

The Swedish Police Authority Strategy for Crime Prevention Work



Designation **PM 2022:12**

Case no 480

Date 03.06.2022

Information classification Open

This is a translation of the Swedish Police Authority's strategy for crime prevention work. The translation is not a governing document.

Decision date	03.06.2022
Reference number	A153.079/2020
Concerned area/subject	Crime prevention
Target audience	The entire Swedish Police Authority
Decision-maker	Anders Thornberg, National Police Commissioner
Rapporteur/organisational unit	John Forsberg and Boel Andersson, National Operations Department
Responsible organisational unit	Police Development Centre Nord
Applies as of	10.06.2022
Period of validity	Until further notice
Replaces and supersedes	New policy document

Contents

1	A strategy for crime prevention work.....	4
1.1	Introduction.....	4
1.2	The overarching objectives.....	4
1.3	The need for a strategy	5
2	Crime prevention work.....	6
2.1	Objectives of effective crime prevention work.....	6
2.2	Basic premises for crime prevention work	7
2.2.1	All staff are to take a proactive approach.....	7
2.2.2	The crime triangle is the point of departure	7
2.2.3	The focus is on situational crime prevention work.....	8
2.2.4	Work is to be problem-oriented.....	8
2.2.5	Work is to be knowledge-based	9
2.2.6	Work is to be based on collaboration and inclusiveness	10
3	Crime prevention capacity is to be strengthened.....	11
3.1	Management	11
3.1.1	Management of crime prevention work is to become clearer.....	11
3.1.2	Management is to create conditions for coordinated work.....	11
3.2	Systems.....	12
3.2.1	Effective methods are to be developed and implemented	12
3.2.2	Fit-for-purpose IT support is to be developed.....	12
3.2.3	Communication is to be enhanced.....	12
3.3	Structure.....	13
3.3.1	Leadership is to be developed	13
3.3.2	Resources are to be ensured for crime prevention work.....	14
3.4	Skills	14
3.4.1	Skills are to be developed.....	14
3.4.2	The knowledge-based approach is to be developed	15
4	Follow-up and evaluation of crime prevention work	15

1 A strategy for crime prevention work

1.1 Introduction

The assignment of the Swedish Police Authority is set out in the Police Act (1984:387). Tasks include preventing, deterring and detecting criminal activity and other disturbances to public order or security, supervising public order and security, intervening when disturbances have occurred, and investigating and prosecuting offences that fall within the domain of public prosecution. The Swedish Police Authority has ascertained that successful law enforcement and crime-solving are among the long-term objectives for its activities.

Crime prevention work is part of the law enforcement assignment. The Swedish Police Authority defines crime prevention work as activities it performs or actively participates in with the primary purpose of preventing crimes being committed.¹

Crime prevention work and safety enhancement work sometimes coincide but they have different purposes; the former is intended to prevent crime, while the latter is intended to reduce people's fear of crime. Crime prevention work and safety enhancement work therefore differ, not least in terms of method choice and anticipated effects.²

1.2 The overarching objectives

To achieve the objectives of crime policy – reducing crime and increasing people's safety – effective crime prevention work is needed. This requires efforts from society as a whole. The Government has drawn up a national crime prevention programme – 'Together against crime' – to create the conditions for structured and long-term crime prevention work throughout society.³ Within the framework of its assignment, the Swedish Police Authority is to contribute to achieving the objectives set out in this programme. The Swedish Police Authority must be an innovative and forward-looking organisation so that a society undergoing rapid change is able to remain safe.

The Swedish Police Authority is to have good analytical capacity and continually develop its leadership, management, methodologies and working methods to be at the forefront of the fight against crime.

¹ Decision on the definition of crime prevention work, National Police Commissioner 208/17.

² The Swedish Police Authority's safety enhancement work involves the kinds of activities that the Police performs or actively participates in and whose primary purpose is to remedy the causes of fear of crime (NOA 83/2019). Strategic development project for the Police's crime prevention and safety enhancement work (A841.321/2016).

³ Government Offices. 2017. Together against crime: A national crime prevention programme, Written communication 2016/17:126.

