



SAPS Border Control Units:

An evaluation of the new detached duties

Ettienne Hennop and Clare Jefferson
Institute for Security Studies

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INTRODUCTION

In July 2000, the South African Border Police Head Office received approval on a new format for its detached border police. Under the new system, police officers are recruited and appointed to border posts for six months. In addition to this, they are given a financial incentive. Under the previous detached system, police officers were sent for border duties on a two to three month rotation system. However this was not delivering the desired results of addressing cross-border crime. As soon as the police officers were trained in their functions at the border post, it was almost time for them to return to their permanent station.

The detached duties concept as implemented by the Border Police was designed to address personnel shortages at identified flash points around South Africa. These personnel shortages were as a result of general personnel shortages within the South African Police Service and financial constraints preventing more substantial deployments of members for detached duties. Other problems experienced at border posts included inadequate logistical support, lack of proper command and control, inadequate discipline, general administrative burdens and low productivity. Against this background, an alternative system was devised to address the short-term needs at border posts in order to ensure that the Border Police were able to render the level of service expected.

The approved six-month detached duties system comprised:

- a system of six months voluntary and uninterrupted contractual border duties;
- where possible, a member is posted to a particular border post in the province where the member is usually stationed;
- applicants are subjected to the Border Police selection and training process prior to acceptance;
- members are provided only with accommodation, and are otherwise self-supporting; and;
- members receive remuneration incentives comprising an additional daily allowance of R52, and an average transport cost of R1 per kilometre for the use of his/her private transport to and from the temporary post. On average, this will amount to R2000 per month.

After a countrywide investigation, it was determined that the Border Police required a minimum of 138 members on detached duties to enhance service delivery at identified flash points. The first 138 members were deployed on a trial basis for six months to evaluate the feasibility of the concept. Due to budgetary reasons, only 90 members were deployed in 1999, and the remainder in the 2000 financial year.

This paper provides an evaluation of the six-month detached duties programme and makes recommendations for its enhancement. The evaluation resulted from two qualitative surveys conducted by Institute for Security Studies researchers among the detached police officers; interviews with the officers in charge at the border posts and at the Border Police Head Office; and observations made during two field trips to the border of northern KwaZulu-Natal.

The aim of these field trips was to ascertain whether the border police assigned under the new six-month detached unit system were enhancing border control in South Africa or not.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Self-administered questionnaires were distributed at the border posts where the police officers selected for the new six-month detached duties were posted. Each police officer was given the option of completing a questionnaire. A third of all the questions in the survey were open-ended. Self-administered surveys, by the very fact of their voluntary nature, usually have a low level of completion and return rate. The first evaluation in December 2000, resulted in 34 of 40 questionnaires being returned. Under the second evaluation in January 2001, 21 of 30 were returned. The results of these questionnaires are considered here.

The research process was divided into two phases.

- In the first phase, two researchers from the ISS undertook a field trip to northern KwaZulu-Natal border posts, for the purpose of conducting interviews and distributing questionnaires. This occurred in December 2000.
- In the second phase, the same two researchers returned to the northern KwaZulu-Natal border posts to repeat the process with modified questionnaires. This occurred in January 2001.

It became clear that an evaluation of the outcome of the decision to extend the period of the detached border police and to implement a monetary incentive as motivation required an analysis of trends in opinion over a period of time. For this reason, the two different surveys were designed and applied. It was felt that, as the detached border police gained experience at the border post, their opinions would change from those held when they were first deployed.

OVERVIEW OF RESPONDENTS

In the first evaluation of the 34 surveys completed, two were from the police officers at Kosi Bay border post, seven from Oshoek, 11 from Qacha's Nek and 14 from Golela border post. Kosi Bay, Oshoek and Golela border posts are situated between South Africa and Mozambique or Swaziland, in the northern KwaZulu-Natal province of South Africa, while Qacha's Nek is situated on the border between South Africa and Lesotho.

In the second evaluation, 21 surveys were completed. The questionnaires were completed by eight detached members in Kosi Bay, seven from Golela Border post, two from Onverwacht and four of the detached members appointed to the Jozini Task Team. Respondents were less enthusiastic about the research during the second evaluation field trip.

The police officers that completed the survey had between six and 22 years' service in the South African Police Service. This reflects the soundness of the selection process for the special six-month detached service, which aimed to secure both experienced and self-motivated police officers. By this means it was hoped to improve the quality of the border control service provided by the detached police officers.

