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POLICE CULTURE AND VIOLENCE

DRAFT REPORT OF VICTORIA POLICE WORKSHOPS

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This report presents the details and findings of a series of workshops held with members of the Victoria Police during 1993 and 1994 as a part of a wider study on police culture and violence funded by the Criminology Research Council and conducted in collaboration between Dr Steve James of the Criminology Department and Professor Tony Coady of the Centre for Philosophy and Public Issues at the University of Melbourne. The cooperation of the Victoria Police in organising and supporting the workshops is gratefully acknowledged.

PREFACE

The following report describes the design, conduct and findings of a series of workshops held with members of the Victoria Police during 1993 and 1994 as part of a larger research project concerned with police culture and violence. That project has been funded by the Criminology Research Council, and has been conducted jointly between Dr Steve James of the Criminology Department and Professor Tony Coady of the Centre for Philosophy and Public Issues at the University of Melbourne. Dr Seumas Miller, now Professor of Philosophy at Charles Sturt University, and Mr Ian Warren, now Lecturer in Police Studies at Deakin University, have worked on the project as Research Fellow and Research Assistant respectively. In addition, Dr Bruce Langtry and Mr Will Barrett of the Centre for Philosophy and Public Issues provided valuable assistance in running several of the workshops.

The workshops which are the subject of this report have been supported unstintingly by the Victoria Police, and in particular, by Superintendent Peter Macievic of the Corporate Policy, Planning and Review Department, and Inspector Bob Mayne, who made the arrangements for the workshops. Our thanks is due also to the Victoria Police Research Co-ordinating Committee, and to the men and women participants in the workshops who made their time and their experiences available to us.

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SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

Police Culture

The organisational cultures of the agencies of social control have become a fertile field for scholarly attention. Long gone are conceptions of social control as a purely reactive enterprise which is structured solely by the phenomena it attempts to control. The capacities of social control agencies to construct their roles and practices, and to give particular kinds of social, political and moral meaning to those roles and practices, are axiomatic features of contemporary control discourse. But few social control agencies have been subject to quite the degree of cultural analysis as has policing. The application of concepts of 'culture' to an understanding of police behaviour and misbehaviour has been a distinctive component of police scholarship over the last two decades or so. At the same time, 'cultural' explanations of police behaviour have appeared increasingly in the popular imagery of policing. The development of analyses of policing which seek to move beyond idiographic conceptions of police behaviour has been welcome; the sterility of older conceptions of police misbehaviour as functions of individual venality and pathology has been all too apparent, and such conceptions have little general currency.

Culture has been invoked as an (or more often the) explanatory variable in the generation of police corruption, brutality and abuse of power,[1] gender and minority discrimination within policing,[2] the failure of internal police complaints investigation,[3] the development of authoritarianism among police personnel,[4] the failure of attempts to reform police organisational structures,[5] and the meddling of police in the political process and the corruption of that process.[6] However, the concept of a distinctive culture within policing which determines all manner of (especially) misbehaviours by police is in grave danger of becoming a cliche. The appropriation of a highly qualified analytical device drawn originally from anthropology[7] by both popular and scholarly commentators on policing has resulted too often in an undifferentiated entity known as 'police culture' which is treated synonymously as the cause and effect of police misbehaviour.

The origins of cultural explanations for police behaviour can be traced to attempts by sociologists in the 1960s to explain an enduring anomaly in policing: the breaking of rules by the people whose primary occupational and social purpose is to enforce rules. Systematic scholarly attention directed at policing is a relatively recent endeavour. The evolution of modern policing, traditionally associated with the introduction by Robert Peel of the London Metropolitan Police in 1829,[8] was for many years assumed to be a rational and successful response to the burgeoning need for more effective means of crime control following the Industrial Revolution.[9] This assumption fitted nicely the premises of a classical conception of effective criminal justice, in which a visible police presence deterred general law breaking and the investigative and apprehension capacities of police offered specific deterrence.

A number of factors combined to render policing practically invisible as an object of academic interest for many years. In particular, it was assumed that police did not make many or any crucial decisions in a control context. This assumption was to some extent a

function of the low regard in which police were held as lower-class workers recruited more on the basis of their brawn (and in the U.S., their local political affiliations[10]) than their brains, characteristics which rendered them less interesting as criminal justice decision-makers compared with the activities of the legislature and the courts. Equally importantly, academics essentially accepted the arguments propagated for many years by police themselves that they were merely servants of the law, acting within the law at all times. Goldstein wrote in 1977:

> In the past the prevalent assumption of both the police and the public was that the police had no discretion - that their job was to function in strict accordance with the law. In fostering this image of themselves as ministerial officers, doing precisely what they were mandated by law to do, the police were responding to their understanding of what was expected of them by legislatures, by the courts, and by a substantial segment of the general public.[11]

But this was and has always been something of a myth. Policing has necessarily required the exercise of discretion, given its diverse mandate and the many options it has available to it for the execution of that mandate. And much of that decision-making has been problematic. While criminal justice scholars may have been blinkered until the 1960s, other observers of policing (in particular municipal policing in the U.S. and in Britain) were well aware of the abuse of power by police.[12] According to Jerome Skolnick, writing in 1966, the accumulated evidence of police misbehaviour in the U.S. raised the issue: 'For many municipal police forces in the United States, the observer's question is... not whether police operate under the constraints of due process of law, but whether they operate within bounds of civilized conduct.'[13]

The belated scholarly recognition that systematic discretionary decision-making by police occurred[14] was accompanied in the U.S. during the 1960s by a plethora of government inquiries and academic critiques of widespread police misbehaviour.[15] The search began for comprehensive understanding of why and how police behaved outside the confines of the rules and regulations that formally governed their mandate. One of the earliest attempts to offer such an understanding, and one still with a lot of currency, was that by Jerome Skolnick. For Skolnick, the inevitability of the exercise of discretion by police, and the abuse of that discretion, are functions of a structural conflict between the demands of efficient and effective law enforcement on the one hand, and the rule of law on the other:

> The police in democratic society are required to maintain order and do so under the rule of law. As functionaries charged with maintaining order, they are part of the bureaucracy. The ideology of democratic bureaucracy emphasizes initiative rather than disciplined adherence to rules and regulations. By contrast, the rule of law emphasizes the rights of individual citizens and constraints upon the initiative of legal officials.[16]

As a consequence, police violate the principles and guidelines of due process and the rule of law in order to achieve what they believe are the fundamental purposes of policing. But Skolnick recognised that discretionary decision-making (and one of its consequences - the violation of due process) needs to take place within an organisational and occupational context which structures, supports and rationalises rule-breaking. While he did not explicitly describe this context as a 'culture' of policing, he identified many of the

conditions and factors which have been viewed subsequently as the defining characteristics of a police culture. Drawing on the literature on the sociology of occupations, Skolnick argued that workers develop particular ways of perceiving, understanding and responding to their occupational environment, 'distinctive cognitive tendencies'[17] which result from factors unique to each occupation. He isolated danger and authority as the most salient factors, and argued that: '..the police, as a result of combined features of their social situation, tend to develop ways of looking at the world distinctive to themselves, cognitive lenses through which to see situations and events.'[18] He called the result the 'working personality' of police.

For Skolnick, the exposure of police to danger in their working environment forges a strong sense of suspiciousness, a tendency to be constantly alert to signs of violence and offending. This suspiciousness isolates police from the community, both the law-abiding members who cannot share the same conceptions of danger, and the lawbreaking objects of police attention. It simultaneously leads to a heightened sense of solidarity amongst police workers. At the same time, police are vested with considerable authority to execute their duties, including the enforcement of what in the U.S. context Skolnick describes as 'puritanical morality';[19] the community resents and resists the exercise of such authority, which in turn reinforces the police sense of suspiciousness, isolation and solidarity. Crucially, exposure to real or anticipated danger '...undermines the judicious use of authority':[20]

> The combination of danger and authority found in the task of the policeman unavoidably combine to frustrate procedural regularity....Danger typically yields self-defensive conduct, conduct that must strain to be impulsive because danger arouses fear and anxiety so easily. Authority under such conditions becomes a resource to reduce perceived threats rather than a series of reflective judgements arrived at calmly. ...As a result, procedural requirements take on a "frilly" character, or at least tend to be reduced to a secondary position in the face of circumstances seen as threatening.[21]

Skolnick argued that while his working personality thesis offers a generalisable description of structuring forces in policing across different societies, it also allowed for significant variation. He proposed, for instance, that the exposure of British police to less danger in their working environment compared with their American counterparts meant that the tendency of danger to weaken procedural regularity was less evident, and that British police in general operated more within the rule of law than American police. He also predicted that were police anywhere to be more exposed to danger (or to perceive that they were in more danger) in their working environment, then we could expect an increase in complaints about illegal police behaviour.

Skolnick (with James Fyffe) has recently updated his views on police culture nearly 30 years after his original work.[22] He begins by reasserting his contention that policing develops, like all other occupational groups, 'recognizable and distinctive rules, customs, perceptions, and interpretations of what they see, along with consequent moral judgements', which govern police action.[23] The crucial determinants of these rules and customs derive from the capacity of police to exercise authority and force within the context of perceived danger in their work life and in the face of citizen resentment of and resistance to the use of coercive force. Other occupations can be objectively identified as more dangerous or injurious, but it is to police that society gives the right (albeit

grudgingly) to exercise force on its behalf, and it is the police who are expected to engage with danger and threat. Police suspiciousness of the conditions (or pre-conditions) for dangerous or threatening situations fosters a preference for predictable, conventional and stable events and people, and a dislike and intolerance of unpredictable, erratic and deviant events and people. Police are as a consequence generally politically and socially conservative in their ideologies. Other related consequences follow. The solidarity engendered by shared perceptions of danger and social isolation leads police to adopt something of a 'siege mentality'[24], reflected in beliefs by police that they are misunderstood and unappreciated by the community at large (and in many cases by their own department). In turn, a code of silence operates to protect even malpracticing police from external (and internal) scrutiny and criticism. The triggers for police abuse of power and force revolve around interactions which represent perceived challenges to police conceptions of normality and convention, and to their status as legitimate holders and wielders of authority. Besides the tendency to exercise more coercive authority and force against people who match stereotypes of deviance and dangerousness, police react aggressively to people who defy or deny their authority.

The Present Study

Despite the topicality of culture in explanations of police behaviour, there has been relatively little systematic research conducted in Australia on police culture.[25] In particular, there has been scant attention paid to the experiences and perceptions of police officers themselves regarding the existence, nature and influence of culture upon their behaviour, that of their peers, and that of the police organisation as a whole. Two obvious questions arise from these deficiencies. First, what is the relevance of the predominantly North American formulations of police culture to Australian policing? Second, what is the 'lived' experience of Australian police officers with regard to culture and its influences?

The research which underpins the present report attempts to answer those questions. The key concern of the project has been the need to examine police culture afresh in light of Australian experiences and developments in the literature on organisational cultures. In particular, there is a need to test the assumption that violence is an integral part of police culture, as well as to examine the nature and consequences of police exposure to violence in the community; there has been considerable awareness in Australian police circles and in the criminological literature about the extent to which police suffer violence such as assaults, and the stress generated amongst police by exposure to violence in the community.

The present research is based upon the assumption that key questions about the existence and nature of police cultures and any pronounced shifts in those cultures over time, the effects of such cultures upon operational practices, the effects of exposure to violence upon police culture and practice, can only be comprehensively answered if police officers themselves are provided the opportunity to express their views and experiences. Further, the complexities and sensitivities of the issues require a more flexible and discursive strategy than the traditional individual interview/questionnaire approach. Thus, a workshop or guided group discussion approach was adopted. The workshop technique offers flexibility and the potential to obtain rich information; importantly, it allows police officers to discuss and debate the concepts and realities of police culture in a way not

possible with standard interview/questionnaire techniques.

The Workshops

Selection of the group characteristics for the workshops was governed by a number of imperatives. There was a need to sample from a range of specialities which, *a priori*, could be expected to furnish indications of continuities and discontinuities in conceptions of and experiences with police organisational culture(s). Thus, in order to address the possibility that different specialisations, ranks, age and gender groups are exposed to variable kinds of organisational/cultural experiences and conditions, it was considered necessary to seek data from the following groups:

1. Trainee operational (uniformed) members
2. Junior operational (uniformed) members
3. Community Policing Squad members
4. Women operational (uniformed) members
5. Divisional sub-officers
6. Divisional commissioned officers
7. Police Academy personnel
8. Internal Investigation Department members
9. Divisional Criminal Investigation Branch members

These groups have been chosen on the basis of their probable differential exposure to and concerns with aspects of violence and police culture. Trainee officers were selected in order to explore their experiences with and perceptions of culture at a very early stage in their police career. As the most numerically strong and perhaps most pivotal of those who deliver primary police services, junior general duties officers were considered a key group. The third group represents a significant speciality which deals directly with domestic violence. The fourth group was chosen to allow policewomen to discuss their unique experiences as women. The fifth and six groups represented middle- and senior-level operational management within policing, which is crucial to the supervision and control of police behaviour. The seventh group represents a body of police whose task it is to equip new police members with the knowledge and skills necessary to conduct policing services within the occupational, organisational and social contexts of policing. This group was expected to furnish data on the particular challenges it faces in balancing the requirements of those diverse environments. The eighth group exercises special responsibilities for the investigation of police misbehaviour, and can be presumed to have particular kinds of insights into the relationship between police culture and police behaviour. Finally, the ninth group was chosen because of its responsibility to investigate serious - including violent - crime in the community.

While the researchers selected the broad groups for inclusion in the study, the Victoria Police liaison officer for the project, Inspector Bob Mayne, was responsible for the selection of the individual participants within each of the groups. The researchers were satisfied that while the participant selection process could not be described as random, there was no unduly biased nomination of police members.

Thus, while the selected groups cannot be claimed to be a random sampling of Victorian

police perspectives on and experiences with aspects of police culture, the researchers are confident that the breadth of the groups being selected ensures that no one particular and idiosyncratic police perspective on police culture dominates the research findings. However, care should be taken so that the present findings are not generalised inappropriately beyond the constraints imposed by the numbers of participants, the nature of the groups, and the methodological format.

The conduct of the workshop program emphasised the flexibility that the workshop model facilitates. The data of concern to the researchers were the perspectives, feelings and experiences of police officers, and these needed to be elicited in as relaxed and informal a setting as possible. At the same time, there needed to be some standardisation across the various sessions so that information can be compared. Consequently, the workshops were guided by a standard core of themes and issues which both allowed a common focus and room for flexible discussion and debate. The researchers served primarily to ask questions, facilitate discussion and summarise that discussion; participants were encouraged to discuss and debate amongst themselves the major issues.

The individual sessions were introduced with a brief explanation of the project. Participants were then asked to read and sign a consent form which outlined the nature of the research, indicated willingness to participate and guaranteed anonymity. It was explained that proceedings would be taped, but that anonymity would be guaranteed and all individual identifying characteristics will be eliminated from the transcripts. All participants declined the opportunity to withdraw from the workshops.

A brief description was then given of how the concept of police culture arose, why it has been considered important in the literature, why it is now time to re-examine the concept in the context of contemporary Australian policing, and why it is important to seek the perspectives and experiences of police practitioners. Police culture was introduced in the following standard format:

> "Let me start off with a couple of suggestions or arguments:
>
> 1. The **kinds of people** who want to become police officers are not really typical of everyday members of society; they are special, in different kinds of ways.
>
> 2. The **nature of police work** is quite unlike any other form of peacetime occupation; for instance:
>
> - police often face **danger** in their job, and they are entitled to use **force** in ways that are not common for the rest of us;
>
> - police learn to become **suspicious** as a basic tool of trade, and what they experience on the job helps them to become suspicious in general, even when not on the job;
>
> - because of the danger they face, and the suspiciousness they develop and apply to other people and the world in

general, police must learn to trust one another a lot, and this leads to a very strong sense of **loyalty** amongst police.

3. The **nature of the way policing is organised** is also unlike most other peacetime occupations. The police organisation requires a strong military-like structure, with many ranks, codes of behaviour between subordinate and superior officers, a rigid disciplinary code etc.

Now, taking each of these three factors - the kinds of people who become police officers, the nature of the work that police do, and the nature of the organisational system within which police work - either singly or in combination, it is possible to argue that policing is not just a job, it is more a **way of life**, a way of life in which people share a set of values and attitudes and standards of behaviour not quite the same, or even quite different, to those of us who are not police officers.

Now, for some people, especially police, this way of life and its associated values have all kinds of advantages and strong points. For instance, take the kinds of people who want to be police; because of their integrity, their capacity for discipline, and their desire to help society, they make great colleagues and companions. And take solidarity; that's good too; it's good to be bonded close to a group, to trust them and rely upon them, and have them trust you and rely upon you in return.

But for other people, these values are not always considered strong points. For instance, critics might say that the kind of people who want to become police are conservative, narrow-minded, generally not very-well educated, and this has a negative impact upon how good policing is. Or critics might say that police solidarity means that police will not tend to take action against one of their own who has done something wrong, because this would be letting the side down.

What I have been talking about, of course, is **police culture**, and the kinds of observations I have just made are those which are typically made about both the good and the bad sides of that culture.

Now, most of the stuff I have been saying is drawn from American research and thinking from the 1960s. There are two problems with it as a consequence. The first is that it **is** American, and Australian policing is at times very much different to American policing. The second is that it is **old**; policing has arguably changed a lot since the 1960s, and it is possible to wonder whether what might have made sense then still makes any sense now.

And yet, the term is thrown around with abandon today: certainly critics of police continue to use the term 'police culture' in a negative sense, but even police commissioners have been known to use it, and it seems to have drifted into the general language.

What we want to know is whether it in fact makes any sense to the people who are supposed to live in it."

The substantive component of the workshop began with invitations to respond to and discuss the opening remarks about the concept of police culture, the assumption of its importance, the need to re-examine it and the contributions that can be made by police officers to its refinement. The discussion at this stage was generally free-flowing, with the organisers encouraging debate amongst the participants. The next component of the workshop saw the researchers ask a series of specific questions in order to focus the discussion which either reiterated issues which emerged from the opening discussion or which introduced issues not yet covered. The format of these questions was as follows:

"1. Do you think that the people who want to become police are special in some way? In what ways?

[Is this changing? - after every question]

2. Looking at these aspects (previously described) of the nature of police work, do you agree that the dangers you face makes you different to other workers? In what ways? What about the force you are able to exercise, does this make you different? (what effects are there upon you both of danger and your ability to use force?)

3. Do you think that police develop an unusually strong sense of suspiciousness because of their work? If so, what are the consequences of this, especially off the job?

4. And group solidarity - how evident is this, and how important? What are its signs, and how do you learn it?
Is loyalty a critical part of solidarity?

5. And now about the nature of the police organisation; do you think working within the police organisation makes a police officer different from other workers? How?

6. And last, in this section, is there any difference in regard to the above issues between your police experiences in general, and your more recent experiences in (your specialisation)? If so, what?

In elaboration of the last question, could you describe the work of (your specialisation), especially in terms of why that work is different to that of other police?"

Following discussion of these questions, a range of more specific questions was introduced to explore particular situations that have emerged from the literature as relevant to conceptualisations of police culture. Not all of these issues were addressed evenly throughout the workshops; the necessary flexibility built into the format meant that some groups preferred to concentrate on some issues rather than others; at the same time, the

specialisations of some groups made the questions more or less irrelevant. The issues were as follows:

"In your answers to the following questions, we don't want you to mention particular people or situations that can be identified by outsiders. We are looking for your general views and attitudes, and not for details.

1. Good Cop

It's been written that the good police officers combines the virtues of the Son of God, Arnold Swazzenegger and a professor of psychiatry.

But realistically, what do you consider are the abilities of a good (specialisation) cop? (if necessary, suggest the following:)

- communication skills
- intuition
- discipline
- maturity
- education
- common sense
- initiative
- physically able

How does one become a good (specialisation) cop?

How do you consider a bad (specialisation) cop behaves?

And how does one become a bad (specialisation) cop?

2. Physical Courage

Let's talk more about physical courage. Policing has a history of requiring and prizing physical courage, and we get lots of media images of heroic, brave police. But on the other hand, with the increase in popularity of 'community-based' policing, some have argued that physical strength and courage are no longer quite so important.

What's your view of this? (gender issues?)

Can you give examples of where physical courage remains very important for you to do your job?

3. Dealing with Young People

It's often been said that young people are amongst the hardest of people to deal with for police, because they do not respond well to authority, and don't seem to understand the consequences of their behaviour. On the other

hand, police are often accused of treating young people harshly.

What difficulties have you encountered in your dealings with young people?

How do you respond when kids you are dealing with just do not accept your authority?

Give us an example of a situation which poses a real dilemma for you in dealing with kids.

4. Loyalty

It has often been said that the nature of police work demands strong loyalty amongst officers. But on the other hand, this places police in a tricky situation sometimes when they see fellow officers breaking the rules in order to do their job.

Can you give us any examples of situations where this might be a problem (for you)? (for example?)

- partner gets very aggressive with an offender

- partner lies on oath ('drops a brick') about a case in court

How would you handle such situations?

What typically happens to officers (especially ones at your level) who make formal complaints about fellow officers in such situations?

What do you think about this? What do you think ought to happen in such circumstances?

5. Domestic Violence

It has sometimes been said that police have not in the past taken domestic violence seriously enough because they viewed it largely as a private matter, beneath the law.

Do you think this is still true in any pockets of the Victoria Police?

How does (your specialisation) handle domestic violence differently from most other sections of the force?

What effect has the exposure to domestic violence had upon you? Has it changed you in any way?

How often do you feel threatened when you attend domestics? What in particular triggers a sense of threat? How do you cope with being

threatened?

How does a police officer prepare him/her self for violence both observed in the community and directed at one? How does one adapt and cope?"

The final section of the workshop was devoted to relating the discussion of the issues raised above to the influences exerted by police culture:

"CONCLUDING SECTION

We want to find out the extent to which the informal cultural 'rules' and attitudes we have been discussing influence the ways police typically make decisions and solve dilemmas.

What are your general thoughts on the extent to which police culture influences police behaviour above, beyond, or contrary to formal organisational rules and regulations. Please use examples from our previous discussions.

If we are agreed that culture exists, and it is influential, what are your thoughts on its 'value'? That is, what are its positive features and what are its negative features?

Should police command (or anyone else with some policy power in terms of what police do and how they should do it) take into account the nature of police culture when they develop policies and priorities in policing?"

The standard format outlined above gave rise to many and varied discussions and debates between participants, and the issues noted here were by no means exclusive, as the results described in the remainder of the report illustrate dramatically. Nevertheless, the format did allow broad comparability between the groups, and has enabled the following results to be presented under a number of key themes.

After an initial and predictable period of caution and wariness amongst participants about the study and what was to be asked of them, each of the workshops was considered by the researchers to be very successful in terms of the willingness of the police members to discuss and debate the issues. Our profound thanks must once again go to the participants.

Audio tapes of the workshops were transcribed by one of the researchers, and the results to follow are based upon those transcripts. To conclude this section of the report, we present details of the workshops in terms of group and individual characteristics.

