

Report of 11 April 2003 on the status at the beginning of April 2003 of efforts to combat crime and problems of law and order etc. originating in the biker community.

Introduction

On 2 July 2002 the Minister of Justice issued a press release on the effort against biker crime, which stated among other things that::

"..... I attach special importance to continuing and intensifying the police effort. I have therefore agreed with the National Commissioner of Police that, during the summer, he will draw up a broad proposal for the continued effort in relation to the biker community in co-operation with the police districts and the Prosecution Service."

A "Plan for intensified efforts to combat crime and problems of law and order etc. originating in the biker community" was issued by the National Commissioner of Police on 25 September 2002. The plan, which was drawn up by the steering group on investigative support centres and cross-border, organised crime, was previously submitted to and endorsed by the Minister of Justice.

On 20 January 2003, the Minister of Justice issued a press release on a number of initiatives to combat biker crime. The press release stated as follows:

"As a provisional follow-up to the intensified effort already implemented against biker crime, I have agreed with the National Commissioner of Police that that he will deliver a report on the status of the fight against biker crime by 15 April 2003."

This memorandum was drawn up by the steering group on investigative support centres and cross-border, organised crime with a view to serving as a status report as of the beginning of April 2003.

Basis of the effort

The police effort is taking place in agreement with the plan endorsed by the Minister of Justice of 25 September 2002 for intensified effort against crime and problems of law and order etc. originating in the biker community.

Content of the effort

The wide-ranging effort that has been made over several years has been continued and - in accordance with the plan of 25 September 2002 - a further intensified and massive effort has been made throughout the country on both a regional and police-district basis.

The police and the Prosecution Service have continued to invest significant resources in the continuing effort, the aim of which is to hold biker-related individuals liable under criminal law for the crime that originates to a large extent in the biker community.

The investigative effort against biker crime is based on systematic police monitoring of the biker community, which makes it possible for the police to have an overview of this community and to independently find approaches to crime (which is rarely reported to the police by the public). Existing information is analysed by the police with the aim of pursuing the "top level" of the crime. The monitoring and analysis work in this connection provide the necessary basis for identifying goals.

In co-operation with the police districts concerned, the regional investigative support centres (RECs) and the national investigative support centre (NECs) of the National Police draw up investigative proposals/analyses, which provide the basis on which to carry out the specific investigation of target individuals.

The police district, which is responsible for the specific investigation, has the option of obtaining assistance from other police districts in the police region concerned, and it is also possible to obtain assistance from a special national investigative support group (consisting of personnel from the National Police and Copenhagen Police) as well as from the assistance departments of the National Police, including in particular the national investigative support centre of the National Police. It can be mentioned in this connection that the special national investigative support group has been strengthened in recent months. The capacity of the national investigative support centre of the National Police in financial investigation has been accorded greater priority with a view to being able to uncover the financial aspects of biker crime.

Regular investigations take place on this basis, and criminal charges are regularly brought against biker-related individuals. Pending investigations by their nature cannot be discussed in more detail in this report in consideration of the completion of these investigations. It may be mentioned, however, that there has been a rise in the number of biker-related individuals put behind bars since September 2002. The number of biker-related individuals serving custodial sentences or held on remand has risen from an average of 150 in the autumn 2002 to an average of 165 in 2003. The rise in the number of people detained is related to the fact that since September 2002 – as a result of police investigations – biker-related individuals involved in cases relating in particular to narcotics crime have been detained.

Recent development in crime is showing a trend towards the biker community having "moved into" the restaurant sector and massage parlours (prostitution), with restaurant keepers and prostitutes being forced to pay what is termed protection money. In addition, there are increasingly common examples of robbery, credit fraud, burglaries and similar offences committed under pressure from people affiliated to the biker community (crime by proxy).