Knowledge and established experience are to be spread throughout the Swedish Police Authority in order to, in combination with increased resources, enhance crime prevention work. As is clear from the Swedish Police Authority's strategic operational plan, crime prevention work is to help ensure that fewer citizens⁴ are the victims of crime and that more feel a greater sense of safety as a result of this.

Crime prevention work is to be legally secure and efficient. It is to be conducted with perseverance, quality and the needs of the citizens in focus.

1.3 The need for a strategy

The Swedish Police Authority wants to further enhance and streamline its crime prevention capacity. To clarify how the overarching objectives of crime prevention activities are to be achieved, the Swedish Police Authority has drawn up a strategy for crime prevention work. The strategy is to ensure that work is conducted in accordance with objectives in the national crime prevention programme and the Swedish Police Authority's long-term objectives and strategic focus. The strategy is to be the platform and create the conditions for structured and long-term crime prevention work. It is to provide all staff at the Swedish Police Authority with a common picture and understanding of how crime prevention work is to be carried out, what effects this work should yield and how their tasks and knowledge can contribute to this work.

The strategy is supplemented with other documents focusing on specific crime categories and societal problems.

The strategy describes the basis of crime prevention work and the shift that the Swedish Police Authority needs to undergo in order to achieve the overarching objectives. Section 2 describes what effective crime prevention work is. It also clarifies the general starting points for this work and the approach that is needed. Section 3 outlines the methods required to achieve the objectives.

⁴ Citizens refers in this strategy to those who live, work and stay in the country.

2 Crime prevention work

2.1 Objectives of effective crime prevention work

Crime prevention work is conducted in a coordinated manner, with investigations, prosecutions and the relevant parts of the service assignment. In crime prevention work, the Swedish Police Authority prioritises measures before crimes are committed. These measures are effective in reducing crime, resulting in fewer citizens being the victims of crime.

The Swedish Police Authority works proactively in accordance with the crime triangle.⁵ All staff understand on the basis of their task how they can contribute to preventing and deterring crime. This means that crime prevention work is both persistent and flexible. Managers at all levels guide, coordinate and actively follow up this work.⁶

Crime prevention work is problem-oriented and based on intelligence. It is based on police presence, knowledge and collaboration, and focuses primarily on situational crime prevention.

The basis is a problem-oriented approach in which situation pictures at different levels are identified and the problems causing crime are analysed. Based on this analysis, methods are used that are relevant to remedy the problems. The working methods and effects are followed up and evaluated both during and after the intervention.

Crime prevention work is based on dialogue and collaboration with both citizens and other actors. The Police engages in outreach activities and is present, both physically and online. Citizens' dialogues and commitments to citizens engage the local community in this work and help to strengthen trust in the work of the Police. Dialogue concerning current crime problems set the right conditions for more crime prevention initiatives from citizens and other partners. Collaboration with other actors takes place on the basis of shared situation pictures in which all actors do their bit based on their task and capacity.

⁵ For more information, see section 2.2.2.

⁶ Levels refers in this strategy to general management level, organisational levels and leadership levels.

2.2 Basic premises for crime prevention work

2.2.1 All staff are to take a proactive approach

To achieve the overarching objectives, all staff are to take a proactive approach, which means that they are to be active in preventing crime. Crime prevention work is to be integrated at all levels and in all activities. For this work to be effective, behaviours need to change, including how managers and staff at the Swedish Police Authority engage in dialogues, cooperate internally and fight crime together.⁷

2.2.2 The crime triangle⁸ is the point of departure

According to the crime triangle, at least three main prerequisites must be met for an offence to occur: a perpetrator with a desire to commit an offence, a suitable object or victim of the offence, and a lack of formal and informal control, such as a low risk of being detected or weak social ties. Measures should therefore be targeted against one or more of these prerequisites as the probability of offences being committed is reduced if one of the prerequisites is not met. Preventive measures could be, for example, reducing a person's desire to commit an offence, restricting access to or strengthening the protection of suitable objects or victims of crime, or strengthening formal and informal control, i.e. increasing the risk of detection or strengthening other factors that increase formal control.



