

GREATER MANCHESTER POLICE USES SPSS TO ESTABLISH A COMMUNITY BASED POLICING PROGRAM

Situation

Formed in 1974, Greater Manchester Police (GMP) has a workforce of over 7000 police officers and 3500 support staff. Serving some two and a half million people covering an area of 500 square miles and ten metropolitan boroughs, GMP is one of the largest police forces in the UK.

Consultation is a statutory function of GMP and is ongoing throughout the year. The Police Authority's Consultative Team (PACT), is responsible for drawing up consultation plans for each local area, and reporting on community concerns, safety and crime and disorder. The police authority also organises youth forums in a number of schools throughout Greater Manchester, bringing together young people and local police officers, with the aim of improving communication, liaison and relations.

Critical Issue

As part of the National Reassurance Project working in the St. Mary's and Failsworth West Wards of Oldham Metropolitan Borough, a survey to 9000 households was undertaken in order to establish a community based policing program, the concept centred on identification of 'signal crime'.

Prior to implementing an SPSS analytical solution, all that existed was a low level paper system with poor analysis - the use of Microsoft Excel for the analytical requirements proved unfruitful due to its limited analysis capability. Keith Bentley, Superintendent, Operations at Oldham Division, explains, "The non-automated data input procedure proved too resource hungry. We wanted a solution that would not only find answers to questions that basic database and spreadsheet packages would miss, but also to make the data entry faster and more reliable."

Solution

Already aware that SPSS had over 35 years experience in implementing and analysing surveys and had completed similar projects for other Police Forces up and down the country, GMP decided to adopt the SPSS analytical solution.

By using sophisticated SPSS software like MrPaper, QuanQuest, MrScan, the flagship desktop analysis package SPSS Base and SPSS Regression Models, it was hoped that a wide range of public views on policing in the area would be gathered and incorporated into the National Reassurance Project. The questionnaires were seamlessly created within the SPSS system and the responses were all scanned in electronically to eliminate the need for manual data entry.

Results

Successful completion of the survey project brought forward 400 persons who were willing to work with the Force to deliver problem solving initiatives in the relevant 2 wards, particularly relating to actions to stop youth offending and anti-social behaviour.

But the main positive outcome was in terms of cost and time and how it has turned GMP into a model organisation for other forces to follow. "Not only did we benefit from a massive reduction in person time for this project, saving approximately £13K in 2 weeks, but these results are now being referenced by other GMP Divisions as contributions to 'efficiency savings' required by Government", said Mr Bentley.

"The SPSS scanning process and capability to drill down into our public consultation survey data has become a bedrock on which the project can move forward during the next 12 months. Our increased survey and analysis capability has also impressed several partners who have now fully bought into the National Reassurance Project in Oldham", concluded Keith Bentley on a successful project.

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- Keith Bentley, Chief Superintendent, Operations, Oldham Division.

