

# **Policing and the Community in Brisbane**

**July 1998**

**Research and Prevention Division**

## **CJC MISSION**

To promote integrity in the Queensland Public Sector and  
an effective, fair and accessible criminal justice system

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ISBN 0-7242-7136-8

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# Abbreviations

ATSI	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
CAD	Computer Aided Dispatch
CBD	Central business district
CCC	Community Consultative Committee
CJC	Criminal Justice Commission
CPP	Crime Prevention Partnership
CRISP	Crime Recording Information System for Police
DCLO	District Community Liaison Officer
JAB	Juvenile Aid Bureau
NRMA	New South Wales Motoring Association
PCYC	Police Citizens Youth Club
PSMC	Public Sector Management Commission
QPS	Queensland Police Service
SEQEB	South-East Queensland Electricity Board

# Acknowledgments

This research report could not have been completed without the cooperation and assistance of the Queensland Police Service. In particular, the contributions of the following people are acknowledged:

- Inspector Tonya Carew, Ms Peta Mackay and Dr Alison Dyne, who conducted the interviews on which chapter 4 is based
- Senior Sergeant Joanne Atkens of Metro North Region and Acting Senior Sergeant Ivan Sikorsky of Metro South Region
- Dr Ann Scott and Senior Sergeant Bob Gee of the Office of the Commissioner
- Officers-in-charge from Metro North and Metro South, who were interviewed for the project
- operational police in both regions who responded to the survey discussed in chapter 5.

Anne Edwards of the CJC's Research and Prevention Division managed the project and had primary responsibility for the writing of this report. Margot Ffrench and Tara McGee also assisted with the research.

**David Brereton**

Director

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# Executive Summary

## Introduction

Over the past few years, police organisations have increasingly been exploring methods of policing that do not rely solely on traditional reactive measures. Two major themes have been community (or ‘partnership’) policing and problem-oriented policing.

The key premise underpinning community policing is that crime can be reduced by increasing the quantity and quality of contact between police and citizens. Problem-oriented policing, on the other hand, describes a new framework in which to focus innovation, regardless of whether particular strategies adopted entail increased contact with the community.

The underlying themes of community/partnership policing, therefore, are:

- local communities are a potentially valuable — but under-utilised — source of information about crime and local policing problems
- police will be much more effective if they can work in conjunction with other agencies and local communities to deal with the causes of crime and related problems.

The underlying themes of problem-oriented policing are:

- police should be trying to prevent the occurrence of crime and disorder, rather than just reacting to it
- police need to move beyond a focus on individual incidents and pay greater attention to identifying and dealing with the causes of policing problems.

This research report focuses primarily on issues associated with the implementation of partnership policing in the Queensland Police Service (QPS), but also includes some examination of problem-oriented policing, in recognition of the links between the two approaches.

The importance of community/partnership policing in Queensland is recognised in the *Police Service Administration Act 1990*, which states:

In performance of the functions of the Police Service, members of the Service are to act in partnership with the community at large to the extent compatible with the efficient and proper performance of those duties.

This emphasis was restated in 1997 in the QPS Vision Statement:

We are determined to be a professional police service, dedicated to excellence and committed to working in partnership with the people of Queensland to enhance the safety and security of our community.

As detailed below, the QPS has also set in train a number of organisational initiatives to promote the concept of problem-oriented policing.

The report, which is based on surveys and interviews of police and local councillors in Brisbane, seeks to contribute to the development of improved policing methods in Queensland by firstly documenting the progress that the QPS has made so far in implementing partnership policing and aspects of problem-oriented policing in Metro North and Metro South Regions of Brisbane, and secondly identifying issues that will require consideration if further gains are to be achieved.<sup>1</sup> The report also documents a methodology that may be of more general use in monitoring the implementation of new policing strategies within the QPS.

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<sup>1</sup> The data used in the report were collected in late 1997 for a joint CJC–QPS evaluation of clustering in Metro North, undertaken in response to Recommendation 139 of the 1996 *Report on the Review of the Queensland Police Service* (Bingham Review).

With its large population, diverse array of communities and cultures, highly mobile residential population, and large volume of calls for service requiring different methods of service delivery, the Brisbane area presents particular challenges for the implementation of these forms of policing.

Some of the findings regarding the Metro North and Metro South Regions may not necessarily apply to other regions; in particular, it is likely that some elements of partnership policing can be more readily implemented in provincial centres and country areas. However, we consider that the findings of this study should be broadly applicable to other large urban areas of Queensland such as Ipswich, Logan City and the Gold Coast. In addition, the two metropolitan regions — which contain nearly a third of the total Queensland population — are sufficiently important in their own right to warrant close attention.

In this study, we addressed a number of questions about the delivery of policing services in the two regions. The project consisted of four separate components associated with each of the areas summarised below.

#### Key measures and data sources

Measure	Data source
What community policing arrangements are in place at the regional and local level?	Community policing indicators schedule sent to Regional Community Liaison Officers in both regions.
How do community representatives view community policing in their areas?	Interviews with local councillors
To what extent do the management of police divisions and clusters use information to identify local policing problems and have processes for addressing any problems that have been identified?	Interviews with Officers in Charge
To what extent do operational police interact with the local community and apply the principles of proactive policing in their daily work?	Survey of operational police

## Community policing structures and programs

There are 18 full-time staff performing designated community liaison and coordination roles in the two metropolitan regions (excluding officers assigned to police beats and shopfronts). These roles are arranged differently in each of the regions, with Metro North committing more staff to community liaison duties than Metro South.

According to information provided by the Regional Community Liaison Coordinator in each of the regions:

- a number of official community policing programs are in operation in metropolitan Brisbane, the most popular being Neighbourhood Watch
- only three police beats and six shopfronts are in operation in the two regions, indicating that the QPS makes only very limited use of this form of service delivery
- it appears that Metro North has initiated more formal liaison or consultative groups than Metro South, although the effectiveness of liaison committees has not been assessed by this research, nor by the Service itself
- the two regions fell well short of the state average number of active Community Consultative Committees per 100,000 population — Metro North has only two active committees representing one for every 252,675 people and Metro South has three active committees, one for every 183,192 people; by contrast, the state average is one for every 45,188 people
- problem-oriented policing has not yet been implemented on a large scale in the metropolitan area, although Metro North in particular has recorded some innovative examples of policing strategies aimed at addressing a range of problems including property damage, theft, and juvenile offending.

## Local councillor interviews

To establish some measure of community satisfaction with police, and to assess the extent of police involvement in local issues, interviews were conducted with 29 local councillors from Brisbane City, Redland Shire and Pine Rivers Shire Councils. Councillors were selected on the basis of having a fairly high level of involvement with their local community.

Most interviewees reported contact with local police, but the contact in some cases was only minimal — this may have been more due to councillors themselves not seeing policing issues as their responsibility than to a lack of police initiative. Contact with police was mainly through official community policing programs such as Neighbourhood Watch. The most common source of information about local policing problems cited by local councillors was the general public, and rarely police themselves.

The top three policing problems cited by councillors were traffic and speeding problems, juvenile offending, and vandalism. While most councillors felt that police on the whole were generally aware of the problems in their local area, the councillors often did not think the police were particularly effective in resolving these problems.

Councillors generally perceived a fairly high level of community satisfaction with services provided by police, although there were several exceptions. Some concern was expressed that police were not sufficiently engaging in crime prevention activities. All interviewees suggested ways to improve the community–police partnership, such as increasing the visibility of police, establishing new consultative mechanisms, improving existing consultative mechanisms, and increasing public knowledge about police work and the role of police in the community. Councillors also expressed concern about the delivery of policing services in their area, several suggesting the need for new or improved consultative arrangements.

## Officer in Charge interviews

To gain an understanding of the routine management of community policing, and to assess the impact of community policing on day-to-day operations, interviews were conducted with 26 Officers in Charge of police divisions and clusters in the two regions.

All Officers in Charge appeared to be aware, and have some understanding, of community policing. The majority had:

- implemented at least one community policing initiative to resolve a local policing problem
- engaged in consultative processes with the local community to address the problem
- gained the cooperation of at least one external agency
- used feedback provided by both police and community sources to evaluate the success of their community policing initiative.

Overall, however, community policing assumed a secondary role to reactive policing in the day-to-day work of Officers in Charge. It was found that:

- Officers in Charge mostly did not see improving contact with the community and problem-oriented policing as important goals
- although most Officers in Charge accommodated community policing, at least some viewed it as a burden
- many of the Officers in Charge cited lack of staff and resources, insufficient time, low staff enthusiasm, and other Service requirements as impediments to the implementation of community policing; there was a general acknowledgement that service delivery and reactive policing requirements had to ‘come first’.

## Operational police survey

Four hundred operational police in the two regions were surveyed to ascertain:

- the frequency of their involvement in community policing activities during the last month
- their knowledge of the local community
- the time they spent on community policing activities.

The response rate for the operational police survey was only 28 per cent (111 officers), which limits the conclusions that can be drawn. However, it appears from the results of the survey that:

- levels of partnership policing activities were relatively low in metropolitan Brisbane, compared to traditional reactive policing duties
- the most frequently performed activities were more general strategies such as informal discussion with colleagues; more focused activities, such as attending community meetings, were performed infrequently
- the majority of respondents reported that they had little or no time for engaging in partnership policing activities
- respondents were generally dissatisfied with the level of their involvement in partnership policing, and many commented on their willingness to do more if given support
- the majority of respondents reported that they considered their local knowledge to be either 'excellent' or 'reasonable'
- the major barriers to partnership policing that were identified by operational police were:
  - perceived lack of departmental support
  - poor public relations
  - heavy workloads
  - other work priorities
  - inadequate time
  - conflict with personal and family commitments.

## Issues to be addressed

The research presented in this report documents some good examples of partnership and problem-oriented policing approaches being utilised by police, and identifies areas where real progress has been made under difficult conditions. However, the report has also highlighted the problems experienced by Officers in Charge and rank and file officers in attempting to meet the dual demands of responding to calls for service and working in partnership with local communities.

As QPS senior management recognise, a corporate commitment to partnership and problem-oriented policing must be more fully integrated into service delivery. This can be achieved in the following ways:

- developing strategies for alleviating demands on resources to answer claims of heavy workloads and insufficient time and staff to undertake partnership policing activities, such as:
  - using negotiated response strategies to manage calls for service
  - focusing on reducing calls for service to high-volume repeat addresses and 'hot spots'
  - using single-officer patrols to a greater extent, and reallocating untasked time to proactive tasks
- developing more useful strategies for measurement of partnership activities, such as:
  - utilising information from the Statewide Activity Survey to document the extent of rank and file involvement in proactive activities

- implementing a systematic process for documenting local partnership and problem-solving initiatives
- initiating an annual planning system for Officers in Charge that would tie in with district-level reporting structures already in place
- establishing local structures to involve community representatives in the resolution of policing problems, e.g. the Crime Prevention Partnership (CPP) initiative, which is being trialled in seven locations in Queensland.<sup>2</sup> As there are currently no CPPs in operation in metropolitan Brisbane, it would be sensible to proceed with a trial CPP in a metropolitan location, once the evaluation of the current CPPs has been completed. While the QPS needs to continue to explore ways of establishing local structures which involve community representatives in the resolution of policing problems, there is also a need for councillors to facilitate the involvement of local government in local crime prevention issues.
- giving emphasis, in the promotions process, to selecting officers who are committed to, and capable of implementing, partnership and problem-oriented policing approaches. The QPS now includes a requirement for problem-solving skills in many position descriptions. However, there is scope to strengthen these provisions; for example, by requiring an applicant to demonstrate the extent to which he/she has developed relationships with local community members or has been involved in solving local problems.

## Conclusion

The recent initiatives undertaken by the Service indicate that it is seeking to work more closely with communities to address local crime and disorder problems. The translation of this corporate intention into day-to-day operational policing will require the vigilant and creative attention of the Service. The results of the present research have shown that, certainly as far as the Brisbane metropolitan area is concerned, there are substantial obstacles to the effective implementation of problem-oriented and partnership policing. Strategies for dealing with these obstacles are needed to ensure these new styles of policing are applied successfully.

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<sup>2</sup> CPPs are intended to identify public safety concerns, develop strategies that will allay these concerns, and consult communities on the implementation of crime prevention strategies. One of the seven members of each CPP is a senior police officer who is required to provide all relevant information and support to the CPP. Partnerships report monthly on their progress to a central coordinating body, which advises the Minister on crime prevention in Queensland.

# 1 Introduction

Over the past few years police organisations have increasingly been exploring methods of policing that do not rely solely on traditional reactive measures. Two major themes have been community (or ‘partnership’) policing and problem-oriented policing.

The key premise underpinning community policing is that crime can be reduced by increasing the quantity and quality of police–citizen contact. Problem-oriented policing, on the other hand, describes a new framework in which to focus innovation, regardless of whether particular strategies adopted entail increased contact with the community.

The underlying themes of community, or partnership, policing are:

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This introductory chapter establishes the focus of the report and presents a brief history of both problem-oriented and partnership policing in the QPS. The chapter concludes by identifying the measures we used in the report, and setting out the limitations of our research.

## Background to the report

The data reported here were collected in late 1997 for a joint QPS and CJC evaluation of the impact of clustering in Metro North Region. Clustering, introduced in Metro North in 1993, eliminated the district level of the QPS regional administrative structure, and created nine centralised clusters within the region, all operating on a 24-hour basis. Clustering is also referred to as ‘regionalisation’ and ‘divisionalisation’.

This initial study was undertaken primarily in response to Recommendation 139 of the 1996 *Report of the Review of the Queensland Police Service* (Bingham Review):

The Committee recommends that: (i) before wider implementation of clustering, the Commissioner, in conjunction with the CJC, conduct a proper evaluation of clustering; and (ii) in undertaking this evaluation, regard should be had to whether or not it is consistent with other recommendations in this report — in particular, whether this form of policing needs to be underpinned by more localised forms of policing, such as small community police stations and ‘beats’.

In 1997, a joint QPS and CJC project team was formed to consider this recommendation. The QPS took primary responsibility for assessing the administrative and operational consequences of the shift to clustering in Metro North. Because of the lack of historical data, this study focused on comparing the performance of Metro North with Metro South, which has a more traditional three-tiered structure (region, district, division).<sup>1</sup> The CJC contribution to this project involved comparing how well police in the two regions had performed on various indicators of involvement with the community.<sup>2</sup>

We decided to present the information which we had collected for this study in a separate report because of the emphasis which the QPS is now giving to promoting concepts such as problem-oriented and partnership policing approaches. The Brisbane metropolitan area, with its large population, is a valuable case study because it presents particular challenges for the implementation of these forms of policing, namely:

- a diverse array of communities and cultures requiring different policing responses
- a highly mobile residential population making it hard to identify and organise discrete community groups
- a variety of policing contexts (such as the CBD and nightclub areas as well as large residential areas), each requiring different methods of service delivery
- a large volume of calls for service, which places heavy demands on the reactive capacity of the police.