WORKSHOP DETAILS

SPECIALISATION	DATE	GENDER AND RANK	YEARS
Junior General Duties	17/5/93	Male Senior Constable	5
		Male Constable	4
		Male Constable	3
		Female Constable	4
Community Policing Squad	25/5/93	Male Senior Constable	8
		Male Constable	5
		Female Senior Constable	11
		Female Senior Constable	5
		Female Constable	4
Divisional CIB ("H" District)	28/5/93	Male Senior Detective	11
		Male Senior Detective	9
		Male Senior Detective	9
		Male Senior Detective	8
		Male Senior Detective	7
Police Academy Personnel	2/6/93	Male Senior Sergeant	n/a
		Male Senior Constable	12
		Male Senior Constable	11
		Male Senior Constable	10
		Female Senior Constable	11
District Sub-Officers ("A" District)	3/6/93	Male Det. Sergeant	15
		Male Sergeant	17
		Male Sergeant	15
		Male Sergeant	15
		Male Sergeant	12
		Female Sergeant	14
Internal Investigations Personnel	8/6/93	Male Chief Inspector	21
		Male Inspector	22
		Male Inspector	21
		Male Senior Sergeant	17
		Male Sergeant	15
Divisional Commissioned Officers ("H" District)	17/8/93	Male Inspector	30
		Male Inspector	29
		Male Inspector	25
		Male Det. Inspector	22
General Duties Police Women ("H" District)	29/10/93	Female Senior Constable	5
		Female Constable	5
		Female Constable	4
		Female Constable	4
General Duties Trainees	28/1/94	Male Prob. Constable	<1
		Male Prob. Constable	<1
		Male Prob. Constable	<1
		Male Prob. Constable	<1
		Male Prob. Constable	<1
		Female Prob. Constable	<1
		Female Prob. Constable	<1
		Female Prob. Constable	<1

	Male	Female	Total
Chief Inspector/(Det) Inspector	**6**	**-**	**6**
Senior Sergeant	**2**	**-**	**2**
Sergeant/Detective Sergeant	**6**	**1**	**7**
Senior Constable/Senior Detective	**10**	**4**	**14**
Constable/Trainee	**8**	**8**	**16**
TOTAL	**33**	**13**	**44**

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SECTION TWO: THE CONSTITUENTS OF CULTURE

The following section summarises and illustrates data from the workshops which relate to the presumptive 'building blocks' of police culture drawn from the literature and addressed in the standard format of each of the workshops: the kinds of people who become police officers, the nature of police work (danger, suspiciousness, loyalty) and the nature of the police organisation (discipline). The section concludes with a discussion of the characteristics of a 'good cop' as described in the words of participants.

Discussions in the workshops regarding the kinds of people who become police officers generally were anchored in considerations of the reasons for joining policing, and the following sub-section provides an extensive illustration of those reasons.

PEOPLE WHO POLICE: REASONS FOR JOINING

It was generally considered that police officers are no different from the society from which they are drawn. As such, there are generally no special characteristics which stand out in an individual before they join. As the following comments of a male IID Chief Inspector with 21 years experience in policing indicate, police are a "by product of society":

> ...they are taken from the society in which they serve. Young police that join today have got different values than what we had when we joined. They say that police are a by-product of society people come in from society, people come into it from society. They're not special they're just normal people like everyone else. They're trained in discipline.

However, a range of different reasons for joining the police force emerged from the interviews. This indicates that not only are the motivations for individuals to join changing in line with changing social and employment circumstances in the contemporary community, but these features are having a profound impact on who is being attracted to the police force. The result is that any changing rationales for joining policing in contemporary society are having some impact on any cultural changes which police departments are experiencing.

Job security.

One common feature to emerge was that many new officers had different motivations for joining the police force than in the past. The security provided by policing was one legacy of this issue, with many respondents indicating that in the current economic climate, policing provided a degree of job security which was absent from many other occupations.

Job security was often cited as a key reason for joining. As one female police officer with five years experience in general duties indicated this does not motivate all people but is becoming an important factor in today's economic climate:

> It's one of the most secure jobs you can take. But I've never really thought about it like that. I didn't really think about security. Also when I think back it is nearly 6 years ago now and when you get a job you weren't really thinking about job security

> whereas in the last few years a lot of people probably do join for that reason, for job security. Well you know they probably think that everybody's being put off and what have you the police force still have to have their members or whatever. I suppose more people join now for security but when I joined that wasn't one of the reasons.

This was reiterated by the following comments of a male CIB police officer with 9 years experience, who indicated that given the current economic climate, job security was becoming a more important reason for many new officers joining the police force:

> When I joined the police force things weren't that bad financially. People were in work. And I joined certainly for job security but it wasn't because the pay. Because almost anyone could get a pay cheque for something else. Laying bricks, digging holes. You could make more money. It was pure security.

In addition, stability associated with the job can underlie other individual characteristics which may be influential in deciding whether to join the police force. This is particularly relevant in the contemporary economic climate where few jobs provide security or stability in the long term. Thus, while the individual characteristics of patience and helping others are conducive elements for people in joining the force, ultimately, in the present economic climate, policing provides a stable work environment which is attractive to prospective members from a broader range of occupations than was characteristic of policing in older times. This comment was illustrated by the following comments of a female community policing squad senior constable with 5 years experience in the Victoria police:

> People who are to be prepared to put up with a certain amount of "bulldust". If you don't have a fairly thick skin you're not going to get through the first two years because you get it from above and you get it from below. If you haven't got the capacity of taking it on the chin and going on with it and seein' something ahead of you that's going to get better your going to pull the pin on yourself. But the economic situation throws a wild card into all of this discussion because the sort of people that used to join the police force in the old days are not the same sort of people who join the police force when things are going tough. Money is practically the first priority for a lot of people. They want a secure job that's going to feed their family. And I'm not saying that it's getting a better or worse group. Sometimes I think we're getting a broader range of people. They're not people interested in police work as such. They're average citizens who need a job and as long as they go through the same training phases they are going to be as good a police officer at the end than one who joined for traditional motives.

The security of policing as an occupation was therefore considered to be one of the primary reasons which attract people to the profession. However, the potential to move from policing to other areas within the criminal justice system may encourage some people to treat policing as a temporary career move. This is contrary to the position in the past, where many people joined policing for life. As the following comments of a male IID investigator suggest:

> Today it is a secure job that is well paid and there's not many vocations in the community that offer that. I think that a lot of people are probably coming in the hope that will see them out until they can get something a bit more suited to what they are

> inclined to. I know that a lot of people that I've worked with that have gone through the job, much later than what I did. They've moved into fields associated with law and never had any intention of staying within the job. It's very much an individual decision.

However some negative legacies were seen to emerge from this reason for joining policing. As the following comments of a male CIB officer with nine years experience in policing suggest, the fact that many new recruits are joining the force for the principal reason of job security, the traditional characteristics which have developed in policing are being eroded. In particular, the notion of solidarity which was once a central part of policing when individuals joined for the uniform and the values it represented is giving way to a more utilitarian police officer who is seen to be more concerned with the pay packet than the nature of the work. This is particularly so in the case of the criminal investigations division, where solidarity is viewed as a central means of forging success in catching the criminals:

> Nowadays there's people joining up simply because of that. Good money. They think I'll just put in the 8 hours and go home. You see them all the time. You see young blokes that are in the job for that exact reason. 3 o'clock, home time. Even the home time business doesn't necessarily have to play into it. You can still work the extra hours alongside you if you're working extra hours but they still come across as people who are there for the pay cheque. It does undermine...it certainly undermines in my mind the solidarity part of the job in the end. To me, without a doubt, my loyalties are to the people I work with and probably more now than ever because you seem to be a diminishing race. For one reason or another we can't seem to...we're expected to be everything to everyone and the slightest thing goes wrong there doesn't seem to be the same thing in it for us. And to me the people who can count on are thinner on the ground than when I joined and that creates a lot of stress too. Every time you go out and do something you've got that solidarity business hanging over your head. Can you count on the guy next door? Is he gonna do a runner on you?. Whether that's because there's an allegation made against you or because someone's shooting at you at the time, you don't know who's going to put their head between their legs and run.

The variety of work provided by policing.

An additional reason for joining is the range of work available in the job itself. For those attracted to work which involves action and the thrill of danger, policing is a viable option. One female police officer with four and a half years experience in the job indicated this in the following way:

> (t)he variety of work. It's so different than any other job. It can be exciting. It can be dangerous. It has variety. There's so many different parts that you can go into like if you're interested in (one specific area) you can do it in the one job so you don't have to actually leave the job you are in to do what you want.

The following comments of a male CIB officer with 9 years experience suggest that the diversity of roles within the policing occupation is an attraction to many prospective recruits:

> I don't think you can go past police work as being fairly exciting sort of stuff. You've

> got the opportunity to do a lot of different things in the day. Whereas as a teacher or something like that you're stuck behind a desk all the time and...you'd sort of discount the possibility of screaming down the street of your local town with your lights and sirens going through the red lights. I mean I don't think anyone joins the job because it's a secure job. That's why I'm joining. Good money. That's why I'm joining. There's a whole lot of things you'd probably consider. And you look at it all I suppose.

This allows individual officers to develop a wide range of expertise and discover their niche in policing. This was illustrated by the following comments of a female officer with 11 years experience in policing in Australia:

> One of the things about the police force is that you can have a variety of about 20 jobs. You might not be very good at one area but you can be brilliant at something else. There is always something if you are prepared to look, to reflect your particular ability.

And another male officer, with 5 years experience, indicated the same features motivated him to join in the sense that versatility in the policing role was an important factor:

> We need to be versatile and we need to be flexible because (of the situations we face). I had those abilities, so I could be given any situation and somehow work around to resolving it.

Respect for the enterprise of policing.

Some indicated that their reason for joining the police force was a general respect for what the organisation and the people who worked for it, did for the community. Any ideas of trying to reform the practices of the police force were seen as secondary or non-existent in some people's decisions to join. This has changed now, with the perception that many people are joining in order to try and alter the old and potentially violent practices which once existed, and the power associated with it. Yet many of those who try to change the police force have a serious conceptual misunderstanding of where that power comes from and the importance it has in the lives of police officers from the older school. These points were illustrated lucidly by the following comments of a male CIB officer with 9 years experience in policing:

> My reason for joining the police wasn't to give orders to people. I came from a fairly large country town. (A) NSW country town where the policemen were larger than life and I was no angel as a kid. I did everything kids do and spent most of my time running around the city away from police. And every now and then when I got caught back in those days you used to get the biggest foot up the arse you'd ever dream of. And if you went home to your parents and told them the police had given you a foot up the arse you'd get another one for it. The fact that I'd been chased around by the police for years before I joined the job didn't scare me away from joining the police force. It didn't make me join because I wanted to get even with them. It didn't give me any pie in the sky ideas about the police force so I could stop that kind of thing.

> It just made me want to join the police force because I had respect for them and what they were doing. I know that's changed now. I think not because of the people. It's changed and as a result people are joining the police force. It goes both ways. People who are joining are trying to stop that (and change the force) and there's others that are joining because it agrees well. But all that I'm saying is that this special business and I didn't join to order people around. I joined because there was excitement in the job and there was crooks to be caught and I wasn't intimidated by this power trip that a lot of people say that police are on. I didn't see the police by kicking me up the arse as being on a power trip. I never saw that. And I take offence now to a lot of people's ideas that when a policeman yells at them or when a person joins the police force it is for that reason. And I never saw it that way and I didn't join for that reason.

The nature of the position of trust and authority was also relevant to the perception that police officers are "different", or "special" people in the community. As such, the general characteristics of police officers would be that they were well intentioned individuals with a sense of right and wrong. This would consequently motivate individuals to pursue a career in policing, which is one of the few occupations which allows individuals to pursue these ideals. This is illustrated by the following statement by a district inspector with 30 years service:

> I think that amongst police officers I believe that there is a greater proportion of police officers than there would be say in the normal public area of people wanting to do the right thing. Good thinking people or well intentioned people.

This perspective was reiterated by the following statement by a male district inspector with 30 years experience:

> One of the reasons for joining is to do good for people. I think most of us would join the police force because they want to do good and a job that's got self satisfying values.

The following comments of a male district inspector with 30 years experience in the force also suggest that serving the public can be the predominant factor over a range of reasons why an individual may select policing as a preferred occupation:

> The job's very wide in itself, so we get a lot of different types of people and it depends on that reasoning of why they want to join the job. But in the majority, the majority of people would be wanting to serve the public and to do that sort of service of serving the public. But there are many and diversified reasons for people joining.

Even junior officers indicated that this was an important feature which develops early on in their careers. This factor was illustrated by the following comments of a female probationary officer with two weeks experience:

> F (F): I think a lot of people like to...what they don't like they don't see. Whereas we, whether we like it or not, we have to see it. So that not so much changes you, it just makes you a little bit less naive than we were before. Like before we went to the

> academy we all came from different areas, and like H said it is not that we are different when we first go. But the only way my friends and family have said that I've changed is that I've got more confident and more respect for the law. As B said, you know, your job is to enforce the law. The law's there and therefore you are more aware. Whereas most people they know it is there and they know that they get into trouble if they do anything wrong. But we have more respect for it.

The genuine sense of justice, and the ability to distinguish right from wrong, was another important motivation for people joining the police force. In this respect, the desire to serve the community, and ensure that wrongdoers are punished for their offences, was an important motivating factor for some police officers. This was evidenced by the following comments by a female senior constable with 5 years experience:

> Most police have a sense of justice. They like to see right done and wrong punished. That does not seem to be changing. Some police have difficulty because they do see things in black and white which is difficult in CPS because there is never a right answer. But most police have a strongly developed sense of what's right and what's wrong as far as the general public, whether they do it themselves. Whether they speed on the way home from work or not. But as far as the general public are concerned, they do have a strongly developed sense of what's right and what's wrong. Besides that it's justice. They do like to see offenders brought to book and again some sort of justice arising from that. It's natural instinct if you like. But it doesn't happen very often in that court situation which is what leads to so much frustration. But I like to see good triumph and evil punished.

The desire to do "good" for the community was also seen to be a central feature of many essential service occupations such as ambulance officers and policing, and thus this reason for joining the police force may not be a unique characteristic motivating many into this area of work. As indicated by the following statement by a district inspector with 22 years experience, all of those engaged in active service occupations would have some sort of satisfaction derived from the nature of the occupation as a service provider to the community:

> You look at a fireman or an ambulance officer and it's the same sort of thing. The whole thing about being in the police force and my being a detective, one of the biggest things you can get is satisfaction. Of solving a crime, of getting a crook, of solving something, you know. You go and help someone get out of a car. You go and help the little old lady into her house, and she says you know "Thank you constable do you want a cup of tea?". That's satisfaction. That helping side and the doing good it's what doing good makes you feel.

This point was stressed by a female senior constable with 5 years experience:

> There are people who want to genuinely help people. They're genuinely interested in public service. They've come from a family orientated police background that's very important to them. (Their grandparents were police). There's also people who do like being able to be in power.

Respect for the job and what it stands for was therefore a common response by many officers with a certain degree of experience. However, it was felt that because of changing circumstances in society, in particular the negative publicity which attaches to a lot of police work, the image of the force is changing. The result is that the once traditional motivations for joining are seemingly becoming eroded by the images of policing generated by those outside of the police force. These issues were illustrated by the following comments of a male CIB officer with 8 years experience in policing:

> I was in the same age group. I grew up around this area and the same thing. I'd been picked up by the coppers just walking along the streets. "What are you doin'? Nothin'. Well here's a kick up the arse for whatever you never got caught for. Now get home". These days the image of the police then was that if you're doing the right thing they would look after you and do the right thing for you. But now the media generated image of the policeman is a thug who beats you up and then you go and bloody complain about him and get them all into trouble. The police are nothing but thugs and that's the image that's been generated by the media.

Changing the nature of the police occupation.

Some indicated that the feature service provision may extend to trying to change the nature of the police force itself. This was indicated by the following comments of a male criminal investigations bureau officer with 9 years experience in policing.

> I'm sure there's people now that join the job, maybe a minority, I'm not sure, that join the job because they want to change the job. They might have some ideas or have had some discussion at university or some way of life and they think they can join the police so they can change the police force. Like the way that it is now, there's got to be some people in the force that have joined for those reasons. I think other than that it's much the same as it has been. Everyone's got a different reason for joining the police force. Security. That's a good reason. And other people have just got good old fashioned reasons for helping people and the great white hope of just doing the right thing. There's people that want to change the face of the police force for their own reasons.

Thus the characteristic of changing the police force only applies to a minority of police officers, but can exist. However not all respondents were convinced that this was a beneficial quality to the modern police enterprise. As the following comments from three male CIB officers ranging from 9 to 11 years experience in policing indicate, there is a suspiciousness associated with the motives of some people with higher education standards joining the police force today, particularly given the nature of the work and the prospects of promotion. This suspiciousness specifically related to the fact that educated people could do better in other occupations, and are merely taking a free ride into the policing enterprise:

> A: I think so. There's a lot of people with university degrees and things like that. 10 years ago that was very rare. Anyone with a degree wouldn't join the police force.
>
> B: It seems a waste of their time really. The police force 10 years ago was never seen as a job where you're likely to get on and make money and be successful because it

> wasn't that sort of occupation. But now I suppose with the fact of the unemployment the way it is and the fact that there's not all that many jobs around people see the police force as a different prospect. For years it's a government job. Well paid. I don't think anybody will ever complain about how we'll get paid. So I think it's probably got more appeal now than it ever has. And that's why. We're certainly getting different people joining now than when I first started and maybe before that.
>
> E: You see there's suspiciousness. And I'm as suspicious as most now joining it because now they want to change the police force in some way or because the pay cheque is good now and they're joining because it's a good pay cheque. It wasn't then. Straight out it wasn't. And there's people out there that we all work with every day and we sit back from time to time and have a look at them and think well this man's a pay cheque man.

Thus, joining policing to change the nature of the job, or to assist in "cleaning up" the profession was, in the minds of a minority of individual officers, a motivation for joining policing. However, the suspicion that this rationale entails, particularly if the motivation leads to an individual advocating wide spread change within the force, would lead to suspicion amongst the colleagues of the reformer.

Strength of individual personality.

Responses generally indicated that policing is no different from many other occupations. Because police officers are recruited from the general community, police officers are essentially part of that community. However a strong personality was often cited as one key characteristic which attracted certain types of people to policing. As one male sergeant with 15 years experience in general duties indicated, because the general community is so broad, there are certain traits which attract a certain type of person to the police force, and the strength of individual personality is one of these characteristics:

> ...the general community is of such a wide scope. I think there is [sic] certain personality traits within the police force. A lot of it is to do with ego. There are very few people with very small egos in the police force.

Additional reasons for joining policing.

In addition to the key reasons cited there was a wide range of additional motivations expressed for entering the profession of policing. The following is a brief description of some of the more important themes to emerge from the interview data on why individuals joined the police force.

The active nature of the job was seen to be a motivating factor for joining the police force. As one sergeant with 12 years experience in the force indicated, the police job demands confidence in the way in which you approach your work:

> I think a lot of people have joined because police people are predominantly doers rather than spectators. And just touching on the ego thing I think it's...most would have confidence in what they do. The sort of confidence which they show and they

> must necessarily show during the course of their duties to the people they come into contact with.

For those who were have been exposed to policing through the family, social influence was also an important motivation for joining the force. As one female police officer with three and a half years experience indicated:

> It was family influence kind of thing. There were about three or four police people in my family and at family functions they would sit down and talk about the work and obviously that gets carried around with you a bit and they'd talk about it, and I'd sit there and listen ... and it was just something that I just had to do. Because I felt like I was missing out on something until I experienced what they were talking about. I mean just the fact that you never know just what you are going to be doing the next minute of the day it's good...

This was reiterated by the following comments of a male community policing officer with 8 years experience in the Victoria Police, who suggested that he was attracted to policing not only through strong family values, but the police force provided an environment for that sense of comraderie to be maintained in the work place:

> I just wanted to join because it was entrenched in my family that the police were good and the comraderie. I was involved in sports teams since I was 10 years old. I enjoyed the comraderie aspect at the academy.

However, the feature of "team playing" or comraderie was not deemed to be attractive to all prospective recruits. The following comments of a male community policing officer with 5 years experience in policing suggest that some individuals are not specifically attracted to the structure of police work which supports comraderie and team playing, despite its centrality as a feature of the job:

> I'm not a team player and I wasn't the centre of attention at school and I didn't feel like I was going to be necessarily with the marks on the board as a leader. But I'm someone who had the ability to lead if I needed to. They ask you when you join up if your in any organisation. And they're really into this group thing and a lot of questions were like that. It comes back to flexibility. If I needed to be part of the group I could be part of a group. But it's not my thing. I don't look for groups.

Others had more personally motivated utilitarian reasons for joining, such as evidenced by the following comments by a male district inspector with 26 years experience:

> Why did I join the police force? Because I doubled my pay quite simply. I had a brother who joined five years before I did. He almost had a heart attack when I did because we are exactly opposite. He's very outgoing boisterous Australian and I was and still am a quiet and considerate person. My father's statement when we both joined was my grandfather would have turned over in his grave for both of us doing it but needless to say that didn't stop us. If I go back to when I joined it was certainly people who wanted security and a stable occupation, and it was a male dominated organisation. There were 50 odd police women and now there's around 1500. So it's

> certainly changed in that sense...Everyone comes in with different motivation, I think I was always in groups that were helping people so I think that obviously prompted me. There's a lot of people that join for that reason too...for a change.

Modernisation, economics and the changing culture of policing.

One theme to emerge from the comments of many police officers interviewed is that the culture of the modern police organisation is changing. One of the legacies of this cultural change was seen to lie in the fact that people who are attracted to policing as an occupation have very different motivations for joining than was the case historically. The traditional notion of the police officer was the individual who joined for life, and the occupation provided a stable form of life time employment. However, as the comments above indicate, not only is there a diversity of reasons for joining the police in contemporary times, but features such as economic security in particular provide new motivations for people to be attracted to policing which may have not been as prominent in the past.

The result of broader social changes in the job climate suggests that the characteristics of those who join the police force have changed substantially in recent years. Different motivations for joining are seen to attract a new type of individual to policing which breaks the historical stereotype of the large, physically able male. Diversification in the nature of police work, changes in recruiting patterns, and civilianisation are also seen as important factors which contribute to the changing nature of the contemporary police force.

This formed part of the general consensus particularly amongst senior police officers. In this respect, the characteristics of younger troops are different from the way new recruits were in the past. Rather than taking up policing as a career move, today, younger people join for temporary motivations. This is indicated by the following interchange between three senior police officers with 15 to 17 years experience in the force:

> A: They don't join the job now to be a career policeman. They join the job to tide them over until they can find something else.
>
> B: When I joined the blokes that I joined with they would join for a career. They joined they wanted to be a policeman
>
> E: You looked around and you all thought that you all were going to be there at 60.
>
> A: A lot of those who are out were within the first five years or so. The police force drew from the general community several years ago or whatever. Now they're drawing from the general community in 1993 and the community changed over that 15 years. A wee difference with the kids that are coming in now is that we had different views then than what they have now. I think we did. I think we were more committed. There was more discipline in the schools at the time

In addition, some argued that the stereotype of the traditional police officer is being eroded, particularly in respect of the ethnicity of current recruits, and general educational standards. This was illustrated by the following comments of a male police officer with a total of 9 years experience, three and a half in criminal investigations:

> I think that the kinds of people that joined the police force 10 or 15 years ago were probably very similar but not now. Now the people who are joining are from different ethnic backgrounds. They've all started to join. Well, they've all joined now. That didn't happen years ago so I don't know whether that's as relevant now as it used to be. Back in the old days you'd be talking about a bloke 6 foot, white Anglo-Saxon, and rather large knuckles. But now a days I don't think that applies now. You get professional people apply, university students and all that sort of thing.

