

Independent Panel

Summary Date Range 08/07/22 to 17/05/24

What have we spoken about?

- The Independent Panel showed a keen interest in the proposed Diversity Panel and the evaluation of its trial in the Bay of Plenty. Members discussed that as Police brings in more diversity, it is important to embrace and celebrate this by providing a safe space for the kaupapa to flourish.
- The Independent Panel focused strongly on the communications strategy and its purpose, which was to give visibility, voice, and progression to the kaupapa. Members identified the need to develop comms material that was unified and spoke to the purpose of the UPD programme to ensure consistent messaging, to both internal and external stakeholders.
- Throughout the programme, the Independent Panel centred their discussions on the data issues. It was evident that the current means of data collection, particularly in operational environments, leaves significant gaps in data availability and quality. The Panel acknowledged that this poses a challenge for both the research teams, and for informing Police themselves about their own policy and practice.
- The Independent Panel agreed that there was a need to maintain a no surprises approach to the UPD research. Throughout the programme, tikanga was maintained and upheld, with the Research Management Committee advising the Panel of upcoming site visits and engagement, and the sharing of media releases between the Panel and Police, to ensure there were no surprises for either party.
- As the programme progressed, members of the Independent Panel noted that whilst there was optimism for the UPD programme as a kaupapa, there was growing concern for Police's financial situation and the potential impact it could have on the programme.

What have we done?

- The Independent Panel supported the procurement of the Research Teams by solidifying the procurement process and the role of the Procurement Panel. Members supported the decision of the Procurement Panel for the preferred research providers, helping the programme land on the four Research Teams: Ihi Research, Mana Pounamu, Dr Paul Brown, and the Donald Beasley Institute. It was agreed that the announcement of the Research Teams should be made by the Panel and be in both te reo Māori and te reo Pākehā, to ensure the communities at the heart of the research could be informed.
- When members became aware of the drug driving legislation, the potential for the exercise of bias within the process of oral fluid testing became evident. The Independent Panel engaged with Police not only to raise their concerns in this space, but to also generate conversation and get a greater understanding around the purpose of the legislation, which is to prevent deaths on the roads caused by drug driving.
- Throughout the programme, the Independent Panel prioritised engagement with different groups to deepen their understanding of areas that were pertinent to the UPD programme focus. Some examples of these were ReFrame, Ao Mai te Rā: The Anti-Racism Kaupapa, Royal New Zealand Police College, Assurance Group with a WAI3060 focus, and Police groups with a strong focus on the policing of gangs.

- Tā Kim provided his paper on Unconscious Bias and Unconscious Bias Training to the group, recommending that the Panel avoid the use of this term due to the differing understanding and interpretation of it. This prompted additional discussion on final definitions, with members agreeing that defining the different terms needed to be finalised following consultation with the Research Teams.
- As the programme progressed, the different rōpū were evaluated to ensure each was fit for purpose and accurately represented their role in the evolving programme. One such change was the Research Steering Group (RSG) being disestablished, with the Research Management Committee (RMC) superseding them, better reflecting their purpose of managing and supporting the Research Teams.
- The Independent Panel aided in the establishment of the Ethics Committee and the development of the process to be followed when the Research Teams began to submit their ethics applications. Members agreed that the RMC would provide support to the Research Teams ahead of their application to ensure the Research Teams were guided throughout the process, and to safeguard the mana of the Ethics Committee.
- Feedback was provided by the Independent Panel on the UPD Values, with the key values being identified as kaitiakitanga, manaakitanga, whakamana, whanaungatanga, and aroha ki te tangata.
- The process by which the Independent Panel could provide advice was developed and refined over the course of the programme. Throughout this time, the Independent Panel provided advice on the Fleeing Driver Policy, Police Strategic Research Agenda, the Facial Recognition Technology paper, replacement of TASER with TASER10, and the Use of Lethal Force review Terms of Reference. However, the Panel Advice workstream was closed with the support the Panel, with the decision that advice will now come in the form of recommendations.
- Each quarter, a wānanga was held between ELT and the Independent Panel to forge stronger relationships between both parties, to prepare Police for the research findings, and identify how the organisation may be able to respond to issues relevant to the programme, that fall outside of the focus of the research.
- The Independent Panel endorsed the Equity Panel to pilot the proposed Systems Approach to Operational Performance, subject to the feedback provided by the Panel. Members focused strongly on the review process to ensure the recommendations made by the Equity Panel were being implemented.
- Members of the Independent Panel endorsed Option One of Police's proposed Implementation Plan to the research findings, which called for a smaller sub-group of the Panel to provide independent community oversight, a Police-only Executive Oversight Group, and a team of nine delivery staff.
- Three registers were endorsed as standing items on each Independent Panel hui agenda: the Register of Impact, the Register of Structural Issues, and the Register of Advice. In addition to these, each month the Register of Interests was updated so members could declare any conflicts of interest and have changes noted against their interests.
- The Independent Panel endorsed the five sites of innovation and the five communities of interest for Ihi Research, which they will focus on during Phase Two of their research.
- Tā Kim stepped down as Chair of the Independent Panel but remained a member as Pou Ārahi, continuing to contribute his breadth of knowledge to the UPD programme. Professor Khylee Quince took over the role of Chair of the Panel.
- The UPD Foundation Document was revised, with the Independent Panel providing feedback on the recommendations in the draft paper that would inform the revised document.

Members agreed to include the role of the Panel as outlined in the initial draft Terms of Reference, but to highlight the mandate that the Panel can escalate issues directly to the Commissioner if they feel their advice is not being considered.

What are we going to do next?

- The Independent Panel agreed to author a phase one report, with the first draft already being reviewed by Panel members and the draft recommendations shared with Police for early consideration. The Panel will continue to progress this report in parallel to the final phase one research reports and will ensure translations to te reo Māori and accessible formats.
- Members of the Independent Panel will endeavour to support the continuation of the national Operational Advisory Group (OAG), and in the development of localised OAGs.
- Throughout the course of the programme, the Independent Panel provided advice to Police on the Joint Inquiry by the IPCA and OPC into Police's photographing of rangatahi. Members have endorsed the recommendations made by the OAG and Tā Kim in his papers, with the advice being sent to the Commissioner of Police. The Panel will await the formal Police response.
- The Independent Panel will progress their realignment to a smaller panel for community engagement and advice on the implementation model, as the recommendations are adopted by Police.
- The communications and engagement strategy for the release of the research reports and findings will continue to be at the forefront of the Independent Panel's conversation. They will work to ensure that the tikanga is maintained between Panel and Police, and that the Research Teams are included in the conversation to ensure a united voice.
- The Independent Panel will continue to work with Police to oversee and manage the research undertaken in the UPD programme. Members, with their cultural and academic expertise, will ensure the programme is well-advised and guided as it reaches the final phases.