An understanding of what has occurred in Brisbane, and of the obstacles to implementation that have been encountered, can therefore contribute to a broader understanding of what is required to promote these approaches across the State, especially in other urban areas.

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<sup>1</sup> Because the purpose of this report is to present findings that are relevant to the wider question of proactive policing strategies in metropolitan Brisbane, regional differences are reported only where they are particularly relevant.

<sup>2</sup> The report has been prepared pursuant to the statutory responsibility of the CJC, under the *Criminal Justice Act 1989*, to:

- monitor the performance of the Police Service with a view to ensuring that the most appropriate policing methods are being used, consistently with trends in the nature and incidence of crime, and to ensuring the ability of the police service to respond to those trends — section 23 (g); and
- review on a continuing basis the effectiveness of programs and methods of the Police [Service], in particular in relation to ... community policing — section 56 3(f).

## Proactive policing in the QPS: A brief history

The related concepts of community policing and partnership policing have been identified as priority areas for the QPS in several reports in the decade since the Fitzgerald Inquiry.<sup>3</sup> The need to adopt problem-solving strategies has also been identified.

The Fitzgerald Report was critical of the traditional reactive approach to policing adopted by the QPS, and recommended the introduction of such strategies as increased community consultation, greater focus on problem-oriented policing, and greater reliance on beat policing in preference to vehicle-based random patrols.

In response to the Fitzgerald Report, the QPS made community policing a primary focus for the Service, as articulated in the organisation's mission statement. The Service began the task of working more cooperatively with the community by establishing the Community Policing Support Branch, which introduced strategies such as Community Consultative Committees (CCCs) and Neighbourhood Watch.

Despite these positive steps, the 1993 Public Sector Management Commission (PSMC) Review of the QPS reported that community policing had been 'the subject of confusion, apathy and alienation within the QPS' (p. 128), and indicated that the establishment of the Community Policing Support Branch had effectively marginalised community policing into a single specialist unit. The Review recommended the relocation of the Branch into the Operations Support Command, and the development of a more operationally focused philosophy for the Branch.

In line with this recommendation, the Branch was disbanded in 1994 and its functions transferred to the Crime Prevention Unit, situated within Operations Support Command. This Unit has continued to implement and coordinate various crime prevention and community policing programs. Most of the responsibility for implementing the concept of community policing now lies with the regions.

The CJC's 1994 review of the implementation of the Fitzgerald Report's recommendations noted that community policing was a poorly understood concept seen by many police as a public relations exercise rather than a strategy affecting the core business of policing. Although some structures aimed at improving police-community consultation had been introduced, not all had been effective. The CJC also noted that, while some problem-solving initiatives had been undertaken, problem-solving had not generally become standard police practice. In addition, apart from the Toowoomba police beat initiative and shopfront programs — in their trial phase at the time — few innovations had been made to the standard means of police service delivery.

The CJC review identified a need for:

- development of an overall strategy to ensure that the concept of community policing could be adequately promoted and integrated into operational policing practice
- improved channels of communication between local communities and police
- more extensive and innovative problem-solving strategies, including training in problem-solving skills and better local information
- development of local community policing initiatives by police divisions
- development of alternative patrol strategies such as beat policing.

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<sup>3</sup> • *Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Possible Illegal Activities and Associated Police Misconduct* 1989 (Fitzgerald Report)  
 • *Review of the Queensland Police Service* 1993 (PSMC Review)  
 • *Implementation of Reform within the Queensland Police Service*, CJC 1994  
 • *Report on the Review of the QPS* 1996 (Bingham Review)

Many of these themes were revisited in the 1996 Bingham Review. In its chapter on policing strategies, the Review noted that, despite a community policing philosophy being part of the QPS Corporate Plan since 1991, many police still confused community policing with public relations and perceived it as something peripheral to core policing business. In particular, the Review noted that:

- there was no organisation-wide strategy for promoting community policing
- community policing was still seen as a centralised function rather than a philosophy permeating all policing
- there was inadequate training and support for officers to engage in community policing
- evaluation of community policing strategies and programs was inadequate
- innovative local programs and strategies had failed due to lack of funding.

Since the Bingham Review, the QPS has taken a number of initiatives to encourage a more strategic approach to addressing the above issues. Of the ten relevant recommendations made by the Review, five have so far been completed and the remainder are at various stages in the implementation process. Table 1.1 details the various recommendations and the progress made in implementing them.

A number of committees and working groups have been established to implement the principles expressed in the July 1997 policy statement. For example, as of May 1998:

- the Partnership and Problem-Oriented Policing Working Group has developed a Guide to Problem-Oriented and Partnership Policing which has been endorsed by the Senior Executive Service for trialling across the State
- the Training Working Group has developed a training plan and drafted a problem-solving training package
- the Information Best Practice Working Group is preparing a report for the Senior Executive Conference in relation to databases for proactive intelligence gathering
- the Marketing Working Group is devising strategies to reinforce the emphasis on problem-oriented policing
- a project database by the Ethical Standards Command and the Information Management Division is being developed which will assist in the dissemination of good practice examples of problem-oriented and partnership policing across the State
- a problem-oriented and partnership policing trial is being conducted in Redcliffe District. The evaluation of this trial, being conducted by the Review and Evaluation Branch of the Ethical Standards Command, will provide a model for the evaluation of other projects across the Service.

These various working groups are overseen by the Policing Strategies Steering Committee, which is chaired by the Assistant Commissioner, Operations Support Command.

In addition to establishing initiatives in response to the Bingham Review, the QPS has participated in the Crime Prevention Partnerships (CPP) initiative, which is being trialled in seven locations in Queensland. CPPs are intended to identify public safety concerns, develop strategies that will allay these concerns, and consult with their communities on the implementation of crime prevention strategies. One of the seven members of each CPP is a senior police officer who is required to provide all relevant information and support to the CPP. CPPs report monthly on their progress to a central coordinating body.

**Table 1.1 — Implementation of Bingham Review recommendations 133 to 142**

No.	Recommendation	Implementation as at May 1998
133	That the Commissioner develop a clear policy statement about policing in partnership with the community consistent with s. 2.4(2) of the <i>Police Service Administration Act 1990</i> .	Vision statement adopted by Senior Executive Conference in 1997 and widely disseminated across the State.
134	That the Commissioner devise strategies to implement this policy.	Strategies being developed under the auspices of the Policing Strategies Steering Committee.
135	That an evaluation of Community Consultative Committees be conducted to determine when and under what circumstances they are an effective medium to provide the links between the QPS and the public.	Completed — a CJC report entitled <i>Community Consultative Committees and the QPS: An Evaluation</i> was published in September 1997. Recommendations from this report are currently being implemented.
136	That the Commissioner investigate the range of strategies needed to provide links between the QPS and the public to meet varying circumstances.	Work is continuing — the QPS has been involved with the trial of Crime Prevention Partnerships, and is currently implementing recommendations from the CJC's evaluation of Community Consultative Committees.
137	That demonstrated problem-solving skills be a requirement for promotion.	Many position descriptions now include problem-solving skills in the selection criteria for positions.
138	That the Commissioner allocate funds specifically for appropriately sited beat policing projects.	Not yet implemented — a report has been presented to the Assistant Commissioner, Operations Support Command.
139	That: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• before wider implementation of clustering, the Commissioner, in conjunction with the CJC, conduct a proper evaluation of clustering</li> <li>• in undertaking this evaluation, regard should be had to whether it is consistent with other recommendations in this report — in particular, whether this form of policing needs to be underpinned by more localised forms of policing, such as small community police stations and 'beats'.</li> </ul>	Completed — joint QPS-CJC report entitled <i>Clustering Evaluation</i> has been written and presented to the Senior Executive Conference.
140	That the Commissioner seek to enhance the multi-agency approach to domestic violence intervention in accordance with both the QPS <i>Domestic Violence Strategic Plan 1993–95</i> and the recommendations contained in the report <i>Only a Domestic</i> .	Completed and ongoing — the new QPS <i>Domestic Violence Strategic Plan 1997–2000</i> includes strategies to improve communication between agencies.
141	That the Commissioner: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• further develop negotiated response strategies</li> <li>• extend the use of single officer patrols where officer safety is not assessed as a significant issue</li> <li>• develop strategies for better using time currently spent on untasked patrols.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not yet implemented</li> <li>• Not yet implemented, but QPS advises that industrial negotiations are continuing</li> <li>• A draft report has been completed.</li> </ul>
142	That the Commissioner: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• develop the capacity to capture and analyse local information about crime trends to facilitate particularised responses</li> <li>• develop the consultancy capacity of the Crime Prevention Unit</li> <li>• prepare an annual plan in order to measure whether the problem-solving strategies have been properly implemented.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A report is currently being prepared detailing the future of databases for local intelligence gathering.</li> <li>• Not yet implemented.</li> <li>• Annual budget reporting will include reports on proactive policing.</li> </ul>

## Measures of proactive policing

In this report, we address a number of questions about partnership policing and problem-oriented policing in Metro North and Metro South Regions. Table 1.2 lists the measures and data sources we used.

The project consisted of four separate components associated with each of the areas listed in table 1.2. The original clustering evaluation research was conducted by a team of research officers from the QPS and the CJC, and was completed under the auspices of a QPS Working Group formed to oversee the evaluation.

**Table 1.2 — Key measures and data sources**

<b>Measure</b>	<b>Data source</b>
What community policing arrangements are in place at the regional and local level? In particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• what are the number, type and coverage of such arrangements?</li> <li>• to what extent have police used these mechanisms to identify policing problems and develop possible solutions?</li> </ul>	Community policing indicators schedule sent to Regional Community Liaison Officers in Metro North and Metro South Regions
How do the community representatives view community policing in their areas?	Interviews with local councillors
To what extent do the management of police divisions and clusters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use information to identify local policing problems (and, if so, the range of information used)?</li> <li>• have processes in place for addressing any problems that have been identified?</li> </ul>	Interviews with local councillors
To what extent do operational police: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• interact with the local community (other than in the context of responding to calls for service or informant activity)?</li> <li>• apply the principles of problem-oriented policing in their daily work?</li> </ul>	Survey of operational police

## Limitations of the research methodology

There are two methodological issues arising from this study. The first relates to the reliability of the indicators chosen to measure police use of partnership and problem-oriented strategies. We acknowledge that each individual component of the research has its limitations, which are detailed towards the beginning of the relevant chapter. However, while each component on its own clearly does not provide sufficient information, a multi-pronged approach can help overcome the limitations of any single measure. If multiple indicators suggest the same broad conclusions, it is more likely that these conclusions are valid.

Secondly, as the study has only included two of the eight QPS regions in Queensland, the conclusions may not necessarily be applicable to other regions. In particular, there is a strong likelihood that some elements of partnership policing can be more readily implemented in large rural centres and smaller country areas. However, it is likely that the findings of this study are broadly applicable to other large urban areas of Queensland such as Ipswich, Logan City and the Gold Coast. In addition, the two metropolitan regions, which contain nearly a third of the total Queensland population, are sufficiently important in their own right to warrant close study.

## A note on terminology

An array of terms are used to describe the movement away from purely reactive policing approaches. For the most part, we have used the term ‘problem-oriented’ and ‘partnership policing’, as this is the phraseology generally adopted by the QPS. However, throughout the text alternative terms such as ‘community policing’ and ‘proactive policing’ have also been used.

## Structure of the report

Each of the four components of the research comprises a chapter in the report, as follows:

- chapter 2 presents an overview of the characteristics of metropolitan Brisbane, and information about the formal community policing programs and strategies in operation in the area
- chapter 3 presents the results of interviews conducted with local councillors on their contact with police
- chapter 4 describes the results of interviews conducted with QPS Officers in Charge in relation to partnership policing and the application of problem-oriented policing approaches within their division or cluster
- chapter 5 presents the results of the survey of operational police about the extent of their involvement in partnership policing activities and their use of problem-oriented policing strategies.

The report concludes with a discussion of common themes arising from each of the four components of the research, and discusses the implications for the further implementation of problem-oriented and partnership policing approaches in metropolitan Brisbane.

Appendices attached to this report give a list of problem-solving initiatives undertaken in the two regions in 1997, as documented by Regional Community Liaison Coordinators (appendix A), a copy of the Officer in Charge interview schedule (appendix B), and a copy of the operational police survey questionnaire (appendix C).

## 2 Metropolitan Brisbane

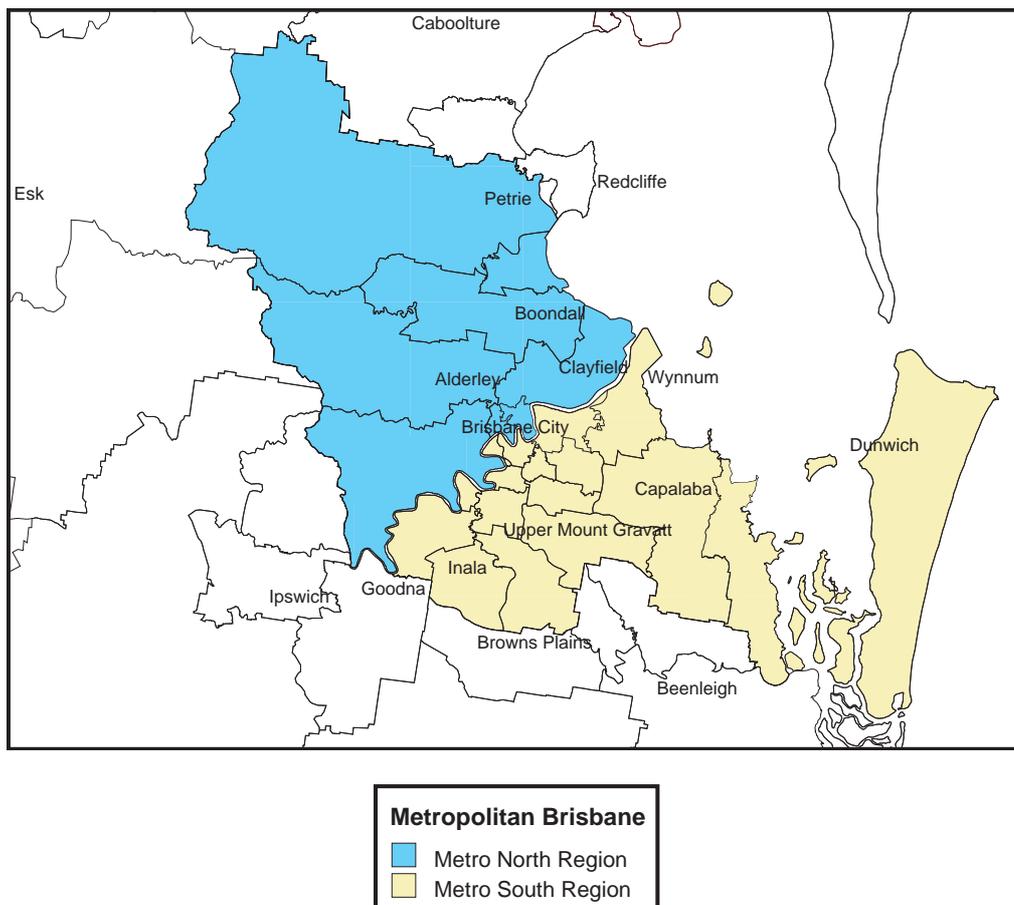
This chapter begins with a presentation of some relevant characteristics of metropolitan Brisbane. The remainder of the chapter presents information gathered from Metro North and Metro South Regions relating to routine regional involvement in official community policing programs and in problem-solving activities, under the following headings:

- organisational arrangements
- official community policing programs
- police beats and shopfronts
- community liaison committees
- Community Consultative Committees (CCCs)
- regional involvement in problem-oriented policing.

