

2012 Community - Government and Local Efforts

Zero Tolerance Committee



CCTV Cameras – Grace Bay

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Police Take To The Beaches On ATVs

Written by: staff
Thursday, 12 April 2012 13:30

The Royal Turks and Caicos Islands Police Force recently revealed its latest device to fight crime, respond to medical emergencies and help keep the public safe on Grace Bay beach.

The All Terrain Vehicle (ATV) — one of two to be donated by the Zero Tolerance Committee — will regularly patrol the sands in an aim to improve police response times.

"We will be using the ATV to provide safety and security for everybody who uses the beach," said Inspector Nigel Couch.

"We will be using it as a tool to speak to tourists, the beach vendors and hotel workers. We will also try and promote the TCI Police and the TCI as a safe destination to work and to play."

The unveiling of the ATV comes amid a recent spate of medical emergencies at Grace Bay, including the death of New York trader Mark Lazard two weeks ago. Police are investigating how the man was struck by a boat while snorkeling.

"All officers are first aid trained," Couch said. "We are working closely with the Emergency Medical Service (EMS) trying to identify access points that we can use to get them onto the beach quickly."

The ATV will be equipped with a first-aid kit, and other rescue devices, including megaphones, whistles and binoculars.

Officer Melonda Robinson believes the ATV is a great addition to the department. "It will help us to access the beach better than when we are on foot patrol," Robinson said.

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Beach Police - New ATV

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Zero Tolerance Clears, Secures Toscana Site

Written by Richard Green/rdgreen@tp.com
Friday, 23 March 2012 10:02



Volunteer safety group Zero Tolerance is clearing brush, filling in dangerous holes and securing fencing around the defunct Toscana resort site on Grace Bay in its latest battle in the war on crime.

The property next to the Coral Gardens Resort, Somewhere Cafe and Lounge and the popular public access to the Bight Reef contains several incomplete block buildings and scattered construction debris and has been overgrown with brush for years now.

Police fear that thieves have been hiding in the property waiting to rob people who park to snorkel the reef and visit the resort and lounge, which was recently robbed at gunpoint.

Somewhere will be hosting a Zero Tolerance fundraiser March 25 from 2-8 p.m. to help police buy two first aid equipped ATVs to patrol Grace Bay on Providenciales to reduce crime and support emergency services.

"It gives us much pride to be involved in this committee and specifically this fundraising initiative, which will assist us to ensure safety of our visiting guests," said Somewhere owner Luis Fabara.

"Many will know that we were the target of recent crime which could have been prevented. We saw this unfortunate incident as a reason to get involved in this effort, which also included recent efforts to clean up an adjacent abandoned construction site (Toscana on Grace Bay) which had become a potential security risk to our business, residents and guests."

Long time resident, business owner and leader of Zero Tolerance Mike Bookalam

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Clearing and Clean-up - Vacant Site

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Letters to the Editor

TCI needs to increase penalties for violence

Regardless of the size of the police force or the number of community members looking out for criminal activity, you can never have the resources in the right place to stop every crime.

The current environment is significantly too lenient. The best way to reduce violent crime is to make the equation of risk versus reward significantly in favour of the public and not the criminal.

First, separate the tools of the trade from the crime. That is, make an armed robbery a series of several crimes, each with their own punishment.

Possession of an unregistered gun in any circumstance is an automatic five years in jail, the person or not, in an additional 15 years.

If you use an unregistered weapon in a robbery and shoot a warning shot, you have a 30 year sentence on your hands. Plus you will get some number of years for the commission of the robbery itself. All penalties must be served consecutively, not concurrently.

A 20 year, no parole, no reduction sentence for simply using a gun in the commission of any crime ought to do most people.

Armed robbery - using a gun or any offensive weapon - should carry a mandatory sentence of 15 years. Wounding a victim, another 20 years.

Supplying a person with a gun should attract a minimum sentence of 15 years, wounding or otherwise helping a person commit the proceeds of crime to cash or other reward should be a mandatory 10-year sentence.

TCI must learn to get tough

TCI is a joke. The attack against officers in Grand Turk SHOULD BE the last straw.

What will it take before this government polices force realize they're being made the object of a joke by citizens?

When an attack against a police officer happens in the USA, God help the villains. As we see there is no wrath like that of a police department warden.

It amazes me that Commissioner (Edward) Hall does nothing to change the current state of affairs. He waits for someone else to change the situation on

Harboring or otherwise assisting the criminal avoid detection or arrest should attract a five-year sentence.

Penalties must be stiff and applied very quickly. Our prosecutors must be staffed so that they can dispose of these cases very quickly and/or a court must have the appropriate staffing to clear the cases quickly. Once the word is out that TCI is extremely hard on violent crime and very hard on any crimes against individuals and property, the criminal element will soon move to more passive postures.

Some of these suggestions should enter that we should not also reinforce our police force with more and better trained individuals, offer significant rewards for turning in people that you know have committed a crime and using technology to assist in our crime fighting efforts. One hundred strategically placed CCTV cameras around Providenciales would greatly assist in the tracking of occupying criminals.

We only have a handful of banks, 10 non-banks, 40 high net worth businesses, and fewer than 20 communities in Providenciales. There is a higher probability of finding a target.

Mark Bennett
Providenciales

1. ANYONE found to be harboring, hiding or withholding information from the police will be prosecuted to the fullest extent.

2. ANYONE found to be harboring, hiding or withholding information from the police will be prosecuted to the fullest extent.

