



NEW ZEALAND
POLICE
Ngā Pirihimana o Aotearoa



*E tū ki te kei o te waka,
kia pakia koe e ngā ngaru o te wā*

New Zealand Police
Strategic Research
Agenda
Te Rautaki Kaupapa
Rangahau o
Ngā Pirihimana o Aotearoa
2023 – 2026

EVIDENCE — BASED —
POLICING • CENTRE • • •

Foreword

by Executive Lead: Future Policing, Mark Evans



It is my pleasure to present the New Zealand Police Strategic Research Agenda for 2023 to 2026, highlighting the priority research areas for New Zealand Police that will enable a greater understanding of what works, what does not work, and what guides Police to prevent crime and protect the public.

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The Agenda will be delivered under the direction of our Evidence Based Policing Centre (EBPC) – a partnership between New Zealand Police, the University of Waikato, the Institute of Environmental Science and Research and One New Zealand.

The 2023-2026 Strategic Research Agenda reflects the challenges that have come to the forefront for New Zealand Police in recent years: in particular staff safety, tactical capability, and better understanding the delivery of core policing services.

In the short-term, the Agenda provides focus, direction and clarity to police-centred research efforts. Over the long-term, it gives us a strategic framework to translate research into improved policing outcomes for New Zealand.

The Agenda presents four high-level, complementary themes, each essential to understanding the challenges of modern policing in New Zealand and each areas we are calling for further research in:

- ▶ Preventing crime and harm
- ▶ Organisational resilience
- ▶ Connecting with communities
- ▶ Strengthening the sector

You will notice the themes and subthemes span many scientific and social science disciplines. To achieve our mandate of making New Zealand the safest country and get the most value from our research projects, we know that interdisciplinary collaboration between New Zealand Police, researchers, scientists, academics, government agencies, Iwi and community groups is essential. And to achieve the greatest impact, our research findings will be shared within New Zealand Police, with our partners, as well as Government agencies, policy makers, the New Zealand public and other international audiences, including police jurisdictions.

We recognise our commitment to Māori and Tiriti o Waitangi by welcoming the unique contribution that mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge and wisdom) can make to our research endeavours and outcomes. We will also ensure that research specific to Māori adopts a Kaupapa Māori (with Māori, for Māori) approach, ensuring our research is culturally safe, appropriate, and relevant.

With this Agenda and the combination of practical expertise, academic rigour, mātauranga Māori, and Iwi, sector and stakeholder perspectives, we will maximise our research capabilities and ultimately deliver the necessary insights to continue enhancing the way we police in New Zealand. It's ambitious, but we hope it will inspire expert collaborators from New Zealand and around the world to work with us on research projects and initiatives that will help keep our communities safe.

R. Mark Evans OBE
EXECUTIVE LEAD: FUTURE POLICING
NEW ZEALAND POLICE

Impact of the 2020 – 2022 Agenda

External and internal researchers can apply to the NZ Police Research Panel (NZPRP) to conduct independent research with endorsement of the New Zealand Police and use of Police resources. Applicants range from academic researchers, post-graduate students, researchers from other agencies (i.e., government ministries) or Police staff who are studying towards a higher qualification.

The Agenda signals to researchers Police research priorities and topics of importance. How their research aligns to the Agenda is vital for the Panel to understand how it will fill gaps in our understanding and benefit our communities, and to justify the investment of Police resources.

To date the Police Research Panel has approved approximately 50 research projects which all align with the Agenda. This includes research in topics such as Police wellbeing, efficiency in service delivery, working with communities, youth crime and organisational change.



New Zealand Police

Strategic Research Agenda

Te Rautaki Kaupapa

Rangahau o

Ngā Pirihimana o Aotearoa

2023 – 2026

Four research pillars cluster our research into broad/high-level areas of strategic priority in line with Our Business and our future policing requirements. These research themes are the foundational principles for setting organisational research objectives and to enable multidisciplinary collaborative research.