Figure 1. The crime triangle in its basic form.

⁷ From the assignment compass – Developing and reflecting, Building trust, Acting together and Creating safety.

⁸ The crime triangle symbolises the routine activity theory, which is based on the assumption that the level of crime in society changes when citizens' everyday lives (routine activities) change. Cohen and Felson, 1979.

The crime triangle is to be the point of departure for crime prevention work. The crime triangle should be used to ensure that analyses cover all three prerequisites, which can also help to identify what other collaboration actors could take measures to remedy the problem.

2.2.3 The focus is on situational crime prevention work

One common starting point for crime prevention work is the division into social and situational crime prevention.⁹ Social crime prevention refers to reducing people's willingness to commit crimes, both at group and individual level, whereas situational crime prevention is targeted at the object, the victim, the place or the general conditions of the offence.

By taking its cue from the crime triangle, the Swedish Police Authority's crime prevention work is to focus on situational crime prevention to deter offences or make it more difficult to commit them.

The Swedish Police Authority is to encourage other actors working on reducing individuals' willingness to commit crime to take a greater responsibility for social crime prevention. The Swedish Police Authority is to take part in social crime prevention when it is considered that its initiatives or involvement make an effective contribution to preventing and deterring crime.

2.2.4 Work is to be problem-oriented

A problem-oriented approach is to be integrated in all crime prevention activities at all organisational levels, regardless of the focus of the work. Work is to be planned on the basis of situation pictures and causal analyses. The SARA model¹⁰ is to be used to systematise problem-oriented policing (POP).

The SARA model contains four steps:

- mapping out the situation and identifying a specific (clearly defined) recurrent problem
- analysing the problem to gain an idea of the causes
- taking stock of which methods could be applied and deciding on the implementation of measures
- following up and evaluating working methods and effects both during and after implementation

⁹ More information about situational and social crime prevention is available on Intrapolis.

¹⁰ The SARA model is based on research by the scholars John Eck and William Spelman – Problem-solving: Problem-oriented policing (1987). How the Swedish Police Authority applies SARA: Scanning – Analysis – Response – Assessment.

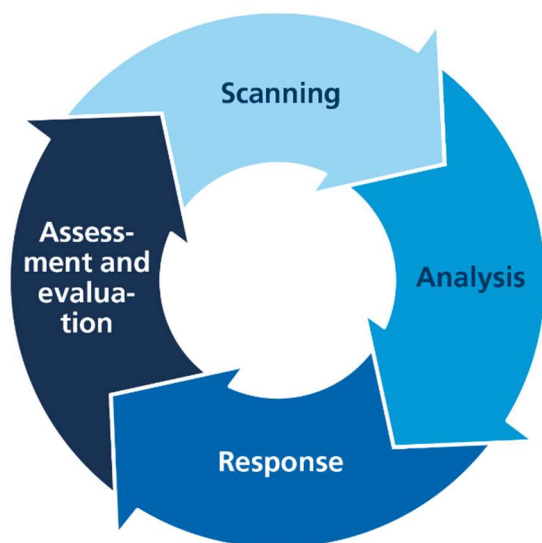


Figure 2. The SARA model.

The steps in the model often need to be repeated and supplemented when new knowledge is obtained in the course of the work. The implementation of measures and the overall effects are to be followed up, continuously valued and if necessary evaluated so that knowledge can be fed back in and used to determine the focus of future activities and coordinate them. For this to be possible, all steps of the SARA model must be documented.

2.2.5 Work is to be knowledge-based

Knowledge-based work builds on the capacity to create and collate knowledge, disseminate knowledge and make it available, and develop and apply quality-assured methods.

The Swedish Police Authority's crime prevention work is to be knowledge-based. This is achieved by actively creating and collecting knowledge. Good examples and experience are to be spread and the best available knowledge applied. This is achieved by weighing research (e.g. facts) against established experience, the citizens' and collaboration actors' knowledge of the problem and the existing legislation and policy documents. New challenges and complex problems also require elements of innovation and investigate approaches.