3. Issue Tazers to every officer - police, port and customs.

4. Permit civilians to purchase and carry personal type Tazers. Background check required. Best alternative to handguns. Non-lethal.

5. Make ALL handguns illegal. It is too difficult to know who has a permit and who does not. ANY handgun (other than a medical or illegal).

6. Impose minimums on

Governor proposes tougher gun laws

GUNS from page 1

Provinciales," he said. "The exercise included roadblocks and traffic stops, resulting in the impounding of illegal arms and charges for other violations."

Also, the Attorney General's chambers will be increasing staff to help police make their cases.

During the last three months, there have been more than a dozen gun-related robberies, during which one victim was killed and two victims were wounded. In one case, the intended victim of a carjacking shot his assailant with a legal handgun.

In the latest attack, armed gunmen robbed a customer at the First Caribbean International Bank on Leeward Highway around lunchtime Oct. 14. The third such daytime robbery within two weeks, but one was ignored, but police have yet to release any further details.

On Oct. 7, robbers shot out a glass door and a display case with an assault rifle during a hold-up robbery of a jewelry store on Leeward Highway, leading off with watches and finger rings worth \$100,000.

And a Canadian man was wounded around 2 p.m. on Oct. 1 when he tried to stop two masked gunmen from robbing his finance outside the First Bank of Canada on Leeward Highway.

"I share the shock of the community at the increase in violent crime in recent weeks," the governor said. "The incidents of armed robberies and multiple use of guns, including today's Oct. 14 attack at the First Caribbean Bank, have reinforced my determination to work with the commissioner of police and attorney general in bringing to account those who are responsible."

Business owners and politicians have been calling on the interim government and the U.K. for tougher laws and increased police presence. The latest law petition demanding the U.K. government take swift action, as the British are responsible for security in the country.

The aim of tougher mandatory laws and restrictions on bail is to get criminals off the street for as long as possible to prevent crime. Tazers with the threat of tough penalties, criminals will think twice about using guns or go elsewhere to commit crimes, it is reasoned.

However, few arrests have been made in the latest spate of armed gun crimes. When there have been arrests, suspects have been quickly freed on bail - including one people charged with the daylight armed robbery of a jewelry store in Grace Bay

Current maximum penalties

Under current TCI laws, criminals using guns during crimes could face these charges and penalties:

- Robbery (with or without gun) - 10 years
- Causing grievous bodily harm with intent - life
- Using a gun during a crime - 10 years
- Illegal possession of a gun - 5 years
- Multisus wounding - 5 years
- Occasioning actual bodily harm - 2 years
- Common assault - 6 months



Source: Attorney General's Chambers

prosecutor or judge to request a trial without a jury. The judge would make the decision, but that ruling could be appealed to the three-judge COURT of Appeal.

On Sept. 16, the Consultative Forum deferred that proposal until more information, and that the law could be revised and discussed further before being recommended to the governor's Advisory Council.

While some oppose the change, others have said that judges should hear serious cases so that justice can be done for someone who is so afraid to them - which can be a problem in small jurisdictions.

Some of the steps taken by the interim government to help police in their fight against crime include:

- An additional \$4 million was appropriated for police in this year's budget - a 30 percent increase.
- Four seasonal U.K. police specialists were hired.
- Four community policing officers now serve Providenciales and two serve Grand Turk.
- Neighborhood Watch and community policing have been established in many areas.
- A new police substation has opened in Salsburgh Plaza on Grace Bay.
- Police created a Case File Quality Assurance Unit to ensure proper case preparation for prosecutors.
- The governor's Advisory Council has approved moving the police department into new

quarters along with fire services and 911. Also approved was the purchase of five additional vehicles and a replacement generator.

Police patrol practices have been changed to get more officers on the streets and to increase uniform patrol visibility and improve response times.

Some people are calling for a more aggressive approach, such as allowing police and citizens to be armed with firearms and bringing in military troops to aid police. Civilian handgun ownership is already allowed with a permit.

The increase in crime has left residents fearful and the governor under pressure from all sides to take serious action to bring such criminals to justice.

"We call on the government to put their money where their mouth is and spend the money that is received from the Department For International Development, which specifically provided the funding through the emergency loans for fighting crime," the People's Democratic Movement said in a statement Oct. 12. "We urge (Her Majesty's Government) to inject this \$1 million into the specialist equipment, training and personnel needed to protect our people."

Anyone with information relating to a crime which has been committed or knowledge of a person in the possession of illegal guns is asked to contact CrimeSupport at 1-800-TIPS (877-743-4774) or an attorney, answered by trained professionals in the U.S.



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Additional Turkeys
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Gun Laws - Amended

Economic Counsel

The screenshot shows the FortisTCI website. The header includes the FortisTCI logo, a search bar, and navigation links: HOME, ABOUT US, CUSTOMER SERVICES, NEWS AND EVENTS, QUICK LINKS, and CONTACT US. The main content area is titled "FORTISTCI PRESS RELEASES" and features a search form with fields for Date (MONTH, YEAR), Keyword, and Category. Below the search form, there is an RSS link and a list of archives from 2012 to 2008. The featured press release is dated February 16th, 2012, and is titled "FortisTCI Ltd. Hosts Gathering with TCHTA and Chamber of Commerce". The text of the release describes a meeting with the Providenciales Chamber of Commerce and the Turks and Caicos Hotel and Tourism Association, focusing on customer relations and strategic planning.

Power Company – Reduction of base costs

Community



TCI Shines – Spring Bi-Annual Clean-up Campaign