Development of police methods

With a view to practical implementation of the plan of 25 September 2002, co-operation agreements, detailed plans and operational orders have been issued in large parts of the country – partly under the auspices of the police regions – in relation to the co-ordination of the practical effort to combat biker crime etc.

A number of seminars have also been held, and special training has been given for police personnel in order to further highlight the effort in relation to bikers. There has also been purposeful work aimed at broadening suitable police methods to encompass all the police districts. In this connection, "best practice" is being established for the operational, tactical and technical effort in the area of bikers, and "best practice" is likewise being established in relation to the crime prevention effort. A catalogue relating to "best practice" will soon be made available to the police districts. In addition, a "patrol manual" providing guidance for the police effort has been drawn up.

The police have also intensified the relationships of co-operation between authorities, at all levels, partly with a view to studying the financial circumstances of bikers. Partners in co-operation include the Central Customs and Tax Administration, municipal tax authorities, bailiffs, social security authorities, building authorities and SSP partners (co-operation between school, social services department and the police on crime prevention matters).

The police are also involved in the more broadly based social effort to combat the problems originating in the biker community. The police take part for example in "after-work meetings" with union representatives and co-operate with restaurant-keepers etc.

In the last six months there has also been very substantial discussion of the biker community and biker crime in the media.

With regard to co-operation with authorities abroad, it may be mentioned that in connection with the fact that a relatively large group of bikers has been reported to have moved from Denmark to Sweden and Germany in particular, specific co-operation has been initiated with the authorities in the countries concerned. It is the view of the police that to a significant extent these are routine moves, partly with the aim of preventing the authorities from gaining insight into (criminal) activities and financial circumstances.

International co-operation has also been intensified in other areas, including under the auspices of the Nordic police and customs co-operation on serious crime, where a joint manual has been drawn up. The National Police in addition continue to be the driving force in Europol co-operation on biker crime.

Summary of information on initiatives in the police regions/districts

A brief summary of the information reported to the National Police is given below. The summary is not exhaustive, but attempts to emphasise certain prominent aspects of the effort being made.

Region I: In May 2002 a joint regional action plan was drawn up for a co-ordinated effort to deal with gang problems in North Jutland comprising an objective to create security and an effort in relation to carrying out checks, as well as an investigative effort. The action plan has been regularly adjusted in relation to aims and requirements and in relation to the nationwide strategy. The action plan was most recently adjusted in September 2002.

In the continuation of the action plan, co-operation has been initiated together with the local authorities in North Jutland and the Central Tax and Customs Administration which in June 2003 is to culminate in a seminar bringing together all the authorities for a joint discussion of how to achieve the best results and create the necessary uniformity in the biker-related effort. The effort in 2003 is expected to be increased following this seminar.

The following can be emphasised in particular in relation to the effort in the individual police districts:

- A permanent co-ordination group has been set up in Aalborg police district consisting of members from the CID, uniformed branch, the regional investigative support centre and legal staff. The group is responsible for organising the intensified effort to deal with the gang culture.
- Co-operation has been initiated in Aalborg police district with the Municipality of Aalborg and the Central Tax and Customs Administration, and in this connection a joint action plan has been implemented (these initiatives are continued in the regional effort).
- Initiatives have been taken in Frederikshavn police district for co-operation with the Central Tax and Customs Administration and the Municipality of Frederikshavn with a view to targeted checks on and investigation of biker-related individuals and groups.
- There have been special SSP meetings in Hjørring on the problem of "penalties for being stupid" (dummebøder).
- In Hobro police district, on the basis of district-based action plans extensive measures relating to checks and investigations have been taken to deal with biker groupings in the area, discussions have been initiated with the Central Tax and Customs Administration on possible relationships of co-operation and series of crime prevention talks aimed at the oldest classes in primary/lower secondary schools (folkeskoler) have been given.