There was no method to ascertain whether any of the respondents who had completed the first survey completed the second. The surveys were all confidential.

RECRUITMENT

Most respondents (90%) heard about the new detached duties by means of an information note or circular that was sent to their police station or specialised unit. This is a good indicator that the new positions were well advertised, which meant that the officers in charge of the selection process were able to choose the best candidates from a wide range of people. Other respondents heard about the new detached duties from friends or colleagues (by word of mouth), or from police officers already posted at a border post.

Only 35% of the respondents had previous experience of police border duties, while 65% had no prior border experience. This meant that many of the respondents had no idea of what to expect from these six-month border duties, and that experience with border duties was not a factor considered during the selection process. Amongst those respondents who had

previously undertaken police border duty, the combined length of the majority of the respondents' (75%) border duty ranged from one to four months. In three cases, the respondents had more than four months' border experience.

The majority of the respondents (91%) were aware of the special selection processes for being appointed to these border duties, that were put in place to ensure that the best candidates could be identified for the task in hand. Overall, 80% of the respondents regarded the selection process in a positive light, either indicating that the process was fair or commenting positively about it. One of the reasons cited for their regarding the process as fair was that the Border Police Head Office in Pretoria carried out the process (8%).

It was found that 16% of the respondents indicated that the selection process was too easy. They explained that the degree of difficulty of the interviews was not what they expected: interviews could have been 'tougher'. Only one respondent indicated that the interview process was unfair and that there was a bias in the type of police officers being recruited. This could be linked to the fact that many of the detached members were previously deployed in the Public Order Police Unit.

PERFORMANCE ENHANCEMENT MEASURE

Signing the performance certificate

All but two of the respondents were quite confident about signing a performance certificate for the detached duties. The performance certificate outlines the agreement between the selected member and the Border Police regarding the detached duties at border posts. It was designed to ensure higher productivity and accountability amongst the detached officers by outlining what was expected from the member during their six-month service. However, it appears that many of them were unsure as to the exact content of the certificate that they were signing. Once they arrived at the border post, there were complaints about the living conditions, self-catering requirements and other such aspects of the work that had in fact been set out in the certificate.

Financial incentive

The detached members were given a financial incentive for undertaking these short-term duties. As previously mentioned, this amounted to approximately R2000 additional salary per month. Although the salary of the detached member varied according to rank, in some cases it implied a doubling of a low ranking police officer's salary. Most of the detached members felt that they were definitely financially better off as a result. It was found that 42% said 'definitely yes' they were better off, and 37% responded 'yes'. However, during discussions with the detached duty members there was evidence to suggest that not all the respondents had benefited that much. Especially in the first months of duty, they found the conditions less satisfactory and the living expenses considerably higher than expected.

Training

There were mixed feelings about whether or not extra training was required before being deployed to the border post. Overall, 68% of the detached members felt that extra training was required, while 32% of the respondents felt that it was not. It appears that those police officers who had previous experience at a border post felt, on the whole, that it was not necessary to have extra training before deployment.

All of the respondents in the second evaluation, as compared to only 68% in the first, felt that training was necessary before starting the detached duties. Finally, consensus was that the detached members needed extra training. It was the first time some of these police officers had been deployed on the border, and certain specialised skills were required to perform their duties satisfactorily. These skills included computer training, training in operating procedures that related to their specific work duties, search procedures and others.

Some detached members felt that there were certain aspects of their employment about which they were required to be informed and that these, though they did not relate directly to their duties, should have been covered in the training. Included was information on the

conditions at the border post (such as isolation and extreme weather conditions) and the situation they might have expected to encounter there.

Other respondents outlined the limitations in the content and form of the training given by the Border Police Head Office. More especially, they claimed that the course was ambitious and at the same time too short. It is recommended that a future course, budget and time permitting, be slightly longer in order for the candidates to have sufficient time to absorb what they are being taught.

With hindsight (as indicated in the second evaluation), the detached border police were able to identify certain aspects of the duties that needed to be covered in future training. It was felt that computer training should be given a high priority. At the end of their six-month duty, this was the one aspect that the majority of detached members felt was needed.

