Opening Address

CPTED 2001 CONFERENCE

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- Making crime harder to commit is part of the fundamentals of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Crime.

- There is always a great deal of simplicity rather than complexity in doing that.

- Definition. CPTED refers to *the proper design and effective use of the built environment can lead to a reduction in the fear of crime and the incidence of crime, and to an improvement in the quality of life.*

- When we look at the bigger picture we know that most places have no crime, and most crime is highly concentrated in a relatively small number of places. Some shops have no robberies, while a few have lots. A few entertainment venues have a lot of problems, most have none. Even in high burglary neighbourhoods most residences have no burglaries, while a few suffer from repeat burglaries – again and again. Understanding clustering and repeat victimisation and crime 'hot spots' is very important in developing preventive measures. Blocking criminal opportunities takes place by understanding place – its design and layout – and strategies that are appropriate for houses, flats, shops, warehouses, factories, public transport, parks, pubs etc.

- Have to work carefully to understand environment and surrounds.

- Examples of CPTED strategies can be found in streets and pedestrian areas, parking lots, malls and pedestrian centres, shops, public toilets, schools and sports centres.

- All of the above places can be crime sites the world over.

- However, there very existence is not dependent upon crime prevention or crime occurring, rather crime is a secondary characteristic. For example, schools are not designed to create and prevent crime, but they can be a venue for both.

- Lessons learnt are universal in their application.

- The planning committee for the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney adopted CPTED in planning for venues, housing and transportation. The Transit Authority for New South Wales has conducted CPTED reviews of its stations and undergone a renovation program since 1995.

- The Australian Institute of Criminology has conducted numerous projects involving CPTED. This began in the 1980s with the publication entitled *Design Out Crime.*

- At the present time research includes crime prevention against small business, much of which is related to the environment.

- One aspect of CPTED is found in situational crime prevention. Situational crime prevention seeks to reduce the opportunities for crimes to be committed through the design, planning and structure of cities and neighbourhoods. It recognises that the physical environment influences the where and what of crime problems. Among its strategies, situational crime prevention uses natural surveillance by legitimate users to inhibit illegal activity and it uses building design to put more 'eyes on the street'. Environmental design, although it may incorporate some features of target hardening that involve the use of physical barriers, the emphasis is on natural access control and surveillance, that is, the goal is to create a setting in which access control and surveillance are brought about by the 'normal and routine use of the environment. Target hardening strategies can be incorporated when they do not overly interfere with the natural use of the environment.

- Risk factors associated with crime are centred around the **individual** (including genetic, biological, psychological and personality factors), **social** (family, employment, education, peer-groups) and **environment** (poverty, etc)

- Crime is the result of complex changes in economic, social and cultural factors such as unemployment, dysfunctional families, child abuse, poor education, community breakdown, economic inequality and substance abuse.

- Lack of opportunity and poor environmental conditions contribute to crime. Social theories have helped to bring about urban reform and contemporary public housing programs, some of which have been successful and some which have been monumental failures.

- Crime prevention should focus on broad social outcomes, for example reducing social exclusion. Compelling evidence suggests that those who feel excluded from participation in community life are more likely to offend against that community. Addressing this sense of exclusion can reduce the risk of offending.

- Marcus Felson's approach known at 'Natural Crime Prevention' which he describes as "….the chunking and channelling of human activities, in imitation of nature, to reduce crime temptations and increase controls." Felson divides up the urban space along a public/private continuum, this is a very useful starting point for thinking about the question, "What makes a place dangerous?"