



Lessons for the Future No. 10

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Lessons for the Future Conference in Västerås

“I wish you all a very warm welcome to Västerås and to this Lessons for the Future conference, which has been jointly organised by the City of Västerås and Brå – the National Council for Crime Prevention. It is good to see you all here in our interesting and expanding city. Today we have 136,000 inhabitants, and are growing at a rate of about 1,000 per year. Once again, a very warm welcome to you all!”

With these words, Elisabeth Örnell, chairman of the municipal executive board in Västerås, and also chairman of the local crime prevention council “Protecting Västerås”, welcomed the participants to the Lessons for the Future conference that took place on the 21st–22nd September, 2009.

New mini-exhibition and award of crime prevention prize

The Director General of the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention, Jan Andersson, noted the major interest that the Lessons for the Future conference has given rise to. Over 300 people would be present at the conference, which took place over two days, starting and finishing with lunch. As in previous years, the conference would include both interesting plenary presentations

and exciting seminars. The biggest innovations for this year highlighted by Jan Andersson were on the one hand a mini-exhibition, in which almost 20 local actors presented and talked about their activities, and on the other the selection of the Swedish entrant to the European Crime Prevention Award competition.

“I would also like to take this opportunity to say that we can see a very gratifying trend, with the police having become significantly more active than before in the work of local crime prevention.”

Exchanging experiences in itself has crime preventive effects and promotes public safety

The National Police Commissioner, Bengt Svenson, also described the importance of

the more intensive cooperation that is now being developed between the police and municipal local authorities in the form of collaborative agreements.

“In relation to combating serious organised crime, too, collaborations within the local community are a necessary condition for success.”

The Lessons for the Future conference is very important in itself, Bengt Svenson argued, and he continued by emphasising that coming together and exchanging experiences facilitates improvements to the work of preventing crime and promoting public safety.

Crime prevention work has become fashionable

Lars Hallberg, County Police Commissioner of the County of Västmanland, concluded the opening addresses with following words:

“It is a great honour that the National Council for Crime Prevention has decided to hold this conference here. We can see that the tide has turned, and that more and more are recognising the importance of working preventively. In our county we have established local community councils. You could say that crime prevention work has become fashionable. But we must not forget all the parents, teachers and other adults who also conduct very important crime prevention work. I am pleased to have been given the opportunity to stand here today, and also that the National Council has chosen to organise the conference in Västerås. I wish you all a very warm welcome!”

PHOTO: CLIFFORD SHIRLEY/VÄSTERÅS STAD



Jan Andersson and Bengt Svenson.

The desire for security can lead to surveillance and control, and it may lead to an increasing number of activities and locations being fenced in and placed under guard. But the desire for security can also lead to society, or parts of it, being made more accessible and it can bring people together.

PLENARY ADDRESS FEELING SECURE IS ABOUT LEARNING TO LIVE WITH YOUR INSECURITY

Learning to tolerate what is unknown, unexpected and different

In his plenary address, Rolf Lidskog, who has a PhD in Sociology and a theology doctorate in Ethics, described the complexities of the concept of security and of our varied attempts to achieve this state. The fact that the society we live in is changing so fast does not make the problem any easier.

The dilemma of security

The social bonds that existed previously are weakened when large numbers of people from different contexts are gathered together in cities. There is also a risk, argues Rolf Lidskog, that the level of integration among people diminishes. The meetings that occur between people tend often to become more superficial, instrumental and impersonal. A form of social fragmentation and anonymity can then emerge, in which nobody feels any responsibility. Distressing and tragic events can lead to demands for the city, or parts of it, to be cordoned off and fenced in, and for different groups of people to be separated from one another. There may also be demands for increased surveillance.

At the same time, Rolf Lidskog argues, and this is part of the dilemma of security in cities, the reduction in social control can lead to many people experiencing a sense

of increased freedom. It can also result in a situation where new aspects of social integration become visible, and where social integration expresses itself in new ways. According to Rolf Lidskog, it is not a question of there being a right and a wrong. Instead we should be discussing what sort of city it is that we want to create (an open or a closed city) and what sorts of citizens we want to have. If we want an open city, then there are several questions that need to be addressed. One of the most important of these, Rolf Lidskog explains, is that of whether we can feel secure by learning to live with some level of insecurity.

In the city we can learn to tolerate what is unknown, unexpected and different

It is easy to perceive things that are different as if they were also threatening, and it is therefore important to learn to distinguish between the two. It takes practice to be able to deal with things that are different in a respectful way, and to realise that it is possible to live with strangers, without forcing them to become like oneself, argues Rolf Lidskog. Efforts have to be made to jointly agree on the norms and rules that apply to how people behave, for example when they meet one another.



PHOTO: CLIFFORD SHIRLEY/ÅSTERÅS STAD

Rolf Lidskog described the complexities of the concept of security and of our varied attempts to achieve this state.

“And I learn all these things when I meet and interact with and respect people who are different from me. We need more meeting places where we don’t just run into to like-minded people, but also into people who are not like us.”

But just meeting, without also communicating, is not enough. Nor is just talking in itself. According to Rolf Lidskog, the conversations must lead to some kind of interaction.

“We also need some form of friction, an antagonism in both the conversations and the interplay. Conflicts are not dangerous, as long as you learn how to deal with them.”

A lot of people want to earn money out of work to prevent crime and promote safety

It is *important* to create a safe and open city. People who feel unsafe and afraid risk having a poorer quality of life than those who feel secure. In the longer term, says Rolf Lidskog, insecurity and fear among citizens can lead to the impoverishment of social life and to the city becoming less open.

It is also *difficult* to create this kind of city. It is often the media who dictate public perceptions of what is dangerous, what should be tolerated and what should be condemned. At worst, their descriptions can lead to moral panic. If work to improve the public’s sense of safety is not thought through, it may in fact produce quite the opposite result, argues Rolf Lidskog. Members of the public may become even more scared of spending time outside their homes than they were before.

“And we mustn’t forget that there are commercial forces that rely on and exploit the fears and concerns of the public. There are a lot of people who want to make money out of working to prevent crime and promote public safety.”

Creating a safe and open city is also *risky*, argues Rolf Lidskog. In a situation of intense social change, the risk increases that society will over-react. It then becomes easy to believe in quick and easy solutions that may focus more on the symptoms than on the underlying problems. Even if intentions are good, they can lead to unforeseen and undesirable consequences.

“When we are working to improve public safety, it is very much about learning to deal with our insecurity, not about eradicating it,” Rolf Lidskog concludes.

