

CONFIDENT POLICING IN A TROUBLED COMMUNITY

Evaluation of the Vancouver Police Department's City-wide Enforcement Team Initiative

**A report prepared for the City of Vancouver and
the Vancouver Agreement Coordination Unit**

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CONTENTS

Executive Summary	vi
1 - Introduction	1
Objectives of the CET Initiative	2
Order Maintenance and Proactive Policing	3
Police Crackdowns and Urban Drug Markets	5
The Implementation, Impact, and Consequences of Crackdowns	8
Structure of the Report	26
2 - The CET Initiative	34
Background	34
Events Leading to the CET Initiative	36
The CET Initiative.....	46
3 - Method	52
The Challenges of Assessing the Impact of the CET Initiative	53
The Organization of Police Services in Vancouver.....	54
Data Collection	55
4 - Implementation Issues	70
Perceptions of Key Senior Officers.....	70
Perceptions of Police Officers Involved in the Initiative	72
The Community Residents' Views on the CET Initiative	78
The Business Owners' Views on the CET Initiative	81
The Health Care Professionals' Views on the CET Initiative	82
Opinions of IV Drug Users	84
Questions and Findings	85
5 - Impact on the Open Drug Market and on Public Health	94
Official Police Data Drug Offences	94
Proactive Interventions in the DTES	96
Overnight Reports of Serious Incidents	98
Field Observations	99
Police Officers' Views	103
Resident's Perceptions	103
Perceptions of Business Owners	105

Offenders' Perceptions	106
Perceptions of the Sex Trade Workers	108
Drug Users' Perceptions	108
Drug Overdose Incidents	113
Hospitalization	115
Impact on Vulnerable Groups	117
Questions and Findings	118
6 - The Impact on Public Disorder	122
Police Records	122
Police Dispatch Data	125
Residents' Perceptions of Disorder	129
Offenders' Perceptions	132
Street Observations	132
The Views of Health Care Professionals	133
The Views of the Core Police Officers	136
Perceptions of Business Owners	138
Traffic Accidents Involving Pedestrians	139
Questions and Findings	139
7 - The Impact on Property Crime and the Flow of Stolen Property ..	141
Offences Known to the Police	141
Second-hand Transactions	143
Displacement	146
Observations	147
Perceptions of the Levels and Flow of Stolen Property	148
Questions and Findings	150
8 - The Impact on Violent Crime	152
Offences Known to the Police	152
Calls for Assistance	153
Ambulance Data	154
Assaults against Police Officers	156
Residents' Perceptions	156
Offenders' Perceptions	158
Questions and Findings	158
9 - Displacement	159
Perceptions of Displacement Among Senior Police Officers	161
Displacement as Reflected in Localized Offence Patterns	163
Mapping the Movement of Criminal Activity	170
Questions and Findings	182

10 - Impact on Police-Community Relations	184
Community Residents' Support for the Police	185
Police-Resident Contact	185
The Police Officers Assigned to the DTES	185
Perceptions of IV Drug Users Residents of the DTES	186
Perceptions of Business Owners	188
Perceptions of Health Care Professionals	189
Police officers' Perceptions	191
Questions and Findings	192
11 - Impact on Vulnerable Groups and the Potential for Police	
Abuse of Authority	194
Impact on IV Drug Users	194
Impact on the Sex Trade Workers	195
Potential for Abuses of Authority	196
Complaints against the Police	199
Questions and Findings	200
12 - The Costs of the CET	202
Costs of the Initiative	203
Impact of the Initiative on Other Police Functions	203
Cost Effectiveness	204
Questions and Findings	204
13 - Conclusions	207
Implementation	211
The Observed Impact of the CET.....	213
Public Health Impact of CET	219
Looking Ahead: Lessons Learned and Future Options	221
Appendices:	
<i>Appendix 1</i> Summary of Key Findings from Surveys.....	225
<i>Appendix 2</i> List of Offences Included in Each Construct	233
<i>Appendix 3</i> Summary of Questions and Findings by Chapter	235
<i>Appendix 4</i> Summary Table: Prime Data: Comparisons Between Districts.....	250
<i>Appendix 5</i> Summary Table: Prime Data: Sub-district Comparisons....	251

Executive Summary

This evaluation, sponsored by the Vancouver Agreement Coordination Unit, was designed to assess the impact of the Vancouver Police Department's City-Wide Enforcement Team (CET) initiative implemented in the Downtown Eastside (DTES) area of the city during the months of April-September, 2003. The CET followed a number of previous police interventions in the area that targeted the drug trade and was initiated after a planning process that included an unsuccessful attempt to secure additional fiscal support from the City Council.

The CET had three primary objectives: 1) to bring order to a disordered community; 2) to disrupt the open drug market; and, 3) to disrupt the flow of stolen property into the DTES. These objectives were to be achieved by providing an enhanced police presence in the area in an attempt to disperse drug dealers and their user-clients and, in doing so, reduce the levels of disorder and increase safety and security in the area.

The CET represented a dramatic departure from the previous "containment" approach wherein policing services were provided to the DTES on a primarily reactive basis. Senior police personnel viewed the initiative as a long-delayed fulfillment of their legislated mandate to provide full policing services to the residents of the DTES.

To assess the effectiveness of the CET, in-depth interviews were conducted with community residents, business owners, incarcerated offenders, health care professionals, the police officers who were assigned to the DTES at the time the CET was implemented, and IV drug users. In addition, systematic field observations were conducted in the DTES during a three month period and focus group sessions were conducted with community residents, persons involved in the delivery of social services, sex trade workers, and members of NGOs in the DTES. Statistical information from the Vancouver Police Department Computer Aided Dispatch system (CAD), the PRIME record system, the pawnshop data base, as well as from other agencies, including Vancouver Fire and Rescue Services, B.C. Ambulance Service, the Coroner's Office, and hospital admission data were retrieved and analyzed.

The results of the analysis indicate that the CET was successful in disrupting the open drug market, reducing the general levels of social disorder, and enhancing the general feelings of safety and security among persons who live and work in the DTES. The CET was less successful in

pursuing drug dealers and the associated criminal activity that was displaced into other areas in District 2 and into adjacent police districts. There is some evidence that the drug market in the DTES adapted to the increased police presence, becoming more orderly, dispersed and moving out of the public realm into private locations. The price and availability of drugs in the area were not significantly impacted. Drug dealers and their clients who were displaced to other areas created localized crime “hot spots” of drug dealing and associated disorder, although this occurred in the context of overall declines in drug and public disorder offences in all police districts in the city during the last nine months of 2003 as compared with the same time period in 2002.

With respect to potential detrimental effects of the initiative, there is no evidence that the CET had a measurable impact on the number of fatal drug overdoses in the DTES or adversely affected IV drug users with respect to their access to HIV prevention, needle exchange and other services. Nor is there evidence that the risk behaviour of IV drug users was influenced by the CET initiative in a way that noticeably increased public health risks.

The data that were gathered for the evaluation did not allow a determination of whether the CET was successful in interfering with the flow of stolen property into the DTES, although the stolen property market was forced to become more discrete and more of the stolen property may have been fenced out of the immediate DTES area. Police officers, community residents, IV drug users, and others who offered an opinion on the subject shared the view that the stolen property market had not been significantly reduced. Senior police personnel, based on their observations, believed that the flow of stolen property as it existed prior to the CET had been impacted and cited the Extract data to support their view that the quality and value of stolen goods flowing into the DTES had declined. The attempt by the project team to assess the impact of the CET on the stolen property market in the DTES was hindered by methodological difficulties.

There was general support among community residents, business owners, sex trade workers, and IV drug users for the increased police presence in the area and with the performance of the police. There was also an expressed desire that the police enhance their relations with the community through expanded foot patrols and increased training to better equip officers to effectively police the area. Some concern was expressed about the policing styles of some officers assigned to the area. Residents were divided as to whether the overall quality of life in the

community had improved, although their overall feelings of safety and security had increased.

The effectiveness of the CET was compromised to some extent by insufficient coordination and joint planning with other agencies and organizations in the DTES, a lack of departmental resources, and by some inconsistency in the policing strategies used by officers in the DTES. The results of the study also indicated that the CET would have benefited from a comprehensive communication strategy to increase the awareness of community residents and business owners and others involved in the delivery of services in the area.

A major limitation of this evaluation is that the survey interview data were gathered six months after the CET initiative was implemented and it can be expected that this short time frame is sufficient only to capture certain facets of any changes in community life in the DTES. It is difficult to determine the extent to which medium and long-term changes are occurring and whether these changes are permanent or ephemeral.

It is also unrealistic to expect that the dynamics of life in a community, where crime and disorder had become deeply entrenched, would be significantly and measurably altered in six months as a consequence of one initiative such as the CET. It can be expected that the dynamics of life in the DTES will continue to evolve and that specific initiatives, such as the CET, will evolve as well. The special initiative did serve a number of purposes, one of which was for the VPD, as an organization, to accept and acknowledge its responsibility to challenge its own long-standing policy of "containment" and to move proactively to provide effective policing services to the DTES community and to attempt to improve the overall quality of life for all of its residents.

1

Introduction

In April 2003, the Vancouver Police Department (VPD) launched a special six-month initiative to restore order in a particularly distressed area of the city commonly referred to as the Downtown Eastside (DTES). The primary objective of the initiative designated the “City-wide Enforcement Team” (CET), was to restore order in the DTES by dismantling the open drug market and interfering with the flow of stolen property. The CET initiative was the core strategy for accomplishing the Department’s 2003 organizational priority: “To reduce the crime and disorder driven by illicit drug use”. The CET initiative was also presented as a major component of a comprehensive strategy to address the drug misuse problem in the City of Vancouver, involving different agencies and levels of government and in which law enforcement is understood as one element of a “Four Pillars Approach”.

In anticipation that the initiative would result in the displacement of persons and criminal offending, the initiative was not limited to the DTES area, but, as the term “City-wide Enforcement Team” connotes, was to be much broader in scope. To this end, a special task force was envisioned that could intervene in different parts of the City as significant crime and disorder problems arose.

The Vancouver Agreement Coordination Unit (VACU) and the City of Vancouver commissioned the present study. The purpose of this independent evaluation was to assess whether the CET had achieved its stated goals during the six month time period April 7- October 5, 2003

during which it was operational and thereafter when the CET was replaced by a more permanent strategy of policing the DTES.

The study proceeded on the basis of an evaluation plan that had been approved by the VACU after consultation with the VPD. The evaluation plan called for an assessment of the impact of the initiative on the open drug market, crime, public order, public health, the quality of life of citizens of the area, the situation of drug users, police-community relation, in the DTES and other Vancouver communities. Of particular concern was the potential effect of the law enforcement initiative - and the anticipated displacement of various drug related activities - on public health. The potential increase in risk behaviour associated with communicable diseases and drug overdoses as a result of the CET were to be monitored, as well as the impact of the initiative on the provision of health care and other services to injection drug users. This evaluation, then, extended beyond the three objectives of the CET as identified by the VPD, to consider the *impact* of the CET on quality of life and health issues as well as on the displacement of persons and criminal activity.

The Objectives of the CET Initiative

The stated objectives of the CET were progressively articulated as part of a year-long review and planning exercise that began in March, 2002. The initiative was surrounded by a considerable amount of controversy and, as a consequence, its objectives were often differentially represented or understood by the various persons, organizations, and agencies involved. Nevertheless, the objectives of the CET initiative were relatively clear:

- (1) to restore order to the DTES community;
- (2) to disrupt the open drug market in the DTES; and,
- (3) to interfere with the flow of stolen property into the DTES

The CET was, first and foremost, a police initiative designed to improve the quality of life in the DTES by focusing on two specific activities that were contributing to disorder in the community. It is best described as an attempt by the VPD to provide police services to a community that had been long-neglected, and in which the VPD had traditionally pursued a policy of containment.

Given the misrepresentations that have also surrounded the CET and its objectives, it is equally important to note what the CET was *not* designed to accomplish. The CET was not implemented in order to:

- target IV drug users or to displace drug users from the DTES
- pre-empt the development and implementation of the Four Pillars Approach in the DTES
- eliminate drug trafficking in the DTES, nor
- in any way affect the creation and operation of the Supervised Injection Site (SIS) in the DTES.

Order Maintenance and Proactive Policing

The “Mission Statement” developed by senior officers responsible for District Two, within which the DTES is situated, refers to their determination to create in the DTES an “intolerant environment for criminal activity.” The initiative incorporated the basic tenets of the “broken windows theory” of policing, including a “zero tolerance” strategy for addressing social disorder and crime. A key principle of the CET initiative was that a strict order-maintenance approach, coupled with high police visibility and presence, and focusing on disorder and minor infractions, would result in a reduction in more serious criminal activity (see Knox, 2001). In the DTES, this would be reflected in a reduction in the overall level of disorder, the disruption of the open drug market, and the criminal activity, including theft of property, associated with it.

The “broken windows theory” is an attempt to explain the relationship between disorder and crime and is based on the hypothesis that “serious crime flourishes in areas in which disorder goes unchecked” (see Kelling 1987; Kelling and Coles, 1996; Wilson and Kelling, 1982; Wilson and Kelling, 1982: 34). Similarly, Burke observes that the central thesis of the “broken windows theory” is that “the existence of unchecked and uncontrolled minor incivilities in a neighborhood – for example, panhandling, public drunkenness, vandalism and graffiti – produces an atmosphere conducive to more serious crime” (1998: 667).

Proponents of this perspective argue that fear, crime, and urban decay are the potential consequences of ignoring disorder in a community (see Kelling and Coles, 1996). According to senior VPD officers involved in the planning and implementation of the CET initiative, this is what had occurred in the DTES as a consequence of the

policy of “containment” that had been practiced by the Department. Within that perspective, intervening to restore order is a means of interrupting or reversing a dangerous downward spiral (Kelling, 2001: 121). Since the New York experience, reclaiming the streets through “quality of life enforcement” and a focus on disorderly behaviour has become one of the main components of policing polices in many North American cities (Cunnenn, 1999). The enforcement of minor offences serves to emphasize the police intention to keep control of the streets (Cunnenn, 1999).

On the other hand, critics of that perspective have argued that, even if it may be convenient to blame disorder and crime for urban decay, it is probably urban decline itself that is most likely affecting neighbourhoods, their composition, the strength of informal social controls, and the vulnerability of their population by making them more attractive targets for crime (Matthews and Pitts, 2001).

Considerable controversy has surrounded the “broken-windows theory” and questions have been raised as to the effectiveness of the various policing strategies that are based on its tenets. Among the questions that have been raised are whether policing initiatives targeting disorder are effective in reducing the levels of crime and, if so, at what cost (see Bowling, 1999; Harcourt, 2001; Kelling and Sousa, 2001; Knights, 1998). Strict enforcement of minor offences may be useful in certain settings, but it can also involve negative unintended consequences (Grabosky, 1999).

Order maintenance activities of the police are, by their very nature, highly discretionary (Kelling, 1999; 2001) and the concept of “zero tolerance” frequently associated with that form of intervention is itself quite ambiguous (Cunnenn, 1999). Targeted initiatives against quality of life crimes, or “quality of life enforcement”, can have an impact on the public feeling of safety, but it is not clear that they affect crime (Cohen, 1999; Orr, 1998).

In fact, some researchers have argued that the “broken windows effect” has never been empirically established and that the relationship between public disorder and crime is a spurious one, except perhaps for robbery (Harcourt, 2001: 57; Sampson and Raudenbush, 1999; Sampson and Scott, 2001). Existing evidence on the effectiveness of targeting public disorder incidents and quality of life offences in order to reduce crime is inconclusive. Crime reduction, however, is only one of the objectives of modern policing. And, while the debate over the “broken

windows theory” continues, there is growing recognition that an order-maintenance approach centred on preventing disorder in the community can result in a reduction in the levels of fear among citizens and a corresponding increase in their quality of life (Dixon and Coffin, 1999: 479; Maher and Dixon, 1999; Scott, 2003).

The CET initiative is similar in its objectives and operational delivery to a policing strategy that has gained popularity in the last decade or so and is variously referred to as “zero tolerance policing”, “confident policing”, “proactive policing”, “order maintenance police strategies”, “quality of life policing”, and even as “community policing with the gloves off” (Dennis and Mallon, 1998; Hopkins Burke, 1998; 1998a; Orr, 1998; Romeanes, 1998). These strategies are also often referred to as - or used in conjunction with - police “crackdowns” which are defined as “sudden and dramatic increases in police officer presence, sanctions and threats of apprehension either for specific offences or for all offences in specific places” (cited in Scott, 2003:1; see Davis and Lurgio, 1969; Sherman, 1990; Sherman *et al.*, 1998).

Police Crackdowns on Urban Drug Markets

The CET initiative targeted the open drug market that it aimed to disrupt. In that sense, the initiative itself and Project Torpedo, which immediately preceded and supported it, could also be described as a more traditional “crackdown” against an open drug market, with all of the issues and problems that are usually associated with such initiatives. In addition to Project Torpedo, conducted by the Drug Squad, the CET initiative was accompanied by proactive interventions conducted by the VPD Drug Squad both within and outside the DTES. The respective impact of the two initiatives cannot be distinguished from each other.

Past experience with problem solving and crime reduction shows that, in selecting a response to a particular crime problem it is “crucial to work out in detail how they are expected to produce the intended effect” (Read and Tilley, 2000: 20). In the cases of attempts to “disrupt” a drug market, the intended effect of the disruption is rarely spelled out.

In their efforts to improve the quality of life in neighbourhoods affected by open drug markets, many police forces have resorted to “crackdowns” without any expectation that their intervention may do more than displace the market or disrupt it temporarily. It is seldom clear what benefit such a “disruption” of the drug market, in itself, is

intended to achieve. However, in the presence of strong public pressure to act to resolve the problem, doing nothing is often not an option while being seen to be taking decisive steps to “attack” the market may help counter the perception that the police have abandoned the community to its own means.

Drug hotspots are more likely to experience disorder and violence. A study conducted by Weisburg and Mazerolle (2000) supports the notion that there is a spatial link between drug hotspots, disorder, and serious crime. However, effective policing policies that successfully address these linkages have not yet been fully articulated.

Police services across North America and in other countries have used crackdowns in attempts to disrupt drug markets in urban centres. Scott (2003: 11-12) describes the rationale underpinning this approach:

“Ideally, crackdowns, especially on certain kinds of drug markets, will have a snowball effect. As initial enforcement reduces the number of offenders in circulation, the remaining offenders are at even greater risk because police can focus their resources on them. Eventually, the drug market will collapse for lack of buyers and sellers. Thus, a constant level of police resources dedicated to a crackdown will prove increasingly effective. (...) Drug enforcement crackdowns that reduce overall drug use will also reduce the needs for cash to buy drugs, and thereby provide the added benefit of reducing some of the need to commit crimes to get cash” (see Kort *et al.*, 1998; Worden, Bynam, and Frank, 1994).

Police crackdowns on drug markets are variously designed to reduce the visibility of the drug trade, reduce the number of drug-related crimes, particularly those involving theft of property by drug users, and to improve the quality of life in the community (see Aitken *et al.*, 2002; Davis and Lurigio, 1996; Caulkins, Larson, and Rich, 1993; Maher and Dixon, 2001; May *et al.*, 2000; Smith *et al.*, 1992).

As Scott (2003:25) notes, the objective of the crackdown is to “raise the non-financial costs of dealing and buying: increasing the time it takes dealers and buyers to find one another and make a deal, increasing the risks of getting arrested and increasing the risks of having drugs confiscated” (see also Jacobsen, 1999). On the other hand, increasing the risks of arrest for drug users may also push them to accept other risks to satisfy their addiction and, in the process, create a public health risk (Maher and Dixon, 1999). On that basis, some researchers have argued

that street-level drug policing strategies (mostly focused on small dealers and users) are fundamentally flawed because of their concomitant public health risk (Maher and Dixon, 1999; 2001; Dixon and Coffin, 1999; Wood *et al.*, 2004).

A study conducted by Home Office (U.K.) of eight open drug markets in deprived neighbourhoods in six different regions of England sought to determine how drug market activity affected these neighbourhoods and how the latter responded (Lupton *et al.*, 2002). In all of these areas, the drug market was one of a number of neighbourhood problems and it affected the community in different ways. The study pointed at the need for local strategies to be designed based on local information. A simple solution, such as a law enforcement crackdown, is unlikely to produce, by itself, the desired results in addressing the problems of that community, including those created or exacerbated by the presence of an open drug market.

A review of evidence-based crime reduction initiatives in England and the United States led Tilley and Laycock to conclude that many of the crime reduction tactics employed as part of these initiatives have a “characteristic life-cycle” (Tilley and Laycock, 2004: 33). After an initial success, the effect fades and crime starts to rise again (Berry and Carter, 1992). Research studies have found that police crackdowns can disrupt drug markets but that their impact tends to be short-term. Maximizing the impact of drug crackdowns requires that there be a multi-faceted approach involving other agencies and organizations to provide treatment services for drug users and, as well, sentencing by the courts to ensure that drug dealers are taken off the street. Reflecting on the experience of various police forces and on what seems to work best in attempting to restore order, Kelling and Coles (1996) argued that initiatives aimed at “taking back the streets” must be part of an overall crime control strategy and that it is a mistake to plan order maintenance strategies that are not part of broader more sustainable approach.

Drug law enforcement carries its own “pathogenic and criminogenic costs” (Maher and Dixon, 1999). Australian researchers have noted how drug enforcement is characterized by waves of activity that produce a “pattern of crackdown and back-off” which is particularly prone to unwelcome side effects:

“Drug market participants adopt risky practices in storing, transferring and administering heroin. The illegal activity is suppressed, but the threat of intermittent law enforcement encourages the development of a level of organization that

protects participants and increases the potential for police corruption. Geographical, social, substance and temporal displacement may occur, and relations between police and ethnic minorities deteriorated" (Maher and Dixon, 1999: 508).

Proactive order-maintenance policing and police crackdowns on drug markets have raised several issues with respect to their implementation, impact, and consequences, which are all relevant to understanding the implementation and outcomes of the CET initiative evaluated here. These issues have been identified in the research literature.

The Implementation, Impact, and Consequences of Crackdowns

Read and Tilley (2000) reviewed crime reduction initiatives carried out by 43 police forces in England and Wales and identified a number of factors responsible for either the success or failure of these initiatives. Among the sources of problem-solving failure, they identified weaknesses in identifying and analyzing the problem and in working out what to do, weaknesses in working with partners, and failings in drawing lessons from previous experiences.

In terms of the actual design of the initiative, failed crime reduction initiatives often had a short-term focus, were poorly planned in terms of how measures were made operational, were not thought through in terms of how measures could have an impact, and were not thought through in terms of the need for a sustained reduction or consolidation of the results achieved through a crackdown (Read and Tilley, 2000: 23; see also Tilley and Laycock, 2004)).

Scott (2003:2) observed that there are many forms of crackdowns:

"They range from highly planned, coordinated, intensely focused operations in which officers know the operational objectives and perform their duties precisely, to loosely planned initiatives in which officers are given only vague guidance about objectives and tasks, sometimes being told little more than to 'get out there and make your presence felt'".

The CET initiative fell somewhere in the middle of this continuum: while there was a planning process at the senior levels, there was a considerable amount of "slippage" at the operational level due to a

number of factors. This included an unanticipated shortage of human resources to commit to the initiative, due to approximately 150 officers taking early retirement over a pension issue, and the initial decision to second officers to the CET from positions throughout the Department, a practice that was subsequently altered to one whereby officers volunteered to be transferred to work in the DTES.

Scott (2003: 3) notes that “crackdowns” can be classified along a number of important dimensions, including the extent to which the initiative involves increased police presence and enforcement actions in an area, the tactics used by police officers, the geographic area in which the initiative is concentrated, and the specific offences that are targeted. Some crackdowns emphasize police visibility only, whereas others emphasize police interventions. The CET employed both police visibility and enforcement, a positive feature, as research studies suggest that simply increasing the number of police officers in a locale without a corresponding increase in enforcement is unlikely to have a significant impact on the levels of crime and social disorder (see: Fritsch, Caeti, and Taylor, 1999). According to Scott (2003: 3), a primary objective of crackdowns is to create, in the criminal population, the perception of an increased threat of apprehension and intervention.

The next chapter of this report will elaborate on the nature of the CET initiative as participants understood it and as it evolved during its planning and implementation phases. However, before moving to that presentation, the following discussion will outline some of the evaluation issues that are considered in this report.

1. Implementation

Scott (2003:7) notes that:

“For crackdowns to be effective, they must be sufficiently strong and long: strong enough doses of police intervention for long enough periods. Marginal increases in routine police activity are unlikely to produce significant effects. Exactly how much more intensive and extensive police action is required varies from problem to problem, but it must be sufficiently greater than normal to alter offenders’ perceptions of risk.”

Among the implementation issues to be examined are the following questions:

- 1.1 *Were the objectives of the initiative well defined and translated into operational objectives and decisions?*
- 1.2 *Were the necessary financial and other resources secured in a timely manner to ensure the success of the initiative?*
- 1.3 *Were capable managers identified and recruited to lead the initiative?*
- 1.4 *Was the staffing/recruitment strategy adopted to create the special team adequate to support the initiative?*

The issues of recruitment and leadership, in particular, were identified by senior managers early in the planning process, as crucial to the success of the initiative.

In his paper “Broken Windows and Police Discretion”, Kelling describes the difficulty involved in explaining to police officers what is expected of them in such initiatives, and the trouble experienced by administrators trying to change police officers’ behaviour to reflect new policing policies” (Kelling, 1999). In that respect, a number of other related implementation issues are also worth considering with respect to the deployment of the officers responsible for the implementation of the CET initiative. These issues include:

- 1.5 *Were the officers involved in the enforcement team sufficiently trained to function effectively under the new policing policy?*
- 1.6 *Did these officers involved in the enforcement team have a clear understanding of the objectives being pursued?*
- 1.7 *Did the officers involved in the enforcement team understand what was expected of them as members of the citywide enforcement team?*
- 1.8 *Did the officers involved in the enforcement team have an appreciation of the complexity of the problems affecting the DTES?*
- 1.9 *Were the officers involved in the enforcement team made aware of the potential impact of the initiative on various vulnerable groups, including drug addicted individuals?*
- 1.10 *Were the officers involved in the enforcement team informed of the potential public health issues that could arise out of the initiative?*

Studies of the impact of police crackdowns have also found that their impact on crime and disorder tends to dissipate rather quickly for a variety of reasons, “including the tendency for police implementation to become less rigorous over time and for offenders to adapt to the crackdown” (Scott, 2003: 15; see also Josi, Donahue, and Magnus, 2000).

The inability of a police Department to maintain the momentum it acquired through a special initiative and to sustain the latter over an extended period of time is often an issue. Achieving sustainable crime reduction is difficult. Current best practices would seem to indicate that “the precise design of the tactics chosen, methods of implementation, and mixes of tactics can all help avert the tendency for impact to fade” (Tilley and Laycock, 2004: 34).

There are also invariably questions about how the police intervention must evolve once the streets have been “taken back”. The experience of the Cleveland Constabulary (Romeanes, 1998) tended to demonstrate that short-term zero tolerance strategies can allow officers to reclaim the streets and implement longer-term strategies of problem-oriented policing, crime prevention, and community safety. In fact, it is usually argued that crackdowns should never be more than just one component of a broader policing policy.

Zero tolerance strategies will only be effective if applied in conjunction with a wide variety of other police tactics. In particular, problem oriented policing initiatives that modify places, routine activities, and situations are seen as particularly promising and can, at least initially, be facilitated by order-maintenance tactics (Braga *et al.*, 1999). As Silverman pointed out, “there is nothing in zero-tolerance policing that is inherently incompatible with simultaneously addressing related community problems through other strategies” (Silverman, 1998: 61). Order-maintenance policing does not in any way imply that that no other attempt is made concurrently to solve problems associated with the disorder.

In that regard, one should therefore also ask:

- 1.11 *What was the Department’s overall policing policy for the DTES and District Two? What was the role of the CET initiative within that policy?*
- 1.12 *Was the CET initiative effectively supported by other police initiatives and was it isolated from other policing activities?*
- 1.13 *Did its intelligence gathering and data analysis component effectively support the overall CET initiative?*
- 1.14 *Did the Department clearly identify the conditions that had to be met for the CET initiative to be sustainable in the long term?*

1.15 Did the Department carefully plan the follow up it intended to give to the initiative?

In their review of crime reduction initiatives in 43 police forces in the UK, Read and Tilley clearly identified a neglect to work closely with partners as one of the main factors responsible for the overall failure of various crime reduction initiatives. The success of the initiatives was often compromised by “a failure to fully to involve partners” or an “insensitivity to others’ agendas, styles, constraints or ideologies” (Read and Tilley, 2000: 24). On the other hand, the successful initiatives were based on community consultation and involvement. They had carefully identified interventions that could elicit the cooperation of residents, community groups, and other agencies (Read and Tilley, 2000: 20).

Research suggests that crackdowns are most effective when utilized in conjunction with other responses to address underlying conditions that contribute to the particular problem (see Braga, 2001; Scott, 2003; Weisburd and Green, 1995). Whether such a strategy has an enduring impact or not, Pollard noted, seems to depend on whether or not it is pursued in partnership with – and complementarily to – the work of other social agencies (Pollard, 1998: 47). The question of whether there was sufficient collaboration and consultation is particularly relevant when considering the enforcement efforts of the VPD in the CET initiative within the larger context of the uneven implementation of the “Four Pillars Approach” adopted by the City of Vancouver (City of Vancouver, 2001).

There are models of policing which are more compatible than others with a harm reduction model. Three approaches are explored by Canty, Sutton, and James (2001), including a market regulation model in which police and community partners assess drug related harm and use law enforcement to reshape a drug market. Some researchers have suggested that the police need to develop their own “taxonomy of drug-related harms” and use their discretion to focus on the most harmful activities and to minimize the harm that they may itself cause through their own interventions (James and Sutton, 2000: 269). The VPD has apparently made some progress in defining its own drug enforcement and other law enforcement policies and practices in relation to the broad harm reduction objectives adopted by the National Drug Policy and the City’s own policy. The following questions therefore come to mind:

- 1.16 *How did the CET initiative relate to the other aspects of the broad response strategy to drug abuse in Vancouver (Four Pillars Approach)?*
- 1.17 *How was the CET initiative coordinated with other agencies involved in Vancouver to address the problems of the DTES and its open drug market?*
- 1.18 *Did the CET initiative have an impact on other parts of the criminal justice system?*
- 1.19 *Did the CET have an impact on other initiatives undertaken in the DTES as part of the Four Pillars Approach?*

2. Disruption of Drug Market and Impact on Public Health

It is important to note that the CET was not designed with the intent of eliminating the drug market in the DTES. Rather, a primary objective was to disrupt the open drug market to an extent that the social disorder that it had spawned would be brought under control, thereby improving the quality of life in the area and providing an opportunity for law-abiding citizens and business owners in the area to establish some sense of normalcy in the area.

As Maher and Dixon (1999: 490) noted, law enforcement strategies aimed at disrupting the drug market are usually based on one of two unproven assumptions. It is assumed that the police intervention will drive up the street price for the drugs and in turn reduce demand for these drugs and it is also assumed that the disruption will prompt more drug users to enter treatment programs.

A number of research studies have raised serious questions as to the effectiveness of police crackdowns. One British study found that, despite the efforts of the police in one initiative to disrupt the drug market, over 80 percent of the arrestees stated that their ability to buy crack cocaine or heroin in their local neighbourhood had not been impaired (Bennett, 2000). Similarly, the British researchers Hough and Edmunds (1999: 129) have documented the elasticity and adaptability of drug markets, which tend to “adapt and transform, rather than disappear, in the face of enforcement strategies.” Another study conducted of two drug markets in England showed that these markets had responded to law enforcement efforts and had adapted to the new circumstances through physical displacement and other means (May *et al.*, 2000). In these markets, drug dealers and drug users believed that the police posed little threat and

were seemingly unconcerned with the risk associated with police activities. The police officers involved felt that their low-level enforcement strategies were ineffective at disrupting the activities of the suppliers and users (May *et al.*, 2000).

In Australia, a study showed that a crackdown on drug dealers achieved some success in reducing the visible aspects of the drug scene, but the impact was mostly superficial and short-lived (Aitken *et al.*, 2002). The operation involved significant public expense and seemed to produce a number of undesirable effects, including the displacement of the drug scene to other nearby areas, the discouragement of safer injection practices and safe needle and syringe disposal, as well as more frequent occurrence of violence and fraud (Aitken *et al.*, 2002). Also in Australia, a series of initiatives in the Cabramata District (Sydney) involved high profile, intensive, and sustained policing interventions that targeted heroin users and user-dealers. The main tactic consisted of “buy and bust” operations (Maher and Dixon, 2003). As was the case in the Vancouver CET, the main objective of the initiative was not so much drug law enforcement, as the restoration of quality of life in the district by disrupting and displacing the drug market. The initiative was a controversial one and a subsequent evaluation raised serious doubts about its value (Maher and Dixon, 1999; 2001).

It is sometimes also argued that a crackdown can continue to have an effect after it ends (a “residual deterrence effect”) and that it can have an impact outside of the geographic area in which it is concentrated (a “diffusion effect”) (Scott, 2003). However, in spite of claims that a “residual deterrence effect” can be created by crackdowns, it would seem that in most cases the effect is short lived.

A central question for the present evaluation is whether the CET initiative significantly disrupted the DTES open drug market and, if so, what was the nature of that disruption and what was its net impact on the quality of life of local residents? Of course, one of the immediate effects expected to result from the disruption is a reduced availability of illicit drugs within the targeted area and perhaps also changes in the nature, price, and quality of available drugs. A crackdown is also expected to disrupt the use patterns of drug users.

In interviews with drug users conducted within weeks of the beginning of a series of drug raids conducted by police in London, Best *et al.* (2001:743) found that more than two-thirds of the drug users residing in areas targeted for the police crackdown had not noticed any significant

change in the price or availability of heroin, crack cocaine or cannabis in the initial two weeks following the beginning of the crackdown. This led the researchers (Best *et al.*, 2001: 744) to conclude that there was no evidence that the police crackdown “had any instant impact on the price, availability or purity of illicit drugs, nor on the use patterns of consumers, even those consumers who are aware of and have been personally affected by the police operation.” Among the possible reasons for this finding, offered by the researchers, was the short time period that had elapsed (2 weeks) since the beginning of the crackdown and the fact that drug markets are adaptable and resistant to the specific strategies being employed by the police.

A prospective cohort study of IV drug users in Vancouver using data collected three months prior to and after the beginning of the CET initiative, found that the latter did not alter the price of drugs or the frequency of drug use among regular users (Wood *et al.*, 2004: 1551). The study also found that drug use activity was displaced to nearby areas (Wood *et al.*, 2004: 1553).

The evaluation issues relating to the intended disruption of the DTES drug market by the CET initiative include:

2.1 *Was the DTES drug market disrupted or otherwise affected by the CET initiative and, if so, how?*

2.2 *Did the CET initiative affect the availability, the price, or the quality of illicit drugs in the DTES and/or in Vancouver?*

There is a growing body of research on the public health risks associated with injection drug use which points at the potential impact of police interventions on drug injecting practices, of syringes sharing, exchange and disposal practices, and on access to medical treatment among drug users (see for example Aitken *et al.*, 2002; Dixon and Coffin, 1999; Druker, 1999; Maher and Dixon, 1999; Maher and Dixon, 2001; Rhodes *et al.*, 2003; Wood *et al.*, 2004).

A recent article by Scott Burris and his colleagues (Burris *et al.*, 2004) presents an excellent overview of the research on the individual risk factors associated with injection drug use and how they can be heightened or possibly reduced by policing practices. They present clear evidence that law enforcement practices are significant ecological factors structuring IV drug users' risk and behaviour (Burris *et al.*, 2004: 131-134).

Increased police presence may reduce access to needle exchange programs, safe injection sites and other health and outreach programs by

drug users ((Kerr *et al.*, 2003; Fry, 2003; Wood *et al.*, 2003; 2004). It can also lead to increases in syringe exchange and the risk of infectious diseases transmission (Bluthenthal *et al.* 2000). Disruption of the drug market may encourage the movement of drug users to different parts of the city and may affect their access to medical and other social services and create an increased public health risk.

In the case of the DTES, new services were recently designed to increase access to the health care system, and that may have mitigated the effect of the CET initiative. The annual report of the CHASE project (VCHA, 2003) notes that the new services established by the VCHA appear to be generally improving access to and movement within the health care system for members of the community and, in particular, for drug users and other individuals at risk of contacting HIV/AIDS. The opening of four new facilities by the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority in the DTES (The Downtown Community Health Clinic; the Pender Community Health Clinic; the Health Contact Centre; and, the Life Skills Centre) may explain some of the observed increases in service utilization.

Several Australian studies have shown that crackdowns on street drug scenes can have potentially harmful consequences for public health (Aitken *et al.*, 2002; Dixon and Coffin, 1999; Maher and Dixon, 1999; Maher and Dixon, 2001). The law enforcement initiatives can discourage safe injection practice and safe needle disposal. These negative public health outcomes, Aitken and his colleagues argue, “may outweigh the perceived positive outcomes, which are largely superficial and temporary and are achieved at significant public expense” (Aitken *et al.*, 2002:197).

Furthermore, the displacement of the drug market makes drugs available in neighbourhoods where they were previously scarce (see Maher and Dixon, 1999; 2001). Concerns are often raised about the impact of such displacement in terms of potentially encouraging previously unexposed at-risk youth to experiment with drugs (Wood *et al.*, 2004: 1555), although one could also argue that a visible, well-known, and easy to find open drug market is far more of a temptation for at-risk youth, than a newly displaced market.

Public health consequences can result from a successful disruption of the drug market. The following questions ought therefore to be considered:

2.3 *Did the CET initiative produce changes in what drugs were being used and where drug users were using them?*

- 2.4 *Was the CET initiative responsible for any changes in injection related risk behaviour of drug users in the DTES?*
- 2.5 *Did the CET initiative have an impact on the number of fatal and non-fatal cases of drug overdose in the DTES or in Vancouver?*
- 2.6 *Did the CET initiative's disruption of the drug market in the DTES also disrupt the provision of health care services and outreach programs to drug users, in particular, IV drug users?*
- 2.7 *Did the CET initiative's disruption of the DTES drug market disrupt the provision of HIV prevention services to IV drug users, or limit their access to sterile syringes?*

3. Displacement of the Drug Market

As compared to other strategies where the evidence of success is much slimmer, increasing patrols directed at hot spots seem to be producing some clear, if not always lasting, results (Sherman *et al.*, 1998, Scott, 2003). The problem with the strategy is that it encourages the displacement of crime and disorder. To be effective, the strategy must allow for the constant analysis of evidence of movement of the problem and a re-focusing of the patrols (as implied in the City-wide enforcement team model).

Police crackdowns may also lead to the displacement of crime and social disorder to areas that were previously unaffected or that had lower levels of crime and disorder prior to the initiative. These newly affected areas tend to be fairly close geographically to the area initially affected. Many of the special law enforcement initiatives dealing with open drug markets are focussing on order maintenance strategies and have accepted that disorder will be displaced to other neighbourhoods. The fact that many of these initiatives are inspired by the "broken window theory" is ironic, as Dixon and Coffin (1999) have noted, because that theory would predict that displacement of minor disorders to a new neighbourhood would lead to a deterioration of that neighbourhood and eventually lead to more crime in that neighbourhood.

Displacement is responsible for some of the social costs of police crackdowns including threats to public health and to community safety as a result of geographical, social and substance displacement (Maher and Dixon 1999).

For instance, because of the levels of harm that can flow from integrated drug and sex markets, law enforcement strategies must be properly coordinated with other interventions to ensure that sex markets take the least socially harmful shape (May *et al.*, 1999). Sex markets can play a significant role in the development of drug markets and vice-versa. Displacement of the sex trade may have public health consequences for other communities, as well as consequences for the sex trade workers themselves, their physical safety and their exposure to violence and abuses (Hubbard, 1998). Sex workers are constantly at risk of being violently victimized. Furthermore, health risks for drug dependent sex workers and their clients are enormous. This suggests that the following questions should be considered:

3.1: How did the CET initiative address the links between the sex trade and the drug markets, and between the sex trade and public disorder?

3.2: Was the sex-trade also displaced together with the drug trade? Were these questions considered in planning the initiative?

Displacement may also lead to criticism that the police, rather than solving problems, have only succeeded in moving the problem to another area. However, Scott (2003:16) observes that “the potential for criticism does not necessarily make crackdowns inadvisable; sometimes, displacing a problem from an area that has suffered disproportionately, to other areas that haven’t, can be justified as a more equitable distribution of suffering.” This observation has important implications for the CET initiative and the issue of displacement that will be considered later in this report.

Displacement is possibly only one aspect of the question, albeit a complex one (Clarke, 1995). There is also the prospect that an intervention may create a “diffusion of benefits” effect. One needs to consider the conditions under which displacement occurs following a police intervention and understand the exact nature of the displacement produced (Silverman, 1998: 64). There is considerable discussion of the problem in the literature, but far less standardized empirical work that investigates the incidence of displacement (Bowers and Johnson, 2003). Existing methods to measure displacement remain unsophisticated.

For the present evaluation, the following questions require attention:

3.3 Is there any evidence that, as a result of the CET initiative, drug market activities were displaced from their initial location in the DTES

to other locations in the DTES, District Two, other districts, or even outside of Vancouver?

3.4 Is there any evidence that, as a result of the CET initiative, the sex-trade market active in the core part of the DTES was disrupted and displaced to other areas of the DTES or the City?

3.5 What was the impact of the CET initiative on the situation of sex-trade workers active in the DTES?

3.6 Did the VPD give itself the capacity to monitor the anticipated displacement and make strategic use of that information?

One of the main implementation issues to be considered by the present evaluation is whether the VPD was able to sustain the CET initiative generally and, more specifically, to pursue and police offenders displaced from the DTES to specific “hot spots” in District Two and in adjacent districts.

3.7 Was the City-wide enforcement team (and/or other elements of the police force) able to pursue and police offenders displaced from the DTES to new hot spots in the City?

4. Reduction of Public Disorder

Kelling observed that the effects of disorder on a neighbourhood vary considerably and some neighbourhoods have a greater capacity than others to tolerate and absorb a significant amount of disorder (Kelling, 2001: 121). In the view of many senior officers of the VPD, the amount of disorder present in the DTES far exceeded the capacity of that, and perhaps any other community, to cope. For the purposes of this study the following questions are important:

4.1 What evidence is there that the amount of disorder present in the DTES was significantly reduced by the CET initiative?

4.2 Is there any evidence that disorderly conducts and incidents were displaced to other areas of the DTES, District Two, or other parts of the City of Vancouver?

5. Impact on Property Crime and the Flow of Stolen Property

One of the explicit objectives of the CET initiative was to interfere with the flow of stolen property in the DTES. This was to be accomplished specifically by the increased visible police presence and by simultaneous pressure being applied on pawnshops to register second-hand property transactions and to report suspicious property.

The impact of the CET initiative on property crime and on the flow of stolen property is hard to predict. The project documentation itself did not specify exactly how the flow of stolen property was to be disrupted or interfered with by the intensive patrols. There is clearly a link between property crime and drug markets. However, the exact nature of that link in a given context and the way in which it may be affected by or respond to various forms of police interventions are, unfortunately, very difficult to ascertain.

Market reduction approaches can be effective in reducing property crime if they are grafted onto intelligence-led policing approaches (Hale *et al.*, 2004). However, this is not quite what the developers of the CET initiative had in mind. Various studies of problem-solving policing have indicated that the most effective ways of controlling property crime rely on targeted efforts enlisting the participation of the community as opposed to a more general increased patrol and order maintenance approach (see Sampson and Scott, 1999).

Generally speaking, property crime control approaches that are not based on a strategic analysis of property crime and are not developed in partnership with other governmental and non-governmental institutions to address specific issues have very little chance of succeeding (Weatherburn and Grabosky, 1999).

Hale and colleagues (2004) explored the experience of two police forces in England that experimented with schemes to reduce rates of burglary and theft by disrupting the stolen goods market. The two projects focused on intelligence-led tactics targeting the mechanisms for the disposal of stolen goods, and on the people and place involved in these markets. The projects produced a wealth of information about the nature of the markets and promising avenues for inter-agency cooperation. However, the study could not demonstrate the impact of these projects on property crime rates (Hale *et al.*, 2004: 14). The close linkages between the drug markets and the stolen property markets,

among other things, made it difficult to isolate the impact of efforts to disrupt one of the two types of markets.

Furthermore, some policing initiatives can also contribute to an increase in property crime. For instance, law enforcement initiatives aimed at disrupting drug markets can sometimes drive drug prices up and, under such circumstances, they may arguably contribute to an increase in property crime as drug addicts must commit more property crime to finance their habit. That causal link, however, is a difficult one to establish (Benson, Lerburn and Rasmussen, 2001: 990). In the same vein, because police resources are limited, concentrating on drug enforcement can sometimes reduce the resources that police devote to control property crime and inadvertently lead to an increase in property crime (Benson *et al.*, 2001; Benson *et al.*, 1992; Sollars *et al.*, 1994).

Property crime remains a major concern in Vancouver. A recent report of the Vancouver Board of Trade (2003) deplores the fact that Vancouver has the highest property crime rate among major metropolitan areas of Canada (i.e. 7,067 per 100,000 population, in 2002, as compared to 2,949 per 100,000 population in Toronto for the same year). Also, as compared to other cities, a relatively low percentage of these crimes are resolved by the VPD. The Board of Trade report also deplored that resources have taken away from property crime enforcement, partly because of an overall shortage of resources (Vancouver Board of Trade, 2003: 27). Drug addiction is, of course, identified as the driving force behind this situation (Vancouver Board of Trade, 2003: 38).

- 5.1 *Did the CET initiative successfully interfere with the flow of stolen property in the DETS?*
- 5.2 *Was the frequency of various types of property crime in District Two and in the City of Vancouver affected by the CET initiative?*
- 5.3 *Is there any evidence that property crime, or certain types of property crime, were displaced from the DTES to other parts of District Two or of the City of Vancouver?*

6. Impact on Violent Crime

As was discussed earlier, one of the claims of the theory behind “zero-tolerance” policing and other proactive order-maintenance initiatives is that they may lead to a reduction in crime, including violent

crime. Whether such a reduction in crime was produced by the CET initiative is a legitimate question to be asked as part of the present evaluation.

It is not clear how offenders respond to police presence and increased proactive interventions. According to at least one study in which drug arrestees were interviewed, it would appear that for some of them it may include changing their offending behaviour (Johnson *et al.*, 2002). There is always also the risk that increased law enforcement and, in particular a successful disruption of the drug market, may bring about power struggles between dealers, and conflicts between dealers and users, and thus increase the amount of violence around these markets. Finally, there is a possibility that the increased police presence may lead to more frequent confrontations between the police and various participants in the drug market.

- 6.1 *Did the CET initiative reduce the incidence of violent crime in the DTES?*
- 6.2 *Is there evidence that the CET initiative may have displaced some types of criminal activity to other neighbourhoods nearby or other parts of the City?*
- 6.3 *If there was evidence of crime displacement, how did the citywide enforcement team or other elements of the VPD respond to that new development?*

7. Police-Community Relations

Crackdowns may have an impact on police-community relations. Improperly conducted, these initiatives may serve only to alienate community residents and increase criticism of the police, undermining the legitimacy of the police and of the initiative (Dixon and Coffin, 1999; Maher and Dixon, 1999, 2001). As the police scholar Herman Goldstein has observed: "It's one thing to realize a quick dramatic decrease in some types of offences, but if that's at the cost of creating great antagonism toward the police (...) then police departments are going to have to deal with the consequences of that hostility." (cited in Rosen, 1997: 9).

There is a consumer demand for more police presence on the streets, for more assertive policing, particularly in neighbourhoods affected by drug markets and the disorder that accompanies them (Hopkins Burke,

1998; Romeanes, 1998). Police departments have to respond to these expectations. However, they face more complex problems in neighbourhoods that are characterized by diverse and fragmented interest groups (Romeanes, 1998). In fact, it cannot even be assumed that there is always a shared understanding of “zero-tolerance” or of “disorder” between the community and the police or even between different segments of a community (Walkate and Evans, 1999). The further marginalization of certain groups is always a risk, particularly when the police do not develop partnerships with the communities or fail to develop policing policies in close consultation with these communities (Cunnenn, 1999).

Restoring public confidence in the police is often an explicit goal of “confident policing” or “proactive police interventions” (Dennis and Mallon, 1998). The intensified police presence established by the CET in the DTES was not sufficient to ensure that the police were present to respond to all incidents of crime or disorder as they occurred. However, as Hüttermann observed, the heightened presence of uniformed patrols serves to cultivate public relations and inspire public trust (Hüttermann, 2003: 384). This is an important point. As Hüttermann explains, “since the police in general depend on trust-based cooperation with local residents to get useful information, the presence of the symbolic police can only be positive in the longer term. It will improve citizens’ willingness to make reports, witness statements, emergency calls, etc.” (Hüttermann, 2003: 387).

There is no doubt that the police must be sensitive to the demands of different communities within a neighbourhood, and the conflicting nature of such demands. Police services can no longer neglect quality of life problems. However, how they respond to these problems often remains an issue. It seems that the public is usually supportive of special, more proactive, enforcement initiatives provided that the policing activities in question are perceived to be “fair” by the various “interest groups that constitute those micro-societies” (Hopkins Burke, 1998).

Silverman argues that zero tolerance policing is “more in harmony with community wishes than the alternative widespread abandonment of public spaces to the perpetrators of incivilities” (Silverman, 1998: 57). In the case of the CET initiative, the VPD took some care to justify its initiative to the community through the media. A video presentation was prepared by the VPD, titled “Picking Up the Beat” which was used by senior officials for presentations to Vancouver City Council and to the media. A public opinion survey commissioned by the VPD and

conducted by Pollara (2003) found a considerable amount of initial support for the CET initiative.

- 7.1 *To what extent were the residents of the DTES aware of, and supportive of the CET initiative and its objectives?*
- 7.2 *How have the residents of the DTES been affected by the CET initiative?*
- 7.3 *How has the CET initiative affected the nature and quality of police – community relations in the DTES?*

8. *Impact on Vulnerable Groups and Potential for Police Abuse of Authority*

Another concern that has surrounded police crackdowns is that police officers may abuse their authority in attempting to achieve the goals of the initiative (Eterno, 2001; Harcourt, 2001; Knox, 2001; Scott, 2003; Wadham, 1998). According to Erzen, the most damaging repercussion of quality of life and similar initiatives is the “increased harassment in certain neighbourhoods and against certain people” (Erzen, 2001: 31). For that researcher,

“The most dangerous consequence of the increasing security and number of arrests under Quality of Life initiatives is the potential for more brutality on the part of the arresting officer. The very vagueness of the enforcement options and the arbitrary way in which community and disorder get defined leave too much discretion to the police. Too often the result is heightened harassment and violence.” (Erzen, 2001: 35)

Cunnenn (1999) and Greene (1999) have noted that public complaints against the police in New York between 1993 and 1996 (as the zero-tolerance approach was being enforced) increased significantly. It should also be noted that there were allegations of police brutality and misconduct against the VPD’s (Human Rights Watch, 2003) at the very beginning of the CET initiative and that there was a response by the City of Vancouver which strongly refuted these allegations (Campbell, 2003).

Other researchers have noted the impact on people with mental illness and taken exception to policing polices that target the behaviour of excluded groups that are found in certain areas and are involved in disorderly behaviour and visible incivilities (Barr, 2001; Crowther, 1998,

Hopkins Burke, 1998a). Barr (2001) explained how a particular quality of life policing approach had multiplied the contacts between the police and people suffering from mental illness and had a detrimental impact on their quality of life.

This is a particular concern with respect to officers who are not normally assigned to the area where the crackdown is being conducted, Scott (2003:18) stating, "When officers conduct a crackdown in a target areas they are not normally assigned to, there is a heightened risk that they will not be able to distinguish the truly suspicious from the ordinary as effectively as locally assigned officers." This may have been a specific issue with the implementation of the CET. Officers with experience in the DTES had possibly developed a better relationship with the community and were better able to decode some of the complex interactions that take place in such a community.

8.1 *How did the CET initiative affect drug users and other vulnerable groups, including youth, sex trade workers, and people suffering from mental illness?*

8.4 *Were there any instances of police abuse of authority in the DTES during the CET initiative?*

9. The Expense of Crackdowns

Crackdowns and other proactive initiatives are expensive and may stretch police resources to the limit. They therefore tend to remain short-term solutions that are difficult to sustain (Knights, 1998). The cost of maintaining a special police unit can be significant and can quickly become an issue for the police service (Knights, 1998, Harcourt, 2001). Introducing and sustaining a high police presence in an area requires that additional officers be seconded to the area and this and other cost factors make it difficult to sustain the initiative over the long term. The limited availability of additional officers also hinders efforts to deal with the displacement effect of the crackdown, as offenders and their associated criminal activity migrate to new areas that may, themselves, be under-policed. The police may be unable to mobilize additional resources to address the "hotspots" of crime and social disorder that develop.

On an entirely different level, Scott (2003) reminds police managers that there is not only the cost of conducting a crackdown that must be considered, but also the cost of not doing something else with the available resources. To devote a large amount of resources to one area,

the police must divert resources from other areas (Knox, 2001). This has been the case for the CET and may have been an issue for some of the other District Commanders.

The reallocation of police resources to drug enforcement and other special initiatives can have unexpected consequences in terms of the police force's ability to focus on other crimes. In that sense, the "opportunity cost of drug enforcement is reduced efforts to combat these crimes" (Benson, Leburn, and Rasmussen, 2001; see also Benson *et al.*, 1992). From an analysis of data from Florida counties, Benson, Leburn, and Rasmussen (2001:990) conclude that a reallocation of police resources from other areas to drug enforcement:

"(...) presumably lowers the probability of arrest for property crimes (or whatever alternative crime control effort has been reduced). This can influence the number of offences in two ways. First, persons currently engaged in criminal activity will on average commit more crimes before being apprehended. Secondly, and perhaps less important, is the possibility that the lower probability of arrest will lead more people to commit offences" (Benson, Leburn, and Rasmussen).

For the present evaluation, at least four questions deserve attention:

- 9.1 *What were the costs associated with the CET initiative?*
- 9.2 *Were the costs incurred for the implementation of the CET justified by the results obtained through the initiative?*
- 9.3 *Did the VPD investment in the CET initiative weaken some of its other operations?*

Structure of the Report

The following chapter describes the CET initiative, its rationale and its implementation between April 7 and October 5, 2003. It also summarizes several additional initiatives that were implemented by the VPD in the DTES and surrounding areas prior to the CET project. Chapter 3 outlines the method used and the sources of data collected for the present study. This is followed by nine chapters examining each of the sub-sets of evaluation issues outlined above. Finally, Chapter 13 presents the conclusions of the evaluation and offers suggestions for the City's law enforcement policy and for future special initiatives.

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2

The City-wide Enforcement Team Initiative

Background

The Downtown Eastside (DTES) area of Vancouver was/is the site of a very active and unruly open drug market which has, over the years, successfully adapted to what has, in essence, been a policy of containment of the problem in that small, under-privileged and disenfranchised district. The drug market has given rise, as open drug markets usually do, to a variety of criminal activities and incidents of disorder that have deeply affected the quality of life of the more than 16,000 residents of the area.

The City of Vancouver and its key partners, in the fight against the devastating consequences of drug abuse, have professed to adopt a balanced approach based on four core and mutually strengthening pillars for intervention: prevention, treatment, enforcement, and harm reduction (City of Vancouver, 2001). Law enforcement and policing strategies are recognized as key components of any drug strategy. In order to increase public order and to close the open drug scene in the Downtown Eastside, police enforcement strategies included a redeployment of officers in the Downtown Eastside, increased efforts to target organized crime, drug houses and drug dealers, and improved coordination with health services and other agencies to link drug and alcohol users to available programs throughout Vancouver and the region. Dismantling the open drug

market in the DTES is one of the four goals set out in the Vancouver Agreement strategic plan.

The CET initiative was not a “spur of the moment” reaction to a particular event or to a new source of public pressure. The initiative was the result of an internal process of review of a number of possible courses of action, first at the District level and, eventually, at the executive level. The ideas for the initiative initially came from senior officers of the VPD in response to a deep sense of frustration about the inefficiency of the approach to policing the DTES and the absence of adequate law enforcement resources available to address the situation in the DTES.

The supervisory police personnel involved in the design of the CET were senior, experienced, and educated officers who were knowledgeable of the strengths and limitations of various policing policy options and applicable strategies. They had reached the conclusion that the department’s traditional “arrest and charge” approach was not producing results. They believed that the strategy of containing the problem to the DTES had created additional complications, including a significant negative impact on the safety and quality of life of residents of the area. The officers were frustrated by their inability to mobilize sufficient resources to offer that area the level of proactive policing it required. They firmly put forward their proposed strategy, which was at least as much the result of their planning activities and the lessons that had previously learned, as the expression of their frustration with the previous failure of the Department to deal with many law enforcement issues present in the area.

