



BELIZE POLICE DEPARTMENT

National Crime Fighting Strategy

Presented to the Minister of Home Affairs

By Hon. Allen Whyllie, LSM, MSM, DSM, CSC

Commissioner of Police



BELIZE POLICE DEPARTMENT

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To: Honorable Elodio Aragon,
Minister of State
Ministry of Home Affairs

Honorable Minister:

NATIONAL CRIME FIGHTING STRATEGY 2018 -2020

It is with great pleasure that I present you the Belize Police Department's National Crime Fighting Strategy (2018-2020).

The issue of crime and violence is not unique to Belize as it is a regional as well as international scourge. The Belize Police Department has enjoyed successes in its crime fighting strategy as over the last 5 years with the exception of 2014, we have experienced a steady decrease in major crimes incidents as reflected below:

YEAR	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
MAJOR INCIDENTS REPORTED	2,395	2,494	2,216	2,137	1,992

Nonetheless, Belize over the last few years has lost a number of its valuable assets; young people to the surge of violence in particular Gun and Gang Violence.

This Strategy is designed to reduce Violent Crime and Dismantle Criminal gangs, the incidents of violence in particular Gun and Gang violence. It also seeks to strengthen matters in relation to firearms, legislative reform, implementation of a systematic video surveillance program for Belize City, and the strengthening of the Department Professional Standard Branch, by employing a targeted and focus approach; which was tailored to suit our present situation, utilizing best practices been employed globally.

approach; which was tailored to suit our present situation, utilizing best practices been employed globally.

The Belize Police Department will align resources to support this Strategy, in order to reduce the level of Crime and Violence in Belize. Fighting crime is not the sole purview of the Belize Police Department. Crime is a societal problem and it therefore requires the full support of all stakeholders. This Strategy provides the frame work for us to achieve our goal.

I hereby submit the Belize Police Department Crime Strategy that will address; the incident of Murders and Firearm related Violent Crime and Dismantle Criminal Gangs in Belize

Respectfully submitted,



ALLEN WHYLLIE, LSM, MSM, DSM, CSC.
COMMISSIONER OF POLICE

...AW/sdg



BELIZE POLICE DEPARTMENT

This document puts forth the Belize Police Department's philosophy, mission, core values, vision, organizational values, guiding principles, primary functions and strategies to reduce violent crime, dismantle criminal gangs, improving and empowering the department with new legislation as well as the strengthening of the Professional Standards Branch in order to improve the quality of life of our citizens. The strategies outlined here are just first steps and we will constantly monitor our success, analyze crime trends and the changing environment and amend as may be necessary in order to ensure we are achieving our goals and objectives.

Belize Police Department Philosophy

That we shall devote ourselves to uphold the safeguards of the Constitution having regard for the rights and dignity of all persons, through the instrument of Law, and the concern for order, working in partnership with the people, and in cooperation with Law Enforcement agencies, we vow to protect the welfare of the state from threat and fear of crime.

Mission Statement

The Police and Community working in Partnership with all communities to help prevent and reduce crime, and to enhance the quality of life for a safer Belize.

CORE VALUES

- E** Employee Excellence
- T** Teamwork
- H** Honor
- I** Innovation
- C** Communication
- S** Service

Employee Excellence – We value all members of our organization and recognize the need for professional growth through continual training, education, and innovative thinking.

Teamwork – We work proactively with and support each other and our community.

Honor – We serve as positive role models by being honest and ethical in our actions in both our personal and professional lives.

Innovation – We promote collaboration and progressive thinking to meet the changes affecting our organization and community.

Communication – We view openness as the key to maintaining accountability between ourselves and the community.

Service – We strive to provide a positive and exceptional response to the law enforcement needs of our community.

VISION STATEMENT

The Belize Police Department shall work in partnership with all communities in providing the highest quality of service through community policing and problem solving strategies.

We seek to reduce and prevent crime by employing Intelligence Led Policing, effective investigation and prosecution of crimes and proactive, preventative patrols of all our communities and roadways.

We aim to enhance the quality of life by creating safer neighborhoods, while maintaining the highest standards of integrity.

ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES

Service Oriented
Professionalism
Commitment
Competence
Knowledge
Discipline
Integrity
Respect
Loyalty
Valor
Just

Guiding Principles

We will carry out our functions with integrity:

- ✓ Treating all persons fairly regardless of color, gender, religion, creed or social standard
- ✓ Through efficient and effective partnerships and consultations in ways which reflect local priorities that are acceptable to local communities.
- ✓ Dealing promptly and transparently with police wrong doing.
- ✓ Holding managers accountable for the performance of their staff and proper utilization of their resources.
- ✓ Ensuring that all personnel are cognizant of the goals and objectives and knows what is expected of them and to what standards.