Other areas requiring emphasis were how to complete the paper work, how to conduct better searches, and how to complete police dockets. Procedures at border posts are different from normal police functions. For example, at 'C' status border posts the police are required to complete administrative functions on behalf of the South African Revenue Service and the Department of Home Affairs. Although these aspects were addressed in the initial training programme, certain detached members (21% of the respondents in the second survey) were still not confident about these procedures.

Contrasting the areas identified for training in the first and the second evaluation, it is evident that while some border police were still getting to grips with certain of the more basic requirements (such as completing the paper work), others were looking for more advanced training than they could have previously anticipated (such as would prepare them for undertaking thorough searches).

Most of the respondents received additional training at the border post upon arrival. This training, which could be given at the discretion of the officers in charge, included, amongst others, explanations about procedures for background checks, searches and seizures.

However, at some border posts working relations between the detached and permanent border officials were strained. This meant conditions were not conducive to such 'in-house' training. The detached members regarded training advice as patronising and condescending, while the permanent members found the lack of enthusiasm and feedback on the part of the short-term staff to be demotivating.

Length of detached service

The six-month time span for the detached service is considered by the respondents to be an appropriate length of time. It was found that 68% of the respondents thought that six months was 'just right'. However, there were others that felt that 12 months would also be optimal.

MOTIVATION FOR VOLUNTEERING FOR DETACHED BORDER DUTIES

Reason for volunteering for detached duties

Many reasons were cited for respondents volunteering to work at the border posts. Responses clearly showed a commitment to activities that might improve border control. One of the main factors previously believed to motivate officers to undertake border duties was the substantial financial incentive attached to these duties. It did not, in the event, seem to be as significant as originally thought.

The 11 respondents that gave reasons for their willingness to transfer to the permanent border police were positive about their work experience and the advantages of border policing as a specialisation. These detached members felt they would transfer to the permanent border police because they liked the type of police work the border control units undertook. Border police work is described as challenging and exciting, with high levels of work satisfaction. Similarly, it was felt that the border control unit is a good environment in which to work.

Other reasons cited for possible transfer by detached members to the permanent border police service included career development (as secured by gained experience and skill) and to assist in crime prevention. It was interesting that one of the main reasons cited for the detached members applying for the new six-month duties was that of crime prevention. This became of less importance when transfer to the permanent border police was considered.

Willingness to return to the border control units

All the respondents were willing to volunteer for this type of detached duties service again. This is a positive indication that the current system is attractive to the detached members. Fewer detached members were willing to apply for a permanent transfer, although the number that was willing still remained significant. Perhaps the knowledge that the financial incentive did not apply to permanent members acted in this case as a disincentive.

EXPECTATIONS REGARDING THE DETACHED BORDER DUTIES

The main expectation in the minds of the detached members at the start of their six-month duty related to reducing crime. Of the total number of respondents, 73% felt that through their work they would serve the nation by improving controls at the border posts, thus impacting on crime. The reasons cited for their desire to reduce crime included: the wish for crime-free border posts; the expectation of a reduction in cross-border crime and an increase in seizures and arrests; an improvement in the ability to identify criminals; and improved crime prevention in general.

The other respondents expected to improve their level of work experience (15%). These respondents interpreted the work at the border posts in terms of the personal benefits they might gain from the experience, which included amongst others, gains in self-confidence and in experience. Amongst those respondents who were working at the border post to gain experience, some individuals cited the following among their expectations: to work hard and achieve success; to become a better person; and to gain knowledge or experience.

Finally, the 'other' expectations cited for the six-month period were to *'extend my contract by six months'*, and to *'obtain more in-service training and better working conditions'*.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Impressions about the border post

The first impressions recorded by the respondents provide useful insight into how the new duties are perceived. It was encouraging that none of the respondents had negative first impressions. Of course, some indicated that they were overwhelmed by the quantity of vehicles and pedestrian traffic as well as the amount of work, but this was not portrayed in a negative light. Two respondents even went as far as to indicate that their first impressions were that the border post was 'not too bad' and 'pleasant'.

There was no change in opinion in the level of satisfaction expressed between the first and the second evaluation. In the first evaluation, it was found that 26 out of 29 respondents indicated that they were happy with the border post to which they were assigned. Given the consistency with which the majority of officers answered the survey, an omission on the part of two respondents to deal with this question appears not to have been accidental. It seems safe to assume that this was their way of indicating that they were unhappy about the border post they were assigned to. However, they were cautious about reflecting their true response in an official survey. Although the questionnaires were confidential, there were only a few detached members at each border post and the possibility existed that the permanent police could identify the respondent according to their handwriting.