The proposed strategy was soon adopted by the new Chief Constable and was elevated to the level of a departmental priority. The core of the strategy was the deployment of a special Task Force (60 officers) in the DTES to disrupt the drug market and to interrupt the cycle of crime and drug use that characterized the street scene in the DTES. The executive level of VPD agreed and understood that some displacement would occur as a result of the initiative. The Chief Constable also reported that the reallocation of staff to the Task Force from other Sections and Districts would negatively impact these units and would reduce the levels of policing services provided elsewhere in the City.

The new initiative took many - including some of the VPD senior officers and many of the Department’s main partners in the community - by surprise. District commanders were expected to contribute a portion

of their own resources to the new initiative and some of these officers had expressed doubts about the ability of the Department to deal effectively with the crime/disorder displacement that was likely to result from the initiative. Eventually, all of the senior officers in the Department lent their support to the CET.

City Council was approached as the CET initiative was being launched. However, a request by the Department for an increase of \$2.3 million to the VPD budget to fund an interim staffing strategy in support of the CET initiative was not approved. Careful attention was given by the senior officers to the need to develop a case for a police intervention and seek public support for it through the media. For instance, a video presentation was prepared by the VPD, titled "Picking Up the Beat", which was used for presentations to City Council and to the media. However, City Council did not agree to provide the additional funding.

The public response to the announcement of the initiative was generally positive, but senior police officers did not perceive the response of the Police Board as particularly supportive of their new initiative and that, together with the initial response of City Council to the Department's request for additional resources to fund the initiative, was a source of disappointment for them.

There were suggestions that the senior officers involved had not consulted as openly as they should have with some of their community partners, particularly those involved in the various aspects of the four pillar strategies. When questioned about this during the course of the evaluation, these officers were quick to point out that they had attended all meetings that they had been invited to and sometimes argued that policing policy was the purview of the police department itself, and that they did not require permission to respond to the urgent needs of a community.

Events Leading to the CET Initiative

In interviews conducted as part of the evaluation, senior VPD officers spoke about how a number of conditions had conspired to create the troubling situation in District Two and, in particular, in the DTES. The open drug market was not a new development but rather had operated, particularly in the Main and Hastings area, for years. The situation, however, had been allowed to deteriorate to a point where

senior police officers felt powerless to effectively police the area. This was partly as a result of the application of a *de facto* policy of containment that guided local policy decisions as well as policing policies with respect to the open drug market and the crime and other problems associated with it.

“With the proliferation of the second-hand shops where stolen property could be converted into money to buy drugs and the very active drug market within a couple of blocks”, a senior officer noted, “you had a kind of ‘perfect storm’, with the convergence of factors that made it very easy for the drug market to flourish”.

One of these factors was, of course, the fact that the VPD had progressively withdrawn its officers from the DTES beat a decade or so earlier as departmental resources were becoming scarcer. These officers had been reassigned to respond to calls for service. Beat officers were being pulled out of the area at the same time as crack cocaine was becoming more popular, precisely at the time where more, rather than fewer officers would have been required. This was also happening within the general context of the officers moving out of the main police station situated in the DTES (312 Main Street) to the new station on Cambie Street, further signalling, at least symbolically, a less than full departmental commitment to responding to the needs of the area.

The policing policies of the VPD as they related to the DTES and its open drug market had been influenced by a chronic lack of departmental resources and there was a perception, even among senior police officials, that the DTES was not receiving the level and quality of police services that it was entitled to, just like any other district. Ironically, during the decades prior to the implementation of the CET, an ever-increasing amount of financial resources were devoted to the DTES and a considerable number of agencies, organizations, and NGOs had developed in the area to provide services to community residents and to specialized populations such as Aboriginals and IV drug users.

According to senior officers, the question of resources for the DTES had been raised by the VPD on several occasions prior to the CET initiative. In 1999, the City had allocated funding for twenty additional officers to be assigned to the DTES on the understanding that twenty additional officers would also be reassigned from other areas to the DTES. Since that initiative occurred at the same time as the overall departmental budget was being reduced, the intended reallocation never occurred as planned and this created a negative impression in terms of

the Department's real commitment to the area. It was suggested during interviews with senior officers that the previous initiative had failed for a number of reasons, chief among them being the absence of strategic planning, a lack of commitment of the Department as a whole to address the law enforcement issues in DTES, and the lack of a critical mass of police officers to significantly alter the dynamics of life in the DTES community.

Senior officers interviewed as part of the evaluation described the CET initiative as a departure from the past policies of general neglect and containment. The initiative apparently came from some District Commanders, the officer responsible for the Drug Squad, and a few officers who set out to mobilize the Department into action. Senior officers explained that there was a feeling at the time that "doing nothing was not an option". One of these officers explained that they "were no longer willing to subscribe to a philosophy of containment". They felt a duty to intervene and to increase the number of officers assigned to police the DTES to the required staffing levels. This was to be accomplished through a special initiative (the CET) that would draw the attention of the community and the media.

Several events led, progressively, to the articulation of the objectives of the CET initiative and its acceptance as the strategy that was most likely to succeed in "taking back the streets" of the DTES and in restoring order to a community in distress. Some of these events are presented briefly below:

The long-standing policy of containment, within which VPD officers did very little proactive policing and responded to specific incidents on a reactive basis, did not require the VPD to take any risks and was viewed as maintenance of the status quo. Over the years, individual officers and groups of officers did engage the community. This was reflected in the work of the police Native liaison officers, and the efforts of the officers who composed the "Odd Squad" and produced the film *Through a Blue Lens*, which documented life in the drug sub-culture in the DTES. There was, however, no strategic plan on the part of VPD as to how to police the area so as to disrupt the open drug market, reduce the amount of stolen property being brought into the area, and to improve the quality of life for all residents of the DTES.

In taking the initiative to design and implement the CET, the senior administrators within the VPD were motivated by the desire to fulfill their legislated mandate to provide the highest level of policing services

to all of the residents of Vancouver. Reflecting on the decisions that were taken to divert police policy and practice from “business as usual” in the DTES, a senior VPD member stated: “It was *not* a natural evolution of what had been going on. Until a couple of years ago, the Department view was that the DTES was what it was and no one was taking much action.”

This officer noted that a change in Commanders in District Two and the arrival of a new Chief of Police resulted in a shift in thinking about the DTES and the view that the approach that had been taken toward policing the DTES in the past had been wrong. Following a series of strategic planning meetings, this officer noted that “We came to a consensus – not 100% support – that we needed to take on the open drug market in the DTES – that it was consistent with the Four Pillars Report, that it was the right thing to do; we knew that it was going to be extremely difficult due to the lack of adequate resources.”

This officer noted that there had been resistance to the CET from within the Department, centering on concerns as to whether the Department had the resources to mount and sustain the initiative and that “there were also people who felt that it wouldn’t work and wouldn’t make a difference or who said ‘Just leave them alone, it’s contained. This is the wrong way to go.’” There was, according to this officer, an element of complacency that had set in vis-à-vis the DTES, a “Why do we want to do this?” perspective that, in his view, “would have been the easiest thing in the world.”

A senior police administrator stated that the CET “was done for purely altruistic reasons: just saying ‘This is wrong and these people here deserve some level of service and safety that is somewhat like other areas of the city’.” Prior to, and following implementation of the CET, the police were criticized from some quarters for failing to consult with other organizations and agencies in the DTES and to develop a coordinated approach to address the issues confronting the community.

Strategic Planning for District Two

In March 2002, the District Two management team held a planning meeting to develop a strategy for addressing the issues in the DTES. During the meeting, a vision statement was adopted: “Our vision for District Two is communities where all citizens feel safe and secure”. Borrowing language from a “zero tolerance” policing philosophy, a

statement was also developed that defined the Mission of District Two in terms of making the District an “intolerant environment for criminal activity”. Three priorities for action were identified to achieve the mission: (1) disrupting the DTES open drug market and addressing the related street disorder; (2) dealing with problem premises; and, (3) adopting District “enforcement” guidelines on drugs. An agenda was being set for a proactive, confident, assertive policing approach to the DTES based on a willingness to reaffirm an intolerance of street crime and disorder.

Following the meeting a proposal was developed for a “coordinated policing approach” to the situation in the DTES. The report was based in part on interviews with police officers from the District. It summarized the situation as follows:

“It is agreed by District 2 members of all ranks that the current model of deployment and existing strategies used to police the DES have not adapted to keep up with changing conditions. Open drug use and other blatant acts of criminal behaviour have become “the norm” in the DES. Our current efforts fall short of effectively dealing with this increase in street disorder.

(...) District Two members were enthused at the possibility of being involved in executing a focused strategy for policing the DES. The majority expressed embarrassment at the current situation and feel that a lower standard of public behaviour should not be accepted. Behaviour that is currently tolerated in the DES would not be found acceptable in other communities. It is generally believed that if the standard of accepted behaviour in the DES were raised, citizens would feel more secure on the streets. The front line constables who work daily in this area are discouraged and exhausted by the lack of impact or progress they currently experience. There is a consensus among members that a change in strategy and a refocus of energy would serve to alleviate this frustration. Many expressed interest in being involved in implementing these initiatives.

Currently the Vancouver Police members assigned to walk the District Two DES beat are outnumbered, overwhelmed, and fighting a losing battle. In past years alcohol and heroin were the primary substances of choice and there were less people living on and roaming the streets. The last decade has

seen a sharp rise in the influence of "crack" cocaine on our streets. This is compounded by the fact that more and more mentally ill people are being forced onto the streets and many of them end up inadequately supported and they gravitate to the plethora of services available in the DES."

In January 2003, the "exit report" of the police manager responsible for the DTES recommended, among other things, the creation of a new "District 5" to acknowledge the special challenges presented by the DTES and the surrounding areas in District Two. The proposed new district would include Gastown, Chinatown, the DTES and Strathcona. This departing officer recommended that the new District 5 adopt a policing strategy based on the deployment of four beat squads, each composed of 15 beat officers and one Sergeant.

The Main and Hastings 24/7 Policing Project

On November 6, 2002, a project was initiated that focused on the southwest corner of Main Street and East Hastings St. (the front of the Carnegie Centre) where there was, at the time, the clearly visible epicentre of the open drug market in the DTES. The police had observed that, at any given time, there could be between 50 and 150 drug dealers at that particular location and numerous drug arrests by both the drug squad and patrol officers had produced no visible impact on the situation. The project consisted of ensuring a police presence at that location twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Immediately after the project started, the crowd completely dispersed. The police monitored the effects of this intervention and observed that the open drug market had almost immediately been displaced a short distance away to the 100 block of East Hastings St., the 400 block of Columbia Street and, the Oppenheimer Park around the 400 block of Powell Street. Increases were observed in the number of calls for services in these areas, reflecting an increase in drug-related activity and police attention.

According to the VPD, residents of the immediate area and the patrons of the Carnegie Centre welcomed the increased police presence and expressed their appreciation of and support for the initiative. On the other hand, there were also complaints about perceived increased violence on the streets, and complaints from business people from Gastown about the displacement of the drug market from its previous location to their area.

The VPD conducted an internal review of the impact of the initiative. Internal correspondence indicate that the VPD concluded that

the initiative had not prevented access to the Health Contact Centre (HCC) - situated behind the Carnegie Centre - nor did it affect the Centre's outreach program. Three of the existing needle exchange programs seemed to have been affected, as they had noted a significant downward change in the frequency of needle exchange.

Issues were identified with respect to long-term viability of the initiative and the inability of the VPD to staff the project on an ongoing basis, particularly during periods when there were a high number of police officers on annual leave.

"This policing project was unprecedented in what could be called the 'modern' policing era of the VPD. In many ways it represented a return to a traditional form of policing whereby a police officer was "posted" to patrol a block on foot for their entire shift. The impact of the project and the positive public response was far greater than what had been envisioned. It became very clear within two weeks that this project should not be viewed as an "experiment" but should become the regular way of doing "business". The project has proved useful in evaluating effective policing techniques in the DTES. The project has also demonstrated that it is possible to co-ordinate policing with health initiatives and that it is important to evaluate the impact of policing practices on these initiatives as well as the drug user population. The 'lessons learned' during the Main and Hastings project will be invaluable as we enter an era where supervised injection sites and other health initiatives are on the horizon." (VPD - Evaluation- Main and Hastings 24/7 Policing Project, March 3, 2003).

The official conclusions that the VPD drew from that project are worth quoting here, not only because they are generally consistent with the experience of other law enforcement agencies that have implemented similar initiatives, but also because in these conclusions are some of the basic assumptions which were apparently being made as the CET was being planned and developed:

"There were a number of observations and lessons learned as an outcome of this project:

- 1) Two uniformed police officers stationed at one location 24/7, by sheer presence alone, can immediately disrupt and move an open-air drug market from a location where it has existed for years.
- 2) Police can leave the location for an hour or more and the traffickers will not move back to the location. The

consistency of the police presence combined with the uncertainty of not knowing if the police are returning seems to prevent the traffickers from returning.

- 3) Traditional techniques of arrest and charge did not eliminate the open-air drug market whereas placing a consistent visible uniformed police presence does accomplish this.
- 4) This visible police presence tactic should be co-ordinated with the drug squad. The displacement caused by the project led to a period where "turf" was being fought over and traffickers who normally only sell to people they know, might have been more vulnerable to arrest through the use of undercover police officers.
- 5) A police presence will impact on health initiatives aimed at the drug user population. Therefore, it is imperative that police projects be monitored for any potential impacts, negative and positive.
- 6) This form of limited police presence may not impact the actual level of trafficking, access to, and use of drugs.
- 7) This form of police presence does directly impact the quality of life of a given neighbourhood. In essence the "living room" of the DTES, the Carnegie Community Center was returned to the non-drug using residents of the DTES.
- 8) The ability of the Vancouver Police Department to maintain a 24/7 presence of two uniformed police officers at any given location in Vancouver is very limited and difficult to sustain"

(VPD - "Evaluation- Main and Hastings 24/7 Policing Project", March 3, 2003)

These conclusions indicate that the senior officers involved in the initiative were discussing strategies and policing policies from the point of view of trying to displace the existing drug market to another area, or to disperse it to several other areas. They were under no illusion that another new initiative would dismantle the drug market or affect it in any other meaningful way. This realization seemed to dictate that any future interventions would have to be defined as "city-wide" initiatives in order to address the anticipated displacement and its associated problems.

It was also concluded that traditional tactics of "arrest and charge" did not eliminate the open-air drug market, whereas the visible police

presence could at least displace it. There was, therefore, increasing support for the notion that future initiatives should focus on ensuring a continuous and visible police presence in the areas of the DTES most affected by the drug market, including in areas to which the market might be displaced as a result of further police interventions. The increased visible presence of the police would, in turn, involve different patrolling practices and, as well, have important resources implications for the Department.

References to the police ability to leave the location for an “hour or more” without having the drug dealing activities move back to the area, indicate that some consideration was already being given to the need for the police to “hold their ground” once a particular area had been reclaimed. The resource implications of this requirement and how this would impact the implementation of the CET did not appear to have been considered in detail at that time. The assumption appears to have been made that, once resources had been mobilized to ensure a visible and convincing police presence in an area, a portion of the resources could be subsequently redeployed to pursue those persons who were displaced to other areas. The ease with which the Department could eventually move its police officers to follow the problem as it was being physically displaced to other locations was possibly overestimated. On the other hand, the need to continue to assign police officers to an area away from which drug dealing activities had recently been displaced were possibly underestimated.

Senior VPD officers obviously recognized that an increased police presence could impact some public health initiatives and potentially affect access to services by drug users and other members of the community. They identified the need to monitor the impact of their future initiatives and to work closely with key agencies from the health sector.

Project Torpedo

Prior to the implementation of the CET, the VPD Drug Squad conducted Project Torpedo, the largest street level under-cover buy and bust initiative ever carried out in British Columbia. The objective of the Project was to “target street-level traffickers in the Hastings Street corridor of the DTES and help restore order to a community in distress”. The Drug Squad conducted the operation three weeks prior to the launch of the CET initiative. A first phase of Torpedo consisted of conducting

under-cover drug purchases over twelve working days, identifying the targets, and processing arrest warrants. Warrants were executed on a "round-up day" with the assistance of the City-wide enforcement team. Follow-up with Crown counsel, immigration officials, and social assistance agencies was also part of the initiative. The Squad attempted to "round up as many drug dealers as it could as part of a plan to obtain bail conditions that would order them to stay away from the DTES". As a result, bail orders (including "no go orders") were routinely ordered by the court.

In addition to Project Torpedo, and beginning on the first day of the CET initiative, there was a major, highly visible, series of buy-and-bust arrests that were followed for three months by other buy-and-bust activities by the Drug Squad, mostly around the Hastings Street corridor and eventually moving towards the Oppenheimer Park where many of the dealers and drug-related problems had moved.

The 2003 Organizational Priority and Goals of the VPD

The organizational priority of the VPD for 2003 was to "reduce the crime and disorder driven by illicit drug use". Two strategic goals were identified: (1) to severely disrupt the open-air drug market and restore order to a community in distress; and, (2) reduce the property crime - drug cycle through targeted enforcement activities.

According to official statements, the pursuit of the first goal was predicated on the assumption that disrupting the open-air drug market would achieve the following:

- return the streets to residents and legitimate visitors;
- reduce the violence associated with street level drug trafficking;
- disrupt the cycle of property crime committed to support drug addiction;
- reduce the opportunities and likelihood for persons to be seduced into the drug/crime/prostitution lifestyle that is so readily accessible in that environment; and,
- improve the environment for a successful implementation of supervised injection sites.

The targeted enforcement activities to reduce property crime were designed to make it more difficult for addicted property offenders to sell stolen goods and to purchase drugs with the proceeds of their crimes.

Planning for the Opening of the Supervised Injection Site

Concurrently with the above-noted activities, the VPD was also planning for the role that it would play in relation to the Supervised Injection Site that was to be opened in September, 2003 and operated by the VCHA. In addition to the importance of the SIS as part of an overall response to the public health problems caused by IV drug use, the successful operation of the SIS carried the potential to offset some of the unintended detrimental public health effects of the CET initiative (Broadhead *et al.*, 2004; see also Elliott, Malkin, and Gold, 2002; and, Fry, 2003). An attempt was made to clarify the role of the police and the position was taken that the VPD would support the public health objectives of the SIS by encouraging intravenous drug users encountered outside of the site to use the SIS. It was also understood that the police were required to provide enforcement in a way that would “balance the need to ensure open and ready access to the SIS by drug users while ensuring that disorder, violent behaviour, and unlawful activities were kept under control”.

The CET Initiative

Background

In addition to the specific interventions such as Project Torpedo and the 24/7 project, the VPD took a number of initiatives in support of the CET, one of which was the production of the video; the development of a collaborative partnership with the SkyTrain in consultation with the RCMP. In addition to Project Torpedo, the VPD anti-fencing unit and property crime team were doing undercover purchases of stolen property in Thornton Park. In addition Senior VPD officers met with the Translink authority to develop an arrangement during the first few weeks of the CET project to partner VPD officers with Sky Train Officers on the Surrey/Vancouver route in attempt to interdict stolen property that was being transported to the DTES via the Sky Train. These

initiatives were part of a multifaceted approach which was designed to create an additional police presence and to increase the probability of detection and arrest of persons involved in drug dealing and theft of property.

Objectives of the CET

A review of the CET project documentation reveals that there were several slightly different versions of the initiative and its objectives. One of the senior officers involved in the planning of the initiative summarized his own view as follows:

“My belief was that we could not stop people from using drugs. If you increase the transaction cost, some people will perhaps not use as much drugs, but I never intended to change the behaviour of drug addicts. The effect I wanted to produce was to restore and maintain order for the community that lives there. That community deserved to have order. We never intended to stop people from buying drugs. We believe that we could instil some basic rules of behaviour in that area and that that would make a difference.”

Another senior officer added, “We wanted to move traffickers out of the DTES. We used the no-go zones to keep them out of the area”. A recurring theme in the responses of the senior officers were “restoring order” and “claiming back the streets.”

The staffing request submitted by the Chief Constable to the City of Vancouver for the CET initiative on March 27, 2003 specifically referred to the experience of New York City in reducing crime and social disorder through a “broken windows” approach, as proof that a constant police presence in areas of concentrated crime and disorder has a dramatic positive effect. The intent, according to the request, was to increase the number of beat officers on the street in the DTES, and, through this increased presence, to act as a deterrent to open drug trafficking and disorder.

The submission by the Chief Constable refers to three objectives:

- “ (a) Assist in dismantling the open drug market;
- (b) Restore order to the streets of the Downtown Eastside, and
- (c) Provide an environment where supervised injection sites can succeed.”

The objectives of the CET initiative were stated differently in the various documents reviewed by the study team. It is not clear to what extent the objective of “dismantling the open drug market” was truly adopted as a concrete objective of the CET initiative. In practice, the CET referred to its own objectives in terms of “disrupting” rather than dismantling that market.

For the purpose of the present review, the main objectives of the CET initiative are taken to be those objectives that were initially identified during its development. The initiative was intended to:

- (1) restore order to the DTES community;
- (2) disrupt the DTES open drug market; and,
- (3) interfere with the flow of stolen property.

Although not originally an objective of the CET, it may also have been anticipated that restoring order to the community would be a prerequisite to the success of the proposed new SIS.

As implemented, the CET initiative was basically an order maintenance tactic consisting in the deployment of four teams of 15 officers to form a special Task Force covering day and evening shifts seven days a week.

The initiative included horseback patrols. In addition, the Drug Squad also contributed to the initiative by providing some strategic enforcement of drug trafficking offences. As noted, the CET initiative was preceded by Project Torpedo, which targeted drug dealers and created pressure on them to leave the area.

Whenever possible, the dealers released on bail were issued area restriction orders (“no go” orders) by the Court prohibiting them from coming back to the DTES. The intent was to request bail conditions that included area restrictions as a strategic means of controlling the behaviour of accused persons released on bail and disrupt the crime cycle and reduce street level disorder. The area restrictions were requested when the accused had not provided information upon arrest that would lead police to conclude that he or she had any legitimate purpose for frequenting the DTES. The restrictions were in effect 24 hours per day except to attend for scheduled court appearances.

The VPD also brought to the attention of crown counsel that the police often deal with individuals in one jurisdiction who are already under charge in another. Furthermore, many of those who are under charge and who have an area restriction in one jurisdiction openly admit to moving to another jurisdiction in order to continue participate in the drug trade. To combat this, the police requested that the Crown ask for “joint area restrictions” for persons charge with trafficking and posse for the purposes of trafficking. This included the provision for residents of Burnaby that they “not to attend within “3 blocks of any Sky Train station in Burnaby” and for non-residents not to “attend with the entire city of Burnaby”. Similar area restriction orders were being requested for offenders within the City of New Westminster.

Finally, the initiative was supported by an intelligence analysis capacity whose role was to:

1. monitor changes in patterns of criminal activity and recommend strategic changes;
2. monitor potential crime displacement; and,
3. identify core groups of criminals (high volume offenders) and issue bulletins identifying the criminals - including a regularly up-dated list of the top ten offenders active in the DTES.

The initiative was first designed as a three-month project and was later extended for an additional three months after an early internal evaluation of the initiative had been conducted. In fact, as of August 2004, the initiative is still ongoing, albeit in a slightly modified form.

The focus of the CET initiative was clearly the DTES, but it was initially anticipated that the Task Force thus created would be able to redeploy part of its complement to address issues of crime and disorder displacement to other areas of the District and the City. This is why the terms “city-wide” were selected to describe the initiative. However, it soon became clear that the best that the Task Force could do to address displacement issues was to pass on information for action by the Drug Squad and other units.

Staffing the CET

To assemble the sixty police positions required, 20 were assigned from District Two (the “Core” officers) in which the DTES is situated and a total of forty additional positions were taken, through secondment,

from all areas of the Department, with the exception of squads delivering front-line policing. The individual police officers involved who were identified and subsequently transferred to District Two did not all volunteer for the assignment. Some of them were conscripts. Training was provided to the new team members. Team leaders were carefully selected for their proven leadership skills.

The commitment made by senior VPD officers at the beginning of CET was that no officers from front line uniformed positions would be seconded to the DTES. This meant that the additional officers were seconded from other areas of the Department including planning and research, drug squad, general duties and investigations, robbery and assault and traffic enforcement unit, among others. According to a senior VPD officer, the objective was to “spread the pain” throughout the department without depleting the front line strength i.e. patrol officers

Senior police personnel realized that this arrangement could not be sustained and so additional funding was sought from City Council to provide for overtime to the equivalent of 40 officers, and then in the final version of the request, overtime to the equivalent of 20 officers. The plan was to use 20 existing officers from the DTES, 20 on loan from other units in the department and 20 positions filled with overtime shifts. As the VPD was not successful in securing additional funding from City Council, all 40 additional positions for the DTES were taken from other units in the department.

Training for the CET

Officers who were identified for secondment and the Core officers who were already policing the DTES received 3 days of training that included information on public health and drug issues. As well, the officers were provided with a wallet sized information card on available services for drug users, and encouraged to refer individuals to them.

Evaluating the CET Initiative

The CET initiative was carefully monitored by the VPD and periodic reports were prepared (Prox, 2003; VPD, 2003a; 2003b). Both within and outside the Department, however, there were different views as to the impact of the CET on the safety, quality of life, and health of residents of the DTES and the City of Vancouver as a whole. There were also differing perspectives as to whether the initiative was a success, whether it produced some unintended negative consequences, and

whether it was sustainable. A draft evaluation plan was prepared during the summer 2003 and, soon thereafter, the City of Vancouver and the Vancouver Agreement Coordination Unit (VACU) commissioned an independent evaluation. The following chapter identifies the main evaluation issues that were considered as part of that study.

References - Chapter 2

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3

Method

The present study was designed and conducted after the CET initiative had been implemented. This precluded the collection of project-specific baseline data that would have assisted in assessing the effectiveness of the CET initiative. To this end, for measurement of factors that preceded the initiative, the project team had to rely to a large extent on data that had been collected for other purposes by various agencies active in the DTES.

A draft evaluation plan that had been adopted by the VACU was reviewed and the main evaluation issues were identified. Some of the data sources tentatively identified in the approved evaluation plan either did not exist or were not available for the purpose of the study. In these cases, alternative methods and data sources had to be identified.

There were a number of data sources that could be used to document the nature and extent of the changes that might have occurred in the DTES and in Vancouver in relation to crime, drug offences, disorder incidents, service utilization, and public health issues. However, it quickly became clear that, in order to consider some of the more sensitive evaluation issues, it would be necessary to rely on “face-to-face”, largely qualitative, research methods. The difficulties of gathering reliable and valid data from specialized populations are well documented and had to be considered in the choice of specific methods for the study.

Past experience in conducting research on specialized populations or in a distressed environment such as the DTES suggested that a mixture

of qualitative methods was the most productive approach for the evaluation. The study relied on a multi-faceted approach and simultaneously utilized various qualitative methods in order to be sure to capture the experiences and perceptions of various groups on a wide variety of issues, including the CET. These included focus group sessions, in-depth one-on-one interviews with key respondents, field observations, and the administration of a survey questionnaire to a sample of residents from the area and to stakeholder groups¹.

There are a number of stakeholder groups in the area whose perceptions and experiences were important. These included police officers, business people, persons involved in the delivery of social and health services, community residents (including IV drug users), and persons charged with, or convicted of, committing criminal offences in the DTES. It was important to utilize a strategy of triangulation to produce the most complete assessment of the impact of the CET, including gathering data from different stakeholder groups and from various official record systems.

The Challenges of Assessing the Impact of the CET Initiative

Any attempt to evaluate the impact of any police initiative, including crackdowns such as the CET, is fraught with challenges in the collection, analysis, and interpretation of the information gathered.

As Scott (2003:31) states:

“Evaluations of police operations are always complicated. Many of the most important things you would want to measure are difficult to measure accurately, such as actual victimizations (as opposed to only those reported), undetected violations, and police officers’ discretionary actions. It is equally difficult to determine reliably what factors other than the crackdown might have contributed to the results, and whether and how the problem might have been displaced.”

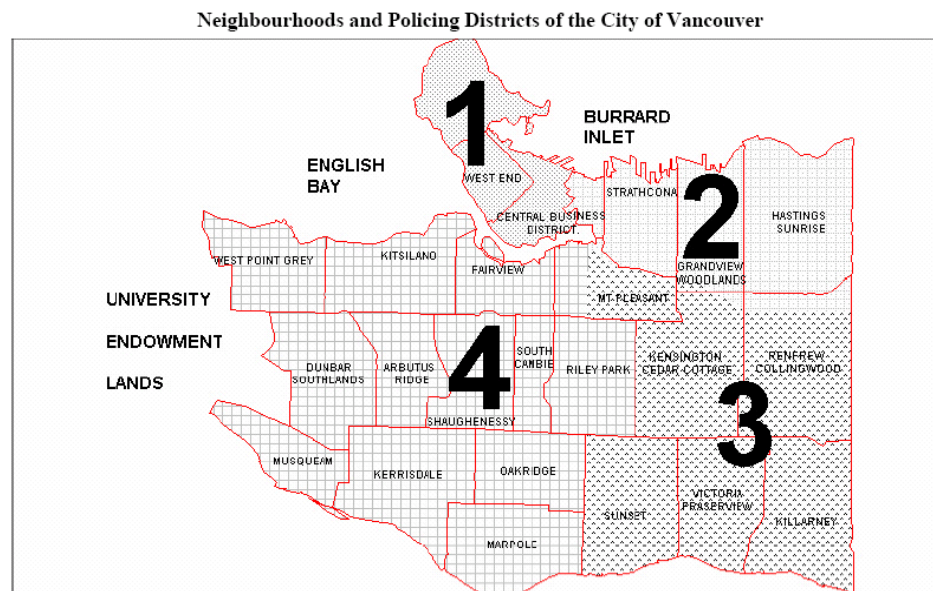
¹ Copies of survey questionnaires are available upon request from Y. Dandurand at yvon.dandurand@ucfv.ca

In an attempt to address these challenges, the present evaluation gathered qualitative and quantitative data and triangulated data sources whenever possible. The objective was to compile as complete a picture as possible of the impact of the CET and to assess the extent to which the CET achieved its stated objectives and accomplished a number of other outcomes, i.e. improving the quality of life in the DTES.

The short time frame of the evaluation of the present evaluation should be kept in mind as one of its potential limitations. Data for the present evaluation were gathered for the time period covering the first six months of the CET, (April-October, 2003) although statistical data cover the time period April-December, 2003. Prior research studies suggest that this may have a significant impact on the findings of the study. Given that the disorder that existed in the DTES had developed over many years, it is unrealistic to expect that changes in many of the quality of life indicators would be evident in the short term. The transformation of a community and the development of positive community capacities occur over the long-term and require the efforts of agencies such as the police, social services, and NGOs and also of the residents who live in the area.

The Organization of Police Services in Vancouver

The VPD is organized in four districts and the DTES is the neighbourhood found at the intersection of District One and Two. It is currently part of District 2.



Map prepared by Planning and Research Section, Vancouver Police Department

Data Collection

This report is based on information gathered through several discrete data collection exercises that took place during the latter part of the CET initiative or soon after its completion. These included:

1. The implementation and execution of the CET

A number of complementary methods were used to review the actual implementation of the CET initiative.

- (a) A review of key planning, operational, and monitoring documents relating to the CET and its successor program as produced by members of the VPD relating to the CET.
- (b) In-depth interviews with six of the senior VPD officers – Inspectors / District Commanders / Deputy Chiefs - directly involved in either the planning or the management of the initiative. One of the officers was interviewed twice. A list of interview topics was developed and was used loosely to ensure that every important area was covered during the

interview. Some of the interviews were recorded and transcribed.

- (c) An analysis of the Overnight Reports for District Two for the period between October 1, 2002 and August 31, 2003. Overnight reports are records of every significant incident that occurs in a 24-hour period in a given district. Police officers record them in a log so that managers and others can brief themselves, and every morning Deputies and Chief are briefed. The CET Intelligence Analysis Section collated the reports and produced a database (on a spreadsheet) regrouping the most serious incidents into twelve general categories.

2. Crime, drug offences, disorder, and police interventions

The following data on crime, drug offences, and disorder incidents were collected or obtained from various sources:

- (a) Data derived from the Computer Aided Dispatch System (Altaris CAD). The data covered calls received and incidents known to the police during the period between April 1st and September 30th, 2002 and April 1st and September 30th, 2003. The latter period coincides with the period within which the original CET initiative was in operation. There was a change in the system in early December 2002 that led to inaccuracies in the data collected for that month. This, however, did not affect the data obtained for the period that was examined for the present review.
- (b) Data extracted from the VPD Prime B.C. Records Management System (Police Records Information Management Environment). The system has been in place in Vancouver since March 21, 2001. The system captures all criminal offences that come to the attention of the police. The data that were extracted from the system covered all offences categories for the periods between April 1 and December 30, 2002, and between April 1 and December 30, 2003.
- (c) Data reported in the CET Benchmark Evaluation prepared by the VPD (signed by R. Prox, May 2003), in statistical reports prepared by the VPD's City-wide Enforcement Team Intelligence Analysis Section (VPD 2003; 2003a), and in a study

of the CET initiative entitled *Policing Public Disorder in A Canadian Community in Crisis* (McConnell, 2003).

- (d) Data obtained from the Vancouver City Engineering Department on car accidents involving pedestrians that occurred between April 1, 2001 to Oct. 31, 2003 on the Hastings Street corridor between Carrall Street and Jackson Avenue.
- (e) Interviews with two members of the Neighbourhood Integrated Service Teams (West End Team and Downtown East Side Team).
- (f) A Focus group meeting with 15 members of the Vancouver Area Network of drug Users (VANDU).
- (g) Systematic field observations conducted in the DTES and in District 2. The primary goal of these observations was to record incidents of disorder occurring in the core of the downtown eastside and the surrounding areas and to document any changes in the dynamics of life on the street. The observations also focused on anything relating to the operation of the open drug market that the CET purported to disrupt, as well as the police interventions in relation to both the drug market and the various crimes and disorder incidents observed. Finally, the observers focused some of their attention on any sign of stolen property being carried around, offered for sale, or sold openly in the area. To record their observations, the observers made use of a "general observation sheet" and an "incident sheet", both of which had been designed for that purpose. Two trained researchers conducted the observations over approximately 500 hours, on forty separate days, between September 7th, 2003 and November 30th, 2003. The field researchers worked separately during the day and together at night.

To gather information on the street, the researchers walked slowly through the area, stopping for short periods of time. Observations were recorded in the DTES and surrounding areas throughout the day and night, except between 4:00 a.m. and 7:00 a.m. when there was very little activity in the area. Some observations were also conducted in the immediate surrounding areas including Commercial Drive, Granville Street, and part of the West End areas. Proportionally,

approximately 90% of the time was spent observing the DTES (as defined by the VPD) and approximately 10% conducting observations in the adjacent areas of the neighbouring communities. Within the DTES, 50% of the total time was spent observing the short corridor on Hastings Street between Jackson Street and Cambie Street and between Cordova Street and South Pender Street. The remaining 40% of the total time was spent conducting observations in Gastown and Chinatown, down Main Street to Terminal (Thornton Park), up Prior Street to Clarke Street, and back down Powell Street or Union/Keefer Street. When unusual noises or activities were heard nearby, the observers would move progressively towards that area.

The observations were made towards the end of the CET initiative, during the months of September, October, and November 2003, and it is unknown whether different observations would have been recorded had the process started earlier, during the initial stages of the CET initiative. The observers noted that activity on the street seemed to become somewhat quieter in the area as the weather and temperature changed in the latter part of the fall.

3. Stolen property and property crime

A primary objective of the study was to determine whether the CET initiative was successful in disrupting the flow of stolen property in the DTES specifically and in Vancouver generally. It was also important to attempt to ascertain whether, as a result of the initiative, property crime had been displaced from the DTES to other parts of the City. There is no existing measure of the “flow of stolen property” in Vancouver and various proxy measures had to be used to ascertain whether the initiative had any impact in that regard. These proxy measures were derived from existing data on “second-hand pawn shop transactions”, police data on known incidents of people caught in possession of stolen property, observation data on second-hand materials being sold on the streets of the DTES during the last three months of the CET initiative, and data on the varying frequencies of theft, shoplifting and break and enter incidents known to the police both in the DTES and in other areas of Vancouver. The main sources of data were:

- (a) Police dispatch/call CAD data on incidents of theft, theft from auto, shoplifting, and stolen property for the periods between April to September 2002 and April to September 2003.
- (b) PRIME data relating to offences of stolen property, theft, theft from auto, B&E, and shoplifting (for the periods between April 1 and December 30, 2002, and between April 1 and December 30, 2003)
- (c) Statistics obtained from the VPD on the volume of second-hand pawnshop property transactions reported for the period between 1 April and 30 December 2003 and the same period during the previous year.
- (d) Street observations of property sold on the streets of the DTES during the months of September, October, and December 2003.
- (e) A report published by the Vancouver Board of Trade (2003) entitled "Report on Property Crime in Vancouver".

4. Views, perceptions, and experiences of the police

Three methods were used to gather data on the views, perceptions, and experience of police officers involved in the initiative. They included:

- (a) Part of the in-depth interviews with senior police officers (mentioned above) which dealt with the perceptions and opinions of these officers with respect to the CET initiative and law enforcement policies in the DTES and the City of Vancouver.
- (b) Semi-structured interviews with 20 "Core" police officers who had been assigned to District 2 at the time the CET initiative was implemented in April, 2003. The names of the officers were supplied by the VPD and the Department subsequently facilitated contact with them. Other officers who had been assigned to the CET from other districts could not be interviewed due to shift scheduling, holiday leave, or other administrative difficulties. The interviews covered a range of topics, including the officers' perception of the DTES and the problems of crime, drug abuse, and disorder

observed in the community, the officers' understanding of the CET and its impact on the open drug market, on drug users, and on the community, and their perceptions concerning the quality of the relationship between the police and the DTES community.

- (c) Interview and discussions with the VPD officer responsible for the CET Intelligence Analysis Section.

5. Views, perceptions, and experiences of members of the community

Three primary methods were used to gather information on the perceptions and experience of residents in the DTES community, including drug users, in relation to the CET initiative.

- (a) *Focus group sessions with members of the community.* A list of topics to be covered during the focus groups was developed. Sessions were held (sometimes during the regular meeting time of a group) with the following: residents of the Four Sisters Housing Cooperative (N=5); members of the VANDU (15); staff members of Triage (N=13); staff members of the Union Gospel Mission (N=3); members of PIVOT; a group of sex trade workers during their Life Skills Meeting (N=23; 22 female, 1 male). Researchers also attended meetings of the Neighbourhood Integrated Service Team for the DTES and a meeting of the Urban Core Group (N = 23). The participants were invited to discuss their experience of living in the DTES community before and after the CET initiative, prompted to discuss a number of quality of life and public safety issues, and invited to reflect on a number of questions relating to law enforcement in the DTES.
- b) *Survey of DTES community residents.* The unique attributes of the DTES precluded the use of several standard methods for gathering information from community residents. A telephone survey of households and businesses in the area was not feasible. A mailed survey questionnaire (to be completed and returned by residents and others working in the area) would likely not have produced a sufficient response rate or reliable data. Similarly, fixed choice survey instruments would not have provided an opportunity to

probe specific responses or to ensure that respondents understood every question. It was decided that the most effective method for conducting the proposed community survey was a survey administered in a face-to-face interview by trained field research assistants with prior experience working with specialized populations in the DTES.

An interview schedule was developed that included some open-ended questions. Arrangements were made to administer the survey, when appropriate, in a space provided by First United Church, which is centrally located and provided a safe, secure environment in which respondents could be assured of confidentiality. Nevertheless, respondents were interviewed in a variety of locations throughout the DTES including on-street settings, parks, cafes and coffee shops, and at the First United Church. Respondents were asked a range of questions, covering personal circumstances (i.e. age, residence, employment, criminal record, patterns of activity), their victimization experiences and perceptions of safety, their opinions on life in the DTES, their attitudes toward and experience with the police, their views of the CET and its impact on the quality of life in the DTES, and opinion of the Supervised Injection Site. Each respondent was paid \$10.00 for participating in the survey interview.

In total, 97 interviews were conducted with community residents and the sample included 57 male and 40 female respondents. Fifteen residents in the sample identified themselves as injection drug users.

Other characteristics of the respondents are as follows²:

- Age: 21-25 (n=5); 26-30 (n=16); 31-35 (n=13); 36-40 (n=22); 41-45 (n=8); 46-50 (n=4); and 51+ (n=29)
- Place of birth: Nearly one-half (N=48) of the sample were born in British Columbia. The other most-frequently noted places of birth were Ontario and Alberta.

² Due to rounding, totals may not equal 100 percent

- Citizenship: Ninety-seven percent of the persons in the sample identified themselves as Canadian citizens and the majority (78%) had lived in Canada all of their life.
- Education: The education level of the respondent sample was as follows: Below Grade 12: 37.2%; Grade 12: 37.1%; College and Vocational: 11.4%; University: 14.4%
- Approximately 25% of the respondents self-identified as Metis or Aboriginal.
- Employment: 36 % of the respondents were employed at the time of the interview.
- Income: Just over one-half of the respondents had received income from social assistance or welfare in the past year.
- Length of Residence in DTES: All but four of the respondents (96%) lived in the DTES and the length of time the respondents had lived in the DTES is broken down as follows: less than one year (11/97, 11.3%), 1-5 years (40/97, 41%), 6-10 years (22/97, 23%), 11 or more years (21/97, 22%), and life (1/97, 1%).
- Criminal Record: just over 40% of the residents interviewed indicated that they had a criminal record and 8% of them were on probation, parole, or recognizance bail at the time of the interview. One-third of these respondents had been most recently convicted of a drug-related offence.

6. Public health and access to services issues

In planning the CET initiative, the senior VPD officers recognized that there would be a “displacement” effect as a result of the disruption of the open drug market that had more or less been allowed to operate unhindered in the DTES. And there was concern that the displacement effect could have some negative public health consequences, particularly in relation to drug overdoses or an increase in the risk behaviour associated with communicable diseases among injection drug users. There were questions about whether the law enforcement initiative would

negatively affect the provision of health care and other services to injection drug users or their access to services. The opening of a Supervised Injection Site (SIS) in the DTES was also being planned and the potential impact of the CET on this other component of the Four Pillars Approach had to be considered.

The initial design for the present study did not include a data collection component focused specifically on understanding the potential impact of the CET initiative on injection drug users. At the time of planning the study, it was clear that the survey of residents would likely only include a small number of respondents who were injection drug users.³ However, it was also known that the British Columbia Centre for Excellence in HIV/AIDS was planning to conduct a review of the impact of the CET on participants enrolled in the Vancouver Injecting Drug Users Study (VIDUS - a prospective cohort study of Injecting Drug Users that began in 1996) by adding questions to the survey. Relevant data from that longitudinal survey (Wood *et al.*, 2004) have since been published and the findings have been reviewed as part of the present study. In addition, two short reports produced by the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority in the months that followed the launching of the CET were acquired and reviewed.

As previously mentioned, a focus group discussion was held with 15 members of the Vancouver Area Network of Drug Users (VANDU). In addition, the survey of DTES residents included a total of 15 residents - 9 male and 6 female - in the community sample who identified themselves as current IV drug users. All of the respondents indicated that they had not been interviewed about the CET police initiative on a prior occasion. The IV drug user respondents ranged in age from 21-57, with the average age being 37. This is, on average, a much older group of residents than the community resident sample as a whole and also older than the street-entrenched youth in other areas of the City who tend to be addicted to other types of drugs, including crystal meth. Five of the respondents were born in British Columbia, two in Alberta, four in Manitoba, two in Ontario, and one each in England and France. The majority (12/15, 80%) had lived in Canada all of their lives and the others were long-term residents.

³ In fact, 15 of the 97 respondents to the survey indicated that they were injection drug users.

Two of the respondents had a college-level education, five had completed grade 12, and eight, grade 11 or less. Seven of the respondents identified themselves as Aboriginal or as having Aboriginal ancestry. Four of the respondents stated that they were currently employed and all of these persons indicated that they worked in the DTES. All of the respondents indicated that they lived in the DTES. The length of time that the respondents had lived in the DTES ranged from three months to ten years or more (N=10).

Additional sources of data included:

- (a) Interviews with nine health professionals. These respondents included a number of registered nurses who worked in a variety of capacities in the DTES. Respondents were asked a range of questions about their perception of the situation in the DTES, the CET initiative and its impact on the community, and their opinion as to the role and activities of the police in the area. The respondents' varied and lengthy periods of service in the DTES resulted in very credible accounts of how the access to services may have been affected by the CET.

The number of years that the nine respondents had worked in the DTES ranged from 1 ½ years to 14 years and the types of activities they were involved in included providing health programming, counselling, health prevention, education and treatment, and support and referrals for area residents. All of the respondents had extensive contact with injection drug users and with adult residents of the area. All but one of them stated that they had "a lot" of contact with other types of drug users and Aboriginal peoples. They reported having frequent contact with other medical personnel, but less contact with youth in the DTES, the police, private business owners, and fire personnel. Significantly, only two of the respondents indicated that they had "a lot" of contact with the police. Four had "some" and two had "none."

- (b) A review of the findings of a small survey of illicit drug users involved in drug use in public spaces in the DTES conducted by students of the School of Criminology, Simon Fraser University, with the assistance of the VPD shortly before the CET initiative was launched (Bradley and Parks, 2003).

- (c) A review of the Ambulance Service data on responses to incidents in the DTES between (and inclusive of) January 2002 and October 2003 for four categories of emergencies: (1) Assault/rape; (2) Overdose, ingestion, poisoning; (3) Narcotics (heroin); (4) Psychiatric/Suicide attempt; and, (5) Stab/gunshot wounds. These are some of the categories used in the Ambulance Service reporting system. The data include calls that were responded to by units from the four stations that cover medical emergencies in the DTES: Stations 241 (West 7th), 242 (Richards), 248 (East Cordova), 251 (Vancouver General Hospital). These data provide a general overview of medical emergencies that occurred in the DTES, but are not precise. The data also include an undetermined, but small, number of cases that occurred outside of these areas, and possibly exclude some cases that were attended to by units from other stations that may have been dispatched to the scene because they were closer to it at the time of the incident. However, there is no reason to believe that these factors affecting the data would have affected it differently before the CET than during the CET and the data can therefore be used as one indicator of the changes in emergencies that may have taken place in the DTES as a result of the CET initiative.
- (d) An analysis of the data collected by the City of Vancouver's Fire and Rescue Services on incidents of medical emergency service alarms (MESA), to which they responded in the DTES between April in 2002 and December 2003.
- (e) An analysis of the hospitalization data provided by the B.C. Ministry of Health Services extracted from its Discharge Abstract Database (Information Resource Management). The data cover residents of the DTES hospitalized between April 1 2002 and March 31, 2003 and between April 1, 2003 and December 2003. The data contained in the database did not allow a distinction between injection drug users and non-injection drug users. A subset of data was therefore created that included only patients hospitalized with the most likely included diagnoses in the list of conditions likely to be present among drug abusers (pneumonia, cellulites and skin abscess, sepsis, infective endocarditis, septic arthritis, osteomyellitis, gangrene, peylonephritis, thrombosis, trauma/ fracture psychiatric illness) and a concomitant secondary diagnosis of

mental/behavioural disorder due to the use of one of the following substances: opioids, cocaine, other stimulants including caffeine, hallucinogens, multiple drugs, and other psychoactive substances.

- (f) Review of the data collected by the B.C. Coroners Service on illicit drug deaths for the City of Vancouver and surrounding areas for the period between April 1, 2002 and December 30, 2003.
- (g) Review of the statistics obtained from the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority on inappropriately discarded syringes for the period between 2002 and December 2003. In March 2003, the needle drop-off points were decentralized which made it difficult to make accurate comparisons between the period during which the CET initiative was being conducted and any period preceding it.

7. Perceptions and experience of business people

Business people had frequently complained over the years about the negative impact on their businesses of the disorder associated with the open drug market. A structured interview with some open-ended questions was used to seek their views and to gain an understanding of the impact of the CET on the community and their businesses.

- (a) Twenty-six business owners were interviewed using an interview schedule. The businesses represented in the sample included pubs, restaurants, manufacturing, and retail shops – a travel agency, bakery, automotive glass shop and pharmacy. The businesses were situated in the core of the DTES, Chinatown, Gastown, and on Commercial Drive. The majority (89%) of the businesses represented did not employ private security officers or loss prevention officers. The proprietors and/or staff persons were asked a range of questions about the DTES, police activities including the CET, drug activity in the community, and the new Supervised Injection Site (SIS), among others.

8. Perceptions and experience of persons arrested in the DTES

It was difficult to gain access to persons who had been arrested during the CET initiative and could contribute first-hand

information on the impact of police activities in the DTES. Some of the respondents to the Community Residents Survey did provide information in that regard, but it was anticipated that the number of residents interviewed who would have that first-hand knowledge would be fairly small. Therefore, permission was sought and obtained from the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General of B.C., Corrections Branch, to interview 40 inmates from the North Fraser Correctional Centre and a similar number at the Burnaby Correctional Centre for Women. Unfortunately, senior management at the North Fraser Correctional Institution did not grant the researchers access to male inmates at the facility. In total, 32 females were interviewed using the structured interview schedule that had been developed.

Inmates were invited to voluntarily participate, confidentially, in the interview and were offered a small incentive (\$10.00) if they did so. The ages of the respondents ranged between 20 and 49 and the average age of the group was 29 years. Six of the inmates were Vancouver-born; half of them were originally from British Columbia and the other half from other provinces (Alberta, Manitoba and Ontario) or from another country (one from England, now a landed immigrant). Thirty-one percent of the inmates were Aboriginal. Approximately one third of the respondents were on remand awaiting trial, disposition of their case, or an appeal. The others were serving short sentences ranging from 21 days to 2 years, with the majority of the sentences being less than six months. Twenty-four of the inmates (75%) stated that they had been charged with a drug offence, but this included six offenders who had most recently been charged in relation to various breaches of a probation order, community services order, or an area-restriction order. Only one of the respondents was currently employed.

9. Public perceptions

In addition to the interviews with community residents mentioned above, the study utilized three other sources of data in an attempt to determine the public response to the CET initiative.

- (a) A review of the local media coverage of the CET initiative and the opening of the SIS, based on the materials kept in the files of the VPD. This included the text of some of the media briefings prepared by members of the VPD and a video

presentation prepared by the VPD, titled “Picking Up the Beat”, which was used for presentations to City Council and to the media.

- (b) A review of a public opinion survey commissioned by the VPD and conducted by Pollara (2003). The survey consisted of 708 telephone and in-person interviews with Vancouver City residents and 101 owners and managers of Downtown Eastside businesses, between June 6 and June 10, 2003, while the CET was in operation.
- (c) A review of the VPD files containing letters received by the VPD or its Chief Constable, the Mayor of the City of Vancouver, or the Police Board. These included letters and submissions expressing views both in support of, and opposed to, the CET initiative.
- (d) A review of a report prepared by Human Rights Watch on the health and human rights impacts of the CET initiative (Human Rights Watch, 2003) one month after the beginning of the initiative and the response to the report offered by the City of Vancouver in June 2003 (Campbell, 2003).

References - Chapter 3

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Implementation Issues

There are a number of sources of data that provide insights into the issues surrounding the implementation of the CET initiative. These include: 1) interviews with senior police officers; 2) the survey of twenty Core police officers who were assigned to the DTES at the time the CET initiative was announced; and, 3) the perceptions of various stakeholder groups, including residents, business owners, health care service professionals and drug users, collected through the methods described earlier. The latter relate more directly to the visible aspects of the police presence in the DTES, its perceived effect on the community, and the expressed levels of support of and satisfaction with the initiative specifically and the police in general.

There are four groups of questions that address the issues surrounding the implementation of the CET: 1) the planning of the initiative; 2) the training of the officers involved; 3) the CET within the broader framework of VPD priorities and initiatives; and, 4) the levels of public awareness of and support for the CET initiative.

Perceptions of Key Senior Officers

The senior VPD officers interviewed were generally satisfied with the implementation of the initiative and generally considered it a success. Most of them expressed the view that the CET initiative was successful because it offered a pragmatic solution to the problem of disorder in the DTES. One officer expressed these views as follows:

“There are some huge problems remaining in the area. We cannot do it all. We had to concentrate on things that we could do. Restoring order to the area was something that we could do. The

other problems have to be addressed by others. We cannot address all problems. We should not even be trying. Many of the problems are health problems. We are willing to help, but they are not primarily our responsibility.”

The senior officers were particularly satisfied with the choice of leaders for the initiative. In their view, the team leaders had played an important role in ensuring the success of the initiative.

The senior officers commented on the significant amount of opposition that the initiative encountered during its development stage. “At first”, one officer commented, “everyone seemed to have a hard time with our new approach.” Another officer mentioned that there were a lot of people within the department who were expecting the initiative to fail. Some of the opposition, it was believed, came from other officers who were displeased with the impact the special initiative was likely to have on their own resources. There were also officers who were opposed because they did not believe that the CET would achieve any appreciable results or because they were apprehensive with respect to the problem of displacement that was expected to occur and what that would mean for law enforcement in other parts of the City.

Some officers expressed reservations about the detailed planning of the whole exercise, which they felt had been lacking in some important respects, including the selection and recruitment of members of the special team, the training of officers, and the impact of the CET initiative on other aspects of the VPD drug enforcement efforts. The implementation rested on the ability of the special team to work with the drug squad, and the senior officers were generally happy with the level of cooperation that developed between the units. In retrospect, some officers agreed that it might have been useful to consult more effectively with some of their community partners and with other agencies prior to the launching of the initiative. Several of them, however, noted the slow pace of the existing consultation process and the uneven implementation of the “Four Pillars” strategy to which special initiatives like the CET are meant to actively contribute.

Officers unanimously noted the problem of insufficient departmental resources and how this had hindered the effort to carry out the CET as originally planned, particularly the component of the initiative that was initially designed to address the issue of drug market displacement by targeting new crime “hotspots” as they emerged. One theme that emerged from the interviews is captured in the statement of one senior officer:

“We were supposed to follow these incidents as they were being displaced. We underestimated the amount of resources that would be required in order to simply hold the grounds that we had re-conquered in the DTES. There were no resources left, to speak of, to address the problem of displacement.”

There were doubts expressed, again in retrospect, about the effectiveness of a strategy based primarily on maintaining a visible police presence in the area. However, there was optimism about the ability of the VPD to build on the successes of the initiative.

Perceptions of Police Officers Involved in the Initiative

Twenty police officers (referred to as “Core officers”) who were assigned to District 2 at the time the CET initiative was implemented were interviewed as part of the evaluation. The officers’ length of service in the VPD ranged from two and a half years to 24 years, with the average length of service being 8.72 years. Several of the officers had previously been assigned to District 2 prior to their current assignment there. The length of service in District 2 ranged from 6 months to 7 years, with an average length of service in District 2 of 3.45 years.

Just over half (11/20, 55%) of the officers had requested assignment to the DTES, several citing the challenge of policing in the area as a reason for their request. This is reflected in the selected responses of several of the officers: “interested in walking foot patrol”, “a more dynamic work environment”, and “opportunity for a different type of policing.” The Core officers had previously been assigned to a variety of positions in the Department, including other districts, traffic, drug squad, and the investigation division.

Officers’ Support for the Initiative

All of the officers interviewed stated that they were supportive of the CET initiative when it was first implemented, although two officers indicated that they had initially been reluctant to participate in it because they were concerned about the lack of departmental resources committed to the initiative and whether other agencies and components of the justice system were also committed to the project. Similarly, all but two of the officers stated that they felt that CET initiative could significantly impact the open drug market and the amount of stolen property coming into the DTES. Concerns were expressed that any police impact would only be

temporary and displacement would occur, resulting in only cosmetic changes.

Organization

The officers assigned to District 2 stated that they were required to make a number of adjustments in their approach to policing. The most difficult adjustments they encountered upon being assigned to this district were related to the challenges of the area, including “learning to work in an area where people don’t trust the police and have hostility toward the police,” “understanding the way of life in the area” and dealing with a large number of persons who were drug-addicted and involved in the drug subculture.

In the interviews, the Core officers were queried as to the specific strategies that they employed in carrying out the CET initiative. Their responses can be generally grouped into the following:

- *Presence*: being in areas where you are supposed to be; having a constant presence in the area; being highly visible.
- *Referral*: referring people to the SIS; offering advice on how to access rehabilitation assistance.
- *Enforcement*: targeting non-residential traffickers; focusing on pawn shops; checking people with items that look stolen; targeting high drug locations.
- *Developing rapport with residents and agencies in the area*: getting to know residents and shop owners to reduce anonymity; working with agencies; use of Safe Ride.