Primary Functions

- Protection of Life and Property
- Maintenance of Law and Order
- Prevention and Detection of Crime
- Apprehension and Prosecution of Offenders.

OUR PRIORTIES:

- Reduction of Murders and Gang related violence in Belize City and across the Country.
- Prevention, Interdiction and successful Prosecution of Criminals.
- Restoration of Public Confidence.

Our priorities will be achieved through the following:

- To Reduce Gun related Crime; Target and Dismantle Criminal Gangs.
- Legislative Reforms.
- Strengthening of Professional Standards Branch.
- Implement a systematic Video Surveillance Program for Belize City.

GOAL #1:- TO REDUCE GUN RELATED CRIME AND TARGET AND DISMANTLE CRIMINAL GANGS

- The Belize Police Department will establish an Anti-Gang Task Force that will be charged with the investigation of specific Gang related crime, with a view to have these cases brought before the Court.
- The Belize Police Department will aggressively investigate and prosecute suspected gang leaders and their financiers for financial and other crimes using all available laws at its disposal.
- The Belize Police Department will aggressively seek to eliminate the proliferation of illegal guns and ammunition countrywide, through the collection and analysis of intelligence.
- The Belize Police Department will ensure that all guns upon being presented for renewal of licenses are test fired and the results entered in the Integrated Ballistic Identification System (IBIS).
- The Belize Police Department will ensure that all firearms and or expended shells recovered are promptly sent to the National Forensic Science Services for ballistic examination and analysis.
- The Belize Police Department will intensify operations aimed at disarming criminals, intensify spot checks and vehicular checkpoints traffic control and stop and search in particular sectors/zones also, Road Policing; to curtail the movement of criminals, to seriously disrupt criminal activities and to arrest and prosecute perpetrators of crime and violence.
- The Belize Police Department will continue the initiative to conduct targeted patrols in and across the country (villages, towns and residential

communities) in an effort to deter offenders and reassure law-abiding citizens.

- The Belize Police Department will focus on Criminal networks: targeting known gangs, bringing more offenders to justice; through an Intelligence approach by proactively targeting individuals and groups engaged in Criminal activities.
- The Belize Police Department will focus on mediation/intervention, and interdiction efforts (tactical approach to address retaliation and revenge killing).
- The Belize Police Department will continue the Crime Prevention Initiatives to reduce citizens' risk of victimization.
- The Belize Police Department will involve the community in identifying law enforcement priorities and strategies for the prevention of Crime and violence.

GOAL#2: LEGISLATIVE REFORMS

In order for the Belize Police Department to be more effective in its approach to fighting Crime and in particular to address the incidents of Gangs and Gang related crimes including Murders, Gun (firearm) Violence and Drugs sales, the Belize Police Department needs to be equipped with more modern legislation. As a result, recommendations have been submitted for the following amendments to existing legislation as well as the promulgation of new legislation:

The enactment of an **Anti-Gang Legislation**. The Anti-Gang provisions as contain in the current Crime Control and Criminal Justice Act, Chapter 102 of the Substantive Laws of Belize, R.E. 2011 will be repealed and be replaced with a new Anti-Gang Act.

This new Act will provide law enforcement officers with the legislative authority to effectively target the gang and their criminal activities. It would also create a number of offenses aimed at the financiers as well as supporters of those criminal gangs along with stiffer penalties. It would also allow for the identity of witnesses in gang related trials to be protected. Specifically, the enactment of this new Act will:

- a. Create specific offences for gang membership and gang activities.
- b. Create specific offences for gang members who are found with firearms or bullet proof vest.
- c. Create specific offences for person(s) who harbors gang members.
- d. Create specific offences for person(s) who lends support to any gang.
- e. Will increase police powers to suppress gang activities.
- f. Will provide for the issuing of injunctions by a Court, restricting the movements of gang members.
- g. Will provide for the creation of a Gang Watch List.
- h. Will prohibit the recruitment of persons to joining a gang.

- i. Will provide for specific offences with severe penalties for law an enforcement officer who joins or provides support to any gang.