*“Mā te kimi ka kite, mā te kite ka mōhio, mā te mōhio ka mārama,
mā te mārama, ka mātau, mā te mātau, ka ora”*

**Preventing
crime and harm**



**Organisational
resilience**



**Connecting
with communities**



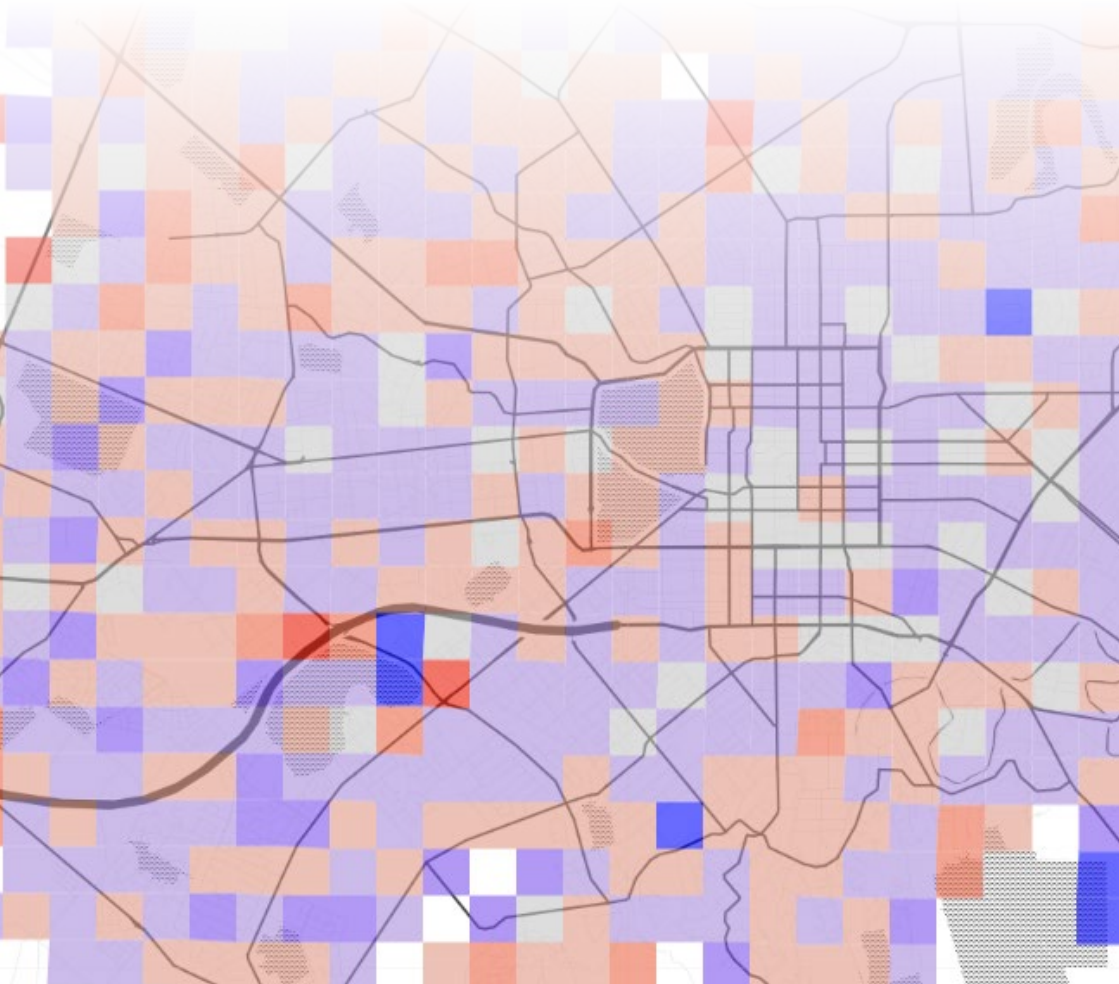
**Strengthening
the sector**



Seek and discover, from discovery comes knowledge, from knowledge comes enlightenment, from enlightenment comes wisdom, from wisdom comes well-being.

Preventing crime and harm

Prevention First is the operating strategy for New Zealand Police and places prevention at the forefront of our Organisation. Police can only prevent crime and harm if we can understand and know what works to address priority areas of increasing demand.



Understanding the drivers of significant harm

We encourage research which helps to understand and explain the drivers of crime and harm to people and communities. Specific areas of interest include, but are not limited to:

- ▶ youth offending
- ▶ at-risk groups (e.g., those with mental health disorders or those experiencing substance abuse and/or dependence)
- ▶ road trauma
- ▶ organised crime
- ▶ cyber and technology enabled crime
- ▶ family harm

Undertaking prevention activities

Prevention aims to prevent crime before it happens, ultimately making New Zealand a safer and better place to live, work and visit. By taking every opportunity to prevent harm, Police will deliver on its intent of making New Zealand the safest country in the world. As such, we endorse research to understand ‘what works’ in terms of prevention activities, be it current practice or novel ideas.