In the second evaluation, 19 of the 21 respondents were happy with their border post assignment.

Impressions of working conditions

Two-thirds (67%) of the respondents found their working conditions satisfactory. Slightly

fewer respondents were as positive about their living conditions as they were about their conditions of work. Only 59% of the respondents were satisfied with their living conditions.

Impressions of living conditions

At the start of the detached border duties, 59% of the respondents were satisfied with their living conditions, while at the end of the detached duties 67% were happy with these. The improvement in the living conditions can be attributed to the fact that some of the respondents changed their accommodation within the first month of their border duties. The timely assistance of the Border Police Head Office in effecting an improvement in the living quarters undoubtedly contributed.

Impressions of the Border Police Head Office

The majority of the respondents felt that the support they received from the Border Police Head Office was sufficient. Three chose not to answer this question. Once more, this could have indicated a certain dissatisfaction on the part of the respondents, which they were unwilling to express in an official survey.

Impressions about fellow detached police members

The detached border police held positive opinions about their fellow detached members. This is a good indication that the six-month detached system was working and that a good team spirit was developing.

Impressions about the permanent police

In the first evaluation, all the respondents reported positively about their interactions with the permanent police officials at the border post. The 34 respondents made 51 comments on the permanent staff (as indicated in the table).

In the second evaluation, the impression of the permanent police had tarnished somewhat. It was of concern that four of the 21 respondents had a 'bad' or 'very bad' impression of the permanent police, while 7 of the 21 had 'okay' impressions.

Although by the second evaluation detached members' impressions of the permanent border police had deteriorated, there was some indication that the permanent border police were making attempts to improve the capacity of the detached duties members.

A positive indicator of the quality of the permanent border police is the extent to which they took it upon themselves to provide extra training for the temporary border police at the border post. As indicated in the prior section on training, it was evident in the first evaluation that only 33% of the respondents received extra training. By the time of the second evaluation, 75% of the respondents had received extra training.

FUNCTIONS OF DETACHED MEMBERS

In the first evaluation, there were 69 different responses given by the 33 respondents to the question, 'What are your main functions at the border post?' In the second evaluation, there were 70 different responses given by 21 respondents to a similarly phrased question. In both evaluations, all of the respondents identified their function at the border post as involving 'searching of vehicles and commuters'.

A significant number of respondents also identified 'crime prevention' and 'border patrols' as their functions. Detached members felt that they should undertake periodic borderline patrols to gain experience of, and insight into, conditions on the ground.

Fewer detached border police saw administrative duties and border patrols as their main functions. Usually, the permanent border police perform administrative duties. There was a marginal increase in the amount of administration performed by the detached members from the start of their duty (4% of the activities undertaken) to those at the end of their duty (7% of the activities undertaken).

There were two other minor functions performed by the detached members that were not identified in the first evaluation, namely creating and working with informers, and working at roadblocks. It was interesting that, in other parts of the survey, these minor functions actually formed some of the highlights of the detached members' six-month service. These officers enjoyed operations that were outside the routine of their usual border duties. Such operations could be used as motivation for the detached officers. Although the detached members were assigned primarily to undertake searches at the border post, in the future better returns could be gained by their being kept motivated in other ways.

CRIME TRENDS

Type of crime at border

Crimes involving the theft of vehicles and illegal immigrants were identified as the most significant problem at the border post, followed by drugs and the smuggling of firearms. However, it is difficult to gauge the accuracy of this perception as often only the border police can gauge those illicit activities that are intercepted. The proportion of illegal activities that occur undetected remains unknown.

In the second evaluation, a different impression of the type of crimes prevalent at the border post was presented. This is probably a more accurate reflection of the crime trends at border posts, since the detached members had by this time gained more experience of the situation.

One of the main shifts in perception relating to crime trends was the relative insignificance to which drugs declined. In the first evaluation, the respondents felt that drug-related crimes comprised 53% of the crime at the border, while they only represented 14% of the crime in the second evaluation.

The identification of fraud and corruption as crimes seemed to arise only towards the end of the six months duty. By this time, police officials were sufficiently experienced to tell the difference between authentic and forged travel documents.