This change of composition of the police force is a critical point which was reiterated by many senior officers. The way in which it was generally rationalised is because the culture and education levels in the broader community are changing, this is affecting the general structure of policing. People from a wider spectrum of society are being attracted to the job, which is changing the nature of the occupation on a gradual basis. Not all police officers supported the nature of these changes. Many senior officers were highly critical of these changes. In their view, new recruits no longer show the values which experience police were imbued with before they joined the job. As a result the culture of the occupation amongst new recruits is impacting on the values and commitment once characteristic of police culture. As such, there is a broader perception that new recruits are less committed to the enterprise of policing, and are treating the profession as a mere job rather than a service which requires dedication and a certain amount of responsibility in the way in which it is carried out.

One manifestation of these changes is the broader development in academic standards in the community at large. While academic requirements were not always seen to be conducive to good policing at the operational level, the increased standards of education are filtering down to police recruitment. As one male sergeant with 15 years experience in general duties and accident investigation indicated, the need for police officers to be physically strong is giving way to a more academically qualified officer:

> I think several years ago everything was sort of stacked in favour of policemen being 6 foot 6 tall, big shoulders and a footy player from the age of 9 years old. I think it's moved away from that and now they've removed the height requirement and that sort of stuff and encouraged more academic type of people into the job. And I think that's becoming more of a cross section of the community, more so than with my experience with the older blokes in the job. I think now a days it's just heading towards a more broader cross section of the community whereas before they were notably different people.

This perception was reiterated by another sergeant with 15 years experience in general duties policing, who suggests that in general, policing is attracting a wider spectrum of recruits in the present day, which includes people with higher educational qualifications:

> The police force attracts from a wider set of the community nowadays. 30 years ago it probably only attracted people from the working class with the odd person form the middle. But now it's a much more wider attraction including quite a few people with tertiary qualifications.

These comments emerged in several interviews, particularly those involving police officers who had extensive experience in policing. Frequently, the issue was mentioned in terms that

indicate that the situation of the "good old days" of policing are gone, and the stringent physical requirements are giving way to a more educated police officer. This was indicated by the following comments of a district inspector with 22 years experience:

> You also take back in our day up until about 10 years ago you had to meet certain stringent requirements. Like blokes had to stretch to get over 5ft 8.5...to try and get higher as they were bringing this great clanger down on your head. They would be up on their tippy toe and the blokes you'd be watching your feet to get you into the police force. And I think that a lot went on back in our day. And when you're talking of cultures and that what went on, whether you were a Catholic or Masons and your background, they'd look at that and you'd turn round they'd look at your stature. And a lot went on your physical stature as to whether you got in.

As the following comments of another district inspector with 22 years experience indicate, the mean age of new recruits appears to be rising. This is vastly different from the case in the past, where most new recruits entered policing in their teenage years:

> But also when you're talking now I think really it has changed dramatically because we joined younger. We had such things as cadets and you were influenced. You were the new young kid on the block and you were taken to the pub and if you didn't go into the pub you weren't socially accepted. Whereas now the kids are joining, they're more mature, and if they don't drink and they don't want to go to the pub they don't go to the pub. If they want to knock off and go and play volleyball they can do it.

This was reiterated by the comments of a male district inspector with 26 years experience in policing, who suggests that not only has the age level changed, but the ethnicity of new recruits is much broader than it was when he joined:

> You're getting a lot more in the older age group applying. When I left school in 1967 we just looked up the ad and the wanted police for the band and you went up and got a job straight away. Now they want HSC for a carpentry apprenticeship. So certainly the academic standard is better. The diversity of the new recruits coming in is better. The major ethnic group that joined when I joined was all those poms that joined after the war. I came out when I was 4. They were all those ex-British servicemen after the war and that was the only ethnic group we had. There was no ethnics that went through in my time.

The following comments of a female police academy instructor with 11 years experience in policing indicate that there are some benefits to this increase in age of new recruits. No longer are the majority of recruits in their late teens, but people are now gaining more life experience prior to joining the police force. This can be advantageous to the development of a mature and experienced police force in the future:

> I think that since I've been here I've noticed that more older people are applying to join the police force and so you're getting not so many 19 or 20 year olds that generally come from a stable middle class background. They haven't seen a lot of domestic violence and it was something quite new to them. Whereas now we're getting the average age of the force now is 24 or 25 and we're getting people who

have seen a little bit more of life before they join.

One of the reasons posited for this situation is that the selection criteria adopted by the Victoria Police was viewed to facilitate recruitment from a broad cross section of society. The lack of specificity in selection criteria was seen to result in allowing a wide range of people to join the police. This in turn has an impact on the nature of fostering a particular type of police culture. This process was described aptly by a male detective sergeant with 15 years experience in policing:

> They give you set questions to ask and it's mainly how people manage time...how they plan their day, how they've identified a career path for themselves thus far, what they expect to do in the future and things like that. I suppose that is where the culture thing comes into it because you have an applicant in front of you and if that applicant appeals to you as being a suitable applicant for the police force I think that, in my experience, the people on the selection panel tend to give them a little bit more of a chance. More hints on how to get by in the interview. Whereas if someone came in and it was quite obvious that there was one fellow in particular that...he had quite a good business but with the depression, the financial situation of the time, he wanted something to sort of lean back on to to keep his business going...came into the police force. And be a sort of part time policeman, full time photographer. [If] that was quite evident at the early stages of the interview and he didn't get too many clues when he was struggling for the answers at the end. Those sorts of things.

This statement indicates that the selection procedures can be tilted in favour of those who the selection panel will deem to be appropriate police officers. The key issue here is that those prospective recruits who are likely to make a career out of policing are more likely to succeed at the recruitment stage. Therefore police officers are currently drawn from the general community but perhaps they would give selection to those who are a bit more confident, assertive, those with stronger personalities. And it is a different perception from how it used to be when they were a bit more jock like.

Educational standards.

As has been suggested, one of the reasons for the changing composition of the contemporary police force is the rise in general education standards in the community. This feature was commonly seen to be a key reason for the attraction of policing to a broader cross section of the community, as well as a potential problem for the contemporary police organisation. While some agreed that there is a need to have a better educated police force, often the notion of higher education was seen to present special problems for the police organisation, particularly in terms of maintaining traditional notions of discipline and solidarity within the organisation.

It was generally felt that the increased academic opportunities in society have the potential to marginalise certain groups away from the policing enterprise through lack of opportunity. As such, policing appears to be transforming into a middle class profession. This was indicated in the following comments of a female instructor at the police academy with 11 years experience in policing:

> The other thing perhaps that's changed since we went through, the academic requirements have changed substantially. And I think that might dictate to some extent where the people are coming from. Some people from lower socio-economic backgrounds just don't get the educational opportunities that other people get and therefore might be disadvantaged when they're applying for the police force.

However, the way in which academic requirements are considered to be valuable to police work has not changed for many police officers. Indeed, it is generally felt that policing does not actively encourage individuals to improve the quality of their education, or consider a wide range of educational options prior to joining policing. This was evident in the following story narrated by a male police academy instructor with 12 years experience in policing, in relation to the experience of a friend who wanted to join policing after having completed her qualifications:

> Getting back to recruiting, a friend of mine, she applied, she was selected. She was coming through about 6 months ago. 2 months ago she deferred because she's got psychology qualifications and criminology qualifications and some post-grad thing. And she wants to do some work in corrections before she joins the police force. And she rang up the director of personnel to see whether she was still accepted and whether she could be still accepted and whether she could join now. He looked at her file and said "Why do you want to join the police force for? You're really over qualified". It seemed like a really strange thing to say. The police force should be trying to get the best people. They don't need everyone to have tertiary qualifications but there is certainly a bunch of people with tertiary qualifications. She was accepted, she was given a place in the recruiting school, she deferred, she wanted to carry on this study out at Pentridge. She thought that if she was in the police force the prisoners wouldn't be too receptive to that. It just seems like a strange attitude they had.

This comment indicates that in some cases, by ignoring or actively deterring people with tertiary qualifications from joining the police, senior management or recruiting officers may be deterring the best people for the job from joining. However, as the following response from a male police academy instructor with 10 years experience indicates, there are possible reasons for this perception of people with qualifications in policing:

> The structure is geared up for people without tertiary qualifications because someone in her position will be bored. Or it would be about 4 or 6 years where she can get into a position where she can exercise her (abilities).

In general, it is felt that the education standards of new recruits are higher, even though traditionally in police organisations, a good education is not necessarily conducive to being a good police officer. The following comments of a male IID officer with 21 years experience in policing are indicative of this point:

> I think the standard...the education standards are higher. See with police it was something that Mick Miller used to say years ago, that when you joined the police force you had two people who applied. One was a plumber and one had tertiary education. The plumber is better able to deal with people. Some of the people who are

> well educated they haven't had to deal with lower class people in some areas. A lot of the criminals fit into that bracket and they don't know how to approach it or talk to them at their own level.

The diversity of opinions relating to education and its value in contemporary policing are indicative of a broader dichotomy between those police officers who feel that academic qualifications are highly valuable to the police force of the 1990s, and those who find that academic qualifications are largely irrelevant to operational policing. In many cases, it was felt that people with academic qualifications are not necessarily the best police officers. This was evidenced by the following dialogue between two female police academy instructors with 11 years experience each in policing:

> B: Certainly I wouldn't say from what I've seen that the person with the degree is going to be a better policeman.
>
> D: They certainly don't show that they are any better than anybody else.
>
> B: And even academically some of them don't shine because it's different types of teaching and learning methods. And in some cases they don't even go on to become (officers). I've got a (friend) who has been in for 11 years at D24 and he's probably one of the most qualified, in tertiary terms, people in the police force. But he hasn't done great things in the police force. He's chosen a job that allows him to study.

Indeed, in some cases, persons with or trying to obtain academic qualifications are culturally marginalised or ridiculed from within policing ranks. This was evidenced by the following comments of a male police academy instructor with 10 years experience in policing:

> When I did the sergeant's course there were 50 of us and 2 of us had tertiary qualifications. Both of us had gotten those qualifications while serving as members so we were o.k. But there was one guy in the squad in the sergeants course who had a tertiary qualification but kept it hush hush and didn't want anyone to know. So we called him a closet academic. But we were O.K. Until they realised that we had actually gotten those qualifications while serving there was sort of an academic wanker attached to you. I find them quite useful.

Problems with new recruitment patterns.

However, many officers indicated that the change in the nature of police recruitment was not as beneficial to the police force as would appear. This juxtaposition between the ideals of policing developed in the old school of recruitment, and the current practice of police recruiting was indicated by numerous comments throughout the interview phase which were often critical of the change in direction of contemporary policing. The general tenor of responses was that there is far less commitment amongst new officers in terms of the nature of the work and the responsibilities of attendance at work. As such, the culture of policing is becoming more individualistic and less collectively oriented as was the case historically. As one female sergeant with 14 years experience indicated:

> You'd turn up with a hangover after you had three hours sleep and turn up to work and they and most of them now take a dive. To me there's just that inch less commitment.

This situation was also reflected by the perceptions of three district inspectors with 25 to 30 years experience, who all indicated that people today no longer join for life, but use policing as one aspect of a variety of career options in their life time. It is only experience which enables officers to cope with some of the down sides of the job:

> B: Particularly the post women. I don't want to be marked down as sexist but particularly when they've got young children at home and they've got their life and their regularly set down. The bloke with the male culture will have the wife and kids to do it and she'll be right. But women will never do that...
>
> A: I totally agree and myself as an officer now and probably over the last five or six years have become much the same too. Now it's more a job rather than a lifestyle to me. For many many years I had terrible troubles in my marriage in the early days when being a detective and the hours I worked and that sort of thing but now it's a job, and you start looking at it more form a job perspective rather than being a lifestyle. You still give the same dedication but your outlook has changed. It's the same thing people have done it since they have joined the police force. How can you stand the penalties the judges give? How can you stand losin' cases? In the early days I was just like any of the young blokes. You hate the judicial system because they find them not guilty. Now you look at it as a matter of percentages. I turn round and say you win some and you lose some so we had in good times a 53% conviction rate in the County Court. In times like this where the allegations are against coppers who are charged you watch our conviction rate in the County Court, it will probably drop down to a 42, 41% conviction rate. In the times of the Beech Inquiry it was a 32% conviction rate. The public perceive you and that's what you start to realise as you get older is the facts behind the judicial system and you don't have to get aggro at it because it is not your fault. It's the way it works whether you jump up and down or not.
>
> D: The reasons for joining the police force are related to the family. It may be short term, a few years, good retirement benefits, good resignation benefits, good wages. And it's a good kick start to a marriage because they really don't have this thing for a long term career. I talk about five year brackets when I talk to potential recruits and that's where I'll say that the policemen today, if you want to say that there is more of an attitude that this is a job because quite frankly I joined for life and most of my contemporaries joined for life. So nowadays I usually say have a five year plan. Even within the job. But certainly you might want to try some other vocation.

This point frequently emerged in the interviews, particularly amongst police officers who had experience in policing. For example the following comments of a male instructor at the police academy with 12 years experience in policing suggests, like many, that the recession is a big driving force in encouraging prospective recruits, but many of those are not on a permanent basis:

> I think that these days...when we joined there was a particular type of person who wanted to become a policeman. I think these days with the recessionary climate, there's a lot of people that are looking at it as a job or a short term thing rather than as a career.

This was reiterated by the following dialogue between three male IID officers with between 17 and 22 years experience in policing:

> B: I think they are (different). I joined and I thought that was going to be all I did every day of my working life but I think now that people are not so committed to the long term. More the short term.
>
> A: It's more of a job not a career.
>
> D: You just have to look at the amount of people who are leaving for superannuation and retirement and how many who try to come back after retirement...It's probably linked to the general economic climate I think. It seems to be an attitude in the general community that people that choose policing as a career by reason of the fact that it's government employment and the public sector of the government as a general rule is being scaled down. It's one of the few areas probably that's safe. We're in excess of 10,000 strong where the numbers are being maintained. Up until the recent posturing by Mr Kennett there was a very attractive superannuation. I think they're are all factors. But I think it is in some ways detrimental to the job because it attracts individuals that aren't really motivated by the nature of the work or the desire to perform that sort of work, as opposed to looking for some of the other considerations which probably for someone else are a bit less...ongoing employment.

There is an important inconsistency in this issue. On the one hand, the recession is compelling more people to join the police force for economic security. On the other hand, there is increasing demand in society for variation in work. While policing can often be seen as the source of this variation, there are some concerns that it is no longer sufficient to attract all people as a permanent profession as it once did. Conceptions varied on this point, with some officers indicating that there was more of a conception of policing as a short term occupation, while others indicated that the majority of new recruits still joined for life. This is particularly so in today's day and age where it is less likely that young people will have a clearly defined career path in mind when they join the work force. These concerns were illustrated by the following dialogue between two male and two female academy instructors with between 10 and 15 years experience in policing:

> C(M): Just a side line comment from recruits was that if they fail they fail and they're out and they would just get a job somewhere else. There doesn't seem to be that drive that desire to want to become a member of the police force.
>
> D(F): I would agree with that in some instances. I sort of think the majority of them really do want to be in the force. The majority of them do want to prepare for a career. You get the odd one who looks at it like they can't get anything else I'll try and join the police force.

> B(F): Or some now join with a specialist view in mind. They don't look at the broad spectrum. They think, well I'm going to go into forensic science in a couple of years and that's what I've joined for. We know that there's a long way between the academy and getting to that particular area of expertise and some of them haven't really thought of that properly before they joined.
>
> E(M): I personally feel that the people who come from school, very few of them actually structure their career path and say I am going to be a policeman. You just said now that the percentage is year 25. They've obviously been out in the work-force and tried something else and then decided I don't like that, or the police force does look attractive for security reasons or a number of reasons. I know very few people that have actually sat down and said I want my career to be a police officer. It's just something that's come up and they've taken the opportunity to apply and got in. When they apply the applications that go through, three or four thousand. You know all of those the two thousand that miss out, they can go away and cut their wrists because they haven't been able to take on board their chosen career. They've just gone "Oh I've missed out. I'll just go back to what I was doing."

In assessing how the motivations of new recruits have changed in recent years it is important to focus on the motivations of respondents when they first joined. In this respect, policing was not really a chosen occupation, unless you had family or close friends in the police force. Rather, many joined because they had the opportunity for variation in work, or some other plans which were unfulfilled. As such, policing became their chosen occupation almost by accident. In addition, even given the range of different tasks within modern policing, the structure of the organisation often prohibited individuals from carrying out their preferred police roles. Again, they seem to end up where they are by accident, rather than by conscious planning.

The result from these comments is that there is a perception amongst senior police officers that the decision to join the police force is ultimately a temporary one. Once the new recruit has had enough of policing, it will be fairly easy to move on. The occupational motivations therefore which once motivated new recruits were no longer as applicable as they once were.

As noted above, this situation was seen to be precipitated by the changing economic climate, which impacts on the motivations for individuals to join policing. As one male senior sergeant with 17 years experience suggested:

> The time we joined the job we had a choice of what we wanted to do. There was jobs everywhere. When I joined the job as a cadet I was 17. Through form 5 we had a careers night at school. They were begging you to join and they kept cadets going basically to keep the numbers up. If you didn't have cadetships you couldn't recruit enough. There was apprenticeships going left right and centre. If you did make a decision to join you'd probably thought about it more than blokes now. just survival now. They're joining to get a job.

The impact of this change of perception is that the culture of contemporary policing is gradually changing. The following comments of a male district inspector indicate the nature of this change:

> I think it will but what you will find is that you'll have divisions...you will still have people who will join for a career. I'm not saying that this will be across the board. So you'll have your career people and they'll maintain some semi culture and they'll start to pick out this lot that'll only be there for so many years or whatever, and you'll have cultures that have a bad influence on the job in so far as there will be that division. You're in it for the short stakes and we're in it for the long term.

This was supported by the following comments of a female community policing officer with 11 years policing experience in Australia, and 4 years experience in the United Kingdom:

> Don't you think that comes back to the (type) of people who are applying at the moment. I mean originally when there was plenty of jobs around people who were applying for the police force were the people who really wanted to apply for the police force whereas now you are getting people coming through who have applied because they want to get a job. They might not necessarily want a career and they are looking for security. I Mean there's a lot to be said for it, it's a secure job with reasonable pay.

Indeed, it seems that this change in the motivations for people joining the police force may be impacting on police culture quicker than some people imagine. The following comments of a female police officer with 5 years experience in the police force are illustrative of this point. In this case, the officer was told prior to joining the police force that there was a distinctive police culture in existence which she would have to negotiate:

> But when I joined five years ago I tended to think then that the old police culture was disappearing. I don't know what's happened since then but a lot of, most of my squad was young men. Most of them were 20 years of age and young fellows with a variety of reasons for joining the police force. You had everything from the psychotic power crazed individual who got weeded out very early to the grand son of the police commissioner. For some fellows at the front of the line this was the thing for their life.

Other reasons for joining the police.

Despite the broad trends outlined to date, a number of other themes emerged in the data. This section will illustrate some of the additional reasons cited for the decision to join the police force which lay beyond the general categories noted so far.

As the following comments of a male instructor at the police academy with 11 years in policing indicate, there are some constant themes to emerge. One of these is that policing is becoming a distinctly middle class occupation:

> One of the things I've noticed...most of the people come from what I term as middle class areas. The Western suburbs, say Broadmeadows. The northern suburbs. Most come from the Eastern and Southern Suburbs. I don't know how that reflects. People from working class suburbs, they've got something against the police or they don't want to be seen with the police. Or if they did join the police, their peers in their home suburbs would ostracise them or something. I'm not sure if it has changed but

it seems constant.

One explanation for this was however viewed to lie in the fact that there is a very limited recruiting system being undertaken, which may mean that the pool of new recruit's who enter the force is being confined to the middle classes. This feature is stressed by the fact that the economic climate is placing a squeeze on available jobs in the community. As the following comments from a male academy instructor with 10 years experience in policing indicate:

> In those 2 years there had been sort of a very very limited recruiting and perhaps...I know I come from the northern suburbs and so many people that I grew up with joining (sic) the police force. What you're talking about now is once again a reflection of the recessionary times or we're not recruiting holus bolus. Perhaps only the so called better suburbs are contributing to the limited stocks of police that we're recruiting.

The following comments of a male IID inspector with 21 years experience in policing indicates that the civilianisation of many policing tasks in contemporary times in also an important variable in attracting different people to policing:

> Civilianisation is going through areas like D24, replacing telephone operators there on emergency lines with civilians. Progressively flowing through...the department in our workshops are now predominantly civilianised. Even our fingerprint experts. The majority of those are civilianised.

Summary

The data suggest that there is no singular reason or characteristic which influences individuals to become police officers. Indeed, police are drawn from the society in which they serve, and there is a range of individual motivations which make policing attractive (or by the same token unattractive to some members of the public. This position is well summarised by the following comments of one male district inspector with 22 years experience in the force.

> I know when I joined the job there were that many different varieties of people who had such diverse backgrounds. You had a bloke whose done his carpentry apprenticeship, and a bloke that's been in the bank for 5 years, you have someone else whose come from the army. There's that many different backgrounds. You go round our district and out of around 600 troops you will find around 200-300 different backgrounds. It all depends on the kinds of people and the status. Here the kinds of people that come in are different but you could probably go to a list of half a dozen reasons that they want to join the police force and that's why they want to make it and they fit into one of those half a dozen categories.

Thus various reasons were cited for joining the police force. The wide range of rationales was canvassed in the following comments of 5 probationary officers with two weeks experience in policing. Their comments are illustrative, because not only do they deal with the range of motivations for joining, but they are indicative of current reasons people may have for joining the police force:

D (M): A lot of us were influenced by others.

F (F): A lot of us were influenced by family and friends.

H:(M): It's somewhere where we had a future to go to, variety.

B (M): If you didn't like one particular area you can transfer to another one. It doesn't mean that you've got to look for another job.

D (M): If you're not happy with one area you can move to somewhere else.

F (F): With my job I was really bored, I didn't do a lot of things so for me it was a real challenge.

G (M): I probably always sort of wanted to join but I just waited until I matured a little bit, did a few things before committing myself. I probably would have joined either way.

F (F): It's a secure job.

Several key themes emerge from these comments. Not only does policing provide job security, but police work can help to develop people's interest in a wide range of areas. These comments are reiterated in the following dialogue between the group of police academy instructors, who all indicated a wide variety of personal reasons, and personal ambitions for joining the police, many of which remained unfulfilled, but all of which suggest the diversity of opinions on what makes policing attractive to certain people:

E(M): I can only talk from my experience and those that joined when I did at 16 when I got this job. We were cadets and we left school and we had nowhere to go. He had the recruiting division come into the school and say these are the ....the army etc etc. I in fact wanted to be a builder and became an apprentice and that fell through and second in line was the police force. The preconceived ideas I had once I got in, and once I selected. O.K. what do I want to do? And my first ambitions were to be on the bikes, to be a motor cop. And once I got in the police culture soon changed that and I went to the CIB.