Focus areas include:

- ▶ developing resolutions that involve restorative pathways to prevent crime and victimisation
- ▶ developing and evaluating successful early interventions, and prevention initiatives, with considerations of replication, mediating factors and scalability
- ▶ understanding the intersection of situations across domains (such as schools, poverty, and child behaviour) that lead to offending, and develop sector wide responses to these
- ▶ developing strengths-based prevention initiatives that focus on building on the individual's skills, knowledge, connections and potential

Maximising resources and deployment

There are relentless and competing demands on Police resources, demand continues to increase in volume, severity and complexity – and may exceed our capacity to respond. There is a need to balance resources allocated to deal with proactive demand reduction with those necessary for reactive response. Our aim is to ensure resources are allocated to the right activities in a timely way, so that there is the best chance of preventing harm and responding effectively. As such, we endorse research to understand ‘what works’ in terms of resource allocation models and demand management. Focus areas include:

- ▶ understanding and managing the drivers of demand such as population growth, public expectation, availability and accessibility, policy decisions and non-crime issues, now and in the future
- ▶ understanding where, and how, resources are, or should be, deployed - including tactical capability – to deploy limited law enforcement resources to maximal effect
- ▶ understanding significant long-term growth areas in demand for Police response and mitigation
- ▶ developing meaningful partnerships and co-response initiatives to meet and manage demand
- ▶ develop and evaluate alternative staffing models to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of demand management

Organisational Resilience

Rapid change in the world we inhabit is touching many aspects of Policing. To successfully face this challenge, we need to build a high performing and resilient workforce, equipped, and enabled to deliver our services effectively and efficiently now and in the future. Research enables us to achieve these outcomes.



Technology

New technology is perhaps the most visible sign of change and the source of one of the biggest challenges that law enforcement is currently navigating. We encourage research that may support an agile policing model that can meet the challenges and opportunities of delivering public safety in a digital age. Research may include:

- ▶ understanding the use of technology to improve policing systems and processes, and the social, ethical, and legal considerations that go with this landscape
- ▶ developing innovative technological solutions to support our key services (e.g., understanding solvability factors, linking serial offences, profiling)
- ▶ staying at the forefront of technological advancements by understanding emerging crimes or existing crimes that have become more sophisticated, and how these will impact the crime landscape and harm caused
- ▶ using technology and data to increase safety and maximise intelligence gathering
- ▶ understanding how to support and encourage organisational and cultural shift in Police that allows for change

Future Demand

We encourage research that can “future proof” police against changes both to normal demand, and new demand, such as increases in the need for increased emergency management systems and support. This may involve:

- ▶ understanding areas where new or increased demand is likely, for example, climate change will likely bring more weather emergencies, as well as new laws that require policing
- ▶ improving demand management and workforce planning including building in redundancy capacity for abstractions
- ▶ building frontline capacity and capability by recruiting, retaining, and developing more, and better-equipped, officers

- ▶ developing flexible methods for delivering policing services
- ▶ working with partner agencies to provide a cohesive and adaptable service

Police are safe and feel safe

We encourage research that provides police a higher level of protection from physical and psychosocial risks, now and in the future, ensuring the wellbeing, capability, and resilience of our people. This includes:

- ▶ identifying and mitigating workplace hazards, psychosocial risks, and unsupportive aspects of the work environment that are areas of concern for frontline staff
- ▶ evaluating the efficacy of tactics and interventions designed to improve officer safety
- ▶ identifying aspects of the police work environment that promote wellbeing and understanding barriers to accessing support
- ▶ investigating and improving how agencies operate in ways that promote a culture of safety, and contributing to individual and organisational wellness
- ▶ understanding training and educational needs for future Police officers and staff
- ▶ developing new models of policing
- ▶ collecting accessible, and reliable data on the performance and impacts of law enforcement

Connecting with communities

Our vision is to have the trust and confidence of all, and we believe in building safer communities in partnership with communities.

We must continually seek to meet the public's evolving expectations of Police. Research can help identify effective ways to connect with, and empower, communities and improve trust and confidence to support policing by consent.



