

To whom it may concern

Re: Operational Use of Tripwire & Grip Systems within Cardinia Shire

Normally I would not write letters of recommendation however in this instance I am pleased to offer some information as to the use of David Black's methodology and work ethic in relation to serious crime reduction in the Cardinia Shire over the past several years. This correspondence is being provided by me from my own involvements and knowledge of the service that David has provided to programs that I manage and supervise in my professional role. I am providing this letter in an individual context and wish to state that I am not speaking on behalf of my employer, Victoria Police, or other partners to this project. I have no personal or pecuniary interests in the business or services operated by David Black.

David's team in conjunction with Council and the Cardinia Police Service Area of Victoria Police formed an alliance with a view to reducing graffiti, vandalism and other such crimes for the Shire several years ago. David's group audited the Shire and established the GRIP database for us with complete analysis of offenders and the spread of damage which allowed us to realize the true scope of the problem.

David Supplied and has for the past 3 years actively deployed 7 Tripwire cameras within the Shire which has lead to dozens of arrests and dozens of important contacts with potential offenders within the Shire.

Graffiti crime is down by 67% from the original audit 3 years ago and David's week to week personal work moving cameras from job to job has seen some very serious crimes dealt with that would not have been possible in any other manner.

The equipment and David's liaison work has recently seen triple arsonists apprehended, large drug crops monitored and intercepted through to stalking and other diverse crime types.

The types of crimes applicable to the use of the cameras have been varied but the ongoing daily interaction with David and Council has been the key stone to ensuring ongoing motivation and use of the systems to bear results.

Some of the crimes resolved have included:

- Deployment of cameras to a Railway Works Site in Beaconsfield where Copper theft was occurring. The cameras were deployed for several weeks and resulted in valuable intelligence being gathered and the identification of several suspects.
- The cameras were also deployed to the disused Council building being the Cockatoo Kindergarten following extensive damages. The cameras were in position there for a substantial period of time and resulted in : regular police attendance and increased patrols of the Cockatoo Township, 4 offenders arrested and processed for breaking into and causing graffiti inside the building, another separate occasion where an offender was caught decamping from the building having stolen copper wires and causing damage;
- Deployment of the cameras to isolated locations in Officer in support of investigations into a Firebug active around the time of the Black Saturday fires - the cameras provided valuable intel

re cars using the area and assisted police to attend and check vehicles and people using the area.

- Assistance to a neighbouring Police Service Area investigating a serial arsonist resulting in three offenders being arrested for serious arson related crimes.
- The camera deployed to an area where an active thief was stealing women's clothing from clothes lines.
- Deployment of the cameras to the Pakenham Outdoor Swimming pool where about 7 offenders over a period of time during summer were detected and apprehended cutting the wire fence, causing damage and using the pool at night;
- Deployment of the cameras to the Community Centre on Duncan Drive, Pakenham where damage to windows and burglaries to a Council building were occurring. Identification of 3 offenders for damaging windows.
- Deployment of the cameras to the Cockatoo Scout Hall re graffiti in 2010 where 3 offenders were identified and as a result were linked to hundreds of "tags" across Cardinia and neighbouring Yarra Ranges;
- Deployment at the Cockatoo Scout Hall a year earlier where graffiti was being caused and where offenders located the hidden camera, stole and damaged same. Offenders were actually photographed stealing the camera and the photos that were sent resulted in 3 offenders being processed for the offences.
- Deployment at the Pakenham Secondary College for a substantial time due to break ins during building construction, damage to school windows and general graffiti. This resulted in police regularly intercepting and speaking to persons on the school grounds unauthorised after hours and possibly preventing offences. The number of persons checked throughout the process captured on camera would amount to the hundreds of persons.
- Support for police investigating major drug cultivation activities at locations across the shire.
- Ongoing monitoring of problem areas such as skate parks, retail precincts.

Arson, graffiti, vandalism, copper theft, burglaries, trespass, and many other such crimes have been dealt with on a reactive basis with the cameras moved instantly from location to location as jobs come about with tremendous results.


The GRIP database has from day one allowed all stations to review annual and daily graffiti incidents to assist in profiling, case building and searching upon local offenders. Most importantly where offenders are offending in multiple cities, our officers have been able to search and track these offenders accordingly.

David's experience and drive to see each job bear results has given the Council and Victoria Police an ability that few other cities have. The audit process, database and portability of the cameras David has designed has allowed crimes and situations to be resolved, that would have been impossible through traditional policing methods.

The cameras have been moved from private, retail, commercial and state assets to resolve issues through a working agreement with the Shire for the betterment of the community in general, and to date the system and methods used has been working efficiently and with solid consistent results and apprehensions.

I cannot speak highly enough of the service, support and product provided to our programs by David and cities who have serious issues with regard to acts of vandalism or other such criminality, could be well served by considering implementing the structured methods the Shire adopted from David. I believe that the results we have achieved are transferable to other cities.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Graham Higginbotham', written in a cursive style.

Graham Higginbotham

0421 747 312

9th April 2011