

## Research Steering Group

Summary Date Range 15/04/21 to 03/03/22

### 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 Group

The Research Steering Group (RSG) was set up in early 2021 with the key functions of enabling the programme, providing guidance and oversight, supporting the collaboration across the UPD contributors and to help ensure that Police protect the independence of the work. Membership is made up of mostly internal Police staff across functions such as the Evidence Based Policing Centre, Media and Comms, Assurance and Risk, Royal New Zealand Police College, Iwi and Communities, Capability, Deployment, Emergency Communications plus representatives from the Independent Police Conduct Authority and the Justice Sector. The RSG is chaired by Bruce O'Brien, Assistant Commissioner, Deployment and Road Policing.

### What have we spoken about?

- RSG recognised the need for rigor in the structure of the UPD Research Programme and looked at options for organising the structure to prioritise transparency, Māori-centred approaches, and integrity.
- The group has explored options for the people, members, and resources needed to ensure the success of the programme, both in the short-term and long-term.
- Perceived and actual risks to the integrity of the programme have been examined, alongside plans for managing and mitigation.
- The group has had robust conversations about the challenges and opportunities noted for Police in undertaking this research:

Opportunities	Challenges
Genuine look at the nature of bias in Police	Engaging genuinely with Māori & mana whenua
Develop understanding of levers that could shift biased outcomes	Multiple right ways to undertake this work; resultant public interest and critique
Become police service that NZers expect and deserve, be a true Treaty partner	Data access
Encourage other gov departments/ police services to see value in undertaking this work	Police will need to own results whatever their potential
Promote transparency and evidence-based conversations with staff	Academic independence to ensure Police aren't researching themselves
Create equity	Balancing needs of frontline police
Demonstrate courage and innovation in policing	Balancing international and local research

### What have we done?

- The RSG was formed in April 2021, with the original purpose of safeguarding the academic integrity of the research and defining the boundaries of and links to each kaitiaki group, as well as ensuring sufficient subject matter expertise was available to provide guidance and oversight to the programme.
- Over several months, the RSG heard presentations on Kaupapa Māori methodology, Biculturalism in the Public Service, Police Legitimacy, and Research Needs. These presentations opened conversations about what exactly Police needs to know about, what sort of research is required, and what will make a difference. These presentations have proven to be invaluable, and have given RSG members a broader understanding of the context for this research as well as the complex environment for change and transformation within NZ Police. An emphasis was placed on the importance of transparent practices that build trust and confidence, and the consideration of what policing means to different communities in Aotearoa NZ.
- A foundation document was drafted, containing the organisational structure of the UPD programme, scope, purpose and guiding principles of the research, and terms of reference for the different groups, and an interest register for declared pecuniary and other interests.
- Two literature reviews were commissioned to inform the direction of the research as well as the tender process for finding an appropriate applied research team:
  - An international literature review was undertaken by the University of Waikato, who reviewed over 10,000 items to find 400 pieces of research in scope. They produced an evidence map and a report of completed international literature.
  - A grey literature review was undertaken by Te Atawhai o te Ao, to look at the NZ context and what constitutes bias. They produced key findings and recommendations for applied research.
- The RSG determined the applied research will be grounded by NZ-specific questions and will utilise Kaupapa Māori or Māori-centred methodology due to these being fundamentally human centred.
- The RSG committed to ensuring that research findings are relevant to the operational policing environment and can result in practical change for the benefit of our staff and communities.
- As the needs of the programme have evolved over time, the roles of each group have been adjusted. The Independent Panel has increased in functionality, and there is now less of a requirement for the RSG.

### What are we going to do next?

- Support the procurement of the research team to carry out the applied research.
- Support the ongoing development of communications and engagement activity to lay out the dissemination of programme updates, elements of NZ Police history, release of literature reviews, commencement of tender process, and research phase developments.