Region II: In January 2003 the police districts in the Region entered into an agreement with a view to further expanding and co-ordinating the effort across the boundaries of police regions. The agreement entails establishing two assistance units - one operational and one investigative - made up of police officers from the police districts in the region. The units will be given the task of assisting the individual police district as necessary in maintaining law and order in connection with events at which large numbers of bikers are gathered, and assisting in connection with major investigations. The aim in establishing these units is that there will always be the necessary resources to accomplish operational and investigative tasks, and that there are staff in all the districts who are familiar with

accomplishing police tasks in relation to bikers. The agreement contains a catalogue of ideas with proposals for and examples of a police effort in fifteen different areas, including a co-operative project implemented between Århus Police, the Central Tax and Customs Administration and the Municipality of Århus

The following can be emphasised in particular in relation to the effort in the individual police districts:

- Targeted efforts against biker crime have been made and continue to be made in virtually all the police districts in the region, leading to several biker-related individuals being held in custody and sentenced. In addition to the detaining of individuals, these targeted efforts have led to biker groups in several places being prevented from becoming established or directly being disbanded.
- Exceptional crime prevention efforts have been made in Herning and Viborg, co-operation and preventive measures being implemented throughout the youth community.
- Århus police district in recent months has take part in several
- "after-work meetings" with the Danish Federation of Trade Unions/Århus, several trade-union associations and some local political associations.
- Targeted efforts have been made in Herning to deal with prostitution with support from all the districts in the region and the National Police (a similar effort is planned in other districts).

Region III: A strategic plan relating to biker-related crime was drawn up and implemented in the autumn of 2001. The elements of the plan relate among other things to monitoring, reporting, effort and co-operation with external partners in co-operation etc.

In February 2003 the police districts in Region III – with a view to strengthening the effort to deal with biker crime – decided to intensify the mutual assistance scheme, so that for these cases, in addition to the options available in the general regional co-operation agreement, there is a binding agreement between the districts on mutual compulsory assistance in the fight against biker crime. In addition, a working group was set up to draw up proposals for a regional plan for the effort to deal with biker crime in the region. Alongside this, an initiative has been taken for

co-operation on the exchange of information with the Central Tax and Customs Administration with a view to intensified investigation related to individuals.

The regional investigative support centre constantly monitors the area and sends a survey of biker-related crime monthly to the police districts in Region III. In addition, there is close co-operation in the centre with the South Jutland Border Police Division and the German police on the exchange of information. Observers and house-searching teams have also been trained in the region.

Almost all the police districts in the region have commenced a large series of investigations against individuals in the biker community during the course of 2002 and 2003. The investigations, which among other things relate to serious narcotics crime, threats, assault, theft, robbery etc., have led to several individuals related to bikers being held on remand or sentenced.

The following can be emphasised in particular in relation to the effort in the individual police districts:

- Extensive information gathering and analysis work has been implemented in Esbjerg police district on biker crime and biker groupings active in the police district.
- There is regular close and formalised co-operation between the police districts in Esberg, Varden and Ribe in relation to the fight against biker crime.
- There are regular co-operative relationships in Esbjerg police district with other police districts outside Region III.
- Various activities across authority boundaries and co-operative relationships have been put into effect in the Esbjerg police district, for instance under the auspices of local boards, SSP and SSP+ as well as with the Danish Confederation of Trade Unions/Esbjerg, the local authorities and the Central Tax and Customs Administration, and emphasis is put on a constructive relationship with the press. Finally further security measures have been taken for the protection of victims and witnesses who have to attend court in biker-related cases,
- A status report was drawn up in Horsens police district in January 2003 on the current biker problem, to form the basis for the continued effort. A similar status report was dawn up in 2002.

The status report sheds light on biker groupings in the police district, membership numbers etc. and additions to and departures from the various groups. In addition, the report is concerned with "individuals closely linked to the biker groups". Finally the report sheds very detailed light on crime, including new crime, for which the biker groups are responsible.