F(M): I was probably fortunate that I spent a lot of time on psych duty interviewing prospective successful and unsuccessful applicants to the police force and their pre conceived ideas. They are always naive. You can always guarantee that police culture will change that. You've already told us why you joined. 2 days before I submitted my application it was the last thing I would have ever thought of. A friend of mine who just joined shocked everyone. Well certainly shocked me. Talked me into it. And I thought I'd join just to give it a go. I was sick of pumping things out of the press that I was working in. And here I am too.

E(M): Same as me. I was as amazed as you would have been.

B(F): I remember doing it (deciding) in grade 5 and I wanted to become a police

woman. Irish background (but not from a police family). It always really appealed to me. And in those days women couldn't join until they were 21 so I had to fill in 3 or 4 years in the mean time. And all through that time I still intended to join. And I did.

D(F) I came from a police background my father was a policeman just about to retire. And I was the same as B. That was all I wanted to do so as soon as I turned 20 and I joined when I was able to. I joined. There was never any doubt. Well there was. I've got a strong interest in animals so at some stage I was inclined to think that I would work with animals and I thought I would be able to incorporate that with the police force anyway.

C(M): I tried unsuccessfully to become a cadet at 16.5 and fairly despondent went into the mechanical field and ended up being successful and ended up being in the work-force for a year or so. And had another shot with the police department. It was always a burning desire in the back of my mind. My brother was in the job at the time. And that was all I knew of the police force. So there wasn't any strong ties as far as background goes but it was still a desire of mine.

A(M): When I joined the police force I was too big to become an ambulance driver. I emigrated from England and applied to join the ambulance service. They wouldn't take anyone over 6 foot two. I was looking out for somewhere else and the police were advertising at the time so I thought I would put in an application and a month later I was in the academy. I would never have joined the police force in England. It's a different thing altogether over there. I came from a sort of very working class area in London and they were always like the enemy. It felt very strange joining the police force actually. I've sort of come around to think it is a good job and you do help people sometimes. But I think the way policing's gone in England you sort of...Thatcher's really changed it and with the miners strike and Wapping it's almost paramilitary. (In Australia) they are but not as much of an enemy. I suppose it's because you don't see them as much. It's a different type of policing over here. In London they're still very much on the beat. They're everywhere. Over here they're sort of driving past in the cars.

However, the data suggest that there are some constant themes to emerge. Features such as job security, the diverse and active nature of the work, it's pay, and the ability to use policing as a platform for other jobs within the criminal justice system, are all potential reasons making policing an attractive occupation to new recruit's. However there are problems which are seen to be associated with these rationales. Many police officers interviewed, particularly those who had had considerable experience within policing, were fearful that the motivations which related to security and pay were leading to an erosion of the traditional values associated with policing. As such, not only was there a perception that absenteeism was on the increase, but it was felt that there was less dedication to the task of policing, and a more utilitarian attitude to the job which had the potential to compromise the credibility of the force. The result is a gradual cultural shift which favours individualism at the expense of the organisation.

The result is that despite the existence of some general trends motivating individuals to join policing, some police officers suggested that there is such a wide variety of people who join

the police force that it is extremely difficult to ascertain what type of person would suit the occupation. As the following comments of a male internal investigations officer with 22 years experience in policing indicate, there are a broad range of people who join policing who have a wide array of characteristics and motivations for joining:

> I think there are different types of people that join. I think they fall into very different categories, and really, without giving it a lot of thought, it would be very difficult to define what those categories were. I think you have a group of people who are attracted towards the nature of the work for a variety of reasons and that's probably where those categories fall. Some have a motivation towards public service. Others are probably motivated towards...drive fast cars for example. The real element within the job for people who are attracted to that style of work. I guess they are attracted by power symbols. They don't see a huge element within the job itself. Other people are attracted by the mind exercise of investigating crime and achieving a goal for society. I think there's very different groups within the police organisation, some much larger than others. You've only got to look at the people who continually attempt to join the police force that aren't successful. You see them in the security industry. The private sector acquire uniforms that look like the police. They go out of their way to try and make themselves look like a policeman. I think there are a lot of different groups within the police force that join for very different reasons.

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DANGER

One of central features outlined by Skolnick which helps to construct a specific occupational culture in modern policing is the treat of danger associated with the occupation. In Skolnick's terms, danger, and in particular its unpredictability, creates an occupational environment conducive to the development of suspiciousness, by which police officers detect signs of deviance or wrongdoing in their interactions with the community, and solidarity, through which the police rely on colleagues for protection in potentially dangerous or violent situations. While the dangers are not always real, the potential for danger is always in the back of each officer's mind. The unpredictability of various situations on the job means that police officers always need to be cautious of the potential for danger, in both protecting themselves and members of the general public. This section will look at the first of four critical elements of Skolnick's paradigm of police culture, the presence of danger in the police occupational role.

The conception of danger within the Victoria Police.

The conception of danger often varied between police officers, depending on their levels of experience on the job and the perceptions they have of occupational danger. In some cases danger was seen to be a precipitant of psychological rather than physical harm, and as such, the police administration had instituted mechanisms for officers to cope with these difficulties. As one male senior officer with 15 years general duties experience indicated:

> If your van goes to a job and 2 or 3 kids have been decapitated you can contact the psychology people and they can deal with the emotional side of it.

In this example, the danger is related to the emotional trauma of dealing with a particularly violent situation which posed no immediate threat of physical harm to the officer in question. However, there was seldom consensus about what danger means in the policing context. This was illustrated by the following comments of a male district inspector with 25 years experience:

> I think if you went through and tried to look for stats on what were dangerous situations I don't think you would find them because there are different situations.

However danger was generally considered to be tantamount to physical harm. In this respect, most officers indicated that there is always a need to be cautious or take even the most minor, routine steps to counteract danger just in case something goes wrong, even though the actual levels of danger are difficult to quantify overall. As a result, preparation for danger, even in the most subconscious preventative ways, is very much a tool of the trade for the operational police officer, given the unpredictability of facing danger. The more experience you have on the job, the more instinctive these procedures become.

This feature is best illustrated by the following dialogue between several female officers with between 3.5 and 5 years experience:

> A: You've got to be aware the whole time of what could happen. You might be

going to the simplest little job which at the face of it you don't think there's going to be any danger but you can't think like that because you never know what's going to happen.

C: There are situations where there could have been danger but you know you've acted in such a way to prevent that. So you don't know how many times you've actually faced it.

D: I think you're aware ... you're always alert.

C: Just things like you when you stand and face some you stand on the side where your firearm's not. It just comes naturally, you do that and you don't even think about it.

A: I don't think so much tense is the word to describe it, you're just more aware. We were always taught that when you went up to any house no matter what the job was to knock on the door and stand back. Even just a cold burglary report, a burglary that's happened that's quite old, I always knock on the door and stand right back because you don't know what's going to happen.

C: I always have a problem when I've got my back to somebody so I can't put my back to someone when I'm out at work. I've got to know what everyone's doing around me.

D: You just never going to know if you're being set up or what. You could be called to just an innocent job and you don't know whether they've called you there for a reason, you just don't know.

B: With things you do, you act in a certain way and you don't think about acting in that way, it becomes instinct...

C: When you're working and you're relaxed, you're not thinking "This is going to happen" or "That is going to happen", because you're really relaxed whereas in your mind...your mind is probably working overtime.

The perception of danger was not however viewed to be unique to police work. All respondents indicated that many other occupations involved constant exposure to danger. However the unanimous perspective was that the dangers received in police work were unique, specifically because of the unpredictability of police work. As one senior male officer with 15 years experience indicated:

The danger with police work and say the emergency services...I don't think we face any more danger than them...I think in the end we don't face a lot of the experiences and dangers that they are confronted with and they are not trained in the same way in which police people are. They're responding to calls in the same way as our general duties police and they don't really know what they are going to get into. And (it's) the same with the firefighters, who seem to be working in a cushy job in their tank and what ever working night shift but you think of Coode

> Island or a fire that they are going into....

This was reiterated by the following comments of a male IID inspector with 21 years experience in policing, which suggest that a range of occupations other than policing face dangers as part of the nature of their work:

> (Danger is) pretty relevant to your occupation. I think if you're a chemist you'd probably think of the laboratory as being pretty dangerous. You've got to be conscious of it. It's just a safe work practice that there is a possible amount of danger in every call that you attend to.

Further, some police officers suggested that the perceptions police have about the extent of danger in contemporary society are little different from those held by members of the public. As the following dialogue between two IID officers with 22 and 21 years experience in policing respectively indicate, often the perception of and reaction to danger is relative, and is seldom constant. However, equally important in this extract is the differences of opinion about the extent of, the nature of, and the response to danger in the contemporary police environment:

> B: I think again that we're probably no different to the public. With the Hoddle St and Walsh St things that sense of danger probably lasted for a substantial time after that incident. But I think now that it's gone further down the track that danger wouldn't be as readily perceived...as it was back then. I think you find that people still are wandering up to the car with the doors open like they would have prior to Walsh St.
>
> E: Look at these rapes out in Flemington way. They're holding all these public meetings with the policemen, but the people out there are shitting themselves with hundreds of civilians turning up and being taught how to belt people by the coppers.
>
> B How long will that last for? - 6 months, 12 months.

One critical feature which was not viewed to be unique to policing was the fact that violence can be directed at people of any occupation. "Ambulance people" and even "bank employees" were all seen to be potential victims of dangerous situations on the job. However the fear associated with violence directly aimed at police officers was seen as a consistent issue for police which made the job unique from many other occupations. As one senior sergeant with 15 years experience indicated, this can raise the levels of fear which police face on the job:

> I think it's a lot more frightening to have violence directed to you as a person than it is to go to an accident which is different for an ambulance man.

Thus the concept of danger, while not being unique to the policing enterprise, was seen to have certain characteristics which made police work different from that of other occupations.

The almost unanimous perspective is that the world is a dangerous place in the eyes of the police officer. This perception of danger was viewed as part of both the genuine perception of the level of danger in the community, and as a legacy of police being a specifically vulnerable group of people to the levels of community danger. Yet ultimately, the majority of police officers interviewed indicated that not only is the world dangerous, but it is becoming more threatening.

One feature however which failed to receive consensus is the level of assaults against police. Some police officers indicated that assaults against police officers were very minimal. As one male senior sergeant with 15 years experience indicated:

> I think you can count on one hand the number of members that have been assaulted whilst at work.

This was reiterated by a male detective inspector with 25 years experience in the force:

> I can really say that in 22 years of policing, and I'm sure that most of these blokes can say that we haven't, and in actual fact if you total...we haven't confronted that many violent situations. But it's the potentially violent situation which plays on your mind.

However some officers indicated that police face danger above and beyond that faced by other occupational workers. As such, given the current social milieux which views danger as a sometimes acceptable cultural form, levels of assaults against police were seen to be increasing. This point was illustrated by the following comments of a female police officer with 5 years experience in the police force:

> There is a steady increase in assaults against members. If you include minor assaults it's the same again. Practically every fifth member of the police force ha had an assault in that last year.

Some perceptions of the nature of danger in contemporary society indicated that police are perhaps not exposed to the same degree of danger as they were in the past. Some respondents, particularly those with less than 10 years experience in the force, indicated that there was little change in the level of danger they were exposed to since their first experiences on the beat. As one female police officer with 5 years experience indicated:

> I don't think it's changed a lot in the five years I've been in...we've become more aware of it and we know so much more about things that are going on now. Before you joined you'd hear something and you'd probably brush it off whereas now you'd take more interest because you remember what was happening. I'm not saying it's the job. The attitudes just change.

Indeed, some junior officers thought that it was difficult to tell whether the problems were actually worsening over time, or whether they were just changing in nature. In this respect, the following comments from two male junior officers with two weeks operational experience, indicate that the problems of violence are relatively similar to how they were in the past, it is just modern developments, particularly the media, which heighten the

perception that society is more violent in contemporary times:

> D(M): I don't really think it is getting worse. Maybe because there is more people there is going to be more crime but I don't think it's any worse than it was. You are always going to have an element of society that is going to muck up so you've got to deal with it.
>
> B(M): People are under the impression that things are getting worse because we hear so much more about it nowadays. With the media, you hear about everything that goes on. Whereas maybe years ago you didn't hear about everything that went on.

As the following comments of a male senior sergeant with 15 years experience indicated, the nature of society in present times is actually conducive to lower levels of violence between members of the community, and in particular, against the police:

> I reckon you've got more of a yuppy society now they are not into blueing like they used to be there was more of a masculine thing.

In addition, as the following comments from one male junior officer with two weeks experience indicate, the changing definitions of crime also contribute to the perception that crime rates are rising in contemporary society:

> Sex crimes used to happen years ago and a lot of them are coming to light and people think it's new. But these things were happening years ago.

However, most police interviewed suggested that the level of danger being faced by police officers in contemporary times is increasing substantially. The following comments by two male IID investigators with between 15 and 21 years experience in policing are indicative of this perception:

> E: There has been a dramatic increase here in the last 8 or 10 years. When I joined a policeman dying or ...with a chainsaw being murdered was hardly ever heard of...but ...like Hoddle street, Queen St, Walsh St, Russel St. Policemen being murdered. Policemen being shot. The threat of danger is very real and it's there all the time. And I think that after those major incidents the number of police...I mean every time you went up to a car with it's door open at night you'd shit yourself no matter who you are because you think you might get blown away. That never existed once but it does now and every policeman no matter who he is are a lot more wary of being exposed to danger than what you were years ago.
>
> C: That can be reflected on armed robberies not occurring to the same extent years ago. The violent crime trends coincide with that...

Thus, even though there appears to be a lack of consensus about the extent of danger directed at the police in contemporary times, it is felt by some officers that the levels of danger associated with the occupation are increasing substantially.

Nature and Sources of Danger in Contemporary Policing.

i) Active nature of occupation.

Part of the perception of danger lies in the fact that the occupation of policing opens individuals up to more of the dangers present in the community. As a result of the particular nature of the job, new recruits are exposed to more of the social dangers first hand, rather than through hearsay or press reports. The result is the perception that the community has more dangers than was felt before joining the force, but also that the world is becoming more dangerous over time. This is evidenced by the description of a female police officer of 4.5 years experience in general duties:

> When you first joined you'd hear of things happening but you don't take notice. You don't see a lot. But as you've been in years and years you see a lot more (and so the perception of danger rises).

This illustrates that exposure to danger in policing only develops from actual policing experience. The nature of that exposure on a day to day basis is thus used to differentiate policing from many other occupations. Common portrayals of danger in the media and public realm are forms of mere distant spectatorship. However, real policing entails a realistic exposure to danger and its manifestations on a day to day basis.

One of the critical issues to emerge however is that with experience the reflectiveness of dangerous aspects of policing increases. This means that experienced officers are more attuned to the treats and possible characteristics of danger than junior officers. As you get older, and particularly as you enter supervisory work, the realities associated with potential dangers faced on the job become more apparent. However, the features of police work, in particular the disparate shift patterns, make it difficult to cope with some of the nature of the dangers experienced in the police role. As such, while junior officers may therefore have been more prepared for the dangers, the nature of the work roster made it difficult to adjust to the features of police work generally. This was stated by one male district inspector with 30 years experience:

> When you're young you take it in your stride and I mean literally. You don't think about it. With a little bit more objectivity as a supervisor you see the danger. I don't know whether you are going to liken police work to any other job in the community. Certainly when we got bracketed in with the fire brigade and ambulance service people in our superannuation scheme and then they said that we were part of the emergency services. Well I sort of could never really accept that. But we are so essential that you can't really call us an emergency because we're there all the time. We're essential all the time. We're not...certainly we react and we proact [sic] with patrol whether it is needed or not and the danger, I can only equate it to a soldier who is fighting a war in a jungle situation. He goes out there and I might be theatrical in my terms there, but you never know what you are going to expect. Now, when you start your work you kit yourself up with your firearms and all your equipment and you go out and you are subjected to the first call which may be an armed robbery in progress or a domestic situation which could flame into a fatality or it could flame into anything. Or it could then go to

> the other end of the spectrum to some bloody boring lecture at the local kindergarten. So it depends on which way you look at it. But in the day you've got so many ups and downs. These huge troughs and these great peaks to get over of emotional involvement and stress on your system the whole time and at the end of the day "see you later" and go home. Now, some people can't imagine how we come down off some of these shifts but we tend to do it. We go home we have a cup of tea and we go to bed. Inside maybe that's niggling all the time. When I joined I worked the night shift every third week. A third of my time was spent in darkness, over a third. Now I don't really think I knew what it was like to be normal physically until I became a senior sergeant, through many many years afterwards where I had a straight run of straight shifts. Then back as an officer again you are back in the whirly burly again. So you're never really normal. I did a study at officers college on night shifts and I put up as an option to work night shifts on a fortnight straight. (My professor) was appalled. He said seven days was too much. And I asked him what the alternative was and he said that they were doing solitary changes one afternoon. We're in such a disarray in regards to being able to plan our lives with our rosters (that's another thing). We really don't know. We're subjected to what the ongoing needs are.

This perspective was reiterated by senior police officers. However there were differences in the responses to danger which were a legacy of greater occupational experience, or different degrees of specialisation within policing which lead to disparate levels of exposure to dangerous situations. As one senior sergeant with 15 years experience suggested, while the perception of danger may rise with greater experience, the ways in dealing with it, particularly in terms of becoming clinical towards danger, alter with that experience:

> With regard to the nature of police work it seems to me that when you go to these sections or the general duties bloke is exposed to the violence you get clinical about it. That's your job and you have a clinical approach to it and you expect certain things. You know if you go to a pub brawl you don't expect to have people who have been carved up by a train. And so you're half prepared for it before you get there. If you go to somebody that's been run over by a train you don't expect there to be 30 drunks fighting. You get clinical about it and you hope that you approach it with the right sort of attitude in the long term.

Many senior officers in particular indicated that the world is becoming a more dangerous place for young police officers. This perception was specifically related to the lack of respect many people have for the uniform in today's society, whether from the members of the public, the magistrates implementing the law in the lower courts, or through changing perceptions of the severity of dangers officers are exposed to. Again, one theme this lengthy quote illustrates is that senior officers are more aware of the potential dangers you can face on the job. As one male district inspector with 25 years experience indicated:

> In terms of past and present I think it is a lot more dangerous for the kids out there nowadays. In the past you were a little white hat in the middle of a blue and they saw a white hat or a uniform coming it meant something. If a policeman said "stop that blue" the fact that he probably could have taken me apart, and I've been in

> many situations where I've arrested guys who could have taken me apart, but I suppose in those days it was the respect for the uniform that stopped it. Whereas nowadays that respect for the uniform is gone. It means nothing. So I feel the young blokes now are confronted with a lot more danger in every situation they face because the respect, not the respect from the general public but the respect from the core people that they deal with in the majority of physical situations, is completely gone. I think we still enjoy a great respect from the general public but the core people they deal with in those type of situations is completely out the window. And they see that because they can punch a copper in the mouth and get a suspended sentence. (A) magistrate at Sunshine many years ago, you punch one of his constables it was 7 days first offence jail. "You don't hit my policemen." Nowadays you can hit policemen and get away with it. So that's one danger. The other thing is also the danger in so far as your perception of it. It changes. We had a couple of situations a couple of years ago I can nominate when we went into a supposed armed hold up call. And you never know whether it is going to be an alarm or not. Running in and my mate turned around. We'd been going into the city and he said "Have you got a gun?" And he said "no, have you got one? No! Have you got a baton? No, I haven't got a baton. Have you got hand cuffs? No. Oh, we've got a clipboard". So we grabbed the clipboard, I grabbed the clipboard and here's myself running into a possible armed hold up armed with a clipboard. No big concerns for our safety. There was a job to be done and we ran in. No backup. Whereas nowadays there would automatically be a backup. We ran in, false alarm. Fair enough. But then some six months ago driving down through Fairfield there was a bloke breaking into a car. I went down, I was first at the scene. I'm one up. I knew the van wasn't far off. There's the crook in the car. He's just broken into it. I went beside him and I was totally conscious of everything I was doing, whereas in the days gone by I would run in and not worry about it. I was totally conscious. I was looking between his legs. He was seated in the car. I asked him to open the door. He lifted the button and I opened the door slowly all the time glancing where was the van? I then asked him to get out of the van and I was holding him down as he was trying to get up just to slow him down so he wasn't out of the van. I saw the van coming round the corner and I'm "right, out mate, round the corner". And I've checked his hands. Now that's maturity once again. All of a sudden I'm looking for things that I've heard happen to other people. Whereas as a young bloke I wouldn't have thought. I would have gone up to the car and dragged him out and if he wanted a fight I probably would have ended up in a big fight and the van would have eventually got there. So perceptions are a big thing. Your perceptions, I was shitting myself on that day. The other day I can truthfully talk about runnin' into a possible armed hold up with a clipboard. I wasn't shitting myself but it was dangerous.

This was reiterated by the comments of another male district inspector with 25 years experience:

> Members nowadays, we train them to expect violence and they're trained in the use of firearms et cetera. I had a young fellow who came out from Northern Ireland and said that the difference between the army is that you are fighting all the time and it's guerilla war. He's dead now. Got killed in a car crash. But getting back, in

> the old days we knew when we worked in an area if we had a stoush with someone it would be a one on one. There wouldn't be anything pulled out, knives. Even the ones that were drunk were relatively rational. If (a fellow officer) and I were working the divvy van at Broadmeadows and we come back to the station there would be no prisoners in the cells. We drag them in. The blokes we're dealing with these and the girls on that relationship and therefore with that sort of attitude. We've got members that wore personal body armour. We're giving them everything and we're building them up too.

ii) Criminal ethics, respect for police, and the socio-demographics of policing.

There were several changes in contemporary society which were seen to impact on the levels and nature of danger police are exposed to. In this respect, there are a number of new dangers which affect policing in contemporary society, which are seen to be qualitatively different to the situation in the past.

One common feature to emerge was that the code of ethics amongst the criminal community has changed. This is seen to create a greater perception of danger for police officers. Not only is there a perception that the criminal community are less willing to co-operate with police as they may have been in the past, but, in line with a general perception of a lack of respect for policing, members of the public are more willing to direct violence at the police on an interpersonal level. Thus, there is a general feeling amongst police officers that members of the public are more likely in the past to treat police with contempt which can heighten the threat of danger associated with contemporary police work. This point was raised in the following comments by a male inspector with 25 years experience:

> In the old days there was a code of ethics amongst the crooks. You could relatively trust them. If you went of a certain pub, everyone would behave themselves. They were all unwritten...

This was reiterated by the following comments of a male IID chief inspector with 21 years experience, who indicates that the primary source of danger was seen to lie in a broader change of attitude in the community. In this respect, it was felt that people were less reluctant than they once were to direct physical aggression at a police officer. However in contemporary times, particularly since several instances of shootings of police by members of the public, there is an increasing perception that police are the direct targets of violence which can create numerous dangers for operational police:

> Society's changed. You'd never kill a policeman or shoot them, but now police get shot sometimes when they go and raid a house. I mean criminals once would never shoot a police man or belt him or assault him. They do now. They don't care. We've lost a bit of control in that area.