Spatial design increases safety

Bo Grönlund, a Lecturer in City Planning at the Copenhagen School of Architecture, is an expert on the significance of the physical environment for security and the sense of safety experienced in cities. Although progress is not being made as quickly as he had hoped, Bo Grönlund feels that perhaps a shift is nonetheless taking place; from an exclusive focus on offenders, attention is now starting to be directed towards the physical environment and people’s perceptions of safety.

According to theories of situational crime prevention, crimes occur when offenders and victims coincide in time and space in the presence of a lack of control. But it is sufficient to remove only one of these factors to prevent crimes occurring. This is the central idea on which Bo Grönlund’s work is founded, to create places where more people are in motion and where there is thus a higher level of social control.

Over the past hundred years, our cities have thinned out quite dramatically: population densities are much lower today as measured in terms of square metres, and there are often large green spaces between dreary traffic areas. This reduced human density means that we have to actively plan to create interpersonal meetings. Using a practical example from an area in Odense in Denmark, Bo Grönlund showed how spatial design can contribute to an increased sense of safety. Amongst other things, the movement network (roads, walkways and cycle paths) must be highly accessible and well-integrated with the various functions associated with a given neighbourhood, such as shops, housing and schools.

“Don’t forget that you can sometimes remove movement lines rather than introducing additional ones! It is important to create spaces that are visually accessible and promote visibility, and also a clear division between what is public and what is private. This can be done by introducing physical or symbolic barriers in the right places.”

Other methods might involve bringing together different social functions in the same location, using glass frontages in the entrances to buildings, in shops and on balconies, and creating stimulating and inviting promenades or courtyards. Bo Grönlund also included a “Västerås-special”, where he focused attention on some of the problems in the urban environment of Västerås itself: schools located in wooded areas, buildings with external galleries and too many dark corners outside shops. At the same time he praised Västerås’s work to create a safer city and the fact that there were campaigns to combat littering and projects focused on housing and young people. There is also an ongoing project to increase the degree of land exploitation and the planning documents include explicit safety goals.

“Voluntary measures alone are not enough! We have to introduce this way of thinking into legislation, planning and building laws, and also into our educational courses in city planning and construction. In order to move forwards more research is also needed, amongst other things on the effects of rebuilding existing problem areas. We must also learn to balance the different priorities of society, so that solutions to traffic problems are not found at the cost of the safety perspective, or vice versa,” Bo Grönlund concluded.



PHOTO: CLIFFORD SHIRLEY/VÄSTERÅS STAD

Bo Grönlund.

Are Swedes unhealthily dependent on

“Yes!” answers David Eberhard, a senior consultant at Danderyd Hospital, who has many years of experience working in emergency psychiatric care. David Eberhard, in the first plenary address of the Lessons for the Future conference, argues that Sweden is suffering from a nationwide panic attack.

Today we are so utterly terrified of everything that we’d like nothing more than to prohibit it all – smoking, terrorists, driving and rapists. Instead of realising that our fear is exaggerated and at times completely groundless, we avoid what frightens us, which in the end makes it even more dangerous, since we never learn how to deal with frightening and unpleasant situations, explains David Eberhard. Not only ordinary people, but government agencies, the media, local authorities and hospitals all act and think in exactly the same way as the panic disorder patients that David Eberhard meets in his work.

According to David Eberhard, in Sweden we are obliged to wear bicycle helmets, there is a prohibition against acrylamide in potato chips and we have laws against terrorism. At the same time it is statistically extremely unusual for anyone to die of acrylamide poisoning or as a result of a terrorist attack. We live today by what Eberhard calls the princi-

ple of caution: if you can’t guarantee something is completely safe, then we regard it as dangerous. And since we always want to prove things are completely safe before they can be permitted, we devote enormous sums of money to safety-proofing every aspect of our existence.

But the more safety we get, the more unsafe we feel, because we never get the chance to practice dealing with unpleasant situations. David Eberhard argues that Sweden has become addicted to safety, despite – or rather because of – the fact that we live in the safest country in the world.

Why is it so dangerous to be addicted to safety?

Eberhard argues that an over-protected childhood fails to prepare us for life, and that when we are then faced with all the different events life throws at us, we are unable to deal with them normally. As an example,

SEMINAR THE SAFE CITY

City planning for safety and participation

“People have a democratic right to feel safe in public places. Planning a city without taking this into consideration and allowing the citizens to participate may create a form of structural discrimination, where only certain citizens feel safe enough to move as they want to in public.”

This was how the moderator Erika Sallander, from the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention, introduced the seminar *The safe city*. She then introduced Per-Olof Rask, co-ordinator of the local crime prevention council “Protecting Västerås”, and Linda Thorell from the City of Västerås, who spoke of their crime mapping work.

A large amount of information, relating to such things as lighting, the road network,

areas of trees and bushes, bus stops, pedestrian subways, pubs and taxi ranks are noted on maps together with information on where and when crimes have been committed. This makes it possible to analyse which factors may be of significance for why crime has a given character at a certain location.

Because the GIS-system contains a large amount of information and is very precise – even though a margin of error of a few me-

tres has been deliberately included in order to avoid identifying individual properties or individuals – it is possible to conduct well-balanced analyses of the types of measure that would prevent crime most effectively. In some places this might mean police patrols and a larger number of people in motion. Other places require physical measures such as wider queues outside clubs or more well-organised taxi ranks.

Gives rise to confidentiality issues

Per-Olof Rask also emphasised, however, that even if the crime mapping method produces great opportunities to see where there are problems and how they might best be resolved, there are also difficulties involved:

“You have to be incredibly cautious and

safety?

he described how sick-leave times have doubled over a period of ten years for the same diagnoses, at the same time as the number of people being given sick leave for psychological problems has increased by 200 percent. Things that are quite simply a part of life are suddenly being viewed as pathological.

“We haven’t learned to handle emotions such as grief, fear or anger. That’s why we drug ourselves with safety. But this addiction to safety means that besides becoming safe, we also become timid, lazy and introverted. Fear can make us do exactly what other people tell us to, and can lead, for example, to us not daring to allow people in from other countries,” says Eberhard.

In the longer term, then, the desire for safety can lead to society becoming increasingly closed and to us regarding everything even slightly unfamiliar with the greatest possible suspicion. Eberhard believes that the reason for this enormous focus on safe-

ty is that Sweden is one of the most secularised countries in the world. Swedes are not a particularly religious people – and since we don’t believe in any form of life after death, death has no meaning for us either. This means that we want to protect ourselves from dying at all costs, by introducing laws and prohibitions against the most absurd things.