### Characteristics of metropolitan Brisbane

The area covered by the Metro North and Metro South Regions is illustrated in figure 2.1. The area includes all of Brisbane City Council, and parts of the Pine Rivers and Redland Shire Councils.

**Figure 2.1 — Metropolitan Brisbane**



To set the context for the following discussion, this section presents information about the population of the two regions, the police strength, rates of reported offences, and volume and types of calls for service.

Table 2.1 shows information relating to the population, the number of police officers, and the number of reported offences in the two regions and in the State as a whole. This information shows that the metropolitan regions account for about a third of the State's population and number of reported offences, and about a quarter of the State's police strength.

Table 2.2 shows that there is some significant variation between the two regions in rates of offences and police strength. Metro North has a higher rate of offence than Metro South, and, consequently, a higher number of police officers per 100,000 population. Table 2.2 also shows a great deal of variation between the districts and clusters within each region. For example, the Brisbane city and Fortitude Valley clusters in Metro North, which comprise the CBD and nightclub areas, have far higher rates of all offence categories than other districts and clusters, while Wynnum District has the lowest rate of all offences in Metro South.

**Table 2.1 — Characteristics of metropolitan Brisbane compared to all of Queensland (1996–97)**

Characteristics	Metro North Region	Metro South Region	Queensland	Metro Brisbane as a percentage of all Qld
Population	505,349	549,576	3,434,266	31
Number of police officers	872	706	6,566	24
Number of reported offences	64,754	56,216	381,525	32

Notes: 1. Data relating to population and police numbers were obtained from the Department of Police Annual Report 1996–97.

2. Reported offence data were obtained from the Department of Police Queensland Police Service Statistical Review 1996–97.

**Table 2.2 — Number of reported offences and police per 100,000 population (1996–97)**

District/cluster	Personal offences	Property offences	All offences	Police strength
Alderley	386	5,552	7,014	–
Boondall	459	7,155	9,040	–
Brisbane city	15,114	65,003	116,679	–
Clayfield	807	11,063	14,100	–
Fortitude Valley	2,782	20,710	36,181	–
Petrie	474	6,683	8,907	–
Sandgate	750	6,954	10,474	–
Toowong	375	6,674	8,206	–
<b>Total Metro North</b>	<b>941</b>	<b>9,078</b>	<b>12,813</b>	<b>173</b>
Oxley	716	9,308	11,663	–
South Brisbane	734	9,079	11,938	–
Wynnum	503	5,167	7,331	–
<b>Total Metro South</b>	<b>662</b>	<b>7,717</b>	<b>10,229</b>	<b>128</b>
<b>Total Queensland</b>	<b>819</b>	<b>7,634</b>	<b>11,110</b>	<b>191</b>

Notes: 1. Data relating to population and police numbers were obtained from the Department of Police Annual Report 1996–97.

2. Reported offence data were obtained from the Department of Police Queensland Police Service Statistical Review 1996–97.

In 1996, there was a total of 183,458 calls for service recorded by the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system (this is the QPS system used to record all calls for service received at the QPS Communications Centre). Table 2.3 shows the types of calls for service received in Brisbane in 1996, the bulk of which were offences against the person or property offences. The table also shows that a great deal of police work involves responding to incidents that are not crime related (such as attending disturbances, dealing with traffic problems and assisting in emergencies).

**Table 2.3 — Calls for service by category in metropolitan Brisbane (1996)**

Job categories	Number	Percentage of total
Offences against the person and property	88,112	48
Vehicle/traffic-related matters	36,277	20
Crisis situation, disturbances	31,457	17
Personal trauma and emergency assistance	14,190	8
Miscellaneous	9,383	5
Fire, explosives, major incidents	3,120	2
Police in trouble/assistance	919	<1

Source: QPS and CJC 1998

## Community policing programs and strategies

### Organisational arrangements

A total of 18 police officers perform designated community liaison and coordination roles full time in the two metropolitan regions (excluding officers assigned to police beats and shopfronts). However, the staffing and administration of community policing in each region is quite different. Metro North Region has 14 full-time Community Liaison Officers distributed over the eight clusters in the region and ranging in rank from Constable through to Senior Sergeant. These officers come under the command of Divisional Tacticians and also work in conjunction with the Regional Operations Unit. Metro North Region has a Regional Community Policing Coordinator who supervises a team employing three Sergeants and one Senior Constable.

Metro South Region employs a Regional Community Liaison Coordinator and three District Community Liaison Officers (DCLOs). DCLOs report monthly about community policing activities to the District Officer.

Community Liaison Officers in Metro North and DCLOs in Metro South are responsible for coordinating and running community policing programs, carrying out public relations duties, implementing problem-oriented policing, liaising with the community, government agencies and local media, and handling school education tasks. They work in conjunction with intelligence staff to identify crime problems.

### Official community policing programs

Table 2.4 presents information provided by Regional Community Liaison Coordinators in relation to official community policing programs.

Although several of these programs are not in themselves particularly useful as measures of either partnership or problem-oriented policing, they have been included here because they have traditionally been used by the QPS as indicators of community policing activity. Information that is more descriptive of problem-oriented and partnership policing activity was collected by asking questions of Regional Community Liaison Coordinators about the types of police initiatives undertaken, the numbers of designated staff assigned community policing activities, and the types of consultative committees convened by police.

**Table 2.4 — Community policing programs in metropolitan Brisbane**

Activity/program	Number
Neighbourhood Watch groups	241
Safety House Committees	33
Houses involved with the Safety House program	approx 1,200*
Blue Light disco events held in last 12 months	30
Police youth clubs in operation	9
* Denotes areas where some information was missing	

Source: Data were provided by Regional Community Liaison Coordinators in each of the two regions.

## Police beats and shopfronts

A **police beat** is a term that signifies a style of policing characterised by:

- the permanent assignment of officers to a discrete geographical area
- use of police methods designed to enhance police interaction with the community
- use of a problem-solving approach to policing local crime problems.

A **police shopfront** is a small police station, generally situated in a shopping precinct, that is designed to be more accessible to the community.

Police beats and shopfronts are both initiatives that have been consistently identified as alternative patrol strategies that should be adopted by the QPS to improve proactive approaches to policing (Fitzgerald Report 1989; CJC 1994; Bingham Review 1996). Currently in metropolitan Brisbane, there are three police beats and six shopfronts in operation. Regional Community Liaison Coordinators were asked to provide information on the average number of calls dealt with by beats and shopfronts, and on initiatives they had generated. However, as table 2.5 (next page) shows, not all police beats and shopfronts were able to provide this information.

Information presented in table 2.5 indicates that police beats and shopfronts do valuable work in local communities in responding to calls for service and taking a problem-oriented approach to local policing problems. However, there are very few police beats and shopfronts in metropolitan Brisbane, hence limited coverage of the large metropolitan population. Clearly, police beats and shopfronts are not a standard feature of QPS service delivery.

## Community liaison committees

Regional Community Liaison Coordinators estimated that a total of 373 people (QPS officers and members of the community) were involved in community liaison committees, and more than 120 meetings had been held in relation to the following community liaison committees convened in metropolitan Brisbane:<sup>4</sup>

- Murrie Watch
- Community Plan Safe Coordinating Group
- Safety and Security of Older People Committee
- Women's Issues Committee
- Police Ethnic Advisory Committee
- Aboriginal and Islander Legal Service
- Child Protection Week
- Queensland Hotels Association/Police Liaison Committee
- Met East School Drug Meetings

<sup>4</sup> It should be noted that not all of these liaison groups were initiated by the QPS.

- 5 Community Consultative Committees
- 2 Licensed Victuallers Committees
- Police and Security Officers Committee
- Zillmere Advisory Group
- Vietnamese Police Liaison Committee
- Alcohol and Drug Awareness

On the information available, it would appear that Metro North Region is considerably more active than Metro South in terms of formal community liaison groups. While it is commendable that Metro North Region has convened or is involved in a range of community liaison committees, it should be noted that the effectiveness of these liaison committees has not been assessed in this report.

**Table 2.5 — Average weekly number of calls for service and successful initiatives by selected police beats and shopfronts in metropolitan Brisbane**

Type of initiative	Average weekly number of calls for service attended	Examples of successful initiatives undertaken
<i>Shopfronts</i>		
Fortitude Valley	25–30	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Monthly items in Centre Management newsletter</li> <li>2. Introduced Quick Dial Telephone from shopkeepers to shopfront</li> <li>3. Conducted campaign to promote property engraving</li> <li>4. Promoted crime prevention weeks (e.g. Domestic Violence Week) by establishing displays</li> </ol>
Toombul	45–50	As above
Brookside	50	As above
Sunnybank	Not available	Not available
Carindale	Not available	Not available
Inala	Not available	Not available
<i>Beats</i>		
House-based (The Gap)	24	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Joint patrol conducted in company with Brisbane Forest Park Ranger</li> <li>2. Identified problems associated with the end of school year, generally relating to local parks (vandalism etc.). Officer addressed schools leading up to the end of school year and patrolled the areas.</li> </ol>
House-based (Kenmore)	16	Large problems with young people in this area. Officer conducted talks with young people, and both officer and young people have identified an area where they can gather which is close to the police establishment (this enables the officer to monitor behaviour even when off duty). This has seen a reduction in minor offences and calls for service.
House-based (West End)	Not available	Not available

Source: Data were provided by Regional Community Liaison Coordinators in each of the two regions.

## Community Consultative Committees (CCCs)

CCCs are committees established with the intention of providing communities and police with a means of communication and local planning, and creating a forum within which local crime and disorder problems can be discussed and resolved. The CJC's 1997 evaluation of CCCs found there were very few of them in metropolitan Brisbane, and concluded that they were more likely to exist in large provincial areas of Queensland.

It is clear from table 2.6 that Metro North Region had the fewest number of active CCCs per 100,000 population at the time the evaluation was conducted, with Metro South Region well below the State average (it must be noted that it is almost certain that Metro South over-counted the number of CCCs they had in the region at the time). More current information provided by Regional Community Liaison Coordinators is that Metro North still has two active CCCs, while Metro South has three. This represents one CCC for every 252,675 people in Metro North and one CCC for every 183,192 people in Metro South.

**Table 2.6 — Number and rate of CCCs per 100,000 population by region**

Region	Number of active CCCs	Number of active CCCs per 100,000 population
Far Northern	16	7.70
Northern	3	1.27
Central	6	1.86
North Coast	18	3.02
Southern	14	2.61
South Eastern	9	1.61
Metro South	8	1.50
Metro North	2	0.40
<b>State total</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>2.26</b>

Source: Data from surveys of all Officers in Charge of Police Divisions, combined with data from surveys of all police contact officers of CCCs listed on the QPS Community Policing Index (CJC 1997).

In addition to disparity in the distribution of CCCs across regions, the evaluation also concluded that there was a range of problems with the operation of the committees. According to members of the committees themselves, many CCCs were poorly attended, produced limited outcomes, and were inadequately equipped to meet their objectives (CJC 1997).

It is clear that the metropolitan area has not been successful in sustaining CCCs. What is more difficult to establish is whether this is due to the broader problems with CCCs reported in the CJC evaluation report, or to the inherent nature of communities in the metropolitan area (large, transient populations that are difficult to mobilise).

## Regional involvement in problem-oriented policing

Regional Community Liaison Coordinators reported a number of examples of problem-solving initiatives undertaken in the two regions (see appendix A). It is clear from these examples that there are many areas suitable for problem-oriented policing. The problems identified ranged from property damage and theft to problems with juveniles. Some of the reported strategies were appropriate and innovative, and the stated outcomes appear to have gone some way toward solving the problems cited in each of the examples. Other strategies were less innovative and there appears to have been a rather standard approach to some problems, particularly theft and break and enters.

There was some variation between Metro North and Metro South Regions in the provision of problem-solving strategies. It appears that Metro North has performed better than Metro South, although there may be several interpretations of this result, such as:

- record keeping in Metro North Region may allow better and more thorough access to data
- Metro North employs a far higher number of Community Liaison Officers than Metro South, which may have affected the capacity of Metro North to conduct problem-oriented strategies
- different administrative priorities or management support between the two regions
- the individual officers involved in community policing in Metro North may have particular abilities or interests that facilitate better problem-oriented outcomes in the region.

Of all these possible explanations, it seems that the difference in staff allocation is the one most likely to contribute to the capacity of each region to undertake problem-oriented policing activities. This tendency for community policing to be carried out by specialist staff points to the fact that these activities are not well integrated into standard police work. Rather, strategies such as problem-oriented policing appear to be an adjunct to more traditional reactive work.

## Conclusion

There are clearly a range of programs and strategies routinely delivered by the QPS in metropolitan Brisbane. Programs such as Neighbourhood Watch and Safety House appear to be reasonably widespread throughout Brisbane. While a number of formal community liaison committees were cited by Regional Community Liaison Coordinators in their response to the schedule, it does appear that Metro North Region has performed better in this area than has Metro South, although the effectiveness of the liaison committees has not been evaluated as part of this research. CCCs have not been extensively established in metropolitan Brisbane, and both regions fell significantly short of the average number of CCCs per 100,000 population statewide.

Police beats and shopfronts have not been widely established in metropolitan Brisbane. Those that were described in the schedules appear to be operating well, both in responding to calls for service and in engaging in problem-oriented approaches to local policing problems. However, beats and shopfronts tend to be more isolated from, rather than integrated into, the overall model of service delivery.