Internal VPD documents show that, at times during the CET initiative, questions were raised among the officers involved about striking a balance between offering a visible presence in the community and enforcing the law (e.g. proceeding with an arrest). As part of the evaluation, the officers were asked to identify the most difficult aspect of their experience with the CET initiative. Their responses can be generally categorized into 1) the implementation of CET by VPD; 2) the opposition of special interest groups in the DTES; and, 3) the absence of the other three pillars of the four pillars strategy, particularly the treatment component.

Organizational concerns centered on the lack of focus of the initiative and the fact that the initiative was to be city-wide (as per the

title of the project, "City-wide Enforcement Team") but, in the words of one officer, "it only looked at three blocks and it was treated like problems did not exist beyond three blocks." Mention was also made of the difficulties of getting staff to volunteer to be assigned to District 2 and the inconsistency that often existed between squads in District 2. One officer stated it was often a challenge "getting everyone on the same page within the organization and between squads". Another challenge was keeping the officers assigned to the DETS focused and motivated.

Several officers cited the absence of strong support from the Mayor and the Council and the fact that there were also attempts on the part of several interest groups in the DTES, such as PIVOT, to discredit the initiative. Concern was also expressed that the other elements of the "Four Pillars Approach" were not being implemented quickly enough and that this might limit the potential effectiveness of the CET initiative.

Officers were also asked to identify the biggest obstacle that the CET had encountered since its implementation in April 2003. The responses centered on organizational factors, the lack of support by the justice system (in particular the courts), and the opposition of various advocacy groups in the community.

One officer, commenting on the organizational difficulties that had hindered the success of the CET, stated:

"At the beginning, there was a lot of backing. It was only a three-month project. It has now lost its steam. The people at the top who were influential are gone and this is hardest on the people who have been here the longest. It is dragging on and it's hard to keep the intensity with the same people on the street."

Another officer expressed the concern that "there was no vision beyond the first six months" and that there was a need for "a plan and goals by which to measure success." The issue of the lack of departmental resources was also raised, one officer stating that VPD was "trying to do a lot with a little" and another noted that maintaining the momentum of the initiative and officer morale was a major challenge.

There was a general concern that the other pillars of the Four Pillars Approach had not been implemented and that, in the long term, this may affect the sustainability of the positive results that have been achieved thus far in the DTES. Several of the officers also raised concerns about the continuity of management in the VPD and noted the importance of having a clear sense of direction moving forward. A related

organizational factor was the risk of burnout among those officers who had been policing in the DTES for a lengthy period of time. Finally, a common theme in the officer's responses was the need for more programs and services for drug-addicted persons and the mentally ill.

Perceived Impact

There was general agreement among the police officers interviewed that one of the biggest achievements of the CET initiative to date was the creation of a general sense of security for residents in the DTES. A majority of the officers also felt that the initiative had reduced the level of drug trade activity and reduced the levels of violence in the area, the comments being made that the initiative had: "provided residents with a sense of security", "reduced the open drug market and violence", and was "giving the community back to the residents." The officers were less certain about the extent to which the CET had reduced the levels of stolen property coming into the DTES.

A majority of the officers (16/20, 80%) felt that, given their experience with the CET initiative since April 2003, it was the best strategy for dealing with disorder in the DTES generally, and the open drug market and stolen property/drug market cycle in particular. Similarly, a majority of officers (15/20, 75%) stated that there were drug dealers and drug users that the officers previously saw on the street but who were no longer present. Opinions as to where these individuals had gone ranged from "got other people to handle their operations and moved up in the chain", to "have gone to a different area", to "back to country of origin".

The police officers were queried on their view as to whether the CET had an impact on a number of different facets of criminal activity and the quality of life in the DTES. Their responses are reproduced in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 - Interview with Police Officers: "In your view, has the CET:"

Has the CET ...	YES	NO	PARTIALLY
Reduced the overall levels of disorder	20 (100.0)		
Made the streets safer	20 (100.0)		
Reduced the levels of conflict between people on the street	20 (100.0)		
Reduced the violence associated with street	19	1	

level drug trafficking	(95.0)	(5.0)	
Increased the number of elderly persons on the street	19 (95.0)	1 (5.0)	
Contributed to an environment in which the SIS can succeed	15 (75.0)	3 (25.0)	
Reduced the level of open drug dealing *	18 (90.0)	2 (10.0)	
Reduced the levels of public drug use	17 (85.0)	1 (5.0)	2 (10.0)
Reduced the levels of stolen property *	14 (70.0)	6 (30.0)	
Reduced the opportunities and likelihood for persons to become involved in the drug/crime/prostitution lifestyle	4 (20.0)	16 (80.0)	
Reduced the levels of street prostitution	1 (5.0)	19 (95.0)	
Increased the number of law-abiding persons on the street	17 (85.0)	3 (15.0)	
Made it more difficult for drug dealers to operate *	18 (90.0)	2 (10.0)	
Reduced the numbers of persons coming into the DTES to buy drugs	13 (65.0)	4 (20.0)	3 (15.0)
Made it more difficult for addicted property crime offenders to sell stolen goods *	13 (65.0)	5 (25.0)	2 (10.0)
Disrupted the cycle of property crime *	12 (60.0)	8 (40.0)	
Made it more difficult for addicted property crime offenders to purchase drugs with the proceeds of their crimes *	14 (70.0)	6 (30.0)	
Increased the number of drug addicts who are seeking treatment	8 (40.0)	10 (50.0)	2 (10.0)
Reduced the number of "overnights"*	8 (40.0)	7 (35.0)	3 (15.0)
Reduced the number of calls for ambulance	11 (55.0)	6 (30.0)	3 (15.0)
Reduced the number of attendance by fire dept	11 (55.0)	5 (25.0)	4 (20.0)
Reduced the levels of thefts from businesses	13 (65.0)	4 (20.0)	3 (15.0)

*Key CET indicator

Overall, a majority of the officers (14/20, 70%) believed that the CET initiative had been able to create an environment in which the Supervised Injection Site project could succeed. A slight majority of the officers

(11/20; 55%) felt that the initiative had reduced the number of calls for ambulance and the incidents of attendance by the fire department.

A majority of the officers also felt that the CET initiative had reduced the levels of stolen property in the area and disrupted the cycle of property crime (12/20, 60%). It was generally believed that the CET initiative, as it was currently structured, was having the desired impact on the DTES and all of the officers felt that it should continue. A number of concerns, many of which were related to organizational factors and how the squads on the street were implementing it, were expressed among the other officers who were less convinced about the impact of the CET initiative:

- “the drug market is beginning to increase”
- “administrators limit what you can do in the area”
- “not enough officers to do the job”
- “the lack of consistency between the squads creates inconsistency in the minds of dealers and addicts”.

Sustaining the CET Initiative

When asked to identify what actions were required to ensure that the open drug market and the high volume of stolen crime did not return to the DTES, officers identified a strong police presence and enforcement as two key strategies. These, in conjunction with rehabilitation programs and detox facilities, were viewed as the most effective way to sustain the gains that had been made in establishing order in the community. A slight majority of the officers interviewed (11/20, 55%) felt that the police, as one pillar of the Four Pillars Approach, could not continue to be successful in reducing disorder in the DTES without the other three pillars.

There was consensus among the officers that the CET initiative should continue indefinitely, even with the strains on police resources and the opposition to the initiative from some quarters. In terms of responding to the displacement that has and will continue to occur, a number of suggestions were offered, including the development of specialized squads to track dealers into other areas (i.e. mobile beat teams) and leaving it to each district to deal with the issues that developed as a result of displacement.

A majority of the officers (12/20, 60%) felt that officers should receive specialized training prior to being assigned to District 2. Suggestions included an orientation session including information on how the drug market works, drug terminology, how to deal with the media, how to walk the beat, and pairing new officers with more experienced officers.

The Community Residents' Views of the CET Initiative

Community residents were asked a series of questions about their knowledge of the CET initiative and its objectives. Residents were evenly divided (49.5% Yes, 50.5% No) as to whether they knew what the CET initiative was and, for those who offered an opinion, the extent of their familiarity with it was often limited: "Very" or "Somewhat" (25/66, 37.9%); "Not Very" (25/66, 37.9%); and, "Not at All" (6/66, 9.0%). The objectives of the special initiative were explained to those residents who had indicated no knowledge of the initiative. Overall, residents expressed the following attitudes toward the CET initiative:

- Strongly Support: 21/96 (21.9%)
- Somewhat Support: 42/96 (43.6%)
- Neutral: 24/96 (25%)
- Somewhat Oppose: 6/96 (6.3%)
- Strongly Oppose: 3/96 (3.1%)

These figures indicate that the majority of residents in the survey sample supported the CET initiative and its objectives.

There was general agreement (84%) among the residents interviewed that there had been an increased police presence in the DTES over the six months since the CET initiative began, and many residents specifically mentioned more motorcycle officers (63.5%) and more officers in patrol cars (71.9%). Residents were evenly split as to whether they had noticed more officers at different times of the day.

A majority (58%) of those interviewed felt that there has been an increase in the number of arrests made by police. There was the perception among 30% of the respondents that one's chances of being caught doing something illegal had increased since the inception of the CET, as compared to 33% who said the chances remained the same, and seven percent who felt the chances of being caught had declined (See Table 4.2).

TABLE 4.2: Survey of Residents: Police and Enforcement

	Increased	Decreased	Same	Don't Know
Number of police on the street	85/95 (89.5)	3/95 (3.2)	6/95 (6.3)	1/95 (1.1)
Number of arrests	56/96 (58.3)	3/96 (3.1)	9/96 (9.4)	28/96 (29.2)
Chances of being caught	28/95 (29.5)	7/95 (7.4)	31/95 (32.6)	29/95 (30.5)

A variety of opinions were expressed by the residents in the sample in response to the question as to why they believed the CET initiative was implemented. These are presented in Table 4.3.

TABLE 4.3 - Survey of Community Residents: "Why do you think that the CET program was implemented?"

Reason Why the CET Initiative was Implemented	YES	NO
For political reasons	58/96 (60.4)	38/96 (39.6)
To allow the police to arrest more people	25/96 (26.0)	71/96 (74.0)
To reduce disorder	30/96 (31.3)	66/96 (68.8)
To help the people who live in the DTES	14/96 (14.6)	82/96 (85.4)
To make the DTES a better place to live	25/96 (26.0)	71/96 (74.0)

The responses in Table 4.3 suggest that, despite the relatively strong support for the CET initiative among the residents interviewed, there was an impression that it was implemented primarily for political reasons. A comprehensive communication strategy for community residents and/or a consultation process prior to implementing the CET initiative would have provided residents with a more precise indication of the specific objectives of the initiative and, as importantly, information on what it was *not* designed to accomplish.

The residents were also asked about the level of community support for the CET initiative and their responses are presented in Table 4.4.

TABLE 4.4 - Survey of Community Residents: "In your opinion, what is the level of community support in the DTES for the CET initiative?"

High level of support	5/93 (5.4%)
Some support	24/93 (25.8%)
Community is neutral	25/93, (26.9%)
Some of community do not support	27/93 (29%)
High level of opposition	5/93 (5.4%)
Don't know	7/93 (7.5%)

Satisfaction

A majority (61/96, 63.5%) of the residents stated that they were either "Very Satisfied" or "Somewhat Satisfied" with the job that the police were doing in the DTES. Nearly three-fourths (71/96, 73.2%) of the residents interviewed stated that they supported the increased police presence in the DTES. The reasons for this support were varied and included the fact that the police could assist in improving the quality of life in the area, the increased feelings of safety in the area, and, as one resident offered, "taking away the idea that anything goes".

Just under 80% (75/94, 79.8%) of the residents felt that the police were part of the solution to the problems in the DTES. Forty percent of the residents felt that most or all of the officers in the DTES were doing a good job, as compared to 34% who felt that some were doing a good job and 23.7% who perceived that few or none of the officers were doing a good job.

With respect to the residents' perceptions of what the police were doing best, a wide range of activities were identified, many centering on patrolling, cleaning up the area, foot patrol, arresting dealers, helping people, keeping the area safe, being present, and speaking with people. In terms of what the police were perceived to be doing the worse at, respondents identified the following, among others: abusing their power,

arresting users instead of dealers, communicating with residents, harassment, and being too aggressive.

The residents offered their views on the impact of the police on specific activities in the DTES and these are presented in Table 4.5.

The results indicate that nearly a half of the residents interviewed felt that the police had impacted the open drug market and that officers had a greater tendency to speak with residents than in previous times. There was not a sense that the police had been able to reduce the amount of stolen property available or that their efforts were generally directed towards helping people in the community.

TABLE 4.5 - Survey of Community Residents: "Would you say that, over the past six months, the police:"

	YES	NO	DK
Have been arresting more people	72/93 (77.4)	6/93 (6.45)	
Providing more assistance to people in need	36/92 (39.1)	35/92 (38.0)	
Have reduced the amount of stolen property available *	17/91 (18.7)	40/91 (44.0)	34/91 (37.4)
Tend to speak to people more	63/93 (67.7)	13/93 (14.01)	17/93 (18.3)
Have decreased the open drug market *	47/92 (51.1)	37/92 (40.2)	8/92 (8.7)
Have been responding quicker to situations	24/92 (26.0)	47/92 (51.1)	21/92 (22.8)
Are more approachable	27/93 (29.0)	54/93 (58.1)	12/93 (12.9)
Have made more of an attempt to help people who live in the neighbourhood	34/93 (36.6)	44/93 (47.3)	15/93 (16.1)

*Key CET indicator

The Business Owners' Views on the CET Initiative

The majority (14/19, 74%) of the business owners who were interviewed were aware of the CET initiative and most (20/24, 83.3%) indicated that they were either "Very" or "Somewhat" familiar with it. When the initiative was explained to those who were not familiar with it, the overall level of support of the business group was over 90%. A high

percentage of the business persons (23/26, 89%) also felt that there was "Some Support," or a "High Level of Support" for the CET initiative in the DTES community and that the highest levels of support were from business owners/workers. Those who were perceived to be the least supportive of the CET were drug dealers and drug users.

A majority (77%) of the business persons had noticed an increase in the number of police officers in the area and all but one respondent were either "Very Satisfied" or "Somewhat Satisfied" with the job that the police were doing in the DTES. All of the respondents indicated their support for the increased police presence in the DTES and nearly all (25/26, 96%) felt that the police were part of the solution to the problems in the DTES. The ability of the police to be part of the solution was seen to be due to their role in enforcement, making arrests, maintaining order, and deterring criminal activities.

In terms of what the police were doing best in the DTES, the most frequently mentioned activities were "Presence" and "Visibility" and other responses included "Safety", "Interaction with the Public", "Walking the Beat/Foot Patrol", "Eliminating Drug Traffic," and "Arrests". The "Response Time" of the police was the most frequently mentioned problem of the police in the DTES. Other concerns expressed by other respondents included the police lack of success in reducing crime and that the officers may be more frequently harassing people.

Overall, there was a high level (15/22, 68%) of support for the police among the businesspersons interviewed, an attitude that was based largely on their personal experiences with the police. There was also the view, held by 74% of the respondents, that most people who lived in the DTES supported the police as well. These same respondents did not feel that people who lived in the DTES felt that the police were harassing people, violated people's rights, or used excessive force.

The Health Care Professionals' Views of the CET Initiative

A majority (6/9; 67%) of the health care professionals interviewed stated that they were either "Not Very" or "Not at All" familiar with the CET initiative and only a slight majority (5/9, 56%) indicated that they knew its objectives. Significantly, among those who stated that they were not familiar with the objectives of the initiative were health care professionals with many years of experience working in the DTES. Only

four (4/9, 44%) of the respondents were able to list even half of the objectives of the CET initiative to the interviewer.

Four of the respondents indicated that they “Strongly” or “Somewhat”, with reservations, supported the CET initiative, while one respondent was neutral and the other four were “Somewhat Opposed” or “Strongly Opposed.” Health care professionals believed that DTES residents did not support the CET initiative, but that perception contradicts the findings from the survey of residents indicating that a majority of residents supported the police. This discrepancy may be due, in part, to the specific clientele that these professionals come into contact with on a daily basis.

In terms of what the respondents felt the police were doing “right” in the DTES, mention was made of “enforcing the law”, “keeping the streets safer”, “taking a strong stand against the social service cuts”, and “making the area safer for older residents.” Concerning what the police were viewed as doing poorly, the following views were expressed: “spreading the problem out; not addressing it”; officers who are on “power trips”; some officers have poor “people skills”; a failure to focus on aspects of policing other than enforcement; and, a concern that police officers were involved in illegal searches and seizures. Two of the respondents (22%) felt that “Most” of the officers in the DTES were “doing a good job”, while four (44%) stated that “Some” were “doing a good job.”

All but one of the respondents indicated that they either “Generally Supported” the police or were “Generally Neutral” about the police. These perceptions were based on “Personal Experience” for the majority of the respondents (6/9; 67%) and on “Observations of Police Activities” (4/9, 44%). The majority of respondents (7/9, 78%) stated that the police could be more effective in the DTES if they worked more with other agencies, focused on the development of long-term solutions, and were more “non-judgmental.”

The data presented above suggest that the VPD should have developed a more effective communication strategy to ensure that all of key professional stakeholder groups, organizations, and agencies in the DTES, as well as the residents, were informed as to the objectives of the CET. As well, there may have been the potential to develop partnerships with key groups in the DTES.

Opinions of IV Drug Users

As previously mentioned, the sample of Community Residents included fifteen individuals who identified themselves as current IV drug users. Their responses to the survey questions, including their perceptions of the CET and its impact on them and on the community, were subjected to a subsequent, separate, analysis.

A majority of the IV drug users in the sample (11/15, 73%) felt that, prior to the CET initiative, the situation in the DTES was out of control. All agreed that the number of police had increased during the CET period and a majority (13/15, 87%) stated that the number of arrests had increased. Nine (60%) of the respondents felt that the chances of being caught doing something illegal had increased during the CET period.

The respondents were nearly evenly split as to whether they knew about the CET initiative, but those who did know about it were only "Somewhat" or "Not Very" familiar with it. Of those who offered an opinion (n=7), three respondents indicated that they "Somewhat supported" the CET, two were "Neutral" and two were "Somewhat opposed".

With respect to why the CET program was implemented, the sample of IV drug users responded as follows:

- for political reasons: 10/15, 67%
- to allow the police to arrest more people: 2/15, 13%
- to reduce disorder: 3/15, 20%
- to help people who live in the DTES: 1/15, 7%
- to make the DTES a better place to live: 2/15, 13%

A majority of the IV drug users in the sample (9/15, 60%) felt that the CET initiative has not accomplished its objectives, but an even higher number (11/15, 73%) stated that they would like to see the initiative continue. Of those who offered an opinion as to how the police could be more effective (n=8), six (75%) of this group of respondents mentioned more foot patrols and more focus on homelessness and poor people, and five suggested more of a focus on reducing drug dealing. All eight stated that there should be more police services in the DTES.

Questions and Findings

Planning of the Initiative

Question: *Were the objectives of the initiative well defined and translated into operational objectives and decisions?*

Yes. A review of the documents provided to the CET evaluation team by the Vancouver Police Department indicates that the objectives of the CET initiative were well considered and were the culmination of a series of more specific initiatives that had been taken by the department in the DTES. Senior police personnel had a clear vision of the objectives of the CET and were also aware of the limitations, and risks, associated with the initiative. There is some doubt as to whether all of the Core officers in the DTES and the officers who were seconded to the CET, either on a “forced transfer” basis or as volunteers, had a clear understanding of how the objectives of the CET were to be achieved. This led to some discrepancy between officers and between police teams in the policing strategies that were used, with some employing more of an enforcement approach and others adopting a maintenance role.

Question: *Were the necessary financial and other resources secured in a timely manner to ensure the success of the initiative?*

No. A critical issue that affected all facets of the CET initiative was the lack of resources. The decision was made by Vancouver City Council not to provide additional funding for the initiative. Compounding the resource issue, a large number of senior level officers took early retirement over a pension issue, in addition to the fact that the VPD was already under-staffed due to the “retirement bulge” and the challenges of recruiting up to 100 new officers annually.

To their credit, senior police personnel realized that additional resources would be required and that, even with an infusion of additional monies, the CET would stretch the organization to the limit in terms of maintaining an acceptable level of policing services throughout the city. When additional monies were not forthcoming, the impact on the organization was even greater. One manifestation of the lack of resources was the inability of the VPD to mount “flying squads” that could follow persons moved out of the DTES

by the CET and who resumed their drug market and criminally-related activities in other areas within District 2 and in adjacent police districts.

Question: *Were capable managers identified and recruited to lead the initiative?*

Yes. The senior level police personnel involved in the design and implementation of the CET initiative were experienced officers who had extensive knowledge of the DTES community and the challenges of providing police services to that community. The CET was envisioned as an initiative whereby the police could alter the long-standing policy of containment in the DTES and proactively re-establish a visible police presence, create a sense of security and safety among community residents, and provide an opportunity for the entire community to move forward in a positive fashion. Senior management was aware of the importance of carefully selecting the individuals who would lead the initiative and proceeded accordingly.

Question: *Was the staffing recruitment strategy adopted to create the special team adequate to support the initiative?*

Initially, no. The Core police officers deployed in the DTES prior to the implementation of the CET was initiated had extensive experience and expertise in policing in the area and were familiar with the community and the various agencies and organizations providing services in the community. To supplement the Core officers, additional police members were seconded to the CET and placed on teams in District 2 with a special emphasis on the DTES area. These officers were removed from a variety of non-uniformed line level positions in the department, including the research and planning unit and the traffic section. Subsequently, it was decided to solicit volunteers from other sections of the department to participate in the CET initiative. Eventually, the process evolved to a point where a one-year secondment to the District was being offered and there was no shortage of new volunteers. In retrospect, senior police personnel acknowledge that the "forced" secondments had compromised the effectiveness of the CET initiative and that a proactive effort to solicit volunteers to supplement the Core officers

at the outset and prior to the implementation of the CET would have been a more productive strategy.

Training

Question: *Were the officers involved in the enforcement team sufficiently trained to function effectively under the new policing policy?*

To some extent, yes. The Core officers who were assigned to the DTES area of District 2 at the time the CET initiative had the required skill set to provide services to the various segment of the community. Many of these officers were familiar with the DTES. Other officers may have been assigned to District 2 at a previous point in time, although the dynamics of life in the DTES had changed over the years.

Although officers who were initially assigned to police the DTES area received 3 days of training that included information on public health and drug issues, in retrospect this was most likely not sufficient. However, officers were subsequently seconded to the area during the course of the CET did not have access to this training. In retrospect, the extent of the training and the absence of training for all of the officers assigned to the DTES during the CET may have hindered the effectiveness of the officers on the street.

There was a perception among many of the community residents interviewed for the evaluation, as well as among some residents participating in focus group sessions, that many of the police officers had little or no experience in dealing with mentally ill persons, persons in poverty, drug-addicted individuals, and had little or no knowledge of life on the street and of the drug-influenced lifestyle. Many officers were perceived to be overly aggressive, as lacking communication skills, and as not having the skills sets to effectively police in a unique and challenging environment.

The health care professionals interviewed as part of the evaluation also expressed the view that many officers lacked a good knowledge of the area and persons they were policing.

There was also some suggestion by senior police personnel and by some of the Core officers interviewed for the evaluation that there was inconsistency between the various teams assigned to the DTES

in terms of their respective focus on order maintenance and enforcement.

There is little doubt that, had more attention been given to ensuring that officers assigned to the DTES as part of the CET initiative had the requisite knowledge and skill sets to meet the unique challenges of the area, the public perception of the officers, the special initiative, and the police department would have been enhanced.

Question: *Did the officers involved in the enforcement team have a clear understanding of the objectives being pursued?*

The evaluation did not explore, in depth, the extent to which officers assigned to the DTES in the CET initiative understood, and accepted, the objectives of the initiative. Only the Core police officers were interviewed for the evaluation study and project team members did not do ride or walk-a-alongs with officers assigned to the area. The responses of the Core officers indicated that they had a general understanding of the objectives of the CET and the strategies employed to achieve these objectives. Although the officers who were seconded to the DTES were not interviewed, it can be assumed that there might have been diversity among them in terms of their understanding of the CET and its objectives. The extent to which this affected the operational success of the CET cannot be determined from the data gathered in the present study.

Question: *Did the officers involved in the enforcement team understand what was expected of them as members of the City-wide enforcement team?*

A review of internal documents provided to the evaluation team indicated that there appeared to be some variability among the officers assigned to the CET in terms of their understanding of the department's expectations of them and the specific policing strategies that were to be used in achieving the objectives of the CET. The documentation, for example, suggested that officers may not have always been clear as to the type of "visible presence" they were being expected to maintain. Throughout the course of the CET, efforts were made to ensure that all team members understood the strategies to be used and applied in a consistent fashion.

Question: *Did the officers involved in the enforcement team have an appreciation of the complexity of the problems affecting the DTES?*

The Core police officers who had policed in the area for a period of time prior to the implementation of the CET certainly understood the complexities of the issues in the DTES. In fact, various groups of officers had been involved in specific initiatives targeting stolen property and the drug trade in the years and months leading up to April 2003. It was apparent from this evaluation that those officers who were transferred into the DTES to supplement the Core police officers often had little, if any, experience, policing in a high needs environment. Significantly, many of these officers did not have the requisite skill set to interact with community residents in a non-aggressive and non-confrontational manner and had little or no knowledge or, or experience with the drug subculture, the homeless, mentally disabled, Aboriginal persons, and other specialized populations. Officers who volunteered for assignment to the DTES as part of the CET may also have lacked the requisite skill sets, but this may have been compensated for somewhat by a positive attitude.

In retrospect, it would have been beneficial for all of the officers who were to be assigned to the DTES to have been required to complete a training course covering issues such as the drug subculture, the dynamics of life on the street in the DTES, and the specific strategies that were to be utilized in carrying out the initiative. This would have, in all likelihood, reduced the widely held perception among community residents that many of the officers were overly aggressive, had poor communication skills, and did not understand the issues in the DTES.

Question: *Were the officers involved in the enforcement team made aware of the potential impact of the initiative on various vulnerable groups, including drug addicted individuals?*

There was no indication from the data gathered for the evaluation that the officers involved in the enforcement teams were provided with directions on how to take into account the potential negative impact of their interventions and of the CET initiative in general on vulnerable groups, including drug addicted persons. Senior management officers were clearly aware of some of the potential detrimental effects of the new initiative, but they appeared to be unwilling to let these concerns detract them from single-mindedly

pursuing the course of action they had chosen. According to a senior VPD officer, front line officers were told to make it more uncomfortable and more difficult for drug users to buy and use drugs and to try to impress upon them that they were not to use drugs in public. However, front line officers were apparently not briefed on the potential impact of such tactics on drug users, particularly high risk behaviour.

Question: *Were the officers involved in the enforcement team informed of the potential public health issues that could arise out of the initiative?*

One component of the 3 day training session provided to the officers initially assigned to the DTES was information on potential public health issues that could arise out of the initiative. It is not possible to determine from the information gathered during the evaluation as to how effective this training was, although as previously noted, not all officers assigned to the DTES as part of the CET received this training.

The CET Initiative within the Broader Framework of VPD Activities

Question: *What was the Department's overall policing policy for the DTES and District Two? What was the role of the CET initiative within that policy?*

There had been a number of more specifically focused initiatives in the DTES prior to the implementation of the CET. The CET was designed to be more comprehensive in its efforts to bring order to the DTES by disrupting the open drug market and the property-related criminal activity associated with this drug market. As well, the initiative involved a significant increase in police visibility and presence for a six-month period of time, far longer and more intense than any previous police initiative. There seemed to have been insufficient consideration given to how the special initiative would fit within the Department's overall policing policy, and in particular within the drug law enforcement policy.

Question: *Was the CET initiative effectively supported by other police initiatives and was it isolated from other policing activities?*

A shortage of resources apparently hindered efforts to integrate the CET into other police initiatives or, for that matter, to mount new initiatives in support of the CET, e.g. flying squads to police “hot spots” created by drug dealers and their clients moved and displaced from the DTES to other areas of District 2 and to adjacent police districts.

Question: *Did its intelligence gathering and data analysis component effectively support the overall CET initiative?*

There was an attempt to interface the work of the VPD crime analyst with the CET initiative in order to monitor the impact of the intervention on specific individuals (e.g. drug dealers) and on the patterns of criminal offending. The ability to maintain this interface and to provide a steady stream of criminal intelligence to the front line was compromised by a lack of resources and data analysis capacity. Illustrative of this is the fact that VPD no longer has access to the computer software that allows offenders and criminal activity to be tracked and displayed on maps. It is essential that VPD re-acquire this data analysis capacity as it moves forward and adopts the tenets of intelligence-led policing.

Question: *Did the Department clearly identify the conditions that had to be met for the CET initiative to be sustainable in the long term?*

The department is currently struggling to recruit sufficient numbers of new officers to fill the vacancies left by departing and retiring members and it is likely to be several years before full staffing levels are achieved. There has also been no net increase in the number of authorized positions for the department, which leaves VPD significantly understaffed compared to other police services in Canada.

This evaluation revealed that, once the open drug market in the DTES had been disrupted, VPD did not have the resources to pursue the drug dealers who were displaced and dispersed to other areas of District 2 and to adjacent districts. This placed an additional burden on the policing teams in other areas of the city to respond to the localized crime “hot spots” that developed. The available resources were also insufficient to allow officers to spend more proactive time with community residents and to develop the close

ties with the community that would assist in sustaining the gains that had been made in creating a safer and more secure community.

Question: *Did the Department carefully plan the follow up it intended to give to the initiative?*

The ability of senior management in VPD to engage in post-CET planning has been seriously compromised by a lack of resources and the inability to sustain the secondments from other units in the organization. One of the post-CET initiatives envisioned at the outset of the process was the creation of a new police district in the DTES and, since the CET, the VPD has continued with a number of initiatives in the DTES.

Question: *How did the CET initiative relate to the other aspects of the broad response strategy to drug abuse in Vancouver (Four Pillars Approach)?*

The VPD is a full partner in the Four Pillars approach and it is committed to participating in the implementation of a comprehensive drug abuse prevention strategy. However, frustration is often expressed within the VPD about the slowness with which the various components of the comprehensive strategy are being implemented, particularly the treatment component. It appears that the Department was not successful in developing collaborative partnerships in the planning and implementation of the CET, an initiative that it itself considered fully consistent with the Four Pillars approach.

On the other hand, the CET, and the additional resources assigned to the area where the SIS was opened, may have contributed to the successful opening and initial operation of the SIS in the DTES. The participation of the VPD in the SIS implementation provided a good example of how the police can carefully plan its intervention, in collaboration with other key partners, without compromising its integrity and mandate. This level of planning and consultation ought to have been present in the planning of the CET itself and it should be engaged in preparing future plans for the DTES and a possible new district.

Question: *How was the CET initiative coordinated with other agencies involved in Vancouver to address the problems of the DTES and its open drug market?*

Despite their best efforts, the VPD was generally unsuccessful in securing the cooperation of the prosecutors and the courts in developing a coordinated approach to the problems of the DTES either prior to or during the CET. The one notable exception is the VPD very public support for the SIS. The slow pace at which the other pillars of the “four pillars” approach are being implemented reflects the myriad of issues – political and programmatic – that must be addressed in designing and delivering services to the area. That said, a more effective communication strategy might have addressed much of the confusion and misinformation that surrounded the CET initiative.

Question: *Did the CET initiative have an impact on other parts of the criminal justice system?*

There is nothing to indicate that the CET had any significant impact on any other facets of the criminal justice system. As noted in the evaluation report, the CET differed from traditional police “crackdowns” in that it was not a coordinated effort on the part of the police, prosecution, and courts to impact criminal behaviour and offenders. One complaint of the officers involved in the CET initiative was that the courts were giving light sentences to drug dealers arrested as part of the CET initiative, imposing periods of probation with “no-go” orders that were ineffective in reducing the dealer’s on-street activities.

Question: *Did the CET initiative have an impact on other initiatives undertaken in the DTES as part of the Four Pillars approach?*

The evaluation did not determine whether the CET initiative had an impact on other initiatives undertaken in the DTES as part of the Four Pillars approach. Nevertheless, there is some indication that the CET and other related police interventions might have prepared the ground for the successful implementation of the SIS.

5

Impact on the Open Drug Market and on Public Health

The evaluation was designed, in part, to assess the impact of the CET initiative and other related police interventions on an open drug market that existed, virtually undisturbed, in the core area of the DTES. Given that the objectives of the CET initiative, in that regard, were to disrupt and disperse the drug market, the question becomes one of how the market was disrupted and with what effect. A number of data sources were used to examine these issues, including police records and police dispatch data, field observations, and data on the perceptions of key stakeholders.

A second set of issues, relating to the potential public health impact of the initiative, focused on whether the disruption of the drug market had an impact on drug availability and the access to drugs, access to medical and other services, and service utilization by drug users. A number of data sources were used in an attempt to answer these questions, including: the perceptions of IV drug users, B.C. Ambulance Service call records, Coroner's Office data on fatal drug overdoses, information on recovered needles, and hospital emergency admissions data.

Official Police Data on Drug Offences

The Vancouver Police Department's PRIME B.C. Records Management System for the periods between April 1 and December 30, 2002 and April 1, and December 30, 2003, was used to determine the number of drug offences that had come to the attention of the police

during the CET initiative as opposed to the during the equivalent period in the previous year. Data on the number of Drug Possession offences that came to the attention of the police - most often as a result of proactive interventions - showed a *decrease* in the number of such cases both in the City as a whole (-35.4%) and in District 2 (-34.2%) during the CET initiative as compared to the same period of time the previous year (See Table 5.1). There was also a decrease in the number of cases of drug trafficking cases during the CET initiative everywhere except in District 1.

TABLE 5.1 - Percentage Change in the Number of Drug Offences Known to the Police, April 1, 2002-September 30, 2002 (pre-CET) and April 1, 2003-September 30, 2003 (during CET)

Type of Offences	PERCENTAGE INCREASE / DECREASE				
	District 1	District 2 (DTES)	District 3	District 4	Total Vancouver
Possession	-17.8	-34.2	-47.1	-57.1	-35.4
Trafficking	130.7	-18.7	-59.4	-53.6	-3.4

Source: VPD, PRIME B.C.

These data are particularly interesting, as they appear to show the opposite of what is normally expected of a police crackdown on a drug market. In spite of the some of the highly visible and publicized sweeps and other “buy and bust” initiatives, the CET did not generate a larger number of drug possession and drug trafficking offences than were recorded during the same period of time the previous year. In fact, the number of drug trafficking offences was significantly *lower* in all districts except in District One. There was a very significant reduction in the number of drug possession offences in all districts in the City (-35.4%). This seems to indicate that, of the two core strategies used by officers - visible presence and enforcement - there was a greater emphasis on using visible presence as a strategy to disrupt and displace the drug market.

In District Two, where the “crackdown” on the drug market was in full operation, drug possession offences went down during the CET initiative by 34.2% and drug trafficking offences by 18.7% as compared to the same period of time during the previous year. In District 1, where there was no special drug disruption initiative, there was an increase of 130.7% in trafficking offences as compared to the same period of time the previous year.

Based on these data, one may suspect that some displacement of drug trafficking activities did occur from District Two to District One. In an attempt to determine whether this had occurred, the total number of drug offences for each period, as a percentage of the total number of drug offences in the City of Vancouver as a whole, was calculated for each district and for both types of drug offences. The results are presented in Table 5.2 below.

The figures in this table seem to indicate that there was a larger proportion of all the drug trafficking offences cases in District One than had been the case in the previous year. Whether this actually is the result of changes in drug enforcement in that District or a reflection of a greater amount of drug market activity is difficult to determine and can only be determined with additional data and analyses.

TABLE 5.2 - Percentage Change in the Number of Drug Offences Known to the Police, by Policing District, as a Percentage of the Total Number of Drug Offences in the City of Vancouver, April 1, 2002-September 30, 2002 (pre-CET) and April 1, 2003-September 30, 2003 (during CET)

Type of Drug Offences	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL CASES IN VANCOUVER							
	District 1		District 2 (DTES)		District 3		District 4	
	2002	2003	2002	2003	2002	2003	2002	2003
Possession	16.9	21.6	58.2	59.3	17.0	14.0	7.8	5.2
Trafficking	15.4	36.8	65.0	54.8	16.1	6.8	3.4	1.6

Source: VPD, PRIME B.C.

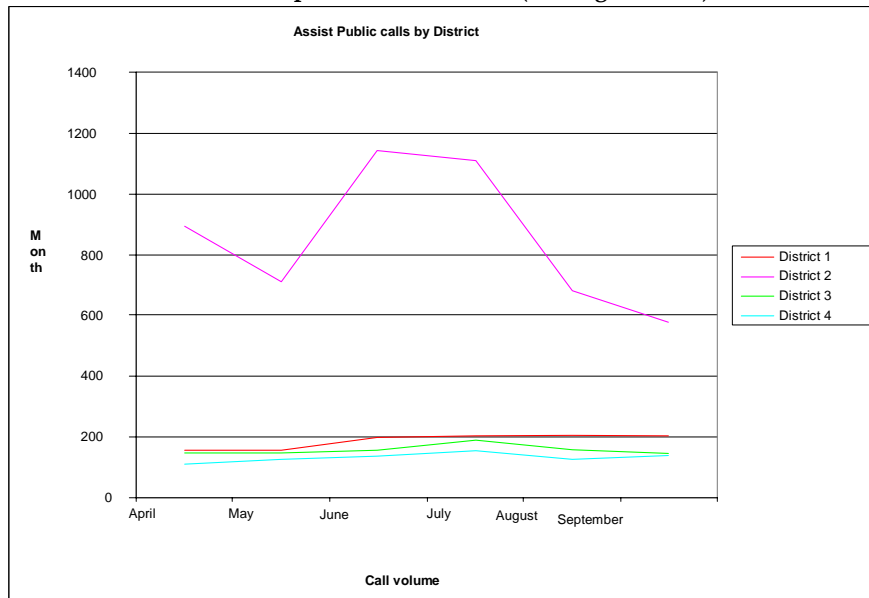
Proactive Interventions in the DTES

It is difficult to measure precisely how proactive the police officers assigned to the DTES were during the CET initiative. One measure of proactive police activity is the number of situations in which the police were involved in providing assistance to the public (See Table 5.3). The data indicate the number of such cases is much higher (in this case at least four times higher) in District 2 than in the other three police districts. The number of incidents recorded in District 2 (e.g., 5,114 incidents during the six month period) is at least twice as high as the number of incidents in the other three districts combined. There was also a very large increase in the number of incidents during the summer months of mid-May and mid-July, 2003 (see Figure 5.1).

TABLE 5.3 – Dispatch Requests for Service

Assistance Requests During the CET Initiative (April to September 2003) by District							
District	April	May	June	July	August	September	TOTAL
District 1	155	154	199	202	205	202	1117
District 2	892	711	1143	1108	682	578	5114
District 3	146	147	156	190	158	144	941
District 4	110	125	135	155	126	138	789
TOTAL	1303	1137	1633	1655	1171	1062	7961

Source: VPD CAD

FIGURE 5.1 – Total Number of Requests for Assistance by Month and by District, April-December, 2003 (During the CET).

Source: VPD CAD

The drug market was disrupted by the CET initiative, but not necessarily as a result of more arrests or stricter enforcement of drug laws. After the initial and very visible series of “buy and bust” operations (primarily as part of Project Torpedo), it does not appear that the VPD enforced the drug laws by proceeding more vigorously with arrests for drug trafficking and drug possession in the DTES. In fact, in District 2, the total number of cases of drug trafficking *decreased* by 18.7%, as compared to the number of cases for the same period the previous year, and the number of cases of drug possession during the time period April 1-October 5, 2003 decreased by 34.2%, again as compared to the same period of time during the previous year. In fact, during the CET

initiative, it was District 1 that received the attention of the police for various drug offences (there was an increase of 130.7% in the number of cases of drug trafficking recorded in District 1 as compared to the same period during the previous year).

The enforcement of breaches of “no go orders” and other court orders and conditions attached to probation or bail decisions, as well as the more diligent execution of outstanding arrest warrants were intended to be part of the disruptive tactics employed by the police as part of the CET. Again, the pattern of police activity that emerges from an analysis of the data extracted from the VPD Records Management System is not what might have been expected. The data reveal that there was, in fact, a *reduction* in the number of breaches of court orders and of outstanding arrest warrants in District 2 during the CET initiative as compared to the same period for the previous year: there were 33.6% fewer cases of warrant execution and 44.4% fewer cases of enforcement of breach offences. These reductions in the volume of these two types of police activities during the CET, as compared to the same period for the previous year, were very similar to those observed for the whole of the City (warrant execution: -31.3%; breach offences: -44.5%).

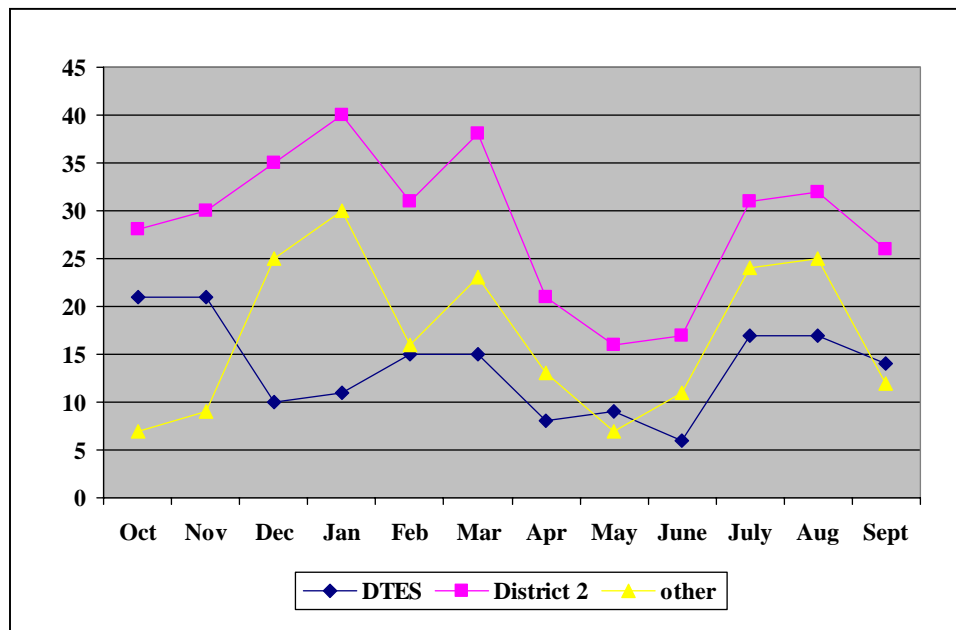
Again, a notable exception to the pattern observed in the City is what happened in District 1, which without the benefit of a special initiative nevertheless increased the number of outstanding warrant executions by a surprising 63.8%. From the data gathered, it is not possible to explain why there was an apparent increase in proactive policing in District 1 and an increased focus by officers in that District on warrant execution, enforcement of public alcohol offences, interventions for drug possession and for drug trafficking.

Overnight Reports of Serious Incidents

An analysis of the overnight reports for District Two for the period between October 1, 2002 and August 31, 2003 is instructive. Overnight reports are records of every significant incident that occurs in a 24-hour period in a given district. Police officers record them in a log so that managers and others can brief themselves, and every morning the Deputy Chiefs and the Chief are briefed. The CET Intelligence Analysis Section collated the reports and produced a database (on a spreadsheet) regrouping the most serious incidents into twelve general categories.

The data from the “Overnights” are presented in Figure 5.2 and depict a clear decrease in the number of overnight reports of serious incidents in the first three months of the CET initiative in the DTES and the rest of District 2. The lack of longitudinal data prevents the drawing of firm conclusions on that basis alone. However, the observed pattern of serious incidents coincides with the perceptions of senior and other police officers that the CET initiative did initially pacify the targeted area, but that that effect was temporary, as the initiative progressively lost its initial momentum and its “shock value” but it did not return to its original levels.

FIGURE 5.2 – VPD Overnight Reports – DTES and District Two – October 1, 2003 to September 30, 2004.



Source: V.P.D.

Field Observations

As previously mentioned, field observations were conducted as part of the evaluation. A primary objective of these systematic observations was to document the street-level activities associated with the open drug market the CET initiative was designed to disrupt, as well as to record police interventions in relation to both the drug market and incidents of

crime and disorder. The project team observers did not record all of the instances in which they saw or came into contact with police officers. And, while they did note police interventions in specific incidents, routine police activities such as officers walking the beat, patrolling on bicycles, on motorcycles, on horseback, and in patrol cars, speaking with one another, and speaking casually with persons on the street were not recorded.

A general finding from the systematic street observations was that there was considerable variability in the level of police presence in the DTES. And, it was difficult for the observers to determine whether this variability was due to events taking place in other areas of District 2, the specific shift schedules of the officers assigned to the DTES, the discretionary decisions of individual police officers, and/or specific orders or guidelines that had been provided to the officers.

The most visible police presence was concentrated along the 90 and 100 blocks of East Hastings Street. Police officers were frequently seen in the alley behind the Carnegie Centre (next to the door to the Health Contact Centre). Their vehicles were parked nearby and officers were often seen chatting with one another in a location that provided them with a clear view of the sidewalk and street in either direction.

The frequency of foot patrols appeared to vary considerably from one day to the next and from one time of the day to another. It was noticed that the police had very little visible presence between 17:00 and 19:00 hours. One observer noted: “Immediately after that time, they all (the police) tend to swoop in and sweep the area. I’m sure that if I can easily identify the times with increased and decreased police presence, so can everyone else”.

Interventions during these patrols seemed to be relatively infrequent, unless there was a fairly major incident. In the words of one of the observers: “Foot patrols seem to have a bubble around them. You will not, for instance, receive any offers of drugs when you are right next to them. However, if you are more than thirty feet behind or sixty feet in front of them, their presence does not seem to make any difference at all.”

There was not a day where the observers were not offered drugs on multiple occasions. One of the observers came to the conclusion that police officers sitting in parked cars did not seem to make any difference in terms of the drug offers or drug deals. He added: “I was offered drugs walking by parked officers several times. Usually their attention is elsewhere”.

One of the two researchers conducting the observations received more drug offers than the other, possibly due to his age, gender, or personal appearance, but both frequently received unsolicited and frequent offers to purchase drugs. The most frequently offered drugs were heroin, cocaine, and crack. At first, the researchers were making note of the kinds of drugs that were offered, but it quickly became evident that any drug could be obtained at any time of the day and night in the DTES, particularly along the short Hastings corridor on both sides of Main.

The number of offers received during a seven or eight-hour period of observation would range between five and 29. In some instances, where several drug dealers were assembled in areas through which the observers were passing, there were too many offers to be counted. One of the observers noted: “It is easy to find drugs in the corridor. A walk through any little group will yield many offers. I could never walk through the corridor without being asked several times”, and, “If I had spent an entire eight hour shift in the corridor alone, wandering back and forth, I could easily receive 15-20 an hour for most of the shift.”

The researchers observed numerous drug deals conducted fairly openly. In some instances, the number of deals observed was too numerous to count. From a safe distance, it was usually not possible to tell which drug was being purchased and what quantities were involved. One of the observers commented that it was like “walking into the eye of hurricane, everything was happening around me, but where I stood everything remained calm”.

Groups of dealers hanging around together were frequently observed. They did not make much effort at all to hide the nature of their business. They would move down the street a little when police officers came close although they generally did not bother to move when the police officers remained in their cars, or when the officers were within view but at a safe distance. Some larger dealers would openly move around and make drops to the smaller dealers/users who were hanging out on the street. Even after a short period of observation, the observers came to recognize these dealers, and many of them did not mind speaking fairly openly to the observers about their activities. The image that came to the mind of one of the field researchers as he and his colleague were observing the drug dealers was that of a group of pigeons which would disperse when the alarm is given by one of them (or by a watcher nearby) and quickly reassemble a short distance away, as if nothing had happened.

The field observations also revealed that open drug use continued in the DTES during the CET initiative and persons were observed on a daily basis openly using drugs, including injection drugs. The street observations conducted for this study began very shortly before the new supervised injection site opened its doors in the DTES. However, it was difficult to determine whether the new facility was having a noticeable effect on reducing the number of times people were seen injecting drugs in public.

The observers noted that there seemed to be very little relationship between police presence at any given point and the open-drug market – except for the temporary relocation of activities to nearby areas. As for the notion that police intervention displaced the open drug market, it was noted that, on numerous occasions, the police would “sweep” through the area and the big groups of drug dealers would leave. However, they never stayed away. Less than ten minutes after the police had walked through most of the dealers had returned.

Drug dealers also frequently loitered outside the bars on East Hastings Street and often conducted transactions inside these locales when a customer appeared. In the early part of the three-month period during which the observations were conducted, large groups of dealers were slightly more frequently observed. Notably, toward the end the three month period large groups of dealers were not as readily observed and drug offers seemed to be more scattered. The dealers that were not part of the big groups began to hang out just around the street corners off of East Hastings Street as this afforded them access to people on that street while keeping away from the immediate scrutiny of police officers who usually remained on East Hastings Street itself.

The above-noted observations must be considered with two major points in mind. First, the observations were made towards the end of the CET initiative, during the months of September, October, November 2003, and it is not known whether there was a different dynamic on the street during the initial months of the initiative and subsequent to the completion of the CET initiative. Second, it must be recalled that the CET was not designed to eliminate the open drug market but rather to disrupt it and to disperse it.

Police Officers' Views

It was previously noted that the majority of the officers surveyed felt that the CET had a significant impact on the open drug market in the DTES. The officers interviewed provided a wide range of estimates of the number of drug dealers who were active in the DTES prior to April 2003, ranging from 50 - 100 to the low thousands. A majority of the officers (13/20, 65%) felt that the number of drug dealers had declined since the inception of CET. The officers also agreed that most addicts were still buying their drugs in the DTES, a perception that was validated by the street observations noted above.

Estimates offered by the police officers as to the percentage of current drug users in the DTES who were interested in getting treatment ranged from 5% to 100%. However, the majority of officers (15/20, 75%) felt that the treatment resources available to persons who wanted to get off drugs were insufficient.

Estimates of the percentage of drug dealers who were also addicts ranged from 15% to 80%, with one officer noting that Hispanic dealers were much less likely to be addicts. There was a near-even split between the officers in terms of whether they thought most drug dealers lived in the DTES before and after the implementation of CET, although a clear majority of the officers felt that most of the drug users lived in the DTES both prior to and after the implementation of the CET initiative.

Residents' Perceptions

One-third of the residents surveyed felt that the number of drug dealers had declined during the course of the CET, while 28% indicated the numbers had stayed the same. In terms of the numbers of drug users, 47% of the respondents felt that the number had remained the same over the previous six months, 26% perceived that the number of drug users had increased, and 18% felt that there had been a decline in the number of drug users (see Table 5.4).

TABLE 5.4 - Survey of Community Residents: Availability of Drugs

Residents' Perceptions	Increased	Decreased	Same	DK
Amount of drugs	17/96 (17.7)	22/96 (40.6)	42/96 (84.4)	15/96 (15.6)
Price of drugs	1/96 (1.0)	7/96 (7.3)	55/96 (57.3)	33/96 (34.4)
Number of drug dealers	23/96 (24.0)	34/96 (35.4)	27/96 (28.1)	12/96 (12.5)
Number of drug users	25/96 (26.0)	17.96 (17.7)	45/96 (46.9)	9/96 (9.4)
Accessibility of drugs	21/92 (22.8)	23/92 (25.0)	39/92 (42.4)	9/92 (9.8)

Just over 40% of the respondents felt that accessibility to drugs had remained the same during the CET period, while 25% felt that accessibility had decreased and 23% held the view that it had increased.

It is important to note that residents of the DTES could not be expected to be fully informed on all of the issues in the community, nor to have specific knowledge of the CET and its impact on the various dimensions of the quality of life in the community. In this respect, the residents of the DTES are not dissimilar from residents in other areas of the city, the Lower Mainland, or any community for that matter.

Nearly one-half of the community residents surveyed, for example, did not know whether there had been an increase in drug dealing in private locales, although 38% indicated there had been a decrease in drug dealing in public. Similarly, 44% of the sample did not know whether there had been an increase in drug use in private. There was the perception, however, that there had been a decrease in the numbers of persons using drugs in public and of increased safety on the streets. Finally, nearly 35% of the residents in the sample didn't know whether the price of drugs had changed during the CET period. If they were not drug users, they would have little access to this information nor have any reason to acquire it.

The residents were asked a series of questions with respect to whether it had become more difficult, or less difficult, to engage in a number of activities in the DTES during the CET period. Their responses are presented in Table 5.5.

TABLE 5.5 – Survey of Community Residents: “Over the past six months, do you think that it has become more difficult or less difficult to:”

	MORE DIFFICULT	LESS DIFFICULT	NO CHANGE	DON'T KNOW
Sell stolen property	16/92 (17.4)	3/92 (3.3)	45/92 (48.9)	28/92 (30.4)
Sell drugs	28/92 (30.4)	9/92 (9.8)	35/92 (38.0)	20/92 (21.7)
Buy drugs	18/92 (19.6)	11/92 (12.0)	42/92 (45.7)	21/92 (22.8)

These responses indicate that many of the residents felt that there had been “No Change” in the ability of persons to sell stolen property or to sell or buy drugs. Interestingly, particularly in terms of selling stolen property and purchasing drugs, many of the residents did not have an opinion on that subject, these responses most likely reflecting the fact that they are not involved in the drug subculture in the DTES.

Residents were also asked whether, if they used drugs of any kind, the actions of the police had any impact on the amount of drugs that they used. Very few (3/47, 6.4%) indicated that the actions of the police affected their patterns of drug use. Similarly, the residents surveyed stated that the actions of the police had little impact on the amount of drugs used by their friends who were users. Among the sample of residents surveyed, 10.8% (10/93) indicated that they dealt drugs and this group was evenly split in their view as to whether the actions of the police had impacted their ability to do so.

Perceptions of Business Owners

The business owners interviewed for this study were queried on their opinions as to whether, during the first six months of the CET initiative, it had become more difficult to engage in specific types of activity relating to dealing and purchasing drugs and selling stolen property. The responses are presented in Table 5.6.

TABLE 5.6 – Survey of Business Owners: “Over the past six months, do you think that it has become more difficult, no difference, or less difficult to:”

	MORE DIFFICULT	NO CHANGE	LESS DIFFICULT	DON'T KNOW
Sell stolen property	6/26 (23.1)	5/26 (19.2)	1/26 (3.8)	14/26 (53.8)
Sell drugs	11/26 (42.3)	5/26 (19.2)	1/26 (3.8)	9/26 (34.6)
Buy drugs	10/26 (38.5)	5/26 (19.2)	1/26 (3.8)	10/26 (38.5)

The business owners’ responses to this series of questions reveal that many of them did not feel they had sufficient information/experience to answer the question. For those who did, there was a general sense that it had become more difficult to sell and to buy drugs in the DTES. Even fewer of the business owners in the sample were able to offer an opinion on whether it had become more difficult to sell stolen property.

Offenders’ Perceptions

The interviews with a group of offenders provided the opportunity to solicit their perceptions of the impact of the CET initiative on the drug market in the DTES. Twenty-nine of the 32 female offenders in detention surveyed for the present study had been arrested and charged with and/or convicted of selling drugs in the DTES. The responses of these offenders to the survey questions provided an insiders’ perspective on how the CET initiative had affected the drug market. Half of the offenders indicated that they lived in the DTES and three quarters of those who lived in the area had resided there for at least two years. The remaining offenders in the sample lived in other areas in the City of Vancouver and the Lower Mainland, but tended to be frequent visitors to the DTES. Most of these drug dealers (18/29, 62.1%) stated that they sold drugs primarily in the DTES, while the others (11/29, 37.9%) also sold drugs in other areas and most stated that it was not difficult to sell drugs in the DTES and that this was an area that provided a large clientele interested in purchasing drugs.

As a group, these offenders did not appear to be the types of individuals who would be easily dissuaded from remaining involved in

the drug market. At least 75% (24/32) of the offenders had prior criminal records, and a similar number (21/28, 75.0%) had criminal records that included at least one drug-related offence, a property offence conviction (15/25, 56%), and, for a smaller number (6/25, 24.0%), a conviction for a violent offence. These individuals were quite familiar with the police and with the criminal justice system: approximately 75% of the sample admitted to having had at least three or more previous criminal convictions and two thirds of the offenders stated that they had 10 or more previous convictions. For 75% of the offenders, some of the previous convictions were also for offences committed in the DTES. Ninety percent of the offenders in the sample had served a period of probation at least once in the past and more than one-half had been on probation on three or more occasions.

A little less than half of the offenders involved in drug dealing (14/29, 48.3%) had received a conditional sentence order in the past, sometimes more than once (4/14) and 84% had served time in provincial custody prior to the present incarceration, usually more than once and often many times.

