

Satellites will track 5,000 of the worst criminals in Britain

By Sophie Goodchild and Andrew Johnson

18 July 2004

Satellite technology will be used to track 5,000 career criminals who are responsible for one in every 10 crimes in Britain, the Home Secretary David Blunkett will announce tomorrow.

The radical new technology, which has been developed in the US, will enable law enforcement officers to pinpoint the exact location of criminals who have been released early from prison and fitted with electronic tags.

It will feature among a series of measures in a five-year plan to tackle burgeoning violent crime and antisocial behaviour. Home Office figures released next week will show police forces recording rises as high as 25 per cent.

A Home Office source said: "We are the largest users of tagging outside the US and we will continue to do this. We will introduce satellite tracing for prolific offenders as well as for domestic violence and sex offenders."

Other measures include increasing the number of community support officers from 5,000 to 20,000 by 2008, putting drug-using criminals through treatment programmes and locking up those who refuse help, as well as making greater use of antisocial behaviour orders.

Tony Blair is expected to reassure voters that protecting "law-abiding citizens" from lawless teenage gangs and drunken yobs will be central to government policy.

Although car crime and burglary have fallen, the annual crime survey this week will show the public and police are reporting a worrying rise in assault, harassment and alcohol-fuelled thuggery.

This is backed up by crime statistics obtained by The Independent on Sunday recorded between March 2003 and April 2004 by seven of Britain's largest police forces. In West Yorkshire, antisocial behaviour incidents rose by nearly nine per cent in the city of Leeds, from 55,813 cases to 60,136. Across the whole of the West Yorkshire force, antisocial behaviour rose by six per cent from 162,669 to 173,045.

In the West Midlands, harassment offences were up by about 22 per cent;

Across the site

Editor's Choice

Tutti frutti



Get creative juices flowing with berries

Robert Fisk **P**

Why Iraq's booksellers want the freedom to censor their shelves

Safari for all seasons



A unique glimpse into South Africa's history

Leading article **P**

The Prime Minister cannot accept responsibility and then do nothing

Juliette Lewis



Hollywood's former darling is back

Interactive

Independent Book Group

Also from this section

Jenkins wins retrial over murder of foster daughter

It's not me, insists Scottish businesswoman after police raid house over £18m Tokyo heist

Pharmacist censured for supplying drugs used by Shipman case

Trial evidence against Jenkins was 'flawed'

New police unit to counter terrorists outside London

Search this site:



 Printable Story

COMPARE
0%
CREDIT
CARDS.

9
months
interest
FREE

MONEY
SUPERMARKET.COM

We
have
hundreds
of
cards
available.

common assault increased by 15.9 per cent and public order offences by just over 12 per cent. There was an upwards trend in North Yorkshire with violent crime in a public place rising by 25 per cent and drink-related violence by 11 per cent. In Avon and Somerset, community disorder rose by just over seven per cent, while across Devon and Cornwall violent assaults rose by 9.5 per cent and in Dorset violence against the person rose by 12.2 per cent.

Chief constables attribute the rise to a greater emphasis on tackling antisocial behaviour and drunken disorder, which means more people are being arrested and more victims are reporting crimes. However, this is unlikely to remove the widespread perception that not enough is being done to make streets safer.

Crime reduction groups say the proposals will fall disproportionately on young people and those already marginalised by current government policy. Richard Garside, director of the Crime and Society Foundation, said that the initiatives would do little to tackle the causes of crime.

"Antisocial behaviour is not just a matter of the naughty child or the boozy adult," he said. "It is also antisocial for the Government to pursue headline-grabbing initiatives that risk criminalising whole groups of individuals while doing little to tackle the causes of crime."

[Terms of Use](#) | [Privacy Policy](#), including use of cookies | [Sign up for our free daily news update](#)
[Freelance contributions](#) | [Advertise in print](#) | [Other Digital sites](#) | [Contact us](#)

© 2004 Independent Digital (UK) Ltd