- Work was initiated in Horsens police district in the autumn of 2002 to draw up a "screenplay" for cross-sectoral co-operation. The aim of the screenplay is to ensure a broadly based social effort, including in local communities, to prevent entry to the biker community and ensure general dissociation from the biker community. The screenplay is being issued in close co-operation with the Municipality of Horsens, the Central Tax and Customs Administration, the Danish Federation of Trade Unions/Horsens and trade and industry in Horsens.
- Action is regularly taken in Horsens against clubhouses belonging to bikers. The action is taken in close cross-sectoral co-operation.

Region IV: Region IV has been co-operating at regional level on various problems over a long period.

Two working groups have been set up in the region at inspector level with the aim of regularly developing co-operation on both creating security and the investigative effort. The co-operation is based on a regional co-operation agreement, supplemented by a number of specific action plans for the security-creating effort.

It is generally the case for both areas of effort that in future personnel in both CID and the uniformed branch will increasingly be required to make reports to the regional investigative support centre with the clear aim of being able to convert the information into operational efforts.

In addition, a joint plan has been adopted between the five police districts in Region IV for a regional effort to combat biker and other gang crime. The plan consists of a co-operation agreement signed by the five chief constables, a strategy for the joint regional effort to counter biker and other gang crime and – for the time being – sixteen specific action plans in different areas that are

relevant among other things for the prevention of and fight against biker crime. The plan will be regularly evaluated.

As long ago as 1999, Odense Police District established an investigative unit – Funen Division – which under a joint decision by the five police districts in the region has had its area of responsibility expanded so that in the initial phases the division can operate throughout the region in co-operation with the contacts designated in each police district. Added to this, on the basis of the regional biker plan mentioned above a joint regional operational group has been set up with representatives from all five police districts on Funen for deployment throughout the region.

As far as co-operation between authorities is concerned, regional co-operation with the Central Tax and Customs Administration has been established. The co-operation is adapted to the new structure of the Central Tax and Customs Administration on Funen.

A regional co-operation agreement has additionally been entered into between the five police districts for a joint regional effort to combat crime committed against employees in detention centres and prisons. The co-operation can be extended to possibly cover employees of the police and courts.

With regard to other regional efforts, it must finally be mentioned that the Chief Constable in Odense sits on a joint consultative body for young criminals on behalf of the districts in Region IV. The co-operation is concerned with the most disadvantaged and crime-prone young people in Funen and seeks to establish a co-ordinated effort and treatment for these young people.

The following can be emphasised in particular in relation to the individual police districts:

- Co-operation with the municipal authorities has been initiated to the necessary extent in Svendborg, Nyborg, Middelfart, Assens and Odense police districts. The co-operation is based on both preventive efforts and efforts to combat crime. It may be mentioned as an example of the breadth of the co-operation between local authorities and police districts that close co-operation has been initiated in Odense Police District with the

Municipality of Odense in a specially composed group, which looks more closely at municipal initiatives in connection with biker-related crime. The group is made up of representatives from the police, the Central Tax and Customs Administration, the local tax authority, the culture and social administration and the leisure administration.

Region V: In relation to the future, intensified effort to deal with the biker community, the chief constables in the region at a meeting on 5 March 2003 approved a new operational plan for intensified efforts to deal with bikers in the region. The plan provides for a more coherent effort at both geographical and police level to deal with the biker community than has been the case to date – both in the area of supervision and in intelligence and investigation. This applies internally in the relationship between the CID and uniformed branch and externally in the relationship with "other co-operating partners". The regional investigative support centre is the fulcrum of the plan, and it is intended that the managerial attention and priority given should be strengthened, both regionally and locally, through new models of co-operation. The plan is based on a project-oriented model of investigation and co-ordinated allocation of resources. An extensive collection of annexes has been drawn up for the plan, intended as a catalogue of ideas for specific areas of effort.