Nearly two thirds (20/31, 62.5%) of the offenders did not know about the CET initiative, even though most of them had noticed an increase in the number of police officers in the DTES during the CET period (27/32, 84.4%). With a few exceptions, those who were aware of the initiative did not know much about it. When told about the initiative, not surprisingly, 75% of them stated that they were not in favour of such an initiative.

Offenders were asked if they thought that, during the CET period, it had become either more or less difficult to sell and buy drugs in the DTES. Forty-three percent of the sample thought that it had become more difficult (13/30), but the majority (16/30, 53.3%) of them thought that it had not changed or that it had become less difficult (1/30, 3.3%).

When asked how the police had made it more difficult, most of the offenders referred to the increased police presence, the fact that there were more officers on the street watching, and the fact that the police were getting to know who the dealers were. Nearly 65% of the offenders interviewed believed that the “chances of being caught doing something illegal” in the DTES had increased during the CET initiative. None of them directly mentioned an increased “fear of being arrested” and 90% had noticed the increase in the number of police officers in the area and believed that there had been more arrests made by the police in the DTES.

The few offenders who did not believe that the police had made it more difficult for them to deal drugs in the DTES (5/32) explained that the police interventions were not a threat because they were ineffective (“they just drive by”) or that the police were too predictable.

The offenders in the sample were also asked whether they thought that the number of drug dealers in the DTES has changed during the previous six months. A majority of them believed that the number of drug dealers had increased (14/31, 45.2%) or stayed the same (7/31, 22.6%), and only a third of them or so (10/31, 32.3%) believed that the number of dealers had decreased.

Just over 50% of the offenders who were interviewed in the correctional facility (a majority of whom were incarcerated for drug trafficking), believed that the amount of drugs available in the DTES had remained the same during the CET initiative and roughly a third believed that it had increased (10/31, 32.3%). In fact, only a relatively small number (5/31, 16.1%) believed that the supply of drugs available had decreased during the six months of the CET initiative. The great majority (21/30, 70%) of these offenders also believed that the price of drugs had remained the same or decreased (3/30, 10.0%), and only 20% of them believed that the price of drugs had increased in the DTES during the six months of the CET initiative.

Perceptions of Sex Trade Workers

In a focus group session, a number of sex trade workers expressed the view that drug sales and use were taking place more often in private since the beginning of the CET initiative and that dealers had moved into neighbouring areas. Several of the sex trade workers had also noticed an increase in the quantity of “bad” drugs sold in the area and felt that this had provoked more violence, “as users wanted to get back at the dealers for this.” The sex trade workers also stated that they had faced an increasing number of “bad dates” or “bad tricks”, with some clients were taking advantage of desperate drug addicted sex trade workers and they “expected more for less money”.

Drug Users’ Perceptions

Availability of Drugs

A majority (9/15, 60%) of the 15 respondents in the community resident sample who self-identified as IV drug users perceived that the

quantity of drugs in the DTES and the number of drug dealers and drug users had stayed the same during the previous six months, while four (27%) felt that the amount of drugs had decreased. A majority (11/15, 73%) believed that their ability to access drugs had remained the same during this period. All the IV drug users interviewed stated that the price of drugs had remained the same during the previous six months and one-third of them believed that there had been a decrease in the activity of the open drug market in the preceding six months.

Participants in the focus group meetings from the Vancouver Area Network of Drug Users generally felt that, since the CET initiative began, the streets were cleaner, the overall level of safety had increased, and there were fewer drug dealers in the area. The consensus was that the police officers involved in implementing the CET were responsible for the perceived increase in the level of violence on the streets. One participant stated that he no longer went out at night due to a fear of being accosted by the police. Participants felt that, while the availability of drugs in the DTES had not changed since the CET initiative started and the drugs themselves were just as easy to obtain, the quality of the drugs on the street was less reliable and there was more “junk” on the street. This, in their view, created a more desperate user who would purchase junk, become angry and then act aggressively toward the dealers. There was also the view that drug users were required to steal more property for money to buy drugs and this added to the tension on the street.

The view was also expressed that the increase in “pipings”, i.e. fighting among street people, was due to the increased police presence. Participants felt that the police had become more aggressive in responding to drug-sick persons in the area and that there had been an increase in drug-sick people because of bad drugs. The increase in bad drugs – of “bunk” – was, in their view, directly related to the police initiative. One main effect of CET initiative, it was argued, was that users were buying drugs from persons they did not know because the established dealers were not able to show their face in the DTES because they were known to the police and feared being arrested by them. They believed that this “bunking” had also increased the level of violent altercations between people.

Drug Users' Activities

Only four (27%) of the 15 injection drug users interviewed stated that their patterns of activities had changed over the previous six months.

All but one of these respondents stated that their quality of life had not improved during this time.

Nine (60%) of the IV drug users stated that their ability to utilize the street, access public spaces, programs and services during the previous six months had remained the same. All of the respondents stated that they walked around their neighbourhood “Always” or “Frequently” and a majority (11/15, 73%) stated that they felt “Very Safe” walking in the neighbourhood during the day and the same number stated that their feelings of safety during the day and a night had remained the same over the previous six month period. Nine (9/15, 60%) of the respondents stated that they felt “Very Safe” or “Somewhat Safe” walking around the neighbourhood at night.

Only 27% of the IV drug users felt that the DTES had become a better place to live in the past six months. A majority (12/15, 80%) stated that their general feelings of safety had either decreased or remained the same during that time.

Eighty percent of the respondents stated that they felt that people who did not live in the DTES did not care about what happened in the area, while a majority (11/15, 73%) felt that people who lived in the area cared “a lot” or “somewhat” about what happened in the area. A large majority (13/15, 87%) felt that most of the people on the street in the DTES lived in the area, although a smaller number (9/15, 60%) felt that the people who dealt drugs lived in the DTES.

The IV drug users also offered the following observations:

- 8/15 (53%): people using drugs in private has increased
- 7/15 (47%): people dealing drugs in private has increased; 5/15 (33%) stayed the same
- 6/15 (40%): number of people doing drugs in public has decreased; 6/15 (40%) stayed the same
- 10/15 (67%): number of people dealing drugs in public has stayed the same; 3/15 (20%) decreased

With respect to the open drug market and stolen property, ten of the respondents (67%) felt that there had been “no change” in how difficult it was to sell stolen property. Only one of the respondents felt that the CET had reduced the amount of stolen property in the DTES and five (33%) of the respondents felt that the CET had decreased the open drug market. Six (40%) felt that it had become more difficult to sell drugs over the

previous six months, while five (33%) had seen no change. Similarly, ten of the respondents (67%) stated that there had been no change in the difficulty of purchasing drugs in the DTES.

A majority (10/15, 67%) of the IV drug users thought that the police could be more effective in the DTES and only 33% felt that the CET had accomplished its objectives. Interestingly, a majority of the IV drug users (11/15, 73%) said that they would like to see the CET program continue and six (40%) stated that they would like to see more foot patrols, five (33%) more police focus on reducing drug dealing, and eight (53%) more non-police services in the DTES. Twenty-seven percent of the respondents felt that there was “some” community support for the CET initiative, while an equal number believed that the community was “neutral” or that the community did not support the CET. Only one respondent stated that there was a high level of opposition to the CET.

Experiences with the Police

Forty percent of the IV drug users in the sample of community residents had been stopped and questioned by the police during the summer of 2003. All of these persons had been stopped on multiple occasions, ranging from 5 times to 10 times. A slight majority (8/15, 53%) of the respondents had been stopped during the CET initiative (September-October 1st, 2003), ranging from two times (n=1) to five times (n=3). Less than one-half (4/15; 27%) of the IV drug users had been stopped and searched by the police during the summer 2003.

Four of the respondents (27%) reported they had brief conversations with the police on more than one occasion during the summer and the fall, 2003. Two of the respondents (13%) had been interrogated at length by the police since October 1, 2003 and one during the summer months, 2003. Two respondents had contact with the police since October 1st as victims of a crime. Seven (47%) of the respondents stated that they had contact with the police since October 1st and six (6/15; 40%) during the summer months of 2003 because the police suspected them of using drugs.

One-half of the IV drug users (4/8, 50%) felt that they had been treated unfairly because they were accused of using drugs since October 1st, 2003; 3/8 (38%) during the summer months; and only one during the previous summer (2002). Of the respondents who felt that they had been treated unfairly (N=8), six (75%) said it was because they were accused of dealing drugs since October 1st, four (50%) of dealing drugs during the

summer, 2003, and only one was so accused during the summer, 2002. These comments suggest that there was increased contact between the IV drug users and the police after the implementation of the CET in April 2003.

Additional comments made about the police by members of this group of community residents included the following:

- “I was treated unfairly because I was assaulted by the cops, and ignored when I told officers of the assault.”
- “Police need to be better trained and sensitive to the community.”
- “Police need to learn more about drug use and how to deal with people – better training”

Access to Health Services and the SIS

In the previous year, the IV drug users surveyed as part of the sample of community members indicated that they had been admitted to hospital as follows: 0 times: six persons; 1 time: five persons; 2 times: one person; 3 times: one person; and, 4 times: one person. The reasons cited for the hospital admissions were alcohol (one person), blood infection (two persons), foot problems from being homeless (one person), hernia (one person), infection (one person), injuries from a robbery (one person), stomach pain (one person), and injuries from a stabbing (two persons).

Five of the seven respondents were admitted to hospital during the summer months of June-August, 2003 and their length of stay ranged from several hours to several weeks.

A majority (9/15, 60%) of the IV users surveyed stated that they used the Supervised Injection Site. The most frequently mentioned reasons for using the SIS was that it was “clean and safe”, and “convenient.” Among the reasons cited by the IV drug users who did not use the SIS was the presence of cameras, the presence of police in the area, the lack of privacy, and the inconvenient location of the SIS. Respondents were also asked whether, if they knew other IV drug users, how often these persons used the SIS. Their responses were as follows: Always: 1; Frequently: 3; Sometimes: 7; Infrequently: 1; DK: 2.

A majority (13/15, 87%) of the IV drug users surveyed believed that the police had an effect on whether people used the SIS. Among the reasons why persons would not use the SIS, they mentioned the concern that the police were keeping a data base of persons who used the SIS,

executing warrants in the area, would seize their drugs, and/or that they would be harassed by the police.

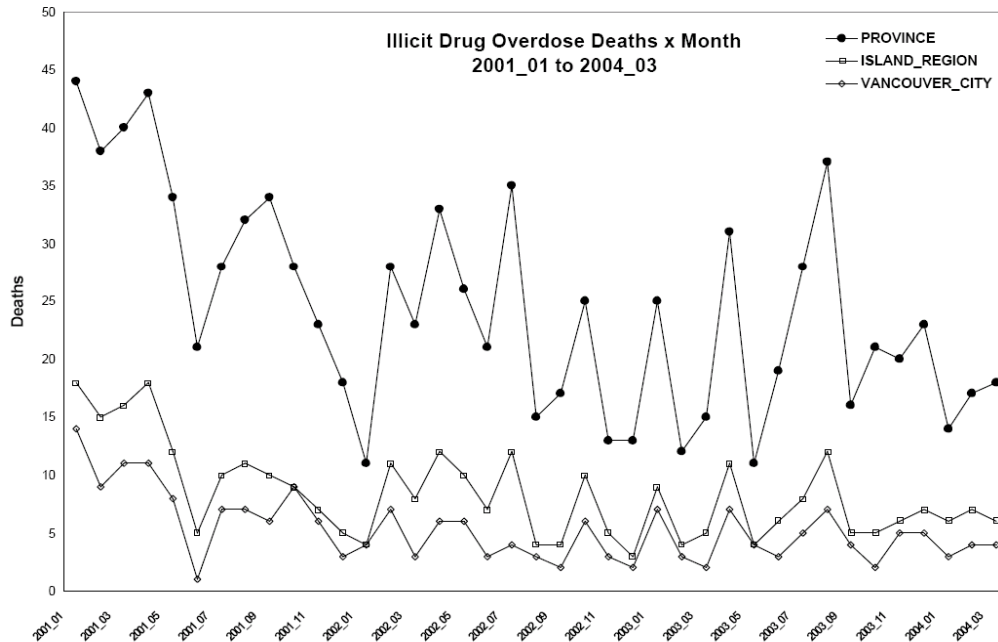
A majority (9/15, 60%) felt that the SIS would help in solving the problems in the DTES, and all but one (14/15, 93%) felt that the SIS would help to reduce drug overdoses. All of the respondents felt that the SIS would help drug users to avoid HIV/AIDS, and most of them (13/15, 87%) felt that the SIS would help drug users access treatment. One-half (7/15, 50%) of the IV drug users in the sample felt that the SIS would assist drug users in overcoming their addiction. A large majority (12/15, 80%) of the IV drug users stated that the SIS would help to restore order in the DTES, although a much smaller number (4/15, 27%) felt that the SIS would reduce the number of IV drug users in the area.

Drug Overdose Incidents

One of the fears associated with special initiatives to disrupt an illicit drug market is that the initiative will affect the supply, quality, and potency of drugs available as well as disrupt established dealer-user relationships that are premised on predictability and trust. This in turn, may lead to an increase in drug overdoses as users are forced to purchase drugs from unknown dealers and as the supply and quality of the drugs available are impacted. Increased police presence may also alter the patterns of drug use and contribute to an increase in drug overdoses.

The following data produced by the B.C. Coroner's Office (Figure 5.3) shows that the CET initiative did not have a perceptible impact on the number of fatal drug overdose incidents that occurred in Vancouver during the initiative (April-September, 2003) or in the months thereafter.

FIGURE 5.3 - Illicit Drug Overdose Deaths in the Province of B.C., January 2001 to March 2004



Source: Coroner's Office – Province of British Columbia

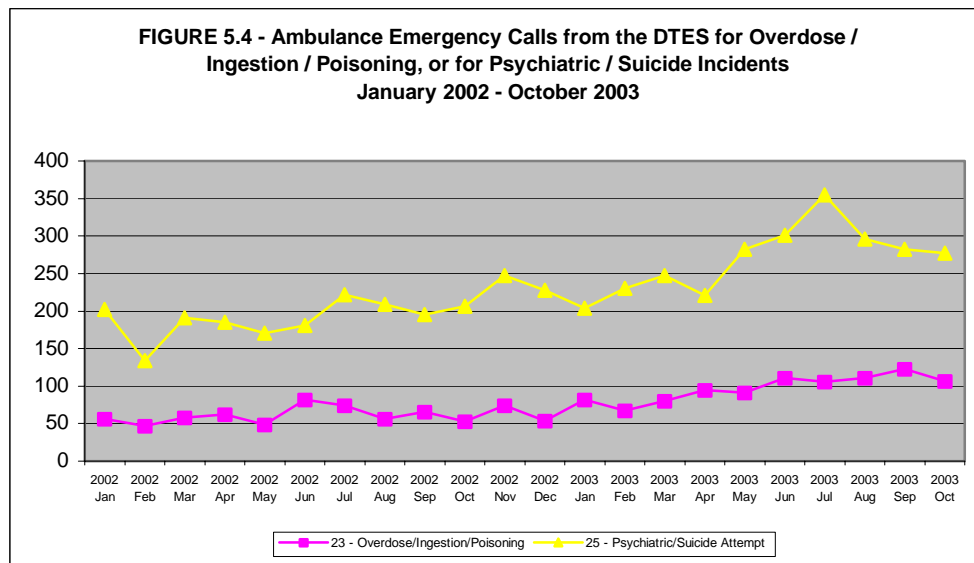
For non-fatal overdose and poisoning, another source of data is required. The data obtained from the B.C. Ambulance Service for the Downtown Eastside area of Vancouver present a more troubling pattern (See Table 5.7). During the period of the CET initiative (April-October, 2003), there were a substantially higher frequency of emergency calls relating to drug overdoses and various forms of poisoning (+68%) than in the same period during the previous year (April to October 2002). There was an even larger increase (+105.2%) in the number of emergency incidents related to Narcotics (heroin) use.

Caution should be exercised in ascribing these increases solely to police intervention as part of the CET initiative. As Figure 5.4 illustrates, the observed upward trend for these types of calls began long before April 2003, although it is clear that the trend continued for all of these types of calls during the following months. The reasons for the continued upward trend lines are not readily apparent.

TABLE 5.7.
Percentage Increase in the Number of Ambulance Emergency Calls Received from the DTES for Potentially Drug Related Emergencies during April-October, 2002 (pre-CET) and April-October 2003 (during CET)

Type of Call	April-Oct 2002	April-Oct 2003	Percentage Increase
Overdose/Ingestion/Poisoning	442	744	68.3
Narcotics (Heroin)	58	119	105.2

Source: B.C. Ambulance Service



Source: B.C. Ambulance Service

Hospitalization

In an attempt to assess the impact of the CET on the health of drug users and on their access to the health care system and, more specifically, hospital resources, the hospitalization data provided by the B.C. Ministry of Health Services extracted from its Discharge Abstract Database (Information Resource Management) were analyzed.

The data include residents of the DTES who were hospitalized between April 1, 2002 and March 31, 2003 and between April 1, 2003 and December 30, 2003. The data contained in the database do not permit a distinction between injection drug users and non-injection drug users, but

rather only between the substances used. A subset of data was therefore created that included only patients hospitalized with a “most responsible diagnosis” included in the list of conditions likely to be present among drug abusers (pneumonia, cellulites and skin abscess, sepsis, infective endocarditis, septic arthritis, osteomyelitis, gangrene, peylonephritis, thrombosis, trauma/ fracture psychiatric illness) and a concomitant secondary diagnosis of mental/behavioural disorder due to the use of one of the following substances: opioids, cocaine, other stimulants including caffeine, hallucinogens, multiple drugs, and other psychoactive substances. The trauma admissions, which were fewer in number, were also analyzed separately from the other admissions.

Table 5.8 and the associated graph illustrate the number of these admissions for the period April-December, 2003, as compared to the same time period for 2002. The data do not indicate an increase in demand for health care attention due to medical conditions associated with drug abuse. In fact, there was a significant *decrease* in the number of admissions beginning in August 2003. The comparison between the two year time periods reveals a change that is difficult to interpret and may not be associated with the CET: the number of admissions began to decrease around August 2003, precisely at the time when it had shown an increase in the previous year. It is difficult to relate that change to the CET initiative itself since the latter had been implemented a full three months earlier. In fact, the number of monthly admissions begins to be significantly lower in the final months of the CET initiative than it was in the previous year in September 2003.

The pattern is similar for trauma admissions. Table 5.9 and the associated graph present data on the number of hospitalizations for trauma for the months April-December, 2002 and 2003 and the percent change for these time periods. There were a total of 118 admissions for trauma during the months April-December, 2002 and 95 during the same period in 2003. The data indicate that the number of admissions were comparatively higher for the months of June (+7.1%), July (+81.1%), and August (+30.8%), than in the same month the previous year. One should resist the temptation to attribute that short term “spike” in the number of trauma admissions to what was happening in the DTES during the CET. An equivalent spike had occurred, albeit a bit earlier, in the previous year. Furthermore, there is no ready explanation for the fact that the number of trauma admissions had begun to decrease in August as compared to an increase in admissions during August of the previous year. This suggests that there are a myriad of factors that influence the

number and types of admissions and that it is difficult to establish a direct relationship between specific interventions such as the CET and hospital admissions.

TABLE 5.8 - Hospital Admissions of DTES Patients for a Number of Conditions Often Associated with Drug Abuse with a Concomitant Diagnosis of Mental/Behavioural Disorder Due to the Use of Psychoactive Substance - April to December 2003, as Compared to the Same Period in 2002.

DTES Drug Abusers Admissions			
Month	2002	2003	Total
April	83	67	-19.3%
May	96	83	-13.5%
June	75	77	2.7%
July	81	98	21.0%
August	75	85	13.3%
September	88	56	-36.4%
October	108	43	-60.2%
November	82	44	-46.3%
December	74	35	-52.7%

Source: B.C. Ministry of Health Services

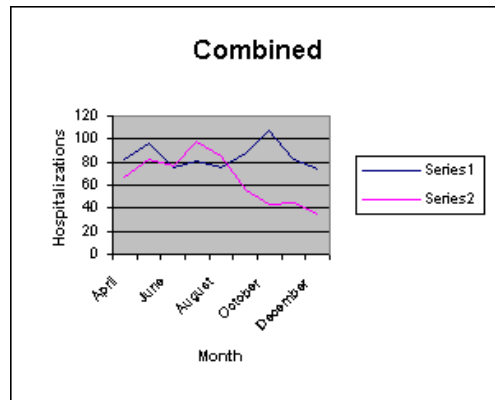
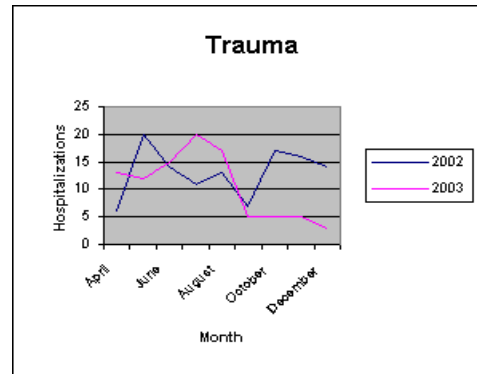


TABLE 5.9 Hospital Admissions of DTES Patients for Trauma with a Concomitant Diagnosis of Mental/Behavioural Disorder Due to the Use of Psychoactive Substance, April to December 2002 and April-December 2003.

DTES Drug Abusers Trauma Admissions			
Month	2002	2003	Total
April	6	13	116.7%
May	20	12	-40.0%
June	14	15	7.1%
July	11	20	81.8%
August	13	17	30.8%
September	7	5	-28.6%
October	17	5	-70.6%
November	16	5	-68.8%
December	14	3	-78.6%

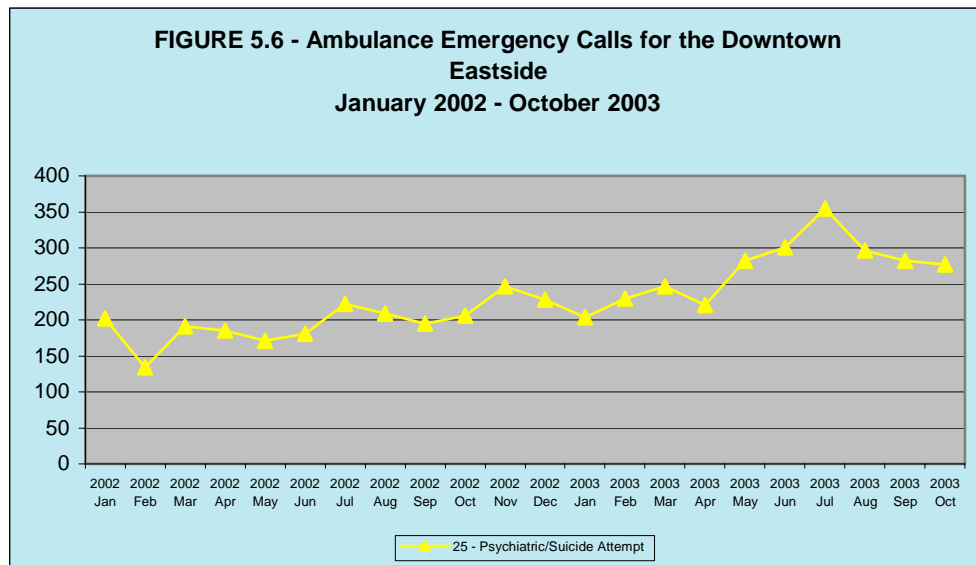
Source: B.C. Ministry of Health Services



Impact on Vulnerable Groups

The ambulance data indicate that there was a marked increase (+47.1%) in the number of calls related to psychiatric incidents and

attempted suicide during the CET initiative (April to October 2003: 2,014 incidents) as compared to the same period during the previous year (April to October 2002; 1,369 incidents). The beginning of the peak in the number of cases (see Figure 5.5) coincides with the beginning of the CET initiative. The data gathered in the study do not allow for a determination of the specific reasons, including the putative impact of the CET, for these increases and for the “spike” that occurred following implementation of the CET and the continued upward trend line.



Source: B. C. Ambulance Service

By contrast, data from the VPD Records Management System (PRIME) show that there were 13.6% fewer interventions in relation to so-called “psychiatric incidents” during the CET than there had been during the same period the previous year. There was a similar reduction (-15.5%) in the number of such cases for the city as a whole.

Questions and Findings

Following are several key questions about the impact of the CET initiative on the open drug market and on public health.

Question: *Was the DTES drug market disrupted or otherwise affected by the CET initiative and, if so, how?*

Yes. Data gathered for this evaluation indicate that the CET was successful in disrupting the open drug market, *as it existed at the time the initiative was implemented in April 5, 2003*. The widespread disorder that accompanied the open drug market and that was centered at Main and Hastings streets was also disrupted. The data also indicate that the drug market did not disappear, nor was this an objective of the CET. However the drug market did reconstitute itself in a different form in other areas of the DTES and District 2 and in adjacent police districts. These re-constituted drug markets created localized hotspots characterized by drug dealing and property crimes. Residents in the DTES perceived that order had been established in the area and reported increased feelings of safety and security. It is important to note that the impact on the open drug market and the associated stolen property market occurred within the general context of declining crime in the DTES, District 2, and in adjacent police districts.

Question: *Did the CET initiative affect the availability, the price, or the quality of illicit drugs in the DTES and/or in Vancouver?*

Information gathered from IV drug users, focus group participants, and from offenders incarcerated for drug-related offences suggests that the price and availability of drugs were not significantly affected by the CET initiative. As with any market, the drug market adapted to the increased police presence and intervention and assumed different forms as the drug dealers and their clients were displaced and then dispersed into other areas.

Generally speaking, discussions of the drug market and of drug use in the DTES most often relate to heroin and IV drug use. There is considerable evidence to suggest, however, that heroin is no longer the drug of choice for most drug users in the DTES. The survey of community residents found, for example, that the most frequently used drug was alcohol, followed by marijuana. The heroin IV drug user population appears to be older than other drug-user groups and declining in number.

There is evidence to indicate that the CET initiative affected the quality of drugs available in the DTES. There is also a perception among many residents, drug users and others that this has resulted in an increase in violence and aggression in the area, as users retaliated against dealers. There is also evidence to suggest that, as

the some of the higher profile drug dealers were arrested or pushed away from the area, they were replaced by a larger number of “small” dealers who may not have established relationships with the user population.

Question: *Did the CET initiative produce changes in what drugs were being used and where drug users were using them?*

It is difficult to determine from the data how the availability of specific types of drugs was affected by the CET initiative and whether certain drugs were affected more than others. Nor is it possible to determine specifically how drug usage patterns were affected by the CET, although there was a general perception among those interviewed for the study, and among focus group participants, that the CET did result in an increase in drug dealing and drug use in private locations, e.g. hotel rooms. The experiences of the field researchers were that a myriad of drugs were always on offer on the street in the DTES during the CET.

Question: *Was the CET initiative responsible for any changes in injection related risk behaviour of drug users in the DTES?*

The data gathered for this evaluation did not identify any clear changes in the injection-related risk behaviour of drug users in the DTES. Perhaps the greatest impact on the injection-related behaviour of drug users in the DTES was the opening of the Supervised Injection Site (SIS) in September 2003. There was a generally held perception among the survey samples, including the IV drug users, that the SIS had reduced injection-related risk behaviour and that IV drug users were making use of the facility despite police presence in the area. This perception was confirmed by media reports that the SIS was receiving four to five hundred IV drug users a day. This dispelled any initial concerns that had been voiced by various parties that the increased police presence in the DTES would have a negative impact to the access to and utilization of the SIS by IV drug users.

Question: *Did the CET initiative have an impact on the number of fatal and non-fatal cases of drug overdose in the DTES or in Vancouver?*

The CET did not have a noticeable impact on the number of fatal drug overdoses observed in the DTES (or in the city of Vancouver) during the initiative as compared to the number observed in the same period of time the previous year. The B.C. Ambulance data reveal that calls for drug-related emergencies increased during the operation of the CET as compared to the same period of time in the previous year. However, since a number of these emergency ambulance calls were generated as a result of the increased presence of the police in the area, it is difficult to draw definite conclusions from this single source.

Question: *Did the CET initiative's disruption of the drug market in the DTES also disrupt the provision of health care services and outreach programs to drug users, in particular, IV drug users?*

There was no clear evidence that the disruption of the open drug market in the DTES also significantly disrupted the provision of health care services and outreach programs to drug users, in particular, to IV drug users.

Question: *Did the CE initiative's disruption of the DTES drug market disrupt the provision of HIV prevention services to IV drug users, or limit their access to sterile syringes?*

There was no clear evidence that the disruption of the drug market in the DTES also significantly disrupted the provision of HIV prevention services to IV drug users, or limited users' access to sterile syringes. This is consistent with the needle exchange data reported in another study (Wood *et al.*, 2004), which reveal a 10% increase in the number of syringes distributed in the first three months of the CET initiative, as compared to the three months preceding it.

Chapter 5 - References:

WOOD, E., SPITTAL, P., SMALL, W., KERR, T., HOGG, R.S., TYNDALL, M.W., MONATNER, J.S.G., and M.T. SSCHECHTER (2004). "Displacement of Canada's Largest Public Illicit Drug Market in Response to a Police Crackdown", *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, Vol. 170 (10), pp. 1551-6.

6

The Impact on Public Disorder

Restoring order to the DTES community was a primary objective of the CET initiative. A portion of the activities of the officers assigned to the initiative's special team were directed toward this objective, even if their efforts were not uniformly appreciated by all segments of the community. A number of data sources were utilized to assess whether the initiative had a noticeable impact on the levels of disorder in the DTES.

Police Records

The impact of the CET initiative on public disorder in the DTES was first assessed by analyzing data from the Vancouver Police Department's PRIME B.C. Records Management System for the periods between April 1 and December 30, 2002 and April 1, and December 30, 2003. For the analysis, the data were categorized by police district. Selected portions of the data were then analyzed using three separate categories of disorder offences, each composed of several types of offences as follows:

Category 1 - Minor Disorder: Disturbing the Peace and Causing a Disturbance, Mischief of \$5,000 or Under and Public Mischief.

Category 2 - Serious Disorder: Mischief Over \$5,000, Obstruction of Peace Officer, Shots Fired, Threatening -Uttering Threats.

Category 3 - Alcohol offences

The use of official police data to measure the incidence of disorder incidents was complicated by the fact that the data are directly influenced by how proactive the police are and the amount of resources that the police have at any particular point in time to provide services to an area. A large number of incidents involving minor (e.g. public mischief, disturb the peace) and major disorder (e.g. obstruct police office, threatening) are included in official police statistics only when the police proactively intervene. As a result, it is difficult to ascertain whether an increase in the number of recorded incidents represents an increase in disorderly conduct or simply an increase in police proactive interventions and/or in the level of resources allocated to these proactive police activities.

In the present case, analysis of the official police data reveals that the frequency of disorder incidents recorded by the police *decreased* in Vancouver and in every district during the CET initiative as compared to the same period of time the previous year. In the case of District 2, the fact that the CET initiative was being conducted would normally create an expectation that the number of official cases would go up, thus reflecting the increased order-maintenance activity in which the special team was engaged during the initiative. This expected increase was not observed and it thus became very difficult to draw conclusions from that particular data source.

Unlike the “dispatch data” (“CAD” data), that will be presented later, the PRIME data do not capture all of the activities and police-community dynamics that occur, such as disruptive behaviour, e.g. arguments and other forms of conflict. As well, it is known that in carrying out their tasks, police officers mediate and resolve informally many of the conflicts they encounter or that are brought to their attention. It can be anticipated that the police officers assigned to the DTES, and, in particular, those officers with extensive experience in policing in the DTES, had developed a skill set that allowed them to resolve many incidents without further enforcement or investigation. Also, it will be recalled that a core strategy of the CET initiative was visible police presence and that enforcement was only one component of the initiative.

It is important, then, to consider these statistical data in conjunction with the qualitative data gathered for the evaluation. This includes the street observations and the survey interviews with the police officers, health care professionals, community residents, and business owners and the information gathered from various stakeholder groups in the focus group sessions. As well, the “Overnights” are a key indicator of

serious disorder in the area. As previously noted, see page Figure 5.2, the number of “Overnight” reports of serious incidents decreased appreciably during the first three months (March to June 2003). Although they subsequently increased during the next three months, they did not return to their pre-CET levels.

Analysis of the PRIME data reveals that, generally speaking, the City of Vancouver experienced a *decrease* in most of the offence categories in all police districts during the time period of April-December, 2002 to April-December, 2003 (See Table 6.1). Offence data from the four police districts indicate that there were significant decreases in incidents of Minor Disorder, Serious Disorder, and even for Alcohol offences.

Comparison of the time period September 1 and December 30 for the years 2002 and 2003 reveals a very substantial *decrease* (-44.3%) in the number of incidents of disorder registered in the City of Vancouver between 2003 (695 cases) and 2002 (1248). There was also a 15.4% decrease in the number of cases of minor disorder recorded for the City as a whole (2003: 3,413; 2002: 4,035), District 2 also experienced similar decreases during 2003 (-32.2% serious disorder; -13.8% minor disorder). There were a total 44 public alcohol offences, a specific form of disorder, in the City of Vancouver in the nine months following the beginning of the CET initiative (as compared to 67 during the same period in the previous year). Sixteen of these cases were in District 2, only one more than the previous year.

TABLE 6.1 - Percentage Change in the Number of Offences Known to the Police for Minor Disorder, Serious Disorder, and Alcohol Offences, April 1, 2002-September 30, 2002 (pre-CET) and April 1, 2003-September 30, 2003 (during CET)

Type of Disorder	PERCENTAGE INCREASE / DECREASE				
	District 1	District 2 (DTES)	District 3	District 4	Total Vancouver
Minor Disorder	-13.2	-13.8	-17.0	-17.2	-15.4
Serious Disorder	-42.1	-32.2	-50.0	-52.1	-44.3
Alcohol Offences	-23.8	6.7	-94.4	-15.4	-34.3

Source: VPD, PRIME B.C.

In an attempt to determine whether, on a District-wide basis, certain types of offences were being displaced from one district to

another, the total number of incidents for each period, as a percentage of the total number of incidents in the City of Vancouver as a whole, was calculated for each district and for each grouping of disorder offences. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 6.2 below.

TABLE 6.2 - Percentage Change in the Number of Offences Known to the Police for Minor Disorder, Major Disorder, Property Crime, Violent Crime, and Drug Offences by Policing District, as a Percentage of the Total Number of these Offences in the City of Vancouver, April 1, 2002-September 30, 2002 (pre-CET) and April 1, 2003-September 30, 2003 (during CET)

Type of Disorder	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL CASES IN VANCOUVER							
	District 1		District 2 (DTES)		District 3		District 4	
	2002	2003	2002	2003	2002	2003	2002	2003
Minor Disorder	24.2	24.8	22.8	23.3	25.5	25.0	27.5	26.9
Serious Disorder	23.2	24.2	24.4	29.6	30.0	26.9	22.4	19.3
Alcohol Offences	31.3	36.4	22.4	36.4	26.9	2.3	19.4	25.0

Source: VPD, PRIME B.C.

The percentages presented in Table 6.2 indicate that there was little change in the proportion of disorder offences in each District from 2002 to 2003. If displacement of disorder from the DTES to adjacent police districts did occur, it is not reflected in district-wide offence data as recorded in the PRIME record system. This does not preclude the possibility that displacement of offenders and their criminal behaviour did occur but cannot be measured by examining and comparing district-wide data. In other words, the composite totals of offences from each district may mask the presence of specific crime “hot spots” that are a consequence of displacement from the DTES. In fact, there is considerable evidence that the displacement of drug dealers from the DTES did result in localized “hot spots” in adjacent areas and districts, particularly in district 1.

Police Dispatch Data

To ascertain whether there were changes that occurred in the number of disorder incidents in the DTES as a result of the CET initiative,

data were obtained from the VPD Computer Assisted Dispatch (CAD) system for each of the four police districts of Vancouver for the period between April 1, 2003 and September 30, 2003, the time period during which the CET was in operation, and the same period of time during the previous year.

With respect to incidents of disorder and violent crime, three groups of calls/incidents were examined: (1) a first sub-group of seven types of incidents that was designated as “minor disorder”, including calls for cab trouble, disturbance in public, indecent exposure, mischief in progress, noise complaints, person annoying, person screaming; (2) a second group of six types of incidents referred to as “serious disorder” because they implied a risk of personal harm to someone that included fights, person with a gun, person with a knife, prowler, shots fired, and threats; and, (3) the number of incidents classified in the CAD system as “prostitution creating an annoyance” was also examined.

It must be reiterated that the number of calls/incidents registered in official police statistics is due, in part, to the nature and extent of police proactive activities and the degree to which officers are present in a district. During the CET initiative, there was a total of 4,951 serious disorder and 22,987 minor disorder incidents recorded in the VPD CAD system for the City of Vancouver as a whole. As Table 6.3 illustrates, for the City as a whole, the number of calls/incidents of disorder, were substantially higher for the six-month period in 2003 than for the equivalent period in 2002. Throughout the City, there was also an increase of 35.6% in the number of incidents of minor disorder and an increase of 13% in the number of serious disorder incidents recorded during the CET initiative as compared to the same period during the previous year. The frequency of these incidents increased in all districts, but particularly in Districts 1 and 2.

In both District 1 and District 2, the observed increase in the number of interventions relating to minor disorder was much larger than for the City as a whole. In the case of District 2, there was an increase of 42.3% (from 4,610 to 6,562) in the number of incidents of minor disorder during the six months of the CET initiative as compared to the same period the previous year. There was also an increase of 11.0% in the number of serious disorder incidents. These increases are hardly surprising given that the CET initiative was designed to restore order and this involved, among other strategies, a “zero tolerance” approach to all incidents of disorder. The increase in minor disorder in District 1, which was even greater than in District 2, is more difficult to explain, particularly since

there were no specific CET-like initiatives undertaken in District One. Proportionally speaking, District 2, in spite of the CET initiative, continued to respond to approximately 28% of the total number of incidents of minor disorder that came to the attention of the VPD and 31% of the total number of incidents of serious disorder in the City of Vancouver (see Table 6.5).

The impact of the CET initiative is more evident when considering the number of interventions related to “prostitution creating an annoyance” (Table 6.4). There was a relative *increase* of 27.7% of these interventions in District 2 during the CET initiative, at the same time as the other three districts were registering a decrease in the number of these interventions and the VPD as a whole recorded a similar decrease of 4.7%.

TABLE 6.3 - Percentage Change in the Number of Service Requests/Responses for Minor and Senior Disorder Incidents, April 1, 2002 - December 30, 2002 (pre-CET) and April 1, 2003 to September 30, 2003 (during CET).

Type of Calls	PERCENTAGE INCREASE / DECREASE				
	District 1	District 2 (DTES)	District 3	District 4	Total Vancouver
Minor Disorder	50.6%	42.3%	24.7%	16.1%	35.6%
Major Disorder	21.5%	11.0%	9.9%	6.2%	13.0%

Source: VPD CAD

TABLE 6.4 - Percentage Change in the Number of Service Requests/Responses to Situations of “Prostitution Creating an Annoyance”, April 1, 2002-December 30, 2002 (pre-CET) and April 1, 2003 to September 30, 2003 (during CET).

Type of Calls	PERCENTAGE INCREASE / DECREASE				
	District 1	District 2 (DTES)	District 3	District 4	Total Vancouver
Prostitution Annoyance	-11.0%	27.7%	-1.7%	-72.7%	-4.7%

Source: VPD CAD

To consider whether some of the disorder was being displaced by the CET initiative from District 2 to other districts, the total number of incidents for each period - as a percentage of the total number of incidents in the City of Vancouver - was also calculated. The figures in Table 6.5 and in Figure 6.1, clearly indicate that, for both minor and

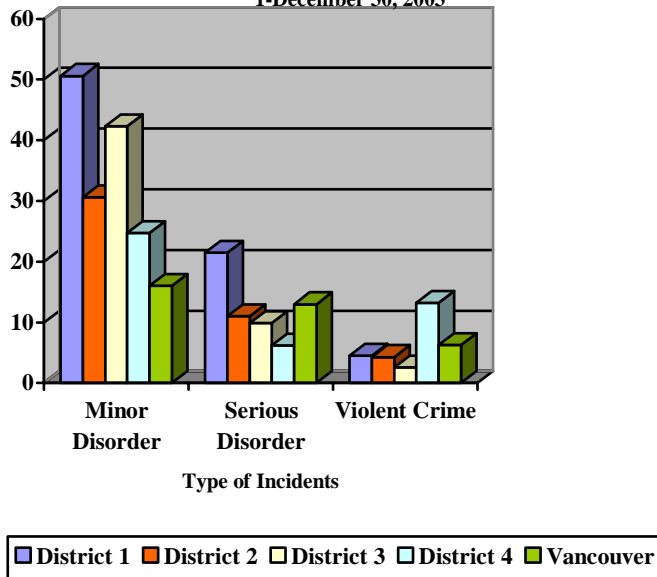
serious disorder, there was little change observed in the proportion of incidents found in each district between the two periods of time.

TABLE 6.5 - Number of Disorder Incidents/Calls per District as a Percentage of the Total Number of Calls Received for the City of Vancouver during the CET Initiative, April 1,2002-December 30, 2002 (pre-CET) and April 1, 2003 to September 30, 2003 (during CET).

Type of Calls	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL CASES IN VANCOUVER ⁴							
	District 1		District 2 (DTES)		District 3		District 4	
	2002	2003	2002	2003	2002	2003	2002	2003
Minor Disorder	29.5	32.8	27.2	28.5	20.2	18.6	22.8	19.5
Major Disorder	24.3	26.1	31.6	31.0	25.6	24.9	17.3	16.3
Prostitution Annoyance	2.4	2.3	20.9	28.0	65.3	67.4	5.7	1.6

Source: VPD CAD

FIGURE 6.1 - Percentage Change in Number of Calls Received for Disorder and Violent Crime During April 1-December 30, 2002 and April 1-December 30, 2003



⁴ Note that the total number of cases for the City of Vancouver includes the calls for each of the four districts, plus a small number of cases classified as “unspecified”. These additional cases account for the fact the total percentages may not add up to 100%.

Residents' Perceptions of Disorder

Table 6.6 – Residents' Perceptions of Disorder in the DTES during the First Six Months of the CET Initiative.

Perceived Change	Increased	Decreased	Same	Don't Know
People drinking in public	12/95 (12.6)	20/95 (21.1)	56/95 (57.7)	7/95 (7.4)
People drunk in public	10/95 (10.5)	16/95 (16.8)	63/95 (66.3)	6/95 (6.3)
People using drugs in public*	13/94 (13.8)	43/94 (45.7)	29/94 (30.9)	9/94 (9.6)
People using drugs in private	23/95 (24.2)	6/95 (6.3)	24/95 (25.3)	42/95 (44.2)
People dealing drugs in public*	17/95 (17.9)	36/95 (37.9)	38/95 (40.0)	4/95 (4.2)
People dealing drugs in private	22/94 (23.4)	5/94 (5.3)	21/94 (22.3)	46/94 (48.9)
Number of prostitutes	11/92 (12.0)	19/92 (20.7)	50/92 (54.3)	12/92 (13.0)
Number of violent arguments between people	39/95 (41.1)	10/95 (10.5)	35/95 (36.8)	11/95 (11.6)
People harassing other people	35/95 (36.8)	15/95 (15.8)	37/95 (38.9)	8/95 (8.4)
Number of people living on street	50/95 (52.6)	24/95 (25.3)	18/95 (18.9)	3/95 (3.2)
Number of people coming into the area	28/94 (29.8)	28/94 (29.8)	24/94 (25.5)	14/94 (14.9)
Safety on the streets*	39/95 (41.1)	17/95 (17.9)	35/95 (36.8)	4/95 (4.2)

*Key CET indicator

The community residents interviewed for the study were nearly evenly divided in their view as to whether the DTES area had become a better place to live since the implementation of the CET initiative than in the previous six months. A majority of the residents (51/96, 53.1%) indicated that their ability to utilize streets, access public spaces, programs and services had remained the same during the CET, while just over 30% indicated that this ability had “Increased a little” or “Increased a lot”.

Nearly all of the residents (85/94, 90.4%) stated that they walked around their neighbourhood “Frequently” or “Always” and a similar percentage indicated that they felt safe doing so during the day. These feelings of personal safety had remained the same throughout the CET’s first six months. A smaller, yet still high percentage (59/97, 60.8%) of the residents stated that they felt safe walking in the neighbourhood at night and, for 19% (18/96) of the residents, these feelings of safety had increased during the CET and for 88% they had remained the same.

These findings indicate that a majority of the residents interviewed have a close connection to the community in which they live and many enjoy living in the area. They feel safe walking in their neighbourhood during the day and at night and they care about what happens in their community.

The residents interviewed for the evaluation were asked to provide their definition of “disorder.” Among the descriptors provided were “chaos, no one has control of the situation,” “lack of order,” “out of control,” and variations on these. When asked to provide an example of disorder, the respondents most frequently cited rampant drug dealing and use, i.e. “IV users on the sidewalk,” “aggressive soliciting of drugs,” and an “open drug market”.

A large majority (67/95, 70.5%) of the residents interviewed agreed that the situation in the DTES prior to April 2003 was “out of control.” The most frequently mentioned problems in the DTES were drugs, the drug subculture, the absence of education and employment opportunities for residents, the absence of affordable housing, poverty and the lack of enforcement of the laws by the police. Three-fourths of the sample felt that there were more problems in the DTES than in other areas of Vancouver and the reasons offered included many of the above-noted quality-of-life features: homelessness, drug addicts and dealers, poverty, and the open drug market.

Drugs and poverty were the two most frequently cited problems in the DTES. Residents provided a variety of suggestions when asked what they felt was the most effective way to address the problems in the DTES, including better and affordable housing, more enforcement efforts against drug dealers, the use of a coordinated approach centered on the Four Pillars Approach, an increase in programs and services, and more educational and employment opportunities.

With respect to who was responsible for addressing the disorder in the DTES, community residents identified the following: the police

(67/97, 69%), community residents (44/97, 45.4%), social service agencies (41/97, 42.3%), all agencies, and organizations working together (19/97, 19.6%), and government (16/97, 16.5%).

Nearly 50% of the residents felt that the police had a “great deal” or “reasonable amount” of impact on restoring order in the DTES, while 33% felt the police had a “little bit” of impact and six percent stated the police had no impact on restoring order.

Quality of Life

Disorder is only one of a number of quality of life issues for residents of a community. The community residents in the sample were asked a series of questions about the impact of the CET on the quality of life in the community and their responses are presented in Table 6.7.

TABLE 6.7: Survey of Community Residents on Quality of Life Impact of the CET: “Do you think that the CET has ...”

	YES	NO	DK
Improved the quality of life in the DTES	35/96 (36.5)	48/96 (50.0)	13/96 (13.5)
Made the streets safer for people	55/96 (57.3)	36/96 (37.5)	5/96 (5.2)
Reduced the number of people becoming victims of crime	29/96 (30.2)	43/96 (44.8)	24/96 (25.0)
Helped make the community more close-knit	16/96 (16.7)	68/96 (70.8)	12/96 (12.5)
Reduced the number of people who come to the DTES to commit crime	40/96 (41.7)	36/96 (37.5)	20/96 (20.8)
Reduced the number of people from the DTES who commit crime	29/93 (31.2)	44/93 (45.8)	20/93 (21.5)
Reduced the amount of litter and trash on the sidewalks/streets	21/96 (21.9)	65/96 (67.7)	10/96 (10.4)
Reduced the amount of drinking in public	26/96 (27.1)	60/96 (62.5)	10/96 (10.4)
Reduced the numbers of people hanging around	54/96 (56.3)	38/96 (39.6)	4/96 (4.2)
Reduced the number of people hanging around and causing trouble	35/96 (36.5)	41/96 (42.7)	20/96 (20.8)

The CET was perceived not to have improved the overall quality of life in the DTES or in making the community more “close knit.” These findings are, perhaps not surprising, given that the CET had only been in operation for six months at the time the residents were interviewed and

as “quality of life” and building community cohesiveness encompass a wide range of issues far beyond the scope of the CET and require a long-term time frame. The police and strategies such as the CET are only part of a more holistic approach to improving life in the DTES that is reflected in the Four Pillars Approach.

A majority of the residents perceived that the CET had made the streets in the community safer, reduced the number of people coming into the DTES from other areas, and reduced the number of people hanging around the streets in the area.

Residents in the survey were asked a variety of specific questions related to the impact of the CET on the quality of life in the community. These are presented in the series of tables below. Their responses indicate that 23% of the residents felt that the amount of drugs in the DTES had decreased in the six months since CET, while 44% felt that the availability had remained the same. Sixty-six percent felt that the price of drugs had remained the same. In terms of the accessibility of drugs, 23% indicated it had increased, 25% held the view that it had decreased, and 42% felt it had remained the same.

Offenders’ Perceptions

Half of the 32 DTES offenders interviewed in jail believed that the situation in the DTES prior to April 2003 was characterised by disorder. Ninety percent of the sample believed that there had been an increase or no change in the number of people drunk in public or drinking in public in the DTES. Only about 10% of the offenders believed that this type of disorder had been reduced by the CET initiative, while one-half of the offenders believed that there had been an increase in the number of people harassing other people in the area.

These offenders believed that there had either been an increase 15/21, 50.0%) or no change (10/31, 32.3%) in the number of people doing drugs in public.

Street Observations

During the street observations conducted for this evaluation, disorder of every kind was frequently observed and it tended, to a large extent, to be associated with the drug dealing. Serious crimes were not observed, but there were instances where the observers arrived after an

incident had occurred and the police, ambulance, or firemen were at the scene. It was difficult for the observers to obtain accurate information from anyone about what had occurred. The incidents would often involve violence, stabbing, and various types of altercations and fights. Confrontations were constantly observed and these were most often associated with drunkenness, substance abuse, arguments over drug deals and being “ripped off”, or people stealing from each other.

The frequency at which disorder occurred did not vary to any appreciable degree during the three months when the street observations were being recorded. It was not possible for the project team observers to make comparisons with the dynamics on the street in the DTES area prior to the time the CET was launched in April, 2003.

However, the contents of the incident logs that were kept by the project team observers are very similar to that of another incident log that had been kept by front door employees of a bar-bistro in the DTES and in which they recorded the incidents they observed during the time period January-June, 2002. Analysis of the project team incident logs also revealed that public disorder incidents were much less frequently observed in areas away from the Hastings Street corridor.

The Views of the Health Care Professionals

The major problems in the DTES, as identified by the health care professionals, were: poverty, drugs, a lack of housing, a paucity of relevant services, and the absence of a coordinated approach focused on long-term solutions. In the words of one respondent: “There are lots of hurt, damaged, and disenfranchised people who have ended up on the street.”

The problems in the DTES were viewed as being due to a number of factors, including poverty, a lack of political will on the part of government, the concentration of drug dealers and drug addicts in the area, disinterest on the part of Lower Mainland residents toward the DTES and its residents, the ineffectiveness of the police and social service agencies and organizations in the area, and a lack of programs and resources. Other factors identified by the health care professionals as contributing to the disorder in the DTES were mental health issues and racism.

A prevalent view among the health care professionals was that the policies of various governments had created an area where the poor and marginalized were concentrated, the area was neglected for many years (including by the police), and there were a number of destination services that attracted and kept people in the area.

A majority of the respondents (6/9, 67%) felt that the DTES had more problems than other areas of Vancouver, one professional stating that the area was “a melting pot for issues: mental, addiction, and racism”, and another commenting that “problems are right in your face; shit that happens down here which would not be tolerated in any other area.”

Among the changes that the health professionals had noticed in the DTES over the years was an increase in HIV and Hepatitis C, a shift from cocaine use to crack use, fewer heroin users, and an increased prevalence of crystal meth. The major reasons identified for these changes were the lack of housing, the closing of shelters, and the lack of detox services. A slight majority of the respondents (5/9, 56%) felt that the situation in the DTES had gotten worse over the past five years, although respondents were nearly evenly split as to whether they would characterize the situation in the community as being “disordered.” The perspective of those respondents who did not feel that the DTES was disordered is captured in the statement by one health care professional that “it is a different type of order.”

The health care professionals were asked to identify what they would consider to be the main reasons for the disorder in the DTES. Their responses are presented in Table 6.8.

TABLE 6.8- Interview with Health Care Professionals: “In your view, was the disorder in the DTES due to:”

	YES	NO
A small number of drug dealers doing their business without fear of the justice system	5 (55.6)	4 (44.4)
The large number of addicts in the area	7 (77.8)	2 (22.2)
The ineffectiveness of social service agencies and other organizations in the area	8 (88.9)	1 (11.1)
The lack of political will on the part of the mayor and council to deal with the issue	6 (66.7)	3 (33.3)
The indifferent attitude of residents in the Lower Mainland toward the DTES	8 (88.9)	1 (11.1)
The ineffectiveness of the police	5 (55.6)	4 (44.4)
The lack of resources and programs in the DTES	4 (44.4)	5 (55.6)
Poverty	9 (100.0)	

There was the perception among a slight majority of the respondents (5/9, 56%) that most of the drug users did not live in the DTES either prior to or after the implementation of the CET initiative. All of the respondents felt that there were not sufficient treatment resources available for persons in the DTES who wanted to get off drugs. The estimates of the number of current drug users in the DTES who were interested in accessing treatment ranged from 15% to 90%. Individual estimates are most likely a reflection of the specific clientele that each respondent had contact with in the course of their occupational activities.

A slight majority of the respondents (5/9, 56%) felt that persons who did not live in the DTES cared very little or not at all about what happened in the DTES, while a majority (6/9, 67%) felt that persons who did live in the area cared some or a lot about what went on in the community. Business owners were also generally perceived to care about what happened in the community and most of the respondents felt that private businesses had been negatively impacted by the problems in the DTES. Although most of the respondents (6/9, 67%) felt that people who are on the street in the DTES lived in the area, they were evenly split in terms of their view as to whether the persons who dealt drugs lived in the DTES.

Among the suggestions for addressing the problems in the DTES were more affordable housing, “serious implementation of the Four Pillars Plan”, and “multi-faceted, coordinated approach involving the community.”

The Views of the Core Police Officers

Officers were queried as to the images they had of the DTES prior to becoming a police officer and their responses most often included such descriptors as “low income”, “dangerous”, “drug-infested”, “skid row”, “open air drug dealing”, and “violent.” Similar images were held by the officers prior to their being posted to District 2, although a number of the officers added the descriptor “totally out of control” to their responses.

Prior to the implementation of the CET, the most serious problems in the DTES were described as “open lawlessness”, “prolific drug use and trafficking and associated violence” and the open drug market. In the words of one officer, “There was almost anarchy on the streets and a complete lack of public order.” Another officer observed: “There was a small criminal minority, but they believed they had a right to commit criminal acts without concern for the community.”

When queried as to their perceptions of the biggest problem in the DTES, the police officers identified the open drug market, the concentration of mentally ill, drug dependent and homeless persons, violence, and disorder and lawlessness. In the view of the officers, the best ways to address the issues in the DTES were a combination of police presence and enforcement using a multi-faceted approach involving other agencies. Several of the officers identified the need for proper resources and programs for the drug-addicted and the mentally ill and the importance of developing the other three pillars of the Four Pillars Approach. Officers also mentioned the importance of soliciting input from and working with community residents, and the importance of developing a rapport with persons in the community.

The Core police officers’ views on the role of a number of factors in the disorder that existed in the DTES are presented in Table 6.9.

TABLE 6.9 - Interviews with Core Police Officers: “In your view, was the disorder in the DTES due to:”

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
A small number of drug dealers doing their business without fear of the justice system	18 (90.0)	1 (5.0)	1 (5.0)
The large number of addicts in the area	20 (100.0)		
The lack of political will on the part of the mayor and council to deal with the issue	16 (80.0)	4 (20.0)	
The indifferent attitude of residents in the Lower Mainland toward the DTES	17 (85.0)	3 (15.0)	
The ineffectiveness of the police	16* (80.0)	4 (20.0)	
Poverty	14 (70.0)	6 (30.0)	
The ineffectiveness of social service agencies and other organizations in the area partly	12 (60.0)	7 (35.0)	1 (5.0)
The lack of resources and programs in the DTES	9 (45.0)	10 (50.0)	1 (5.0)

*One response of “partially” has been included as a “Yes.”

There was general agreement among the Core officers that a combination of factors contributed to the disorder and chaos that characterized the DTES prior to April, 2003. These factors can be generally grouped into the ineffectiveness of the police and other agencies in the area, indifference on the part of the City Hall and the general public, and the large number of drug dealers and their clients that were in the area. Other factors identified by the officers as contributing to disorder in the DTES were the welfare system that provided free food and clothes so that money was spent on drugs and the ineffectiveness of court sentences in keeping drug dealers off the street.