Figure 3. The main sources of knowledge for crime prevention work.

Follow-up and evaluation are important prerequisites for knowledge-based work. The purpose is to collect and feed knowledge back in for continued development.

2.2.6 Work is to be based on collaboration and inclusiveness

The Swedish Police Authority is to actively seek to achieve effective collaboration and coordinated measures with other government agencies, municipalities, businesses and the voluntary sector. Collaboration is to have a long-term perspective and take place locally, regionally, nationally and internationally with a clear structure for and consensus on who does what based on a shared situation picture. The Swedish Police Authority is to carry out its part on the basis of its assignment so as to contribute as far as possible to achieving the common objectives.

Citizens are important partners in crime prevention work. Their knowledge of society and their problems are important information when prioritising and planning measures. The Swedish Police Authority is to engage in outreach activities and be present, both physically and online, to create contact and relations to be able to interact, solve problems and at the same time set boundaries.

Citizens are to be included through dialogues and commitments to citizens. They must also be given the conditions and tools to gain an insight into, take responsibility for and become involved in crime prevention work.

3 Crime prevention capacity is to be strengthened

For crime prevention work to be successful there needs to be a culture change by altering behaviours and working methods to a more proactive approach. The involvement of citizens is crucial for success. This section looks at the development areas that the Swedish Police Authority must focus on to support such a change. This section is based on the capacity model.¹¹

3.1 Management

3.1.1 Management of crime prevention work is to become clearer

The Swedish Police Authority is to follow developments in society and technology, identify areas in need of development and actively work towards national and international legislation and other policy instruments that support crime prevention work.

To make crime prevention work visible and specific, there have to be objectives staking out a clear direction. In follow-up, it is important to both look at the effects of the various measures and assess the work as a whole. A comprehensive follow-up of the activities conducted is to form the basis of continued work and enable management at different levels to take active decisions on the direction of continued efforts.¹²

The Swedish Police Authority's objectives are that:

- qualitative and quantitative objectives are set for crime prevention work; and
- the work is followed up and analysed and the results are used to inform leadership and management.

3.1.2 Management is to create conditions for coordinated work

All of the Swedish Police Authority's capacity must be used to fight crime. This requires a holistic perspective in which crime prevention work is coordinated with other law enforcement activities from local to international level, with several parallel coordinated measures being taken strategically, operationally and tactically.

¹¹ Capacity model in preparation, A626.692/2021.

¹² The term 'leadership' refers in this strategy to managers and their management support in a broader sense.

The Swedish Police Authority's objectives are that:

- crime prevention work is conducted in coordination with other areas of law enforcement activities; and
- crime prevention measures are taken in parallel at several levels depending on what is required to solve a problem.

3.2 Systems

3.2.1 Effective methods are to be developed and implemented

Based on an analysis of which capacities have to be available to address the challenges of society, the Swedish Police Authority is to develop and implement effective and quality-assured methods for crime prevention work.

The Swedish Police Authority's objectives are that:

- focus, prioritisation and coordination of methods development are strengthened;
- established models and methods are implemented and applied; and
- management of methods is enhanced.

3.2.2 Fit-for-purpose IT support is to be developed

The Swedish Police Authority is to strengthen its capacity to collect, collate and analyse data. Data is to be collected at all steps of the SARA model and made available on the basis of assignment and need.

The Swedish Police Authority's objective is that:

- IT support for collection, visualisation, analysis and follow-up is developed.

3.2.3 Communication is to be enhanced

Communication linked to crime prevention work includes communication as a crime prevention measure as well as communication in crime prevention work.

Communication as a crime prevention measure

The Swedish Police Authority's objectives are that:

- communication is used as a measure that is coordinated with other measures in crime prevention work, in line with the SARA model;

- communication is based on a proactive approach in both sudden incidents and long-term work;
- the crime triangle acts as a guide when planning crime prevention measures in the form of communication; and
- communication measures are based on analysis of the crime problem and how a measure is thought to have greatest impact on the problem.