This way of thinking is then spread by the media, hospitals and researchers. And we live in a globalised world in which, to quote Eberhard, “fear travels faster than common sense”. It is true of course that terrible things do happen sometimes, but when the media focuses on them it is not because such things occur frequently, but precisely because something so unusual has finally happened!

“The mortality rate is actually 100 percent!”

But there are solutions to the problem, and it is possible to free oneself of this addiction to safety. First and foremost, we need to realise that it is in fact dangerous to be alive:

“We need to turn our perspective on its head and challenge our fears instead of prohibiting everything that might be dangerous in any way – obviously without exposing ourselves to foolhardy risks. The most



PHOTO: SOLVEIG HOLLARIBRA

David Eberhard.

important task that parents have is to prepare their children for adult life, and we do this by teaching them to cope with uncomfortable and unusual situations. Let children have snowball fights, let them ride their bikes without a helmet sometimes, and let them play near open windows. We have to challenge our fears, but in a sensible way. Don’t forget – we are all going to die! The mortality rate for human beings is actually 100 percent.”

consider very carefully which information you can make available. It is important to keep to the facts in order to avoid stigmatising an area as dangerous. It becomes a very unwieldy instrument if you don’t have enough knowledge to use it correctly and to be able to analyse which things are actually related to one another and which factors it is possible to influence.”

There are also a large number of laws and regulations which mean that careful consideration is essential when working with the GIS-system. Per-Olof Rask spoke of the difficulties in maintaining a balance between the fact that all municipal documents are in the public domain and the fact that this work involves dealing with sensitive and sometimes confidential information on crime.

Avoid protracted meetings in order to get youths involved

Daniel Andersson and Cecilia Broman from *Young Culture 116* in Gothenburg presented a project working to make first and foremost youths participants in the city plan-

ning process: *In another part of Vasa Park*. The project is a collaborative enterprise between Young Culture 116; Safe, Beautiful, City; the Park and Nature Administration; the Youth Council and the Office of Culture at the City of Gothenburg. In the context of its work with young people, Young Culture 116 was asked by the youths if they could do something in the city’s public spaces. The question was passed on to Safe, Beautiful City, and the youths were given the opportunity to do something in Vasa Park. The park had long been experiencing problems associated with insecurity, drugs and disruptive youth groups. Previous attempts to make the park more accessible had not produced the desired results.

One of the project’s goals is, together with the youths, to formulate proposals for changes in the park, a process which has been taking place at a series of workshops, either in Vasa Park itself or at the Youth Project in central Gothenburg. Architects and artists have also been invited to participate and all those involved have agreed to concen-

trate on seating, litter bins and lighting. The youths have then participated at the workshops to formulate their own proposals for how the park might be improved in these areas. In dialogue with the Park and Nature Administration and the municipal officers involved, the local authority then puts the youths’ ideas into practice.

“Collaboration can be difficult, and it can be tough getting a cumbersome local authority administration to collaborate with a lively group of young people, but it is not impossible. The goal is that the City of Gothenburg will acquire experience of how you can collaborate with young people on questions relating to public spaces,” explained Daniel Andersson and Cecilia Broman.

One important idea is that those who live and work in the vicinity of the park should also be included in the work, and a reference group has continuously provided feedback. A college of further education located in the area has also been involved and has included the activities associated with improving the park in its classroom work.

The 2009 Swedish ECPA-competition (European Crime Prevention Award) was won by the MUMIN project, a collaboration between the police, the healthcare sector and the social services in Stockholm. Reduced processing times and youths accepting contract-care instead of justice system sanctions are two examples of the project's results.



PRIZE AWARDS FOR THE SWEDISH ECPA-COMPETITION

The MUMIN project wins the Swedish ECPA

MUMIN is first and foremost a collaboration between the police, the healthcare sector and the social services in Stockholm. When the police make a drug-related arrest, the youth is driven directly to the premises of the Maria Ungdom clinic, where counselling and a treatment contract are offered immediately. The work has both led to the identification of a new group of criminal youths with serious drug abuse problems and has succeeded in getting many of them to accept treatment.

“MUMIN shows the massive social benefits that can result when important crime prevention actors work together to resolve a common problem,” say Jan Andersson, Director General of the Swedish National

Council for Crime Prevention, who awarded the prizes to the winning entrants.

The ECPA is an annual competition which awards a prize to the best crime prevention project in Europe. The competition is preceded by a national selection process, and the final is arranged in December by the country hosting the EU presidency, which this year is Sweden. The Swedish competition this year included nine projects which have tested new methods to prevent crime among young people, and from these one winner has been selected along with two projects that have been awarded Honourable Mention prizes. All three projects also received SEK 10,000. The representatives of the MUMIN project will go on to represent

Sweden in the European competition final, which will be decided in Stockholm in December.

Two other projects were also awarded prizes: *Safe school*, a school project in the municipalities of Nacka, Tyresö and Värmdö in Stockholm, which shows that detailed surveys and systematic measures can reduce crime and harassment in schools, and *Young & safe in Gothenburg and Mölndal*, a large collaborative project among crime prevention actors in Gothenburg, whose objective is to reduce recruitment to criminal groups.

A further six projects were awarded diplomas at the prize ceremony in Västerås. You can read more about these projects in the box below.

THE JURY'S MOTIVATION FOR THE WINNING SWEDISH ECPA ENTRY IN 2009, AND FOR THE PROJECTS THAT RECEIVED HONOURABLE MENTION PRIZES

ECPA WINNER: MUMIN

MUMIN has identified a new group of youths with serious drug abuse and poor home conditions, who were previously relatively unknown to the dependency care sector. The project shows the major social benefits than can result when important crime prevention actors such as the police, healthcare and the social services collaborate – not as an end in itself but as a means to the end of resolving a common problem. The MUMIN project is innovative from a methodological perspective, and has been evaluated and transformed from a commendable project into an integrated part of routine activities. MUMIN has contributed to reducing processing times and to enabling youths from difficult circumstances to choose another direction in life than drugs and crime.

HONOURABLE MENTION PRIZE: SAFE SCHOOL

The project's method of measuring preventive effects using experimental schools and control schools is well-constructed and constitutes a classic design. The project has been sensitive to and has

proceeded from school-youths' perceptions of crime and insecurity in their own schools. Safe School shows that systematic measures, both social and situational, that are implemented in accordance with the findings of a detailed survey of problems, can reduce harassment and crime in schools.