All of the officers interviewed felt that the CET had reduced the overall level of disorder in the DTES, had reduced the level of conflict between people on the street, and made the streets safer for residents. All but one of the officers stated that there had been an increase in the number of elderly persons on the street. A large majority of the officers held the view that the CET had reduced the levels of open drug dealing, made it more difficult for drug dealers to operate, reduced the levels of public drug use and reduced the levels of violence associated with street level drug trafficking.

In general, then, the officers perceived that the CET had been successful in re-establishing order in the DTES, increasing the numbers of law-abiding residents on the street, and in disrupting the open drug market. The CET was viewed as less effective in reducing the likelihood that persons would become involved in the drug/crime/prostitution lifestyle and there was the near-unanimous perception that CET had not reduced the levels of street prostitution.

Perceptions of the Business Owners

A slight majority (14/26, 54%) of the respondent sample felt that the situation in the DTES had deteriorated over the previous five years and a similar number felt that the DTES could be described as “disordered.” The “open drug market” was cited as a major reason for the disorder that existed in the community, along with the absence of control over drug distribution and consumption. Among the reasons cited were “No enforcement on drug dealers/users”, the presence of drugs such as crack, an increase in the number of persons on the street, and a decline in public safety. The major problems in the DTES, in order of frequency of mention, were identified as drugs, crime, poverty, and the lack of policing. These problems were viewed as more extensive than in other areas of the Lower Mainland and were ascribed to drugs, poverty, crime, and the fact that these and other issues were treated differently than in other areas. The one single problem identified most frequently was drugs.

There was a widely shared perception (15/26, 69%) that most of the persons who dealt drugs in the DTES did not live in the area.

Sixty-five percent (17/26) of the respondents indicated they felt that people who did not live in the DTES carried “a lot” or “some” about what happens in the area, while the view of the large majority (24/26; 92%) of business persons was that persons who lived in the area cared “a lot” about the DTES. As well, all of the business persons interviewed felt that business owners in the DTES cared “a lot” (24/25) or “some” (1/25) about what happened in the DTES.

The majority (21/26, 81%) of businesspersons interviewed stated that the situation in the DTES prior to April 2003 was out of control and that this affected their businesses. The main reasons offered for the situation included “open drugs and dealing”, “nobody dealing with the problems:”, “no order”, “people can do anything they want down here,”

and “too many people on the street doing drugs openly.” The most frequently mentioned impacts of this situation on the businesses were fear and having customers scared away or deterred from coming into the area. A majority (22/26, 85%) of the businesses had been the victim of a criminal offence, i.e. break-in, stolen goods, shoplifting, and many of the businesses had been victimized more than once.

The respondents offered a variety of suggestions for how the problems of the DTES could best be addressed. The most frequently mentioned were “More severe sentences in court,” “More police”, and “More mental health services.”

Traffic Accidents Involving Pedestrians

Another indicator of disorder that is associated with the open drug market is the number of people under the influence of drugs on the street, crossing the streets and sometimes getting involved in accidents. In order to verify whether that form of disorder had perhaps been affected by the CET initiative, data were obtained from the City of Vancouver Engineering Department on the number of car accidents involving pedestrians which occurred between April 1, 2001 and October 31, 2003 on the Hastings Street Corridor between Carrall Street and Jackson Avenue. There were only three accidents involving pedestrians that occurred in that section of the corridor between April 1, 2003 and October 31, 2003, as compared to 7 during the same period of time the previous year. However, that reduction pales by comparison to the reduction that had occurred during that period in 2002 and the same period of time in 2001: from 23 accidents (2001) to 7 (2002). It is therefore unlikely that the reduction observed in the number of accidents involving pedestrians was the result of the special police initiative in 2003.

Questions and Findings

Question: *What evidence is there that the amount of disorder present in the DTES was significantly reduced by the CET initiative?*

The reduction of the high level of disorder associated with the open drug market was one of the three main objectives of the CET initiative and it appears to have been achieved. Given that the observed decline in the frequency of officially recorded disorder incidents in the DTES and in District 2 from 2002 to 2003, it is

difficult to measure statistically the impact of the CET on number of officially recorded offences. To this end, the evaluation sought out the opinions and perceptions of persons who live and work in the DTES and these data indicate widespread agreement that the CET had reduced the levels of disorder in the DTES. The perceptions of persons who live and work in an area are, in many ways, as important as the official police data, as they are likely to make decisions such as using public areas and patronizing local businesses based on their perceptions of safety and other quality of life issues.

Question: *Is there any evidence that disorderly conducts and incidents were displaced to other areas of the DTES, District Two, or other parts of the City of Vancouver?*

Analysis of official crime data is inconclusive regarding the question of whether disorder was actually displaced, as a result of the CET initiative, from the DTES to other parts of the District or to other areas. On the other hand, police dispatch data (for the period the CET was in operation and for the equivalent period during the previous year) clearly show a sizeable increase in the frequency of major incidents of disorder in the city of Vancouver (13%) and a large increase in the frequency of incidents of minor disorder in Vancouver as a whole (35.6%) and an every single district. New hotspots appeared at different places within the city over the period of time, but there did not seem to be, as such, major displacement of the volume of disorder from one District to another.

7

The Impact on Property Crime and the Flow of Stolen Property

Given the CET initiative's stated objective with respect to property crime, this chapter examines whether the initiative was able to interfere with the flow of stolen property in the DTES. It also considers the available evidence on the impact the initiative may have had on property crime in the DTES and in the rest of the City. At the outset it is important to point out that there are significant differences in the dynamics and measurement of property crime and the stolen property market.

Offences Known to the Police

One way to assess the impact of the CET initiative on property crime in the DTES and in Vancouver as a whole was to analyze the data from the Vancouver Police Department's PRIME B.C. Records Management System for the periods between April 1 and December 30, 2002 and April 1, and December 30, 2003.

For the analysis, the data were categorized by police district. The property crime category included the following offences: Break and Enter, Theft, Theft of Vehicle, Theft from Vehicle, Shoplifting, and Possession of Stolen Property.

The data reveal that, generally speaking, the City of Vancouver experienced a *decrease* in all of the property crime categories during the time period of April-December, 2003, as compared to the period April-December, 2002 (See Table 7.1). Property offence data from the four police districts indicate that there were quite large decreases in every category of incidents: Break and Enter (-33.5%), Shoplifting (-48.4%),

Theft (not related to vehicles) (-22.3%), Theft from Vehicle (-14.8), Possession of Stolen Property (-9.4%), and even Theft of Vehicle (-7.0%).

In District Two, during the nine months that followed the beginning of the CET initiative, the following number of offences were known to the police: 987 B&E incidents (33.7% fewer incidents than in the same period of time the previous year), 151 incidents of shoplifting (40.8 fewer such incidents than the previous year), 1130 cases of Theft not including theft of vehicles (15.5% fewer such incidents than the previous year), 1003 incidents of Theft from Vehicle (18.5% less than there were during the same period during the previous year).

These observed decreases were more or less proportional to the decreases observed in the City as a whole and therefore it is difficult to attribute them directly to the impact of the CET. The number of cases of Possession of Stolen Property (287 in 2003, as compared to 301 in 2002) represents a reduction of less than 5% in the District which includes the DTES when all other districts have known greater reductions (District 1: -26.0%; District 3: -41.4%; and, District 4: -14.5%).

TABLE 7.1 - Percentage Change in the Number of Property Offences Known to the Police, April 1, 2002-September 30, 2002 (pre-CET) and April 1, 2003-September 30, 2003 (during CET).

Type of Property Offences	PERCENTAGE INCREASE / DECREASE				
	District 1	District 2 (DTES)	District 3	District 4	Total Vancouver
B & E	-19.5	-33.7	-41.2	-33.3	-33.5
Theft	-27.5	-15.5	-33.7	-12.9	-22.3
Theft of Vehicle	-23.0	-7.2	-0.4	-0.9	-7.0
Theft from Car	-15.5	-18.5	-13.8	-11.2	-14.8
Shoplifting	-51.4	-40.8	-51.8	-42.5	-48.5
Possession of Stolen Property	-26.0	-4.7	-41.7	-14.5	-19.4

Source: VPD, PRIME BC

There is nothing in these data that would lead to the conclusion that the CET initiative had a perceptible impact on the property crime in

the DTES or on the flow of stolen property into the area. This finding is due, at least in part, to the methodological difficulties of operationalizing the concept of “flow of stolen property” and its various manifestations. Senior police officers interviewed noted that they found absolutely that “blatant trafficking” of stolen property was taking place in the DTES before the CET initiative and that police officers were seizing many items of great value. After the CET had been in operation for a while, they noted that the number of suspected stolen items seized was much lower and the items were of less value. This was confirmed by data from the extract system on second hand transactions in the DTES presented below.

Second-hand Transactions

The following data obtained from the Vancouver Police Department shows the changes observed in the amount second property transactions that took place in various parts of Vancouver (Table 7.2). Monitoring the transactions involving second-hand goods is indeed a very imperfect and indirect measure of transactions in stolen goods. However, it would be normal to expect that the volume of second-hand transactions in stores would be affected negatively if the flow of stolen property had been interrupted as intended by the CET initiative.

TABLE 7.2 - Second-hand Transactions, April 1, 2002-September 30, 2002 (pre-CET) and April 1, 2003-September 30, 2003 (during CET).

Area		Transactions	Value of Goods (\$)	Clients	Value per Transaction	Value per Client
Downtown Eastside	2002	12,879	828,174	9,366	\$64.30	\$88.42
	2003	13,174	624,522	9,665	\$47.41	\$64.62
	% Change	2.29%	-24.59%	3.19%	-26.27%	-26.92%
Commercial Drive & Mt. Pleasant area	2002	7,932	1,339,866	5,554	\$168.92	\$241.24
	2003	8,860	1,489,448	6,505	\$168.11	\$228.97
	% Change	11.70%	11.16%	17.12%	-0.48%	-5.09%
Granville/Seymour & Central Business area	2002	8,541	725,476	6,647	\$84.94	\$109.14
	2003	7,897	608,870	6,656	\$77.10	\$91.48
	% Change	-7.54%	-16.07%	0.14%	-9.23%	-16.18%
West End	2002	369	26,040	327	\$70.57	\$79.63
	2003	107	9,907	103	\$92.59	\$96.18
	% Change	-71.00%	-61.95%	-68.50%	31.20%	20.78%
East Side (South of	2002	4,478	448,357	3,120	\$100.12	\$143.70

Comm. Drive / Mt. Pleasant)	2003	3,832	286,467	2,699	\$74.76	\$106.01
	% Change	-14.43%	-36.11%	-13.49%	-25.33%	-26.23%
East Side (East of DTES / North of Broadway)	2002	2,232	115,052	1,486	\$51.55	\$77.42
	2003	1,830	101,412	1,452	\$55.42	\$69.84
	% Change	-18.01%	-11.86%	-2.29%	7.51%	-9.79%
West Side	2002	3,643	873,163	3,169	\$239.68	\$275.53
	2003	3,247	711,617	2,853	\$219.16	\$249.43
	% Change	-10.87%	-18.50%	-9.97%	-8.56%	-9.47%
AVERAGE	2002				\$111.44	\$145.01
	2003				\$104.93	\$129.52
	% Change				-5.84%	-10.68%
TOTAL	2002	40,074	4,356,128.88	29,669		
	2003	38,947	3,832,244.95	29,933		
	% Change	-2.81%	-12.03%	0.89%		

Source: VPD Extract Data

The data in Table 7.2 indicate that the Downtown Eastside shops did not experience a decrease in either the number transactions or the number of clients, although the total value of second-hand goods exchanged was lower and so was the average value per transaction. Overall, for all the Vancouver areas monitored, there was a reduction of -2.81 in the number of transactions and a reduction of 12% in the value of goods being exchanged.

Property Crime Incidents from the VPD CAD System

Turning to another source of information, data on two groups of property crime incidents as captured in the VPD Computer Assisted Dispatch (CAD) system for each of the four police districts of Vancouver for the period between April 1, 2003 and September 30, 2003, during which the CET was in operation, and the same period of time during the previous year. With respect to incidents of property crime, two groups of calls/incidents were considered: (1) a group of property crime incidents including break and enter in progress or reported and theft in progress; and, (2) shoplifting incidents.

These data offer a quite different picture than the one obtained previously from the analysis of police official records. For the City of Vancouver as a whole, as can be seen in Table 7.3, the number of

calls/incidents involving property crime in general was 20.9% higher in 2003 than in 2002. The same is true for District Two where the increases in the number of such incidents are generally proportional to the increases observed for the whole of the City. However, District 1 (the business district which is very close to the DTES) is the one that experienced the highest level of increase (45.6%) during that period of time. The drastic increase may have been a result of the disruption of the nearby open drug market.

Incidents of shoplifting also present a pattern that is somewhat difficult to relate to the intended impact of CET initiative. On the one hand, while the number of reported incidents of shoplifting in the City as a whole seemed to be stable during the initiative, there was a 3.4% decrease in District 2, a 11.6% decrease in District 3, and a 5% increase of shoplifting incidents in District 1 and 4. As shown in Table 7.4, however, incidents occurring in District 2 during the CET initiative continued to account for roughly the same percentage of the total number of incidents occurring in the City as a whole.

TABLE 7.3 - Percentage Change in the Number of Service Requests/Responses for Property Crime during the CET Initiative, April 1, 2002-September 30, 2002 (pre-CET), and April 1, 2003-September 30, 2003 (during CET).

Type of Calls	PERCENTAGE INCREASE / DECREASE				
	District 1	District 2 (DTES)	District 3	District 4	Total Vancouver
Property Crime	45.6	19.8	-1.8	24.3	20.9
Shoplifting	5.0	-3.4	-11.6	5.3	0.4

Source: VPD, PRIME BC

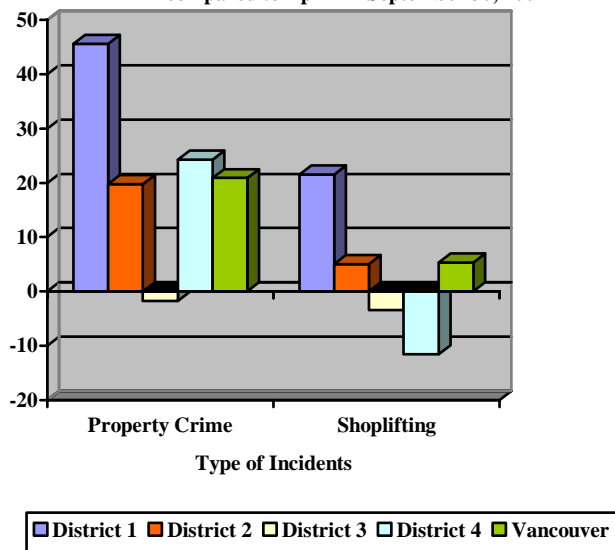
TABLE 7.4 - Number of Calls for Property Crime Incidents per District as a Percentage of the Total Number of Calls Received for the City of Vancouver, April 1, 2002-September 30, 2002 (pre-CET) and April 1, 2003-September 30, 2003 (during CET).

Type of Calls	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL CASES IN VANCOUVER ⁵							
	District 1		District 2 (DTES)		District 3		District 4	
	2002	2003	2002	2003	2002	2003	2002	2003
Property Crime	18.2	21.9	21.2	21.1	29.0	23.5	30.9	31.8

⁵ Note that the total number of cases for the City of Vancouver includes the calls for each of the four districts, plus a small number of cases classified as “unspecified”. These additional cases account for the fact the total percentages may not add up to 100%.

Shoplifting	44.0	46.0	14.4	13.8	27.0	23.8	14.5	15.2
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FIGURE 7.1: Percentage Change in Calls Received in Each District for Property Crime and Shoplifting, April 1- September 30, 2003, as compared to April 1 - September 30, 2002



Displacement

In order to determine whether, on a district-wide basis, certain types of property crime were being displaced from one district to another, the total number of incidents for each period, as a percentage of the total number of incidents in the City of Vancouver as a whole, was calculated for each district and for each grouping of offences. The results are presented in Table 7.4 below. The percentages presented in that table indicate that there was little change observed in the proportion of each type of property offences recorded in each District from 2002 to 2003. Again, if displacement of property crime from the DTES to adjacent police districts did occur, it was not reflected in district-wide offence data as recorded in the PRIME record system. The increase in the number of “possession of stolen property offence” incidents in District 2 is very likely the direct reflection of more proactive policing in the DTES as part of the CET, as it was part of the objectives of that initiative to proactively interfere with the flow of stolen property. Conversely, the decrease in the number of stolen property offences recorded in District 3 may also be a reflection of the shift of attention and resources from that District in order to concentrate on that particular problem in and around the DTES.

TABLE 7.4 - Percentage Change in the Number of Property Offences Known to the Police, by Policing District, as a Percentage of the Total Number of Offences in the City of Vancouver, April 1, 2002-September 30, 2002 (pre-CET) and April 1, 2003-September 30, 2003 (during CET).

Type of Property Offence	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL CASES IN VANCOUVER							
	District 1		District 2 (DTES)		District 3		District 4	
	2002	2003	2002	2003	2002	2003	2002	2003
B & E	14.9	18.1	20.3	20.2	28.1	24.8	36.8	36.9
Theft	38.7	36.1	22.2	24.2	15.5	13.2	23.6	26.4
Theft of Vehicle	22.3	18.5	21.3	21.3	27.0	28.9	29.4	31.4
Theft from Car	37.0	36.7	21.3	20.4	17.9	18.1	23.7	24.7
Shoplifting	43.9	41.4	14.0	16.0	24.4	22.8	17.6	19.7
Possession of Stolen Prop.	18.6	17.1	45.5	53.8	26.5	19.1	9.4	9.9

Source: VPD, PRIME BC

Observations

As part of the systematic field observations conducted during the evaluation, the field researchers focused some of their attention on any visible evidence of stolen property being carried around, offered for sale, or sold openly in the area. They noted that property was offered for sale on the streets of the DTES at all times. It was understandably difficult to say how much of it had been stolen. A lot of the items offered were of very poor quality. It was difficult to distinguish between the “binners” who salvage things from the garbage to sell, and those who offered stolen merchandise.

There were almost always a few individuals selling things in the gravel lot on the 00 block of East Hastings, but the items offered mostly looked like they had been salvaged from trash. The observers frequently saw people in cars parked on this lot buying items from various individuals. Usually this occurred around 15:30 or so, which is when the visibility of the police tended to be at its lowest. Judging from the look of nervousness of those standing in line to sell things and the nature of the items involved, it was clear that many of the items being purchased had been stolen. There was nevertheless no way for the observers to establish

the origins of the property being sold, whether it was a dozen or so old fridges or a collection of CDs. People went in and out of pawnshops and other stores which seemed to accept various types of merchandise. Some of the individuals observed were clearly involved in frequent transactions.

There often were people outside of the American Hotel/Pub on Station Street selling items that had most likely been stolen – such as clothing with the tags still on and boxes of meat still wrapped in the store packaging. The items were of the kind that had likely been obtained through shoplifting. Although it was not an everyday occurrence, the researchers themselves frequently received offers of stolen property in the East Hasting Street corridor. The goods being offered often looked like what might have been quickly stolen from a car or a house – such as CDs or easily movable electronic equipment. Some of the best places for acquiring stolen goods in the DTES remained the various pubs of the area and their immediate surroundings.

Perceptions of the Levels and Flow of Stolen Property

DTES Residents

As a group, the DTES residents were unclear about whether the property crime situation in the DTES had changed in the six months since the implementation of the CET initiative (see Table 7.6). Twenty percent of the residents interviewed felt there had been a decline in the amount of stolen property in the area, as compared to 19% who felt the amount of stolen property had increased and 30% who felt it had stayed the same. One-third of the respondents did not know whether it had increased, decreased, or stayed the same.

TABLE 7.6 - Survey of Community Residents: Perceptions Concerning Stolen Property.

	Increased	Decreased	Same	Don't Know
People stealing from one another	32/95 (33.7)	8/95 (8.4)	30/95 (36.1)	25/95 (26.3)
Amount of property being stolen	18/95 (18.9)	19/95 (20.0)	28/95 (29.5)	30/95 (30.9)
People selling stolen property	18/95 (18.9)	14/95 (14.7)	44/95 (46.3)	19/95 (20.0)
Amount of stolen property	18/95 (18.9)	19/95 (20.0)	28/95 (29.5)	30/95 (31.6)
Selling price of stolen property	6/95 (6.3)	13/95 (13.7)	37/95 (38.9)	39/95 (41.4)

Offenders

The 32 offenders interviewed, in jail, as part of this study were asked about their perceptions of property crime in the DTES. The great majority of the 31 offenders who responded to the questions (87.1%) believed that property crime in the DTES had either stayed the same (14/31, 45.2%) or increased (12/31, 38.7%). In terms of the market for stolen property, they generally seem to believe that the price offered for stolen property had either stayed the same (14/31, 45.2%) or increased (10/31, 32.3), thus providing an added incentive for thieves. Half of the offenders believed that the number of things stolen in the DTES had increased (16/31, 51.6%) and 38.7% of them believed that that number had stayed the same (12/31). The vast majority of the offenders did not believe that there had been a change in the stolen property market in the DTES, 50% (15/30) of them believed that there had not been a change in the number of people selling stolen property and 43.3% of them (13/30) believed that there had been an increase in that number during the CET initiative.

IV Drug Users

With respect to the open drug market and stolen property, ten of the 15 respondents (67%) who self-identified as IV drug users felt that there had been “no change” in how difficult it was to sell

stolen property. Only one of the respondents felt that the CET had reduced the amount of stolen property in the DTES and five (33%) of the respondents felt that the CET had decreased the open drug market. 13/15 (87%): number of people selling stolen property has increased or stayed the same

Questions and Findings

Question: *Did the CET initiative successfully interfere with the flow of stolen property in the DTES?*

There is no conclusive evidence from the data gathered that the CET was successful in interfering with the flow of stolen property into the DTES, although the stolen property market was forced to become more discrete and the locations where stolen property was fenced may have shifted out of the immediate DTES area. Police officers, community residents, IV drug users, and others who offered an opinion on the subject shared the view that the stolen property market has not been significantly reduced. Senior police personnel, based on their observations, believed that the flow of stolen property as it existed prior to the CET had been impacted and cited the Extract data to support their view that the quality and value of stolen goods flowing into the DTES had declined. The attempt by the project team to assess the impact of the CET on the stolen property market in the DTES was hindered by methodological difficulties. This objective of the CET initiative appears not to have been achieved. It is also most likely that the opening of the SIS has had no impact on the stolen property market, as IV drug users are still forced to steal goods, fence them, and purchase drugs from dealers, prior to having access to the injection site.

Question: *Was the frequency of various types of property crime in District Two and in the City of Vancouver affected by the CET initiative?*

If displacement of property crime from the DTES to adjacent districts did occur, it is not reflected in district-wide offence data gathered by the VPD as part of the PRIME system. On the other hand, the police dispatch data (CAD) for the period during which the CET was in operation, as compared to the same period of time

the previous year, show that there was a rather large increase (45.6 %) in the frequency of reported property crime in District 1 (the business district). However, since the same data also revealed a large increase in the frequency of these offences in District 2 during the same period, it is difficult to attribute the changes observed in district 1 to the impact of changes in District 2. The mapping of property crime incidents in Vancouver during the two discrete periods of time reveals the appearance of new “hotspots” in every district. Property crime patterns are obviously not static, but it is very difficult to relate any change in them to the activity of the police in the DTES.

Question: *Is there any evidence that property crime, or certain types of property crime, were displaced from the DTES to other parts of District Two or of the City of Vancouver?*

District 1, the Downtown business district, clearly continues to be affected by its proximity to the DTES open drug scene. It is a “target rich” area for property crime, particularly theft, theft from vehicle, and shoplifting, and it has experienced a substantial increase in property crime during the CET initiative. There is evidence to suggest that, as dealers were displaced from the DTES westward to District 1, their drug user clients followed and found a target rich environment.

8

Impact on Violent Crime

Three primary sources of statistical data were used to assess whether the CET initiative had an impact on the amount of crime, and in particular, violent crime taking place in the DTES and in Vancouver: the data extracted from the VPD Records Management System (PRIME B.C.); the data extracted from the Computer Assisted Dispatch (CAD) system; and the data extracted from B.C. the Ambulance Service Data System. In addition, the perceptions of residents of the DTES and of the offender sample were considered.

Offences Known to the Police

The impact of the CET initiative on violent crime in the DTES was assessed by conducting an analysis of relevant data from the Vancouver Police Department's PRIME B.C. Records Management System for the periods between April 1 and December 30, 2002 and April 1, and December 30, 2003.

For the analysis, the data were categorized by police district. The violent crime category included the following offences: Murder and Attempted Murder, Sexual Assault, Robbery, and Assault. In total, there were 1,265 such incidents in Vancouver during the nine-month period in 2003, as compared to 2,721 incidents for the same period the previous year, less than half the frequency during the previous year (-53.5%).

TABLE 8.1- Percentage Change in the Number of Violent Crime Offences Known to the Police, April 1, 2002-September 30, 2002 (pre-CET) and April 1, 2003-September 30, 2003 (during CET).

Type of Offence	PERCENTAGE INCREASE / DECREASE				
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	Vancouver

Violent Crime	-48.5	-52.3	-55.8	-58.9	-53.5
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In an attempt to determine whether, on a District-wide basis, certain types of offences were being displaced from one district to another, the total number of incidents for each period, as a percentage of the total number of incidents in the City of Vancouver as a whole, was calculated for each district and for each grouping of offences. The results are presented in Table 8.2 below. They indicate that there was little change observed in the proportion of violent offences in each District from 2002 to 2003. If displacement of these violent offences from the DTES to adjacent police districts did occur, it is not reflected in district-wide offence data, as recorded in the PRIME record system. This does not preclude the possibility that displacement of offenders and their criminal behaviour did occur but cannot be measured by examining and comparing district-wide data.

TABLE 8.2 - Percentage Change in the Number of Violent Crime Offences Known to the Police, by Policing District, as a Percentage of the Total Number of these Offences in the City of Vancouver, April 1, 2002-September 30, 2002 (pre-CET) and April 1, 2003-September 30, 2003 (during CET).

Type of Offence	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL CASES IN VANCOUVER							
	District 1		District 2 (DTES)		District 3		District 4	
	2002	2003	2002	2003	2002	2003	2002	2003
Violent Crime	21.3	23.6	35.5	36.4	27.1	25.8	16.1	14.2

Source: VPD, PRIME B.C.

Calls for Assistance

Data were also examined from the VPD Computer Assisted Dispatch (CAD) system on a group of violent incidents reported in each of the four police districts of Vancouver for the period between April 1, 2003 and September 30, 2003, during which the CET was in operation, and the same period of time during the previous year. The group of violent crime incidents considered included all incidents recorded in the system as assaults in progress, assault reports, hold ups in progress, robbery reports, robberies in progress, sexual assaults, and stabbings.

Table 8.3 indicates that, for the City as a whole, there was an increase of 6.3% in the number of calls/incidents relating to violent crimes during the CET initiative as compared to during the same period of time in the previous year. District 2 recorded a slightly lower increase in the number of such incidents (4.3%).

TABLE 8.3 - Percentage Change in the Number of Service Requests/Responses for Violent Crime April 1, 2002-September 30, 2002 (pre-CET) and April 1, 2003-September 30, 2003 (during CET).

Type of Call	PERCENTAGE INCREASE / DECREASE				
	District 1	District 2 (DTES)	District 3	District 4	Total Vancouver
Violent Crime	4.5	4.3	2.6	13.2	6.3

Source: VPD CAD

TABLE 8.4 - Number of Calls for Violent Crime Incidents by District as a Percentage of the Total Number of Such Calls Received for the City of Vancouver April 1, 2002-September 30, 2002 (pre-CET) and April 1, 2003-September 30, 2003 (during CET).

Type of Call	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL CASES IN VANCOUVER ⁶							
	District 1		District 2 (DTES)		District 3		District 4	
	2002	2003	2002	2003	2002	2003	2002	2003
Violent Crime	24.4	24.0	37.6	36.9	22.7	22.0	13.7	14.6

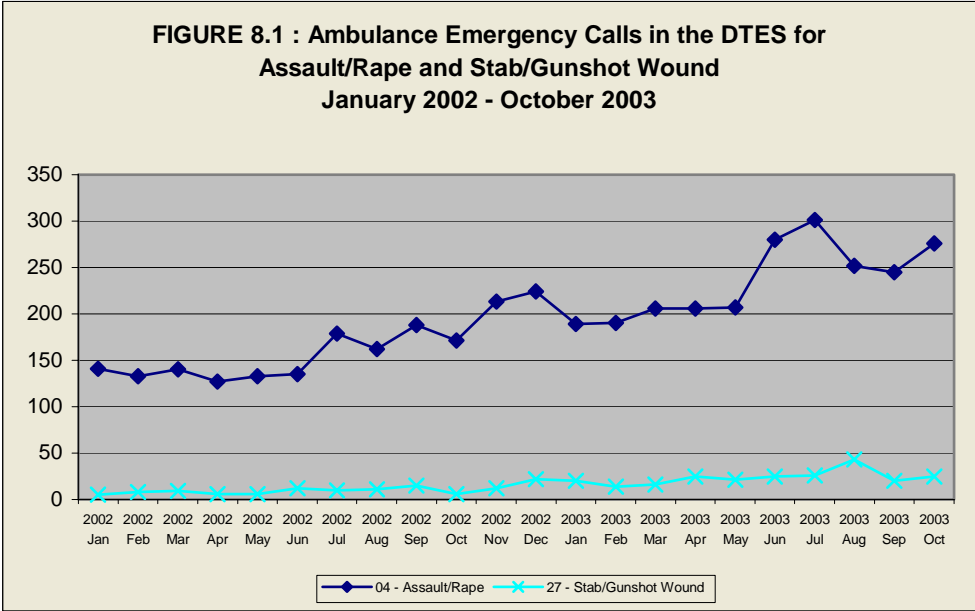
Source: VPD CAD

Ambulance Data

The ambulance data show a marked increase (+61.4%) in the number of calls related either to assaults or sexual assault during the CET initiative (April to October 2003: 1,767 incidents) compared to the same period during the previous year (April to October 2002: 1,095 incidents), as well as a marked increase (+64.3%) in the number of emergency calls relating to stabbing or gun shot wounds (see Figure 8.1).

⁶ Note that the total number of cases for the City of Vancouver includes the calls for each of the four districts, plus a small number of cases classified as "unspecified". These additional cases account for the fact the total percentages may not add up to 100%.

This would seem to confirm previous research findings that the disruption of a drug market will often produce an increase in violence within and around the affected area.



There was a perception among 30% of the residents interviewed that the number of assaults had increased. This is in line with the view expressed by several persons in the focus group discussions that confrontations between people had increased due to more “bad” drugs being sold as a consequence of the crackdown on established dealers.

TABLE 8.5 - Survey of Community Residents - Perception of Changes in the Frequency of Crime in the Previous Six Months since the Implementation of the CET.

Type of Crime	Increased	Decreased	Same	Don't Know
Number of assaults	29/95 (30.5)	18/95 (18.9)	26/95 (27.4)	22/95 (23.2)
Number of fights between people	37/95 (38.9)	21/95 (22.1)	21/95 (22.1)	16/95 (16.8)
Number of fights between people with a weapon	22/92 (23.9)	16/92 (17.4)	31/92 (33.7)	23/92 (25.0)
Amount of crime in general	18/95 (18.9)	13/95 (13.7)	38/95 (40.0)	26/95 (27.4)

Source: B. C. Ambulance Service - Information Management System

Assaults against Police Officers

There is often an expectation that a police crackdown will produce more difficult interactions between the police and various participants in the affected drug market and that, as a result, there may be more frequent cases of assaults committed against police officers. In this case, the Police Records Management System (Prime B.C.), indicates the opposite. During the CET initiative, there were 32.3% fewer cases of assaults against a police officer reported in the City of Vancouver than during the same period of time in the previous year (42 cases in the nine month period in 2003 as compared to 62 during the same period in 2002). In District 2 where the police initiative took place, the difference was even larger: there was 48.3% fewer cases of assaults against a police officer reported in the district during the nine month period in 2003 (n=15) as compared to the same period of time the previous year (n=29).

Residents' Perceptions

According to the results of the survey of community residents, there was little difference in the frequency of victimizations suffered by residents prior to and after the implementation of the CET initiative. The location of the victimization was most frequently a public space - on the sidewalk or street in the DTES. Offenders were nearly always men and persons who were unknown to the victim. This pattern of victimization is in marked contrast to most victim-offender situations where both parties are known to one another.

Twenty-three percent of the sample indicated that they had been injured in the DTES prior to April, 2003, the most common cause being assault, falling, being hit by a vehicle, or being robbed. A variety of injuries were sustained, ranging from broken bones to stab wounds, to bruising. The police were called in five percent of these cases and responded in all instances and, in one-half of the cases, the ambulance attended as well. In nearly 80% (15/19) of the cases, the person was taken to the hospital. In the remainder of the incidents, the victim went on their own to a medical clinic.

Sixteen percent (15/93) of the residents surveyed indicated that they had been injured in the DTES since April, 2003, most frequently as a result of assaults. Among the injuries reported were stab wounds and bruises. The police were called in 20% (3/15) of the incidents and responded in each instance. The Ambulance Service responded in 43% (6/15) of the cases and the Fire and Rescue Service in one instance. One-half of the victims were taken to the hospital and several of the others attended the medical clinic on their own.

A majority of the residents interviewed felt that the amount of crime committed in the area had either remained the same (39%) or increased (19%) (see Table 8.6). There was a perception among 30% of the residents interviewed that the number of assaults had increased. This is in line with the view expressed by several persons in the focus group discussions that confrontations between people had increased due to more “bad” drugs being sold as a consequence of the crackdown on established dealers.

TABLE 8.6 - Survey of Residents - Perception of Changes in the Frequency of Crime in the First Six Months of the CET Initiative.

Type of Crime	Increased	Decreased	Same	Don't Know
Number of assaults	29/95 (30.5)	18/95 (18.9)	26/95 (27.4)	22/95 (23.2)
Number of fights between people	37/95 (38.9)	21/95 (22.1)	21/95 (22.1)	16/95 (16.8)
Number of fights between people with a weapon	22/92 (23.9)	16/92 (17.4)	31/92 (33.7)	23/92 (25.0)
Amount of crime in general	18/95 (18.9)	13/95 (13.7)	38/95 (40.0)	26/95 (27.4)

Offenders' Perceptions

Similar to the community residents, the perception of the incarcerated offenders that crime had increased during the CET was not supported by the data. Exactly half of the 32 offenders interviewed in jail for the present study believed that crime in general had increased in the DTES while the CET initiative was taking place, and 37.5% of them believed that the amount of crime had stayed the same. Roughly half of them also believed that the number of fights and assaults between people in the DTES had increased during the CET initiative. Only two offenders believed that the number of assaults (or fights) had decreased. One thought that that kind of violence had stayed the same during the six-month period.

Questions and Findings

Question: *Did the CET initiative reduce the incidence of violent crime in the DTES?*

The official police data indicated that there was a substantial decrease, similar to that observed in other districts throughout the City, in the amount of violent crime in the DTES during the CET period as compared to the same period in the previous year. However, data from the VPD CAD system indicated that the number of calls received by the VPD for violent crime in the DTES increased during the CET period in 2003 as compared to the previous year. This increase may reflect the increased police presence in the community and the increased willingness of community residents to call the police for assistance. There is some, albeit conflicting evidence, that the CET might have contributed, at least initially, to an increase of aggressive behaviour among participants in the drug market.

9

Displacement

Measuring the movement of persons out of an area and the extent to which they are displaced to other locales raises a number of practical difficulties and the methods that exist to do so are still evolving (see Bowers and Johnson, 2003). The data presented above concerning evidence of potential displacement of drug market activity, disorder incidents, violent crime, and property crime are less than conclusive. Part of the problem is that there are serious limitations to using data aggregated by administrative districts defined by the police. In fact, in order to identify patterns that would otherwise be masked or distorted, it is often necessary to use disaggregated crime data, particularly when the data include detailed geographical information (Johnson *et al.*, 2001). These types of data are increasingly used to identify problem areas as they change and evolve and to identify new hot spots as they emerge - sometimes as a result of displacement produced by law enforcement intervention.

The identification of new hotspots has become an integral part of proactive enforcement strategies. In the case of the CET initiative, an analyst was responsible for identifying the hotspots and the “hot individuals”. That information was conveyed to members of the CET. However, using crime data for that purpose does not necessarily require an elaborate analysis of any potential causal link between the geographical movement of criminal activity and various police interventions. In reality, establishing the presence of such a link can be quite challenging.

One anticipated outcome of any police crackdown is the movement of persons out of a specified area. Many of these persons will return to their home communities, while others will merely move to adjacent areas and continue with their criminal activities. The CET initiative was designed to disperse the concentrations of drug dealers and the associated open drug market from the DTES area so that order could be established in the community. It is very difficult to secure the data required to empirically assess the movement of persons out of the DTES due to the CET and their subsequent criminal activities in adjacent areas of the City of Vancouver and beyond.

This chapter introduces the question of displacement from the point of view of the senior police officers interviewed for this study. It also examines the question of crime and disorder displacement by using two other methods of analysis of the data from the Vancouver Police Department's PRIME B.C. Records Management System for the periods between April 1 and December 30, 2002 and April 1, and December 30, 2003. In the first instance, the analysis was designed to determine whether there was displacement in eleven small geographical areas (patrol areas) within District 1 (4 areas), District 2 (4 areas) and District Three (3 areas). This was accomplished by analyzing the changes that occurred in reported crime during the CET initiative as compared to the same period during the previous year in each of these areas as compared to: 1) the changes observed in each of the districts as a whole; and, 2) the City of Vancouver as a whole. Secondly, the analysis generated crime maps for the Districts 1, 2, and 3 and for specific areas within each of these Districts as well as for the City of Vancouver as a whole.

Qualitative data gathered by the evaluation team suggested that police districts adjacent to District 2 and the DTES did experience displacement and that such displacement was manifested in "mini-crime" waves and "crime spikes" in specific localized areas *within* District 2 or adjacent districts. An example of a localized area that might be impacted by drug traffickers and drug users displaced from the DTES is a public parking lot adjacent to a park where drug traffickers had migrated to due to increased police presence and pressure in the DTES.

The crime analyst whom the VPD assigned to the CET initiative reached the conclusion that whatever displacement took place as a result of the initiative typically occurred within the district itself, and less so between districts. In his view, the "displacement typically occurred within a six to twelve blocks radius". Even without any police intervention, most criminal activity patterns are not completely static.

Sometimes, for example, offenders just discover a target rich environment and decide to move there.

Perceptions of Displacement Among Senior Police Officers

The senior police officers had obviously given considerable thought to the question of crime displacement, which was considered to be an “inevitable” consequence of the CET initiative. In the words of one officer:

“Displacement was expected. I would not call it an intended effect but it was certainly a price that we were willing to pay. I do not know what could have been done that would not have carried some negative effects. I have never encountered a true case of a win-win situation.”

The displacement effect was clearly anticipated and was one of the factors that contributed to the initial opposition to the CET initiative among some officers within the department. As one senior officer stated:

“Other officers and district commanders were worried about it, worried that decay in the City could move to other parts of the City. Displacement did occur, every senior officer conceded it, and officers from other districts “reported that our initiative was hurting them. They were afraid that we were spreading the cancer.”

Some of the officers, although not denying that displacement had occurred as a result of the CET initiative, pointed out that the initiative had provided a convenient scapegoat and had been blamed for every crime problem and hotspot that emerged elsewhere in the City during the months following its implementation. In the words of one officer:

“One of the things that bothered me was that, all of a sudden, when people had any problem in their area, it automatically was the result of displacement from the DTES. The reality is that there are emerging problems in other areas that were not related at all to the DTES or the CET; particularly the downtown business area and the West End. These problems were already emerging: totally different market; crystal meth; homeless kids; these people were never in the DTES; they emerged in the West End.”

All of the officers expressed some disappointment that the CET initiative had not provided the opportunity to respond proactively to the localized hotspots that were created as a result of the displacement of persons from the DTES. One officer noted that the “City-wide initiative

was never a City-wide effort.” These officers used the metaphor of the “occupying army” holding conquered territory more than once. One of them explained:

“We named the initiative CET because we recognized that drugs were a City-wide issue. We were also familiar with the challenges that are created by the displacement that often results from police intervention. We intended to disperse the problem and follow it around by using the same tactics wherever the problem would re-emerge. Displacement happened perhaps less than we had anticipated. We were not able to follow the problem as we had planned due to a lack of resources. Once we have taken the ground in the DTES, we had to hold it.”

And another senior officer recounted:

“I thought that wherever the crime went, east or south (corridor), or along the sky-train, that law-enforcement would follow. But resources were lacking. Without the resources we were not able to follow the problem to where it moved. The problem-oriented policing and the community development did not occur either which would have allowed the police to shift its attention to other areas. It is like an army, once you have conquered some territory”.

Several officers held the view that the negative effects of displacement were mitigated by a number of factors. First, they believed that the open drug market and the persons who were responsible for this market and the associated disorder were not one hundred percent displaced to other areas and districts. Second, there was the view that, as the drug market was displaced and dispersed, it lessened in intensity and, with this, so did the level of disorder. Third, as several officers pointed out, some communities were better equipped than others at dealing with the displaced problems. The DTES, they suggested, had exceeded its capacity to cope with such problems, whereas other communities in Vancouver had the means to be more resourceful and effective in addressing them. These perspectives reflected a general view that the entire City of Vancouver must “share the pain” and “share the responsibility” for mobilizing against the open drug market and its associated crime and disorder, rather than this being contained in the DTES, a community (with the exception of Chinatown) without the necessary capacities to effectively control crime and social disorder.

At least one officer was concerned with the fact that the displacement of the drug market had made drug law enforcement in

Vancouver more complicated and that it had perhaps strengthened some aspects of this overall market. Another officer mentioned that there had been unconfirmed reports, at the Regional Police Committee, that some of the drug market activities had moved to other neighbouring municipalities.

Questions about displacement led some senior officers to express the view that a concentration of prevention and other services for drug users in the DTES was a problematic and undesirable development. One officer noted: "I am very much interested in decentralizing the needle exchange and other services for drug users". Another commented:

"There is a proliferation of services for drug users in the DTES. It is not clear that the concentration of services in one area is the best strategy. Some agencies have accused us of taking away their clients. I do not know whether there is any truth to it. That was not the intent."

Displacement as Reflected in Localized Offence Patterns

To explore the possibility that displacement of persons from the DTES as a result of the CET initiative did result in increases in certain types of criminal offences in adjacent police districts, the PRIME data were analyzed comparing sub-areas within District 2, including the area covered by the CET initiative with sub-areas in Districts 1 and 3. The results of this analysis are presented in Tables 9.1, 9.2, and 9.3. The results are presented below in three tables that compare for District 1, 2, and 3, the situation in these sub-areas to the overall situation in the three districts (see also Appendix 5).

In considering the following materials, it is important to note that the present review of displacement of offences within the DTES and District 2, and between the various police districts, was not exhaustive. Only selected sub-areas within each District were examined and it could be argued that these choices were arbitrary and affected the results obtained⁷. However, the purpose of the analysis was to illustrate the general point that displacement, where it did occur, occurred not on a district-wide basis, but manifested itself in localized crime "hot spots"

⁷ Districts are defined by the Vancouver Police Department. Sub-districts were created from consideration of community names of common usage or names of community policing stations located in the neighbourhoods. Districts were divided into sub-districts along consideration of VPD patrol boundaries and community policing zones.

and in increases in certain types of offences in localized areas in adjacent police districts. Clearly, more detailed analyses (beyond the scope of this evaluation) would be required in order to provide greater insights into the nature and extent of crime displacement that occurred as a result of the CET initiative.

TABLE 9.1 - Percentage Changes in the Frequency of Offences in Selected Areas Within District 1, as Compared to Percentage Changes for District 2 and District 3 and for the City of Vancouver, April 1, 2002-September 30, 2002 (pre-CET) and April 1, 2003-September 30, 2003 (during CET).

Type of Offence	Selected Areas Within District 1				D1	D2	D3	Van
	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8				
Minor Disorder	18.6%	-12.6%	-23.3%	-18.0%	-13.2%	-13.8%	-17.0%	-15.4%
Serious Disorder	-56.8%	-22.4%	-46.2%	-46.3%	-42.1%	-32.2%	-50.0%	-44.3%
Break & Enter	-33.8%	-23.7%	-26.4%	-10.0%	-19.5%	-33.7%	-41.2%	-33.5%
Theft from Vehicle	-7.5%	14.9%	-29.5%	-20.8%	-15.5%	-18.5%	-13.8%	-14.8%
Theft of Vehicle	-13.3%	-15.5%	-30.2%	-27.6%	-23.0%	-7.2%	-0.4%	-7.0%
Theft of Bicycle	-40.2%	-14.3%	-60.6%	-28.3%	-37.6%	5.4%	-11.5%	-11.8%
Theft (not vehicle related)	-29.8%	-7.2%	-32.8%	-33.0%	-27.5%	-15.5%	-33.7%	-22.3%
Shoplifting	-44.4%	-21.4%	-48.2%	-61.8%	-51.4%	-40.8%	-51.8%	-48.4%
Stolen Property	-33.3%	-30.0%	-43.5%	-3.1%	-26.0%	-4.7%	-41.7%	-19.4%
Prostitution	100.0%	-20.0%	66.7%	100.0%	9.1%	-48.5%	-19.1%	-30.3%
Public Alcohol Offence	100.0%	-54.5%	-25.0%	100.0%	-23.8%	6.7%	-94.4%	-34.3%
Psychiatric	-38.7%	-17.2%	-38.5%	10.7%	-12.7%	-13.6%	-13.0%	-15.5%
Warrant Execution	100.0%	43.6%	91.7%	56.3%	63.8%	-33.6%	-55.1%	-31.3%
Breach Offence	-34.9%	25.4%	-7.1%	-8.4%	-49.7%	-44.4%	-23.8%	-44.5%
Assaulting Police	0.0%	0.0%	150.0%	-100%	-7.7%	-48.3%	-9.1%	-32.3%
Drug Possession	-36.4%	-44.0%	-11.5%	55.2%	-17.8%	-34.2%	-47.1%	-35.4%
Drug Trafficking	0.0%	143.5%	187.1%	44.4%	130.7%	-18.7%	-59.4%	-3.4%
Violent Crime	-50.0%	-33.1%	-51.7%	-55.7%	-48.5%	-52.3%	-55.8%	-53.5%

Source: VPD, PRIME B.C.

SA 5: Yaletown North/Stadium

SA 6: Yaletown South / Granville Entertainment Area

SA 7: Downtown Business Core

SA 8: West End

TABLE 9.2 - Percentage Changes in the Frequency of Offences in Selected Areas Within District Two, as Compared to Percentage Changes for District 1 and District 3 and for the City of Vancouver, April 1, 2002-September 30, 2002 (pre-CET) and April 1, 2003-September 30, 2003 (during CET).

Type of Offence	Selected Areas within District 2				D2	D1	D3	Van
	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4				
Minor Disorder	-8.9%	-15.9%	-8.2%	-28.9%	-13.8%	-13.2%	-17.0%	-15.4%
Serious Disorder	-40.6%	-29.7%	-35.2%	-12.5%	-32.2%	-42.1%	-50.0%	-44.3%
Break & Enter	-42.6%	-40.5%	-28.8%	-30.1%	-33.7%	-19.5%	-41.2%	-33.5%
Theft from Vehicle	-16.2%	-29.9%	-19.3%	-14.4%	-18.5%	-15.5%	-13.8%	-14.8%
Theft of Vehicle	-22.3%	-20.5%	9.7%	-9.0%	-7.2%	-23.0%	-0.4%	-7.0%
Theft of Bicycle	-11.7%	37.5%	29.7%	-18.8%	5.4%	-37.6%	-11.5%	-11.8%
Theft (not vehicle related)	-10.9%	-25.2%	-14.4%	-29.7%	-15.5%	-27.5%	-33.7%	-22.3%
Shoplifting	-44.3%	-38.2%	-27.1%	-59.4%	-40.8%	-51.4%	-51.8%	-48.4%
Stolen Property	10.7%	-19.8%	-14.6%	-25.0%	-4.7%	-26.0%	-41.7%	-19.4%
Prostitution	-50.0%	-31.0%	-58.2%	0.0%	-48.5%	9.1%	-19.1%	-30.3%
Public Alcohol Offence	-11.1%	Nil	50.0%	-100%	6.7%	-23.8%	-94.4%	-34.3%
Psychiatric	-9.9%	-1.4%	-7.3%	-46.9%	-13.6%	-12.7%	-13.0%	-15.5%
Warrant Execution	-43.3%	-33.1%	22.2%	-19.4%	-33.6%	63.8%	-55.1%	-31.3%
Breach Offence	-61.6%	-41.3%	26.0%	-30.9%	-44.4%	-49.7%	-23.8%	-44.5%
Assaulting Police	-53.3%	100.0%	-50.0%	-66.7%	-48.3%	-7.7%	-9.1%	-32.3%
Drug Possession	-30.5%	-22.9%	-13.6%	-47.6%	-34.2%	-17.8%	-47.1%	-35.4%
Drug Trafficking	-30.1%	128.9%	-2.4%	65.0%	-18.7%	130.7%	-59.4%	-3.4%
Violent Crime	-55.4%	-48.5%	-35.7%	-68.7%	-52.3%	-48.5%	-55.8%	-53.5%

Source: VPD, PRIME B.C.

SA 1 = DTES - CET main area of focus

SA 2 = DTES - Jackson Street and East of Jackson St.

SA 3 = Commercial Drive N. (North of Grandview)

SA 4 = Sunrise/ Hastings Park

TABLE 9.3 - Percentage Changes in the Frequency of Offences in Selected Areas Within District 3, as Compared to Percentage Changes for District 1 and District 2 and for the City of Vancouver, April 1, 2002-September 30, 2002 (pre-CET) and April 1, 2003-September 30, 2003 (during CET).

Type of Offence	D1	D2	Selected Areas Within District 3			D3	Van
			SA 9	SA 10	SA 11		
Minor Disorder	-13.8%	-13.2%	-20.1%	-24.1%	-21.1%	-17.0%	-15.4%
Serious Disorder	-32.2%	-42.1%	-48.9%	-51.8%	-58.9%	-50.0%	-44.3%
Break & Enter	-33.7%	-19.5%	-42.3%	-41.4%	-31.4%	-41.2%	-33.5%
Theft from Vehicle	-18.5%	-15.5%	-28.9%	-16.4%	-27.1%	-13.8%	-14.8%
Theft of Vehicle	-7.2%	-23.0%	2.9%	-1.0%	-13.0%	-0.4%	-7.0%
Theft of Bicycle	5.4%	-37.6%	-36.0%	-22.2%	115.4%	-11.5%	-11.8%
Theft (not vehicle related)	-15.5%	-27.5%	-34.4%	-29.8%	-34.0%	-33.7%	-22.3%
Shoplifting	-40.8%	-51.4%	-47.3%	-48.6%	-39.3%	-51.8%	-48.4%
Stolen Property	-4.7%	-26.0%	-52.5%	-40.4%	-41.7%	-41.7%	-19.4%
Prostitution	-48.5%	9.1%	-14.0%	-42.9%	-30.3%	-19.1%	-30.3%
Public Alcohol Offence	6.7%	-23.8%	-100.0%	-88.9%	-100.0%	-94.4%	-34.3%
Psychiatric	-13.6%	-12.7%	-25.0%	-24.1%	-11.4%	-13.0%	-15.5%
Warrant Execution	-33.6%	63.8%	-49.1%	-67.0%	-61.7%	-55.1%	-31.3%
Breach Offence	-44.4%	-49.7%	-35.1%	-38.3%	-40.8%	-23.8%	-44.5%
Assaulting Police	-48.3%	-7.7%	-66.7%	-	-66.7%	-9.1%	-32.3%
Drug Possession	-34.2%	-17.8%	-52.8%	-70.8%	-4.0%	-47.1%	-35.4%
Drug Trafficking	-18.7%	130.7%	-60.0%	450.0%	-71.4%	-59.4%	-3.4%
Violent Crime	-52.3%	-48.5%	-54.4%	-52.3%	-52.3%	-55.8%	-53.5%

Source: VPD, PRIME B.C.

SA 9: Mt Pleasant Area

SA 10: Commercial Drive/Trout Lake / Kensington

SA 11: East Van / Collingwood (E of Nanaimo)

At the outset, it is noted that, between April-December, 2002 and April-December, 2003, all of the police districts experienced *decreases* in the offence categories selected for the analysis. Some of these declines were as high as 50% (i.e. Violent Crime, -53.5%; Shoplifting, -48.4%; and, Serious Disorder, -44.3%; Warrant Execution, -44.5%).

An examination of the three tables reveals that for the time period April-December, 2003, for specific categories of offences, in certain areas within each of the policing districts, there were increases (“spikes”) – some quite large – as compared to same time period in 2002. Some of these sudden variations are clearly the results of an increase in police activity (e.g. execution of warrants and arrests for drug trafficking),

sometimes in response to a perception of increased criminal activity in the area, while other so-called “spikes” may be more direct and immediate measures of the movement of the criminal activity within a district or the City as a whole.

The statistics establish conclusively that displacement did occur and that the impact of displacement was centered on specific locales, or “hot spots” within the adjacent districts.

More specifically, the results of the statistical analyses indicate the following:

Percentage Changes in Offences in the DTES and in District 2

1. In the DTES area of District 2 (see Table 9.2), there were *decreases* of up to 50% in all of the offence categories, with the exception of Stolen Property, a type of offence that is a direct reflection of proactive police enforcement and one of the key foci of the CET initiative. This indicates that the CET was successful in increasing the detection of stolen property in the DTES area of District 2.
2. In the DTES, Jackson and East of Jackson St., there were declines in the numbers of offences recorded in the PRIME system in all offence categories except Theft of Bicycle (+37.5%), Assaulting Police (+100%) and Drug Trafficking (+128.9%). The increase in thefts of bicycles may be associated with drug users commandeering bicycles to travel to target-rich areas to commit thefts (stolen property) offences and to return to the DTES in order to pawn these stolen goods for money to purchase drugs. As drug traffickers and their clients were displaced from specific locales within the DTES, i.e. the corner of Main and Hastings, drug users were required to travel further to obtain stolen goods and then to purchase drugs. Bicycles are the most convenient mode of transportation for these activities.

The increase in Assaults on Police Officers (+100%) and in Drug Trafficking offences (+128.9%) reflects proactive police activities on Jackson Street and East of Jackson Street. An increase in the numbers of police officers on the street and in proactive police activities as part of this presence resulted in more assaults on police officers. Similarly, the increased police presence and focus on drug trafficking – a key objective of the

CET - also resulted in more incidents of trafficking being recorded into the PRIME system.

3. The area of Commercial Drive North (North of Grandview) also experienced increases in a number of offence categories, including Public Alcohol Offence (+50%), Theft of Bicycle (29.7%); Breach Offence (+26%); Warrant Execution (+22%); and Theft of Vehicle (+9.7%). Several of these offences are a consequence of increased police presence and proactive police actions. A primary objective of the CET initiative was to target those persons with outstanding warrants and to adopt a "zero tolerance" approach toward disruptive behaviour. The increases in the number of warrants executed and in the number of breach offences reflect this approach. As in the area of Jackson St. and East of Jackson St., there was an increase in the number of bicycle thefts. This was the only sub-area in the District 2, or, for that matter, in all of the areas studied, where there was an increase in the number of Theft of Vehicles (+9.7%).
4. A review of the percent change in offences recorded in the PRIME system for the Sunrise/Hastings Park area in District 2 indicates decreases, many over 50%, in all of the selected offence categories except Drug Trafficking (+65%). This included substantial decreases in Violent Crime (-68.7%), Drug Possession (-47.6%), Assaulting Police (-66.7%), Public Alcohol Offence (-100%), Shoplifting, (-59.4%), and Break and Enter (-30.1%), among others. The large increase in Drug Trafficking offences for the period studied suggests that the police had identified the Sunrise/Hastings Park area of District 2 as a new drug market "hot spot", possibly the result of the displacement of drug dealers due to the CET initiative.
5. Although Drug Trafficking offences recorded an overall decline of -52.3% in District 2 during the time period April-December, 2002 and April-December, 2003, it increased in two sub-areas: the Jackson and East of Jackson area of the DTES and in the Sunrise/Hastings Park area of District 2, which is outside the geographic area of the DTES.

Percentage Changes in District 1

Overall, for District 1, there were *decreases* in all of the offence categories examined between the time period of April-December, 2002 and April-December, 2003, with the exception of Drug Trafficking (+130.7%), Warrant Execution (+63.8%), and Public Alcohol Offence (+100%).