While Metro North appears to have performed better in terms of the use of problem-solving and formal liaison strategies, it is unclear to what extent Metro South has suffered from lack of good information about its own activities. It seems likely that the greater number of Community Liaison Officers employed in Metro North has contributed to the capacity of the region to undertake problem-oriented policing activities on a larger scale.

The improvement of record-keeping procedures for partnership policing activities is a matter for the consideration of all regions in the QPS. It would be of great benefit to QPS regions to be able to indicate, for instance:

- the number of active Neighbourhood Watch groups and Safety House Committees
- the sorts of initiatives undertaken by police beats and shopfronts
- strategies undertaken in response to identified problems.

Perhaps the Service could consider the introduction of a standard system of information recording that is regularly updated.

## 3 Local Councillor Interviews

This chapter presents information from interviews with local councillors in the Brisbane area regarding police involvement with the local community, and describes councillors' perceptions of local satisfaction with police services.

### Method

Interviews with local councillors from Brisbane City, Redland Shire and Pine Rivers Shire Councils were conducted as a means of establishing some measure of community satisfaction with police, and assessing the extent of police involvement in their local communities. It was believed that local councillors, as elected representatives of their local communities, would be in a good position to provide such information. Personal interviews were employed in preference to a survey questionnaire in order to maximise the response rate and enable more in-depth questioning.

Members of the Working Group and research staff from the QPS and the CJC developed a structured interview schedule, which addressed seven different issues, as follows:

1. What is the amount and nature of the contact which you have with police in your capacity as a Councillor?
2. What, in your view, are the main policing problems and issues in your area? What are your sources of information about policing issues?
3. How familiar do you think police are with the policing problems in the local community?
4. In your assessment, how effective have the police been in addressing local policing problems?
5. Are you aware of any example of where police have worked with representatives of the local community to address local policing problems? Could you provide details of these examples?
6. In your view, how could the police–community partnership in your area be enhanced?
7. How satisfied is the local community with the level of service provided by police? How could this service be improved?

A team of five research officers (two QPS officers and three CJC officers) worked in pairs to conduct the interviews and prepare written records. To ensure the accuracy of the recorded material, the information recorded during the interview was in most cases shown to the interviewee.

A total of 29 interviews were conducted. Table 3.1 shows that the majority of interviewees were councillors with the Brisbane City Council (only two councillors from the Brisbane City Council were not available to be interviewed). As QPS regional boundaries do not directly align with local council boundaries, a further five interviews were conducted with members of other local councils. At the completion of all interviews, responses were collated into the seven separate questions. A coding schedule for each question was developed which allowed the information to be quantified.

**Table 3.1 — Location of local councillor interviews**

Location of local councils	Number of interviews conducted
Brisbane City Council	24
Pine Rivers Shire Council	4
Redland Shire Council	1
<b>Total interviews</b>	<b>29</b>

## Limitations of the research design

On its own, this means of evaluating the extent of partnership policing has obvious limitations. Firstly, some would question whether local councillors are the most appropriate representatives of the community to interview for this purpose. It became clear after meeting with several of the councillors that many regarded the State Member of Parliament as more likely to have contact with members of the community on crime and police matters. While some consideration had been given to the possibility of interviewing State MPs, again the time and resource limitations placed on the evaluation precluded interviewing this group. In any case, the research was aiming to ascertain the degree of contact police have with the most immediately local groups in the community; it was concluded that local councillors would be best placed to comment on this.

Another limitation of the study was the degree to which councillors' individual experience varied. For instance, table 3.2 shows that while some local councillors had been in office for less than a year, others had been in office for several years or more (one had served for just over 12 years).

It may be that recently elected councillors have had less contact with local police, and less opportunity to gauge the perceptions of the community about policing than longer serving councillors. In addition, the amount of knowledge a councillor has about local crime and policing is to some extent a matter of personal interest. After all, the position of local councillor encompasses a wide variety of aspects of community life; not all councillors have the same amount of interest in, and therefore the same amount of experience with, policing issues.

While these limitations do require that the results of the study be interpreted with caution, the exercise is still a valuable addition to other information about partnership policing in metropolitan Brisbane.

**Table 3.2 — Number of years in office of local councillors interviewed**

Number of years in office	Number	Percentage
Less than a year	5	17
1 to 3 years	14	48
4 or more years	10	34
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>	

## Findings

### Contact between police and local councillors

All councillors interviewed for the study stated that they had some contact with local police, but the amount and nature of this contact varied widely from councillor to councillor. As can be seen from table 3.3, the majority of interviewees had been in contact with local police through formal police programs, notably Neighbourhood Watch. Involvements with other police programs were also cited, such as CCCs, Police Citizens Youth Clubs (PCYCs), Safety House, Adopt-a-Cop and Community Supporting Police.

The second most commonly cited way local councillors came into contact with police was through informal means such as social events, or in relaying complaints to police from members of the public. Such complaints usually related to traffic problems or vandalism in the area. The prevalence of these sorts of complaints is understandable, given that members of the public would naturally expect local councils to have a role in dealing with them. Several councillors explained that they had contacted police on behalf of the complainant to register the complaint, while others stated that they had referred members of the public to either the police or the State Member. One councillor, in describing his system of making written complaints to police on behalf of his constituents, commented that 'although the matter was usually attended to', he was 'rarely advised of the outcome' by police.

In addition to these means of contact, 11 councillors stated that they had worked jointly with local police on specific issues; for example, issues relating to particular ethnic groups in the area and the management of public areas such as parks.

**Table 3.3 — The nature of councillors’ contact with police (n=29)**

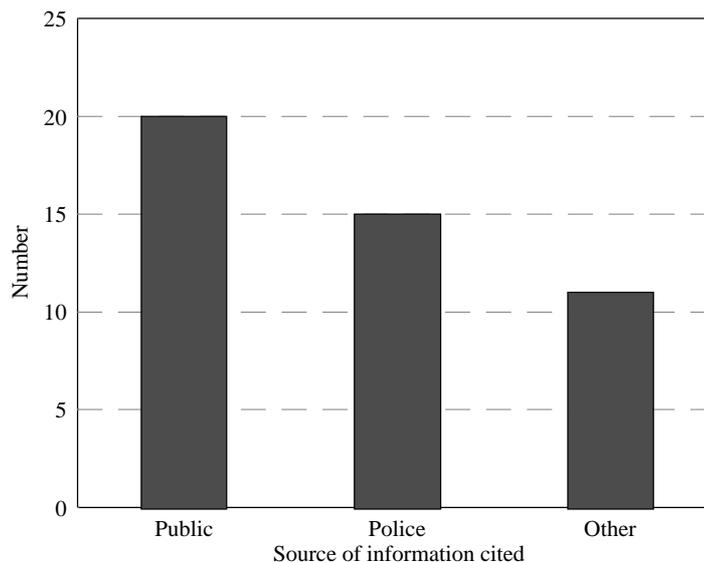
Nature of contact with police	Number	Percentage
Police program	23	79
Unofficial contact	16	55
Contact over particular issues or crime problems	11	38
Through a particular police officer	5	17
Through a police beat or shopfront	2	7
Other	2	7

Note: Multiple responses were allowed

### Crime problems and perceptions of police response

The majority of councillors most often derived their information about policing issues from members of the public (see figure 3.1). Police themselves were a source of information for only five councillors.

**Figure 3.1 — Councillors’ sources of information about policing issues**



- Notes:
1. Information for three respondents was missing
  2. Other includes: local media, council employees, the business community, and personal observation
  3. Multiple responses were allowed

The top three policing problems cited by councillors were traffic and speeding problems, juvenile offending, and vandalism (refer to table 3.4). Given that members of the public were cited as the main source of information about crime problems, these responses are hardly surprising. Ten councillors also cited various quality of service issues, such as lack of police numbers and police cars, lack of police presence and visibility, and inadequate response times.

On the whole, councillors generally believed there was either a good or moderate level of police awareness of the crime problems in their area (see figure 3.2).

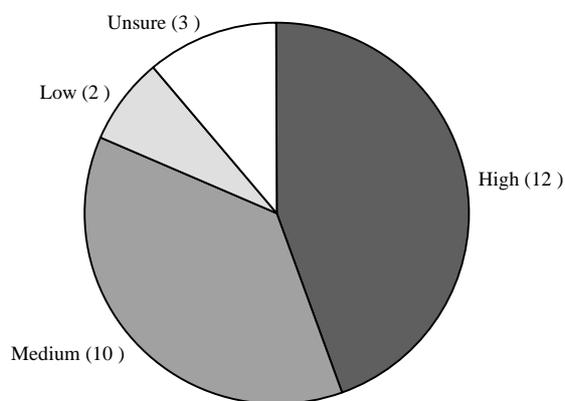
Data presented in figure 3.3 suggest that, while it was felt that police were aware of crime problems, councillors did not think that police were very effective at resolving them. Only four councillors felt that police were effective, with 13 stating that police were only partly effective.

**Table 3.4 — Main policing problems cited by councillors**

Problem cited	Number	Percentage
Traffic/speeding	18	62
Juvenile offending	16	55
Vandalism	16	55
Break and enter	13	45
Quality of service	10	34
Drugs	6	21
Public space security	4	14
Fear of crime	3	10
Other	2	7

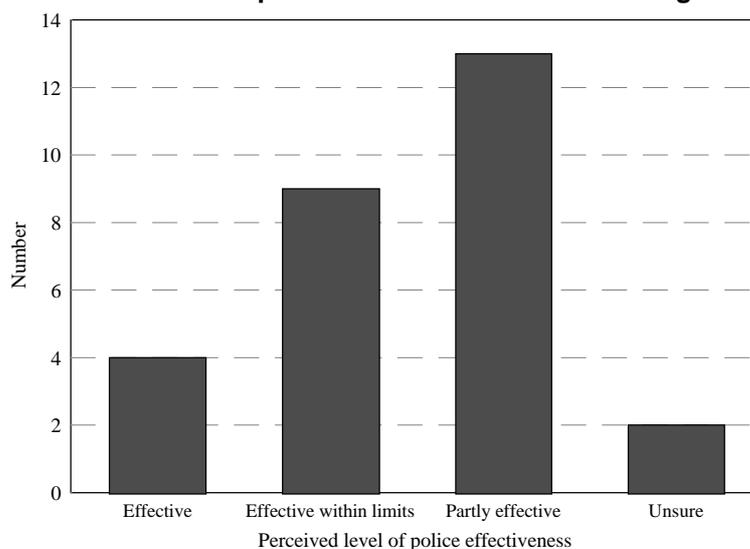
Notes: 1. Multiple responses were permitted.  
 2. Other consists of: difficulty with particular ethnic groups and bag snatching.

**Figure 3.2 — Perceived level of police awareness of crime problems**



Note: Information for two respondents was missing

**Figure 3.3 — Perceived level of police effectiveness in addressing crime problems**



Note: Information for one respondent was missing

Councillors who stated that police were less than effective spoke of several areas in which they were unhappy with police performance. Two councillors were concerned about a decline in interest in Neighbourhood Watch:

- Neighbourhood Watch has dropped right off in the area — no new groups have been established since clustering.
- Sometimes police don't turn up to Neighbourhood Watch meetings — I think that it's important that they do so, otherwise interest will die off.

Several said that the police were ineffective in dealing with speeding and vandalism:

- A \$25,000 piece of playground equipment was fire bombed, and residents reported it to police; they had the registration plate number but this was not enough evidence. Community information says that the crime was committed by a kid who was high on drugs at the time.
- Police need to apprehend graffiti.
- Speeding is a continuing problem; but police are effective in their other roles such as responding to break and enter.

While making these comments, however, many of the councillors were aware that problems such as speeding and vandalism are difficult and expensive to police effectively. Others made reference to the many resource constraints placed on police, and the high expectations of the community:

- [In relation to speeding] There are not enough resources to cover all of the streets, and there is awareness among the community of this lack of resources.
- Police haven't been effective enough to stop traffic offences, but then the traffic problems are too overwhelming to solve.
- Police are very effective on traffic issues when they are there, but they're not always there — they don't have the resources to allow it.
- Police are not particularly effective due to a resource problem.

Three councillors were critical of police for their minimal involvement in crime prevention activities:

- Police work tends to involve bandaid solutions — they tend to engage in too few crime prevention activities. Police are effective in terms of doing their job and booking people; they are not effective in terms of changing culture.
- My own emphasis is on crime prevention. Police seem to deploy resources primarily for the purpose of reactive policing.
- There is no evidence of nipping it in the bud — crime prevention.

This last comment was made by a northside councillor who pointed out that not only was there a lack of crime prevention activity in his area, there was also a serious lack of local knowledge ever since the decision had been made not to staff the local police station.

Finally, councillors were asked to give examples of joint community–police problem-solving. In total, 18 councillors were able to think of such examples, and 11 could not. Examples include:

- Some Aboriginals have a different way of life. In a house in \*\*\* Street, a family had a party one Sunday night and the police were called in to calm it. The people who called the police also called Channel 7 and it became quite hysterical. We [the Council] got together with police and other key bodies and had a series of meetings. We worked out a strategy for dealing with complaints about the family in the future. It was agreed that the police and the media were not to be involved.
- Trucks used to leave the \*\*\* Freeway and use \*\*\* Drive to get where they were going [this drive is narrow, dangerous and there is a school there]. A meeting was held with Council, residents, truck drivers, quarry representative and police. The truck drivers volunteered that they would take a different route ... Police gave input in relation to how it would work, and how it would be enforced. The army, quarry and trucking companies all agreed to cooperate. During this process the community was kept informed and there has been liaison ever since.

- There was a traffic problem on the corner of \*\*\* Road and \*\*\* where a young boy was killed in a traffic accident. The Police Community Consultative Committee took this up as an issue ... A petition was gathered and presented to Council, and now it has been identified as a 'black spot' and they are waiting for funding to come through, at which time they will install a set of traffic lights. This process was facilitated by the police.
- The Residents Action Group is headed by a retired police inspector and involves police, Housing Commission and long-term residents. \*\*\* has always been classed as lower socioeconomic, low skilled, second-class citizens. There has been a stigma attached and it has been perpetuated by the media ... The Resident Action Group has had an effect on tenancies and the new legislation has been pushed by this group. The police have been effective in working with them.