HONOURABLE MENTION PRIZE: YOUNG & SAFE IN GOTHENBURG AND MÖLNDAL

By bringing together important actors such as the Police, the Prosecution Service, the City of Gothenburg and municipal housing companies, the project has taken a broad approach to youth problems. The evaluation of the project has in a candid, ambitious and insightful way described the sometimes difficult and crooked path that must be followed for a project to win legitimacy in structures that are already well-established. Young & Safe has led to an increased focus on youth issues and has made possible strong and optimistic work to combat youth crime and new recruitment into criminal groups in a large part of Gothenburg.

From left: Ulf Wahlgren (Research Coordinator, Maria Ungdom, County Council), Torgny Söderberg (Detective, Youth Section, County CID, Stockholm), Jörgen Olsson (Detective Inspector, Västerort Police District) and Göran Häggglund (Section Head, Social and Labour Market Administration, Maria Ungdom Unit).

PHOTO: CLIFFORD SHIRLEY/VÄSTERÅS STAD

BRIEF DESCRIPTIONS OF THE OTHER SIX PROJECTS THAT PARTICIPATED IN THE SWEDISH ECPA COMPETITION IN 2009

STUDENT 08

Collaborative project with the goal of reducing violence and alcohol consumption in connection with high-school graduation parties in the City of Stockholm.

GIVE AND TAKE EVERY DAY

The police in Södertörn, Stockholm have implemented a training project to facilitate meetings between school youths and the police, amongst other things in order to recruit more police officers from minority ethnic backgrounds.

A SAFER JOURNEY

School project in Gothenburg that has made possible a dialogue between school youth and bus drivers in order to avoid friction on public transport.

ACT TO STOP VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN!

Crime preventive school project in Malmö with the objective of giving youths' greater self-confidence and to give them the courage to report offences and to deal with potentially violent situations.

“CHAT-INTERVIEWS” – THE COMMUNICATION OF THE FUTURE

The police in Skåne have developed a pilot model for police interviews with youths in cyberspace by means of what are referred to as chat-interviews.

LAW AND JUSTICE DAYS IN YEAR 6

The municipality of Järfälla in Stockholm organises annual meetings between school students and amongst others the police and the fire service, and then calculates what a certain type of criminal damage costs their own school.

MINI-EXHIBITION

Concrete examples of local initiatives

To round off the first day of the Lessons for the Future conference, a mini-exhibition and mingle-session was arranged. At the same time as the conference participants helped themselves to fruit, snacks and alcohol-free cider, they had the opportunity to exchange knowledge and experiences. Twenty or so local projects participated in the exhibition and described their crime prevention work.

Amongst other projects, a group of volunteer co-ordinators tied to the Stockholm County Police Authority were present and described the volunteer project that has now been introduced on a permanent basis. The local police from Danderyd just outside Stockholm described the *Safe Site* project, a web-based information network that allows citizens, businesses, police officers and local authority employees linked to the network to send warnings about crime in real-time. Another stand presented the *Children exposed to harm* project, in which a number of municipal schools have collaborated with the police in order to improve routines for making reports to both the police and social services.

The Association for Social Work Research (FORSA) informed conference participants about a website that collects ongoing research in the field (www.socialvetenskap.se), and the Foundation for a Safer Sweden had prepared a presentation describing their activities. The National Board of Building, Planning and Housing were represented and described how local authorities and other organisations can apply for funding for efforts focused on improving safety in city and urban environments from a sexual equality perspective. The County of Västmanland presented the mediation activities being conducted in various municipalities across the county as well as a description of the Community Council that has been established to strengthen collaborations between the police, municipal authorities, the business community and other agencies and organisations.

Focus on crime prevention among children and youth

The local authority of Eslöv presented its informational campaign *Take Care of Your*

Municipality! – a collaboration between the local police, the emergency services and the local Rotary Club. The project is focused on reducing vandalism, arson and other criminality and is particularly directed at students in compulsory education.

Örebro's crime prevention council presented the *Örebro sportsbag*, a product intended to reduce thefts in connection with sporting activities. The bag contains smaller, numbered bags, one for each team member, where they can place their valuables instead of leaving them unattended in the changing room. A parent or another adult is then responsible for the sports bag and gives the valuables bags back to the players after the match.

Other exhibitors included the Victim Support Centre from Västerås, who described their work with crime victims, and *Bålsta buddies*, a crime and drug prevention project conducted by youths employed by the social services in the municipality of Håbo.

The nine finalists in the Swedish ECPA (European Crime Prevention Award) competition were also represented, of course. The Swedish prize was won by the *MUMIN* project, a collaboration between the police, the social services and Stockholm County Council, involving a method to establish contact with a previously unknown group of youths with serious drug abuse problems. The other finalists were *Young & Safe* in Gothenburg, *Student 08*, *Give and Take Every Day*, *Safe School*, *Act to Stop Violence Against Women!*, *Chat-interviews*, *A Safer Journey*, and *Law and Justice Days in Year 6*.

All of these projects are described in more detail in the brochure “European Crime Prevention Award 2009” which is available for download from the National Council's website: www.bra.se.

I can't do anything on my own, you can't do any

This was what Annelie Silvander, of the Gothenburg City licensing unit, said during a seminar focused on organised crime in three different arenas: the internet, motorcycle gangs and the bar and restaurant trade. Common to the crime prevention work of these three fields is that all of society's agencies must work together, and use several different methods, in order to deal with these forms of crime.

Jonathan James, an IT-security specialist at the firm Atea, began the seminar by describing the nature of online crime, and by emphasising that it constitutes a very concrete threat. With the help of technology, hackers have succeeded in breaking into sensitive computer systems on several occasions and have attacked both nuclear power stations and electricity control centres. Another common method involves blocking access to the websites of important public sector agencies by overloading their servers.

Organised crime is also widespread on the internet and is most often seen in the form of credit card fraud or phishing, with people being lured into giving out their personal bank codes and passwords. There are

also organised frauds where apparently serious websites sell goods, and take payments for them, without ever delivering the items in question.

“It is also important to remember not to use the same password everywhere. There are examples of police officers who have used the same password at work and on various internet sites – sites which then turn out to have been fronts for criminal networks. If these passwords are stolen, this could result in sensitive police information falling into the wrong hands.”

Internet crime turns over vast sums of money and there is little risk of getting caught, in particular because of the internet's global and borderless nature. The criminal



PHOTO: CLIFFORD SHIRLEY/VÄSTERÅS STAD

Jonathan James described the nature of online crime.

networks involved are often based in Eastern Europe, but they conduct their activities on sites linked to other countries, including Sweden, Jonathan James explained.

Successful action plan to combat motorcycle clubs

It is possible, however, to combat organised

PLENARY ADDRESS MOBILISATION TO COMBAT SERIOUS ORGANISED CRIME

Everyone can contribute to preventing

In the summer of 2008, the Swedish Government instructed Brå – the National Council for Crime Prevention – to mobilise the local level in the work to prevent organised crime. The Council's work in this area involves supporting, developing and following up the work conducted locally to combat serious organised crime.