Analysis of the PRIME data for District 1 (Table 9.1) suggests that there were a number of sub-areas within the district that were impacted by displacement from the DTES as a result of the CET initiative. More specifically:

1. In the Yaletown North/Stadium area of District 1, there were increases in Warrant Execution (10%), Prostitution (+100%), and in Minor Disorder offences (18.6%) recorded in the PRIME system.
2. In the Yaletown South/Granville Entertainment Area, there was a very large increase (143.5%) in Drug Trafficking offences, as well as increases in Warrant Execution (+43.6%), Breach Offences (+25.4%), and in Theft from Vehicle (+14.9%). These figures reflect the migration of drug dealers into this area and an increased police surveillance of these persons and their activities.
3. The Downtown Business Core of District 1 recorded a very large increase in Drug Trafficking (+187.1%), in Assaulting Police (+150%), Warrant Execution (+91.7%), and in Prostitution (+66.7%). Again, these figures indicate an impact on areas in District 1 from the displacement of drug dealers and their clientele from the DTES.
4. The PRIME data for the West End area of District 1 for the time periods studied indicate large declines in Serious Disorder (-46.2%), Theft of Bicycle (-60.6%), Shoplifting (-61.8%), Prostitution (-100%), Assaulting Police (-100%), and Violent Crime (-55.7%), with smaller decreases being recorded for other offence categories. Substantial increases were recorded for Public Alcohol Offence (+100%), Warrant Execution (+56.3%), Drug Possession (+55.2%), and Drug Trafficking (+44.4%). All of the categories in which increases occurred reflect increased proactive police activity.

Percentage Changes in District 3

Data from the PRIME system indicate that there were decreases in all of the selected offence categories in District 3 for the time periods examined (See Table 9.3). Among the large declines were for the offences of Public Alcohol Offence (-94.4%), Drug Trafficking (-59.4%), Violent Crime (-55.8%), Warrant Execution (-55.1%), and Drug Possession (-47.1%). However, there were two notable exceptions to these overall declines:

1. A 450% increase in Drug Trafficking offences in the Commercial Drive South/Trout Lake area, south of Grandview, largely as a result of increase police activity in the area once the area had been identified as a “hot spot”; and,
2. A 115.4% increase in Theft of Bicycle in the East Vancouver/Collingwood area, east of Nanaimo and north of 41st Avenue.

Mapping the Movement of Criminal Activity

Another method was used to attempt to track down some the movement patterns of selected types of criminal activity. Clearly a number of “hot spots” emerged during the CET initiative. An attempt was made to map some of these movements.⁸

The following eight pages (MAPS 9.1 to 9.8) present eight pairs of maps comparing the frequency of incidents of drug trafficking known to the police in the same three-month periods in 2002 and 2003 for Vancouver, the Downtown Peninsula, the Downtown East Side, and the central core area of the city. They illustrate the appearance of new drug dealing hotspots as they move and attract police intervention⁹. Maps 9.9 and 9.10 then depict the frequency of incidents of theft from vehicle, a low planning and low return property offence typically associated with the desperate behaviour of drug addicts, for the Downtown Eastside in

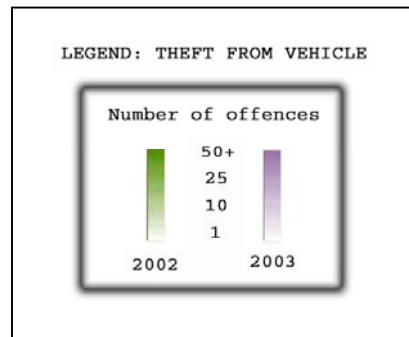
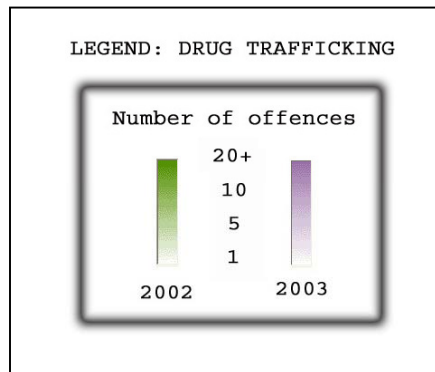
⁸ Data records with address and associated incident data with each location address were extracted, separated, sorted, collated, grouped and analyzed from an Oracle database engine using custom-developed Oracle Developer and Powerbuilder front end applications. Data was placed onto maps using geographic data supplied by Microsoft MapPoint. Graphical work was performed using Adobe Photoshop.

⁹ A separate addendum to this report presents these maps in more detail.

the six months following the launching of the CET initiative as compared to equivalent periods during the previous year.

List of Maps	
MAP 9.1	Drug Trafficking Offences (April to June, 2002/2003; Vancouver)
MAP 9.2	Drug Trafficking Offences (July to September, 2002/2003, Vancouver)
MAP 9.3	Drug Trafficking Offences (April to June, 2002/2003; Vancouver Central Core)
MAP 9.4	Drug Trafficking Offences (July to September, 2002/2003; Vancouver Central)
MAP 9.5	Drug Trafficking Offences (April to June, 2002/2003; Downtown Peninsula)
MAP 9.6	Drug Trafficking Offences (July to September, 2002/2003; Downtown Peninsula)
MAP 9.7	Drug Trafficking Offences (April to June, 2002/2003; Downtown Eastside)
MAP 9.8	Drug Trafficking offences (July to September, 2002/2003; Downtown Eastside)
MAP 9.9	Theft from Vehicle Offences (April to June, 2002/2003; Downtown Eastside)
MAP 9.10	Theft from Vehicle Offences (July to September, 2002/2003; Downtown Eastside)

Below are the legends respectively depicting the logarithmic scale used to map out the frequency of occurrence of Drug Trafficking offences and Theft From Vehicle offences at each point.



Drug Trafficking Offences (April to June, 2002: Vancouver)



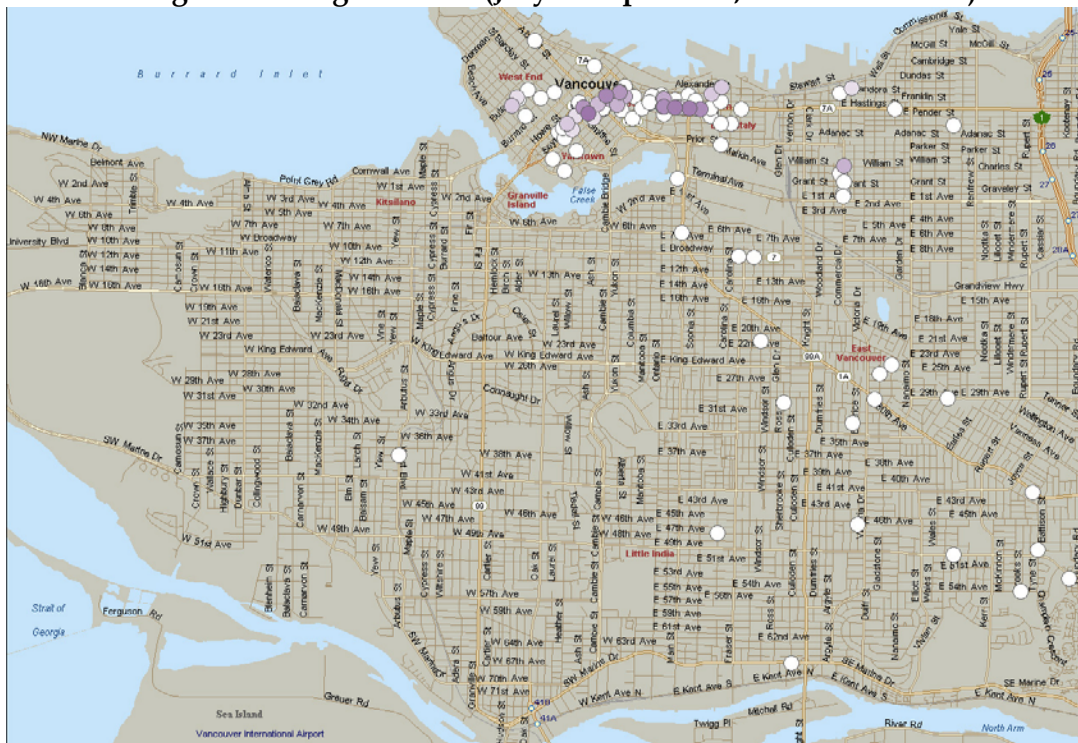
Drug Trafficking Offences (April to June, 2003: Vancouver)



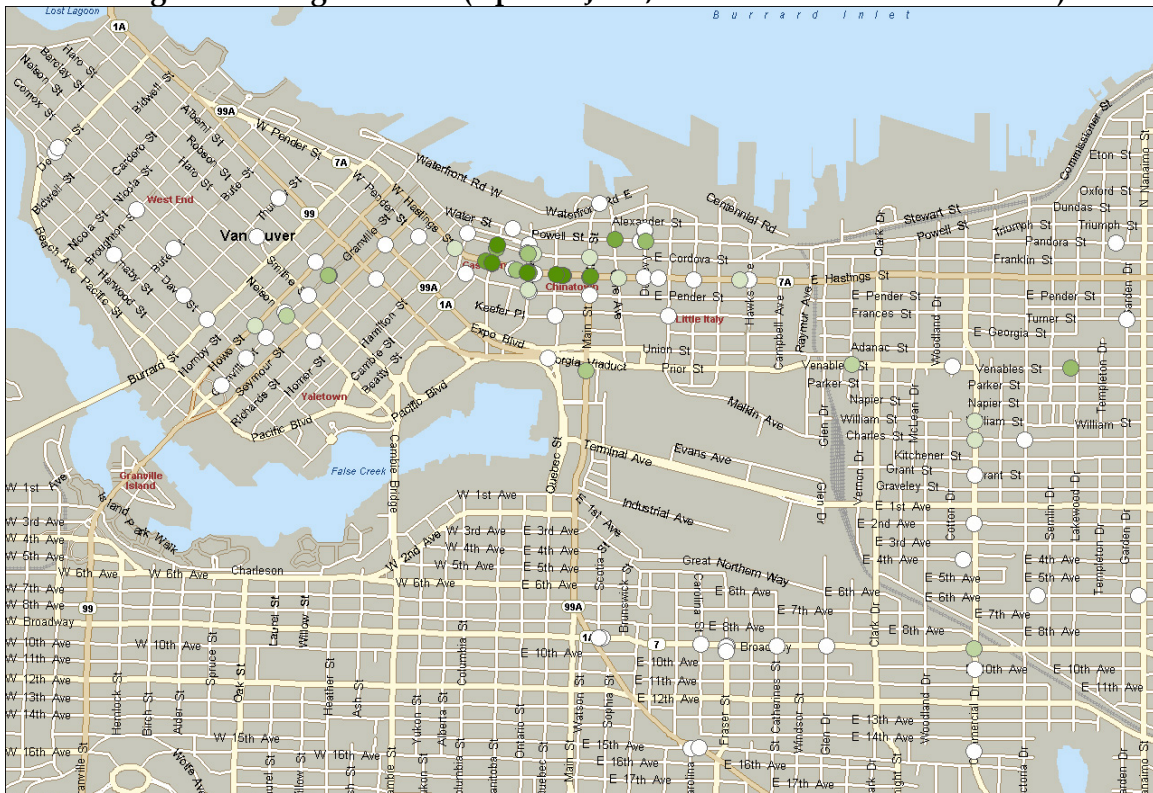
Drug Trafficking Offences (July to September, 2002: Vancouver)



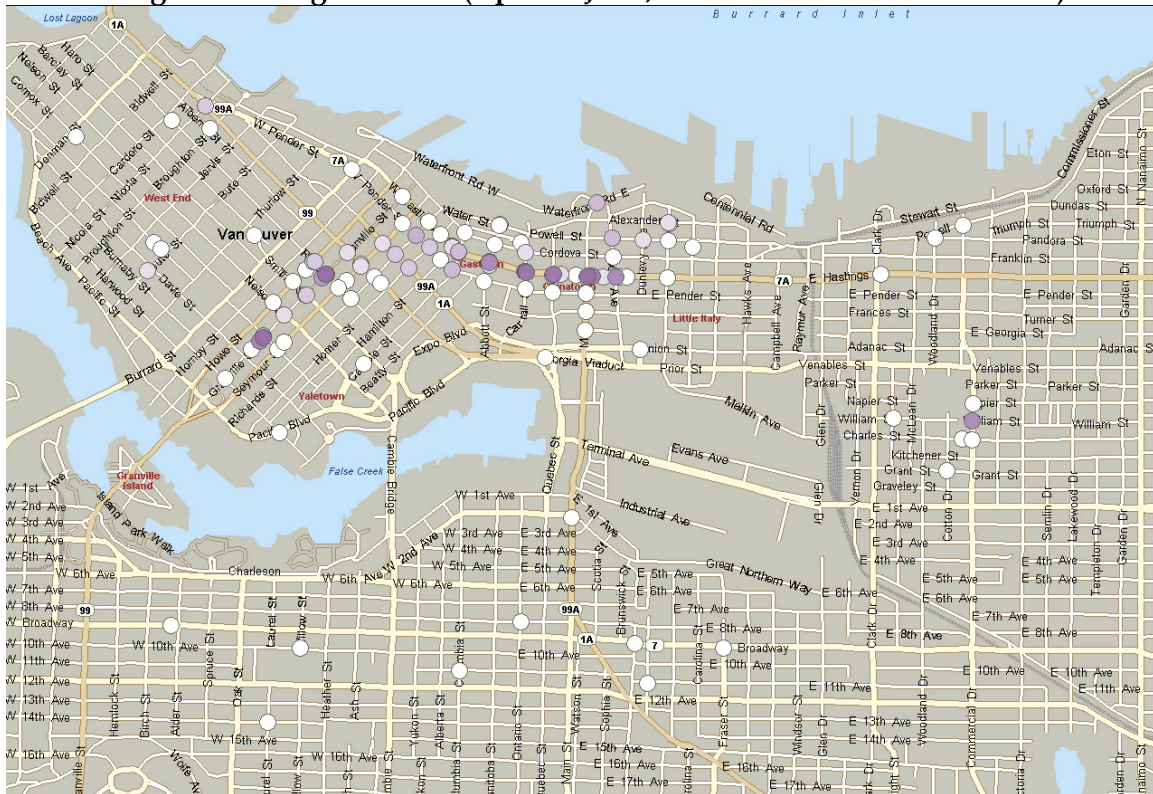
Drug Trafficking Offences (July to September, 2003: Vancouver)



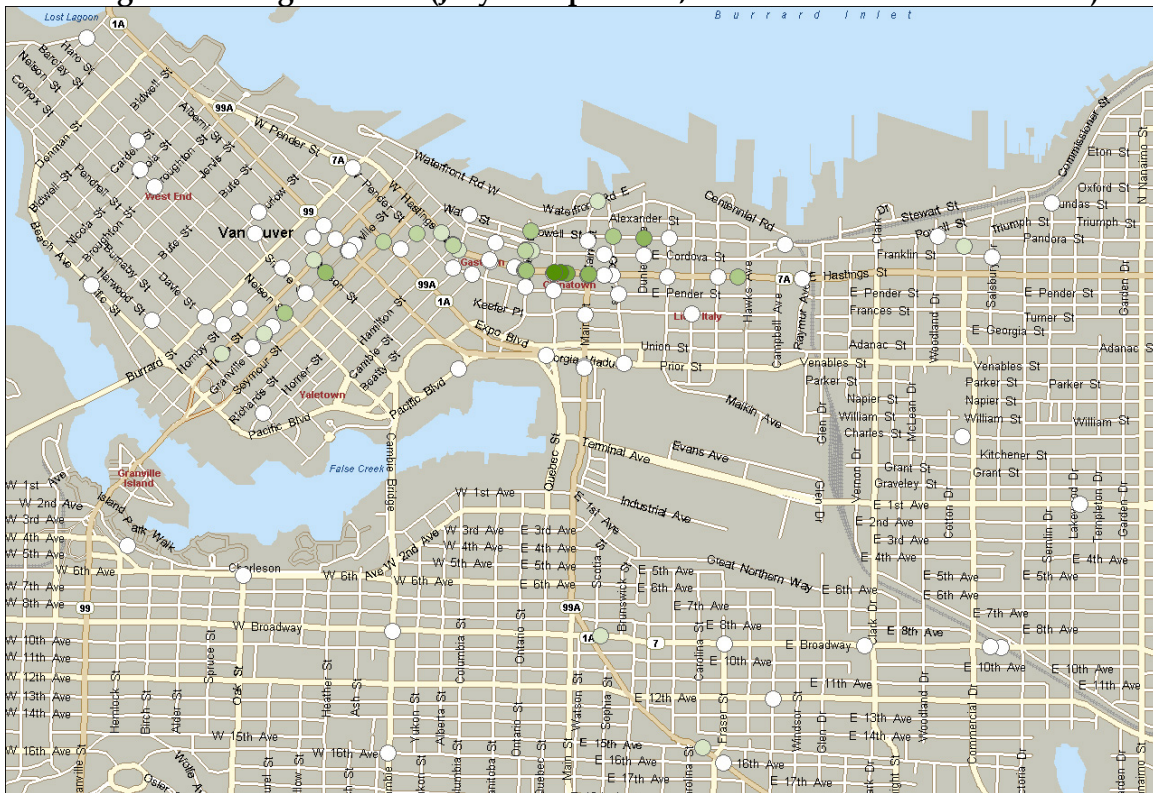
Drug Trafficking Offences (April to June, 2002: Vancouver Central Core)



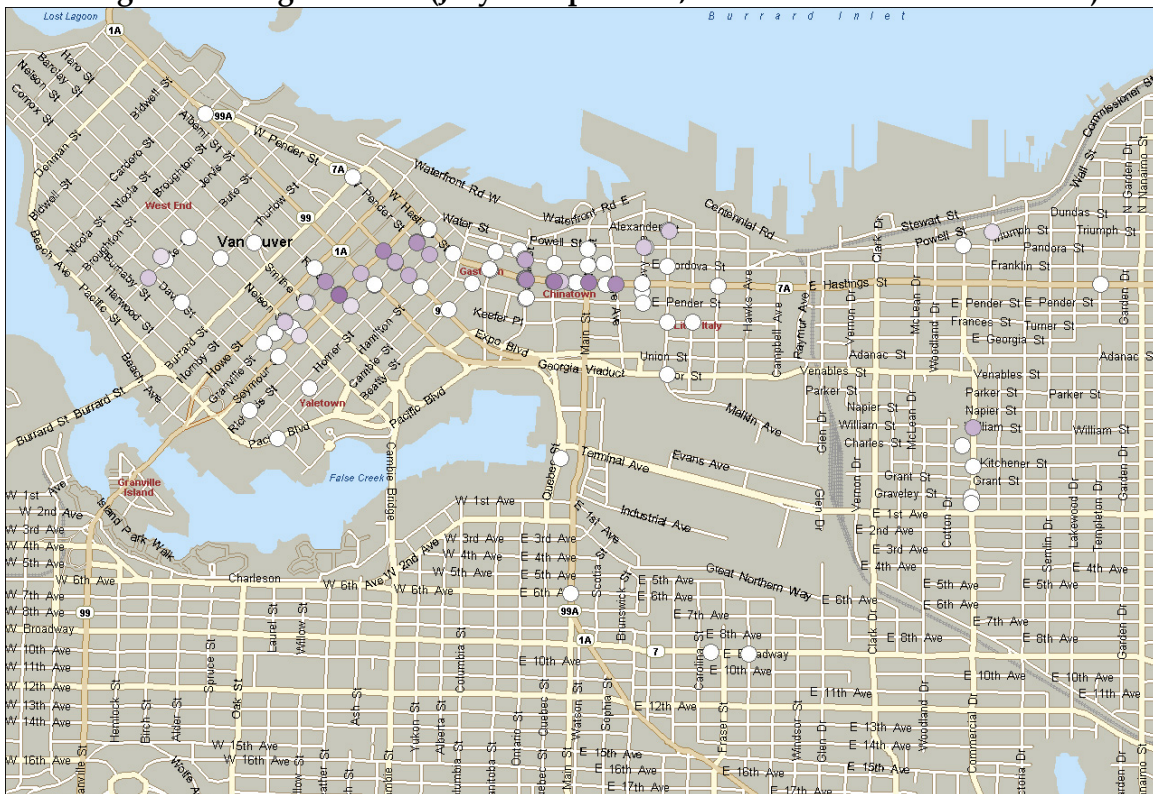
Drug Trafficking Offences (April to June, 2003: Vancouver Central Core)



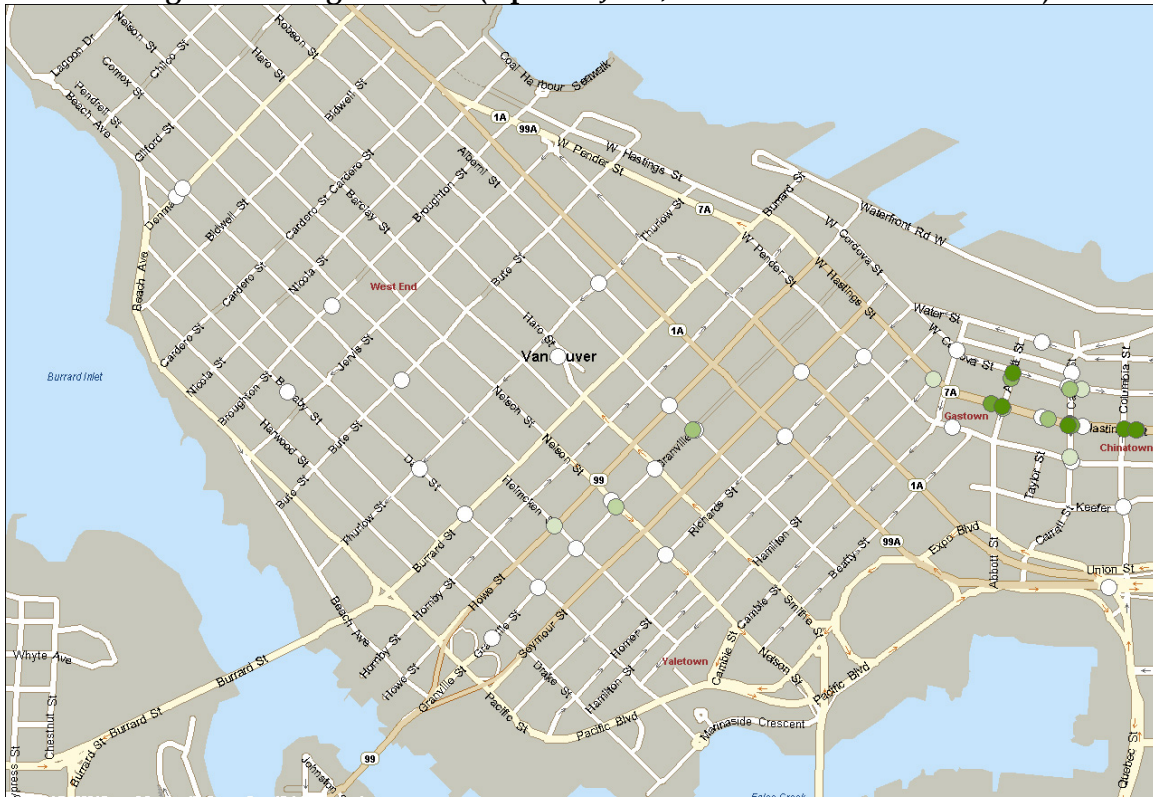
Drug Trafficking Offences (July to September, 2002: Vancouver Central Core)



Drug Trafficking Offences (July to September, 2003: Vancouver Central Core)



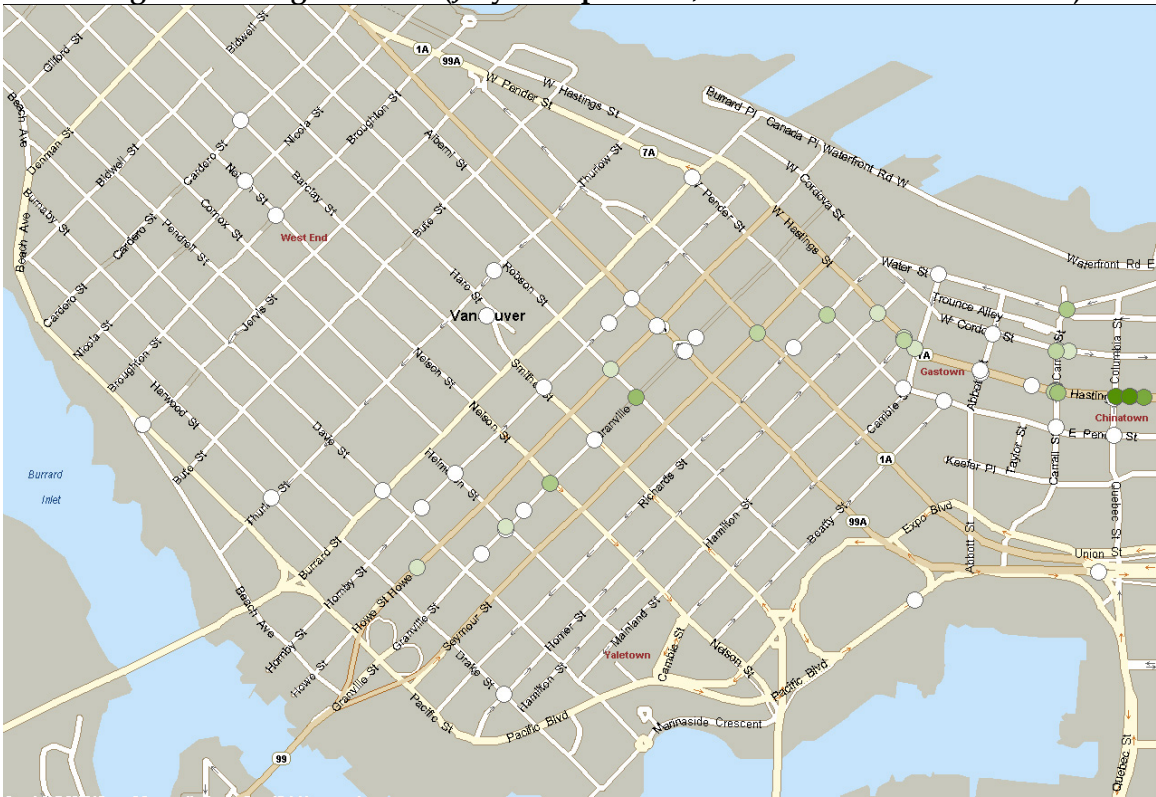
Drug Trafficking Offences (April to June, 2002: Downtown Peninsula)



Drug Trafficking Offences (April to June, 2003: Downtown Peninsula)



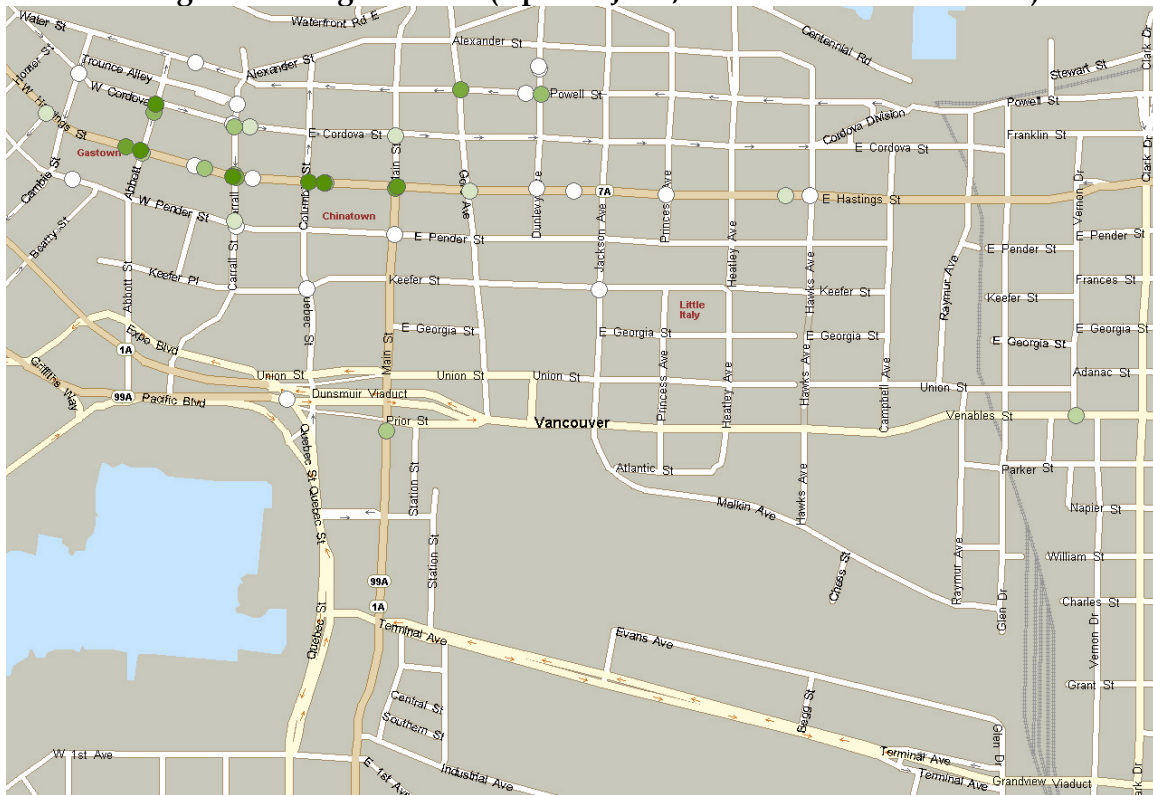
Drug Trafficking Offences (July to September, 2002: Downtown Peninsula)



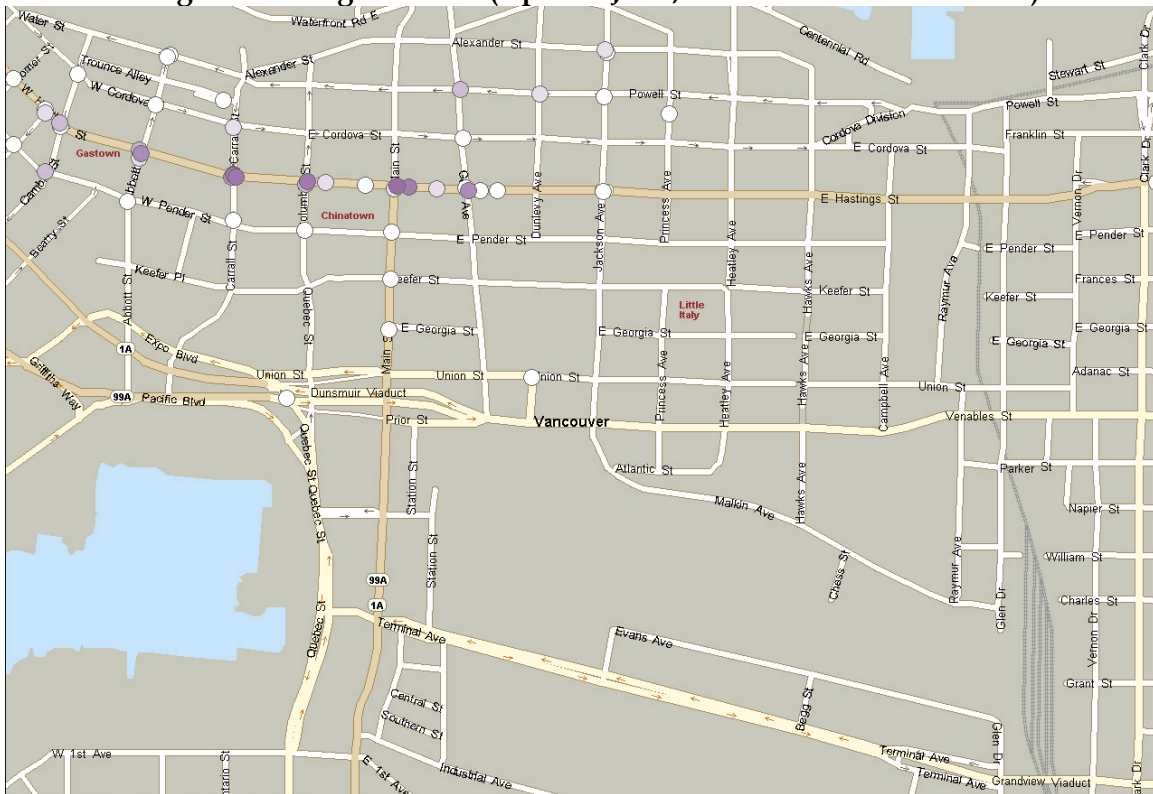
Drug Trafficking Offences (July to September, 2003: Downtown Peninsula)



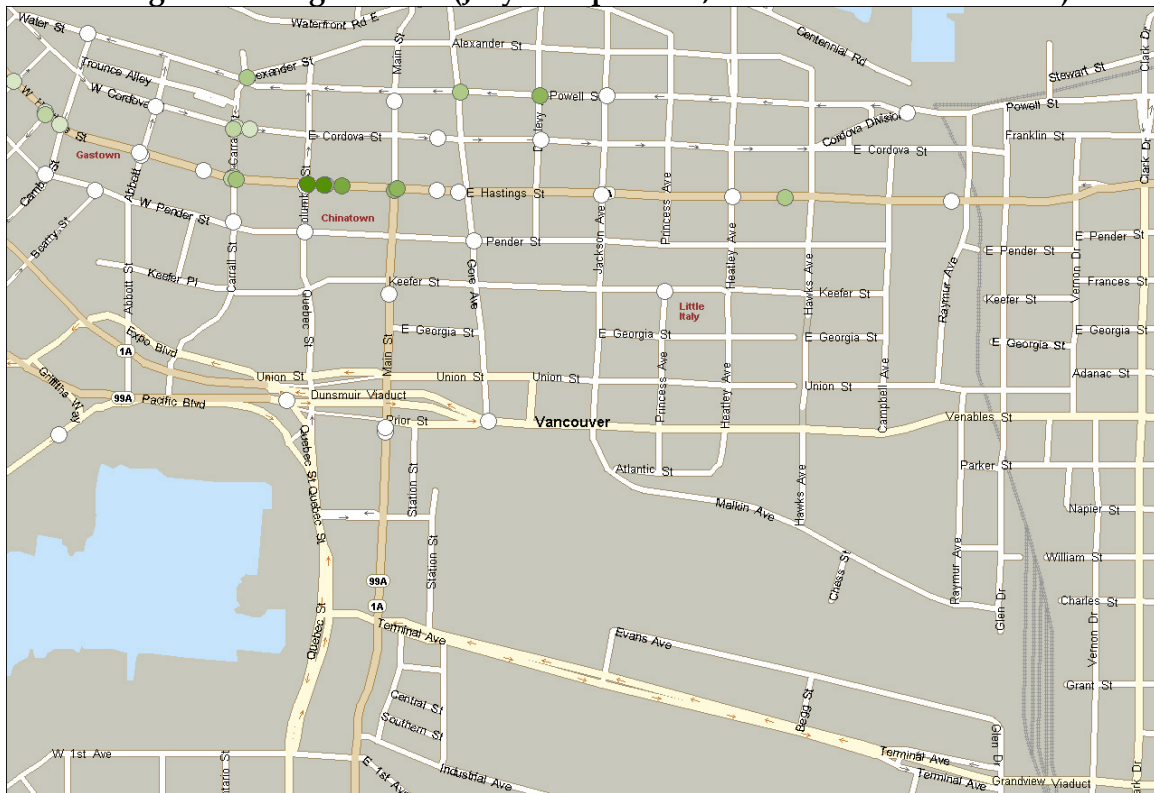
Drug Trafficking Offences (April to June, 2002: Downtown Eastside)



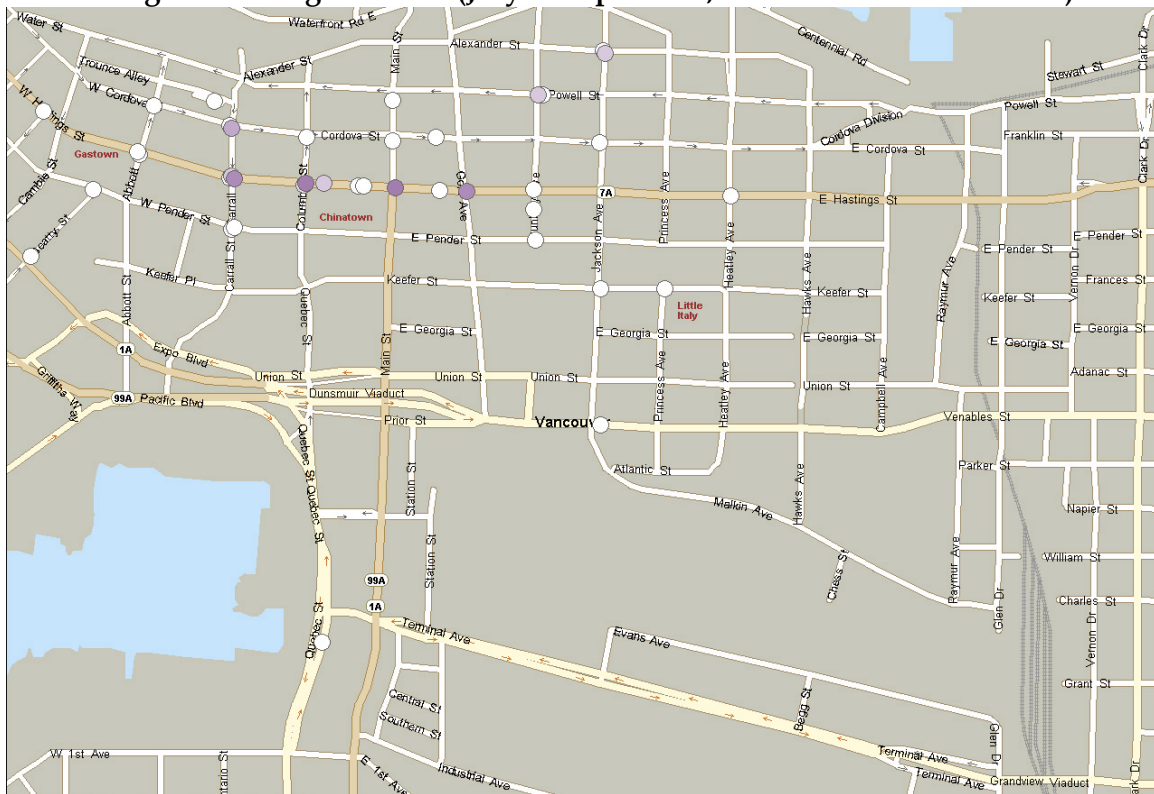
Drug Trafficking Offences (April to June, 2003: Downtown Eastside)



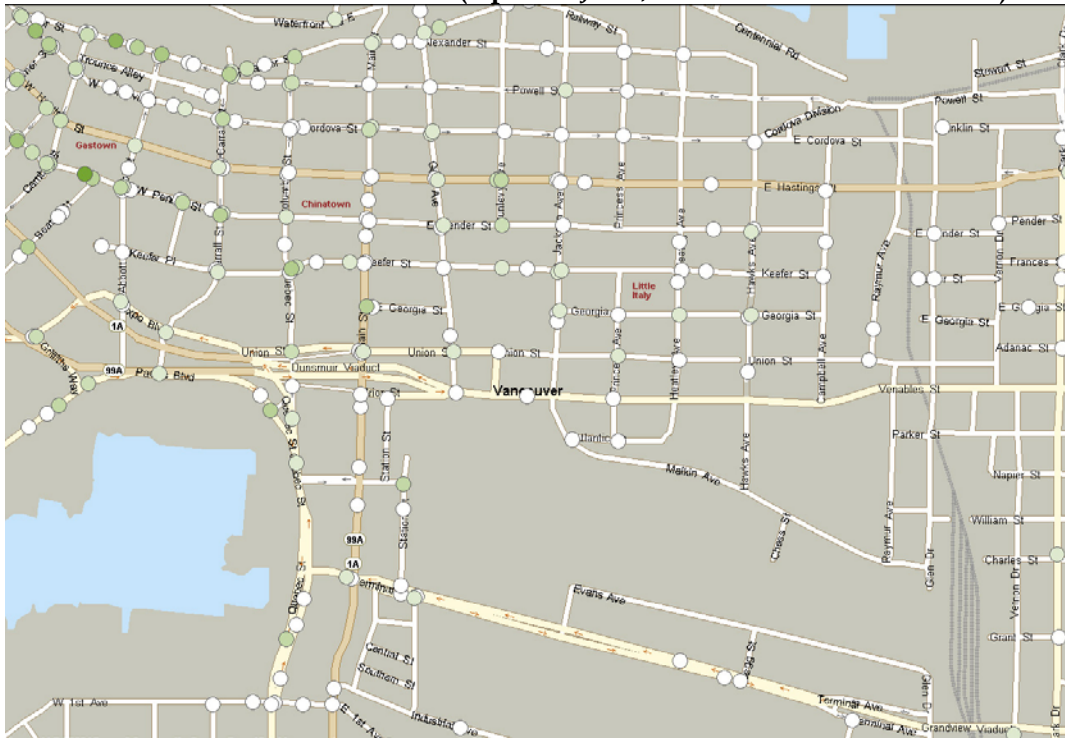
Drug Trafficking offences (July to September, 2002: Downtown Eastside)



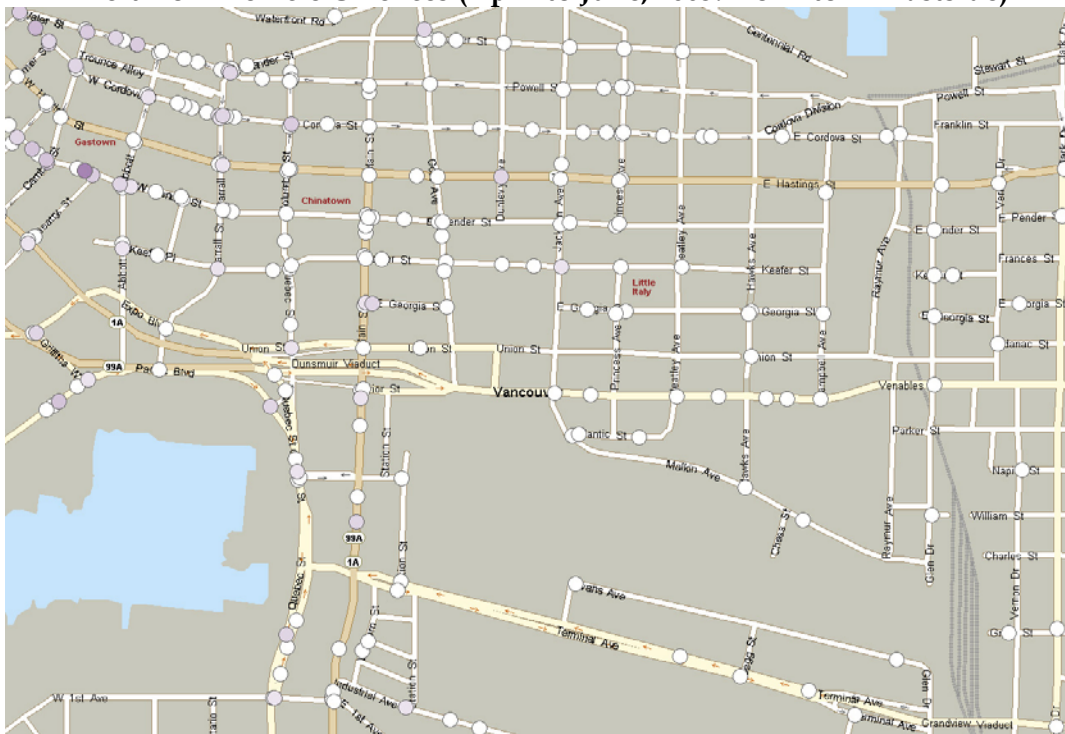
Drug Trafficking Offences (July to September, 2003: Downtown Eastside)



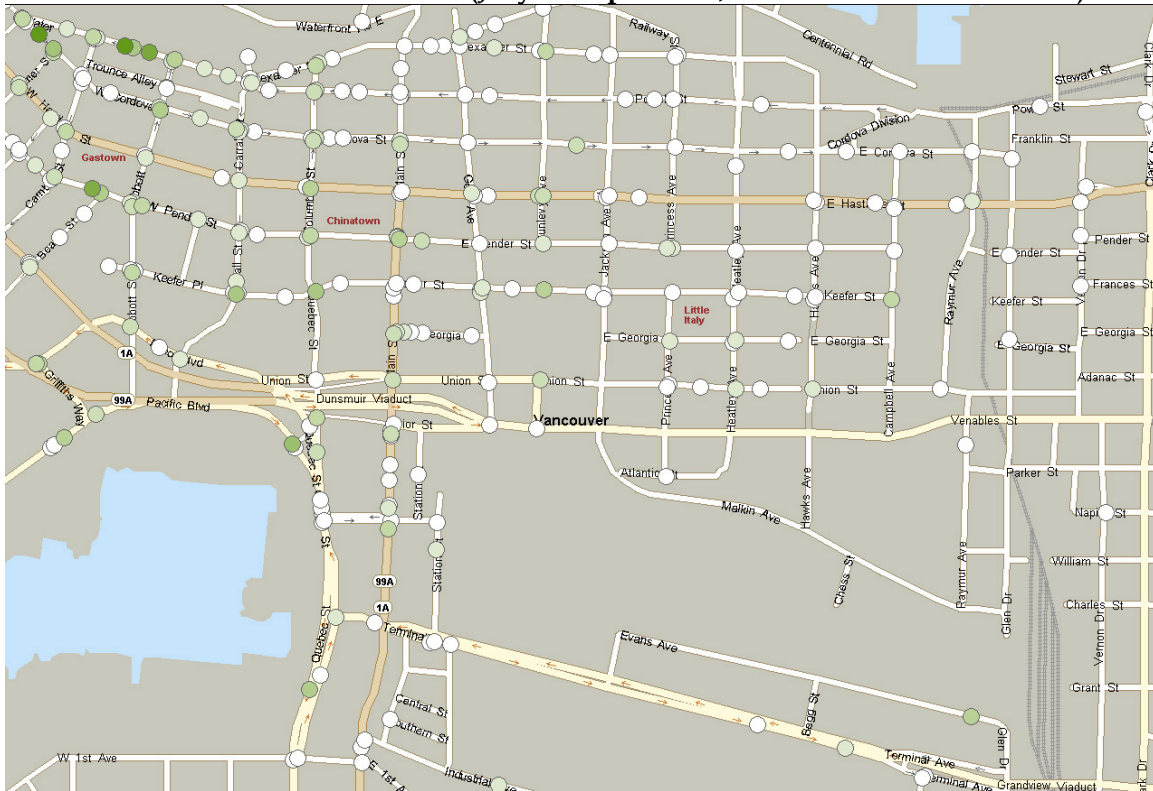
Theft from Vehicle Offences (April to June, 2002: Downtown Eastside)



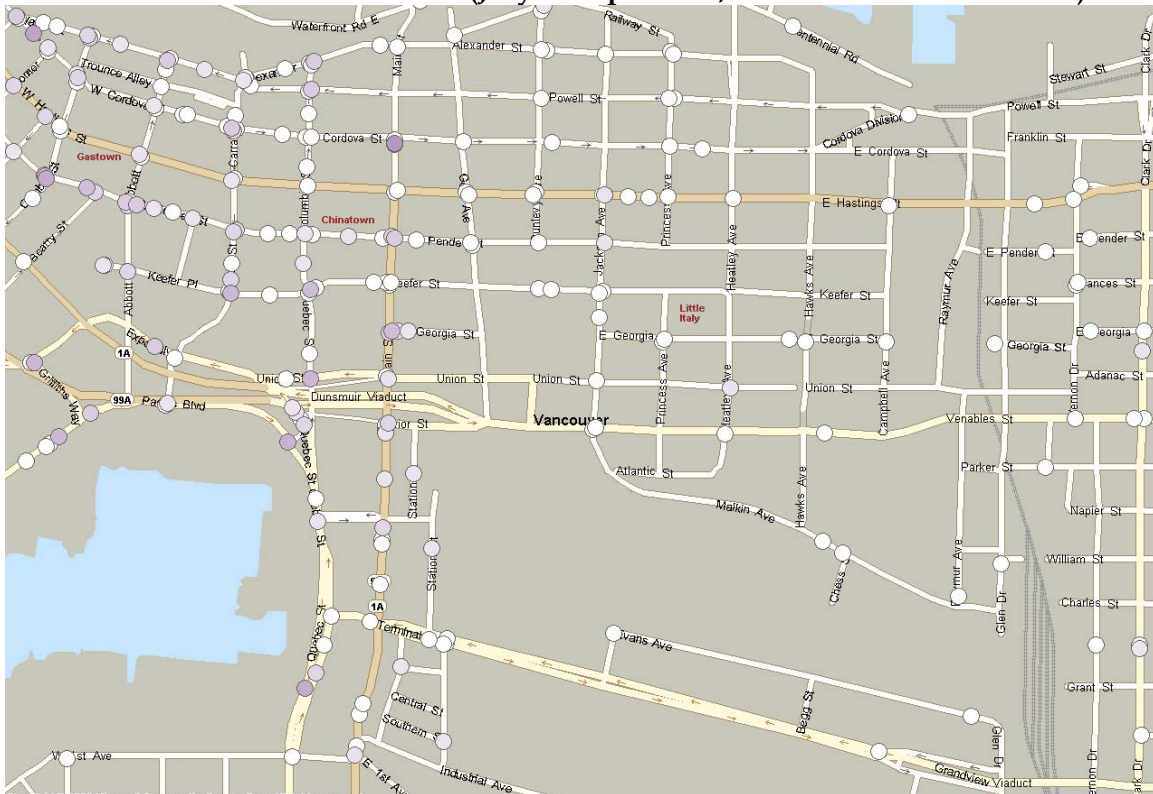
Theft from Vehicle Offences (April to June, 2003: Downtown Eastside)



Theft from Vehicle Offences (July to September, 2002: Downtown Eastside)



Theft from Vehicle Offences (July to September, 2003: Downtown Eastside)



Questions and Findings

Returning to the evaluation issues identified at the outset of the report, a number of questions can be raised and conclusions stated concerning the displacement effect produced by the CET initiative.

Question: *Is there evidence that the CET imitative may have displaced some types of criminal activity to other neighbourhoods nearby or other parts of the City?*

Yes. Analysis of the PRIME data for the DTES, District 2, and the adjacent police districts indicates that the CET initiative did displace certain types of criminal activity, particularly drug related activities, to other areas. This is reflected in increases, or “spikes” for specific categories of offences, in certain areas within each of the policing districts. These variations were, at least in part, a consequence of the movement of criminal activity within a district or the city as a whole that, in turn, resulted in increased police activity.

Question: *If there was evidence of crime displacement, how did the city-wide enforcement team or other elements of the VPD respond to that new development?*

The increase in the incidence of officially recorded offences in localized hot spots reflects a proactive response on the part of the police in District 2 and in adjacent police districts. This is illustrated in the increases in certain offence categories that are a reflection on proactive policing, e.g. execution of warrants, drug trafficking. It appears from the analyses that the VPD, while not having the resources to mount the “flying squads” to track and respond to specific offenders and their drug-market related activities, nevertheless were able to respond to some of the localized hot spots that developed. It is important to note that the recorded decreases in the frequency of several types of crime, as reflected in the PRIME data for specific categories of offences, may have been due, at least in part, to a diminished capacity of the VPD to proactively police and to respond to criminal activity.

Question: *Was the City-wide enforcement team (and/or other elements of the police force) able to pursue and police offenders and their associated*

drug market-related activities that were displaced from the DTES to new hot spots in the City?

Interviews with senior police officials in the VPD revealed that the Department did not have the resources to adequately police the localized crime hot spots that developed in other areas of the DTES and District 2, nor in the adjacent Districts 1 and 3. Although the senior administration had anticipated that displacement would occur, several factors prevented the Department from mounting the necessary enforcement effort required to respond to it. This included the fact that the Department was under-resourced prior to the CET initiative, did not receive additional funding support from Vancouver City Council, and experienced the unexpected retirement of 150 senior officers from the Department due to a pension issue.

Chapter 9 - References

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- JOHNSON, S.D., BOWERS, K.J., YOUNG, C., AND A. HIRSCHFIELD (2001). "Uncovering the True Picture: Evaluating Crime Reduction", *Crime Prevention and Community Safety: An International Journal*, Vol. 3 (4), pp. 7-24.

10

Impact on Police-Community Relations

One of the critical issues surrounding police crackdowns is how the activities of the police affect relations with the community. As previously discussed, there often is a demand for more police presence in the streets and, in the case of the DTES there certainly was a growing public expectation that the police do something to address the crime and disorder associated with the existing open drug market. In responding to these expectations, however, the police must be sensitive to the demands of different communities within the area. The expectations of the various communities, however, are neither always clear, nor congruent with each other.

Special police initiatives such as the CET have the potential to help restore public confidence in the police. In fact, as was seen, this is often one of the explicit goals of such initiatives. On the other hand, when unsuccessful or when improperly conducted, they also have the potential to alienate community residents, damage police-community relations, and undermine the legitimacy of the police and its various interventions. For all these reasons, the question of the impact of the CET initiative on police-community relations in the DTES is an important one. There are also questions about the general level of community satisfaction with the police, how the CET initiative and its implementation were viewed by various segments of the community, and whether the CET initiative was perceived as having achieved its objectives. This will be addressed in the present chapter.

Community Residents' Support for the Police

A majority (52/97, 53.6%) of the community residents surveyed indicated that they were supportive of the police, while 39.2% (38/97) indicated they were neutral and 7.2% (7/97) stated that they did not support the police. Their opinion of the police was most frequently based on personal experiences and on observations of police activities, rather than what had happened to other people or on media reports.

Police-Resident Contact

Fifty-seven percent (54/94) of residents surveyed for the present study indicated that they had contact with the police during the summer months of 2003, as compared to 35% (33/94) who had contact with the police during the same period in 2002. Twenty-two percent (24/96) had been stopped by the police within two months preceding the time of the interview. In terms of “stop and search” experiences with the police, twice as many residents reported that they had been stopped and searched during the summer of 2003 (n=22) as compared to the summer of 2002 (n=10). This is a reflection of the increased presence of the police in the area as part of the CET initiative. Similarly, nearly twice as many residents (n=26) reported that they had a “brief conversation” with the police during the summer of 2003, as compared to the same period in 2002 (n=15).

Residents were evenly split as to whether they had noticed a change in police behaviour during the CET. Those that had noticed a change (47/96, 49%) cited increased police presence, a more aggressive approach toward the public, and more communication with the public as key indicators.

The Police Officers Assigned to the DTES

Overall, the residents in the focus groups were supportive of the police, but felt that officers who were newly assigned to the area required training so as to be better able to relate to the special needs of persons in the DTES. There was a general consensus that when the police had been called to attend the housing cooperative to deal with problems, the police had responded appropriately. Some residents voiced a negative view of

the use of patrol on horses, which was seen to emphasise power differentials instead of better relations. Some participants complained that the young officers assigned to the area tended to treat everyone in the area as though they were criminals. They argued that the DTES “should not be a training ground for new recruits.” Several residents in the focus groups believed that the police had assaulted some residents and some drug dealers and drug users during the CET initiative.

When asked for suggestions about how to improve law enforcement in the area they suggested that the area needs “officers who will be down here for 10-20 years so they will understand the area and make relationships”. It was said that “rotating officers in and out of the area causes problems” and that more community policing was needed. The following comments were also voiced with what appeared to be the support of the group: “The police must have a coherent idea of what they are doing, rather than standing around and talking”; “Officers should speak with people rather than interrogate them, be less authoritarian and more involved”; “Officers need sensitivity training and to be taught how to interact with the community without power trips”; and, “Change must come slow and start with basic needs for those in the area. This should come before enforcement”.

Perceptions of IV Drug User Residents of the DTES

A total of 15 persons in the Community Residents Survey sample identified themselves as current IV drug users. Generally speaking, nearly one-half (7/15, 47%) of the respondents stated that they supported the police, while 6/15 (40%) stated that they were neutral about the police. All but one (14/15) of the respondents felt that most people who lived in the DTES did not support the police, while nearly less than half (6/15, 40%) felt that most people supported the police sometimes. A majority (11/15, 73%) felt that most people think the police harass people too much, violate people’s rights (9/15, 60%), and use excessive force (11/15, 73%).

A majority (9/15, 60%) of the IV drug users in the sample supported the increased police presence in the DTES as part of the CET and an even larger number (11/15, 73%) felt that the police were part of the solution to the problems in the DTES. Only two (13%) respondents perceived that the police were not part of the solution. Nearly half (7/15, 47%) of the drug users in the community resident sample felt that the police had a “reasonable amount of impact” on restoring order in the

DTES, while 4/15 (27%) felt that the police had a “little bit of impact.” Eight (53%) of the respondents felt that all or some of the police officers were doing a good job policing in the DTES.