Indeed, it was generally felt that members of the community, unlike the police, are not governed by rules to overcome the excessive use of force. This can heighten the potential and the unpredictability of dangerous situations when dealing with members of the public, as illustrated by the following comments from a male police officer with 5 years

experience in community policing:

> He's got no rules either. When he takes the baton he does what he likes with it and he's not accountable. And he might just run away. If you use the baton you've been trained to use it in a certain way, you've got to account later on for why you used it and what circumstances you justified how you use it. He's not going to use constraint.

However the legacy of this was seen to be combined with the way in which younger officers have changed in their attitude to the job. Gone are the days when a police officer would work after hours to maintain law and order and get information about potential criminal dealings in pubs. Indeed, as the nature of crime has altered over time, it is more and more hazardous for police officers to adopt these socially justified surveillance and undercover measures. As three male inspectors with 25 to 30 years experience suggested:

> A: I think the times are changing too. We've gone through all this. And this is where it's very hard for me to speak on a street level. That's all right with your detectives and the blokes who have been in a bit longer. With well known crooks that have hung around pubs. But your not getting...your getting the disco style drug using and our police now actually respect their bodies. And they're not going to go like we used to go and swill a few beers and talk with crooks. The young blokes now are into nutrition and they know that if they get into this scene they are going to be in there injecting and they don't want to do that. So the times have changed. The days of the old beer swilling and you'd lock a crook up. He'd walk over and buy you a beer and say, "Catch me again. Buy me a beer and go". And those sort of things have completely changed. It's not that sort of atmosphere and the people aren't like that, because whereas we joined the police force they were probably beer drinkers anyway and the crooks were beer drinkers and we'd all hang out in these dives. When they're getting young blokes who are fit and respect their bodies and they don't mingle with the criminal element because the criminal element are into drugs and that sort of thing that they don't want, and we see our young blokes knocking off work and they don't go to the pub. They're going to the gym...they're going to volleyball.
>
> B: It was culturally acceptable to drink in hotels. It's not culturally acceptable to smoke marijuana.
>
> D: It's just not culturally acceptable to drink heavy beer.

This was reiterated by the following comments of a male IID officer with 22 years experience in policing which indicate the types of drugs which are viewed by police as increasing the hazards and potential unpredictable threats faced in operational duties:

> Drugs are now in the community. It wasn't a feature many years ago. Drugs were virtually unheard of. I'm talking specifically about the emergence of illicit drugs. LSD. And when all that went by the wayside and the opiate based drugs came to the fore, I think that really started to change things.

This means that the level of interaction between the police culture and the criminal cultures has waned in recent years. This was stressed by the following comments of two inspectors with 25 to 30 years experience:

> A: I reckon it is dying off (the cultural interaction). The cultures have grown apart.
>
> D: But you can still have your respect. But the way in which you deal with a person, people come back to you afterwards and they say to you I'll give you something now because I trust you and that sort of thing. And you can give this respect. You deal with them fairly.

Part of this perceived change relates to the way in which police officers are treated by the general public while on the job. For instance, when questioned about the nature of these change in attitudes which experience in the job brings, the same female respondent indicated:

> It's just the way police people get treated. I would never have spoken to a person the way we get spoken to. People have no respect for police people.

This was reiterated by the following comments of a female police officer with 11 years experience of policing in Victoria, and 4 years experience in the United Kingdom:

> But all I'm saying is that particularly when I joined in England things have changed dramatically and a lot of that comes down to the general public perception of respect for the police force. Now people aren't as frightened about fucking up against a police officer as they used to be.

The following comments of a male police academy instructor with 15 years experience in policing also illustrate this point.

> When I first joined I had a licence, a licence to assault people. You'll find this pretty profound that in the earlier days it was fairly violent down in Frankston. As soon as they made the first step to assault you, they always had the opportunity to assault you, and then you had the licence to fix them up. Now that was the preconceived notion. I'm talking 12, 13, 14 years ago. And it was almost a licence. If we went out on the van driving, and he's jumped out, he knew he'd punched me knowing the consequences are legal, so that he was arrested, forcibly arrested, taken away and locked up. Now I know my attitudes have changed somewhat through education and I don't believe that's the case any more because of the accountability. But it was my personal opinion, and at the station at the time and it even moved to Springvale when I was there, if they wanted to take the first step they do it at their own peril. That was their perception. It wasn't their perception. They might have been drunk or had a domestic with their wife. Anything. There could have been any underlying reasons which we were never taught. As far as we were concerned if they punched us, they've done the wrong thing. It doesn't matter what the reasons were.

This quote illustrates a critical feature of contemporary police work which is different

from the situation in the past: that there is less fear amongst the general population to criticise the authority of the police. As such, there is a contemporary notion in the community that police no longer have the right to interfere with a member of the public for the purposes of revenge. The legacy of this is that police are potentially at greater risk of physical harm from members of the public who have lost respect for the notion of policing, and, in light of increased levels of public accountability, police are less able to engage in summary justice to "even up" when they have been assaulted. The "licence to assault people" therefore no longer exists, which is perceived to heighten the risks associated with contemporary policing.

In addition, it was felt by some members of the public that there was an expectation that in their dealings with police they would be the victims of violence. This relates closely to the lack of respect because it heightens the negativity associated with the public perception of the police role. This has significant implications for the issue of danger, because lack of trust and respect for policing can filter into the community perceptions of the enterprise, which can heighten the nature of negative contacts between police and citizens. As the following comments from a male police academy instructor with 11 years experience indicate, there is almost a sense of shock by some people taken into custody that they are not mistreated by police. The damaging result however from the police perspective, is that often rumours abound about cases where people are alleged to have been physically mistreated, often falsely, by police:

> One of the things I've found out working at Broadmeadows was there was an expectation by the criminal element, in fact they were often disappointed if it didn't happen, that they.. One particular occasion I was talking to a crook and thinking of taking him back for drunk. But he was saying "You're going to hit me. You're going to hit me. You hit such and such." I remember I was on duty the night we brought the other chap in and he was locked up and no one ever touched him and he'd been out there in his peers saying the coppers beat me up. For them it's an esteem building experience to be able to go to their colleagues or their peers and say that the coppers beat me up. But they didn't leave any bruises because they're really good at it. And it was amazing and I imagine it was happening all the time. Like *Flying High* and the nun situation where they are all lining up to beat the nuns. I was amazed. And it sort of dawned on me then that these guys are sort of doing it in a way that they were sort of disappointed that it didn't happen or they're going to make it up anyway.

This lack of respect indicates a number of features. First there is an apparent lack of respect for the authority of police officers which was present historically in policing. Members of the public were seen to be more willing to challenge the authority of the police in an open, and confrontational manner. However respect was often seen to be earned by the police for their actions. If such respect was not earned, there is a greater likelihood that members of the public will complain against police officers. The implications of this were outlined by one male senior sergeant with 15 years experience:

> You've got to earn respect and I think in reality with so many police being charged now a days. I'm one of those who recognise how these things come about but if you don't know ... about police work and suddenly you're being charged you think

> "What's going on?" And in my area there has been 50 odd cases since March last year. Now that's a hell of a lot of people. I think you are more likely to be charged with a criminal offence as a policeman than in any other profession...

Secondly, police officers seldom receive the assistance of the public during the course of their investigations. There was the perception in some cases that the general public were more prepared to assist criminals in their quest to avoid official detection, rather than assist the police in their law enforcement task. This was evidenced by the comments of one female police officer of 3.5 years experience:

> It's like they (the public) saw nothing, "we saw nothing". They won't help you in any way.

However this varies from location to location depending on the types of people the police officer will be in contact with on a regular basis, and the socio-economic milieu in which crime can flourish. The following dialogue between three female police officers with between 3 and 5 years experience is illustrative of the range of environmental cultures which influence operational police perspectives of their clients:

> A: A lot of it comes down to poverty I suppose too. Not poverty as such but you know Preston, Preston East there's a lot of people that aren't really well off...a lot of them there it's just the way that they're brought up (which influences their relationship with the police).
>
> C: [The job opens up your eyes]...You would see different things in Hawthorn like different deceptions and things like that whereas out here it's things like drugs and burglaries and constant things like that.
>
> D: I was at Heidelberg for two and a half years and then I went to Hawthorn and we pulled a car over in Heidelberg and go right through it. You'd search the whole car, especially if they had drug priors and things like that. In Hawthorn you just don't pull over cars because they are all Mercedes and...you just don't pull over any cars and you are just going out of your way to try and find some work.
>
> C: I'd say in Preston or Heidelberg or areas like that where you can actually catch people doing it (criminal activity)...in Hawthorn you have to investigate to find someone...
>
> A: And in doing that you get more cold burgs on the job because...the job you get has happened during the day while they are at work whereas at Preston there's always people home because these people don't work so it's more active. When you get a job it's either something that's just happened or is happening whereas in Doncaster and those areas the job when you get it has happened hours and hours before. They've been out all day.

Thus the environment where the particular officer works is important in determining the nature of the crime, and the type of response the police officer is to adopt in order to implement crime solving techniques. This impacts in the levels of danger as in some areas,

because of the socio-economic nature of the population. Those areas with higher unemployment mean that there is a greater likelihood of direct police/offender contact due to the greater likelihood of crimes being reported soon after they occur. This is in contrast to regions where most people are employed, where crimes are committed during working hours and are often reported well after the event. This was reiterated by the following comments of a male IID chief inspector with 21 years experience in policing:

> It's changed too but I think that if you look within Melbourne itself, and the policemen that work within different stations. You can get a policeman that works for a file station all his life that has never seen an angry man. And you get a young policeman that goes to a place like Broadmeadows or St Kilda or Frankston and you put him on the streets for a couple of years and he can handle anything. He's had to be treated like shit and deal with shit all his life but yet you'd much rather have someone like him standing along side you if something goes wrong than someone who's worked in a file station all his life. But it does tend to rub off. People who work in those areas and even the police in those areas are not as highly thought of as in other areas. If you treat police like shit all the time or give them a hard time they start to react and they treat the people that are treating them like that in the same way. And of course every now and then they come across a decent citizen and they can't differentiate and he cops the same as he's treated.

In relation to this issue of the area of where the offence occurs, there was general consensus that some areas are more conducive to criminal activity. As such, police officers are likely to be more suspicious of people in certain regions than in others. However, in practice, this is an undesired element in effective police work. There was a general acknowledgment, particular by junior police officers, that stereotyping individuals in particular issues is likely to lead to many crimes being overlooked by the police. The consensus is that everybody in the community has the potential to commit crime, therefore it is potentially dangerous for police officers to stereotype particular individuals or particular communities. This point was illustrated by the following comments by a male junior police officer with two weeks experience in the Victoria Police:

> It also gets back to different people being stationed at different areas. I'm going to be stationed in Dandenong. It's a different class of people than someone who's stationed at Hawthorn or Camberwell. So you can't say there's a particular person you've got to be wary of because crime still appears in Camberwell or Hawthorn and crime's still going to be committed by people in suits and driving BMW's. And it's not just going to be street kids or Aboriginals or whatever.

This was reiterated by the following comments of another male junior police officer with 2 weeks experience:

> But everyone breaks the law. When I studied accountancy and learning the ways of avoiding tax, or the average Joe citizen going away speeding or running a red light. Everyone breaks the law. It's just if you get caught.

However, it was also felt that socio-economic issues had an important role in determining whether an individual person would direct their violence against police. In particular, it

was viewed that social factors such an unemployment and poverty have been conducive to contributing to a "don't care" attitude amongst many perpetrators of violent crime. The result is that police can often be victims of violence from their "clients" on the grounds that some members of society simply have nothing to lose. This is particularly seen to be characteristic of the behaviour of some homeless people who are viewed as difficult to police. As one male senior sergeant with 17 years experience indicated:

> I think it might be different because as we said before society's changed. There's a lot more stress and pressures on the community with unemployment and uncertainty as to their own future they don't sort of have to toe the line. Like your homeless people and people who just sort of drift around. They're harder to find if they do do the wrong thing. It's sort of getting to the stage where they haven't got anything to lose because it is so uncertain for them and I think that plays a big part on how they approach the police. And it's the same for the police. You go and look at somebody and he'd got nothing to lose if he does go and what's he going to lose. You're probably going to be better off you get a warm bed, showers, food, everything you know once he gets inside, and his family are probably going to be better off than yours because you don't get the support of benefit of what they get. So he really hasn't got a lot to lose by standing up to police.

Many of the features conducive to this perspective were seen to be structural social characteristics of certain groups in society which were often beyond the ability of the police to negotiate. Yet ultimately, the damage done to police is seldom direct and lacks the symbolism which was characteristic of violence against police 10 or 15 years ago. As one male senior sergeant with 15 years experience indicated:

> Because there is so much unemployment people lack self respect now so if you don't respect yourself you don't give a hoot about what anyone else is doing. Now if you respect yourself you're going to think a lot more about what the general community think of you. You don't want to be locked up and have that stigma. You don't care. In the old days when you busted a young thug down the road, they're being cheeky, you drive off, five or 10 minutes later they'll bash your windows in. They're not crashing the window to hurt the people. They're purely sticking it up the coppers. At this stage I think there would be very few that (have a go at the police directly).

iii) The criminal justice process and danger.

The nature of the criminal justice process is also viewed by some officers to be too lenient in dealing with the violence of members of the community. As such, the courts are seen to be inadvertently sanctioning certain types and degrees of violence through sentencing policy and authoritative decisions which do not adequately reflect police concerns over violent activity. The following comments of a male IID inspector with 21 years experience in policing illustrate this point:

> The courts let you down in that regard too with the penalties that they mete out to people for those sort of crimes. I think the crims, they knew that you never had a go at them or you inflicted harm to one because you know that retribution not only

from the police but other criminal elements. But that doesn't happen any more.

iv) Danger and new social problems.

Environmental, social and cultural issues were seen to exacerbate the dangers police face, which contributed to the unique nature of danger in the police occupation. However the dangers change over time. Two specific dangers which are seen to create increasing problems for police are the threat of potentially fatal transmissible diseases, and the preparedness of members of the public to use weapons against the police. Both of these dangers are viewed as realities of contemporary policing. Yet both have substantially different impacts on the way in which the police operational role is carried out.

The existence of AIDS and HIV has heightened the awareness of police officers that they can become victims of a danger which manifests itself in a vastly different way than the bruising, battering, or immediate physical injury inflicted by an aggrieved member of the public. The dangers to policing from these diseases are a constant reminder to police that social situations have changed, and self preservation for police officers takes on a different form in contemporary society. As one male sergeant with 15 years experience in the force indicated:

> The dangers change too like with Aids and blood and all our drug users, and more people carrying weapons.

As noted above, the issue of drugs is an important concern for contemporary policing. The existence of drugs is seen to interrelate with the problem of transmissible disease.

The hazards associated with police work have increased the potential for danger to immediately affect police officers who intervene in particular situations. Take the comments of one male inspector with 25 years experience in the force:

> And now you need plastic gloves on to do it (intervene). There was a senior sergeant who walked up the street and a bloke had a heart attack and he couldn't do anything because the bloke was frothing at the mouth. It created a bit of a dilemma. It was only when the nursing staff came out with the proper equipment that anything could be done whereas in the past you would say forget the body fluids...but nowadays they think that in the back of their minds that they have three young children.

What was however clearly evident was the fact that the potential for serious violence directed against police has changed, with potentially violent results. Though, while the phenomenon of the pub brawl is "a bit of an urban myth nowadays", the potential for knives or other weapons to be used against police contributed to police fears. As one male senior sergeant with 15 years experience indicated:

> A few weeks ago one night shift, a few blokes were involved in separating a fight. Some idiot has just come up behind him, hit him right square in the back. Now that's an assault but you're not going to lose any sleep over it unless the culprit has been armed a short time before it. There's been a realisation that instead of

shoving him in the back he could have (done) him with a knife. A lot of the assaults on police, probably the majority, are of a minor nature but none the less they are aware that the potential could have been much more serious. The other thing with the force which has changed today is that 15 years ago you didn't have knives...

v) Unpredictability and danger.

One of the critical issues to emerge from the work of Skolnick is not only are police subject to some specific levels of danger in their day to day work environment, but in many ways, these dangers are highly unpredictable in nature. As such, it is often difficult for the individual police officer to develop cues on how to detect or identify situations which are potentially dangerous. This means that the contemporary police officer deems it highly necessary to be prepared for the worst outcome when dealing with a member of the public, due to the potential for violence.

The source from which danger does or can come from is one of the critical difficulties facing new recruits. It was fairly unanimous that it was difficult for police officers to predict precisely which members of the community were likely to be dangerous or pose some sort of physical threat to a police officer. As such, it was often difficult, particularly for junior officers, to be able to judge who in the community was likely to be an aggressive or dangerous person. This point was mentioned by the following comments of five junior officers with two weeks operational experience, about the warning signs provided at the academy for predicting danger in the community:

F(F): (Danger can occur at) any time and any place.

B(M): Don't stereotype. Danger comes from anyone.

H(M): Someone in a suit might be more dangerous than a street kid.

C(F): You can't predict danger.

H(M): Obviously there's going to be some signs of danger but someone who's not suspicious can be dangerous. No matter how they're dressed. No matter how they stand. Only if it's an extreme nature. Like you can see that they've got a knife or they've got something on them. But otherwise...

B(M): It's got to come down to I think personal experiences and experiences of others. For example Walsh Street, whenever someone come across a stolen car in the middle of the road with the doors open the car responding would shit itself and call for backup because of what had happened before. And it stuck in the back of their minds, "Well, this is danger." And it just comes back to what you know of your experiences. What's happened to you before and to others and certain situations. But as for being able to predict what someone's going to do well I don't think you can.

G(M): I think that you can try to predict a situation you can flare a lot of things

> up. Like they might not be dressed neatly or whatever, and you think this is going to be a dangerous situation. And you get up and start talking to him really aggressive. It could flare situations up.
>
> F(F): And if you approach somebody in a business suit and say "how are you going mate?" this is really great, he might give you a smash in the face and you're left with it. You can predict some people's body language but you can't predict danger. Sometimes, they give us the example that they turn their eyesight to the firearm, or you can see the face swipe. When they do that they are going to punch you. One of the characteristics if someone's going to become aggressive towards you is if they crouch down and lift the shoulder up. It's not if this happens this is going to definitely happen but just be aware of the starting signs. Someone may be aggressive towards you. But if you go in there with a perception of this is what the situation is going to be you really are on the back foot before you go in.

As this passage illustrates, despite the fact that danger is often unpredictable in day to day police work, there are certain cues for predicting danger in operational policing. However, given the diversity of possible situations, and the difficulty in predicting who danger is likely to come from in the community, it is not always possible for those cues to be an effective guide to predicting danger. As such, junior police officers are told to be on their guard and treat each situation as it arises. This means that you need to take your cues from your client, and be as non-obtrusive as possible. This places the onus on the individual police officer not to be confrontational in his or her dealings with the public, in order to minimise the possibility of danger being generated from the nature of the interaction. This point was illustrated by the comments of two junior police officers with 2 weeks experience:

> B(M): Well, I think you go in nice. You go in and talk to everyone like they're your mother or your neighbour or whatever. You talk to them normal and you let them direct how they would like you to react. If they don't want to play your game, play along with you, if they don't want to be nice and start getting angry, well then, you're in the position to go to the next level. It's very difficult to go in all pumped up and all aggro at them, and then bring yourself down. You can't sort of do that. But if you go in nice well then it's very easy to react to the situation.
>
> F(F): We take our cues from them.

The fact that danger is difficult to predict created problems which were deemed unique to policing. However these problems differ substantially depending on the level of experience of the individual police officer and the levels of exposure to danger they experience according to their specialist roles in the police organisation. As two senior officers with 15 years experience, there were distinct differences between the perceptions of CIB officers and general duties police officers was related to the nature of the predicability of their exposure to dangerous situations:

> E: They're (CIB) picking up the pieces.
>
> A: It's the unpredictability which creates the greatest difficulties.

The conception of danger, and its degree of predicability differed significantly between some respondents. And it was generally acknowledged amongst officers with different levels of experience and different degrees of specialisation, that some police officers have a greater ability to control the nature of the situation which governs the degree of predicability of a citizen's response to the police. As the following dialogue between three male CIB officers with between 5 and 10 years experience indicates, while there are some similarities in perceptions with other officers in terms of the need to be aware and cautious of danger in CIB work, it was felt that CIB officers are generally more geared to the potential for danger in the job, even to the extent that it can make the tasks of policing more exciting. The following comments are in response to the question "Is danger a problem?":

> E: Not for us anyway.
>
> B: Danger is my middle name.
>
> C: It's certainly present and it's something you've got to be aware of. But you don't dwell on it.
>
> B: Shit happens. Sometimes danger can even be regarded as the thing that makes it good fun. You can be hanging out the front door of a house with a sledge hammer in your hand and you think "Yeah. This door is going to go in in 30 seconds". I don't know about anyone else but I don't take very much notice of it.

Part of this perspective was seen to be a legacy of the fact that CIB officers are more prepared for dangerous situations than general duties police officers. In this respect, CIB officers are generally prepared for violent confrontations, unlike general duties police officers, who face the unpredictability of violent situations, by being called to a variety of settings at first instance and receiving little information or insight as to how dangerous the situation is likely to be. For CIB officers, there is a greater deal of knowledge and predicability of the degree of danger they are likely to be exposed to. As such, even though CIB officers may be exposed to more threats of danger than uniformed police officers, there is less unpredictability in the CIB role. This was illustrated by the following comments of five male CIB officers with between 5 and 12 years experience in operational policing:

> B: We know what we're going to be in for before we go through the door.
>
> E: We can spend a day on the phone.
>
> C: We're in control of the situation. We run it in the way that we want to. But uniform. They are radioed over the phone to domestics.
>
> D: The ratio of the number of dangerous situations that we're put in compared to their day to day things would greatly be outnumbered.
>
> A: When we go to a dangerous situation we know that there is a potential for danger so we're ready for it. A lot of the situations they (uniformed police) go to

(is a straight up response).

This feature is indicative of a further rift between the cultures of general uniformed police and CIB police officers. The conception is that because the situations associated with the day to day policing role in both divisions is substantially different, the conceptions of and responses to those roles are different. This means, that in terms of danger, because CIB officers are more in control of the nature of the situation, they are more prepared to cope with the legacies of danger directed towards the police because of that control. As such, the unpredictability of danger is not as much of a concern for CIB officers than for general duties police officers.