The following can be emphasised in particular in relation to the effort in the individual police districts:

- It has been decided at a local board meeting in Slagelse police district that co-operation across authority boundaries should be strengthened.
- The Central Tax and Customs Administration in connection with the regular dialogue has been involved in specific investigations in Slagelse police district, and there has been formalised co-operation in the police district since 1998 with restaurant keepers and doormen.
- In Køge police district operational plans have been drawn up/revised for the effort in relation to bikers, with emphasis on co-operation between different authorities.
- Strategic and operational orders have been drawn up in Holbæk police district for intensified efforts to deal with bikers, and a draft

plan has been drawn up for co-operation with the Central Tax and Customs Administration.

- Quarterly bar-keepers' meetings have been introduced in Kalundborg police district with all keepers of bars in order to co-ordinate the effort to deal with bikers and exchange information, and closer co-operation with the Central Tax and Customs Administration has been initiated.
- In Ringsted police district the local plans have been adapted to the current threat scenario, and co-operation with the Central Tax and Customs Administration, the local authority and the SSP partners has been increased.
- In Næstved police district a consistent practice has been introduced in connection with body searches and other checks on bikers in bars and elsewhere with a view to issuing prohibitions etc., and meetings have been held with restaurant keepers in the town with a view to co-ordinating efforts.
- There has been special focus on the problem of "penalties for being stupid" (dummebøder) in Vordingborg police district.

Region VI: The effort to deal with biker crime has been given high priority in the region for many years, and has been governed by a regional operational plan concerned with organised, complex and resource-demanding crime.

The operational plan was revised in February 2003, and is now more emphatically directed against biker crime and behaviour creating insecurity emanating from the biker community. Agreements have been reached at regional level on co-ordinated investigation and assistance, also covering joint regional observation teams and house-searching teams.

- The plan is based on the following elements:
- continuing the systematic police monitoring
- expanding co-operation with the national investigative support centre,
- ensuring a response to road-traffic offences,
- carrying out checks on vehicles,
- preventing behaviour creating insecurity in the restaurant community,
- supervising special events,
- surveying both social-security and tax circumstances,
- detecting, investigating and prosecuting crime committed by members of the biker community,

- maintenance of a broad preventive effort.

The plan assumes that investigative priority will be given in daily practice in such a way that investigations are always launched when individuals from the biker community are involved.

To date, ten joint regional investigative efforts have been agreed alongside the regular effort at district level with a view to identifying major crime problems. Staff from the Central Tax and Customs Administration are involved in all investigations with a view to uncovering tax circumstances. It is also envisaged that checks will be made on the tax situation of all other biker group members in the region in an interaction between the local police districts/stations and municipal tax authorities. Co-operation has also been initiated with the police in Skåne in Sweden on individuals from the biker community who move there.

A large number of investigations have also been launched in 2002 and so far in 2003, and almost all the districts have been involved in this work. The investigations among other things relate to cases concerned with assault, tax fraud, deception, falsification of documents, computer fraud, extortion, theft, narcotics crime, the Registration Act, the Weapons Act, robbery, homicide, handling of stolen goods and burglary. A large number of biker-related individuals have been charged or treated as suspects in this connection.

It may also be mentioned that Copenhagen Police since 1996 have been assisting with personnel resources with the special national investigative support group, which primarily assists the police districts outside Region VI.

Region VII: Operational plans have been drawn up by Bornholm police district for general and heightened supervision of bikers, and co-operation takes place with both municipal authorities and the Central Tax and Customs Authority.

The following remarks should be made in particular in relation to the effort:

- There is a continuous close dialogue in the restaurant community with restaurant-keepers and doormen with the objective of minimising the opportunities for bikers and biker-related individuals to create insecurity - an effort that is supported by targeted and visible patrol activity as well as the issuing of prohibitions etc.
- The effort to combat narcotics crime and related forms of crime is focused in particular on efforts on the street in relation to

marginal people who either have or are suspected of having contact with bikers or biker-related individuals.