Most (10/15, 67%) of the respondents had noticed a change in police behaviour during the CET’s first six months and the views of this group included such descriptors as “less caring” and “more aggressive.” Only two (13%) felt that the police were providing more assistance to people in need. There was also a view shared by all but one of the respondents (14/15, 93%) that the police were arresting more people and harassing more people (13/15, 87%) although there was the generally held view (13/15, 87%) that the police tended to speak to people more since the inception of the CET. Only three of the respondents (20%) felt that the police were more approachable and a similar number felt that the police cared about people in the DTES. Twice that number (6/15, 40%) felt that the police were making more of an effort to assist people in the DTES.

Just over one-third (5/15, 33%) of the respondents felt that the police were responding more quickly to situations since the inception of the CET and a similar number (6/15, 40%) felt that the police were making more of an attempt to help persons who lived in the neighbourhood. Only three (20%), however, felt that the police were more approachable than they had been prior to the CET initiative and that the police officers cared about the residents of the DTES. However, a majority (9/15, 60%) supported the efforts of the police to make the streets safer and to clean up the area.

Of the 15 respondents to the residents survey who identified themselves as current IV drug users, only two (13%) indicated they would have more police patrolling the DTES, 8/15 (53%) would have the same number as at present, and 5/15 (33%) would have fewer officers in the DTES. Of those IV drug users who offered an opinion (N=13), six (46%) indicated they were “somewhat satisfied” with the job that the police were doing in the DTES; while seven (54%) were either “not very satisfied” or “totally unsatisfied.” Most of the respondent (10/15, 67%) police could be more effective in the DTES by being more communicative, being more understanding of the community and its residents.

Members of a focus group composed of service providers from a not-for-profit agency in the DTES and drug users explained that they had noticed an increase in the number of police officers. However, they felt that there were no set rules or standards regarding the police who were expected to deal with people: “the behaviour of the police was random

and no one could figure out what the rules were”. They expressed their perception that there was a lack of clarity around the implementation of the CET initiative: “the police were not certain what they were doing”. Resentment was expressed concerning the “sweeping” and “arbitrary” searches executed during which “everyone would be searched regardless of what they were doing there”. There was a feeling that people were being unnecessarily harassed and that the overall strategy of the CET initiative was to drive people out of the DTES. A view generally held within that group was that the CET initiative was linked to businesses and tourism and not to the needs of people in the DTES. The CET initiative, in the view of members of that group, had divided the community between those who supported it and those that did not, those who wanted the police intervention and those who realized that the police were not the answer to the problems in the DTES. Those who support the police, it was stated, “are prepared to turn a blind eye to the illegal activities of the police”.

Perceptions of Business Owners

A majority of the business owners surveyed had observed the police providing assistance to area residents, arresting drug dealers, and arresting other people in the area, had not observed the police harassing people or the police physically assaulting people. A slight majority of them (13/25, 52%) had observed the police arresting drug users. The police were generally viewed by the business owners as having become more approachable, providing more assistance to persons in need, and speaking more with community residents. Less than 20% of the sample felt that the police had been harassing more people during the first six months of the CET.

There was a high level of support (21/26, 81%) for having more police patrolling the DTES. There was the view, held by a majority (16/24, 67%) of the business owners surveyed, that the police could be more effective in the DTES if there were more officers, they “had the ability to do more,” and if other factors came into play such as more severe sentences, more emphasis on enforcement, and quicker response to criminals. A majority (16/25, 64%) of the business owners interviewed had called the police for assistance. The police had responded in all of the cases and just over half of the owners (58%) were satisfied with the police response.

A slight majority (14/26, 54%) of the business sample indicated that they had noticed changes in the behaviour of the police during the CET, among these being more interaction with the public and increased presence. There was the perception that the police were providing more assistance to people in need, making more arrests, speaking to people more, diminishing the size and scope of the open drug market and being more approachable. Respondents were generally not able to determine whether the police were engaged in more harassment of people in the area, or whether they had reduced the amount of stolen property in the area. There was a consensus that police officers in the DTES cared about the people who lived in the area and that all or most of the officers were doing a good job. There was a shared view that the police had an impact on restoring order in the DTES.

Perceptions of Health Care Professionals

All but one of the respondents indicated that they either “Generally Supported” the police or were “Generally Neutral” about the police. These perceptions were based on Personal Experience for the majority (6/9, 67%) of the respondents and on Observations of Police Activities (4/9, 44%) for the remainder of the sample. In terms of the levels of DTES resident support for the police, all of the health care professionals (9/9) were of the view that residents in the DTES thought the police harassed people too much, violated people’s rights, and used excessive force and, that those residents who did support the police, did so only on occasion. The majority of respondents (7/9, 78%) stated that the police could be more effective in the DTES if they worked more with other agencies, focused on the development of long-term solutions, and were “more non-judgmental.”

The perception of the health care professionals that residents in the DTES did not support the police contrasts with the views of the sample of community residents who indicated that a majority of residents supported the police. This discrepancy may be due, in part, to the specific clientele that these professionals come into contact with on a daily basis.

A slight majority (5/9, 56%) of the health care professionals interviewed felt that there had been a change in way that the police behaved in the six months since the implementation of the CET initiative. A generally-shared view was that officers had become more aggressive, due in large measure to the behaviour of police members who had fewer years of policing experience. The perceptions as to specific behaviour on

the part of police officers in conjunction with the CET initiative are captured in Table 10.5.

TABLE 10.5 - Health Care Professionals: "Would you say that, over the past nine months, the police:"

Perception of the Police	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
Provide more assistance to people in need?	1	5	3
Have been arresting more people?	9		
Have been harassing more people?	8	1	
Have reduced the amt of stolen property available?	1	6	2
Tend to speak to people more?	6	2	1
Have decreased the open drug market	7	2	
Have been responding quicker to situations?	3	5	1
Are more approachable?	2	6	1
Have made more of an attempt to help people who live in the neighbourhood?	2	5	2

A majority of the respondents stated that, in their view, the police had been arresting more people and had a significant impact on the open drug market. Respondents were also of the view that the police tended to speak more with residents but also tended to harass more people. Conversely, the police were seen as not providing more assistance to persons in need, reducing the amount of available stolen property, or as being more approachable. These perceptions reflected the view held by two-thirds of these professionals (6/9, 67%) that, in general, the police officers did not care about the people who lived in the area.

In terms of what the respondents felt that the police were doing "right" in the DTES, mention was made of "enforcing the law", "keeping the streets safer", taking a strong stand against the social service cuts", and making the area safer for older residents." Among the areas in which the police were viewed as doing poorly was "spreading the problem out; not addressing it", officers who were perceived to be on "power trips", to have poor "people skills", a failure to focus on aspects of policing other than enforcement, and a concern that police officers were involved in

illegal searches and seizures. Two of the respondents (22%) felt that “Most” of the officers in the DTES were “doing a good job”, while four (44%) stated that “Some” were “doing a good job.”

Police Officers’ Perceptions

The senior police officers interviewed were of the view that the CET initiative had significantly improved the relations between the police and the DTES community as a whole. They believed that the community was generally supportive of the initiative and would support its continuation. They also quoted the favourable responses they had received from other segments of the Vancouver community – quoting in particular the results of the public opinion survey they had commissioned - and they pointed at the significant amount of correspondence they and the Police Board had received in support of the initiative.

In the addition, the “core” police officer, who were already assigned to the DTES at the time the CET was implemented, were asked to assess the quality of the relationships that exist between the police and the community and their responses are presented in Table 10.6.

TABLE 10.6 - Interview with Police Officers: “How would you describe the relations between the police and the following groups in the DTES?”

Community Group	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Don’t Know
Addicts	1 (.05)	12 (60.0)	6 (30.0)	1 (.05)	
Private business owners	3 (15.0)	13 (65.0)	3 (15.0)	1 (.05)	
Pawn shop personnel		6 (30.0)	10 (50.0)	3 (15.0)	1 (.05)
Carnegie Centre personnel	6 (30.0)	6 (30.0)	7 (35.0)		1 (.05)
Church personnel	4 (20.0)	10 (50.0)	2 (10.0)	3 (15.0)	2 (10.0)
Health personnel	2 (10.0)	10 (50.0)	6 (30.0)	2 (10.0)	
Charities		11 (55.0)	4 (20.0)	2 (10.0)	2 (10.0)
DEYAS		2 (10.0)	13 (65.0)	5 (25.0)	
Aboriginal organizations		7 (35.0)	5 (25.0)	5 (25.0)	3 (15.0)

The responses of the officers indicate that relations with most of the agencies and residents of the DTES are viewed as “Excellent” or “Good.” Exceptions to this are relations with pawn shop personnel, DEYAS, and Aboriginal organizations.

Questions and Findings

Question: *To what extent were the residents of the DTES aware of, and supportive of, the CET initiative and its objectives?*

The responses of community residents in the survey interviews indicate that these residents were evenly divided as to whether they knew about the CET initiative. When the CET and its objectives were explained to those residents not familiar with it, the overall level of support for the initiative and its objectives from the entire sample of community residents was high.

Question: *How have the residents of the DTES been affected by the CET initiative?*

The results indicate that nearly half of the residents interviewed felt that the police had impacted the open drug market and that officers had a greater tendency to speak with residents than in previous times. There was not a sense that the police had been able to reduce the amount of stolen property available or that their efforts were generally directed towards helping people in the community.

Question: *How has the CET initiative affected the nature and quality of police – community relations in the DTES?*

There were high levels of satisfaction among community residents with the performance on the police in the DTES and a majority of the residents supported the increased police presence in the area. Residents viewed the police as part of the solution to the problems in the community, reducing disorder and making the community and its residents more safe and secure. A majority of the residents perceived that the CET had made the streets in the community safer, reduced the number of people coming into the DTES from other areas, and reduced the number of people hanging around the streets in the area.

While there was overall support for the police, concerns were expressed by some community residents that the police were too aggressive and that many of the officers seconded to the area, as part of the CET, did not have the skills to interact effectively with the residents.

11

Impact on Vulnerable Groups and the Potential for Police Abuse of Authority

Police interventions such as the CET initiative may differentially impact and affect the various groups in a community and a key question is how the CET initiative affected drug addicted individuals and other vulnerable groups, including youth, sex trade workers, and people suffering from mental illness.

Impact on IV Drug Users

Several members of the focus group that included IV drug users stated that the police officers who were seconded to the DTES to supplement the Core police officers displayed an aggressive attitude and behaviour. More specifically, their view was that these officers were not as tolerant as the Core officers who had worked for some years in the DTES and who were familiar with the residents and had the skills to mediate and resolve situations without resorting to the use of force or arrest. Most of the negative comments made about the police centered on the behaviour of officers who had been brought into the DTES as part of the increased staffing requirements from other areas of the city to implement and who were unfamiliar with drug market, the drug subculture and the associated crime and disorder. According to the group, these new police officers were more likely to issue “ridiculous” tickets for such things as jaywalking and loitering. Several of the IV drug users also felt that the police often abused their power and authority, and

harassed persons on the street in an attempt to have them leave the area, and stopped and searched persons on the premise they were dealing for no apparent reason.

A key strategy of the CET initiative was a zero-tolerance approach toward public disorder and an attempt by the police to alter certain long-standing patterns of behaviour. During the same focus group meeting, concerns were expressed that the police had been smashing crack pipes, harassing the mentally challenged and abusing the elderly who were alcoholics in an attempt to assert their authority. Several respondents also stated that there was “shit” going on in the parks and that the police did not do anything but stand around talking to each other. One man stated that he was confined to his house in the afternoon and was afraid to go out because of police harassment – he said that if he were smoking dope on the street that would cause the police to search him. Others in the group agreed. One person stated that he had been arrested for jaywalking and possession of cocaine in a syringe.

The drug users who were part of the sample of residents surveyed were also asked whether, during the CET, they had observed the police engaged in specific types of activities. Their responses were as follows:

- Harassing people: 15/15 (100%)
- Helping people: 9/15 (60%)
- Arresting drug dealers: 13/15 (87%)
- Arresting drug users: 14/15 (93%)
- Arresting other people: 11/14 (79%)
- Physically assaulting people: 11/15 (73%)
- Heard about the police harassing people: 14/15 (93%)
- Heard about the police helping people: 9/15 (60%)

Impact on Sex Trade Workers

During a focus group with a number of sex trade workers, participants related that they had noticed more police in the area and more officers on horseback. Overall, the sex trade workers were very supportive of the CET as they felt that the increased police presence had improved their safety. There was a perception that there had been more violence since the inception of CET initiative, not on the part of the police, but by the dealers who “are being pushed around by the police” and have become more aggressive. However, the sex trade workers felt that the

DTES was still out of control and that violence was continuing to increase.

Sex trade workers who participated in the focus group meeting agreed that the “majority of the police officers in the area do a good job”, but that some of the new cops were “cocky and had caused some of the problems”. They suggested that the police “often go beyond what they should do in their jobs and are too aggressive in enforcement”. They were critical of police officers who issued tickets for minor infractions such as not wearing a helmet or jaywalking.

Potential for Abuses of Authority

Police crackdowns and other proactive initiatives also hold the potential for the abuse of power by officers attempting to achieve the objectives of the initiative. There is also the possibility that some police officers may abuse their authority in attempting to achieve the objectives of an initiative such as the CET. To determine whether this dynamic occurred during the CET initiative, the evaluation examined whether the VPD officers were perceived to be fair in their interactions with members of the community, and in particular, with drug users and whether there were any instances of police abuse of authority in the DTES during the CET initiative?

During the course of their observations on the street, project team members (who were not known to the police and did not identify themselves to the police) did observe a number of situations involving police intervention, but did not observe any abusive or inappropriately aggressive police behaviour. This is significant in that police abuse of power in the DTES was a criticism offered from some quarters.

As part of the survey interview, community residents were asked whether they had personally observed a range of police activities that could be problematic (see Table 11.1).

Their responses indicate that a large percentage of the community residents had observed the police arresting drug dealers and drug users, as well as harassing people. Many of them had also observed the police helping people. It was not possible to ascertain the circumstances in which the behaviours were observed. For example, it is not known who the police were seen to be harassing, nor is it known what the respondents would classify as “helping” behaviour. As well, it is not

possible to determine how many of the drug users that were seen being arrested may have had in their possession an amount of drugs exceeding that required for personal use. Significantly, however, a majority of the respondents had not *personally* observed the police physically assaulting persons in the area.

TABLE 11.1 – Survey of Community Residents: “During the past six months, have you *observed* the police:”

Police Behaviour Observed	YES	NO
Harassing people	65/95 (68.4)	30/95 (31.6)
Helping people	60/94 (63.8)	34/94 (36.2)
Arresting drug dealers *	80/95 (84.2)	15/95 (15.8)
Arresting drug users	68/94 (72.3)	26/94 (27.7)
Arresting other people	54/93 (58.1)	39/93 (41.9)
Physically assaulting people	30/95 (31.6)	65/95 (68.4)

*Key CET indicator

Residents were also asked whether they had heard about certain activities on the part of the police and these responses are presented in Table 11.2.

TABLE 11.2 - Survey of Community Residents: “During the past six months, have you *heard about* the police:”

Police Behaviour Heard About	YES	NO
Harassing people	72/95 (75.8)	23/95 (24.2)
Helping people	54/95 (56.8)	41/94 (43.2)
Arresting drug dealers	77/95 (81.1)	18/95 (18.9)
Arresting drug users	73/95 (76.8)	22/95 (23.2)
Arresting other people	63/95 (66.3)	32/95 (33.7)
Physically assaulting people	62/95 (65.3)	33/95 (34.7)

Consistent with their personal observations, a majority of the residents surveyed had heard about the police harassing people, arresting drug dealers and drug users, and arresting other people. Significantly, there were more residents who had heard about the police physically assaulting people than had actually observed police assaults.

During various focus group sessions held as part of the evaluation, residents, drug users, and service providers frequently raised the issue of the “aggressive” behaviour and attitude of police officers, particularly in the case of younger officers and officers from other districts who had been seconded into the area as part of the CET and who were less familiar with the DTES and its residents.

Our survey of health care professionals also included a number of questions about police behaviour that they had observed, but not directly experienced, during the CET (see Table 11.3).

TABLE 11.3 - Survey of Health Care Professionals: “During the past nine months, have you observed the police:”

Police Behaviour Observed	YES	NO
Harassing people	3	
Helping people	5	3
Arresting drug dealers	8	
Arresting drug users	8	
Arresting other people	7	
Physically assaulting people	4	4

All but one of the respondents had observed the police arresting drug dealers, drug users, and other persons in the DTES. Many of them (5/9, 56%) had also observed police officers assisting persons in the community. Half of the health care professionals stated that they had witnessed the police physically assaulting people, but without knowing the specific context in which these observed assaults occurred, it was difficult for them to ascertain whether they were justified. Only three of the respondents (33%) had observed the police harassing people in the area.

All of the health care professionals surveyed felt that police officers should receive specialized training prior to being assigned to the DTES. In their view, this training should include knowledge of addiction and health care issues, sensitivity training, cross-cultural training, and harm-reduction awareness.

Another important source of information on whether abuses of authority were taking place during the initiative was the survey of offenders who had first-hand experience of being arrested in the DTES. A majority (27/32, 84.4%) of the offenders interviewed in prison stated that they had noticed a change in the way the police behaved in the DTES during the CET. When asked about how the police behaviour had changed during that time, 48% (12/25) said that it was more violent or more aggressive. Three quarters of the offenders believe that they had not been treated fairly by the police and that the police generally did not treat people with respect. The offender sample also offered the following responses about police behaviour:

- 72% of offenders interviewed believed that police officers in the DTES were using excessive force, while 79% did not believe that the police officers respected people's rights.
- 90% of the offenders stated they had observed the police harassing people or arresting drug users, 75% said that they had observed the police physically assaulting people and 94% said that they had heard about the police assaulting people. Only 16% said that they had observed the police helping people.

Predictably, the responses of those persons charged with, or convicted of, committing drug-related offences in the DTES are more critical of police behaviour than the responses of others interviewed for the evaluation. These responses may be due, in part, to the fact that the police, as part of the CET initiative, targeted these persons. It was not possible to independently verify the statements made by the offender group or, for that matter, by any of the other respondents to the survey questions.

Complaints against Police Officers

There was virtually no change in the total number of complaints against police officers working in District 2 received by the VPD in 2003, while the CET was in operation, as compared to the previous year (2002: 151; 2003: 150). If one distinguishes between formal and informal complaints, one notes that, during 2003, the VPD received a total of 44 formal complaints against police officers for incidents alleged to have occurred in District 2, as compared to 51 in the previous year. This represents a reduction of 13.7% in the number of formal complaints.

The number of informal complaints relating to incidents alleged to have occurred in District 2, on the other hand, went from 80 in 2002 to 106 in 2003, an increase of 32%. On the basis of the aggregated information supplied by the VPD, there is no evidence to suggest that the CET initiative resulted in more frequent complaints against police officers.

Nearly one-third (31/95, 32.6%) of the residents surveyed for the present study stated that they had, at some point, complained about the behaviour of the police, most often to persons and organizations other than the officer or the police department itself. A much smaller percentage (8/94, 8.5%) of the residents in the sample had filed a formal complaint against the police. Most of the respondents (58/94, 61.7%) were not aware of the formal process for filing complaints against the police. This makes it very difficult to ascertain the number of incidents in which the community residents complained to persons other than the police when there was sufficient basis for filing a formal complaint.

Questions and Findings

Question: *How did the CET initiative affect drug users and other vulnerable groups, including youth, sex trade workers, and people suffering from mental illness?*

Other than the previously described perceptions and experiences of the sex trade workers, the evaluation gathered no information that would allow a determination of the impact of the CET on youth, the mentally disabled, and other persons in vulnerable groups. With respect to the drug users, the limited data collected did not indicate that their situation had changed considerably as a result of the CET, nor had their access to services.

Question: *Were there any instances of police abuse of authority in the DTES during the CET initiative?*

There is no evidence of widespread police misuse of authority in the DTES during the CET initiative nor did the number of formal complaints filed against the police increase during the CET. Many of the criticisms levelled against the VPD by various interest and advocacy groups in the DTES, centering on the assertion that the police systemically abused their authority and that physical assaults on persons in the area were widespread, were not supported by the data gathered in the present evaluation and, therefore, remain unsubstantiated. Significantly, the interview data gathered from

interviews with community residents, including IV drug users, indicated general support for the increased police presence in the DTES and an acknowledgement that the police were only one part of the solution to the issues facing the DTES. There was a widely shared belief among those interviewed and among focus group participants that the police had become more aggressive in policing the area since the implementation of the CET and had adopted a zero-tolerance approach to public disorder. There is no verifiable evidence that this aggressiveness resulted in police abuses of authority.

12

The Costs of the CET

Police crackdowns and other proactive policing initiatives have significant cost implications for police departments and the VPD's CET initiative is no exception. The question of whether there were adequate resources available to police the DTES preceded the development of the CET initiative and, in fact, may have provided an impetus for its development. The issue was also complicated by the fact that the police department was already experiencing difficulties with staffing due to retirements and was constrained by a relatively fixed operational budget.

Four questions previously identified in this report with respect to the expense of the CET initiative will be briefly considered:

1. What were the costs involved in the CET initiative?
2. Did the investment of resources in the CET initiative by the VPD investment weaken some of its other operations?
3. Were the costs incurred for the implementation of the CET justified by the results achieved by the initiative?
4. Is the CET, or similar initiative, sustainable in the DTES? If yes, how should it be designed to improve its effectiveness? If not, what may be some viable and effective alternatives?

Costs of the Initiative

The present evaluation did not include a detailed analysis of the costs of the CET initiative, although some figures were supplied by the VPD. Estimates produced by the VPD indicate that costs of between \$1.2 million and \$2.4 million may have been incurred as a result of allocating additional resources to the CET initiative and in re-deploying resources within District 2 for the six months it was in operation. The costs of the initiative were absorbed within the VPD's regular budget. A large portion of these costs was for overtime salaries that, according to some of the senior officers interviewed, had become exorbitant.

Impact of the Initiative on Other Police Functions

The reallocation of police resources to drug enforcement and other special initiatives can have undesirable consequences in terms of a police force's ability to deliver services in other areas of the city and to focus on other types of criminal activity. In the case of the CET initiative, resources had to be diverted from other districts and, by all accounts, this affected those areas. Various rumours were in circulation about what other services had been affected as a result of the initiative. It was suggested, for example, that the contact that the police had with community residents had been negatively impacted by the number of officers reassigned to work in the DTES. None of these perceptions could be corroborated during the current evaluation as these questions were beyond the scope of the study.

The limited availability of additional officers also hindered efforts to deal with the displacement effect of the crackdown, as offenders and their associated criminal activity migrate to new areas that may be under-policed and the department may not be able to mobilize additional resources to address the "hotspots" of crime and social disorder that develop. The CET initiative, according to some of the senior police officers interviewed, barely had the resources necessary to "hold its grounds". In fact, it appeared that the amount of resources required to sustain the initial successes of the initiative had been underestimated during the planning phase, in particular the resources required to address new "hotspots" that developed as a result of the displacement of dealers and their user clients from the DTES to District 2 and other districts. These new "hotspots" were also problematic for the commanders of other police districts who felt that they had to deal with these additional

problems while continuing to lend some of their resources to support the CET initiative.

Questions have been raised about whether the CET initiative was effective from a broader drug law enforcement perspective. The view was expressed by some police officers that “we have just pushed the problem around and have not affected it”. There was also the suggestion that the effectiveness of the drug squad in addressing drug trafficking had been compromised by having to support the CET initiative and pursuing street-level drug dealers who were displaced from the DTES.

There were concerns among some officers that, although the open drug market had been disrupted and the level of disorder associated with it reduced, the problem of drugs in the DTES still remained. Dispersing the drug market, some argued, meant that officers involved in drug enforcement now were required to cover a wider area in order to go after the traffickers, that they had to vary their appearance and enforcement tactics as the traffickers had altered their drug marketing strategies, developed new markets and found new customers.

Cost Effectiveness

The question of the cost-effectiveness of the initiative was not examined as part of the evaluation. This would have required comparisons with the costs, risks, and expected results of other forms of intervention and was beyond the scope of the evaluation framework. There is no doubt, however, that both the question of policing the DTES and the problem of property crime in Vancouver have been enmeshed in fundamentally unresolved issues about what is an adequate human resource complement for the VPD and how much of these should be assigned to policing the DTES. In fact, it might be argued that a special initiative such as the CET may not even have been necessary had a sufficient level of resources been allocated to policing the DTES at the outset.

Questions and Findings

Question: *What were the costs associated with the CET initiative?*

The evaluation did not examine, in depth, the financial costs involved in conducting the initiative. The costs, as estimated by the

VPD, were substantial and, at the time of writing of this report, the medium and long-term outcomes of the initiative remain to be determined.

Question: *Were the costs incurred for the implementation of the CET justified by the results obtained through the initiative?*

The present evaluation was able only to document the impact of the CET and perceptions of persons who lived and/or worked in the DTES within a six-month time frame. While the study did document changes in the DTES, in District 2, and in adjacent police districts during this time, the medium and long-term impacts of the CET remain to be seen. Only over the long term will it be possible to assess whether the CET was a catalyst for other positive developments in the DTES and an improvement in the quality of life for residents and others who work in the area. It is not possible to determine at this juncture what future partnerships will develop between the police in District 2 and agencies and organizations involved in the delivery of justice and social services. It is also very difficult to anticipate how, when, and in what form, the four pillars model will ultimately be implemented in the DTES. There is the possibility that the imminent economic re-development of the DTES and the influx of new residents and businesses in a newly created mixed-use neighbourhood, will eclipse the need to implement a model that was conceived several years ago when a different community dynamic was evident in the DTES.

All communities, including the DTES, are in a constant state of change and for many years, policy and programs designed and delivered to the DTES have assumed a static community with a specific set of relatively unchanging needs such as housing, drug treatment services, and other programs. If the DTES follows the pattern of other urban inner city areas in North America that have been “gentrified”, it is likely that many of the current residents of the area will no longer be in the area in five years, having been displaced and dispersed to other areas of the city and to other municipalities.

Question: *Did the VPD investment in the CET initiative weaken some of its other operations?*

The information gathered from police sources indicate that the CET initiative had a significant impact on other operations of the VPD, although no effort was made in the current evaluation to assess the nature and extent of this impact. The CET was implemented at a time when the department was desperately seeking to replenish its staffing levels while at the same time coping with the early retirement of approximately 150 senior level officers. In addition, the department's efforts to secure additional funding from the city to support the CET initiative were unsuccessful. This meant that all costs associated with implementing and carrying out the CET initiative were borne by the VPD out of its existing budget and from its existing, depleted, pool of police officers.

13

Conclusions

In the absence of adequate policing levels, the open drug market in the DTES and the associated crime and disorder had grown to such levels so as to impact the entire area. The CET initiative is perhaps best characterized as one component of the VPD's ongoing efforts to address crime and disorder in the DTES. The initiative was one of a series of proactive interventions designed to establish a high level of police visibility in the DTES and in doing so to increase safety and security and to improve the overall quality of life in the community.

The CET initiative was designed to disrupt the "routine" that surrounded the open drug market and the associated stolen property crime cycle. This routine had spawned considerable disorder in the DTES and this, in turn, had a significant impact on the quality of life of community residents.

The CET initiative was designed to break up the "perfect storm" that developed in an area over a long period of time due to a policing policy of containment and the failure of various organizations, agencies, and governments to provide the peace and stability that would enable the community to grow and prosper.

Re-establishing control over the area and asserting a police presence required a confident and determined effort by the VPD and the CET initiative was the strategy selected to accomplish this. The CET was designed more as an ongoing order-maintenance effort through targeted patrols than a traditional crackdown on the drug market, although it incorporated elements of a "crack down" approach in an attempt to

disrupt the open drug market and disperse drug dealing and the associated market in stolen property.

Historically the VPD and other agencies had followed a policy of active containment, and in recent years, the policies of municipal, provincial and federal governments had focused almost myopically on the IV drug user population. While this population has legitimate, clearly identifiable needs, the findings from this and other evaluations (see Griffiths, 2003) are that IV drug users are only one segment (and perhaps an aging, declining segment at that) of the drug using population in the DTES and only one component of a community in which the majority of residents are not involved in the drug subculture. These residents, the business owners who operate retail stores in the area, and others who have occasion to be in and/or work in the DTES, expect the police to carry out its mandate in a manner designed to meet the needs of the entire community.

The results of the interviews conducted with businesspersons and community residents indicate there was widespread support for the CET initiative and the attempts of the police to fulfill their legislated mandate to provide policing services to the community. Significantly, there was support for the increased police presence from the IV drug users in the sample as well. There were mixed views as to whether the CET had, in its six months of operation, succeeded in improving the overall quality of life in the community, although residents did express increased feelings of safety and security. These perceptions are even more important given that a high percentage of the persons interviewed actually reside in the DTES and are, therefore, most directly affected by the open drug market and the associated disorder that existed at the time the CET was implemented in April 2003.

A general question that can be raised is what it was, in fact, that was disrupted by the CET initiative? More specifically, did the CET disrupt?

- The open drug market and, if so, did it disrupt the flow and availability of illicit drugs in the DTES or in the City of Vancouver?
- The flow of stolen property?
- The *status quo* that included complacent attitudes toward the crime and disorder in the DTES?

- The perspectives and policing styles of front line officers in the DTES?
- Law enforcement activities in other districts?
- The routine of drug users and their access to services?
- The interests of some advocacy groups?
- The collaborative process between the VPD and other agencies and partners in the implementation of the Four Pillars Approach and the Vancouver Agreement?

The data gathered for this evaluation indicate quite conclusively that the CET initiative contributed to the efforts of the VPD and it also represented a shift from the VPD's *de facto* policy of containment that had characterized the previous police response to the community generally and, in particular, to crime and the drug market in the DTES. In altering its strategy for the delivery of policing services to the DTES, the VPD was subjected to criticism from various interest groups that, for a variety of reasons, were advocating for the continuation of the policy of containment and the maintenance of the policing status quo centered on the *de facto* policy of policing the DTES only on a reactive basis. This would have maintained in the DTES what one VPD senior officer described as a "police free zone".

Many people and organizations were initially taken aback by the VPD's new proactive approach to policing the DTES. This may partly explain the equivocal response that the VPD initially received to its initiative. In retrospect, some observers have argued that the police should have "negotiated" this significant change in its policing policy for the DTES with its various partners and other stakeholders. Others suggested that the VPD needed to be bold in implementing that new policy and pre-empt the resistance it was certain to encounter from various advocacy groups and organizations in the area. Many remained convinced, including a majority of the residents surveyed as part of the evaluation, that the VPD has a legal mandate, and even a moral responsibility, to take the necessary steps to make the DTES safe and secure for its residents and that this role is not negotiable.

Nearly a year after the CET formally ended (October 5, 2003), there is still considerable confusion among concerned groups and individuals who do not quite understand that the CET was designed to *disperse and displace* the open drug market rather than to eliminate it. Displacing drug

market activities to other parts of the District and the City was an explicit objective of the CET initiative and this is reflected in the title of initiative – City Wide Enforcement Team. It was originally intended that the CET initiative would have the capacity to follow the drug dealers and the stolen property market as they were being displaced from one area to another.

Whether a policy containment of containing an open drug market and the associated crime and disorder within a defined geographical area is morally, politically or otherwise defensible was, and is likely to remain, an issue for the City of Vancouver. Perhaps from an epidemiological perspective, containment is the preferred option. This perspective is reflected in the opposition of certain groups in the DTES to the objective of the CET to disrupt and displace (if only partially) the drug market that may, as well, serve to disperse various health risks to other areas of the City (e.g. Wood *et al*, 2004).

Researchers and advocacy groups, who primarily focus on the risks of provoking an HIV/AIDS epidemic or accelerating the transmission of various communicable diseases associated with injection drug use, are understandably concerned about any intervention that has the potential to increase that risk. The problem is, of course, that a policy of containment is not easily defensible from the point of view of the rights of members of the community within which the problem is presumably being contained. Social problems cannot be easily “quarantined” and there is only a limited analogy drawn between drug addiction and a virus.

The CET initiative was solely a police initiative. In contrast to many crackdowns that have been carried out in U.S. jurisdictions, the CET initiative did not involve a coordinated effort on the part of the public, the police, social agencies, health agencies, prosecutors, and the courts. The active support and collaboration of other agencies, including other criminal justice agencies, was not effectively mobilized by the VPD in advance of launching the initiative. Prosecutorial, sentencing, probation and parole supervision practices were not reconsidered, as they should have had, by these other elements of the system in order to optimize the impact of the police initiative.

Implementation

Development

The CET initiative involved a degree of planning that is not always characteristic of police initiatives. Nevertheless, there were some important challenges concerning the recruitment and deployment of human resources, the securing of financial resources, the training of the officers involved in the initiative, and with the communication with other agencies that may have been partly curtailed by the leaders' determination to take action and their impatience with the planning and approval process.

In recent years, the VPD has made significant progress in defining its policies with respect to general policing strategies, order maintenance, and drug enforcement as these relate to the DTES, the Four Pillars Approach, and the national drug strategy. Many of these progressive policies, including publicly stated support for the Supervised Injection Site (SIS) have received national and international recognition. The department, however, needs to continue to delineate the potential public health impacts and human security consequences of its policies and to adequately plan to address these outcomes.

Consolidation of Project Achievements

Research has shown that crackdowns are most effective when utilized in conjunction with other responses to address underlying conditions that created the problems that are the focus of the intervention. The VPD's attempts at coordination and active collaboration with other agencies with respect to the CET were generally unsuccessful, and, as a consequence, collaborative partnerships that would assist in consolidating and sustaining the achievements of the CET in restoring order and improving the quality of life in the DTES were not established. It remains to be seen, going forward, whether these partnerships will be developed.

At the time this evaluation report was completed (August, 2004), the challenges confronting the DTES community continue to be complex and multi-faceted, and include an active drug scene, a lack of housing, and insufficient treatment services for specialized populations including the mentally ill. In the absence of effective, collaborative partnerships between the various levels of government, the justice, social service, and

health systems, and community organizations and residents, it will be difficult to sustain the initial successes of the CET. Full implementation of the Four Pillars Approach, as expeditiously as possible, would be significant contribution to these efforts.

The research literature also suggests that simply increasing the number of police officers in a locale without a corresponding increase in enforcement is unlikely to have a significant impact on the levels of crime and social disorder. It appears from the data collected that the emphasis of the CET initiative, as it was actually implemented, was much more on ensuring a visible presence than on enforcing the law and proceeding with arrests. In fact, while the dispatch data seem to indicate that the police responded to a larger number of incidents, the case management data confirms that there was a marked decrease in formal law enforcement in all categories of offences except one (alcohol offences) during the CET initiative as compared to the same period the previous year. It was evident in this evaluation that, at times, the VPD officers and their leaders faced a dilemma of whether to increase the number of arrests, thereby spending less time on the street due to the associated case processing and paperwork, or limit the number of arrests to ensure that officers spend more time being visible on the street.

At one time, officers in the DTES received instructions to generally limit the number of arrests to two a day in order to maintain their presence and visibility. That is not entirely consistent with one of the primary objective of crackdowns, which is to create, among the criminal population, the perception of an increased threat of apprehension and intervention. Furthermore, unlike many police crackdowns, the CET initiative did not involve a concomitant effort on the part of the prosecutors and the courts and this may have compromised the efficacy of the interventions.

Sustainability of the Strategy

The experience in other jurisdictions has been that the impact of police crackdowns and other targeted interventions tends to dissipate rather quickly. The data gathered for this evaluation indicate that the open drug market and the associated disorder that existed in the DTES were significantly impacted by the CET, even though the drug market reconstituted itself in various forms in other areas of District 2 and in adjacent police districts. Drugs are still readily available on the street in the DTES, although the drug market has been transformed. Significantly,

the CET initiative does appear to have provided the initial “breathing space” for community residents and social service and health agencies to begin to develop positive capacities in the area and for community residents to reclaim their neighbourhoods.

One can also argue that the CET initiative has achieved a lasting reduction of the disorder that used to take place in one part of the DTES, most notably the corner of Main and Hasting Streets. However, to sustain these gains would most likely require an increased police presence. Disorder has reappeared in at least one area of the DTES that is only a few blocks from the original target area.

The VPD faces major challenges in building upon the successes that were achieved with the CET initiative, particularly given that organizational resources continue to be constrained and are not likely to be supplemented significantly in the near future.

The Observed Impact of the CET

Limitations in Measuring the Impact of the Initiative

There are significant challenges in attempting to measure the impact of police interventions and to establish direct relationships between police strategies and outcomes. In an area such as the DTES there are a variety of forces that work that are also likely to have altered the community dynamics, the open drug market, and the stolen property cycle. Furthermore, there are a myriad of factors that can potentially influence how police officers on the street exercise discretion and make decisions. And, the limitations in using official data to assess the effectiveness of specific police initiatives have been well documented. At best, the data collected for the present evaluation can provide some insights into the movement of these specific types of criminal activity within the District in which the DTES is situated and the City and the basis for comparing the perceptions of DTES residents with other key stakeholders groups as they relate to the initiative and its apparent impact.

With the exception of the studies reviewed in the background section, there were no data collected from community residents pre-CET, nor was there a provision for soliciting the perceptions and experiences of a group of community residents on an ongoing basis. These types of data would provide important insights into the impact of the initiative and the

extent to which it, and others such as the SIS, have altered the dynamics on the street in the area and improved the quality of life in the community.

It is also important to point out that there are many “communities” in the DTES. This study attempted to capture the perceptions and experiences of several of these, i.e. business owners, community residents, police officers, health care professionals, drug users, and persons confined in a correctional institution. However, all communities are composed, first and foremost, of individuals and this ensures that their perceptions, opinions, and views that they express in surveys will be variable and will, as well, change over time.

The responses that the residents and other groups provided to the surveys conducted as part of this review provide only a “snapshot” of prevailing perceptions at the time the interviews were conducted. Respondents were interviewed six months after the CET initiative was implemented and it can be expected that this short time frame is sufficient only to capture certain facets of any changes that occurred in community life in the DTES.

It remains difficult to ascertain, on that basis, the extent to which medium and long-term changes are taking place, whether these changes are permanent or ephemeral, or whether other effects (desirable and undesirable) are being produced that are not yet known by community residents and others who work in the area. It is also unrealistic to expect that, in a community in which a particular dynamic developed over decades, this dynamic would be significantly and measurably altered in six months or even a year, as a result of any one initiative such as the CET or the SIS. It can be expected that the dynamics of life in the DTES will continue to evolve and that specific initiatives taken by the police and other agencies and organizations will evolve as well.

It was expected that the CET initiative would have immediate, short-term, and long-term impacts. It is important to consider that the data for the present study were gathered during the time frame of six to nine months following the beginning of the initiative.

An immediate impact of the initiative was the break-up of the daily congregation of drug dealers and users in front of the Carnegie Centre at Main and Hastings. This was due to continuous police presence. Short-term impacts of the initiative were the displacement of well-established drug dealers and their drug-using clientèle. It is not possible to fully anticipate the long-term impacts of the CET initiative, given the

uncertainties as to how the DTES will evolve in terms of re-development, when and in what form the Four Pillars Approach will be fully implemented, and what intervention strategies and capacities the VPD will utilize in the future (e.g. the creation of a new police district for the DTES).

It would be unfair to hold the CET initiative to a myriad of anticipated results within such a short time frame and to expect that a single initiative, well intentioned as it was, would significantly alter the dynamics of community life in the DTES. The CET did serve a number of purposes, one of which was for the VPD, as an organization, to accept and acknowledge its responsibility to challenge its own long-standing policy of “containment” and to move proactively to address two of the contributors to the disorder that have plagued the DTES and severely affected the quality of life for community residents: the open drug market and the stolen property/drug use cycle.

There are degrees of difference in the responses of community residents, health care professionals, the Core police officers, the business owners, and focus group participants in the extent to which these objectives have been met and in the methods that have been used by the police in an attempt to achieve them. This is to be expected, given the political backdrop against which the CET initiative was implemented, the particular strategies chosen by senior VPD officers to implement it, and the often-competing interests that are reflected in the activities and positions of the various stakeholder groups in the DTES.

Reduction of Disorder

The CET initiative had a direct and significant impact on the public disorder that surrounded the open drug market and, as well, placed an increased number of police officers in highly visible positions in the community. This, in turn, created more of a sense of safety and security among residents. The research literature suggests that increasing police visibility and accessibility through operational strategies such as foot patrols, while not necessarily reducing the crime rate, nevertheless increase the feelings of safety and security among residents. This, in turn, reduce social disorder as persons feel more secure in their community and “recapture” the streets from the more dysfunctional, and often criminal, elements. The CET initiative was successful in disrupting a chaotic open drug market and forcing this drug market to become more

orderly and less public. In this sense, the CET did achieve one of its primary objectives: to bring order to a community in chaos.

All communities, including the DTES, are in a constant state of change, as was seen in the deterioration of community life and the increase in disorder that occurred under the policing policy of containment. So too has the DTES continued to evolve since the completion of the CET initiative in October, 2003. The most notable change is the increased construction and development activity in the area. At the time of preparing this report, final plans are being made to select the developer and project plans for the site of the former Woodward Building. The burgeoning Vancouver construction industry and the high demand for housing and mixed-use developments will certainly extend into the DTES, an area that contains the last undeveloped land close to a downtown core in the entire country. In the end, it will likely be economic factors that will drive change in the DTES, although there is little doubt that the "order" established by the CET initiative have given many residents a renewed sense of identity with their community that can form the basis of a new community that retains many of the unique attributes of the DTES.

Noticeably absent from many of the discussions and debates about the most effective strategies, policies, and programs for the DTES is Chinatown. One of the more significant attributes of the DTES is that, even at the height of the chaos and disorder that surrounded an unfettered open drug market, one block away from Hastings St., the streets were orderly and the drug market was not present, nor was the stolen property market. In the view of many observers, this reflected the fact that the Chinatown community had a strong infrastructure that maintained order and did not allow the drug market to spill over from the neighbouring streets to the north. It was also evidence of how those persons involved in the drug market and in the stolen property market avoided the area for precisely that reason - there was a concerned community with residents and business owners who would not allow the drug market to get entrenched. Significantly, order was maintained in the Chinatown streets without a massive police presence or even the presence of the agencies and organizations that exist a block away.

There are certainly lessons to be learned from the contrast in communities that exist within the DTES. In fact, for all practical purposes, the focus of the efforts of the police, and of social service and health agencies, is in an area of less than ten square blocks. The fact that the problems in this area continued to escalate and became more severe

over the years, despite ever-larger amounts of money that were put into the area, strongly suggests that financial resources are, alone, not the solution to the problems of any community, including the DTES. Rather, an equal if not greater emphasis must be given to developing community capacity and strengthening the neighbourhoods and empowering residents.

This suggests that a major “rethink” may be in order as to how community development and social change are best effected, and in considering the potential, and limitations, of agencies and organizations in facilitating and sustaining social and community change. As of April 2003, when the VPD decided to address the policing issues in the DTES, it can be said that the efforts of other agencies and organizations to create a safe and secure community for all community residents, including IV drug users, had been largely unsuccessful. There were more people on the street, more chaos, and no relief in sight. The CET initiative has served as a catalyst for reflecting on lessons learned as well as providing the foundation from which a strong, viable, safe and secure community can emerge.

Disruption of Drug Market

Similar to police initiatives in other jurisdictions, the CET did have some initial success in disrupting the open drug market and, most notably, in reducing the levels of disorder in specific areas of the community. The overall impact on the drug market itself, however, was limited and, without continued police visibility and proactive police presence, potentially short-lived. The disruption did not manifest itself in higher prices for drugs or reduced their availability. Drugs (sometimes of a lesser quality, at least according to some users) continued to be available at approximately the same cost to users. The routine activities of drug dealers in the DTES were disrupted and tensions increase between dealers and users. Drug-using activities that were very often taking place in public before the CET were also disrupted and many users have apparently started to move to other areas or to more private places when using drugs (including in the SIS). The market quickly accommodated itself to this new reality. Some displacement of drug activities occurred and the market re-emerged, albeit in a different form, in a number of areas in relatively close proximity to the original drug market scene. However, there is no evidence that these changes resulted in increased high-risk behaviour among IV drug users.

It is possible, in this instance, that displaced drug market activities have had some longer term consequences in the sense that they have allowed some dealers to identify and target richer areas and to develop new market opportunities in those parts of the City, and perhaps with new user-client groups not previously serviced.

Disruption of the Flow of Stolen Property

As previously noted, the data analyzed, as part of the present evaluation did not provide for a definitive determination as to whether the CET initiative had a significant impact on the flow of stolen property into the DTES. There is no conclusive evidence from the data gathered that the CET was successful in interfering with the flow of stolen property into the DTES, although the stolen property market was forced to become more discrete and the locations where stolen property was fenced may have shifted out of the immediate DTES area. Police officers, community residents, IV drug users, and others who offered an opinion on the subject shared the view that the stolen property market had not been significantly reduced. Senior police personnel, based on their observations, believed that the flow of stolen property as it existed prior to the CET had been impacted and cited the Extract data to support their view that the quality and value of stolen goods flowing into the DTES had declined. The attempt by the project team to assess the impact of the CET on the stolen property market in the DTES was hindered by methodological difficulties.

The number of property crime offences known to the police decreased considerably in the City of Vancouver during the period under review as compared to the same period of time in the previous year. That is not to say that property crime does not remain a serious issue for the City of Vancouver. In retrospect, there are many other problem solving strategies that are far more promising in terms of their ability to target and address various facets of the property crime problem. Much of the thinking behind the CET strategy was based on the assumption that the property crime problem that Vancouver has known for some years is essentially driven by the needs and behaviour of drug addicted individuals. While this is the case to some extent, the phenomenon of stolen property is complex and requires a multi-faceted approach.

The evidence indicates, however, that the initiative was not successful in stemming the flow of stolen property into the area. Finally, keeping in mind that the frequency of violent crime incidents was lower

for the city of Vancouver as a whole (and in every District) at the time of the CET as compared to the equivalent period of time the previous year, it does not appear that the CET had a noticeable impact on the amount of violent crime committed in the DTES.

Displacement and Dispersal

Displacement is one of the predictable consequences of “crackdowns” and proactive “order maintenance” initiatives. To be effective and to ensure that problems are not simply “moved around”, these interventions must be accompanied by both an analytical capacity to track down that displacement and an ability to quickly re-deploy tactical resources to target problem areas as soon as they emerge. It was originally intended that the CET initiative would have an ongoing capacity to monitor displacement and respond to it. Unfortunately, there is some question as to whether the VPD has the requisite resources to sustain an analytical, intelligence-led approach to the open drug market and the associated stolen property market. Further, the tactical capacity to follow the problems, as they were displaced, never materialized due to limited departmental resources.

What was first conceived as a daring, confident, intelligence-led policing initiative was subsequently compromised by a lack of resources and, in retrospect, involved a considerable allocation of resources directed at a very small area in the city. The VPD has gained considerable organizational wisdom from implementing the CET initiative and from its efforts in other, more broad interagency projects. It may be time to draw these lessons and articulate a comprehensive and realistic policing policy for the DTES, one that is compatible with the objectives of the Four Pillars Approach and is responsive to the needs of the various communities in the area.

Public Health Impact of the CET

There is some evidence that law enforcement practices can influence the spread of communicable diseases among IV drug users and that the law and its enforcement can be “both an ecological cause of risk and a medium of structural intervention to reduce that risk” (Burriss *et al.*, 2004: 126). The net impact of that particular public health risk depends largely on how well the individual risk factors are understood and what care is being given to ensure that police interventions are well-integrated with other efforts to minimize that risk.

There is a considerable risk that a police “crackdown” will affect the behaviour of drug users and their access to services in a way that increases the public health danger. The disruption of the drug market by the CET led, as predicted, to the movement of some drug users to other areas within the DTES and the rest of the City. There is no convincing evidence that the CET reduced drug users’ access to drugs or their access to prevention and health services. In fact, drug users and other residents in the DTES now have access to four new facilities in the DTES in addition to the Supervised Injection Site (SIS).

The number of emergency calls responded to by the ambulance service for DTES incidents involving drug overdoses, poisoning, narcotics (heroin), and mental health crises increased significantly during the CET initiative as compared to the same six month period the year before. Given that many of these calls were generated as a result of the increased police presence in the area, one cannot conclude that there were more of these incidents, simply that they were getting more frequent attention. This particular interpretation is confirmed by the emergency hospitalization data, which revealed a decrease in the number of individuals with a “drug problem” being admitted for trauma incidents or for various forms of medical conditions frequently associated with drug addiction.

Another issue is what the VPD have done differently to minimize the potential negative public health impact of the intervention. Prior to the CET initiative, the VPD had identified the need to work more closely with its health partners and to monitor closely the public health impact of the initiative. This was one of the lessons learned by the VPD as a result of an intervention project that preceded the CET initiative. Some modest initiatives along these lines were taken by the VPD including providing some training of the officers involved in the CET initiative, issuing officers assigned to the area an information card to facilitate the referral of drug addicts to services, and requesting the collaboration of the VCHA in monitoring a few indicators of the health impact of the initiative. More could and probably should have been done, particularly at the planning stage, and perhaps along the lines of the careful planning that went on later in relation to articulating the role of the police in the context of the opening of a new Supervised Injection Site (SIS) site in the DTES.

Looking Ahead: Lessons Learned and Future Options

As previously noted, health and other service delivery organizations were to some extent caught off-guard by the CET initiative and were therefore slow in supporting it and mobilizing themselves to prevent any detrimental effect of the intervention. There was undoubtedly frustration, both within and outside the VPD, about the slow and unequal implementation of that plan of action, but this should not be used by any of the partner agencies as a pretext for distancing themselves from the collaborative approach they have committed themselves to.

The Proposal to Create a New Police District in the DTES

The idea of creating a new Police District in the DTES (District 5), pre-dates the CET initiative. The idea, as set out in one internal VPD document, is to group the communities of Gastown, Chinatown, Strathcona and the DTES into one new district. At the heart of this proposal is the idea of building the new district around four beat squads, each of which would have responsibility for a geographic area and have sufficient non-assigned duty to conduct proactive order-maintenance and preventions. The teams would also be supported by officers with specialized functions (e.g. drug detection, youth crime, sex trade policing, etc.). The intent is to create permanent patrol squads that have a knowledge of the area, its residents, capacities and problems.

The findings of this evaluation suggest that the creation of a new police district is a good one. The proposed structural changes and the associated increase in the resources devoted to the area can be enhanced by ongoing, collaborative partnerships between the police and other municipal agencies and organizations.

Street Level Drug Enforcement Policies

Even with the creation of a new police district in the DTES area, members of the drug squad will continue to work closely with the officers patrolling the district. This suggests that the VPD should identify more clearly and realistically its own drug enforcement priorities and communicate them clearly both within the department and to key stakeholders. This exercise should be carried out within the context of the Four Pillars strategy to which the Department is committed so as to further delineate the role of VPD, not only in relation to drug law enforcement, but also in relation to the other roles it can play in the implementation of the strategy. There is also a need for the VPD to

further articulate its internal policy concerning street level drug enforcement, the specific types of disruption of drug markets sought, the precise role of officers on patrol in relation to these street activities, and the mechanisms that will be put in place within the district (and between districts) to address various forms of displacement of drug market activities and the movement of drug dealers and associated crime and disorder.

Policy Development Process

Interviews conducted with senior officers revealed that there were different perspectives on the process surrounding the development and implementation of the CET initiative. Notwithstanding these differences of opinion, this evaluation has suggested a number of larger questions that the VPD might want to examine with respect to how policing policies are developed and implemented, including:

- What is the internal process through which these decisions are made and who is involved in the process?
- How much discretion is left to District Commanders and other senior officers in determining and implementing these policies?
- To what extent is the process in based on solid intelligence about the nature of the problems to be addressed and about the known effectiveness of proposed solutions?
- To what extent are the community and various stakeholders groups consulted about these policies and informed about their potential consequences (both positive and potentially adverse) and to what extent are the police required to engage in such consultation?
- What is the role of the Police Board in the policy development process?¹⁰
- How are the resource implications of these policy changes evaluated and reflected in the budgets submitted for approval by City Council?

¹⁰ On the role of municipal police board in policy development, see: Lalonde and Kean, 2003.

These are all questions that could not be fully addressed in this evaluation, but should nevertheless receive the careful attention of both the Department and the Police Board.

References - Chapter 13

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FROM SURVEYS**COMMUNITY RESIDENTS**

1. A majority of the residents in the DTES have a close connection to the community and many enjoy living in the area. They feel safe walking in their neighbourhood during the day and at night and they care about what happens in their community.
2. The majority of the residents stated that they were not involved in the use and abuse of drugs. Alcohol was the most frequently used substance and only three percent of the respondent sample self-identified as heroin users. This is particularly significant given the amount of attention, and resources, that have been directed drug dealing and drug use in the DTES, in particular IV drug users.
3. Residents in the DTES make extensive use of, and demands on, police, ambulance, and fire services to a much greater extent than residents in other areas of the city.
4. A large majority of the residents agreed that the situation in the DTES prior to April, 2003 was "out of control", with drugs, the drug subculture, an absence of education and employment opportunities for residents, the absence of affordable housing, poverty and the lack of enforcement of the laws by the police being the most frequently-mentioned problems.
5. Nearly 60% of the residents stated that they had been the victim of a crime both prior to and following the implementation of the CET initiative in April, 2003, the most commonly-reported crimes being theft of personal property, threats and intimidation, assault without a weapon, stalking and harassment, and aggressive panhandling.
6. Residents were nearly evenly divided in their view as to whether the DTES area had become a better place to live in the six months since the CET initiative was implemented.
7. Nearly 70% of the residents felt that it was the responsibility of the police to address the issues in the DTES.
8. Residents were evenly divided as to their knowledge of the CET initiative. Among the residents who either knew of the CET initiative

or had it explained to them by the interviewer, 66% indicated support for the initiative, while 25% were neutral and the remaining residents were opposed.

9. There was a widely-held perception among community residents that the CET was implemented primarily for political reasons although one-third of the residents mentioned the objective of reducing disorder.
10. A majority of community residents were supportive of the police and their opinion of the police was most frequently based on personal experience and on observations of police activities, rather than on what had happened to other people or on media reports.
11. Nearly one-third of the residents interviewed stated that they had, at some point, complained about the behaviour of the police, most often to persons and organizations other than the officer him/herself or the police department. Less than ten percent had ever filed a formal complaint against the police.
12. A majority of the residents were satisfied with the job that the police were doing in the DTES and supported the increased police presence in the DTES.
13. Nearly half of the residents interviewed felt that the police had impacted the open drug market and that officers had a greater tendency to speak with residents than in previous times, although there was not the sense that the police had been able to reduce the amount of stolen property available or that their efforts were generally directed towards helping people in the community.
14. A majority of the residents perceived that the CET had made the streets in the community safer, reduced the number of people coming into the DTES from other areas, and reduced the number of people hanging around the streets in the area.
15. A majority of the residents felt that the amount of crime committed in the area had either remained the same or increased (PRIME data indicate it has declined; illustrates the limitation of perceptual data).
16. A sizeable percentage of the resident sample answered "Don't Know" to the questions related to drug dealing and drug use in non-public areas such as hotel rooms and private residences.

17. There was the perception that there had been a decrease in the numbers of persons using drugs in public and of increased safety on the streets.
18. There was a widely-held view that the police could be more effective in the DTES and suggestions ranged from more enforcement of the law, arresting more drug dealers, better and more respectful communication with area residents, and for the police to be more community-oriented.
19. A majority of the residents felt that the CET had, generally, not accomplished its objectives although a large majority of the sample indicated they would like to see the CET continue.
20. A majority of the residents would like to have officers policing in a style (foot patrol) that brings them in closer contact with the community and for the police to increase enforcement efforts with respect to drug dealing in the area.
21. A large percentage of the residents had observed the police arresting drug dealers and drug users, as well as harassing people and helping people.
22. Consistent with their personal observations, a majority of the residents had heard about the police harassing people, arresting drug dealers and drug users, and arresting other people. However, a majority of the residents had heard about police behaviour that they, themselves, had not actually observed. This was particularly evident in responses regarding the police physically assaulting persons in the DTES.
23. Many of the residents felt that there had been "No Change" in the ability of persons to sell stolen property or to sell and to buy drugs. Interestingly, particularly in terms of selling stolen property and purchasing drugs, many of the residents responded "Don't Know", suggesting that they are not involved in the drug subculture in the DTES.
24. A large majority of residents believed that the SIS was a good thing and functioned to get people off the street and out of the alleys, provide addicts with a safe environment, reduce overdoses, and reduce the rates of HIV.