This difference in the conception of danger for CIB officers was reflected in the different ways in which uniformed police were seen to deal with specialised CIB roles. This point was mentioned before, in terms of the fact that CIB officers considered themselves to be more professional in their criminal investigations tasks, than their general duties counterparts. However, the general perception of CIB officers was that because they were generally in control of the situations where danger is likely to occur, they often forget the day to day threats which general uniformed police face. As such, there was seen to be a great deal of admiration for the way in which general duties police deal with the unpredictability of danger in their day to day policing role. This issue was raised in the following comments of a male CIB officer with 9 years experience in policing in Victoria:

> For me it's been so long since I walked around in a uniform. Since I've actually had a uniform on. It's been nearly 4 years since I've worn a uniform. And even though I've only been in CIB for only 2 years...Recently I had an incident in the area where I work and I was with a young uniformed fellow and we were running on the spot, looking for an offender. And we actually had to arrest. And he shot at us with a shot gun. He fired 3 shots and I shit me self. I did the job and so did my partner who'd only been in the job 18 months and he did a fantastic job. And we got the crook. And afterwards I felt sick and I realised that I'd been getting soft or complacent about how dangerous the job is every day for uniformed members. I was there because it was a siege situation and I happened to be the bloke that was going into the back of the house setting up an OP at the back of the house. Now I just happened to be Johnny on the spot when he came out with the gun. And afterwards I realised I'd forgotten what it was like to be a uniformed copper because you do that every day. And that young fella that I was with even though he'd only been in the job 18 months, he'd been to things like that every day. Not every day but in his 18 months he'd been (under that same threat). And afterwards I thought we're all mortal and I'd forgotten about that.

This point was reiterated by the following comments of a male IID officer with 21 years experience in policing, who suggests that it is at the initial call stage where the unpredictability of danger is more likely to be present. The result of this is that general duties police officers are more likely to be exposed to unpredictable dangers on a routine basis:

> I think that the initial call stage that you're talking about that's where most danger comes in. There's nowhere in Melbourne that I wouldn't go to in uniform unarmed and I think that you can still do that in this day and age. It's just that when you're attending to certain calls there's some likelihood that there may be some danger associated with it.

However, in practical terms, the even though the levels of danger are substantially different between CIB officers and uniformed police, ultimately, the issue of professionalism hinges on the way in which the job is done. In this respect, CIB officers often indicated that uniformed police do not follow the correct procedures in dealing with criminal situations, which results in the more specialist CIB officers having to "clean up for their mistakes". This point was raised by the following comments of two male CIB officers with 9 and 8 years experience respectively, although these comments indicate that the conceptions of the effectiveness of uniformed troops vary depending on the experience of the particular CIB officer of the way in which uniformed troops deal with their work:

> C: (Those) who give you a job as investigators and according to their lack of experience they haven't investigated it properly and they dump it on your hands.

> B: I've never had a problem with a uniformed bloke. It really does depend on where you work and it really does get back to the job is changing. It depends on what station you're working at. With CIB, your work's always the same it doesn't matter where you work. Basically, you're investigating crimes of a similar nature in any division. They're always of a similar nature the difference is what the uniformed do. Certain uniformed stations work harder than other uniformed stations. That's as plain as the nose on your face. And some of them are in areas where it doesn't matter how keen you are, you're going to have to take some other stations crooks if you want to be as best as the next station. I worked at a busy station and probably the best days I've ever had in the job were working at that station. A real busy station. And I still look back at the times I had at that station and think, fantastic times. And I've never had a problem with the uniform as a whole but where I'm working now I've certainly, I've probably got a real problem with the sub-officers and the like in the uniformed section. The people that are coming through, the juniors that are coming through, will never know what it's like to be a real copper as long as they're working there under those people. There are stations where it shows up more and there is an obvious problem between the CIB and the uniform because of that. But other stations where they've got a busy uniform and are self motivated, you never have a problem with those people.

Training, preparation, and danger.

The police academy is aimed at giving recruits the basic tools with which to conduct operational police work. Thus, while there is a general reluctance for academy trainers to focus on how dangerous the world is for police officers, there is a specific focus on the correct procedures which have the ability to avert danger when there is a violent or aggressive situation. This point was made by the following comments of three junior officers with two years experience:

H(M): I don't think that they put on to you that this is going to be so dangerous. The thing that they point you on is that if you don't do procedures correctly, if you don't do things the right way then it can be very dangerous.

B(M): I think they stress that once you've been out there and been working for a while you become complacent and you believe everything isn't dangerous. Nothing's going to happen to me. And when you let your guard slip that's when they are going to get you. That's when things like that happen. When you let your guard slip you don't treat every situation like it's not going to happen here. People become complacent, "Yeah I've done this before, it's gonna go a certain way". But the time it doesn't go a certain way, when you let your guard slip, that's when you're in danger.

F(F): Always be alert and every situation has the potential to be dangerous. Not so much be defensive. Just be alert and aware that every situation could be dangerous.

Thus the academy training focuses primarily on the need to be wary, rather than the way in which potential dangers are likely to occur in police operations. Yet for many, the stress placed on the dangers in the operational world is too much. As a result, many do not complete the training phase because the pressures associated with the dangers in the job are too great:

B: There are a lot of people in the academy who don't make it through because they just can't cope with it there and then. You know they just can't cope.

C: I still don't think that you've got an indication (of the nature of the job) until you hit the street.

A: Yeah but they do drum it into your head when you're in the academy that this is going to happen or that this is gonna happen just to see how you will react so people might think then "Oh I might be able to cope with that kind (of) situation". But I suppose a lot of people get caught out (three female officers with between 3 and 5 years experience).

However some junior members indicated that the police academy does give you an adequate indication about what the policing environment was likely to be like for new officers. In this respect, it was generally felt that training staff at the police academy, and those present during work experience, had sufficient experience and provided realistic insights into operational policing to paint a fairly true picture of the nature of police work, and the society which it is aimed to deal with. This was indicated by the following comments of a male junior officer with 2 weeks experience in policing:

They've all been at stations. And when we got out we were told to sit down and sponge it all in, and just absorb it. And most people did that. A lot of people went out and did different things. But they all treated you the same. They would sit around in the mess room. They didn't hold back because you were there. So you got to see what it was really like.

There was also a variety of experience amongst the members of the training fraternity which provided an accurate assessment of the nature of operational practice for new recruits. This was illustrated by the following comments of a female junior officer with 2 weeks experience:

> All of the instructors had different areas too. We didn't just have the one instructor for the whole time. We had a junior based and a senior based law instructor. But in that time we had different instructors taking different topics so you get everyone's different perception and you're not just being tunnelled in to one idea. You don't have one person who is really bad on this area and good on the other area. You get a very round picture.

Danger, experience, and specialisation in policing.

The critical issue with danger is that police officers must always be prepared to confront potentially volatile and unpredictable situations. The following comments of two male IID investigators with 21 and 22 years experience in policing, indicate that police officers must always be aware of danger, and to react accordingly. Usually, in situations such as a car chase, police must react to danger spontaneously, and without time to dwell on the situation. The result is that there is little opportunity for police officers in dangerous situations to contemplate the risks or the consequences of their reactions to volatile situations. However, the more experience an individual officer has, the more likely they are to treat dangerous situations with the appropriate degree of care:

> D: Generally, as much as it's in the back of your mind, you're always aware of danger. If you go to a factory late at night and suddenly offenders get stirred and there's people going in all directions, you will run as hard as you can. However when you get the corner of the factory, you're gonna be 10 feet out from the wall, not right up against it, because the chances are that you might get a piece of 4x2 between the eyes. You're careful but...
>
> B: In pursuits too. Why do we pursue? After it's all over and you've caught the villain you think what have I done? And what could have gone wrong? But you'll do it again 5 minutes later...
>
> D: We react as we are taught to react and you do it at the time without any real thought as to whether or not you're perhaps should or shouldn't pursue. I don't think that comes an issue...the difference in the individual is in the amount of care they take.

Danger and sex roles.

However the level of danger is not seen by women to be greater than it is for men in the operational field. As one female officer with five years experience indicated, the problems of danger affect all officers equally, regardless of the tools they have available to control potentially violent situations:

> I don't think it's any more dangerous for a female than a male because you're

> doing exactly the same job and going to the same calls and things like that. It's only that bit about the strength part but I think that females are much better about being able to talk their way out of things. So you have an advantage where they have a disadvantage and they have an advantage in something else.

Indeed, as the following dialogue between three female junior officers indicates, the need to negotiate your way out of certain situations, rather than use physical force, is an increasingly important skill for modern police officers:

> E(F): You can talk your way out of situations.
>
> F(F): You won't have to always use force but you will sometimes.
>
> C(F): Nowadays you are more likely to get yourself out of a situation by using your mouth. If you approach somebody the wrong way you are going to get their back up straight away. If you go in on a high level the situation is likely to get worse. So it comes down to communication. And if you come across a situation where the violence is, you can't avoid it, we're trained for it.

Thus, the general conception, particularly amongst female officers, is that the use of physical force is a last resort for contemporary policing.

The nature of the work however, and the nature of the masculine aspects of police culture, often mean that female officers have to prove themselves to be worthy as police officers. This need to show that they are just as good as the men has important implications for the way in which some female officers carry out their role. In the back of their minds, there is a need to illustrate to their colleagues that they have what it takes to confront danger, regardless of their sex. As one female officer with five years operational experience indicated:

> If something happens I'm not going to lock myself in the car and sit in here and then after you've done that they think "Yeah, she's not bad". But it takes that I think. Some think women are not like that but that's unfortunately what some guys have in the back of their minds...that you're going to run or you're not going to want this to happen. You want to defend (yourself) but you don't want people to think that police women can't do it. You don't want to give them (the crooks), or police men that impression.

Danger and the situational context.

Many officers had difficulty talking of the issue of danger in the abstract. Indeed, it was often felt that press reports or statistical accounts of danger were inherently flawed, because they misrepresent the context in which danger occurs. In this respect, there are a number of situations which have the potential to either exacerbate the fear of danger in the mind of the individual police officer, or are highly unpredictable in nature which can make it difficult for police officers to estimate when danger will occur. In this respect, there were two common examples cited which illustrate each point.

i) Demonstrations and public order.

The case of, the threat of danger to emerge from collective disorder is very real. There are a number of cases throughout Western history where collective disturbances have resulted in serious injury to property, police officers and members of the public who have been caught up in the collective nature of the event. When combined with often heated political beliefs, which at times are counter to government policy or lead to counter demonstrations, the position of the police officer becomes a difficult one to negotiate.

This was illustrated by the comments of one male inspector who had 30 years experience in the police force in relation to the tactics employed at demonstrations. In this respect, improved police training was a relevant consideration in not only contributing to dangers faced by police, but in also ensuring that police officers did not act without undue force in public situations:

> (There is) more violence against the police I think. My experience in the major demonstrations recently, last year and the year before, ILO, the militant type from around the campuses around the city areas that marched on parliament house. I saw the aftermath of what they did to the police officers. They came up and there's absolutely no question in my mind. They ripped the girl's blouses across them so they were put 'em at a disadvantage. And come up to the police men and more or less do a sort of a friendly motion then gouge down the face. Now they were trained, they were really well trained. There was a few reacting against it, but they more or less were acting defensive. Now we never say that years and years ago. Nowadays the training is completely defensive and we have our members out the back. I'd hate to have seen the last time somebody ordered a baton charge. That'd be years ago. We had our batons drawn at a situation in Carlton a few years ago when the Bouverie St drag races were creating a lot of problems. They were very very dangerous and we virtually had to have our batons out and move people through the area just to clear it out. But the JP got up and actually read the riot act that night. I think there's more of a chance of having violence used against you. The TV cameras were always on the other side. Now the police have become very shit cunning. They've invited them around to our side and they get the pictures from our point of view and before it goes to air you get a balanced view of the whole situation. All our interviews at Russell St and all our meetings the press were invited. Complete privy to everything that was discussed for the troops. What the troops knew the press knew. You can't really hide any more. There is no other way. We had a certain time to brief all our people and the press were always there with us. They'd come down to the lines and photograph the situation. A few people can change it and that's really what the training is. A few of these IOA people turned a big demonstration into a violent confrontation with police.

The fear of mass public resentment against police at community events is very real. In this respect, police officers feel that they are dehumanised and not viewed as representatives of the community by members of the crowd. This point leads to an increased perception of threat, potentially where crowds are involved in illegal activity which the police must negotiate. This dilemma can often lead to unpredictibility in the police role, as was illustrated by the following comments of a female police officer with 5 years experience,

and a male police officer with 5 years experience in policing in Victoria:

> B (F): When I'm in a demonstration situation, all I'm there is to try. I might agree with what all the people behind us or in front of us are doing. Why are they taking it out on me?. I had nothing to do with the decision. Yet you're on the front line. You're being spat at you're having things thrown at you and they don't know me from a bar of soap. Inside my uniform I just feel like an ordinary person. I'm just here doing my job. I'm here to try and control the situation for other members of the public etc so you don't go running past us and hurting people.

> E (M): (At the illegal drag races in Carlton in the late 1980s) The crowd was a mixed crowd and they weren't there for aggression but you could see that they were ticking over. "What will we do with these police and this guy and maybe we'll do something about it." They were there watching the drags but when we stopped this guy and got him out of the car and started talking to them. They just sort of closed in and it was more than just looking. It was like it was 2 o'clock in the morning. There's a couple of thousand of us, there's two coppers and maybe there is a bit of fun. You know that in that crowd there's a few people who are gonna start. You know. But I felt very confident that we should be o.k. with this crowd because it is mixed. You weren't taking on a brawl as such. But you might just get the wrong sort of guys who might say "lets just try this", and you start to think, especially when they close in, "Oh well, we'll see what happens". Then you just stick to the routine. When it looked unsure where things were going to go the Carlton van turned up at a convenient time. They had to pave the way to get through. (It was) not just a crowd of hostile people. It's a crowd with mixed purposes. There are some just there to watch the drags. There's some guys there that are probably pro police and some guys who probably hate the coppers because they think "you ruined our fun". "Lets get 'em". So you just don't know which way it is going to turn.

Important in this process was the way in which information about danger is conveyed from senior officers to the new recruits. In this respect, the academy teaching is not meant to tell you with the details of how to deal with danger, but is to give each individual officer some indication of what to expect on the job. As such, there is a general perception conveyed by academy trainers that there will be situations where new recruits are involved in danger, which are difficult to predict, and where the individual officer is de-personalised by the police uniform. This point was indicated by the following comments of two male junior officers with 2 weeks experience:

> H(M): (They told us) just how to deal with it (danger) not what you're going to get. They also made it very clear that there are going to be people out there that are not going to like you just because of your uniform. There are people there who just don't like you.

> B(M): They'd tell us in a demonstration that people aren't abusing you as a person. They are abusing the uniform. So you just take it. Don't take it personally. It's just the uniform.

Public demonstrations that get out of hand for instance can be a key test of the tolerance and discipline levels of young officers, as evidenced by the comments of a male senior sergeant with 17 years experience in the force:

> The first time I think a lot of recruits ever get abused is by a demonstrator. You find out then and there when they have already graduated what their reaction is to a demonstrator. If they get abused they can't handle themselves. The Bush inquiry the T.V. cameras honed into a few coppers down there with the old long batons going hell for leather and it looked shocking. They probably deserved it but it looked shocking. But obviously some of the troops down there did lose it. What you're simulating is getting your blokes back up.

The problems with demonstrations were reiterated by one district inspector with 25 years experience in the force. In this respect, it is felt that greater emphasis is placed on a low key approach to policing public disorder. However despite this point, members of the public are becoming more aggressive towards law enforcers at these environments. The increased public desirability for the right to protest, provides the perfect setting for certain individuals to cause trouble for the police. This makes policing such venues difficult in light of the increased public desire for a non-interventionist police presence:

> There's very limited stuff that will stop demonstrators doing now. They can march as many streets as they like. But there's certain things... You don't go on the steps of parliament. You don't charge treasury place. Normally we protect those areas and basically the people can march whatever streets they like. But there will always be a police presence on parliament house but they've laid down the rules beforehand. And it's mainly these core groups that try to rush through there that cause all the trouble...I'm saying that there's not a big difference. The reason that I'm saying that there's slightly less is (violence) because there are other things. The situations seem to take on. We are attempting to approach situations with less violence and we're adopting a low key approach. Blokes are talking there for a while. Too often I see the last resort is "hey the only way we are going to resolve this is by force". And it's going to be forcing that bloke into the van or forcing this bloke off the property. To me there's not a real big difference. I think that as we get better with the dealing with the public, and as I say I think that some of the dramas there are perhaps...I suppose it's because I'm from the old school. But now I can go for a certain amount of time where we can negotiate or talk. Or lets resolve this. But then all of a sudden I think that I've gone as far as I can, I'm bashing my head against a brick wall trying to do this nicely. "Right son, that's the end, in the van!"

The demonstration is however one instance where public disorder can pose threats against the police. In Victoria in recent years, there has been a growing concern about the level of violence in licensed premises. In these environments, where alcohol is often seen to be a key precipitant of public disorder, the threats to police again raise questions about the types of dangers police experience, and whether these have increased or caused greater problems for police administrators in contemporary society. Public order presents several dilemmas, particularly for young police officers. In such cases, it is often expected that there will be a threat of confrontation which leads to the very real possibility that force

will be used by police officers. This point was stressed by one district inspector with 30 years experience in the Victoria Police:

> Self survival...nowadays they will be heavily armed. They will go out and they will be targeted to a particular hotel where people have either got drugs. Associated with something like concealed weapons, knuckle dusters, flick knives etc. And to go in to that situation there must be a certain amount of force expected to deal with it because I can't really think of any other way.

In addition to the demonstration scenario, there are other environments where collective disorder can pose particular threats for police. Licensed premises for instance were often deemed to be "hot spots" for violence. This made it easy for police to predict when danger was likely to occur, and the fact that it could be directed specifically at the police. As one male senior sergeant with 15 years experience indicated:

> It depends on the venues you've got in town. With these night clubs every night shift you're going to get something from the night clubs. Every night shift and the city west blokes they're just on the road.

Part of the reason for this was the fact that inner city areas often attract transient populations of people, who have "nothing to lose" when attending the city's night clubs. However rates of interpersonal violence would often vary between shifts. Thus current statistical measures were seen to be poor indicators of the overall levels and characteristics of violence police experience. This reiterates the point that the levels of violence police experience are often unpredictable.

In addition, the characteristics of pub violence were seen to have changed over time. For instance, the presence of police at a "pub brawl" was once seen to be of little outcome to the fight. However today, a police presence will often mean that the violence dissipates relatively quickly. As one male senior sergeant with 17 years experience in the force indicated:

> When I worked down at Prahran we used to go to brawls, going back to the mid to late 70s. You get there and they're still going hell for leather, down the Station hotel, Greville St, the various pubs around Prahran. Very rarely now do you go to brawls where they're still going for it. It's usually finished or someone's lying on the concrete bleeding. The arrival of the coppers years ago didn't mean a lot.

ii) Domestic situations.

In some situations involving domestic violence, because the police officer is often entering a heated situation, the potential for violence to be directed at police is heightened. Once again, the problem is trying to predict when police officers will be targets of the violence of members of the public.

In some cases, even though police officers are trained and have special skills to deal with inflamed situations, the nature of the situation means that you ultimately have to use instinct to quell violence. This was pointed out by the following comments of a female

police officer with 5 years experience in the Victoria Police:

> CPS skills did not matter a damn. It was how big you were and how quick you were on your feet and whether you would have to pull your firearm. So in the violent domestic situation once it has got to that act taking place it's just .... but if it's a matter of preventing a situation from becoming more inflamed and for him to make the decision to go. You rely on your communication skills and your maturity.

Therefore in some situations it is impossible to plan for the way in which domestic situations will turn out. The result is that police officers in this environment must, by necessity, use a certain degree of instinct to prevent a violent situation and to preserve their own safety. This issue is illustrated by the following comments of two female police officers with between 5 and 10 years experience:

> A: Your instincts are there to prevent harm to yourself. The bottom line is safety.
>
> B: Domestics are the most inherently dangerous jobs a police officer can get called to because it is a tinder box where you just don't know what is going to happen.
>
> A: One word can either calm the situation down or spark it off.
>
> B: The reaction you get at the door is a matter of luck. The violence a crook uses is designed for escape. You can never be certain what will happen in a domestic situation. A lot of police don't mind a scuffle with a crook from time to time. They actually enjoy it. A bit of a show of physical force. A bit of adrenalin rush. However those police would loathe being pushed around and spat at at a domestic. There you are told that you have to play it cool and you can't fight back.

Ultimately, police have the power of the law behind them to deter people from acting violently. However, the fear of retribution from the offender can often haunt police officers who have enforced the law in these situations. This was illustrated by the following comments of a female police officer with 5 years experience in the Victoria Police:

> We were once in the front line and one of our members was clobbered. A female member. And she charged that fellow with threat to kill and he's been convicted for that. She's still very fearful of him. He's out at the moment. (This event has made her) much more wary and much more suspicious of any job like that. It was an unusual thing they did not expect it. From the moment they knocked on the door it was on and extremely violent.

One issue of interest was whether female officers treated domestic situations differently to male officers. It was hypothesised that this would be the case given the different ways of perceiving domestic issues, and the fact that females are more commonly victims of domestic disputes. However the results indicated few differences between domestic disputes and other forms of interpersonal violence which police are forced to deal with. As one female officer with five years experience indicated in relation to domestic disputes:

> The only reason it gets treated a little bit different is because, usually if it is an assault in a pub it was someone who didn't know someone or they were going to go ahead with it anyway whereas with domestics they make up the next day.

Some female police officers suggested that part of the difference in dealing with domestic disputes is a legacy of the fact that women tend to specialise in this form of policing to a greater extent than men. As such, female officers are more accustomed to the specific tools of dealing with domestic situations. Males either tend to be more involved in confrontational forms of policing, or take a peripheral role in the domestic situations, which means that female officers are more likely to have the necessarily expertise to deal with domestic situations in an appropriate way. This issue was raised in the following comments of a female police officer with 5 years experience in the Victoria Police:

> The girls are having the problems and are carrying the majority of the workload because most of the victims do not want to talk to males. Males tend to do more of the peripheral stuff rather than sit one on one with the victim. It's not the fault of the guys but the girls are getting overworked anyway.

The reason for this is seen to extend beyond a general reluctance for men to become involved in domestic related policing. In some situations, the victims of domestic violence are more prepared to consult with female police officers than their male counterparts. This point was indicated by the following comments of a female community policing officer with 11 years experience in the Victoria Police:

> It's not that men are not up to the work it's just that the victims don't want to talk to them.

Some female officers were critical of the way in which the public saw the police role in many domestic situations. In particular, the work that goes in to pursuing a prosecution is often ignored by the parties involved in a domestic dispute. The result is that the police are often caught out wasting their time when the partners make up. As one female officer with 3.5 years experience indicated:

> But no one ever says you've just called the police, you've done 80 hours paper work for that, and yet there is a domestic situation when they get back together. They don't worry about it and we're constantly doing the same work for the same people with the same results every time, for what? It's always different when a child is involved but that is not different where a guy is concerned.

Indeed, it was only where children were involved that police saw the need to intervene as being more critical.

Coping with danger.

One coping mechanism to danger was seen to be humour, even in the face of potentially grim or violent situations. As one female senior sergeant with 14 years experience in general duties indicated:

> I think a lot of it is related to humour. A lot of the things you hear people say, you ask them whether they have been to a dead body or a car accident or something like that they come out with some quite funny things...