### Improving the community–police partnership

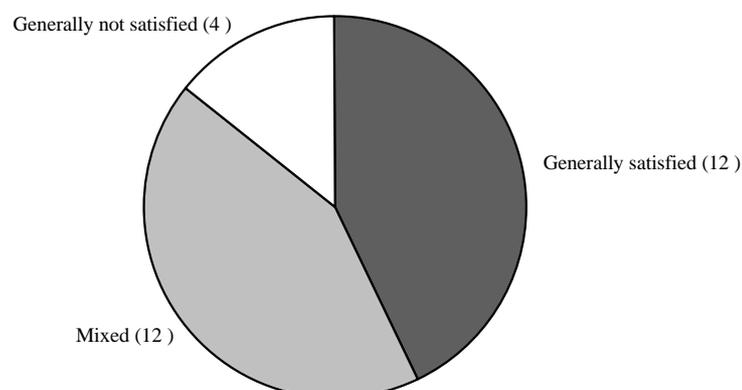
According to councillors, there was generally a reasonable level of community satisfaction with services provided by police (see figure 3.4). A group of 12 councillors, however, responded that the public felt mixed in its satisfaction with police. Examples of these responses are as follows:

- People are largely satisfied with the police response regarding significant crimes, but they think minor crimes are dealt with in a rather perfunctory way and that people are dissatisfied with the way traffic issues are managed.
- Neighbourhood Watch members are pretty pleased with everything. The biggest complaints are about response times to break and enters and accidents. It sometimes takes forever for police to get there.
- The local community would say that the level of service was OK. I sense a feeling in the community that police are focused on more serious criminal activity at the expense of less serious crimes like traffic offences and break and enters. The community senses that it is becoming more difficult to obtain attention from the police about these smaller issues.
- It depends on the incident and the circumstances of the offence. Generally, I think they're happy, but response time is an issue that has been mentioned by constituents.

Several councillors noted that there was a need for greater public awareness of the constraints on police time and resources, and that this education in itself would lead to greater public satisfaction with police.

Finally, four councillors stated that their communities were fairly dissatisfied with the level of service provided by police. Issues such as inadequate response to traffic problems and vandalism, poor police presence in the community, poor local knowledge of the community, and slow response times generally were cited as reasons for this dissatisfaction. Councillors saw the principal means of enhancing the community–police partnership to be through creating a closer working relationship between police and the community, and through increasing the visibility of police (see table 3.5).

**Figure 3.4 — Level of perceived community satisfaction with police**



Note: Information for one respondent was missing

**Table 3.5 — Councillors' suggestions about how to enhance the community–police partnership**

Means of enhancing the partnership	Number	Percentage
Closer working relationship between police and the community	11	38
More visible police	10	34
More resources/funding for police	10	34
Other	6	21

Notes: 1. Multiple responses were permitted

2. Other consists of the following responses: Get a police shopfront, establish a new approach to crime prevention, put police in the local (currently unstaffed) police station, and improve feedback to victims of crime.

Councillors made several suggestions about how to create a better relationship with the community. Most often these suggestions involved the establishment of new consultative mechanisms, the improvement of existing consultative mechanisms, or increasing public knowledge about police work and the role of police in the community. For example:

- Through people knowing who their local police are — through the police putting themselves in the media so the community is more aware of them.
- Police could lift their profile at Neighbourhood Watch meetings insofar as they could provide speakers on specific crime issues.
- Elected representatives should meet with the police, without the public, to be informed of issues relating to the community on a six-monthly basis.
- There's a need for police to interact better with the community, for example police walking the beats.
- You need police walking around as familiar faces and knowing everyone, for example going into parks and chatting to kids and getting to know them. Also to have a presence in shopping centres. With the centralisation of police stations, the community feels as though they have been deserted.
- The partnership may be enhanced by more contact on both sides. For example, it could be enhanced by police dropping in and getting to know people such as the heads of local organisations (e.g. Meals on Wheels, Rotary, church leaders). When I see the local police, they tend to be in their cars, always on the move. They are never walking around.
- I would like police to be more visible — driving around in cars etc. I like the Toowoomba beat approach to policing.
- Police beats are a good idea and I would like to see more police around in the community.
- Police presence at a broader range of community meetings might serve an educative function.

In speaking about the need for closer relationships between the public and police, several councillors also referred to a need to improve the profile of police to increase public awareness of the job of policing.

In addition, many comments made by councillors related to a perceived need for more police resources for their areas, such as more police, improved response times, more police cars on the road, and more funding for proactive policing initiatives:

- Police over on Stradbroke Island work well, but they do lack numbers which makes it difficult to respond to calls. Over the holiday period there are only two police, 40,000 people and three townships. The Council funded five security staff over there on the holidays and they work with the police.
- There was a need for more police on the ground — they need to be more visible and more available.
- We used to have police coming to the schools for 18 months [it was a pilot program]. It was really good and it was stopped due to funding limitations.

- The funding issue needs to be addressed.
- There is a need for more resources.
- The police beat officer needs an offsider.
- There need to be resources that are specifically directed towards enhancing the police–community relationship ... It's very difficult to get in contact with the local community policing officer because he has such little resourcing.

## Conclusion

Key findings from interviews with local councillors are:

- Councillors reported some contact with local police, although this was minimal in some areas. In some cases this may have been because councillors themselves did not see policing issues as their responsibility, rather than this being due to a lack of police initiative.
- Councillors generally come into contact with police either formally through official police programs such as Neighbourhood Watch, or informally at social events.
- Councillors most often cited traffic issues, problems with local juveniles or vandalism as the most serious policing problems in their areas; their source of information was most often their constituents.
- Councillors generally perceived a fairly high level of community satisfaction with services provided by police.
- Councillors felt that the best way of enhancing the community–police partnership was through creating a closer working relationship between police and the community, or by increasing the visibility of police.

There was clear concern among some councillors that police were not sufficiently engaging in crime prevention activities, that police needed to be more visible, and that response times and resources were not adequate. On the other hand, some councillors gave excellent examples of police working with key members of local communities to resolve particular crime problems.

## 4 Officer in Charge Interviews

This chapter presents findings from interviews with Officers in Charge of police divisions or clusters in metropolitan Brisbane. It describes the routine management of partnership and problem-oriented policing by Officers in Charge, the impact of these approaches on day-to-day operations, and the extent and nature of interaction between police and the local community.

### Method

Officers in Charge are generally well placed to know the extent of partnership and problem-oriented policing in their division or cluster, and to influence how policing services are delivered in the area. Officers in Charge of the 17 divisions in Metro South Region and the eight clusters in Metro North Region were interviewed, with the addition of the Officer in Charge at South Bank, which operates as a station within Dutton Park Division (Metro South Region). South Bank was included because its staff numbers are comparable with many of the other divisions in Metro South. In all, 26 interviews were conducted.

The interview process was standardised by the use of an interview schedule, which comprised 21 questions divided into three sections (see appendix B). Officers in Charge were asked questions about the more familiar concept of community policing. They were provided with the schedule of questions before the interview to encourage additional information. Although not every officer took advantage of prior exposure to the questions, some had prepared notes which they used as prompts during the interview.

A team of four (three QPS officers and one from the CJC) worked in pairs to conduct the interviews and compile written records. One team member, who holds the rank of Inspector within the QPS, conducted all the interviews and the three research officers took the role of scribes. The interviews were conducted at the Officers' in Charge place of work and, on average, took an hour to complete. On three occasions another officer was present during the interview, which occurred at the discretion of the Officer in Charge.

The results of Officer in Charge interviews have been presented using the term 'community policing'.

### Limitations of the research design

The interviews have two main limitations as a source of data regarding partnership and problem-oriented policing activities. Firstly, Officers in Charge were only asked to provide illustrative and representative examples of the range of relevant activities, rather than an exhaustive listing of all relevant information. The survey therefore presents a small sample of the partnership and problem-oriented policing activities conducted within metropolitan Brisbane rather than a comprehensive list.

Secondly, the information gained varied according to the knowledge, experience and perspective of each Officer in Charge: some were only acting in the position; others had only recently assumed their position. Similarly, some Officers in Charge noted that 'community policing is not my thing'. Those with less experience and less personal interest in the topic were likely to be less informed about the extent and nature of partnership and problem-oriented policing activities in their division or cluster.

## Findings

Findings from the Officer in Charge interviews are presented in four sections:

- Understanding of community policing
- Day-to-day operations
- Interactions with the community
- Concrete examples of community policing.

Each section provides a description of the response categories, and individual statements from interviewees are used to illustrate the key issues.

### Understanding of community policing

All but one Officer in Charge stated that both the police and the community were key stakeholders in community policing. The exception was the officer who said that community policing was ‘having policemen well trained, out in the community, doing their jobs’. According to this officer being well trained encompassed knowing (i) the law; (ii) how to apply the law; and (iii) how to communicate with people. The main function of police was ‘to create a safe environment for the community; the community benefits from having well-trained officers’. Community policing was not about the community playing a role in solving policing problems.

Most officers described the relationship between police and the community as a partnership, but two expressed different views: one officer suggested that no relationship need exist; the second suggested that the community’s role was secondary.

### Day-to-day operations

This section reviews the descriptions given by Officers in Charge of their day-to-day operations, particularly as they relate to policing goals, the day-to-day impact of community policing, information sources and obstacles to the implementation of community policing.

### Policing goals

As shown in table 4.1, the responses to this question could be grouped into four broad categories. Clearly, Officers in Charge perceived reducing crime and quality of service delivery to be the most important in terms of local policing problems. Administrative and problem-oriented goals were also nominated by several respondents. Improving contact with the community was nominated infrequently.

In summary, the predominant focus was on reducing crime and the quality of service delivery rather than improving contact with the community or problem-oriented policing.

**Table 4.1 — Officers’ in Charge goals in terms of local policing problems**

Goals	Number (n=26)	Percentage
Reducing crime and quality of service delivery	23	88
Problem-oriented policing	5	19
Administrative (training, resources, staffing)	6	23
Improve contact with community	3	12

Notes: 1. Multiple responses were permitted.

2. Crime and quality of service includes: ‘reduce/minimise crime’; ‘make community safer’; ‘de-stigmatise area’; ‘reduce fear of crime’; ‘improve crime clear-up rates’; ‘keep problems under control’; ‘improve response times’; ‘identify and target suspects’; ‘improve response to police issues’.

Problem-oriented policing includes: ‘increase the use of partnership strategies’; ‘target and solve policing problems’; ‘evaluate the results of problem-solving strategies’.

3. Improve contact with community includes: ‘to work in with the community’; ‘to increase foot and bike patrols’; ‘to provide police for Neighbourhood Watch meetings’.

## Impact on day-to-day operations

As shown in table 4.2, on a day-to-day basis Officers in Charge focused on the administrative aspects of community policing, rather than its strategic benefits or its advantages in terms of improved interaction with the community.

Five officers suggested that community policing had a negative administrative impact. Some of the concerns expressed included:

- Fifteen Neighbourhood Watch groups represents a big drain on the division's resources.
- It's time consuming. Neighbourhood Watch Officers have to prepare crime statistics to present to the meetings.
- There are 21 Neighbourhood Watch groups in the division; it is very difficult to supply police officers to each of the meetings.

These comments were consistent with the observation that community policing generally assumed a secondary role in day-to-day operations.

**Table 4.2 — The impact of community policing on day-to-day operations**

Type of impact	Number (n=26)	Percentage
No impact	5	19
Administrative	15	58
Strategic	7	27
Improved interactions with community	5	19

- Notes:
1. Multiple responses were permitted.
  2. Administrative includes: 'rostering'; 'ensuring all staff contribute to some form of community based policing'; 'assigning a staff member to a partnership policing role'; 'partnership policing is time consuming' and 'drains resources'.
  3. Strategic includes: 'partnership policing provides a source of information'; 'community based policing provides our main source of information'; 'partnership policing is an appropriate strategy for issues that arise on a daily basis'.
  4. Improved interactions with the community includes: 'we have implemented foot patrols to make contact with the community'; 'working closely with key community members'; 'daily interactions with the community'.

## Information sources

Table 4.3 indicates that Officers in Charge relied most heavily on QPS databases and other statistics as their sources of information about crime. Local knowledge and local communities were generally less important sources of information.

**Table 4.3 — Information sources used by Officers in Charge**

Information sources	Information sources ever used		Information sources used most often	
	Number (n=26)	Per cent	Number (n=26)	Percentage
QPS databases	23	88	11	42
Other statistics	23	88	12	46
Local knowledge	14	54	7	27
The community	19	73	2	8

- Notes:
1. Multiple responses were permitted.
  2. QPS databases includes CRISP and calls-for-service data.
  3. Other statistics includes: intelligence, crime-trend analyses, logs, occurrence sheets, Activity Report Index, Risk-management information and intelligence-driven patrol boards.
  4. Local knowledge includes: 'Local knowledge' and/or 'information provided by staff'.
  5. The community includes: complaints, information gained by liaisons with the 'general community', 'particular individuals' and 'external organisations', Neighbourhood Watch meetings and media reports.

## Obstacles to the implementation of community policing

All Officers in Charge highlighted at least one obstacle to implementing community policing. Table 4.4 shows the frequency with which various obstacles were identified.

**Table 4.4 — Perceived obstacles to the implementation of partnership policing**

<b>Obstacles</b>	<b>Number (n=25)</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b><i>Organisational</i></b>	25	100
Inadequate staffing/resources	21	84
Lack of time	8	32
Service constraints	7	28
Staff characteristics	5	20
<b><i>Community</i></b>	10	40
Community apathy	6	24
Nature of local community	5	20

- Notes:
1. Multiple responses were permitted.
  2. Information for one respondent was missing.
  3. Service constraints includes: 'service requirements for community based policing'; 'QPS structure'; 'inflexible awards'; 'other QPS programs'.
  4. Staff characteristics includes: 'staff are not locals'; 'staff have negative attitudes to community based policing'.

All officers stated that there were organisational barriers to implementing community policing, particularly in staffing and resourcing initiatives:

- It would be better if Community Liaison Officers were provided with resources that would assist their communication with the public; for example, their own vehicle (not necessarily a standard police vehicle) and a mobile phone. The cluster is currently one vehicle short. Police often use their own cars for work purposes.
- The Community Liaison Officer does not have a car. Special arrangements have to be made when she goes into the community. The property officer has a dedicated car. The Community Liaison Officer has last priority when it comes to vehicle access.

Difficulties with 'lack of time' were cited by eight officers. For example:

- The main thrust is service delivery, which is the bread and butter work. An officer can't be at a Neighbourhood Watch meeting when there are jobs going.
- The division is getting kicked from pillar to post just doing reactive policing jobs. Jobs are stacked up and the division receives complaints about long response times. There's no time for community policing.

Service constraints were nominated as an obstacle to community policing by a further eight officers. The issues that tended to be raised in this context were inflexibility of award provisions, the lack of congruence between QPS philosophy and practice, and inadequate infrastructure to support community policing. The following examples illustrate these points:

- Senior management is very committed to community policing, but this commitment does not always translate to support systems or money.
- The service has a philosophy of community policing; police are supposed to do problem-oriented policing, which involves lots of forms and is too time consuming. However, if you look at the [staffing and budgetary] resources, then it appears that such a major platform has been allocated virtually nothing. The Service was never fair dinkum about it [community policing]. Instead, the focus is on responding to jobs; police work is 98 per cent reactive.