Communication about crime prevention work

The Swedish Police Authority's objectives are that:

- communication is used in an appropriate manner to involve citizens and collaboration partners in crime prevention work;
- communication contributes to greater knowledge and understanding of the Swedish Police Authority's crime prevention work both externally and internally;
- all relevant functions take responsibility for communication;
- communication support is provided that makes it easier for staff to actively use communication both as a measure and to support crime prevention work; and
- terms used in crime prevention work are used and interpreted in the same way in different systems and activities at the Swedish Police Authority.

3.3 Structure

3.3.1 Management is to be developed

Management of crime prevention work is to be based on a holistic perspective of law enforcement. It should be conducted on the basis of the SARA model integrated with the planning and follow-up process. Management should occur actively on the basis of clear objectives for crime prevention work at all levels.

The Swedish Police Authority's objectives are that:

- managers at all levels take responsibility for crime prevention work being coordinated with other law enforcement activities on the basis of the crime triangle;
- management at all levels plans, conducts and follows up crime prevention work in accordance with the basic premises outlined in section 2;
- managers at all levels take responsibility for producing situation pictures and conducting analyses to direct and coordinate crime

prevention work and provide the right resources for law enforcement activities;

- management of crime prevention work is to be enhanced with a focus on situational crime prevention;
- managers at all levels is to work towards more actors taking effective measures in crime prevention work, especially in terms of social crime prevention; and
- managers at all levels is to work towards good collaboration with other societal actors.

3.3.2 Resources are to be ensured for crime prevention work

Successful and persistent crime prevention work requires guaranteed resources. There must be a reasonable balance between the resources allocated to investigation and prosecution, crime prevention work and service. The Swedish Police Authority's capacity in terms of analysis, implementation of measures, and follow-up and evaluation of crime prevention work in particular must be strengthened.

The Swedish Police Authority's objective is to ensure resources for:

- analytical capacity concerning problem-oriented work within intelligence activities;
- implementation of crime prevention measures; and
- follow-up and evaluation of crime prevention work.

3.4 Skills

3.4.1 Skills are to be developed

So that all areas of activity have the capacity to work preventively, it is very important that all staff take a proactive approach. Skills development is to contribute to greater knowledge and understanding of what crime prevention work involves. The best available knowledge concerning crime prevention work must therefore be included in the various stages of basic police training and in continuing professional development for staff throughout the Swedish Police Authority. It is also important that knowledge is shared with all staff during inductions and other forms of skills development in everyday work.

The Swedish Police Authority's objectives are to:

- develop and enhance training requirement priorities, implementation and evaluation of training; and

- attract, develop and retain the right skills for crime prevention work.

3.4.2 The knowledge-based approach is to be developed

To stay apace with societal developments, the Swedish Police Authority must work towards strengthening its knowledge base and developing and introducing new and effective methods. This work is to be based on research to a greater extent than it is today.¹³ Documentation is an important prerequisite for knowledge-based work.

The Swedish Police Authority's objectives are that:

- research and innovation concerning crime prevention work are to be sought, implemented and used;
- routines for quality assurance and documentation of crime prevention work are to be well-known and used at all levels; and
- knowledge from process and effects evaluation is to be used and fed into continued development.

4 Follow-up and evaluation of crime prevention work

To ensure that crime prevention work yields the desired effects, it must be continuously followed up and evaluated. Follow-up and evaluation should provide answers to the following questions:

- What measures have been implemented?
- When, where, how and why were these measures implemented?
- What changes are necessary, if at all?
- What results have been achieved and what effects have they yielded?

The Swedish Police Authority's objectives are to:

- ensure fit-for-purpose follow-up and evaluation;
- coordinate the collection, collation, availability and analysis of data;
- ensure that follow-up forms the basis of decisions at all levels so that the objectives of crime prevention work are achieved;
- ensure that more process and effects evaluations of crime prevention work are required, implemented and used; and
- produce a clear structure and plan for what methods are to be evaluated.

¹³ The Government Bill 'Research, freedom, future – knowledge and innovation for Sweden' presents the Government's research policy for the period 2021–2024, Govt Bill 2020/21:60.