This was reiterated by the comments of a male district inspector with 25 years experience in policing in Victoria, who lamented that one of the key precipitants of violence in general in society was the increased seriousness with which people dealt with social issues in contemporary society. However this has given way to a more scientific way of dealing with trauma for young police officers:

> I think like society, like in days gone by mum and dad would have domestics. They would try and work out their own domestics. I'm not saying it's the right way to do it but they would try and work them out. Nowadays people try to seek more counselling and assistance and I think that it's the same with the young people now. I find that young people hit these traumatic situations and they now call them critical incidents, and they're now seeking outside assistance whereas in our day we handled it by making it an in house joke. By making it with your peers. I can remember a murder scene. We were standing there and we had a dead body. A bloke had been killed. And he was lying there dead on the road and he had been shot and he happened to be Turkish. Now one of the blokes there, and it wasn't a real good scene and everyone was a bit down, and one of the blokes started singing "There's a dead Turk in the middle of the road...stinkin' to high heaven." And it just cracked everyone up. It took everyone's focus off for one second. Now that was enough to say well now lets get about our work. It was the crack of a joke. Something treating it as a light issue at a later time. Now I'm not sure that that was the right way to do it. That's how we dealt with it. But now you see the young people actively expecting and seeking outside assistance when they face these critical incidents. And that's good for them. It's a step in the right direction. Rather than bottling them up and not being able to tell your missus "Oh we had a body today it was a general body" when really that body was quite traumatic to you.

One of the features of police culture which emerged is that despite the very general level of recognition that society is becoming more dangerous, police seldom admit to their colleagues that they are more fearful of danger. Thus, the coping mechanism in contemporary policing is to try not to be reflective about dangers experienced in the day to day activity of the job. This was indicated by the following comments of a male IID inspector with 21 years experience in policing:

> These days people carry knives they carry bloody guns, they've got AIDS, they'll get you with needles. But very few people, you find that with police. Police don't like to openly discuss things. They won't say that I'm shit frightened because you don't want people to thing you're a woos or you're no bloody good. But it's still there. It doesn't finish. You ask a policeman, on the selection panel, whatever you ask a policeman... Like I'll give you an example of something that wasn't up to standard. You'll never find one that'll give an example straight away. You're on the defensive. "No, I've never done anything that's below standard. I'm always above standard."

However the effects of exposure to unpredictable dangers, particularly over time, can have considerable effects on individual police officers. As the following comments of two male IID officers with between 15 and 21 years experience in policing indicate, over time, the exposure to danger can have certain psychological and emotional effects on individual officers which some people never resolve:

> E: It has a severe psychological effect on the people involved in it. You have people that are shot at. You know, we never had the force psychologist once. Now we've got...(them) and their flat out all the time. You've got members that are shot at. Some members lose their nerve. They just go to pieces. And we always cover it up and hide it but it does exist. And there are problems. Like when you're dealing with things like a...fatal car accident. They're things that happen every day. Some people just don't get over those things.
>
> C: We're not normally talking about one incident, being de-briefed and you'll never come across it again. There will be very many things over a lone period of time. Murderers, suicides, fatalities. So there could be a combination of the effects of each incident that aren't realised until 10 or 15 years down the track.

Danger and Police Administration.

It was felt that in some ways, the way in which the police hierarchy was changing policing was counterproductive to dealing with danger in an efficient manner which deals adequately with community concerns. Part of the problem is the fact that bureaucratic rationalisation is changing the nature of police-community interaction. This point was made by two male inspectors with 25 to 30 years experience of policing in Victoria:

> D: There's a big problem with big stations. Withdrawing our little local police stations. You're going to have a siege mentality. It's no longer going to be the North Melbourne police. It's going to be the occupying police from Melbourne police station that come in on an eight hour basis three times a day and then go out. They'll have no empathy with the local people. It doesn't matter how many times they get out and have photographs with the kids shooting basketballs etc. That won't happen...and it's very hard to be at odds with someone that you know and you're familiar with. You don't make complaints about your local copper. It's only the bloke that comes in every now and again and kicks you up the arse from Melbourne or down there somewhere. Away from where we live on the high rise.
>
> A: See we can't afford nowadays, which we've got here, to have within say two miles four police complexes. That each has got to have a fax, a photostat machine. Logistically it is better to have one complex with two faxs and photostat machines. You cut out two. But see the big problem is we've got to go into this regionalisation and logistically it's the way to go with budgets and whatever but all our proactive measures are being more local which you can't do. It's going to be a big problem. You get back down to that street level. I used to work at Fawkner and we used to have so many regulars. We were a 16 hour station we had eight people. The regulars knew every policeman there. And we'd have to walk in and you walked in to a big complex like Broadmeadows. You got some 70 or 80

> different people there. Even your day man who'd come in and deliver the lollies and say "hows me policemen going" or whatever. He doesn't get to know all those people there are so many different faces. They can't feel the same closeness.

Summary

In conclusion, there were a number of perceptions of the phenomenon of danger and the way in which it applies to contemporary police work. While it is generally considered that the world is becoming a more dangerous place, there is also a sense that the social and cultural features of contemporary society are giving rise to a new set of dangers which individual police officers and police organisations must deal with collectively. The preparedness of members of the community to engage in acts of interpersonal violence against the police, and the existence of new threats of danger to police officers from lethal transmissible diseases, means that the conception of danger is changing in contemporary society. However, there are questions raised in the data about whether the actual incidence of danger directed specifically at the police is increasing in contemporary society. Generally, it was felt that there are more dangers being directed specifically at police officers, primarily due to economic factors and a general perception that police have less respect amongst the community than was the case in the past. However, there was a sufficient degree of support for the proposition that there are only qualitative changes in the nature of dangers facing police officers in contemporary society. In quantitative terms, it may be that police officers are subject to no more danger than they were in the past.

The issue of danger is however relative to the degree of exposure to threats which apply to individual officers. The following lengthy quote from a senior IID investigator suggests, there are a wide range of characteristics which lead to varied perceptions of and responses to dangerous situations. In addition, it is important to note that the perception of danger often influences the response to danger. In this respect, suspiciousness and in particular the unpredictability of danger are often linked in the mind of the individual police officer:

> I think there's a particular nature of the danger which you are exposed to is very different. Probably the danger that's exposed to any other group by reason of occupational hazard that they have to confront...I think it's the unpredictability of the danger and the constant awareness of police that they have to treat almost every situation that they're confronted with and that's where it plays...on the suspiciousness. It's not only in relation to detection of crime. You have to be suspicious about a lot of things by reason of self preservation and the unpredictability of that danger is really the element that sets it aside. You can talk to someone who is involved in the search and rescue squad...the danger of someone who worked at the national safety council...and the sort of danger that they were confronting was very predictable. And you can take specific precautions to defend yourself, whereas police in a lot of ways, although you can take specific precautions to defend yourself, calling for backup and that sort of thing, there's still that element of danger in many cases which is unpredictable. And I think that was carried home by things like Walsh St where you had to check a suspect vehicle and find yourself gunned down without any real opportunity to defend yourself. If you look back over probably 90% of the cases where police have been killed in the line of duty, it's been in the majority of cases, or even where they

have been seriously hurt, the unpredictability of that danger. And it goes back to ... who had his throat cut on the steps of Flinders St railway station to Walsh St where members are gunned down in what would otherwise be a fairly innocent call. It was such a routine nature that a hundred of these would be attended each night in the Metropolitan area. To Rocky Lane up at Swan Hill when the CI dealing with an offender one up searching his caravan over a very minor theft and finds himself shot. Invariably almost every situation you look at it's the routine matters that the policeman that's walked up to the door to give the message that's got shot. Straight through the fly wire door before he's had a chance to draw breath and talk to anyone. Negotiation skills would play very little part in preserving police and I think that...when you talk about the element of danger and you talk about other people being exposed to danger I don't think that the danger that they're being exposed to is even equitable on the same scale.

The various reasons for the contemporary dangers facing police officers, and their causes, is best summed up by the following dialogue between two female and five male junior officers with two weeks operational experience. Here we see a combination of lack of respect for the legal system, broader questions of economics, increased immigration and unemployment, the new risks of modern society such as HIV, greater use of weapons by members of the community, and just general changes in social attitudes are all seen to contribute to a more dangerous society in terms of policing.

C(F): It's just the way society goes. People are getting away with lesser crimes.

A(M): Economics has changed in society. 10 or 15 years ago there wasn't a lot of unemployment. But now we've got near 10% unemployment. There are a lot of people around not doing a lot. A lot of kids feeling sorry for themselves. They are in a bad situation. No job, nowhere to live.

H(M): I think it's also some feeling sorry for themselves. A lot of them. Just the way the standard of living causes population increase. Obviously there is not going to be jobs for everyone. Obviously there is going to be people living worse off than others. Therefore they are going to have to try and survive as best they can. And you only have to look at America to see how that is and that's where you come into it all the murders and all the crimes. I can only see it getting worse.

D(M): I think years ago there was still a lot of people and not many jobs.

H(M): It's not as bad as today. With things like immigration continually coming in at a greater rate, the population's just going to keep growing and growing. Jobs may increase but not to the degree of the population.

B(M): AIDS and Hep B make it a lot more dangerous. So much of the people we deal with, the criminals we deal with, are drug related. And just conducting a casual search of someone and members get a needle stuck in their hand. And just the dangers of those diseases...

G(M): The amount of people who carry weapons. 15 or 20 years ago you catch a

bloke carrying a knife, it was not really heard of that much. But now.

E(F): Society's values have changed too which influences the crime. What is accepted now wasn't accepted 20 years ago.

RESPONSES TO DANGER: THE USE OF FORCE.

To date we have seen that the issue of danger is a prominent matter for individual police officers and modern police organisations to deal with. In this section, we will examine one of the responses to danger which are available to police officers: the use of force.

Ultimately the use of force is sanctioned by the law in the case of police officers. Police are one of the few peace time organisations authorised to use reasonable force to carry out their occupational role. As such, the demands for police to use force are directly related to the occupational reality of the police role.

There are no available statistics on the extent of the use of force by the police. Complaints filed against police could be one way of exploring the extent of force used, but often complaints will reveal only part of the story. Incidents of official action taken against police can also provide some guide as to the use of force, but ultimately, the internal nature of many complaints mechanisms may mean that there is a large dark figure of incidents of force which remain undocumented. Part of the difficulty in recording these matters therefore is that very often, the use of force, whether it is within or beyond the mandate of the law, occurs and is formally dealt with as a matter of internal rather than external discipline. As such, it is doubtful that official records contain a true representation of the extent to which force is used by the police.

This study documents the use of force by police from a police perspective. The data raise some important questions about the rationales and justifications for the use of force from a police perspective.

Traditional versus contemporary perspectives.

It was generally felt that the incidence of the use of force by police had declined in recent years. Unlike the "good old days" where police officers could be justified in handing out some minor summary justice to an individual, it was felt that a combination of higher levels of community disapproval for the use of violence, and the greater range of accountability mechanisms available to the public which are designed to keep the police in check.

Indeed, the use of force was traditionally seen to be one of the key tools available to police to deal with dangerous situations. However, as the following interchange between three district inspectors with 25 years experience indicates, changes in social tolerance to the use of force, and the improved training measures adopted by police departments to combat the use of force, had led to an erosion of these old methods of dealing with conflict:

A: I'd say it's one of the areas in which we are just learning to deal with. Traditionally we just reacted to dangerous situations with force. It was the way in which you had to get on top of a situation. I know the teachings of the academy and that sort of thing are steering towards the American approach of the body contact and the hands, "come on, we just want to talk". But that gets difficult when the kids are getting on the street. And this is one of those transition periods where their supervisors are still seeming(ly) ingrained with the force issue. You know I'd say hopefully it's getting less but I wouldn't guarantee it.

B: We've got to go back to when we were a 4000 man organisation to a 12000 man. So obviously the statistics may be higher. But when I did training at the depot it was to teach you to box and wrestle and to use the baton to break their collarbone. They're taught now to use the baton as a defensive weapon. I'd say it's a lot less. There may be a perception of fear of force the fact that members of the public are going to see that one other member may have the long baton in his hand which is more aggressive. So there may be more of a perception of it.

C: Far less force these days. Possibly a function of academy training but I think you've got to accept policemen generally are a lot smaller these days so perhaps they've got to talk their way in and out of things. Use force in a timid sort of manner. Also these days if force is used and there's some sort of injury, be it a blood nose or a black eye, not particularly serious but a physical injury that is obvious, it usually ends up in a complaint file. People try and avoid that. Whereas in the old days I suppose that if someone resisted you used force on them. They may have received a slight injury. They may have been locked up and go to court and that would have been the end of it.

A: I was using a lot wider definition of force than physical force. To me force is police taking charge of a situation whether the people there want it or not and that could easily be through intimation of voice. And actual bodily...you're a policeman and you step in and say "hey, listen mister, you sit over in that corner and listen to me. And you sit over there". That's force. When you stand before to the Supreme Court and you have to say in your mind did that person think they had to come with you and even though you didn't physically touch him, you're the one who arrested him because he had in his mind that he had to come with you. That's an arrest. When you start using words such as force it's "you get in that corner son and sit down".

C: You're better trained, you're better prepared and you have all these better back up facilities. You don't have one unit attending a potentially dangerous situation, you have the backup of a second or a third unit and quite often you have a sergeant responding.

Therefore, not only is there a general reluctance by police officers to use less force, which is reflected in better conflict resolution techniques, but there are better facilities available which means that there is not as much of a need for police officers to resort to force. The rationale is that not only will police officers be in a safer position, but increased measures relating to the use of force may act as a deterrent to potential offenders.

The use of force was not seen to be as problematic for some police officers as the exposure to force which police officers face. In this respect, the following comments of a male CIB officer with 7 years experience were seen to be indicative of the need for police officers to be able to employ force in response to some of the threats of violence they are exposed to in day to day policing:

> I don't know whether it's the use of force. I think it's the fact of being exposed to force. Everyone's entitled to use force.

Indeed, some respondents indicated that the use of force is not confined to members of the police force. As the following comments by a CIB officer with 11 years experience indicate, the use of force can be justified by any member of the public:

> What if everyone's allowed to use force? That's the bottom line. It's not only policemen. It's not illegal. As long as it's not out of proportion everybody can.

Some respondents indicated that the use of gratuitous force did exist within the police force. The only difference is that now, you tend to be more selective in who you choose to use such force against. Take for example the lengthy comments by a male senior sergeant with 15 years experience, on the perceptions of policing aboriginal communities in today's social climate:

> Without wishing to be pedantic...Aboriginals...they in reality. Purely for socio economic reasons they're in the second box of criminals. There are very few part Aboriginals that the police come into contact with that aren't straight out crooks. It's not purely because of their race or their background. But certainly the Aboriginals and part Aboriginals are treated with kid gloves now a days. Not because they are more likely to complain as such but their lawyers are. And if a part Aboriginal is taken into custody the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service must be notified at the time. And they always go to the legal service. Now if there's any suggestion of excessive force, they'll pursue it vigorously. So you do treat Aboriginals or part Aboriginals just that more gentle because it's not worth the bloody rooting around. There are a lot of accusations that police are racist...but people are not treated differently just because of their race. In my recent experience over the last 5 or 6 years is that it does not occur. And unless there's been an offence or they're acting suspiciously or doing something else that comes to police notice they won't be spoken to.

The recognition of this tactic of policing certain groups who are likely to complain was more likely to take place in the case of senior, rather than junior officers: "once again because of our experience in the force. It's not worth stuffing around."

For others, the use of force against members of the public who appear to "deserve it" is essentially a waste of time and sits in contradiction with the police role which is to process offenders. As such, the use of force cannot lead to the alteration of the behaviour of some individuals. This was illustrated by the following comments of a male police academy instructor with 10 years experience in policing:

> The sorts of people we deal with, I've always held the opinion that you can't modify their behaviour. You're not there to modify their behaviour really. And they'll modify their behaviour when they're good and ready. And you're just there to sort of process them when you catch them...It's pretty hopeless. You sort of get these guys and you can tell straight away, especially if you see them growing up in the area or have been long enough at a station. You get someone on the books who is really going berserk and he's stealing cars, doing drugs, in fights getting locked up, doing burgs, and he just goes berserk for a couple of years. Now processing them is going to have the same impact as processing them and giving them a bit of a swish. You're wasting your time giving them a bit of a swish because essentially you're not going to change their behaviour.

Some felt that police under-react to dangers presented by members of the public, particularly in demonstrations. In this respect, public scrutiny of the actions of police will not be a problem. However, when police are seen to over-react to a particular situation, a greater deal of scrutiny of the officers' actions emerges from the public response. These issues were raised in the following comments of two male IID investigators with 22 and 21 years experience respectively in policing:

> B: It probably doesn't come under attention if they do under-react. People are more ready to criticise if they over-react.

> E: If you look at demonstrations they always under-react there because they're more violent and they'll have minimum force present at the scene. But there's three or four hundred in busses around the corner and they'll go in too strong. They'll always like to under react than over-react. They're controlling it by under reacting. If you think they'll never have a show of strength, they usually walk around town, and have a set number out there and there's always plenty of reserves around the corner.

In some respects complaints made by members of the public were seen to inhibit the use of force by police. As one male senior sergeant with 15 years experience indicated, a better educated community, and an awareness of the rights of individuals vis a vis the police were considered crucial to the rising number of complaints by members of the community against police, and the consequent reduction of the use of force by police:

> They're (the public) aware of their rights and they're aware of the fact that they can make complaints whether they are founded or unfounded and in fact they're encouraged which ...where they set up a desk at the pub and they had a notebook out and noted everything. They're encouraged to make complaints against the police.

The media was often seen to be important in raising public awareness of police deviance, which impacts on the police operational role. As one male senior sergeant with 15 years experience indicated:

> I think that perhaps from the community at large that, as crime increases more members of the community are thinking that if a copper gets a smack in the mouth

> good because they deserve it.

Yet the same officer indicated that many members of the public tolerate some levels of police violence and are cynical of many complaints against police:

> I think that's (a result) of the Rodney King beating where a lot of the people in L.A. support the police because they are just sick and tired of these crooks getting away with it.

This point was reiterated by some other respondents. Despite the fact that general levels of education indicate that members of the public are more critical of the criminal justice system there is in some cases a general perception of tolerance about the violent activities of police in some situations. This was seen to be a particular legacy of the law and order climate which sympathises with police as law enforcers. This was illustrated by the comments of one male senior sergeant with 15 years experience in the force:

> We went through the Labor government where people were encouraged to question things. They brought that into the education system; "Don't just take blindly what the teacher tells you". They encourage the students to question; why researching whatever subject you had. It wasn't a matter of the teacher standing in front of the blackboard saying this is black this is white. What they're saying now is "Here's a piece of paper, there's the library go and research it". So while they are researching they are starting to question things with the whole set up. And now we're going back with a change of government where they're talking about bringing back the death penalty and giving the police the power to finger print people and all that and people are starting to realise as C said eventually if we were going to keep going on the track that we were on who was going to separate the good ones from the bad ones so to speak. If you had the police in the centre as in years gone by as (previously) said relying purely on luck because the others weren't there and you've got the criminal element which know the powers aren't there so they are ready to exploit it and they know that they can make accusations against you if you try something. And now we've got the community waking up to all of this so now with the help of the legislators starting to say "Well we've had enough of it! We're sick and tired of our elderly being victims, we're tired of our rights being infringed, we're tired of not being able to walk down the street", we realise we have to have somebody there with sufficient power to deal with these things. And I think we are starting see the real effects of this.

There was a high degree of criticism in the way in which members of the public, and the media in particular, are critical of the way in which the police use force. In this respect, much has been said about the way in which police officers are critical of the media's portrayals of various aspects of policing. When it comes to the portrayal of the use of force of police, there appears to be a high degree of bias against the police, which makes police highly critical of the media's role in the criminal justice process.

The general conception of the media in portraying incidents of the police use of force, is that they present a biased and very one sided view of the facts. The following comments of two CIB officers with between 5 and 10 years experience in policing, indicate the level

of criticism in this way of conceptualising the police use of force:

> E: This use of force use of force all the time. The minute the police use force it's headlines. The people they're subjected to, that's the headline and that's the copper. His whole life. The headline. Nothin' happened before that. Nothing happened after that.
>
> C: He was scared for his life at the time of the assault.
>
> E: He didn't get the shit kicked out of him at the pub the night before by 6 blokes because he was there tryin' to help somebody else. He didn't get shot at the day before that. He didn't get into a car chase and have a crash. He didn't go to a fatal accident or he didn't bloody go to a sudden infant death in a cot the day before that. No. "Oh jesus, the cop used force today. Oh, he's a bad boy. Look at that." Headlines. And once again you're dehumanised. You're a copper. You're a machine and you've done the wrong thing.

This level of criticism about the perceptions of the public in relation to the police use of force was seen to lead to a high level of misunderstanding of the nature of the police role. This was illustrated by the following comments of a male CIB officer with 9 years experience in policing, who indicates that the public are often prepared to criticise the police without an adequate understanding of the reasons for using force:

> People who have never had a slap in the face in anger are able to say with all this certainty, "surely that copper could have done something else". And they say it all the time. And they're the people who scream the loudest when they become the victim of a serious violent crime and want to know why the coppers haven't caught him. And this that and the other. "Why was he on the street? Why did he get away? Why did the judge not sentence him? Why was he on early release?" And the same people say the policeman, he didn't have to shoot him or he didn't have to hit him. Why have they got the handcuffs on that man? For christ sake.

However, on the whole levels of violence or excessive force being used by police are generally reducing in the eyes of many police officers. As one male senior sergeant with 17 years experience in the force indicated:

> The world's turning in the other way too because before we emphasised our use of force probably outside the bounds of what legislation provided for us to get the job done. Now there will be a reluctance to. We haven't got the written legislation to back us up now. I don't think police will ever operate as they did 20 years ago. We're more guarded about our careers and what we're obliged to do because of the complaint situation. If the wheel is turning and I believe it is we've got to get legislative back up rather than just taking it upon ourselves to do the job.

Self Defence and the situational characteristics of the use of force.

The self defence reason for the use of force is a central part of the police role. In this respect, although the fact that police are armed can amount to an additional and at times

awkward responsibility for individual police officers, it is necessary to use force for self preservation, and to support partners in times of conflict. This point was illustrated by the following comments of a female police officer with 5 years experience:

> I don't like violence. I loathe it. (Carrying the firearm) means a sense of responsibility. I carry the firearm when I'm operational. I would always want to be able to protect my partner if we got into difficulties. I'd lay down my life for whoever I was working with. Also for members of the public. But I wouldn't put myself at risk for an offender. So if I get criticised in the courts for making a judgement that later is in hindsight turns out to be premature or what so be it. But I'm still going to be alive to hear in the court what I should or shouldn't have done.

For some police officers, the use of force in operational policing is minimal. In many situations, the use of force is more of a self preservation issue, rather than one designed to suppress broader dangers in the community. This was mentioned in the following comments by a male CIB officer with 9 years experience in policing:

> I don't even think about it except to save my arse. The use of force comes in to savin' my arse.

The need to use force could emerge in a number of ways. In many cases it was utilised as a way of avoiding the threat of personal injury, and to quell the fears associated with violent members of the public. This point was noted in the following comments by a male police academy instructor with 10 years experience:

> When we couldn't lock them up we used to have them cuffed to the heaters because what was the point? You knew that if they come near you they would go berserk. And that was the precaution you took because I don't think any members enjoy...the fear of being assaulted when you're in an interview is very off putting. So you're better off having the person cuffed essentially.