Amendment to the current “**Firearm Act, Chapter 143 of the Substantive Laws of Belize, R. E. 2011**” in the following areas:

- creation of the offense of Firearm Trafficking.
- creation of the offense of Ammunition Trafficking.
- creation of an Heirloom License.
- allows for the certification of Firearm License Holders by the Belize Police Department.
- allows for the Re-certification of License Firearm Holders every 3 years by the Belize Police Department.
- allows for stiffer penalties for firearm offenses, stiffer penalties for crimes committed with firearms (and also allows for an increase in license fee for the various categories of Firearm Licenses).

The enactment of a **Witness Anonymity Act**, which would allow for non-disclosure of the identities of witnesses in criminal cases of:

- murder
- attempted murder
- manslaughter
- robbery
- attempted robbery
- rape; where the offence or the injury or death was caused by a firearm or other offensive weapon or where the commission of the offence involved a firearm or other offensive weapon.

Enactment of legislation to allow for admission of **Video Identification and other Digital and Audio Evidence** in judicial proceedings. This will include Close Circuit Television footage retrieved from cases, Video Identification Parades; Witness Album Display System and Custody Imaging System.

Amendments to the **Police Act** and **Regulation** which will provide for greater accountability and control. It will allow for greater streamlining of the administrative disciplinary process and minimizes undue delay in the conduct of disciplinary tribunal within the Belize Police Department.

GOAL #3: STRENGTHENING OF THE PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS BRANCH (PSB)

The Belize Police Department will continue to strengthen the administration and operation of the Professional Standards Branch:

- ◆ Additional Police Officers will be identified and posted to the PSB to allow for a PSB officer to be stationed in every Police District.
- ◆ The Belize Police Department will promulgate a Code of Ethics for its officers for their strict adherence.

The Belize Police Department will seek the employment of a former Senior Police Officer to be employed and appointed by the Commissioner as a National Adjudicator for the conduct and hearing of formal disciplinary action against police officers.

Closer collaboration will be sought with the Office of the Ombudsman by the Commander PSB holding monthly meetings with the Ombudsman. The Commissioner of Police will also meet with them on a Quarterly basis.

The Professional Standards Branch will be responsible for conducting sting operations and cleansing program to identify and remove corrupt Police Officers:

- The Belize Police Department will coordinate and investigate with the Financial Intelligence Unit to target police officers suspected of profiting from corrupt practices and unjust enrichment.
- A “Public Education Campaign” regarding police corruption will be conducted to educate citizens on their rights and responsibilities.
- Specialized training for members of the Professional Standard Branch and other members of the Department will be sought.
- Customized training courses for senior officers aimed at raising their awareness to ethical and corrupt behaviors will be sought as well as conducted.

GOAL #4: IMPLEMENT A SYSTEMATIC VIDEO SURVEILLANCE PROGRAM FOR BELIZE CITY

Surveillance cameras are excellent tools to document and prosecute criminals. The mere presence has a dramatic deterrent effect, thus preventing crime in their immediate area.

The Belize Police Department will continue to implement a CCTV program that will:

- See the installation of cameras in strategic locations across Belize City.
- Standardize the type and quality of cameras to be purchased and installed as part of its CCTV program. Businesses and households will be encouraged to sign up to become a part of the camera surveillance program.

The Belize Police Department will construct a Modern Communication Center at Queen Street police compound that will house its radio communication network as well as its CCTV program as a part of the CABEI project.

CONCLUSION:

We live in an ever changing world, as a result, the specific tactics and action of our crime fighting will change over time, as crime changes and progress is made. The Belize Police

Department will align its resources to support this new Plan, in order to continue to reduce the level of crime and violence in Belize. This Plan requires all Units, Branches, Precincts, Divisions, Formations and Regions; to work in a collaborative and coordinating manner.

To ensure our success, all Senior Officers of the Belize Police Department, will be the driving force in the execution of this Plan in line with our Mission and Vision. It is the responsibility of the Regional, Divisional and Formation Commanders who are required to tailor these strategies to the unique needs of their areas of responsibility. Branch and Unit Commanders are expected to implement strategies that will support the Regional, Divisional and Formation Commanders.

“Police alone and their actions cannot and will not bring down the level of crime to the extent that we as a society can be happy with”. Crime is a societal problem and it requires the full support of all stakeholders and in particular the public. This Plan provides the framework for us to achieve our goal of addressing gang and firearm related crimes and other anti-social behavior in Belize to:

- Reduce the number and frequency of Gangs and Gun related activity
- Decrease the number of shooting
- Reduce Murders
- Increase the number of illegal firearm and ammunitions taken off the streets of Belize
- Increase the murder clearance rate
- Increase the clearance rate for all other violent crimes
- Improve the level of trust and confidence the citizenry has in the Belize Police Department and to change the perception in regards to the fear of crime