“The point we want to get across is that it is possible to combat organised crime. To begin with, you should chart the nature of the situation in the municipality in question. The National Council is therefore developing a research tool that is intended to facilitate this work.”

Rasmus Sundin, a research analyst at the National Council for Crime Prevention, continued his address by describing some of the other activities that the National Council is currently engaged in. He spoke of the guidelines document on local measures to counteract serious organised crime that has already been published, and on the national progress report that has been written. The progress report, which is based on a survey involving both questionnaires and

interviews, shows that there are currently two large scale collaborative projects being implemented to combat serious organised crime in Sweden, the one in Gothenburg, the other in Östergötland. A number of smaller collaborative projects are also being conducted in various places around the country.

“There is a fairly large focus on criminal motorcycle gangs. But generally speaking, the crime prevention work currently being conducted is not particularly extensive. The survey shows that there are not very many projects being implemented around the country.”

Network meetings and seminars

The National Council is organising sev-

thing on your own, but together we can do it!

crime, as Göran Pettersson, of the Östergötland Police Authority was able to verify.

An explosion outside the clubhouse of the motorcycle club Top Sides led to the development of an action plan to combat organised crime, with the objective of ensuring that by the end of 2009 there would no longer be any criminal motorcycle gangs in the county. The action plan has involved the collaboration of all the municipal local authorities in Östergötland, the Swedish Tax Agency, the Enforcement Service, the Social Insurance Agency, the Prison and Probation Service, the Customs Service, the Public Prosecution Service and the police.

The action plan means that there are now two operational collaboration groups in Linköping and Norrköping, and a contact person within each organisation. The organised approach to the work, with the various agencies scrutinising every aspect of the lives of the individuals involved in crime, each on the basis of their own powers and authorities, has made the activities of the motorcycle clubs much more difficult.

The goal of the project has largely been

achieved already, but the work continues to further develop the methods used and to prevent new criminal operations becoming established. There is also a desire to improve the visibility of the collaboration in public places, by maintaining a presence at the annual tattooing show in Norrköping, for example.

Using alcohol as a crime prevention tool

A similar example of a successful collaboration is found in Gothenburg, where the local authority's licensing unit, the police and the Swedish Tax Agency have been involved in a joint effort to combat organised crime in the bar and restaurant trade.

By means of improved collaboration and dialogue, the work has achieved very good results within the framework of existing financial resources. The work takes place in the form of both joint activities out on the streets and at the desks of individual agency workers. Amongst other things, the work involves collaborative scrutiny of the finances of bars and restaurants, and of the backgrounds of those who run them, with the

help of police data, and the training of police officers on the street so that their notes become as detailed as possible. The establishments' entrances and cloakroom areas are also scrutinised in order to document how well they function from a legal perspective.

"A strategy that is individually adapted to each specific case gives extremely good results in court. Sometimes it can be better to wait with an intervention in order not to disturb an investigation that is underway at another agency," explained Annelie Silvander, Director of the licensing unit at the City of Gothenburg.

She also emphasised the usefulness of the Alcohol Act. It provides many powers that other pieces of legislation don't give you, and gives the police the right to investigate premises and conduct long-term observations of what is going on at different bars.

"The police see an incredible amount, but it is only the local authority that can revoke a liquor license. Thanks to our improved collaboration we now revoke three to four times as many licenses as we used to," Annelie Silvander explained.

organised crime

eral regional seminars, one of which was held in Linköping in the spring. The next two seminars focused on organised crime in the restaurant trade, and were conducted in Gothenburg on November 11th and in Umeå on December 2nd. In January 2010 a seminar on organised crime and public sector tendering will be held in Stockholm. In addition, seminars are being planned on extortion and on how to combat recruitment into organised crime.

In order to stimulate collaborations, the National Council is working to encourage networking meetings where municipal local authorities and the police are given the opportunity to collate their knowledge and co-ordinate their efforts. The county police authorities can seek special financial sup-

port from the National Council to arrange such meetings with the local authorities in their respective counties. To date, 11 of Sweden's 21 police authorities have applied for funding to conduct a network meeting.

Handbook on strategies and methods

"At the beginning of 2010, a handbook will be published on strategies and methods. It describes a range of administrative measures, such as planning permission and other forms of permits, that the local authorities can use in their preventive work."

Rasmus Sundin says that the handbook will also include information on measures to strengthen local authority administrations, such as training courses for municipal officers that make it easier for them to iden-

tify irregularities in the context of tendering procedures. In addition, the handbook will contain examples of measures directed at youths. And it will describe promising projects in those areas of crime where organised criminal activities are often found.

"Altogether it is clear that organised crime is both active and visible at the local level. The National Council's assessment," says Rasmus Sundin, "is that prevention work is not only a matter for the police. Municipal and other local measures can also combat and prevent this kind of criminal activity."

He concludes by noting that effective collaborations between the various parties involved are an important element in this work.

“The people who engage in serious organised crime have often ended up where they are because they’re not very good at anything else. They are involved in both everyday offending, such as shoplifting and leaving petrol stations without paying, and in much more serious crime. Sometimes they are violent towards their nearest and dearest and rape their women. We police officers see them in every type of context imaginable, and this is either because they’re simply clumsy, or because they’re not really in control of their lives.”

PLENARY ADDRESS IT IS POSSIBLE TO COMBAT ORGANISED CRIME

“Not the sharpest knives in the drawer”

Jonas Trolle, a detective inspector at the Stockholm County Police Authority, does not mince his words when he describes the individuals involved in organised crime, which he has worked to combat for the past six years.

“They’re not the sharpest knives in the drawer,” he says, “I’ve met some of the individuals regarded as the most serious criminals in the county of Stockholm, and discovered that most of them are feeble-minded people, pretty stupid. It is therefore important to remember that they don’t actually have any advantage over us, other than the advantage of terror, which they often work hard to maintain.”

According to Jonas Trolle, serious organised crime involves a large number of different categories of offences. People who earn money from trafficking and burglaries in Sweden, for example, may at the same time be importing and exporting drugs and weapons. They might also be involved in debt collection activities either in Sweden or in other countries. This versatility constitutes a major challenge to the police officers whose job is to combat organised crime. They sometimes have to work outside their own areas, both in terms of the subject matter and geographically, explains Jonas Trolle.