Perceptions of the relevance of border policing to addressing crime

The six-month detached duties comprise only a small aspect of the fight against cross-border crime in South Africa. The work undertaken by the detached police in no respect removed the need for concern over cross-border crime. In the first evaluation, all but three of the 32 respondents felt that there was a need for concern over cross-border crime in South Africa. In the second evaluation, the respondents still felt overwhelmingly that cross-border crime in South Africa was a matter for concern.

The detached members also felt that the six-month detached duties system would better the situation on the borders most affected by cross-border crime. In both the first and the second evaluation, the respondents expressed an overwhelming belief that this new six-month form of detached duties would improve the situation on the border posts and the problems arising from cross-border crime.

Most of the respondents felt that their presence at the border post would have a positive impact on fighting cross-border crime. In the first evaluation, two respondents felt that they still had to wait and see whether they would have a positive impact on fighting such crime, while in the second one respondent was convinced that border police did not have a positive impact on fighting cross border crime. In general, the detached border police felt that the new six-month duties are an effective way to police South Africa's international borders.

ARRESTS AND SEIZURES

Extent of arrests and seizures

Most of the border police made seizures or arrests while deployed at the border posts. In the first evaluation, 82% of the respondents had made seizures and/or arrests. In the second evaluation, 95% of the respondents had performed such duties.

Official records of the achievements of the border police are kept at the border post and furnished to the Border Police Head Office on a regular basis. Respondents were asked in the second evaluation to indicate approximately how many arrests they had made since they started their border duty (that is, in a six-month period). From the replies of the 15 that gave estimates, it appears that the arrests were fairly modest, the 15 respondents having arrested approximately 286 people in the past six months. This makes an average of 19 arrests per respondent over six months, implying that each detached border member arrested three people per month, which is not a significant number. Attempts must be made to improve the level of arrest carried out by the detached duty members. It must be presumed that these arrests are mainly at the border post and that they exclude arrests during special operations or roadblocks.

The majority of the illegal activities detected at the border posts related to the recovery of stolen motor vehicles, as well as the use of fraudulent vehicle registration documentation. Some of the other crime intercepted included persons trying to leave South Africa with stolen household goods and music tapes.

PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED

In the first evaluation, there were 29 respondents that cited the problems they had experienced within the first two months at the border. Half these respondents were concerned with problems directly relating to their working conditions. The problems were divided into those that could easily be solved and those that most probably had no solution in the short-to-medium term, given the current budgetary constraints faced by the police.

The main problems relating to working conditions included issues such as the lack of facilities for undertaking searches, the lack of transport available to the border police and the huge work load, exacerbated by the lack of staff and the high volume of pedestrian and vehicular traffic. Other problems raised related to issues concerning the lack of technical knowledge about border procedures, poor staff relations, and living conditions. Finally, the main issue identified as a problem under the last category of 'other' was the personal one of the respondent who missed his or her family.

Overall, 18 of 27 respondents felt that they would overcome the problems experienced thus far during the next six months, while nine felt that this would not be possible.

In comparison to the first evaluation, the respondents in the second focused more on problems limiting the capacity of the border police to perform than on poor working conditions. In order to prioritise the problems identified, respondents were asked to outline the problems that were the most significant. The two main areas identified by the detached duties border police were the lack of equipment and the lack of infrastructure for undertaking searches.

Two-thirds of the respondents believed that they were able to overcome the main problems identified above. This provides some indication that certain of the problems experienced were related more to the conditions faced by the border police.

In the second evaluation, the detached members were asked specific questions to identify what the problems were that prevented more frequent searches. The two main aspects named were the lack of equipment for undertaking searches (such as metal detectors and radios), and the lack of training received by personnel in the correct methods for conducting searches.

HIGHLIGHTS EXPERIENCED

Of concern was the fact that in the first evaluation, only 14 of the 34 respondents answered the question 'What has been the main highlight to date for you?'. It seemed to imply that the remaining 20 respondents were of the opinion that they had not experienced any specific highlights. However, it is debatable whether such an experience is necessarily a feature in this type of work. None the less, given the exceptional nature of the six-month detached duty system, more enthusiasm might have been shown.

Of those 14 respondents who answered this question, the main highlight was making arrests and success in the reduction of crime. In the second evaluation, the main highlight was the recovery of stolen vehicles.