Another organisational obstacle referred to by five officers was 'staff characteristics'. Typical comments were:

- Police officers are not really part of the community; they do their jobs and then go home to their own communities.
- There is a lack of enthusiasm.

Lack of an understanding of community policing, and the expectation that police officers will participate in community policing activities during their own time, were cited as explanations for the lack of staff enthusiasm:

- Community policing is expected of officers during their own time; this is the wrong track. You shouldn't expect young police to be out in the community day and night in their own time. The cluster has lots of committed young police who are really active. Because young police do briefs in their own time, how can you push them into community policing?
- In reality, community policing has never been promoted or described to police. They think it's just 'PR'. A lot of police don't understand the basics of it. Promoting it should be done from Headquarters.

Apart from organisational barriers to community policing, 40 per cent of the interviewees also cited barriers to implementation that arose within the community itself. Six officers suggested that community apathy represented an obstacle to the implementation of community policing, for example:

- It's difficult to inspire and sustain community involvement in initiatives.
- One obstacle to community policing is lack of interest on the part of the community. Neighbourhood Watch struggles; I keep sending staff to Neighbourhood Watch meetings even when only a few community members attend.

The nature of the local community was also perceived as an obstacle to the implementation of community policing by five Officers in Charge. As illustrated by the comments below, three main issues were raised: the non-residential nature of the local community, the geographic spread of the area, and the existence of opposing factions within the local community:

- People come to the area to work or play; they don't actually live here.
- The local area is predominantly high-rise accommodation — there's no real neighbourhood or community.
- The spread of the area is an obstacle; it takes time and resources to attend jobs that are not nearby.
- The local community consists of vastly opposing groups.

## Interactions with the community

### Community contact by Officers in Charge

Officers in Charge were generally concerned to establish relationships with community members and agencies. Table 4.5 shows the strategies adopted by officers to become familiar with their communities. Two respondents stated that they did not seek interaction with their communities. In one instance the officer stated that this was because his role was primarily managerial and community contact was the specific role of another senior officer attached to the cluster. The other respondent stated that: 'I have no time to develop relationships with the community'.

About half of the officers made contact with their communities through participation in local initiatives generated by community groups. Fifteen contacted their communities by adopting a generally personal approach, with six stating that they interacted with the community by establishing their own initiatives.

In addition, Officers in Charge were separately asked to indicate whether or not they had been involved in public seminars on community policing or crime prevention. Table 4.6 shows that about half the officers interviewed had been involved in either a forum or a symposium of this nature.

**Table 4.5 — Strategies used by Officers in Charge for becoming known in the local community**

Strategies employed	Number (n=26)	Percentage
No strategy	2	8
Participated in a community generated initiative	14	54
General personal approach	15	58
Established an initiative	6	23

- Notes: 1. Multiple responses were permitted  
 2. General personal approach includes: 'seek publicity'; 'deal on a personal basis'; 'become known'  
 3. Established on initiative includes: 'foot patrols'; 'consultative committees'; 'traffic committees'.

**Table 4.6 — Police involvement in community forums**

Community forums	Number (n=25)	Percentage
No seminar	11	44
Community forum	13	52
Crime prevention symposium	9	36
Public relations activities	6	24

- Notes: 1. Multiple responses were permitted  
 2. Information was missing for one respondent.  
 3. Public relations includes: 'station tours'; 'station open days'; 'static displays'.

## Police and community interactions

Interviewees were asked to explain the ways in which various police in their division interacted with the local community. Table 4.7 presents information about the types of people and agencies with whom operational police interact. It is apparent that, according to the Officers in Charge, police officers have most contact with official agencies and individuals, and least contact with indigenous agencies.

**Table 4.7 — Informal and formal contacts with the community**

Contacts	Number (n=26)	Percentage
Police initiatives	20	77
Government agencies	18	69
Emergency services	18	69
Public figures	17	65
Community groups	13	50
Business organisations	11	42
Local initiatives	11	42
Local businesses	8	31
Schools	7	27
Private security companies	6	23
Indigenous agencies	5	19

- Notes: 1. Multiple responses were permitted  
 2. Police initiatives were contacts or programs initiated by police  
 3. Public figures include: 'State MP'; 'Ward Councillor'; 'Local Mayor'  
 4. Local initiatives were contacts or programs initiated by community members but attended by police

## Servicing Neighbourhood Watch and Adopt-a-Cop programs

More than 50 per cent of Officers in Charge in both regions roster Adopt-a-Cop duties most of the time, and 50 per cent roster Neighbourhood Watch duties most of the time. Five Officers in Charge reported never rostering police to Neighbourhood Watch duties, and three reported never including Adopt-a-Cop duties when rostering decisions are made (see table 4.8).

With the exception of one cluster in Metro North (where the Community Liaison Officer has sole responsibility for working with the Neighbourhood Watch Groups), Officers in Charge assign individual officers to specific groups. If the designated officer is unable to attend a meeting, a Community Liaison Officer most often deputises for them. Where the Neighbourhood Watch program appeared to be a particularly active one, the Officer in Charge reported establishing a timetable for attendance at Neighbourhood Watch meetings.

**Table 4.8 — Rostering provisions for Neighbourhood Watch and Adopt-a-Cop**

Program		Number (n=25)	Percentage
Adopt-a-Cop:	Mostly rostered	13	52
	Rostered < 50%	9	36
	No Adopt-a-Cop program	3	12
Neighbourhood Watch:	Mostly rostered	10	40
	Rostered < 50%	10	40
	No Neighbourhood Watch group	5	20

Note: Information was missing for one respondent.

## The use of referral information

Officers in Charge were asked about the availability of referral information for use by their staff. It was expected that this might be one way of gauging the potential for police officers to make contact with the wider community in the course of fulfilling their traditional policing duties. Table 4.9 summarises the data collected.

A number of Officers in Charge reported that a formal system was in place for the provision of referral information. This generally consisted of a directory of relevant agencies which had been compiled within the cluster/division, although one officer used an externally published directory which was re-purchased when updated. Only two officers provided staff with their own copies of the referral directory. In other areas, this information is variously stored in the Duty Office, on the Notice Board, or in the Radio Room.

Officers in Charge who did not have a formal system for the provision of referral information were asked how community referrals were made within their division or cluster. As shown in table 4.9, two officers did not know whether or how referral information was accessed by operational police; the remaining suggested that their staff either called Central Operations, referred to appropriate specialist staff, or used their general knowledge.

**Table 4.9 — Referral mechanisms in metro Brisbane**

Referral system	Number (n=25)	Percentage
Systematised referral	12	50
Ad hoc	10	42
Not identified	2	8

Note: Information was missing for one respondent.

A greater proportion of Officers in Charge in Metro North had established a systematic referral system than had those in Metro South Region, suggesting that the former value the provision of referral information to the community more so than do the latter. From these data it is also possible to conclude that police officers in Metro North are more efficiently equipped to provide referral information to members of the public than are police officers in Metro South. Whether police officers are actually using the referral information available to them is not known, but two Officers in Charge made the following relevant comments:

- Although the Volunteers in Policing have compiled a directory of referral agencies, the officers probably don't use it.
- The station doesn't have a register of local help agencies — I can't get the staff to read the information that is available now.

## Concrete examples of community policing

### Local policing problems

Table 4.10 shows officers' perceptions of their local policing problems and compares these with the perceptions of local councillors. It is interesting to note that, while local councillors most often identified traffic problems, juvenile offending and vandalism as their top three crime problems, Officers in Charge were more likely to view break and enter, unlawful use of a motor vehicle and drug and alcohol problems as the most substantial policing problems.

Table 4.11 shows the local policing problems that have been addressed by a community policing initiative. It is clear from the table that community policing strategies are not confined to the most common policing problems, but cover a diversity of local problems. Indeed, with the exception of domestic violence, at least one partnership policing initiative has been developed to address each of the policing problems cited.

**Table 4.10 — Local policing problems identified by Officers in Charge and local councillors**

<b>Problem cited</b>	<b>Officers in Charge Percentage (n=26)</b>	<b>Councillors Percentage (n=29)</b>
Break and enter	68	45
Unlawful use	50	–
Drugs/alcohol	42	21
Disturbances	36	–
Juvenile crime	33	55
Vandalism	18	55
Railways	16	–
Race-related issues	16	3
Traffic	15	62
Domestic violence	15	–
Theft	14	3
Fear of crime	3	10
Quality of service issues	–	34
Public space security	–	14
Other	12	–

- Notes: 1. Multiple responses were permitted.  
2. Other includes: 'prostitution' and 'homelessness'.

**Table 4.11 — Local policing problems addressed by a community policing initiative**

Problem addressed by initiative	Number	Percentage (n=21)
Break and enter	5	24
Unlawful use	4	19
Drugs/alcohol	5	24
Disturbances	10	48
Juvenile crime	8	39
Vandalism	1	5
Railways	2	10
Race-related issues	5	24
Traffic	2	10
Domestic violence	–	–
Theft	5	24
Fear of crime	2	10
Crime in general	1	5

Notes: 1. Multiple responses were permitted.

2. Five Officers in Charge were unable to provide an example of a partnership policing initiative.

### Strategies implemented to address policing problems

The strategies that Officers in Charge said they had employed to address policing problems in their areas are shown in table 4.12.

**Table 4.12 — Strategies used to address policing problems**

Strategies used	Number	Percentage (n=21)
<i>Community Consultation</i>		
Improve communication/build relationship	9	43
Involve/coordinate external agencies	4	19
Form Community Consultative Committee	3	14
Offer alternative, long-term resolution process	1	5
Community Education	8	38
Media publicity	5	24
<i>Policing strategies</i>		
Increase number/efficiency of patrols	9	43
Safety audit	5	24
Letterbox drop to collect intelligence	2	10
Use plain clothes police	2	10
Obtain search warrant, raid premises	1	5
Electronic surveillance	2	10
<i>Other</i>		
Improve urban design	6	29
Employ private security firm	2	10
Reward non-offenders in an 'at-risk' group	1	5

Notes: 1. Multiple responses were permitted.

2. Five respondents were unable to provide an example of a partnership policing initiative.

The majority of Officers in Charge reported using at least one form of community consultation, although not all responses could be categorised as representing a community policing approach. It is questionable, for example, whether responses such as ‘letterbox drop to collect intelligence’ and ‘electronic surveillance’ can be termed community policing activities. The consultative strategies used most frequently were relationship building and improving communication. The following comments are illustrative of the use of a relationship building process:

- The major strategy involved developing closer liaison between the school and police; encouraging openness about the problems in the school. For example, police attended lunch-time sports functions at the local school.
- The project undertook to break down the barriers between police, Aboriginal community members and non-indigenous community members. The aim of the project was for the young people to get to know some police officers and to engage in cultural activities. A rapport was established.

Typically, community education strategies involved promoting an awareness of crime prevention activities. The following comments serve as good examples:

- The first week of the program had an education focus. The NRMA provided \$25,000 for radio advertising about securing vehicles and brochures with information about the need for security and suggestions for car security. The cluster rostered two police officers, one to talk about car security with shoppers and provide them with written information and one to accompany security officers who patrol the car parks, check for unlocked cars and put a leaflet (which makes note of such details as car unlocked, goods in view etc.) on each car windscreen. [Strategy used to address the problem of unlawful use of motor vehicle]
- I attend the local Pensioners’ League meeting on a regular basis and provide guest lectures at each meeting (e.g. ladies and handbags, security in the home, safety precaution when entering/exiting cars in shopping centres, personal safety when shopping, personal security for evening outings). About 100 Senior Citizens attend each meeting. [Strategy used to address issues relating to personal safety]

Other consultative strategies included the development of CCCs and seeking the involvement of external agencies. The following response is a good example of an effort to achieve a long-term solution to the problem of Aboriginal young people creating a public disturbance:

- The short-term solution involved attending the scene, speaking to all parties, and resolving the initial problem on the day. Because I saw the potential for ongoing problems, we used police to resolve disputes rather than them taking revenge.

Policing strategies were used in combination with community consultation in nearly all cases. The policing strategies most often cited were: increasing the number of patrols around the target area and/or deploying these patrols more effectively, and the implementation of a Safety Audit process.

Many of the strategies described by Officers in Charge were implemented with the assistance of an outside agency or individual. A range of external individuals or agencies were acknowledged. Those who provided external assistance included government bodies, non-government agencies, politicians, the media, Neighbourhood Watch members and business organisations. Clearly, police have shown the capacity to work cooperatively with an extensive range of external individuals and agencies.

### **Sources of feedback used in order to evaluate initiatives**

Officers in Charge were asked to indicate whether and how they had sought to evaluate the success of the community policing initiatives which they had undertaken. All of the Officers in Charge nominated the use of at least one measure of the success of their initiative. Their responses are shown in table 4.13.

The majority of Officers in Charge reported that they used police information to evaluate the effectiveness of their community policing initiative. Again, QPS statistics were most often mentioned. There were two noteworthy differences between Metro North and Metro South Regions with the use

of community information. First, Officers in Charge in Metro South Region were almost twice as likely to report using some form of community feedback. This difference is largely attributable to their reliance on ‘complaints’ as a source of information about the problem. Second, Officers in Charge in Metro North Region were more likely to nominate feedback provided by formal police programs such as CCCs and Neighbourhood Watch Meetings, whereas Officers in Charge in Metro South Region were more likely to use feedback from the local community.

**Table 4.13 — Feedback sources used by Officers in Charge to evaluate the success of their community policing initiative**

Feedback sources	Number (n=21)	Percentage
<i>Police</i>		
QPS statistics	12	57
Occurrence sheets	2	10
Arrest/prosecution	3	14
Recovery of stolen property	1	5
<i>Community</i>		
Decreased Complaints	3	14
CCC meetings	3	14
Neighbourhood Watch meetings	1	5
Creation of new support mechanisms	1	5
Feedback from the local community	5	24

Notes: 1. Multiple responses were permitted.

2. Five respondents were unable to provide an example of a partnership policing initiative.

## Conclusion

Officers in Charge have an understanding of community policing and variously use it as a strategy for policing their division or cluster. While some Officers in Charge offered comments that showed that they had taken significant responsibility for initiating and sustaining community interest in initiatives, their descriptions of day-to-day operations indicate that community policing assumes a secondary role relative to the demands of traditional reactive policing. In particular:

- Five Officers in Charge suggested that community policing had no impact on day-to-day operations, and a further five stated that it had a negative administrative impact. While it is certainly a positive sign that most Officers in Charge accommodate community policing, at least some of these Officers viewed this impact as a burden.
- Although more than half of the Officers in Charge reported using community information, very few said this was their preferred source. Further, formal police programs such as Neighbourhood Watch were seldom nominated as a source of information.
- Many of the Officers in Charge focused on the organisational impediments to community policing such as lack of staff, resources and time, competing service requirements, and lack of staff enthusiasm; there was a perception that service delivery and reactive policing requirements ‘come first’.

