

VICTORIA POLICE STUDY ON REPEAT FAMILY VIOLENCE

Leanne Sargent and Sandra Russell
Victoria Police

Slideshow presented at:
Delivering crime prevention : making the evidence work
Carlton Crest Hotel, Sydney
21-22 November 2005



Australian Government

Australian Institute of Criminology



Crime Prevention Division
Attorney General's
department of nsw

This conference was organised by the Australian Institute of Criminology in conjunction with the Crime Prevention Division of the New South Wales Attorney General's Department.
<http://www.aic.gov.au/conferences/2005-cp/>

Note: copyright for these papers/speeches rests with the authors and the AIC accepts no liability for the material contained within them. These papers/speeches are not peer reviewed and in particular, speeches may not necessarily meet the standards of the AIC's formal publication series. Their presence on the AIC website should not be constituted as an endorsement of the views contained within them.



VICTORIA POLICE

Victoria Police Study on Repeat Family Violence

Leanne Sargent & Sandra Russell





Background

- Victoria Police report Violence Against Women: A Way Forward
- Establishment of the State Wide Steering Committee to Reduce Family Violence (SSCRFV)
- Development of the Victoria Police Code of Practice for the Investigation of Family Violence (Code of Practice)



Background

When the number of Family Violence Incidents were examined in terms of actual and distinct households for the year 2001/2002 we found:

- **That 16% of households were attended for multiple Family Violence Incidents**
- For some of these Police had attended up to 18 times, although mostly the number of Repeat Attendances clustered around 2 to 4 visits
- **This 16% attributed to one third of Total Family Violence Incidents attended by Police**



Literature

- A review of the literature indicated a concentration on the Police response including decision making around arrest, applications for protection orders and prosecution practices, police attitudes and the presence of situational variables.
- **There is little literature of the household as the primary point of observation**
- Killenbeck (1999) examined Repeat Victimization in context of Police action recommending a tiered police response.



Methodology

- Are there features or characteristics of families experiencing Repeat Family Violence that differentiates them from those that don't?
- Using the parties involved not the physical address to define the household we compared households experiencing *one* Family Violence Incident with those that experienced *multiple* Family Violence Incidents against a range of selected variables.



Selected Variables

- Relationship between parties
- Presence of Alcohol
- Presence of Drugs
- Injury Sustained
- Day of Week
- Offender Age
- Aggrieved Family Member Age
- Presence of Firearms
- Presence of Other Weapons
- Cause of Incident
- History of Violence (either party)
- Immediate safety concerns
- Criminal Offences
- Action Taken
- Gender of Victoria Police Member
- Children Present
- Number of Children present by Age
- Offender Co-operative
- Aggrieved Family Member Co-operative
- Home Type



Findings

- **81% Households identified as Single Incident**
- **19% Households identified as Repeat Incident**



Findings Continued

Variables which identified an association with Household Type included:

- **Relationship**
- **Children Present**
- **Previous Criminal History of Violence Against the Person (offender)**
- **Action Taken (Intervention Order)**
- **Home Type**



How Did We Make the Evidence Work?

- Data was real to the Organization and most importantly the Practitioners
- It was analyzed and reported in context of the Operational Police members needs
- It provided data and outcomes on which police could act and respond in tangible ways



How the Evidence Worked cont'd

- It was incorporated into a variety of Training forums
- It informed new infrastructure
- It was sufficiently timely to inform key Police and Government Initiatives



VICTORIA POLICE

Contact Us

leanne.sargent@police.vic.gov.au

sandra.russell@police.vic.gov.au