The greatest possible profit for the smallest possible risk

As a police officer or a prosecutor, you mustn’t simply believe and accept their stories about their businesses. They often engage in some form of money laundering, sometimes with the help of a business of their own. It is uncommon for their commercial activities to be legitimate, and this

becomes visible as soon as you start scratching away at the surface, says Jonas Trolle.

“It is important to go after the money. At my unit, for example, we uncovered fifteen million in a single swoop, and that’s only five million less than the running costs of the unit for an entire year. If we succeed in attacking their finances, it becomes less interesting for them to continue. Their activities are all about seeking the biggest possible profit for the smallest possible risk.”

Everything is focused on power and profit

Jonas Trolle goes on to describe how individuals involved in serious organised crime devote efforts to exerting unlawful influence on politicians, the media, public administration, justice system agencies and economic organisations. He says that within the EU, for example, there is a major lobby working for the legalisation of prostitution. Some of the members of this lobby are in the hands of criminal networks and silently represent them. The lobbying activities focused on the partial legalisation of drug use also have links to serious organised crime, according

to Jonas Trolle. The illegal drug trade that was formerly conducted by criminals is organised by the same individuals once it has been legalised, he says.

“It is important to remember that serious organised crime can be extremely dangerous, but you don’t have to take this as your point of departure. They are often fully occupied with being criminal. Although they can scare people, they don’t always have time to carry out the revenge attacks that they have threatened,” says Jonas Trolle.

We have to collaborate, persevere and work strategically

Jonas Trolle is convinced that it is possible to combat serious organised crime. But in order to do this, everyone must stand united and really put these activities under intense scrutiny.

“We all have to understand that together we can have an impact. But to do so we have to collaborate, persevere and work strategically. If we do this together, then the market here in Sweden will become unattractive to serious organised crime.”

According to Jonas Trolle, one or more of the following behaviours indicates serious organised crime:

- Collaboration between more than two individuals.
- Individual work tasks assigned to each participant.
- Long or unlimited duration.
- Some form of discipline and control.
- A suspicion of serious criminal acts.
- Activities at the international level.
- The use of violence or other threatening methods.
- The use of commercial or business-like structures.
- Participation in money laundering.
- Exertion of unlawful influence over politicians, the media, public administration, justice system agencies or the economy.
- Striving for profit or power.



“Collaboration is not about getting together for coffee and doughnuts – you really have to work together!”

In the municipality of Värmdö, outside Stockholm, a new approach has led to dramatic reductions in the time taken to process youth offences. Ann Hellströmer, a trained social worker, describes how the municipality’s social services, together with police and prosecutors, are working actively to speed up processes, change investigative routines and provide support for parents.

The collaborative work referred to as the Värmdö model actually involves a large number of different activities, of which the investigative centre for young offenders, also known as “The 48”, is only one. The centre was established in order to reduce investigative processing times and its main objective is to reduce offending among young people by means of rapid interventions. This requires that the three agencies involved – the Stockholm County Police Authority, the Municipality of Värmdö and the Public Prosecutor – have a well-functioning collaboration and consensus.

The new working methods involve several different strategies. Amongst other things, the police focus on “taking home” all investigations to the municipality of Värmdö, which means that irrespective of where in the county a crime is committed, it is the police in Värmdö who deal with every investigation involving a youth who lives there.

Forms were developed and filled in as a means of identifying the exact places in the investigative process where sticking points arose, and this also showed what improvements were needed so that the cases would not be left to lie around unfinished. Today, the work ensures that the investigations of the different agencies tie in with one another without any hitches, which is central to limiting the time taken to process these cases. It also means that the youths do not have

time to commit new offences while they are waiting to appear in court.

“Since the police have reorganised their routines, the police officers on internal duties now work on the same cases as those working out on the street. Before, there could be a delay of several months, but this is now practically a thing of the past. One of the positive side-effects is that police officers serving in different functions have gained a greater understanding of one another’s work”

Ann Hellströmer also emphasises how important it is to bring the police and social services together on the same premises:

“One of the preconditions for success is that everyone is sitting together. It can be a bit painful at times, but it’s absolutely essential to be able to work effectively and with intensity”

Today the clearance rate for youth offences in Värmdö lies at 78 percent, way above the average, and this is first and foremost a result of the attempts to intervene as quickly as possible following the commission of an offence. It then becomes easier to get hold of witnesses and more people are willing to talk about what happened, which makes it easier to clear the offence.

Support to parents is a priority

One factor that particularly speeds up the work of the social services is getting the offenders’ guardians involved. Prior to their

first meeting with the social services, the parents are assigned the task of gathering as much information as possible on how their children are doing at school and how they spend their leisure time. There is also an active mediation program in operation and in the future, Ann Hellströmer hopes to be able to develop the methods of parental mediation even further.

She points out that it is very important that there are social projects and related activities in the community – not only for the offenders and the youths exposed to crime, but also for the parents affected. In Värmdö there is amongst other things a support centre for young crime victims, open access clinics for children and parents, opportunities for therapy, and the “Buddies” field-project organised by the social welfare board.

Thus several factors have contributed to the success of the Värmdö Model and to the associated marked reductions in processing times for youth offences. Among the most important of these, Ann Hellströmer emphasises, are bringing police and social services together on the same premises, the use of a local perspective, with investigations being conducted in the youths’ home municipality, the existence of a well-developed network between the police and the social services’ field-activities and well-functioning measures both in the open-access activities and among the different agencies involved in the model.

Don't be a victim. Instead, develop a strategy and deal with media issues actively and in a structured and continuous way. And don't deny the existence of problems; instead make a point of saying when they have been remedied. Landskrona and Gothenburg share their experiences.

From left
Sonny Mattisson,
Annika Wågsäter,
Jennie Zetterström
and
Jens Lisell.



PHOTO: CLIFFORD SHIRLEY/VÅSTERÅS STAD

SEMINAR GET YOUR MESSAGE ACROSS THROUGH THE MEDIA

Build confidence in relation to the media

There was a time when a great deal was written about Landskrona. The focus was on violence and youth gangs, and the majority of articles had a negative tone. Crime prevention worker Annika Wågsäter remembers this period as hectic, with a lot of flapping about, and with the media in complete control of the game.

“We weren't really prepared. I have spent a lot of time thinking about what we might have done differently. One thing that is very clear is that we didn't have a media strategy,” she says.

As an example, Annika Wågsäter describes how two of the projects being run by the municipality were dealt with by the media. The *Blue Jackets* were a group who worked preventively out among children and youths. They were visible on the streets between 9am and 10pm on weekdays and Saturdays. The *Peaceful Streets* group were out when the risk for violence was greatest, between 8pm and 4am on Fridays and Saturdays.

