

Operational Advisory Group

Summary Date Range 18/02/22 to 10/03/22

Understanding Policing Delivery

The Understanding Policing Delivery (UPD) programme was announced by the Police Commissioner Andrew Coster in March 2021 when he appointed the Chair of the Independent Panel Tā Kim Workman.

Its purpose is to identify whether, where, and to what extent, bias exists at a system level in Police's operating environment so that Police can ensure it delivers policing that is fair and equitable for all our communities. UPD will look at all aspects of bias affecting our communities.

Purpose of the Operational Advisory Group

The Operational Advisory Group (OAG) was established in early 2022 and brings together a diverse range of operational staff to ensure that the research programme is informed by frontline insight, observations and advice from Police's operating environment, including management policies and practices, training and deployment. The OAG is chaired by Inspector Scott Gemmell, Area Commander Counties Manukau East, and includes observing members from the Police Association and Police Leaders Guild.

What have we spoken about?

- The critical role OAG has in the success of the UPD Research Programme. In overseas research into issues such as systemic bias, the police agency has led the project, managed the research, announced its findings, and expected staff to implement the changes.
- This programme must be, and is, different. Involving the OAG members in identifying what needs to change and how is vital to the success of the programme. Members will be empowered to work collaboratively with the Panel, the research team, and other Police staff to bring about real changes in the workforce.
- To allow full participation of members, the privacy and safety of the OAG members is paramount, as is their ability to build relationships within the group.

What have we done?

- The OAG was established and the first two hui were held, focussing on whanaungatanga (the process of establishing relationships). Similar to the other Kaitiaki groups in the programme, beginning this work by establishing a foundation of trust and respect allows for tolerance of difference in perspective and understanding. Hui also focussed on relaying an understanding of the 3 key focus areas of the UPD Research Programme:
 - Who Police stop and speak to and how we engage with them
 - Use-of-force decision-making
 - Charging decision-making
- Members heard a presentation on the four pillars of police legitimacy (lawfulness, effectiveness, procedural justice, and distributive justice) and the relationship these pillars have to the research areas.
- The administration, safety and privacy of members was explored thoroughly to ensure everyone can contribute as fully as possible. The group was also consulted on how they could best work

- with the UPD Independent Panel and on the programme, including the practicality of members, who are mostly frontline staff, travelling for hui and having time to read and prepare for hui.
- A Strategic Communications Plan was developed by the Leads of the four groups within the programme. It contained a proposed three-month tactical approach, outlined the general assumptions of the plan, the phasing of internal and external communications, and recommended links to the Police *Be First, Then Do* programme to enable internal communications to start from a space that was comfortable and gradually open up to more confronting topics. OAG were asked to provide feedback and advice on the Plan, including how different communications channels and key words would be received by colleagues, and suggestions to help ensure messaging is well-received. Their feedback included:
 - Comparing NZ to USA policing models and environments is challenging; members felt that the USA are more extreme in their policing approaches than NZ.
 - Some of the examples used were of events such as Bastion Point, the Spingbok Tour, and the Dawn Raids and several members are the children of the generations involved in these events. More recent examples of systemic bias and racism would be helpful and would make the research more relevant, particularly to the younger members of the workforce.
 - Terms such as institutionalised racism, systemic racism, and structural racism are not well understood by OAG members or in their opinion, to most of their colleagues, and the meanings will be difficult to convey to such a large workforce. Use of these terms will need careful planning and relevant examples.
 - Views on the use of the term 'racism' were mixed, as this will likely provoke a negation reaction from some members of the workforce.
 - A joint hui between the Independent Panel and the Operational Advisory Group was held for the purpose of forming a common understanding of the research scope, including to explore and form a consensus view on critical terms, definitions, supporting language and communications activities. This consensus view was then able to form part of the programme glossary, as well as provide advice and recommendations to the Police Executive.

What are we going to do next?

- The OAG will continue building on their relationships with each other and the Panel, by meeting locally as well as a group and planning more joint hui. This will allow both groups to continue developing an understanding of each other's perspectives and experiences, in turn, contributing to the research findings and practical implementation of relevant recommendations.
- OAG members will continue to inform the development of internal communications collateral for the programme and ongoing engagement through the sharing of stories and experiences.
- Review OAG membership at the 6-month mark to ensure the group continues to have a broad representation of the organisation providing insight into the programme.