## 5 Operational Police Survey

This chapter presents information on the nature and extent of police interaction with the local community as measured by a survey of operational police.

### Method

A survey questionnaire was designed to identify levels of participation in partnership or community policing activities by operational police in metropolitan Brisbane. In particular, the survey sought to gather the following data:

- the occurrence or frequency of partnership policing activities during the last month
- knowledge of the local community
- time allocated for partnership policing activities.

The survey was developed with reference to recent literature on community policing (e.g. Greene & Mastrofski 1988; Peak & Glensor 1996; Rosenbaum 1994; Trojanowicz & Bucqueroux 1990) and following considerable consultation with the QPS Working Group. A pilot study of 23 police officers was undertaken at Ipswich and Goodna Police Stations, and oral and written feedback provided by the respondents was incorporated into the final survey (see appendix C). It was estimated that the survey would require only five minutes of the respondent's time.

The survey questionnaire asked officers whether they had engaged in various activities within the preceding month. The period of a month was considered about right because it required only fairly recent memory recall and allowed a long enough time for most activities to have occurred.

A sample of 400 operational police was randomly generated by the Human Resources Division of the QPS. Ten of these officers were not identified on the e-mail system, leaving a final sample of 390 officers. In early December 1997, each of the selected officers was sent an e-mail by the Chair of the Working Group, requesting their participation in the study and assuring complete confidentiality. The survey was placed on the QPS Bulletin Board, and officers were requested to access the document by inserting a password. In an attempt to increase the response rate, two reminder e-mails were sent to each officer at intervals of six and eleven days following the initial invitation. These messages were accessed by 87 per cent of the targeted officers.

Of the 400 officers invited to participate, only 111 replied — a response rate of 28 per cent. As discussed below, this low response rate may have affected the representativeness of the sample and hence the extent to which the findings can be generalised.

### Limitations of the research design

The following are the main limitations arising from the methodology:

- The ability of respondents to recall accurately the occurrence or frequency with which activities occurred may have affected the findings; therefore, the actual numbers associated with the occurrence and frequency of activities may be slightly different from the actual occurrence of events.
- Selection bias could be a problem in the findings as only 28 per cent of those sampled actually responded. If the reasons for responding (or not) to the survey were related to attitudes towards, or current activities in, community policing, the findings may have been affected.
- As respondents were not asked to identify whether individual activities had been undertaken during a rostered shift or in their own time, some important information may have been lost.

Nevertheless, the survey represents a unique set of data about the policing activities in which operational police are engaged. While the results must be handled with caution, particularly considering the low response rate, the survey provides valuable information that, used in conjunction with other sources, helps us to understand the involvement that police have with the wider community.

## Findings

### Demographics

Table 5.1 shows that respondents were most often of the rank of Constable, and were generally employed as general duties police officers.

The average number of years of service of the sample was just over nine years, and respondents had been in service in their current region for an average of three and a half years.

**Table 5.1 — Rank and area of duty of survey respondents**

Demographic details		Number	Percentage
Rank	Constable	55	50
	Senior Constable	32	29
	Sergeant	21	19
	Senior Sergeant	3	3
Area of duty	General duties	69	62
	Traffic	11	10
	Juvenile Aid Bureau	10	9
	Criminal Investigation Bureau	5	5
	Other	16	14

Note: Other consists of: Community Liaison (n=4), Scenes of Crime (n=4), Inquiries (n=4), Intelligence (n=2) and Watchhouse (n=2) officers.

### Involvement in community policing activities

Officers were asked to estimate the number of times they had undertaken 16 different kinds of community policing activities in the last month. As can be seen in table 5.2, the most common and most frequent activities undertaken by officers were general activities such as informal discussion of local policing problems. Most of the more focused and specific activities (such as attending community crime prevention or local community meetings) were performed by relatively few officers during the previous month, and relatively infrequently.

This pattern of response is consistent with information provided by Officers in Charge who reported that their principal means of establishing contact with the local community was by adopting a generally personal approach or by participating in a community-generated initiative (reported in table 2.4). Officers in Charge rarely reported establishing an initiative as a means of becoming known in the community.

One noteworthy difference between the two police regions was the number of officers reporting that they had worked from a local police beat or shopfront. Significantly more officers from Metro North reported having worked from a police beat or shopfront in the last month (41%) than officers from Metro South (4%). While the number of beats and shopfronts are similar in both regions (three shopfronts and two beats in Metro North; three shopfronts and one beat in Metro South), Metro North has committed to these sites at least one permanent officer and another on monthly rotation.<sup>6</sup> This discrepancy, therefore, is explicable because of regional differences in rostering and management procedures.

<sup>6</sup> Source: QPS

**Table 5.2 — Occurrence and frequency of 16 policing activities performed by Brisbane-based operational police**

Activity	Number and percentage of officers undertaking activity		Mean number of times activity performed
	Number	Percentage	
Discussed local policing problems with colleagues informally (e.g. over lunch)	93	84	8.3
Taken action in response to a concern raised by a member of the local community	93	84	4.3
Approached by a member of the local community regarding a local policing problem	91	82	4.7
Discussed local policing problems with a QPS intelligence officer or superior	80	72	4.0
Discussed local problems with a member of the community other than as a response to a call	65	59	3.1
Purposely walked around to meet local/business people	57	51	2.3
Referred a member of the local community to a local crisis care agency	56	51	1.6
Dealt with a local policing problem in response to a request by superior officer	40	36	1.4
Discussed local policing problems with colleagues formally in a meeting	34	31	1.0
Involved with members of the community to address local problems	34	31	1.1
Attended a community crime prevention meeting (e.g. Neighbourhood Watch)	26	23	0.4
Worked from a local police beat or shopfront	26	23	2.1
Participated in the Adopt-A-Cop Program	24	22	0.5
Met with local treatment or crisis care agencies (e.g. drugs/domestic violence)	19	17	0.4
Attended a local community meeting in capacity as police officer (e.g. Rotary, Lions)	13	12	0.2
Taken action in response to a problem identified by a local crisis care agency	13	12	0.2

### Time available for community policing

Although most officers (89%) reported some involvement in community policing activities, it is important to note that the majority reported that they had either ‘very little time’ (68%) or ‘none whatsoever’ (14%) to get involved in such activities during work time. Very few reported that they had ‘a lot of time’ (2%) or ‘some time’ (17%) available. It is also important to note that a significant number of respondents (16%) reported undertaking these activities in their own time, perhaps in an effort to overcome the restrictions placed on them during formal working hours. These figures may provide some explanation for the low occurrence of many activities investigated in this survey.

### Knowledge of the community

Approximately one-third of all officers surveyed (37%) resided in the same area as their current workplace. The majority considered their local knowledge to be either ‘excellent’ or ‘reasonable’, and that they had either ‘a lot’ or ‘some’ contact with their local community (see table 5.3). The difference between regions in the amount of reported contact with their local community was significant, with respondents from Metro South reporting considerably more contact than respondents from Metro North.

**Table 5.3 — Knowledge of the local community**

	<b>Excellent/reasonable</b>	<b>Poor/none</b>
How good a knowledge do you consider you have of the local community in which you work?	97 (87%)	14 (13%)
	<b>A lot/some</b>	<b>Infrequent/none</b>
How much contact do you have with the local community in which you work?	85 (77%)	26 (23%)

### Respondents' comments: A qualitative analysis

Respondents were invited to make written comments in response to two questions:

- Please list ways you think QPS support for community involvement could be improved.
- Do you have any further comments about your involvement with the local community?

Seventy respondents commented on the first question, 51 on the second.

The major issues that arose in these comments were:

1. Identification of a number of current problems, including:
  - poor public relations between the police and the community (e.g. 'community policing lacks credibility due to its quick inception following the Fitzgerald Inquiry')
  - lack of departmental support for community policing (e.g. 'community issues are not emphasised as being overly important')
  - high workloads and limited time for community policing during rostered shifts (e.g. 'it's hard to meet all demands')
  - the expectation that community policing be done in an officer's own time
  - conflict with family commitments (e.g. 'I am reluctant to take on community-based activities for fear of not having enough time to do my duties and have time for my family').
2. Suggested improvements, including:
  - public relations exercises (such as positive newspaper articles and regular times for community grievances to be heard)
  - practical suggestions for workloads and time limits (more staff; increased reliance on Volunteers in Policing; less paperwork/correspondence)
  - formal training in community policing
  - formal rostering for community policing activities for all operational police during shift time
  - formal and informal recognition and commendation for community work undertaken by officers in their own time
  - ongoing monitoring of individual and station/district participation in community policing activities
  - feedback from community policing initiatives into operational policing.
3. Descriptive comments about current involvement with community policing:
  - many commented on the benefits of residing in the community in which they work, although this was not universal (one officer disputed the benefits).

## Conclusion

Several main findings arose from the operational police survey:

- Levels of partnership policing activities were relatively low in metropolitan Brisbane compared to traditional reactive policing.
- The most frequently performed partnership policing activities were the more general activities such as informal discussion with colleagues; more focused activities such as attending community meetings were performed infrequently.
- The majority of respondents reported that they had little or no time for engaging in community policing activities.
- Respondents were generally dissatisfied with the level of their involvement in community policing, and many commented on their willingness to do more if given support.
- The majority of respondents reported that they considered their local knowledge to be either 'excellent' or 'reasonable'.
- The major barriers to community policing were: perceived lack of departmental support; poor public relations; heavy workloads; other work priorities; inadequate time; and conflict with personal and family commitments.
- Officers with a greater commitment to community policing may have been more likely to respond to the survey than those with a lesser degree of interest. Broader generalisations about the findings, therefore, should be tempered.

## 6 Conclusion

This final chapter briefly summarises the key findings of the research, and outlines some strategies for overcoming the obstacles to implementing partnership policing approaches in the QPS.

### Key findings

#### Community policing programs and strategies

There are a number of formal community policing programs in operation in metropolitan Brisbane, including Neighbourhood Watch groups, Safety House Committees, Blue Light disco events and PCYCs. Of these, the most common is Neighbourhood Watch. However, data on the number of such programs is not a very useful indicator of the extent of police involvement in community policing activities, or of the success of community policing efforts. A small number of police beats and shopfronts have been established throughout Brisbane, indicating that the Service makes limited use of this form of service delivery.

The metropolitan area has not been successful in establishing and sustaining CCCs. Metro North Region reported having two active CCCs, and Metro South reported three committees; both regions fell well short of the state average of one CCC per 45,188 people.

On the information provided by Regional Community Liaison Coordinators, it appears that Metro North in particular has initiated a broad range of formal liaison or consultative groups, although the effectiveness of liaison committees has not been evaluated as part of this research, nor by the Service itself.

Problem-oriented policing has not yet been implemented on a large scale in the metropolitan area, although Metro North in particular has recorded some innovative examples of policing strategies aimed at addressing a range of problems including property damage, theft, and juvenile offending.

#### Local councillor interviews

Most councillors reported experiencing contact with local police, but some only minimal contact. This may have been because councillors themselves did not see policing issues as their responsibility, rather than a lack of police initiative. Councillors were most likely to come into contact with police when attending a police program such as Neighbourhood Watch, or through informal means. Councillors' main source of information about local crime and disorder problems was most often their constituents.

Local councillors generally perceived a fairly high level of community satisfaction with services provided by police, although concerns were expressed about the effectiveness of police in dealing with many local policing problems. Some of those interviewed felt that police were not sufficiently engaging in crime prevention activities, and all councillors suggested ways to improve the community and police partnership. These suggestions included increasing the visibility of police, establishing new consultative mechanisms, improving existing consultative mechanisms, and increasing public knowledge about the work of police and the role of police in the community.

#### Officer in Charge interviews

All Officers in Charge shared an awareness of the principles underpinning problem-oriented and partnership policing, and most were able to provide examples of initiatives that had been implemented successfully. The majority of Officers in Charge reported having:

- developed at least one initiative to resolve a local policing problem

- engaged in consultative processes with the local community to address a problem
- gained the cooperation of at least one external agent or agency
- used feedback provided by both police and community sources to evaluate the success of their partnership policing initiative.

These are positive findings which indicate that, under the right circumstances, Officers in Charge have the capacity to implement problem-oriented and partnership policing strategies. However, there was also a general feeling among interviewees that Officers in Charge did not see improving contact with the community and proactive policing as important goals and some saw them as burdensome activities. The barriers to wider implementation identified by interviewees were: insufficient staff, resources and time, other Service requirements, and low staff enthusiasm. There was a broad perception that service delivery and reactive policing requirements ‘come first’.

### **Operational police survey**

The survey of operational police found that reported police involvement in partnership policing activities was quite low, with officers being most likely to have engaged in informal discussion about, or contact with, local communities and their policing problems. Involvement in formal processes, programs or strategies was also infrequent. While officers reported feeling generally dissatisfied with the level of their engagement with the local community, the majority of respondents reported their local knowledge to be either ‘excellent’ or ‘reasonable’. Respondents identified a number of major obstacles to their participation in community policing activities, including:

- lack of departmental support
- heavy workloads
- competing work priorities
- inadequate time available.

The low response rate for the operational police survey (28%) limits the conclusions that can be drawn from its findings, but it seems unlikely that those police who failed to respond to the survey would have had more involvement in partnership policing activities than those who did reply.

### **Overcoming the obstacles to proactive policing**

In summary, the data show that some worthwhile initiatives have been developed and sustained by the QPS in the two regions examined, and that a number of Officers in Charge have taken some positive steps to apply partnership policing approaches. However, there is still some distance to travel to achieve full implementation of these approaches. As our research has shown:

- on the whole local councillors do not appear to have much formal contact with police
- in some areas of Brisbane, police have not managed to establish formal communication networks with key stakeholders in the community
- many Officers in Charge of stations perceive partnership policing as a peripheral activity rather than as core police business
- operational police are generally only involved in partnership policing informally and at a low level
- Officers in Charge and operational police alike have expressed concern about the adequacy of organisational support for problem-oriented and partnership policing in terms of resourcing and time allocation.

## Implications for the QPS

### Providing strategic direction

Until recently, community policing has not been systematically integrated into routine policing, and has been viewed by police primarily as a public relations exercise rather than a fundamental part of the job. The need for an overarching strategic direction for problem-oriented and partnership policing has been noted in this report, in previous police service reviews (CJC 1994; Bingham Review 1996), and in interviews with Officers in Charge. The QPS itself has recognised this as an area for its attention, and the Policing Strategies Steering Committee is approaching the task of formulating and implementing strategic direction with some success. The adoption by the Service of the Commissioner's Vision Statement, and the initiatives that have been established as a result, signify the intention of the QPS to provide strategic direction. The Service must now aim to ensure that corporate commitment to proactive policing is successfully integrated into rank and file police work.