“The Blue Jackets who passed outside the newspaper premises during the day were given a great deal of media coverage. But almost nothing was written about Peaceful Streets,” says Annika Wågsäter and describes further that the local authority has now specified communication as a special item in its collaboration agreement with the police. They will be participating in media training together, will issue joint press releases and will make a joint decision on who will answer which questions.

Handbook on media strategy

Sonny Mattisson is a member of Gothenburg's central crime prevention council, A

safer and more human Gothenburg and has, together with Jens Lisell, the communications and media advisor at the City of Gothenburg, written a handbook on getting one's message across through the media.

The key words are structure and continuity. A media strategy should not be based on enthusiastic individuals but should rather be built into the meeting structure, says Sonny Mattisson and describes how the method presented in the handbook emerged from a feeling of frustration in Gothenburg regarding the images presented in the media.

“There may have been some truth in what was written, but there were also errors,” says Sonny Mattisson.

A review of everything that had been written in the media about youth crime in Gothenburg showed that the police were the source in 60 percent of cases. Staff working at youth centres, teachers and similar were only used as sources in six percent of cases.

“In an initial phase it is quite natural that it is the police who describe the factual circumstances. But there is also a great deal of competence in other professional groups and it would be good if this was also expressed,” argues Sonny Mattisson.

Talk about what isn't working

The local authority in Gothenburg writes in its communications policy from 2002 that the media are an important actor in the context of municipal democracy, as information providers, opinion-makers and as scrutinisers. There is also a passage about communicating both what works and what isn't working. According to Jens Lisell it is a very strong document, which shows a good un-

derstanding of the role of the media.

“It is by also taking up what isn't working that it is possible to build up your credibility in relation to the media, and you then have a greater chance of affecting what they write about,” he says.

The media focuses on things that are new or that deviate from what is normal. If you have turned a negative situation into something positive, for example, then it has an appeal for the mass media. Jens Lisell describes a situation of this kind: A few years ago, there was an area experiencing problems due to youths using their summer holidays to engage in vandalism. The following year a project was started to give them something to do and the vandalism ceased. They issued a press release describing this positive change and there was an immediate response from local radio, Göteborgsposten and Metro, who came out and interviewed both project leaders and youths on site.

“And the media themselves say that this is exactly the type of example that they are looking for,” says Jens Lisell.

Both media workers say that it is important to be proactive, to decide what it is that you want to say and to formulate a strategy. Accessibility is also important. The social services in Gothenburg have therefore started a media strategy group. The group consists of five managers who have been given a mandate to talk about the municipality's social services in general – and who are available for comment in the evening, on weekends and during holidays. A media group consisting of city district directors has also been started, and groups will soon be developed for the elderly care and school administrations.

We must take advantage of the commitment of young people

According to the national school survey conducted by Brå – the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention, one pupil in five reports having been bullied at some point during the past year. A further ten percent say that they have been bullied sometimes or often. At the same time, a report commissioned by the National Council shows that the extent of bullying can be reduced through the use of anti-bullying programs. The work being conducted with the Here4U program in Västerås is an interesting example of how schools can work preventively across a broad front without overtaxing their resources.

Per Alvant from the National Council for Crime Prevention presented a brief description of the results from the research review commissioned by the Council. Altogether, the report shows that if a school implements one of the programs examined over the longer term, bullying can be reduced by approximately twenty percent. According to Per Alvant, some of the most important factors for success are that the work includes educational measures focused on parents and that both teachers and students become involved. Disciplinary measures involving some form of negative consequence for bullying behaviour, and increased playground supervision are also important elements.

The National Council opened the website *Brottsrummet.se* one year ago. The site is intended for children and youths who want to learn more about the criminal justice process and about right and wrong. The website was recently expanded with the addition of an interactive “case” where visitors can click their way through a child-bullying scenario. The objective, according to Tina Rapp, the National Council’s webmaster, is to explain what bullying is, what can be done about it, and the role of schools.

“Most of all it is about helping children and youths to reflect over and discuss what can be done to prevent and stop bullying.”

Dependence on the knowledge of young people

In Västerås, eleven of the municipality’s fifteen schools are participating in the work of implementing *here4u*. Several of the city’s further education colleges are also involved.

In brief, *here4u* can be described as a program to support students, where the students themselves, under adult guidance, function as extra pairs of eyes and ears in the school and also work systematically to prevent bullying, amongst other things, over the longer term. Of the many students who apply to participate in *here4u*, a number are selected for interview. Of these a further selection is made of those who then participate in the work.

“When we make the selection, we want to put together as mixed a group as possible. The group should include both well-behaved students and students who are more disruptive. The groups should comprise both boys and girls and also children and youths from different ethnic backgrounds,” says Ammi Karlsson-Pye, who supervises the project.

The young participants meet every week. They go on study visits and take part in different courses and training programs, where they discuss a variety of questions, such as what makes a good role model, how to resolve conflicts and how to prevent bullying.

According to Therese Ankréus, project co-ordinator for *here4u* in Västerås, participating in this work gives status among other students in the schools concerned. Ammi Karlsson-Pye describes how she is dependent in her work on the young students’ knowledge in order to understand their world and what happens there. This knowledge

is necessary, for example, to be able to help them to resolve conflicts.

“I have 24 young people who can tell me about things and explain them to me. We simply can’t afford not to take advantage of their knowledge and commitment.”

A clear framework with a high degree internal freedom

There were several reasons for starting *here4u*. According to Therese Ankréus, the work leads to the majority of students feeling safer in school. Both the number of thefts and the amount of graffiti have declined, say both Ammi Karlsson-Pye and Therese Ankréus. *here4u* also makes schools’ work with the promotion of fundamental values more visible and makes bullying prevention more effective.

The firm Ernst & Young has studied four schools that are working with *here4u* and concluded that the students in these schools are significantly better equipped to identify and report incidents of bullying than students in other schools. The factors that Therese Ankréus can identify as promoting success are:

- The large size of the network (size gives strength)
- An organisation that moves very quickly from ideas to decisions
- The youths’ own desire and commitment (which is most important of all)
- The work is evidence-based
- A clear framework with a great deal of freedom within this framework
- The work with *here4u* is prioritised by school leaders



PHOTO: CLIFFORD SHIRLEY/VÄSTERÅS STAD

Tina Rapp, Per Alvant, Ammi Karlsson-Pye and Therese Ankréus.

Caretakers who were committed to combating violence against women were given a training program Dare to Ask in order to encourage more people to report crimes to the police. This constitutes a welcome addition to the National Police Board's large-scale educational efforts.