CORE POLICE OFFICERS

1. Officers felt that a combination of factors contributed to the disorder and chaos that characterized the DTES prior to April, 2003. These factors can be generally grouped into the ineffectiveness of the police and other agencies in the area, indifference on the part of the City Hall and the general public, and the large number of drug dealers and their clients that were in the area.
2. Officers identified the need for proper resources and programs for the drug-addicted and the mentally ill, the importance of developing the other three pillars of the “four pillars” approach, and of working with community residents to find solutions to the challenges facing the DTES.
3. Officers were supportive of the CET when it was implemented, although several were initially sceptical due to concerns about the lack of departmental resources to commit to the initiative and whether there would be support from social service agencies and the justice system.
4. A large majority of the officers felt that CET could significantly impact the open drug market and the amount of stolen property coming into the DTES.
5. Opposition by special interest groups in the DTES and the absence of the other three pillars of the four pillars approach were identified as hindering implementation of the CET initiative.
6. Organizational issues affecting the implementation of the CET included the lack of departmental resources which, in turn, limited the scope of the operation to the DTES rather than to a City-wide approach.
7. Operational issues affecting the implementation of the CET included a lack of focus of the initiative, the difficulties of getting officers to volunteer to be assigned to District 2, the inconsistency in approach that often existed between squads in District 2, and the challenges of maintaining the momentum of the initiative and sustaining officer morale.
8. Support for the police effort in the CET initiative was viewed as highest among the residents of the DTES, business owners, the addict

population, and the staff at the Carnegie Centre, while officers perceived lower levels of support and higher levels of opposition to the CET by DEYAS, PIVOT, and VANDU.

9. There was general agreement that the CET had increased the sense of security for community residents and reduced the drug trade and the levels of violence in the DTES.
10. The officers perceived that the CET had been successful in re-establishing order in the DTES, increasing the numbers of law-abiding residents on the street, and in disrupting the open drug market.
11. A majority of the officers also felt that the CET had reduced the levels of stolen property in the area and disrupted the cycle of property crime. The CET was viewed as less effective in reducing the likelihood that persons would become involved in the drug/crime/prostitution lifestyle and there was the near-unanimous perception that CET had not reduced the levels of street prostitution.
12. A majority of the officers felt that the CET, as it was currently structured, was having the desired impact on the DTES and all of the officers felt that it should continue.
13. Officers identified a strong police presence and enforcement in conjunction with rehabilitation programs and detox facilities and the implementation of the other pillars of the four pillars approach as the pre-requisites for ensuring that the open drug market and the high volume of stolen property did not re-emerge in the DTES.
14. There was consensus among the officers that the CET initiative should continue indefinitely, even with the strains on police resources and the opposition to the initiative from some quarters.

HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS

1. Respondents were nearly evenly split as to whether they would characterize the situation in the community as being “disordered.”
2. The disorder in the DTES were viewed as being due primarily to the ineffectiveness of social service agencies and other organizations in the area, a lack of political will on the part of the Mayor and Council to deal with the issues, and the indifferent attitude of Lower Mainland residents toward the DTES.

3. "Political Reasons" was the most frequently given response to the question of why the CET was implemented. Significantly, the reason of "To Reduce Disorder" and "To Make the DTES a Better Place to Live" were each selected by only two respondents and "To Help the People Who Live in the DTES" was not selected by any of the respondents as a reason why the CET was implemented.
4. Health care professionals were generally opposed to and not supportive of the CET initiative. There was a generally shared view that the way in which the police were policing the DTES was not effective, that the approach was not sufficiently community-oriented and that the police were only dispersing the problems rather than solving them.
5. There was the generally-shared view that police officers had become more aggressive, due in large measure to the behaviour of police members who had fewer years of policing experience.
6. One third of the health care professionals felt that the efforts being made by the police to reduce the levels of disorder in the DTES and to disrupt the cycle of property crime and drug use would be successful.
7. One third felt that the quality of life in the DTES had improved since the Spring of 2003, with the majority feeling that the major problems still existed.
8. A little less than one-half of the professionals felt that the CET had reduced the number of persons who came into the DTES to commit crime, had reduced the amount of trash and litter on the street, and the number of people hanging around and causing trouble.
9. A large majority of the health care professionals interviewed felt that the CET was not the best strategy for dealing with the disorder in the DTES and for addressing the stolen property/drug use cycle.
10. A majority of the respondents also believed that there has been an increase in the number of arrests and that there has been a decrease in the number of people doing drugs in public, persons dealing drugs in public (the open drug market), and the general safety of the community.
11. A majority felt that the SIS was a "good thing", primarily because it saved lives, took users off the street, provided IV drug users with a safe place and with more contact with care professionals.

BUSINESS OWNERS

1. The major problems in the DTES (in order of the frequency mentioned), were drugs, crime, poverty, and the lack of policing.
2. A large majority of business owners stated that the situation in the DTES prior to April, 2003 was out of control and that this had affected their businesses.
3. Over 90% of the business owners stated that they supported the CET.
4. There was a generally held perception that the quality of life in the DTES had improved in the time since the CET project was initiated.
5. A large majority of the business owners had seen an improvement in the quality of life in the DTES as reflected in a reduction in the numbers of persons coming into the DTES to commit crime, the amount of crime committed by residents in the area, and in the levels of public disorder.
6. A majority of business owners felt that the police had significantly impacted the open drug market, but had been less successful in reducing the amount of stolen property coming into the area.
7. The police were generally viewed by the business owners as having become more approachable, providing more assistance to persons in need, and speaking more with community residents.
8. A majority of the business sample had observed the police providing assistance to area residents, arresting drug dealers, and arresting other people in the area, but had not observed the police harassing people or the police physically assaulting people.
9. Half of the business owners stated that the CET had accomplished its objectives, while the other half stated that they did not know.
10. There was unanimous support for the CET to continue, but with more police foot patrols, an increased focus on reducing drug dealing, more policing in patrol cars and on motorcycles, stricter enforcement, and an increased focus on homeless people and the poor.
11. A slight majority of business owners felt that the SIS was a positive development in the DTES as an effort to deal with drug use, reduce HIV/AIDS, assist users in obtaining treatment, assist in restoring

order to the DTES, reduce drug overdoses, and reduce the number of IV drug users.

THE SUPERVISED INJECTION SITE (SIS)

The findings from the surveys indicate that a majority of persons interviewed in the DTES, including business owners, police officers, community residents, and health care professionals, support the SIS. The facility was generally viewed as providing a safe, clean environment for IV drug users, reducing the risk of HIV/AIDS and drug overdoses, contributing to the creation of order in the DTES, and as assisting IV drug users in accessing treatment.

Appendix 2

List of Offences Included in Each Construct**Minor Disorder offences**

Disturb the Peace/Cause a Disturbance
(5010 PBOM)
Mischief \$5,000 or under
Public Mischief

Serious Disorder offences

Mischief over \$5,000
Obstruct Public Peace Officer
Shots Fired (50223)
Threatening-Uttering

Break & Enter offences

Break & Enter - Business
Break & Enter - Residence
Break & Enter - Other
Break & Enter - Cottage or Seasonal
Residence

Theft from Vehicle offences

Theft from Auto Over \$5000
Theft from Auto Under \$5000

Theft of Vehicle offences

Theft of Auto Over \$5000
Theft of Truck Over \$5000
Theft of Motorcycle Over \$5000
Theft of Vehicle - Other - Over \$5000
Theft of Auto Under \$5000
Theft of Truck Under \$5000
Theft of Motorcycle Under \$5000
Theft of Vehicle - Other - Under \$5000

Theft of Bicycle offences

Theft of Bike Over \$5000
Theft of Bike Under \$5000

Theft offence (not vehicle related)

Theft Over \$5000 (Miscellaneous)
Theft Under \$5000 (Miscellaneous)

Shoplifting offences

Theft-Shoplifting Over \$5000
Theft-Shoplifting Under \$5000

Stolen Property offences

Possession Stolen Prop over \$5000
Possession Stolen Prop under \$5000

Prostitution-related offences

Bawdy House
Prostitution under 18 - Living off the avails
Procuring
Communicates for Purpose of Sex Under 18
Prostitution - Other

Public alcohol-related offences

Liquor Act
Consuming in Public Place
Alcohol Abuse/Use

Psychiatric

Mental Health Act/Attempted Suicide
Mental Hospitals Act

Warrant executions

Warrant Execution - Criminal Code
Warrant Execution - CDS/Youth Br. Prob
Warrant Execution - MVA/FRA/LCA
Warrant Execution - Municipal Agency
Warrant Execution - O/S RCMP
Warrant Execution Exec - O/S Municipal

Breach offences

Breach of UTA/Bail Violations
Fail to Appear
Breach of Probation-Adult
Breach of Conditional Sentence Order (CSO)
Breach of Probation-YOA
Corrections & Conditional Release Act

Driving While Prohibited

Driving While Prohibited (259.4 CCC)
Drive While Disqualified/Suspended-MV ACT (95.1a MV/102 MV)

Assaulting Police offences

Assault Against Police Officer/Resist Arrest
Assault Against Peace-Public Officer

Drug Possession offences

Heroin Possession
Cocaine Possession
Other Controlled Drugs and Substance Act Possession
Opium Possession
Morphine Possession
Methadone Possession
PCP Possession
Other Schedule I Drugs/Substances Possession
Other Schedule III Drugs/Substances Possession
LSD Possession
MDA Possession
Psilocybin Possession
Cannabis - 30 gram or more Possession
Cannabis - 30 gram or less Possession
Cannabis Resin - 1 gram or more Possession
Cannabis Resin - 1 gram or less Possession

Drug Trafficking offences

Heroin Trafficking
Cocaine Trafficking
Other Controlled Drugs and Substances Act Trafficking
Morphine Trafficking
Methadone Trafficking
PCP Trafficking
Other Schedule I Drugs Trafficking
MDA Trafficking
Psilocybin Trafficking
Methamphetamine Trafficking
Amphetamine Trafficking
Barbiturates Trafficking
Other Schedule III Drugs/Substances Trafficking
Other Schedule IV Drugs/Substances Trafficking
Cannabis - 3000 g. or more Trafficking
Cannabis - 3000 g. or less Trafficking
Cannabis Resin - 3000 g. or more Trafficking
Cannabis Resin - 3000 g. or less Trafficking

Violent Crimes

Murder 1st Degree
Murder 2nd Degree
Attempted Murder
Aggravated Sexual Assault
Sexual Assault with A Weapon
Sexual Assault
Assault Level 3 Aggravated
Assault Level 3/Child Abuse
Assault Level 2 with Weapon/CBH
Assault Level 2/Child Abuse
Robbery - with Firearms
Robbery - with Other Offensive Weapon
Robbery - Bodily Force

SUMMARY OF QUESTIONS AND FINDINGS BY CHAPTER

IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

Planning of the Initiative

Question: *Were the objectives of the initiative well defined and translated into operational objectives and decisions?*

Yes. A review of the documents provided to the CET evaluation team by the Vancouver Police Department indicates that the objectives of the CET initiative were well considered and were the culmination of a series of more specific initiatives that had been taken by the department in the DTES. Senior police personnel had a clear vision of the objectives of the CET and were also aware of the limitations, and risks, associated with the initiative. There is some doubt as to whether all of the Core officers in the DTES and the officers who were seconded to the CET, either on a “forced transfer” basis or as volunteers, had a clear understanding of how the objectives of the CET were to be achieved. This led to some discrepancy between officers and between police teams in the policing strategies that were used, with some employing more of an enforcement approach and others adopting a maintenance role.

Question: *Were the necessary financial and other resources secured in a timely manner to ensure the success of the initiative?*

No. A critical issue that affected all facets of the CET initiative was the lack of resources. The decision was made by Vancouver City Council not to provide additional funding for the initiative. Compounding the resource issue, a large number of senior level officers took early retirement over a pension issue, in addition to the fact that the VPD was already under-staffed due to the “retirement bulge” and the challenges of recruiting up to 100 new officers annually.

To their credit, senior police personnel realized that additional resources would be required and that, even with an infusion of additional monies, the CET would stretch the organization to the limit in terms of maintaining an acceptable level of policing services throughout the city. When additional monies were not forthcoming, the impact on the organization was even greater. One manifestation of the lack of resources was the inability of the VPD to mount “flying squads” that could follow persons moved out of the DTES by the CET and who resumed their drug market and criminally-related activities in other areas within District 2 and in adjacent police districts.

Question: *Were capable managers identified and recruited to lead the initiative?*

Yes. The senior level police personnel involved in the design and implementation of the CET initiative were experienced officers who had extensive knowledge of the DTES

community and the challenges of providing police services to that community. The CET was envisioned as an initiative whereby the police could alter the long-standing policy of containment in the DTES and proactively re-establish a visible police presence, create a sense of security and safety among community residents, and provide an opportunity for the entire community to move forward in a positive fashion. Senior management was aware of the importance of carefully selecting the individuals who would lead the initiative and proceeded accordingly.

Question: *Was the staffing recruitment strategy adopted to create the special team adequate to support the initiative?*

Initially, no. The Core police officers deployed in the DTES prior to the implementation of the CET was initiated had extensive experience and expertise in policing in the area and were familiar with the community and the various agencies and organizations providing services in the community. To supplement the Core officers, additional police members were seconded to the CET and placed on teams in District 2 with a special emphasis on the DTES area. These officers were removed from a variety of non-uniformed line level positions in the department, including the research and planning unit and the traffic section. Subsequently, it was decided to solicit volunteers from other sections of the department to participate in the CET initiative. Eventually, the process evolved to a point where a one-year secondment to the District was being offered and there was no shortage of new volunteers. In retrospect, senior police personnel acknowledge that the “forced” secondments had compromised the effectiveness of the CET initiative and that a proactive effort to solicit volunteers to supplement the Core officers at the outset and prior to the implementation of the CET would have been a more productive strategy.

Training

Question: *Were the officers involved in the enforcement team sufficiently trained to function effectively under the new policing policy?*

To some extent, yes. The Core officers who were assigned to the DTES area of District 2 at the time the CET initiative had the required skill set to provide services to the various segment of the community. Many of these officers were familiar with the DTES. Other officers may have been assigned to District 2 at a previous point in time, although the dynamics of life in the DTES had changed over the years.

Although officers who were initially assigned to police the DTES area received 3 days of training that included information on public health and drug issues, in retrospect this was most likely not sufficient. However, officers were subsequently seconded to the area during the course of the CET did not have access to this training. In retrospect, the extent of the training and the absence of training for all of the officers assigned to the DTES during the CET may have hindered the effectiveness of the officers on the street.

There was a perception among many of the community residents interviewed for the evaluation, as well as among some residents participating in focus group sessions, that many of the police officers had little or no experience in dealing with mentally ill persons, persons in poverty, drug-addicted individuals, and had little or no knowledge of life on

the street and of the drug-influenced lifestyle. Many officers were perceived to be overly aggressive, as lacking communication skills, and as not having the skills sets to effectively police in a unique and challenging environment.

The health care professionals interviewed as part of the evaluation also expressed the view that many officers lacked a good knowledge of the area and persons they were policing.

There was also some suggestion by senior police personnel and by some of the Core officers interviewed for the evaluation that there was inconsistency between the various teams assigned to the DTES in terms of their respective focus on order maintenance and enforcement.

There is little doubt that, had more attention been given to ensuring that officers assigned to the DTES as part of the CET initiative had the requisite knowledge and skill sets to meet the unique challenges of the area, the public perception of the officers, the special initiative, and the police department would have been enhanced.

Question: *Did the officers involved in the enforcement team have a clear understanding of the objectives being pursued?*

The evaluation did not explore, in depth, the extent to which officers assigned to the DTES in the CET initiative understood, and accepted, the objectives of the initiative. Only the Core police officers were interviewed for the evaluation study and project team members did not do ride or walk-a-alongs with officers assigned to the area. The responses of the Core officers indicated that they had a general understanding of the objectives of the CET and the strategies employed to achieve these objectives. Although the officers who were seconded to the DTES were not interviewed, it can be assumed that there might have been diversity among them in terms of their understanding of the CET and its objectives. The extent to which this affected the operational success of the CET cannot be determined from the data gathered in the present study.

Question: *Did the officers involved in the enforcement team understand what was expected of them as members of the City-wide enforcement team?*

A review of internal documents provided to the evaluation team indicated that there appeared to be some variability among the officers assigned to the CET in terms of their understanding of the department's expectations of them and the specific policing strategies that were to be used in achieving the objectives of the CET. The documentation, for example, suggested that officers may not have always been clear as to the type of "visible presence" they were being expected to maintain. Throughout the course of the CET, efforts were made to ensure that all team members understood the strategies to be used and applied in a consistent fashion.

Question: *Did the officers involved in the enforcement team have an appreciation of the complexity of the problems affecting the DTES?*

The Core police officers who had policed in the area for a period of time prior to the implementation of the CET certainly understood the complexities of the issues in the

DTES. In fact, various groups of officers had been involved in specific initiatives targeting stolen property and the drug trade in the years and months leading up to April 2003. It was apparent from this evaluation that those officers who were transferred into the DTES to supplement the Core police officers often had little, if any, experience, policing in a high needs environment. Significantly, many of these officers did not have the requisite skill set to interact with community residents in a non-aggressive and non-confrontational manner and had little or no knowledge or, or experience with the drug subculture, the homeless, mentally disabled, Aboriginal persons, and other specialized populations. Officers who volunteered for assignment to the DTES as part of the CET may also have lacked the requisite skill sets, but this may have been compensated for somewhat by a positive attitude.

In retrospect, it would have been beneficial for all of the officers who were to be assigned to the DTES to have been required to complete a training course covering issues such as the drug subculture, the dynamics of life on the street in the DTES, and the specific strategies that were to be utilized in carrying out the initiative. This would have, in all likelihood, reduced the widely held perception among community residents that many of the officers were overly aggressive, had poor communication skills, and did not understand the issues in the DTES.

Question: *Were the officers involved in the enforcement team made aware of the potential impact of the initiative on various vulnerable groups, including drug addicted individuals?*

There was no indication from the data gathered for the evaluation that the officers involved in the enforcement teams were provided with directions on how to take into account the potential negative impact of their interventions and of the CET initiative in general on vulnerable groups, including drug addicted persons. Senior management officers were clearly aware of some of the potential detrimental effects of the new initiative, but they appeared to be unwilling to let these concerns detract them from single-mindedly pursuing the course of action they had chosen. According to a senior VPD officer, front line officers were told to make it more uncomfortable and more difficult for drug users to buy and use drugs and to try to impress upon them that they were not to use drugs in public. However, front line officers were apparently not briefed on the potential impact of such tactics on drug users, particularly high risk behaviour.

Question: *Were the officers involved in the enforcement team informed of the potential public health issues that could arise out of the initiative?*

One component of the 3-day training session provided to the officers initially assigned to the DTES was information on potential public health issues that could arise out of the initiative. It is not possible to determine from the information gathered during the evaluation as to how effective this training was, although as previously noted, not all officers assigned to the DTES as part of the CET received this training.

The CET Initiative within the Broader Framework of VPD Activities

Question: *What was the Department's overall policing policy for the DTES and District Two? What was the role of the CET initiative within that policy?*

There had been a number of more specifically focused initiatives in the DTES prior to the implementation of the CET. The CET was designed to be more comprehensive in its efforts to bring order to the DTES by disrupting the open drug market and the property-related criminal activity associated with this drug market. As well, the initiative involved a significant increase in police visibility and presence for a six-month period of time, far longer and more intense than any previous police initiative. There seemed to have been insufficient consideration given to how the special initiative would fit within the Department's overall policing policy, and in particular within the drug law enforcement policy.

Question: *Was the CET initiative effectively supported by other police initiatives and was it isolated from other policing activities?*

A shortage of resources apparently hindered efforts to integrate the CET into other police initiatives or, for that matter, to mount new initiatives in support of the CET, e.g. flying squads to police "hot spots" created by drug dealers and their clients moved and displaced from the DTES to other areas of District 2 and to adjacent police districts.

Question: *Did its intelligence gathering and data analysis component effectively support the overall CET initiative?*

There was an attempt to interface the work of the VPD crime analyst with the CET initiative in order to monitor the impact of the intervention on specific individuals (e.g. drug dealers) and on the patterns of criminal offending. The ability to maintain this interface and to provide a steady stream of criminal intelligence to the front line was compromised by a lack of resources and data analysis capacity. Illustrative of this is the fact that VPD no longer has access to the computer software that allows offenders and criminal activity to be tracked and displayed on maps. It is essential that VPD re-acquire this data analysis capacity as it moves forward and adopts the tenets of intelligence-led policing.

Question: *Did the Department clearly identify the conditions that had to be met for the CET initiative to be sustainable in the long term?*

The department is currently struggling to recruit sufficient numbers of new officers to fill the vacancies left by departing and retiring members and it is likely to be several years before full staffing levels are achieved. There has also been no net increase in the number of authorized positions for the department, which leaves VPD significantly understaffed compared to other police services in Canada.

This evaluation revealed that, once the open drug market in the DTES had been disrupted, VPD did not have the resources to pursue the drug dealers who were displaced and

dispersed to other areas of District 2 and to adjacent districts. This placed an additional burden on the policing teams in other areas of the city to respond to the localized crime “hot spots” that developed. The available resources were also insufficient to allow officers to spend more proactive time with community residents and to develop the close ties with the community that would assist in sustaining the gains that had been made in creating a safer and more secure community.

Question: *Did the Department carefully plan the follow up it intended to give to the initiative?*

The ability of senior management in VPD to engage in post-CET planning has been seriously compromised by a lack of resources and the inability to sustain the secondments from other units in the organization. One of the post-CET initiatives envisioned at the outset of the process was the creation of a new police district in the DTES and, since the CET, the VPD has continued with a number of initiatives in the DTES.

Question: *How did the CET initiative relate to the other aspects of the broad response strategy to drug abuse in Vancouver (Four Pillars Approach)?*

The VPD is a full partner in the Four Pillars approach and it is committed to participating in the implementation of a comprehensive drug abuse prevention strategy. However, frustration is often expressed within the VPD about the slowness with which the various components of the comprehensive strategy are being implemented, particularly the treatment component. It appears that the Department was not successful in developing collaborative partnerships in the planning and implementation of the CET, an initiative that it itself considered fully consistent with the Four Pillars approach.

On the other hand, the CET, and the additional resources assigned to the area where the SIS was opened, may have contributed to the successful opening and initial operation of the SIS in the DTES. The participation of the VPD in the SIS implementation provided a good example of how the police can carefully plan its intervention, in collaboration with other key partners, without compromising its integrity and mandate. This level of planning and consultation ought to have been present in the planning of the CET itself and it should be engaged in preparing future plans for the DTES and a possible new district.

Question: *How was the CET initiative coordinated with other agencies involved in Vancouver to address the problems of the DTES and its open drug market?*

Despite their best efforts, the VPD was generally unsuccessful in securing the cooperation of the prosecutors and the courts in developing a coordinated approach to the problems of the DTES either prior to or during the CET. The one notable exception is the VPD very public support for the SIS. The slow pace at which the other pillars of the “four pillars” approach are being implemented reflects the myriad of issues – political and programmatic – that must be addressed in designing and delivering services to the area. That said, a more effective communication strategy might have addressed much of the confusion and misinformation that surrounded the CET initiative.

Question: *Did the CET initiative have an impact on other parts of the criminal justice system?*

There is nothing to indicate that the CET had any significant impact on any other facets of the criminal justice system. As noted in the evaluation report, the CET differed from traditional police “crackdowns” in that it was not a coordinated effort on the part of the police, prosecution, and courts to impact criminal behaviour and offenders. One complaint of the officers involved in the CET initiative was that the courts were giving light sentences to drug dealers arrested as part of the CET initiative, imposing periods of probation with “no-go” orders that were ineffective in reducing the dealer’s on-street activities.

Question: *Did the CET initiative have an impact on other initiatives undertaken in the DTES as part of the Four Pillars approach?*

The evaluation did not determine whether the CET initiative had an impact on other initiatives undertaken in the DTES as part of the Four Pillars approach. Nevertheless, there is some indication that the CET and other related police interventions might have prepared the ground for the successful implementation of the SIS.

IMPACT ON THE OPEN DRUG MARKET AND ON PUBLIC HEALTH

Following are several key questions about the impact of the CET initiative on the open drug market and on public health.

Question: *Was the DTES drug market disrupted or otherwise affected by the CET initiative and, if so, how?*

Yes. Data gathered for this evaluation indicate that the CET was successful in disrupting the open drug market, *as it existed at the time the initiative was implemented in April 5, 2003*. The widespread disorder that accompanied the open drug market and that was centered at Main and Hastings streets was also disrupted. The data also indicate that the drug market did not disappear, nor was this an objective of the CET. However the drug market did reconstitute itself in a different form in other areas of the DTES and District 2 and in adjacent police districts. These re-constituted drug markets created localized hotspots characterized by drug dealing and property crimes. Residents in the DTES perceived that order had been established in the area and reported increased feelings of safety and security. It is important to note that the impact on the open drug market and the associated stolen property market occurred within the general context of declining crime in the DTES, District 2, and in adjacent police districts.

Question: *Did the CET initiative affect the availability, the price, or the quality of illicit drugs in the DTES and/or in Vancouver?*

Information gathered from IV drug users, focus group participants, and from offenders incarcerated for drug-related offences suggests that the price and availability of drugs were not significantly affected by the CET initiative. As with any market, the drug market

adapted to the increased police presence and intervention and assumed different forms as the drug dealers and their clients were displaced and then dispersed into other areas.

Generally speaking, discussions of the drug market and of drug use in the DTES most often relate to heroin and IV drug use. There is considerable evidence to suggest, however, that heroin is no longer the drug of choice for most drug users in the DTES. The survey of community residents found, for example, that the most frequently used drug was alcohol, followed by marijuana. The heroin IV drug user population appears to be older than other drug-user groups and declining in number.

There is evidence to indicate that the CET initiative affected the quality of drugs available in the DTES. There is also a perception among many residents, drug users and others that this has resulted in an increase in violence and aggression in the area, as users retaliated against dealers. There is also evidence to suggest that, as some of the higher profile drug dealers were arrested or pushed away from the area, they were replaced by a larger number of “small” dealers who may not have established relationships with the user population.

Question: *Did the CET initiative produce changes in what drugs were being used and where drug users were using them?*

It is difficult to determine from the data how the availability of specific types of drugs was affected by the CET initiative and whether certain drugs were affected more than others. Nor is it possible to determine specifically how drug usage patterns were affected by the CET, although there was a general perception among those interviewed for the study, and among focus group participants, that the CET did result in an increase in drug dealing and drug use in private locations, e.g. hotel rooms. The experiences of the field researchers were that a myriad of drugs were always on offer on the street in the DTES during the CET.

Question: *Was the CET initiative responsible for any changes in injection related risk behaviour of drug users in the DTES?*

The data gathered for this evaluation did not identify any clear changes in the injection-related risk behaviour of drug users in the DTES. Perhaps the greatest impact on the injection-related behaviour of drug users in the DTES was the opening of the Supervised Injection Site (SIS) in September 2003. There was a generally held perception among the survey samples, including the IV drug users, that the SIS had reduced injection-related risk behaviour and that IV drug users were making use of the facility despite police presence in the area. This perception was confirmed by media reports that the SIS was receiving four to five hundred IV drug users a day. This dispelled any initial concerns that had been voiced by various parties that the increased police presence in the DTES would have a negative impact to the access to and utilization of the SIS by IV drug users.

Question: *Did the CET initiative have an impact on the number of fatal and non-fatal cases of drug overdose in the DTES or in Vancouver?*

The CET did not have a noticeable impact on the number of fatal drug overdoses observed in the DTES (or in the city of Vancouver) during the initiative as compared to the number observed in the same period of time the previous year. The B.C. Ambulance data reveal that calls for drug-related emergencies increased during the operation of the CET as compared to the same period of time in the previous year. However, since a number of these emergency ambulance calls were generated as a result of the increased presence of the police in the area, it is difficult to draw definite conclusions from this single source.

Question: *Did the CET initiative's disruption of the drug market in the DTES also disrupt the provision of health care services and outreach programs to drug users, in particular, IV drug users?*

There was no clear evidence that the disruption of the open drug market in the DTES also significantly disrupted the provision of health care services and outreach programs to drug users, in particular, to IV drug users.

Question: *Did the CET initiative's disruption of the DTES drug market disrupt the provision of HIV prevention services to IV drug users, or limit their access to sterile syringes?*

There was no clear evidence that the disruption of the drug market in the DTES also significantly disrupted the provision of HIV prevention services to IV drug users, or limited users' access to sterile syringes. This is consistent with the needle exchange data reported in another study (Wood *et al.*, 2004), which reveal a 10% increase in the number of syringes distributed in the first three months of the CET initiative, as compared to the three months preceding it.

THE IMPACT ON PUBLIC DISORDER

Question: *What evidence is there that the amount of disorder present in the DTES was significantly reduced by the CET initiative?*

The reduction of the high level of disorder associated with the open drug market was one of the three main objectives of the CET initiative and it appears to have been achieved. Given that the observed decline in the frequency of officially recorded disorder incidents in the DTES and in District 2 from 2002 to 2003, it is difficult to measure statistically the impact of the CET on number of officially recorded offences. To this end, the evaluation sought out the opinions and perceptions of persons who live and work in the DTES and these data indicate widespread agreement that the CET had reduced the levels of disorder in the DTES. The perceptions of persons who live and work in an area are, in many ways, as important as the official police data, as they are likely to make decisions such as using public areas and patronizing local businesses based on their perceptions of safety and other quality of life issues.

Question: *Is there any evidence that disorderly conducts and incidents were displaced to other areas of the DTES, District Two, or other parts of the City of Vancouver?*

Analysis of official crime data is inconclusive regarding the question of whether disorder was actually displaced, as a result of the CET initiative, from the DTES to other parts of the District or to other areas. On the other hand, police dispatch data (for the period the CET was in operation and for the equivalent period during the previous year) clearly show a sizeable increase in the frequency of major incidents of disorder in the city of Vancouver (13%) and a large increase in the frequency of incidents of minor disorder in Vancouver as a whole (35.6%) and an every single district. New hotspots appeared at different places within the city over the period of time, but there did not seem to be, as such, major displacement of the volume of disorder from one District to another.

THE IMPACT ON PROPERTY CRIME AND THE FLOW OF STOLEN PROPERTY

Question: *Did the CET initiative successfully interfere with the flow of stolen property in the DTES?*

There is no conclusive evidence from the data gathered that the CET was successful in interfering with the flow of stolen property into the DTES, although the stolen property market was forced to become more discrete and the locations where stolen property was fenced may have shifted out of the immediate DTES area. Police officers, community residents, IV drug users, and others who offered an opinion on the subject shared the view that the stolen property market has not been significantly reduced. Senior police personnel, based on their observations, believed that the flow of stolen property as it existed prior to the CET had been impacted and cited the Extract data to support their view that the quality and value of stolen goods flowing into the DTES had declined. The attempt by the project team to assess the impact of the CET on the stolen property market in the DTES was hindered by methodological difficulties. This objective of the CET initiative appears not to have been achieved. It is also most likely that the opening of the SIS has had no impact on the stolen property market, as IV drug users are still forced to steal goods, fence them, and purchase drugs from dealers, prior to having access to the injection site.

Question: *Was the frequency of various types of property crime in District Two and in the City of Vancouver affected by the CET initiative?*

If displacement of property crime from the DTES to adjacent districts did occur, it is not reflected in district-wide offence data gathered by the VPD as part of the PRIME system. On the other hand, the police dispatch data (CAD) for the period during which the CET was in operation, as compared to the same period of time the previous year, show that there was a rather large increase (45.6 %) in the frequency of reported property crime in District 1 (the business district). However, since the same data also revealed a large increase in the frequency of these offences in District 2 during the same period, it is difficult to attribute the changes observed in district 1 to the impact of changes in District 2. The mapping of property crime incidents in Vancouver during the two discrete periods of time reveals the appearance of new “hotspots” in every district. Property crime patterns

are obviously not static, but it is very difficult to relate any change in them to the activity of the police in the DTES.

Question: *Is there any evidence that property crime, or certain types of property crime, were displaced from the DTES to other parts of District Two or of the City of Vancouver?*

District 1, the Downtown business district, clearly continues to be affected by its proximity to the DTES open drug scene. It is a “target rich” area for property crime, particularly theft, theft from vehicle, and shoplifting, and it has experienced a substantial increase in property crime during the CET initiative. There is evidence to suggest that, as dealers were displaced from the DTES westward to District 1, their drug user clients followed and found a target rich environment.

THE IMPACT ON VIOLENT CRIME

Question: *Did the CET initiative reduce the incidence of violent crime in the DTES?*

The official police data indicated that there was a substantial decrease, similar to that observed in other districts throughout the City, in the amount of violent crime in the DTES during the CET period as compared to the same period in the previous year. However, data from the VPD CAD system indicated that the number of calls received by the VPD for violent crime in the DTES increased during the CET period in 2003 as compared to the previous year. This increase may reflect the increased police presence in the community and the increased willingness of community residents to call the police for assistance. There is some, albeit conflicting evidence, that the CET might have contributed, at least initially, to an increase of aggressive behaviour among participants in the drug market.

DISPLACEMENT

Returning to the evaluation issues identified at the outset of the report, a number of questions can be raised and conclusions stated concerning the displacement effect produced by the CET initiative.

Question: *Is there evidence that the CET initiative may have displaced some types of criminal activity to other neighbourhoods nearby or other parts of the City?*

Yes. Analysis of the PRIME data for the DTES, District 2, and the adjacent police districts indicates that the CET initiative did displace certain types of criminal activity, particularly drug related activities, to other areas. This is reflected in increases, or “spikes” for specific categories of offences, in certain areas within each of the policing districts. These variations were, at least in part, a consequence of the movement of criminal activity within a district or the city as a whole that, in turn, resulted in increased police activity.

Question: *If there was evidence of crime displacement, how did the city-wide enforcement team or other elements of the VPD respond to that new development?*

The increase in the incidence of officially recorded offences in localized hot spots reflects a proactive response on the part of the police in District 2 and in adjacent police districts. This is illustrated in the increases in certain offence categories that are a reflection on proactive policing, e.g. execution of warrants, drug trafficking. It appears from the analyses that the VPD, while not having the resources to mount the “flying squads” to track and respond to specific offenders and their drug-market related activities, nevertheless were able to respond to some of the localized hot spots that developed. It is important to note that the recorded decreases in the frequency of several types of crime, as reflected in the PRIME data for specific categories of offences, may have been due, at least in part, to a diminished capacity of the VPD to proactively police and to respond to criminal activity.

Question: *Was the City-wide enforcement team (and/or other elements of the police force) able to pursue and police offenders and their associated drug market-related activities that were displaced from the DTES to new hot spots in the City?*

Interviews with senior police officials in the VPD revealed that the Department did not have the resources to adequately police the localized crime hot spots that developed in other areas of the DTES and District 2, nor in the adjacent Districts 1 and 3. Although the senior administration had anticipated that displacement would occur, several factors prevented the Department from mounting the necessary enforcement effort required to respond to it. This included the fact that the Department was under-resourced prior to the CET initiative, did not receive additional funding support from Vancouver City Council, and experienced the unexpected retirement of 150 senior officers from the Department due to a pension issue.

IMPACT ON POLICE-COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Question: *To what extent were the residents of the DTES aware of, and supportive of, the CET initiative and its objectives?*

The responses of community residents in the survey interviews indicate that these residents were evenly divided as to whether they knew about the CET initiative. When the CET and its objectives were explained to those residents not familiar with it, the overall level of support for the initiative and its objectives from the entire sample of community residents was high.

Question: *How have the residents of the DTES been affected by the CET initiative?*

The results indicate that nearly half of the residents interviewed felt that the police had impacted the open drug market and that officers had a greater tendency to speak with residents than in previous times. There was not a sense that the police had been able to

reduce the amount of stolen property available or that their efforts were generally directed towards helping people in the community.

Question: *How has the CET initiative affected the nature and quality of police – community relations in the DTES?*

There were high levels of satisfaction among community residents with the performance on the police in the DTES and a majority of the residents supported the increased police presence in the area. Residents viewed the police as part of the solution to the problems in the community, reducing disorder and making the community and its residents more safe and secure. A majority of the residents perceived that the CET had made the streets in the community safer, reduced the number of people coming into the DTES from other areas, and reduced the number of people hanging around the streets in the area.

While there was overall support for the police, concerns were expressed by some community residents that the police were too aggressive and that many of the officers seconded to the area, as part of the CET, did not have the skills to interact effectively with the residents.

IMPACT ON VULNERABLE GROUPS AND THE POTENTIAL FOR POLICE ABUSE OF AUTHORITY

Question: *How did the CET initiative affect drug users and other vulnerable groups, including youth, sex trade workers, and people suffering from mental illness?*

Other than the previously described perceptions and experiences of the sex trade workers, the evaluation gathered no information that would allow a determination of the impact of the CET on youth, the mentally disabled, and other persons in vulnerable groups. With respect to the drug users, the limited data collected did not indicate that their situation had changed considerably as a result of the CET, nor had their access to services.

Question: *Were there any instances of police abuse of authority in the DTES during the CET initiative?*

There is no evidence of widespread police misuse of authority in the DTES during the CET initiative nor did the number of formal complaints filed against the police increase during the CET. Many of the criticisms levelled against the VPD by various interest and advocacy groups in the DTES, centering on the assertion that the police systemically abused their authority and that physical assaults on persons in the area were widespread, were not supported by the data gathered in the present evaluation and, therefore, remain unsubstantiated. Significantly, the interview data gathered from interviews with community residents, including IV drug users, indicated general support for the increased police presence in the DTES and an acknowledgement that the police were only one part of the solution to the issues facing the DTES. There was a widely shared belief among those interviewed and among focus group participants that the police had become more aggressive in policing the area since the implementation of the CET and had adopted a

zero-tolerance approach to public disorder. There is verifiable evidence that this aggressiveness resulted in police abuses of authority.

THE COSTS OF THE CET

Question: *What were the costs associated with the CET initiative?*

The evaluation did not examine, in depth, the financial costs involved in conducting the initiative. The costs, as estimated by the VPD, were substantial and, at the time of writing of this report, the medium and long-term outcomes of the initiative remain to be determined.

Question: *Were the costs incurred for the implementation of the CET justified by the results obtained through the initiative?*

The present evaluation was able only to document the impact of the CET and perceptions of persons who lived and/or worked in the DTES within a six-month time frame. While the study did document changes in the DTES, in District 2, and in adjacent police districts during this time, the medium and long-term impacts of the CET remain to be seen. Only over the long term will it be possible to assess whether the CET was a catalyst for other positive developments in the DTES and an improvement in the quality of life for residents and others who work in the area. It is not possible to determine at this juncture what future partnerships will develop between the police in District 2 and agencies and organizations involved in the delivery of justice and social services. It is also very difficult to anticipate how, when, and in what form, the four pillars model will ultimately be implemented in the DTES. There is the possibility that the imminent economic re-development of the DTES and the influx of new residents and businesses in a newly created mixed-use neighbourhood, will eclipse the need to implement a model that was conceived several years ago when a different community dynamic was evident in the DTES.

All communities, including the DTES, are in a constant state of change and for many years, policy and programs designed and delivered to the DTES have assumed a static community with a specific set of relatively unchanging needs such as housing, drug treatment services, and other programs. If the DTES follows the pattern of other urban inner city areas in North America that have been “gentrified”, it is likely that many of the current residents of the area will no longer be in the area in five years, having been displaced and dispersed to other areas of the city and to other municipalities.

Question: *Did the VPD investment in the CET initiative weaken some of its other operations?*

The information gathered from police sources indicate that the CET initiative had a significant impact on other operations of the VPD, although no effort was made in the current evaluation to assess the nature and extent of this impact. The CET was implemented at a time when the department was desperately seeking to replenish its staffing levels while at the same time coping with the early retirement of approximately

150 senior level officers. In addition, the department's efforts to secure additional funding from the city to support the CET initiative were unsuccessful. This meant that all costs associated with implementing and carrying out the CET initiative were borne by the VPD out of its existing budget and from its existing, depleted, pool of police officers.

**PRIME System (Police Records Information Management Environment)
Comparing Districts 1-4 (April to December 2002 with April to December 2003)**

Category	District 1					District 2					District 3					District 4					All Districts		
	2002		2003		% Change	2002		2003		% Change	2002		2003		% Change	2002		2003		% Change	2002	2003	% Change
	Incidents	% of All	Incidents	% of All	% Change	Incidents	% of All	Incidents	% of All	% Change	Incidents	% of All	Incidents	% of All	% Change	Incidents	% of All	Incidents	% of All	% Change	Incidents	Incidents	% Change
Minor Disorder	976	24.2%	847	24.8%	-13.2%	921	22.8%	794	23.3%	-13.8%	1029	25.5%	854	25.0%	-17.0%	1109	27.5%	918	26.9%	-17.2%	4035	3413	-15.4%
Serious Disorder	290	23.2%	168	24.2%	-42.1%	304	24.4%	206	29.6%	-32.2%	374	30.0%	187	26.9%	-50.0%	280	22.4%	134	19.3%	-52.1%	1248	695	-44.3%
Break & Enter	1094	14.9%	881	18.1%	-19.5%	1488	20.3%	987	20.2%	-33.7%	2058	28.1%	1210	24.8%	-41.2%	2696	36.8%	1798	36.9%	-33.3%	7336	4876	-33.5%
Theft from Vehicle	5027	37.0%	4250	36.7%	-15.5%	2898	21.3%	2362	20.4%	-18.5%	2427	17.9%	2093	18.1%	-13.8%	3224	23.7%	2862	24.7%	-11.2%	13576	11567	-14.8%
Theft of Vehicle	1132	22.3%	872	18.5%	-23.0%	1081	21.3%	1003	21.3%	-7.2%	1370	27.0%	1364	28.9%	-0.4%	1493	29.4%	1480	31.4%	-0.9%	5076	4719	-0.7%
Theft of Bicycle	399	41.8%	249	29.6%	-37.6%	130	13.6%	137	16.3%	5.4%	96	10.1%	85	10.1%	-11.5%	330	34.6%	371	44.1%	12.4%	955	842	-11.8%
Theft (not vehicle related)	2324	38.7%	1685	36.1%	-27.5%	1337	22.2%	1130	24.2%	-15.5%	932	15.5%	618	13.2%	-33.7%	1417	23.6%	1234	26.4%	-12.9%	6010	4667	-22.3%
Shoplifting	802	43.9%	390	41.4%	-51.4%	255	14.0%	151	16.0%	-40.8%	446	24.4%	215	22.8%	-51.8%	322	17.6%	185	19.7%	-42.5%	1825	941	-48.4%
Stolen Property	123	18.6%	91	17.1%	-26.0%	301	45.5%	287	53.8%	-4.7%	175	26.5%	102	19.1%	-41.7%	62	9.4%	53	9.9%	-14.5%	661	533	-19.4%
Prostitution	11	3.5%	12	5.6%	9.1%	103	33.2%	53	24.5%	-48.5%	183	59.0%	148	68.5%	-19.1%	13	4.2%	3	1.4%	-76.9%	310	216	-30.3%
Public Alcohol Offence	21	31.3%	16	36.4%	-23.8%	15	22.4%	16	36.4%	6.7%	18	26.9%	1	2.3%	-94.4%	13	19.4%	11	25.0%	-15.4%	67	44	-34.3%
Psychiatric	212	21.7%	185	22.4%	-12.7%	286	29.3%	247	29.9%	-13.6%	239	24.5%	208	25.2%	-13.0%	239	24.5%	185	22.4%	-22.6%	976	825	-15.5%
Warrant Execution	105	9.1%	172	21.7%	63.8%	605	52.4%	402	50.7%	-33.6%	372	32.2%	167	21.1%	-55.1%	73	6.3%	52	6.6%	-28.8%	1155	793	-31.3%
Breach Offence	794	36.6%	399	33.1%	-49.7%	887	40.9%	493	40.9%	-44.4%	294	13.5%	224	18.6%	-23.8%	196	9.0%	88	7.3%	-55.1%	2171	1204	-44.5%
Diving while Prohibited	21	11.8%	8	9.8%	-61.9%	56	31.5%	39	47.6%	-30.4%	69	38.8%	18	22.0%	-73.9%	32	18.0%	17	20.7%	-46.9%	178	82	-53.9%
Assaulting Police	13	21.0%	12	28.6%	-7.7%	29	46.8%	15	35.7%	-48.3%	11	17.7%	10	23.8%	-9.1%	9	14.5%	5	11.9%	-44.4%	62	42	-32.3%
Drug Possession	152	16.9%	125	21.6%	-17.8%	523	58.2%	344	59.3%	-34.2%	153	17.0%	81	14.0%	-47.1%	70	7.8%	30	5.2%	-57.1%	898	580	-35.4%
Drug Trafficking	127	15.4%	293	36.8%	130.7%	536	65.0%	436	54.8%	-18.7%	133	16.1%	54	6.8%	-59.4%	28	3.4%	13	1.6%	-53.6%	824	796	-3.4%
Violent Crime	579	21.3%	298	23.6%	-48.5%	967	35.5%	461	36.4%	-52.3%	737	27.1%	326	25.8%	-55.8%	438	16.1%	180	14.2%	-58.9%	2721	1265	-53.5%

PRIME System (Police Records Information Management Environment)

Comparing DTES & nearby neighborhoods (April to December 2002 with April to December 2003)

Category	DTES (CET area) (District 2)					DTES (Jackson & East of) (District 2)					Commercial Dr. North (N. of Grandview) (District 2)					Sunrise / Hastings Park (District 2)					Yaletown North / Stadium (District 1)					Yaletown South / Granville Ent. Area (District 1)				
	2002		2003		Change	2002		2003		Change	2002		2003		Change	2002		2003		Change	2002		2003		Change					
	N.	%	N.	%		N.	%	N.	%		N.	%	N.	%		N.	%	N.	%		N.	%	N.	%		N.	%			
Minor Disorder	302	7.5%	275	8.1%	-8.9%	164	4.1%	138	4.0%	-15.9%	281	7.0%	258	7.6%	-8.2%	173	4.3%	123	3.6%	-28.9%	113	2.8%	134	3.9%	18.6%	238	5.9%	208	6.1%	-12.6%
Serious Disorder	101	8.1%	60	8.6%	-40.6%	64	5.1%	45	6.5%	-29.7%	91	7.3%	59	8.5%	-35.2%	48	3.8%	42	6.0%	-12.5%	37	3.0%	16	2.3%	-56.8%	67	5.4%	52	7.5%	-22.4%
Break & Enter	270	3.7%	155	3.2%	-42.6%	262	3.6%	156	3.2%	-40.5%	587	8.0%	418	8.6%	-28.8%	369	5.0%	258	5.3%	-30.1%	148	2.0%	98	2.0%	-33.8%	186	2.5%	142	2.9%	-23.7%
Theft from Vehicle	1398	10.3%	1172	10.1%	-16.2%	471	3.5%	330	2.9%	-29.9%	615	4.5%	496	4.3%	-19.3%	403	3.0%	345	3.0%	-14.4%	871	6.4%	806	7.0%	-7.5%	756	5.6%	869	7.5%	14.9%
Theft of Vehicle	188	3.7%	146	3.1%	-22.3%	220	4.3%	175	3.7%	-20.5%	351	6.9%	385	8.2%	9.7%	321	6.3%	292	6.2%	-9.0%	181	3.6%	157	3.3%	-13.3%	200	3.9%	169	3.6%	-15.5%
Theft of Bicycle	60	6.3%	53	6.3%	-11.7%	16	1.7%	22	2.6%	37.5%	37	3.9%	48	5.7%	29.7%	16	1.7%	13	1.5%	-18.8%	82	8.6%	49	5.8%	-40.2%	49	5.1%	42	5.0%	-14.3%
Theft (not vehicle related)	705	11.7%	628	13.5%	-10.9%	206	3.4%	154	3.3%	-25.2%	264	4.4%	226	4.8%	-14.4%	158	2.6%	111	2.4%	-29.7%	289	4.8%	203	4.3%	-29.8%	387	6.4%	359	7.7%	-7.2%
Shoplifting	61	3.3%	34	3.6%	-44.3%	34	1.9%	21	2.2%	-38.2%	96	5.3%	70	7.4%	-27.1%	64	3.5%	26	2.8%	-59.4%	27	1.5%	15	1.6%	-44.4%	56	3.1%	44	4.7%	-21.4%
Stolen Property	149	22.5%	165	31.0%	10.7%	86	13.0%	69	12.9%	-19.8%	41	6.2%	35	6.6%	-14.6%	24	3.6%	18	3.4%	-25.0%	18	2.7%	12	2.3%	-33.3%	50	7.6%	35	6.6%	-30.0%
Prostitution	6	1.9%	3	1.4%	-50.0%	29	9.4%	20	9.3%	-31.0%	67	21.6%	28	13.0%	-58.2%	1	0.3%	1	0.5%	0.0%	1	0.3%	2	0.9%	100.0%	5	1.6%	4	1.9%	-20.0%
Public alcohol offence	9	13.4%	8	18.2%	-11.1%	0	0.0%	2	4.5%		4	6.0%	6	13.6%	50.0%	2	3.0%	0	0.0%	-100.0%	2	3.0%	0	0.0%	-100.0%	11	16.4%	5	11.4%	-54.5%
Psychiatric	81	8.3%	73	8.8%	-9.9%	74	7.6%	73	8.8%	-1.4%	82	8.4%	76	9.2%	-7.3%	49	5.0%	26	3.2%	-46.9%	31	3.2%	19	2.3%	-38.7%	58	5.9%	48	5.8%	-17.2%
Warrant execution	363	31.4%	206	26.0%	-43.3%	157	13.6%	105	13.2%	-33.1%	54	4.7%	66	8.3%	22.2%	31	2.7%	25	3.2%	-19.4%	10	0.9%	20	2.5%	100.0%	39	3.4%	56	7.1%	43.6%
Breach offence	523	24.1%	201	16.7%	-61.6%	179	8.2%	105	8.7%	-41.3%	104	4.8%	131	10.9%	26.0%	81	3.7%	56	4.7%	-30.9%	43	2.0%	28	2.3%	-34.9%	134	6.2%	168	14.0%	25.4%
Driving While Prohibited	24	13.5%	10	12.2%	-58.3%	18	10.1%	11	13.4%	-38.9%	5	2.8%	9	11.0%	80.0%	9	5.1%	8	9.8%	-11.1%	8	4.5%	1	1.2%	-87.5%	4	2.2%	2	2.4%	-50.0%
Assaulting Police	15	24.2%	7	16.7%	-53.3%	1	1.6%	2	4.8%	100.0%	10	16.1%	5	11.9%	-50.0%	3	4.8%	1	2.4%	-66.7%	1	1.6%	1	2.4%	0.0%	6	9.7%	6	14.3%	0.0%
Drug Possession	259	28.8%	180	31.0%	-30.5%	118	13.1%	91	15.7%	-22.9%	59	6.6%	51	8.8%	-13.6%	42	4.7%	22	3.8%	-47.6%	22	2.4%	14	2.4%	-36.4%	75	8.4%	42	7.2%	-44.0%
Drug Trafficking	385	46.7%	269	33.8%	-30.1%	38	4.6%	87	10.9%	128.9%	42	5.1%	41	5.2%	-2.4%	20	2.4%	33	4.1%	65.0%	10	1.2%	10	1.3%	0.0%	69	8.4%	168	21.1%	143.5%
Violent Crime	453	16.6%	202	16.0%	-55.4%	171	6.3%	88	7.0%	-48.5%	196	7.2%	126	10.0%	-35.7%	147	5.4%	46	3.6%	-68.7%	56	2.1%	28	2.2%	-50.0%	145	5.3%	97	7.7%	-33.1%

Downtown Business Core / Coal Harbor (District 1)					West End (District 1)					Mt. Pleasant / Kensington area (District 3)					Comm. Dr. S./ Trout Lake (S. of Grandview) (District 3)					East Van / Collingwood (E of Nanaimo, N of 41) (District 3)					All District Totals		
2002		2003			Change	2002		2003			Change	2002		2003			Change	2002		2003			Change	2002		2003	Change
N.	%	N.	%	N.		%	N.	%	N.	%		N.	%	N.	%	N.		%	N.	%	N.	%		N.	%	N.	
227	5.6%	174	5.1%	-23.3%	395	9.8%	324	9.5%	-18.0%	259	6.4%	207	6.1%	-20.1%	191	4.7%	145	4.2%	-24.1%	194	4.8%	153	4.5%	-21.1%	4035	3413	-15.4%
65	5.2%	35	5.0%	-46.2%	121	9.7%	65	9.4%	-46.3%	92	7.4%	47	6.8%	-48.9%	56	4.5%	27	3.9%	-51.8%	73	5.8%	30	4.3%	-58.9%	1248	695	-44.3%
261	3.6%	192	3.9%	-26.4%	499	6.8%	449	9.2%	-10.0%	496	6.8%	286	5.9%	-42.3%	319	4.3%	187	3.8%	-41.4%	436	5.9%	299	6.1%	-31.4%	7336	4876	-33.5%
1619	11.9%	1141	9.9%	-29.5%	1761	13.0%	1394	12.1%	-20.8%	570	4.2%	405	3.5%	-28.9%	530	3.9%	443	3.8%	-16.4%	538	4.0%	392	3.4%	-27.1%	13576	11567	-14.8%
172	3.4%	120	2.5%	-30.2%	579	11.4%	419	8.9%	-27.6%	315	6.2%	324	6.9%	2.9%	205	4.0%	203	4.3%	-1.0%	331	6.5%	288	6.1%	-13.0%	5076	4719	-7.0%
109	11.4%	43	5.1%	-60.6%	159	16.6%	114	13.5%	-28.3%	25	2.6%	16	1.9%	-36.0%	36	3.8%	28	3.3%	-22.2%	13	1.4%	28	3.3%	115.4%	955	842	-11.8%
763	12.7%	513	11.0%	-32.8%	872	14.5%	584	12.5%	-33.0%	250	4.2%	164	3.5%	-34.4%	178	3.0%	125	2.7%	-29.8%	159	2.6%	105	2.2%	-34.0%	6010	4667	-22.3%
413	22.6%	214	22.7%	-48.2%	306	16.8%	117	12.4%	-61.8%	110	6.0%	58	6.2%	-47.3%	72	3.9%	37	3.9%	-48.6%	84	4.6%	51	5.4%	-39.3%	1825	941	-48.4%
23	3.5%	13	2.4%	-43.5%	32	4.8%	31	5.8%	-3.1%	59	8.9%	28	5.3%	-52.5%	47	7.1%	28	5.3%	-40.4%	24	3.6%	14	2.6%	-41.7%	661	533	-19.4%
3	1.0%	5	2.3%	66.7%	2	0.6%	0	0.0%	-100.0%	93	30.0%	80	37.0%	-14.0%	7	2.3%	4	1.9%	-42.9%	76	24.5%	53	24.5%	-30.3%	310	216	-30.3%
4	6.0%	3	6.8%	-25.0%	4	6.0%	8	18.2%	100.0%	3	4.5%	0	0.0%	-100.0%	9	13.4%	1	2.3%	-88.9%	2	3.0%	0	0.0%	-100.0%	67	44	-34.3%
39	4.0%	24	2.9%	-38.5%	84	8.6%	93	11.3%	10.7%	76	7.8%	57	6.9%	-25.0%	58	5.9%	44	5.3%	-24.1%	44	4.5%	39	4.7%	-11.4%	976	825	-15.5%
24	2.1%	46	5.8%	91.7%	32	2.8%	50	6.3%	56.3%	110	9.5%	56	7.1%	-49.1%	109	9.4%	36	4.5%	-67.0%	60	5.2%	23	2.9%	-61.7%	1155	793	-31.3%
113	5.2%	105	8.7%	-7.1%	107	4.9%	98	8.1%	-8.4%	94	4.3%	61	5.1%	-35.1%	81	3.7%	50	4.2%	-38.3%	49	2.3%	29	2.4%	-40.8%	2171	1204	-44.5%
2	1.1%	2	2.4%	0.0%	7	3.9%	3	3.7%	-57.1%	22	12.4%	5	6.1%	-77.3%	13	7.3%	6	7.3%	-53.8%	15	8.4%	2	2.4%	-86.7%	178	82	-53.9%
2	3.2%	5	11.9%	150.0%	4	6.5%	0	0.0%	-100.0%	6	9.7%	2	4.8%	-66.7%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	-	3	4.8%	1	2.4%	-66.7%	62	42	-32.3%
26	2.9%	23	4.0%	-11.5%	29	3.2%	45	7.8%	55.2%	53	5.9%	25	4.3%	-52.8%	48	5.3%	14	2.4%	-70.8%	25	2.8%	24	4.1%	-4.0%	898	580	-35.4%
31	3.8%	89	11.2%	187.1%	18	2.2%	26	3.3%	44.4%	50	6.1%	20	2.5%	-60.0%	2	0.2%	11	1.4%	450.0%	28	3.4%	8	1.0%	-71.4%	824	796	-3.4%
172	6.3%	83	6.6%	-51.7%	201	7.4%	89	7.0%	-55.7%	180	6.6%	82	6.5%	-54.4%	132	4.9%	63	5.0%	-52.3%	174	6.4%	83	6.6%	-52.3%	2721	1265	-53.5%