Main problems experienced by the detached duties police members

Those cited under poor working conditions were factors limiting their ability to undertake complicated searches included:

- can only search those vehicles we suspect
- difficult to search vehicles for drugs and firearms
- the huge workload resulting from the high crime rate
- lack of equipment for searches
- limitations to undertaking proper searches
- public impatience at being asked to wait or at being searched
- no area for the detention of suspects
- lack of shelter in bad weather conditions
- no dog handlers at border post for searches
- lack of search equipment
- releasing of suspects by local police station

Those identified as limiting the police capacity to perform included:

- lack of personnel
- lack of transportation, state of vehicles and servicing of vehicles
- unusual work shifts
- lack of meetings to plan work
- lack of radios for communication

Those cited as relating to border crime included:

- illegal immigrants and over-staying on permits
- the traffic of persons through the border posts
- too many vehicles to check all for stolen vehicles
- too many illegal immigrants

Those identified as relating to the lack of technical knowledge included:

- cancellations of stolen vehicles not done correctly
- cannot work the car circulation system
- need more training on procedures

Those identified under poor staff relations included:

- self-sufficient system not properly explained before arrival at border post
- working under negative pressure from commander
- poor staff relations between detached and permanent members
- lack of co-operation from permanent police
- payment of claims received late
- frustrations with leadership
- poor welcome from the permanent staff.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

When the researchers first started work on border controls in South Africa in late 1999, they were given the opportunity of undertaking a field trip to the border of the Northern Cape. It was there that they came into contact with a team of self-motivated detached police officers. This team's seizures were high and they worked extremely hard to improve their track record. Their levels of self-motivation and commitment were considerable, raising the researchers' expectations of what the detached border police were capable of.

The two field trips to northern KwaZulu-Natal and the evaluation survey provided researchers with an opportunity to investigate the performance of the detached border police. In particular, they considered whether the placement of detached police officers at the border posts for six months with the provision of a financial incentive, was improving performance.

Recruitment process

The recruitment process for the six-month detached duties service was well advertised. This meant that a wide range of candidates was available for the selection process, which

improved the chances for selecting the most suitable ones. The special recruitment process was well received by the detached members. Moreover, it was seen in a favourable light that they were exclusively singled out for duty.

It is recommended that in the future the selection process be stricter and that more emphasis in the advertisement be placed on the uniqueness of border police duties. In this way, it is hoped that the idea of detached border police might be marketed to the rest of the SAPS, thus aiding future recruitment.

Performance enhancement measures

Performance enhancement measures are actions taken, in this instance, to improve the ability of the detached members to undertake the work to which they have been assigned. Direct motivational measures are relied on, as well as effecting an improvement in the skills and know-how of the detached members.

The detached members appeared to know very little about the content of the performance certificate in which their undertaking was outlined. It seemed that they were not properly informed of the actual conditions under which they would be living and working at the border post. In addition to this, given the current limited personnel resources within the Border Police Head Office, it is uncertain whether there is the supervision to hold the detached members accountable to this performance certificate.

The financial incentive was undoubtedly the drawcard for officers enlisting in the detached duties service; detached members holding the perception that they would be better off financially as a result. Some of the top candidates in the police were even persuaded to apply as a result. However, the financial incentive should be seen as a short-term measure (3-5 years) for attracting a high calibre of police official. In the medium-to-long term, it is recommended that attention be placed rather on developing a profile for these detached duties more closely linked to the elite nature of being selected for this type of detached duties service. The status and pride attached to being selected for the programme must be reinforced in both the advertisement for the positions and in the selection process.

Training

Training is a priority to ensure that the detached members have the necessary skills for performing their duties, especially given that two-thirds of the respondents had not previously worked at a border post. It is recommended that training prior to the deployment be longer, and that it focus on basic border police procedures as well as specialised search techniques.

Specialised search and investigation skills

The detached members felt they lacked the necessary skills to undertake thorough searches. They also lacked knowledge concerning the finer details of where illegal goods could be hidden in vehicles, as well as experience in uncovering these.

The researchers recommended that skills of members of the specialised police units be canvassed to train the detached members. Included among the relevant specialised units would be the Firearm Investigation Units, Vehicle Theft Units, Organised Crime Units, Anti-corruption Unit and Stock Theft Units. Requested to assist with training in their areas of specialisation, these service members, due to the nature of their skills, could teach the detached members how to understand and profile certain crime trends much faster.