The biker community in general

The situation in Denmark at the beginning of April 2003 (according to police information) is that the Hells Angels have eight full chapters (divisions) with a total of 155 permanently affiliated individuals (120 members, 20 prospects and 15 hangarounds), while the Bandidos have ten full chapters, one probationary chapter and two prospect chapters with a total of 145 permanently affiliated individuals (81 member, 24 probationaries, 24 prospects and 16 hangarounds).

As far as the supporter groups are concerned,¹ there has recently been evidence of regroupings and restructuring taking place, based on reports to the police investigative support centres on the disbanding of certain chapters in some places and the establishment of new chapters/groupings in other places. The new groupings/chapters are established largely with the individuals coming from the disbanded chapters. It is judged that these moves can largely be attributed to the bikers feeling under social pressure.

It has been found that under the Hells Angels five support chapters/Charter Support have been set up, considered to rank higher than the Red & White Support Crew and to be a form of link between the Hells Angels and the Red & White Support Crew. The significance of this has not yet been finally judged.

There is also information to the effect that some members of the Red & White Support Crew "have taken off their jackets" (with name logo) and in doing so have removed the more visible and evident link with the Hells Angels. Under the Bandidos, there is similar information to the effect that some divisions of the Support X-Team no longer "have to" call themselves the X-Team, and it has also been noted that material indicating affiliation to the Bandidos have been removed from some divisions of the Support X-Team. However, there is no basis for assuming that the supporter groups are actually being disbanded, or that the affiliation to the parent groups is being broken.

The regroupings/restructuring and disbanding of parts of the supporter groups are therefore considered to have been carried out by the Hells Angels with the aim of making the supporter groups less visible in relation to the parent groups. It should be noted in this connection that it is

¹ The Hells Angels' supporter groups are organised under the name of the Red & White Support Crew, while the Bandidos' supporter groups are organised under the name of the Support X Team.

assumed by the police that it is the supporter groups who carry out a large proportion of the biker crime on behalf of and on the instructions of the members of the parent groups.

Relationship between the biker groups

A tense relationship continues to exist at worldwide level between Hells Angels and Bandidos, who regard each other as rivals.

There are no circumstances suggesting violent clashes in the biker community in Denmark at present. The police assessment is that the intensive effort being made by the authorities is contributing towards the biker community internally attributing great importance to no acts of violence being committed between the groups.

Conclusions

- ❖ The wide-ranging effort has been continued, and a further intensified and massive effort is being made throughout the country on a regional basis and also on a police district basis.
- ❖ The number of biker-related individuals detained in prison or held in remand has risen from an average of around 150 in the autumn of 2002 to an average of around 165 in 2003.
- ❖ Co-operation agreements, detailed plans and operational orders have been drawn up in the police regions in relation to co-ordination and specific efforts to deal with biker crime etc.
- ❖ There has also been purposeful work aimed at broadening police methods to encompass all the police districts. In this connection, work is in progress on establishing "best practice" for efforts in the area of biker crime. A catalogue relating to "best practice" will soon be made available to the police districts.
- ❖ The police have intensified relationships of co-operation across authority boundaries at all levels, with a view to studying the financial and other circumstances of bikers.
- ❖ A relatively large group of bikers has been reported to have moved from Denmark, in particular to Sweden and Germany. Practical co-operation has been initiated with the authorities in the countries concerned.

- ❖ International co-operation has generally been intensified, including under the auspices of the Nordic police and customs co-operation on serious crime (PTN), where a joint manual has been drawn up. The National Police in addition continue to be the driving force in Europol co-operation on biker crime.
- ❖ The bikers are feeling under pressure and are regrouping.

The overall conclusion to be drawn is therefore that the total effort to deal with biker crime has been further strengthened, and there are clear signs that the bikers are feeling under pressure from all sides of society. The intensified effort is producing results to an ever increasing extent.