Empowering and connecting with the community

Demographic changes such as generational shift, urbanisation, and immigration, plus technological, social, and political shifts are reshaping both how police forces do their work, as well as the communities that they protect. This means that communication between communities, both with, and about the police is changing. We will encourage research into methods and best practice approaches for connecting with communities and ensuring they feel heard, informed and respected. There will be a particular focus on:

- ▶ increasing the reporting of currently under-reported crime and intelligence
- ▶ building community resilience
- ▶ understanding what the public want and expect from the police now and in the future, and the public's priorities for policing
- ▶ the development of problem-solving and problem-oriented policing (POP) techniques, tools and best practices to promote public safety
- ▶ improving online and social media visibility and accessibility to connect with different communities

Enhancing understanding and responsiveness to diverse communities and cultures

Te Huringa o Te Tai (The Turning of the Tide) is the Police Māori strategy and is core to delivering our policing vision, O Le Taeao Fou (Dawn of a New Day) is the Pasifika National Strategy which sets the direction for building Police's capability and capacity to partner and engage with Pasifika communities and families. Working Together with Ethnic Communities – the Future, is Police's strategy to ensure that we are ready and capable of responding to the needs and emerging issues of our increasingly diverse ethnic communities. For New Zealand to be the safest country, we must work with Māori, Pacific and other ethnic groups as our partners. As such, we encourage research that helps us to understand, engage with, and improve outcomes for diverse communities with a focus on:

- ▶ incorporating a Kaupapa Māori approach, or other non-western world views, in research
- ▶ identifying, developing, and evaluating interventions involving partnerships with underrepresented groups
- ▶ strengthening police engagement with, and understanding of, new resident and emerging communities, and traditionally marginalised communities (e.g., LGBTQ+, individuals with disabilities, individuals who are neurodivergent etc)
- ▶ strengthening police engagement with victims and victim services as a component of community engagement
- ▶ determining the best channels and communication approaches to effectively reach all people in our communities
- ▶ recruiting and developing more officers and staff from diverse communities, reflective of the communities we serve

A Focus on Fair and Equitable policing outcomes

We encourage research that enhances the performance of Police duties in a manner that increases community Trust and Confidence in Police. We are committed to fair and just policing practices and exploring and addressing any inconsistencies that may exist within our systems, processes, and practices. Some priorities include:

- ▶ understanding the impact of international socio-political environments on New Zealand (e.g., Black Lives Matter, anti-police/ anti-establishment sentiments)
- ▶ understanding and identifying inconsistencies in the policy and practice of justice sector organisations
- ▶ developing methods to identify patterns of unprofessional police conduct and provide training programs to help ensure prevention against any biased practices
- ▶ providing effective, efficient, and procedurally just crime control strategies
- ▶ recognising tikanga Māori customary values and practices to guide actions and outcomes
- ▶ providing equitable and just access to Police support and services



Strengthening our sector

We recognise that system efficiency, collaboration, and the delivery of alternative resolutions in a timely and accessible manner is critical to achieving safer communities that are resilient to crime and harm.

Improving sector integrity and efficiency

We will encourage research that explores opportunities to optimise system delivery with a focus on:

- ▶ optimising law enforcement system components to improve efficiency and service delivery
- ▶ assessing best practice for sector regulation and its contribution toward reducing crime and recidivism
- ▶ investigating threats to staff integrity and developing means to mitigate and protect against these (i.e., corruption and bias-based practices)

Optimising Police partnerships

Within New Zealand's diverse communities, there are challenges that are best understood and solved in collaboration with partners including Justice sector, wider government, and non-government. We encourage research into methods and best practice approaches for cohesion between Police and other organisations with a focus on:

- ▶ applying knowledge from across organisations to inform service design and policing practice (e.g., behavioural insights)
- ▶ ethically sharing data to better inform our approaches in targeting the root causes of crime behaviours or vulnerability to crime
- ▶ system-wide research and collaboration
- ▶ enhancing cross-collaboration of agencies involved with the justice system to optimise outcomes and opportunities

Supporting accessibility, rehabilitation, and reintegration

Supporting people to never offend, or to desist from offending, may be the most important role of the justice sector. Breaking the cycle of victimisation to offending is a significant part of this. The relationship between victimisation and offending, also referred to as the victim-offender overlap, is widely documented. Most victims of crime do not become people who offend, but most people who offend have been victims. We encourage research that explores opportunities for Police to support victim centred research, reintegration approaches and sector accessibility with the aim of reducing reoffending with a focus on:

- ▶ developing a greater understanding of the overlap between people who have offended, and people who have been victimised
- ▶ determining methods of navigating the justice system that is accessible to all people
- ▶ developing evidence-based strategies to reduce both victimisation and future offending
- ▶ developing strategies that support the reintegration of people who have offended into communities
- ▶ developing evidence-based programmes and practices, and offering trauma-informed care to victim-offenders
- ▶ undertaking victim-centred and strengths-based research and data collection

Our drivers of success

Openness and transparency

We are committed to being accessible and available; we proactively share our skills, knowledge and capabilities. We aim to be leaders in open science, promoting the removal of barriers for sharing outputs, resources, methods or tools, at any stage of the research process.