The skills of these units could be introduced at various stages. They could be involved by delivering lectures during the initial training course, or by being stationed at the border post for a certain period of time for the purpose of practical training demonstrations.

Length of duty

Clearly, the six-month appointment of detached members is a better system than the previous system of two or three months. Six months, it appears, is an ideal length for the detached duties.

The success of the detached border system is due to one 'ingredient' in particular: it makes

use of the energy exhibited by new recruits. The willingness of the detached police to do searches, use new techniques and work irregular hours is at its optimum when they have been newly recruited. With time, this enthusiasm wears off. By the second evaluation, it was already apparent that the detached duty members were finding it hard to go the 'extra mile' required for proper border control.

When the period for the detached duties is limited to six months, corruption is prevented from arising at the border since the detached police know neither the local networks at the border post, nor the local communities, nor do they know the permanent police officers. If the period of time is longer in duration, these relationships start to form and the system becomes penetrable by corruption.

It is recommended that no police officer be re-assigned to a border post at which he or she has previously served. Further, it is recommended that detached members not be permitted to re-apply, thus extending their duty, but only be allowed to make fresh applications after 12 months back at their permanent stations. In this way, the sense of the 'uniqueness of this type of duty' might be perpetuated, thus ensuring that detached border duty be regarded as an honour. This will also ensure that each detached member be enthusiastic and willing to work to the best of his or her ability, fully aware of the opportunity he or she has been given.

Utilisation of detached members

Improvement is still required in certain areas to ensure that the detached members are optimally utilised. Detached border police are generally badly under-utilised by the border posts. Although respondents showed a willingness to apply themselves better, they found their spirits soon dampened, both by a lack of leadership on the part of permanent police officers and by the stale management practices that prevailed.

During discussions between researchers and the detached police officers in December 2000, views and opinions about the detached duties were quite optimistic. However, the enthusiasm had regressed significantly by the researchers' return in February 2001. There is no denying that standing at a border post undertaking vehicle searches is a repetitive and monotonous task. Knowing this, the leadership at the border post should find management mechanisms for motivating the detached border police.

Some of the detached members had poor impressions of their living conditions. This became quite understandable when some of their accommodation was inspected. The residential living areas were untidy and poorly maintained. In a comparison between one type of accommodation and another at the border posts, there was a noticeable difference in residential areas. However, much of the disorder of the living conditions could be attributed to a lack of discipline among the detached members themselves.

Field team stationed at head office

Positive feedback was received from the detached members about the roving border field team. The detached members seemed inspired and motivated by the presence of the team at the border post. This admiration for the field team should be exploited to its full potential as a motivational incentive.

The detached members expressed a desire to be included in some of the field team's special operations. The inclusion of detached members on a limited number of special operations could provide a useful opportunity for training and motivating the detached members.

Final word

It is a special type of personality that is attracted to undertaking border duties. The detached members were motivated to join the border units not only because they felt that they could assist in crime reduction, but also because of the excitement inherent in this type of work. To ensure optimal performance from these detached members, they should in future be more thoroughly trained (both prior to and during deployment).

The six-month detached border duties have proved to be a viable programme for improving border control performance at border posts. However, researchers felt that the detached

members were under-utilised because of a lack of motivation. An impression was created, too, that the detached members were not properly incorporated into border posts. One of the best ways to motivate the detached members would be to periodically use them in special operations. Moreover, the permanent police at the border posts must be encouraged to find ways to include the detached members in the overall functioning of the border post.

The newly created six-month detached border duties are a great success. More detail concerning arrests and search and seizures figures, are not included in this evaluation, due to the moratorium placed on the release of police statistics. However, from what we could gather from the detached members, and from interviews with the senior police officers at the border posts, these seizure and arrest successes are on the increase.

ABOUT THIS PAPER

In July 2000, the Border Police Head Office received approval on a new format for the detached border police. Under the new system, police officers are recruited and appointed to border posts for a six-month duration. In addition to this, they would be given a financial incentive. Under the previous detached system, police officers were sent for border duties on a two to three month rotation system. This was not delivering the desired results of addressing cross-border crime anymore. This paper provides an evaluation of the new six-month detached duties programme and makes recommendations for its enhancement.

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