### Resource allocation

Competing demands on police resources is a barrier to the implementation of partnership policing that was consistently identified by both Officers in Charge and operational police, who stated that there were insufficient resources to fulfil the promises of partnership policing. Claims of heavy workloads, insufficient time and insufficient staff must be systematically addressed. The importance of providing reactive services is not questioned here, and it is acknowledged that demands for reactive services have increased dramatically in the past few years. However, as QPS senior management recognise, and the findings of this report confirm, it will be difficult to make much progress in implementing more proactive policing approaches unless a way can be found to free up more resources to support these activities. Several possibilities that have documented benefits, and which are currently being considered by the Policing Strategies Steering Committee, are:

- the use of negotiated response strategies to calls for service to ensure that service demands are managed more effectively
- investing resources in reducing calls for service to high-volume repeat addresses and hot spots
- greater use of single-officer patrols, especially during daylight hours
- reallocating untasked time so that operational police can engage in more proactive activities.

Employing these strategies can help relieve resource pressures and enable Officers in Charge to dedicate more resources to proactive initiatives.

### Developing tools for monitoring progress

In order to identify and monitor obstacles to partnership policing, it is important that the Service have in place a set of measures that can be repeated at regular intervals to assess the success of implementation. Some of the traditional measures used by the QPS to indicate the success of community policing, such as the number of various official community policing programs, are not very helpful indicators. There are several alternative methods that the Service could consider:

- Utilising information from the Statewide Activity Survey to document the extent of rank and file involvement in proactive strategies. This would provide valuable information about the impact of partnership policing on day-to-day policing activities as part of a pre-existing survey mechanism that enjoys good coverage of the State and healthy response rates.
- The development of a systematic process for documenting local problem-solving and partnership initiatives.
- The use of annual planning, probably tied in to district-level reporting structures already in place, for Officers in Charge to assess local crime problems, plan appropriate strategies to address them, and evaluate the success of their implementation.

### **Providing appropriate local structures**

The interviews with local councillors that were conducted for this report showed surprisingly little contact between councillors and local police. In addition, several councillors voiced the opinion that crime and policing were state rather than local issues.

Local government is undoubtedly a critical stakeholder in the identification and resolution of local policing problems. There has been a lack of appropriate structures for including local government, and other key community representatives, in the process of identifying and addressing local policing problems. The Crime Prevention Partnership (CPP) initiative, with its seven members representing different groups in the community, has the potential to provide such a structure. Each CPP is obliged to consult with members of the community in the identification of local public safety concerns, and in the development of strategies to address problems. As CPPs have yet to be introduced to metropolitan Brisbane, it would be sensible to proceed with a trial partnership in a metropolitan location, once the evaluation of the currently existing CPPs has been completed.

While the QPS needs to continue to explore ways of establishing local structures which involve community representatives in the resolution of policing problems, there is also a need for councillors to facilitate the involvement of local government in local crime prevention issues.

### **Providing appropriate rewards**

One of the themes arising from interviews with Officers in Charge was a sense of confusion about the goals of the Service. While the QPS has signalled a commitment to promoting problem-oriented and partnership policing, the reactive model of service delivery still dominates 'on the ground'. Both officially and informally, officer performance is still evaluated largely in terms of measures such as response times, the number of crime reports filed, the number of offences cleared, and the number of arrests made. Successful problem-solving, or maintaining good relations with the local community, is an aspect of officer performance that is not valued in the same way. In this organisational climate, it should not be a surprise that Officers in Charge view reactive policing as the primary focus of the job. The QPS now includes a requirement for problem-oriented skills in many position descriptions. However, there is scope to strengthen these provisions: for example by requiring an applicant to *demonstrate* the extent to which he/she has developed relationships with local community members or has been involved in solving local problems.

### **Conclusion**

The recent initiatives undertaken by the Service indicate that it is committed to working more closely with communities to address local crime and disorder problems. The translation of this corporate intention into day-to-day operational policing will require the vigilant and creative attention of the Service. The results of the present research have shown that, certainly as far as the Brisbane metropolitan area is concerned, there are substantial obstacles to the effective implementation of problem-oriented and partnership policing. Strategies for dealing with these obstacles are needed to ensure this philosophy is applied successfully.

## Appendix A: Examples of Problem-Solving Initiatives

### **Problem 1: Cars being damaged and property being removed from a private secured car park attached to units at \*\*\***

#### **Information sources used to identify the problem:**

CAD (calls for service) and CRISP

#### **Strategies undertaken to address the identified problem:**

1. Attended scene and conducted observations.
2. Observed the gate had a large space at bottom which people could crawl under and obtain entry to secured area.
3. Observed gate automatic but took ages to close after vehicle moved through.
4. Spoke to Body Corporate about (2) and (3) and these faults rectified.
5. Place notice in Body Corporate Newsletter about securing vehicles and not leaving valuables in vehicles.
6. Place individual car theft brochure under every unit door.
7. Performed random patrols of parking area and left notes congratulating people who locked and did not leave valuables.
8. Placed warning letter on cars and locked cars that did not comply.

#### **Rank and designation of officers involved:**

Senior Constable, Regional Community Policing Unit.

#### **Outcome of the strategy:**

No further reported offences from this car park.

### **Problem 2: Poker machines being targetted by offenders at various clubs throughout \*\*\***

#### **Information sources used to identify the problem:**

CRISP

#### **Strategies undertaken to address the identified problem:**

1. Officers identified all clubs which were being targetted.
2. Officers attended each club and identified potential problems.
3. Officers then identified best practice — i.e. removing bottom money drawer of poker machines or placing a bar around the bottom drawer preventing easy removal of drawer and a sign outside the club advising patrons of the policy of not having money kept in poker machines.
4. Officers then spoke to a number of clubs about practices and many believed the Poker Machine Division would not allow such practices.
5. Consultation with the appropriate authority took place and in fact such initiatives were supported by the clubs.
6. Letters were written to all the clubs in Metro North Region advising and suggesting the clubs take such action.

#### **Rank and designation of officers involved:**

Sergeant and Senior Constable, Regional Community Policing Unit.

#### **Outcome of the strategy:**

Very few incidents of this type are now reported — if they are personal, visits are made by officers attached to this section. The clubs are advised of best practice.

### **Problem 3: False alarms at schools within the \*\*\* Division**

**Information sources used to identify the problem:**

CAD (calls for service) and Patrol Logs

**Strategies undertaken to address the identified problem:**

1. Meet with State Government Security Services and Education Department personnel.
2. Identified many problems involving alarms not being set correctly.
3. Introduction of education program for those responsible for setting alarms.

**Rank and designation of officers involved:**

Senior Constable, Community Liaison Officer

**Outcome of the strategy:**

Marked reduction in false alarms in schools.

### **Problem 4: Young people causing a problem at the \*\*\* petrol station**

**Information sources used to identify the problem:**

CAD (calls for service)

**Strategies undertaken to address the identified problem:**

1. Site visited by police.
2. Identified area where the young people frequented.
3. Proposal put to petrol station company for modifications to lighting where young people gathered (suggested lights be placed which highlighted skin defects) also music piped through speakers be changed from pop station to classical station.
4. SEQEB lighting attended and gave advice as to light and quote on same.
5. Full proposal given to petrol station company who needed to pay for modifications — approved and now is to be implemented in other trouble spots throughout the State.
6. Education of employees on how to handle young people and not encourage them to attend the petrol station.

**Rank and designation of officers involved:**

Senior Sergeant, Regional Community Policing Unit and Constable, \*\*\* Cluster.

**Outcome of the strategy:**

Young people no longer gather at this location — calls have decreased.

### **Problem 5: A number of young people were entering the JAB system or in the future would enter this system. Parents were at a loss to help their children — lack of open communication**

**Information sources used to identify the problem:**

Approaches made by parents to the PCYC and people identified by City JAB

**Strategies undertaken to address the identified problem:**

1. Identified a need for some type of diversionary program.
2. Identified many young people needed a good role model.
3. Conducted joint sessions for both parents/guardians; JAB personnel; Branch Manager PCYC.
4. An activity at the club was identified as being suitable for the young person.
5. The young person attended the club at least two days per week.
6. Fees are waived if the young person cannot afford activity.
7. Coaches and Branch Manager then become the pivotal point for the young person.

8. The Branch Manager gives JAB and parents/guardians regular update — behaviour is monitored at home and at the PCYC.

**Rank and designation of officers involved:**

Sergeant, PCYC and Sergeant, City JAB

**Outcome of the strategy:**

Six persons have been through the program this year — all are well entrenched in club activities. Behaviour at home has changed dramatically in all cases.

**Problem 6: In the \*\*\* Division it was noted that young ATSI people were becoming more prevalent in complaint calls**

**Information sources used to identify the problem:**

CAD (calls for service); census data (noted sharp increase in ATSI population. \*\*\*Division now has the largest of this type of population); identified problem via Neighbourhood Watch who had noted more young ATSI people walking the streets late hours of the night.

**Strategies undertaken to address the identified problem:**

1. Consultation took place between \*\*\* Neighbourhood Watch, Aboriginal families from the area, \*\*\* police.
2. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families were concerned their young people had no activities to occupy them — especially over holiday periods.
3. Decided to organise a camp for the young people with police and persons in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.
4. Meetings conducted and persons identified through local schools and community members.
5. Funding obtained.
6. Two camps have now been conducted which encourage the education of the young people in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander customs.
7. Also breaks down the barriers between police and the young people.

**Rank and designation of officers involved:**

Inspector, \*\*\* cluster; Senior Sergeant, \*\*\* cluster; two Detective Sergeants, \*\*\* cluster; Sergeant, \*\*\* cluster; Senior Constable, city.

**Outcome of the strategy:**

Only one young person has come under the adverse notice of police since the camps. Broken down barriers between police and the whole of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Decline in crime during the camp period. Positive nature of the young people since the camp.

**Problem 7: Complaint of shop steal \*\*\* Plaza**

**Strategies undertaken to address the identified problem:**

1. In conjunction with Centre Management undertook lecture/training to individual shop owners and staff regarding strategies which they could employ to combat this offence.
2. Undertook a staffed week long Business Security display.

**Problem 8: Complaint of break enter and steal in \*\*\* Plaza shopping centre**

**Strategies undertaken to address the identified problem:**

1. In conjunction with Centre Management undertook lecture/training to individual shop owners and staff regarding strategies which they could employ to combat this offence and update external and internal security.
2. Undertook a staffed week long Business Security display.

**Problem 9: Complaint of break and entre, shop steal, disorderly conduct by local youths at the \*\*\* Central Shopping Centre**

**Strategy undertaken to address the identified problem:**

In conjunction with the local MLA, businesses and police undertook and commenced an unofficial Business Watch for the shopping strip and near business area. This is an ongoing activity involving both local police and business houses.

**Problem 10: Complaints of break and enter in the \*\*\* area**

**Strategy undertaken to address the identified problem:**

Information obtained from local residents and intelligence undertook extensive local media education campaign. Information forwarded to local Neighbourhood Watch with the view of promoting security education and information regarding suspect activity.

**Problem 11: Complaint of break and enter in the \*\*\* area**

**Strategies undertaken to address the identified problem:**

In consultation with immediate area where offences were occurring, undertook training regarding security techniques, and established a quasi Neighbourhood Watch with the view of preventing the break-ins occurring in that area.

## Appendix B: Officer in Charge Interview Schedule

### Section 1: Community-based policing

1. What is your understanding of the concept of community based policing?
2. How does community based policing impact upon your day-to-day operations?
3. In what ways do various police from your station interact with the local community?
4. How do you go about developing relationships with the community?
5. Are members of your staff active in community groups/activities?
6. What obstacles do you believe may hinder your ability to implement community-based policing?

### Section 2: Concrete examples of approaches to local policing problems

7. What are the local policing problems?

*The Officer in Charge was asked to describe a recent example of a major initiative to demonstrate the application of community based policing principles. For each initiative provided, the officer was asked the following questions in turn:*

8. How do you know this is (or was) a problem.
9. What strategies have you implemented to address it?
10. What sorts of mechanisms did you use to gauge the success of your strategies?
11. Are there any individuals, agencies or community groups who are willing to help you out (e.g. ward councillors, school principals, retailer's associations)?

### Section 3: Miscellaneous

12. What are your goals in terms of local policing problems?
13. What sources of information do you use?
14. Which of these information sources would you tend to rely on most often?
15. Is the involvement of police in community-based initiatives encouraged in your Division/Cluster. If not, why not?
16. Has this Division/Cluster ever conducted, sponsored or attended a public seminar on community policing or crime prevention? Please give details of police involvement.
17. Are individual officers equipped with up-to-date information for correctly referring citizens to other agencies for assistance?
18. Are you aware of any other sorts of regular informal contact (not related to a call for service) between police officers of this Division/Cluster and community agencies or individuals?
19. What sort of communication exists between this Division/Cluster and local media regarding policing issues?
20. Do you wish to add anything to what you have said that may help to elaborate or describe the communication that exists between police of this Division/Cluster and community agencies or individuals?
21. What is your opinion of clustering?

## Appendix C: Operational Police Survey Questionnaire

Dear respondent

As part of an evaluation of clustering, the QPS is currently collecting information about the involvement of operational officers in Metro North and Metro South Regions in community policing activities. The research is being conducted with the full knowledge and support of Mr Early (Assistant Commissioner, Metro North Region) and Mr Jefferies (Assistant Commissioner, Metro South Region).

To completed this aspect of the research, you have been randomly selected to take part in a survey about the involvement of operational police in community policing activities. The research aims to collect the following information:

- (i) background information on your rank and location;
- (ii) an estimate of the number of times you have participated in a range of community policing activities in the last month; and
- (iii) your knowledge of the local community.

The information which you provide will be treated as confidential and you will not be identified in any way in any database or document. Our interest is strictly a research one to find out more about the everyday interactions of operational police with the community.

We would appreciate your cooperation in completing the survey, which should take about 5–10 minutes. The survey is located on the QPS Bulletin Board. To access the survey, follow these steps:

1. Locate the home page on the Bulletin Board.
2. At the prompt, enter CJCSURVEY.
3. Click on the blue link.
4. Enter the user name (the user name is SURVEY) and the password (the password is PARTNER).
5. Complete the survey.
6. Return the survey by pressing the submit button.
7. Exit from Netscape.

Please return the survey to us by 12 December 1997.

Yours sincerely  
Superintendent Ian Stewart  
Chair  
**Recommendation 139 Working Group**

*Thank you for your cooperation*

# References

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