Innovative Methodologies

The knowledge economy is linked to creativity and innovation. To ensure our research makes an impact on policing practice and culture, we place importance on innovative research questions and methodologies that may contribute to products or processes that are likely to have a great impact. As such, our research is informed by a diverse range of methodologies and schools of practice including those from non-western paradigms, such as Kaupapa Māori. Furthermore, we aim to place concerns and world views of non-Western individuals in the centre of research, and respectfully understand theory and research from different perspectives.

Deliver Tangible Outcomes

Our research outputs are relevant, practical, and have measurable impact on the way policing services in New Zealand are delivered. We will increase the impact of our research by embracing multiple disciplines and delivering actionable results to decision-makers, frontline staff, and the community. Our research will drive change where needed in our training, policies, professional practices, and tactics, producing tangible outcomes for all.



New Zealand Police's values
 Professionalism|Respect|Integrity
 Commitment to Māori and The Treaty
 Empathy|Diversity



Multidisciplinary Partnerships

New Zealand Police is dedicated to approaching problems through a multidisciplinary lens to produce meaningful research outputs. We will build and maintain collaborative relationships with our partners, researchers, academic institutions, government agencies, and Iwi and community organisations – locally, nationally and internationally. We will demonstrate to others best practice in multidisciplinary, cross-agency and cross-country co-operation to enrich research endeavours and to build an evidence base that enables Police to best serve New Zealand communities.

Dedication to PRIMED (our New Zealand Police Values)

We are dedicated to drawing on the unique diversity, knowledge, tradition, and culture of New Zealand within our research approaches, methodologies and outputs to help improve policing outcomes for New Zealand. We recognise our commitment to Māori and Tiriti o Waitangi and will reinforce the values and standards we are proud of by maintaining an explicit commitment to integrity and ethical legitimacy throughout our research process. Our people and activities should reflect the communities we service.

Agility

Our priorities ensure our research efforts are focussed on the areas of most value as identified by New Zealand Police and our partners. However, our research agenda is a touchstone, not a milestone; we are flexible and agile in our approach to growing the evidence base of New Zealand Police.

A word from our partners

Established in December 2017, the EBPC is a partnership between the New Zealand Police, the New Zealand Institute for Security and Crime Science at the University of Waikato, and New Zealand Institute of Environmental Science and Research (ESR) and New Zealand Police's strategic technology partner, One NZ.



University of Waikato

Te Puna Haumaru, the New Zealand Institute for Security and Crime Science at the University of Waikato is proud to be a long-term strategic partner of the Evidence Based Policing Centre. The Strategic Research Agenda is critical for helping researchers across Aotearoa focus on research areas that can have an impact on the safety of communities. We look forward to supporting this work and building the evidence base in crime reduction.



ESR

ESR is proud to partner with Police in the Evidence Based Policing Centre. The Strategic Research Agenda outlines four key research themes that will see the Centre deliver significant impact for New Zealand. We are excited to contribute ESR's scientific capabilities to the multidisciplinary projects that will help deliver against this agenda and build the basis for evidence informed decision making across policing.



One NZ

One NZ as a long-term strategic partner for New Zealand Police fully supports the Strategic Research Agenda and the fantastic work of the Evidence Based Policing Centre (EBPC) in conducting and facilitating research to help improve the safety of all New Zealanders. One NZ is fully committed to providing what support we can today and into the future to enable New Zealand Police and the EBPC to continue the great work that it has started.

Research enquiries

All internal and external researchers can apply to the New Zealand Police Research Panel for access to New Zealand Police Data or resources.

Data and resources include staff time and research that involves staff as participants. Researchers include those police employees who are conducting research as part of their role within Police and/or may be studying towards a higher degree and/or collaborating with an external agency on a research project.

For information on the Police policy for researchers' access to resources, data or privileged information and information on the research proposal application process please follow this link: <https://www.police.govt.nz/about-us/publication/research-external-researcher-requests>

For research enquiries please email:
research@police.govt.nz

For more information about the Evidence Based Policing Centre please visit us at:
<https://www.police.govt.nz/about-us/programmes-and-initiatives/evidence-based-policing>





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