SEMINAR MEN'S THREATS AND VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN INTIMATE RELATIONSHIPS

Pioneers dare to ask questions

What do you do if you suspect that a woman is being assaulted? Can you ring the social services anonymously? What will the police do? These questions were put to the local crime prevention council in Lundby, Gothenburg, when they met with the caretakers of buildings in the area. The crime prevention council invited some of them to attend lectures on violence against women.

"They thought it was very interesting but far too theoretical," explains Malin Uller, co-ordinator of the local crime prevention council in Lundby.

And this led to the initiation of the project Dare to Ask, in which caretakers and nuisance response officers were given a course on violence against women. A training com-

pany was hired, which tailored a couple of half-day seminars to the needs of the intended participants.

"The objective isn't to turn the caretakers into experts in social work or for them to be perceived as spies, but they need to be able to give victims the right directions," says Malin Uller.

The participants were given small cards to carry in their pockets with telephone numbers to among others the police, women's shelters, Way Out Gothenburg (the public sector agency collaboration to combat violence against women) and the nuisance response office.

Network meetings produce results

The police, the municipality and housing companies all have representatives on the local crime prevention council.

"We've had a very important principle that you don't say what others should do but instead talk about how you yourself

can contribute," says Malin Uller.

In order to improve the level of local collaboration between the police, social services and other institutions in the district, the project invited representatives to participate in various network meetings. Meetings were organised across institutional lines to discuss honour-violence and other issues.

"I'd really recommend this," says Malin Uller, "that you engage in these discussions with others and not only with your usual colleagues."

On one such occasion a police representative asked the social services to photograph injuries even in cases where the women didn't wish to lodge an official offence report.

"It is very valuable for the police if there is a photograph should the woman choose to report the incident three years later. A small result, but important," explains Pernilla Hallberg, who works as a manager at the local city planning association, Fastighets-

PHOTO: CLIFFORD SHIRLEY/VÄSTERÅS STAD



PHOTO: SOLVEIG HOLLARI/BRÅ

From left
Abigail
Choate, Pia
Hallberg and
Malin Uller.

ägare Centrala Hisingen, and is a member of the crime prevention council.

Dare to Ask is a pioneering project that has been financed by development funding from the National Crime Prevention Council in Stockholm. Men's violence against women is an area that has been given a high political priority. The dark figure is very high, according to the National Council, with only one in six women – or perhaps even fewer – reporting the crime.

Action plan against men's violence

A couple of years ago, the Government presented an action plan to combat men's violence against women, violence in same sex relationships, and violence and oppression in the name of honour. Amongst other things, the National Police Board was instructed to educate police officers, disseminate information to the public and ensure in other ways that more victims report the crimes to which they have been exposed and that more offences result in a conviction. At the present time only between 19–40 percent of reports are passed on to the prosecutor, 19 percent in the county police authority with the worst record, and 40 percent in the authority with the best record.

Handbook and digital training

The first thing the police did was to develop training schemes for investigating officers working with cases involving children and violence in intimate relationships. A handbook was written to help police conduct better investigations. The handbook is also available digitally as part of an interactive training material. This includes different pages where you can watch training films showing a range of case descriptions, read about the police's value base, and read the National Council for Crime Prevention's report on which factors lead to crimes resulting in a prosecution. The interactive educational material also includes a training video for those whose job involves documenting injuries.

“Everything that we have developed is based on a collaboration between the county police authorities and the prosecution service. We have recently begun the final phase of this program of measures, namely the dissemination of information to the public, which involves amongst other things ads in the daily press,” explains Abigail Choate, project leader at the National Police Board.



PHOTO: CLIFFORD SHIRLEY/VÄSTERÅS STAD





PHOTO: CLIFFORD SHIRLEY/VÄSTERÅS STAD



The Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (Brå)

The Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (Brå) – an agency under the Ministry of Justice – is a centre for research and development within the judicial system. Brå assists the agencies of the justice system by improving their knowledge and developing new methods. The results of Brå's work constitute a basis for the work of decision makers within the judicial system, Parliament and the Government. Brå's operations may be divided into five different areas of activity, which correspond to the agency's five specialist divisions:

1. THE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT DIVISION The task of the division is to conduct applied research and development work in the field of crime policy. The division is to produce knowledge that may be of use in connection with decision-making in the area of crime policy, and knowledge that may be utilised in support of the agencies of the justice system.

2. THE RESEARCH INTO ECONOMIC AND ORGANISED CRIME DIVISION The Council maintains a special division for economic and organized crime that is to serve as a national body of expertise in the area of economic crime in a broad sense, to disseminate findings and to conduct various research projects.

3. THE EVALUATION DIVISION The task of the division is to conduct large-scale evaluations of changes within the justice system. These evaluations are often commissioned by the Swedish Government.

4. THE LOCAL CRIME PREVENTION DIVISION The task of the division is to create interest and encourage involve-

ment in crime prevention work at the local level. Amongst other things the division provides support and supplies funding for the development of municipal crime prevention projects. The division is also responsible for evaluating this work.

5. THE STATISTICAL DIVISION The division is responsible for the production of Sweden's official statistics on crime and criminal offenders. In addition to its routine statistical production work, the division works to further improve Sweden's official crime statistics.

Brå often works in collaboration with other organisations and public sector agencies. The target groups comprise decision makers and employees within the judicial system, actors in the field of crime prevention and those members of the general public with an interest in the knowledge we possess.

Brå has been in existence since 1974 and is lead by its Director General, Jan Andersson. See also www.bra.se.

SHARING GOOD PRACTICE AND EVIDENCE-BASED KNOWLEDGE

For several years now, the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention has organised the very popular Lessons for the Future conference. This year, the conference was held for the tenth time, and was organised in collaboration with the City of Västerås and the city's local crime prevention council, *Protecting Västerås*.

This year the Lessons for the Future conference focused on safety and security. Issues relating to the prevention of crime and the promotion of public safety were thrashed out in a range of plenary addresses and seminars. The question of how we might create a safer society was discussed from a variety of different perspectives. A second central theme focused on how local-level actors can work to prevent serious organised crime. A good deal of time was also devoted to the intensive collaborations between municipalities and the police that are now underway in many parts of Sweden. A range of other interesting subjects were also discussed, including violence against women, bullying and the media's role in disseminating information.

Sharing and learning about experiences of good practice and evidence-based knowledge is what Lessons for the Future is all about. The conference functions as an arena in which local actors can meet with others who are also committed to the work of preventing crime. New experiences are contrasted with old, good ideas are spread and a large number of inspiring meetings take place. We hope and believe that many will find this documentation from the tenth Lessons for the Future conference both informative and useful.

www.bra.se