However the increased dangers faced by police in some cases lead to the excessive and unnecessary use of force. However in some cases, this can be legitimised in the circumstances, particularly where a member of the public has threatened the safety of a police officer:

> I wouldn't say that members are behaving badly. But you get an SOG fella that goes out to a uniformed station, and someone has a go at him and assaults him, and he goes whack and hits him twice as hard as anyone else does. And if he's still doing his duty properly he's entitled to what he did.

Indeed, this use of force was at times seen as necessary to "put them back in line" in the station environment due to the often heated nature of police/citizen contacts. This issue was illustrated by the following comments of a male police academy instructor with 11.5 years experience in policing:

> I don't think you will change their long term behaviour. I think you will change

> their behaviour in the short time in the police station. It's like they may come into your work environment up in the police station. If they're not conforming to the standards expected of them you've got to impose those standards on them to a certain extent...When I was at St Kilda, if they played up at the police station they had to be put back into line.

Often, the use of force was necessitated in police practice by the need for the police officer to act in self defence. As the following comments from a male police academy instructor with 15 years experience indicate, it is simply not worth while to sacrifice your own safety in order to avoid the possibility of a complaint through the excessive use of force. As such, self preservation can become a key motivation for police to use force while on duty:

> You've got to look after your own. I've got the notion and I still believe this, if they want to tackle me and threaten my physical self or my subordinates well they're going to cop it. What I'm saying is if he wants to get up and punch someone he can break your nose, break your ribs, do a lot of damage. And if they get the first one in well they get subdued and they get cuffed and they don't move. If I've got to jump on them hard enough and I break their rib. So what. But if they're prepared to do that. I look at it the other way. I'm not concerned about their welfare. I'm looking at my welfare. I'm not saying it happens all the time. If you do get people in there and you are dealing with some pretty nasty people, where talking to them just won't do any good, and they throw the first punch, I'm not going to get a broken nose for anybody.

Thus the use of force in police terms can have substantial preventative implications from a work safety perspective. The rationale is that it is often necessary to use force in order to avoid becoming the victim of another's force.

Often however, the resolution of the dilemma between the use of force and the greater community demands for police accountability depends on the decisiveness of the particular officers involved. The key here is for officers to stand by their decision and fight it if they are brought to account later on. Lack of decisiveness means that it will be harder to defend a complaint if it arises in the circumstances. This was illustrated by the following comments of a male instructor at the police academy with 15 years experience, responding to the question about how the dilemma between accountability and the need to use force becomes resolved:

> It doesn't. The decisiveness is the problem. If you're in a situation, you have to go in and make a decision, and there is violence, it's untidy, it makes the local news, whatever, and someone gets a broken nose. And there might be a 16 year old kid handing in a complaints. His mother goes to IID. The next minute you're being investigated for that incident. Now what's happened? In the initial stages it was o.k. We'd write them off. We'd think another complaint, another complaint, we're o.k., we're only doing our job. Now members are being suspended for those things. They're being charged, etcetera, etcetera. Now I'm personally starting to realise well why is it all worth it? Similarly, if an offender is going to punch me I'm going to punch him back because I want to go home at the end of the day.

> Similarly, I don't want to be charged and suspended at the end of the day. Why should I stick my neck out only for the department to come out and charge me?

One of the key issues is how police rationalise this tension. There are several possibilities available to the police officer other than to calculate that a jury verdict is likely to be more beneficial than protection from fellow police officers. On the one hand, increased accountability may have the effect of making police officers more reluctant to use force. On the other hand, given the primacy placed on self preservation, it may be that in the long run, increased accountability may be having little effect in relation to the use of force. As the following comments by a male police academy instructor with 15 years experience in policing indicate, the response now is to modify the use of force, so that police are now put in the position where they have to retaliate to the obvious threat posed by a member of the public:

> 10 to 14 years ago when I was talking about this negative part of the culture, although I accept that there was a positive part because it was a generally accepted thing, I've since come across the indication through the job, since the introduction of this accountability, I've realised now it's not as free and I don't want to do it any more. It's a case of you don't want to be stupid and you don't want to be near it and you don't want to bash their head against the wall then let them go. But as soon as they attack my personal safety... However with this accountability comes that dilemma. For example, I went to a job. My partner was stabbed. He tried to stab me. He stabbed a woman while he was there. I shot him a couple of times. He was charged with three counts of attempted murder. He got a 3 year good behaviour bond, and one of the jurors got fined $250 for being late to court. How do you justify that? And we could all quote hundreds of examples like that where your personal safety has been threatened. I've just had 2 of my members of the major crime squad suspended for 10 months because they went into a hotel to arrest somebody they punched first because their life was threatened. They broke the bloke's nose and they were charged with assault and suspended for 10 months. They were exonerated however. That's what you're up against. This accountability for personal safety? Seeing people dropping their guard. I personally believe letting it go until they get hit first, which in major cases you have to do because as soon as you punch someone first you're gone. If they show an indication of violence and you go first you're gone.

One feature which was seen to be conducive to the use of excessive force by police officers in certain situations was the level of adrenalin certain situations cause for police officers. In the heat of the moment it is often difficult for officers to realise precisely what they are doing. As such, the retrospective accountability mechanisms often come as a shock to police officers who do not set out to intend to cause members of the public harm.

This issue is illustrated by the following comments of 2 male inspectors ranging from 25 to 30 years experience each. In this respect, the comments indicate that in the case of police shootings of members of the public, and the excessive use of force in Rodney King style beatings, police officers seldom realise what they are doing until the retrospective action has brought to light the excessive nature of the force used. As a result, it is difficult to devise accountability mechanisms which adequately cater for this feature of shock and

instinctive reaction in the police operational role. However the discipline of the internal hierarchy can operate in certain circumstances to quell the over exuberance of junior officers:

> A: It's adrenalin and I can tell you now having been involved in a number of shooting inquiries that it's amazing that if one person lets a gun off everyone will let a gun off. And if you ask them later about how many shots they've fired and they'll say two. And the gun will be empty and they just have no idea in that adrenalin situation. And unless you've been in that situation, if this bloke is perceived to be a threat to them and one starts hitting the other officers without consciously formulating, but they perceive that threat also and enter into the battle. And that is an incredible situation to be in. When you experience that situation it is very easy to clinically say that they must have consciously thought about it and hit...
>
> B: In that case (Rodney King) the judge said that it was only the last 10 or 15 seconds that were illegal. If the sergeant, and he's copped more shit than the other blokes, he had a responsibility to step in and say stop. Now I think if a sergeant here had said stop the majority would have stopped. If he put himself physically there they would have stopped.
>
> A: I was involved in the Russel St bombing and I can truthfully now sit here and try and explain what I did on that day. I can tell you what I did but try and explain my logic and reasoning for doing it and I couldn't tell you one iota about why I did things. Why I rushed into an area which I shouldn't have rushed into just to grab people and try and make sure they were shovelled out. You just can't explain it. It's instinctive and you do it as you're going alone and it's very easy later when people sit down and try and analyse it and work out what your thoughts were on the occasion. But with that adrenalin going it becomes instinctive.

As such, the need for proper training to handle these instinctive matters in an appropriate way is all the more important.

The legal right to use force.

There are various reasons for justifying the use of force for police work. However the ultimate justification is the use of the legal sanction. In this respect, police members must be aware that ultimately they have the legal backing to use force in an authorised manner. This will be the key feature for a police officer to remember if their use of force is being questioned by members of the public. This point was expressed by two district inspectors with experience ranging from 25 to 30 years in the Victoria Police:

> B: In all of these things you have a legal right to do it and that's where the confrontation comes in. In the past we used our native cunning, finesse and our knowledge of crooks...and luck...
>
> A: People you would knock on their door and you would say "Hello, how are you? We're coming in." Now they wouldn't think that you could say where's your

> warrant. 99% wouldn't even thing to complain about it but nowadays people are told that they, not only can they but they should (present a warrant).
>
> B: There is a (greater possibility of violence) but the members know that they have the right behind them. They approach people with actual legal documents. Our members still do a lot of negotiating. There's still a lot of what we would have done in the past.

Confidence.

Force is a necessary part of many police tasks. Yet the lines between the use of legitimate and illegitimate force are often very fine. In some cases, police officers are often at odds with each other on when it is legitimate to use force. And in some cases, power is a key motivation for the illegitimate use of force. Yet the power to use force is often a necessary part of the job, and ultimately experience plays a large part in developing the confidence to use it properly. Take for example the following comments by a female police officer with five years experience in general duties:

> There's only a few people that get the big power kick. But there is that view out there that gives us the bad name, whereas it's confidence. You know that you can use it if you have to. It's not something you want to use but you know you can if you have to. So you're sort of more in control of situations. I wouldn't say many people are into that power thing.

Force and the specialist divisions of policing.

The need for a specialist organisation to deal with highly dangerous or volatile situations was seen as a reflection of this increase in danger. In this respect, the following comments of a male senior sergeant with IID inspector with 17 years experience in policing indicate that the Special Operations Group (SOG) are used more frequently, particularly in raids, because of the increased perception of dangers which may be directed specifically at the police:

> I think that also reflects on CI doing a lot of their raids. They used to do them on their own. Whereas now... They get the SOG in, purely because of the fact that there is a chance that they'll get shot at if they go through the doors. I think (SOG) have been available for a long time they're just used more now. It's more of a feature of...(the perception of a violent society).

The following comments of two IID officers with between 17 and 22 years experience reiterate this point. In this respect, in the case of a raid, the specialist SOG are often used to avert or negotiate any possible risks which may be directed at the police. This is seen by the second officer to be a legacy of the broader changes in the nature of violence in society, which the police must always try to keep in mind when increasing their armoury:

> B: The response we make probably escalates what we give in return. When you were talking before about the SOG, in the past, if the detectives went to do a raid there were probably two detectives that would kick the door in at 6.30 in the

morning. But now after the response that they've received up to nowadays it's more likely that they'll get the SOG to go in...

D: That's in response to the constant change in the job. And I think that in our career path it's been an accelerated change that's been far greater than that that's taken place in the general community. I think the changes in the general community have been incredible in the last few years. You've only got to open up on the back page of the Sun now and people who are advertising for resumes for people...years ago it was unheard of.

The purposes of a special organisation to handle potentially violent situations are numerous. As the following dialogue between three IID investigators with between 15 and 22 years experience in policing suggest, there is a combination of being "one up" against the public, and improving the level of specialist accountability for police in dangerous situations which justifies the existence of a specially trained division of policing which deals with violence:

E: You've got to maintain the ascendancy. You've still got to be holding the reins. If we let go and we didn't have an SOG ...groups of crims running riot that weren't afraid of the coppers... You've got to still be in control. The crooks have got to know that if they are going to have a go at the coppers (they're gonna get) people bursting through the door.

D: You've got to go one better. It would be great if you could have two detectives in with their size 10 shoes but you can't.

C: I think it's also accountability for the possible repercussions later on in court. (It's a) professional organisation to perform the raid.

Impediments to the use of force.

i) Lower community tolerance of violence.

One of the prominent reasons suggested was the general conception of a lower tolerance of violence as a way of dealing with problems in society. In many ways, the old days of giving young people a clip behind the ears were counter productive to more proactive community problem solving models and efficiency in police work. As one male senior officer with 17 years experience indicated:

When they say you give them a kick in the arse I think they're literally speaking. The thing is that if you can communicate with your local community and people get to know the local community and speak to them rather than sort of persecuting them that's the sort of changes we've seen. We've seen that the police force have actually encouraged their members or the police leaders have actually encouraged their members to become involved in the community and have had the community acknowledge that criminal behaviour and other aspects of law enforcement are not solely up to the police. And we've said to the community we're quite willing to help you if you're willing to help yourself and if by communicating in that way. If

> we can encourage enough people in the police force to think in that way, we come back to the old saying of "If you give young Johnny a clip behind the ears or whatever, a good talking to, the problem's solved", rather than sort of grabbing him take him back. You don't want to go to the children's court any way you're just making work for yourself. People have got to realise that when you communicate with them you've got to sort of turn a blind eye.

The impact of old forms of community policing were also seen to have eroded given the broader social changes. Thus, as one male senior sergeant with 15 years experience indicated, the community milieux in which the "clip over the ear" once worked in instilling community discipline among some young people were no longer present in society. In particular social transience has emerged to erode the sense of community which once existed. These changes therefore were beyond the control of the police:

> We can only take so much too. When I was a kid I grew up in Frankston and I knocked around in Frankston. I didn't travel very far at all. And now my nephew goes from Frankston to Clifton Hill to ride the skate board ramp. I find that frightening. The thought of going all the way up there just to ride the skate board ramp. And everybody is just so transient now. You don't have that close community. You really have to go up to the country and go into the smaller areas to get that community back where giving local Johnny that kick up the arse would probably work.

ii) Supervision and complaints mechanisms.

There were several reasons posited for this change in the overall acceptability of the use of force by police. As one male senior sergeant with 15 years experience indicated:

> It's a combination of a lot of things really, accountability, greater community awareness of complaints.

Senior officers were more conscious of helping to educate junior officers not to use force as readily today as it may have been used in the past. This was indicated by one male senior sergeant with 12 years experience in the police force: -

> You possibly try to stop them (younger officers) making the same mistakes that you did. But then you are at a different level. And things have changed. I tell a story of when I was 8 or 9 and I got a foot up the arse for riding my bike on the footpath. You accept it, you go home, and tell mum and dad and...there is no way known that you'd do that now a days and there are a couple of connies that try to apply that and it just will not work.

The key issue here is that as social tolerance of physical violence for disciplinary reasons has lowered, the police are not as able to use force in the same way as they may have been able to in the past.

This creates a dilemma for the modern day police officer. On the one hand there is the necessity to use force to prevent injury to yourself and your colleagues in situations where

members of the public are violent. On the other hand, greater levels of accountability exist which may work to inhibit the use of force by police officers for fear of recrimination. The result, in the eyes of the following comments of a male police academy instructor, is to hedge your bets:

> I still think that my personal philosophy is, with my gun, I've had my gun out and I've tried to shoot people twice. My personal philosophy is I'd rather be judged by 12 than carried by 6. And I know it's a corny line but I'm not going to put my life on the line.

It was difficult to obtain consensus on these matters however. In some cases for instance, it was felt that the general public would generally accept some use of force where it was warranted. However, the existence of greater complaints mechanisms meant that many officers were more reluctant to engage in the excessive use of force. This was indicated by the following comments of three district inspectors with 25 to 30 years experience in the force:

> D: Straight out violence, I don't think would be treated differently. But where you say that this fellow was under threat and he has given him one to go on with, it's almost justifiable. You almost tend to accept it.
>
> B: There is often no need to get it into a self defence mode. I've got a complaint filed now where the complainant admits that as the policeman approached him he kicked him in the balls. And he's objecting to the fact that the policeman then hit him with a torch and gave him 4 stitches. Whereas when Henry Bolte was premier his statement was that complaints against police were to be dealt with by members of parliament and the courts. Now that should be dealt with in a court, and if the court says it is in self defence and someone kicked me in the balls he'd get a bloody hit in the head too. It shouldn't be a complaint but now it is a full complaint.
>
> A: We're also more accountable. You've always got to look at it from the point of view that years ago when I first joined the job, when I was a thirsty young detective, the clip behind the ear to the crook sitting in the interview room, it was standard procedure. The clip behind the ear. Not to punch the living hell out of him. It was a clip. "Hey son don't lie to me"...clip. And I'm standing there watching all these detectives you know and then things become more accountable and times have...in those days we didn't have the stringent attendance register, the signing by the sergeant, the putting them on the system. The time he comes in and the time he leaves. Nowadays they've got the audio tapes. The tapes are there to tape everything. So the days of these clips are gone and they grew out when I was a sergeant rank and that's got to be 10-12 years ago. And this is the big thing and I think that a lot of young blokes must get frustrated with is they go in they do the right thing. There's been a wrestle at the scene. They bring the person back. They interview him and the young people get very frustrated because blokes walk out of there and make a complaint against them.

The change in this respect was therefore seen to produce two results. On the one hand, the

use of force for proactive purposes was seen as counter productive. On the other hand, the level of accountability and increased demands by the community, the police and the media, meant that reactive methods of accountability were greater. This was summed up by the comments of one male district inspector with 25 years experience:

> Violence will go on happening but the constraints now and the accountability now is going to make it pretty hard.

There is also a general misunderstanding about the nature of accountability which affects police officers. While the public are often seen to be critical of the police when they use force, there is seldom any coverage of the difficulties associated with formal accountability mechanisms, such as the courts, on the individual police officer alleged to have abused their power. This issue, in respect of the pressures of court accountability, was raised in the following comments of two male CIB officers with between 5 and 10 years experience in policing:

> C: And then it's the policeman who gets up in court and has all the allegations thrown at him. And you've got to try and recreate what happened in the space of probably 2 minutes in a 4 or 5 day court hearing. And then there's the bloke that you had on the night with a belly full of beer with tattoos and scars all over him and he's sitting in the back of the court room in his Hugo Boss suit and he's just had his hair cut and he looks a million dollars. And he's got mum and dad and the family priest at the back. And they go, "That scumbag down there? No, it couldn't have been him. They got the wrong bloke." You're trying to relate a two minute incident that happened all at once.
>
> E: And you're on night shift and you're in court until four in tha afternoon with your eyes hanging out of your head. People just got no idea.

Reactive versus proactive responses and police training.

The legacy of this increased perception of danger in contemporary police work is a tendency for police to become reactive in particular situations where there is a risk of danger. As the following comments of a male IID investigator with 22 years experience in policing suggest, in some instances, such as the pub brawl, rather than risk being injured, police officers now tend to let the incident play itself out, and as a result, stand back and "pick up the pieces" afterwards:

> Like, if there is a divvy van that pulled up out the front of a hotel where there's a fairly sizeable brawl, in years gone by you'd pick up the radio and say "Were out at the Last and it's on. Get some back up" In you go. These days, sit there, sit on the other side of the street and watch them punch the living christ of one another and when the back up is in position I'd get out and saunter over and pick the pieces up. I don't know whether that's a change in attitude. That comes with age and cunning rather than youth and exuberance and probably having a couple of kids to go home to at night.

However, as this extract also suggests, part of this issue may be a legacy of the experience

of a police officer who knows how to handle the situation whilst avoiding any risks to themselves. Thus, the threat of imminent danger to the individual officer may tell only part of the story in this case.

One of the trends seen by some officers to stem from the increase in police accountability is that police are going in "soft" in certain violent situations. This point was illustrated in the following comments of a male police academy instructor with 15 years experience in policing:

> Members are standing off, particularly at sub-officer rank. They are not willing to make harder decisions. They're standing back. For example, you get a pub brawl where you've got an offender you have to arrest in a hotel. They just leave them be. It's happening a lot more. You get a violent situation where you have to go in and get someone, you let it go.

The effect of this was illustrated by the following example provided by a female police academy instructor with 11 years experience in policing:

> To give a good example I...did a raid one night in an address in Corio where there was 5 offenders. Four of them were male. And the sergeant instructor, there was 8 police and 6 offenders, 6 people in the house. (The sergeant) instructed us not to arrest anyone because we may be out numbered, or we may be over powered. And I finally convinced them to take one female who lives in Melbourne. And we did. And the others got off because we didn't take them then. The opportunity was lost and I couldn't believe it. But he (the sergeant) was concerned about us being in a position where the escalation of force might have resulted in, who knows what, because there was only 8 of us and 5 fairly strong blokes. How far do you go? I think he was worried that these people were renowned assailants and he was worried, scared, worried about our welfare and his own welfare. There were 3 sergeants among us and he was in charge.

However internal aspects of the police job help to facilitate accountability in more subtle ways. In this respect the issue of discretion in the policing task is central to not only effective, but efficient law enforcement. Depending on the definition of efficiency and effectiveness, the lawfulness of police actions could be considered a crucial aspect of maintaining accountability. The rationale for this is that the more lawful the activity, the less likely a charge will be thrown out of court. Yet one male senior officer with 17 years experience indicated that acting to the letter of the law will not always produce results. This is particularly relevant given the general public's desire to assess police effectiveness in terms of criminal convictions:

> Realistically if you work to the letter of the law as far as interviewing people, (and) apprehending people, you wouldn't get any body actually convicted because it's just too hard. You have a look at the things to prove. There are 7 things you have to prove beyond reasonable doubt. Now it's virtually impossible to do that. The public realise this so you get a lot more people now a days saying no comment and pleading not guilty when they are caught and...unfortunately we had to revert to these tactics of persons admitting their mistakes. And you say that they

> are more accountable now the crime figures are going to go through the roof. You're not really going to be effective. All you're doing is going through the motions, "did you kill the man? No! ..O.K, you put the brief together you won't get prosecuted". If you're not going to be apprehended or you're not going to be convicted or suffer any punishment for it and you're well aware of that I would say it would be a basic thing that you would go out and do it.

As such, crime rates had a possibility of rising because of the police inability to use force to exercise some force as part of their discretionary duties. However in general, the use of force to extract confessions was no longer as common a phenomenon as it was in the past. In today's climates, the main issue was that because of the greater knowledge of individual rights, persons apprehended by police were less likely to co-operate with police.

Training can in some ways alleviate these difficulties. As the following comments by a male instructor at the police academy with 12 years experience in policing indicate, the current regime in academy training is designed to help new recruits identify potentially hazardous situations more effectively than was the case in the past. This instruction is therefore aimed at the self preservation aspect, where police officers are to respond instantly to potential threats of violence against them:

> We certainly teach them here that if there is any indication, if there's any indication of violence coming towards you, you don't wait for the punch to come because you strike first, even though...you may end up in hospital with a broken nose or something like that. You still don't want to be the recipient of anything like that, rather than face the consequences of it later on and justify your actions .

Academy instructors indicated that it was important to teach new recruits how to deal with the use of force for preventative purposes. This was illustrated by the following comments of a female academy instructor with 11 years experience in policing:

> That's one of the major thrusts of training here. That you're not a punching bag. You don't have to put up with that. You're not being paid to do that. Your safety is paramount. So operational training is playing a large part of training than it has in the past (occupational safety issue).

This was seen to be a substantial improvement on academy training in the past. As the following comments from two male academy trainers with between 11.5 and 15 years experience indicate, the training of police officers in techniques designed to prevent the risk of injury was ineffectual in the past:

> A: I remember when I went through, we used to have this guy come in and give us three hours of boxing lessons. And you know if you're out in the street boxing is bloody useless you know. It's crazy when this guy is trying to hit you with a bottle or something like that. You just do whatever you have to do to subdue them. It doesn't matter. You can pick up anything and hit them with it.
>
> E: I was punched 3 times in the first three months of my career. I think the third time I'd just had enough of it. From that day on I just said no I'm not going to do

that again.

The Use of Force and Individual Traits of Police Officers.

The use of force has different impacts for female police officers. In many cases, the use of force is not an option due to the lack of physical strength and the possibility of being overpowered. Yet female officers cope with this by relying more heavily on negotiation skills to quell potentially violent situations. Yet each situation is variable and ultimately depends on the mood of the person being confronted by the police. This makes it difficult for police officers to predict the types of reactions to expect in different situations. For example as one female police officer with 3.5 years experience, and one with five years experience indicated:

> C: A lot of the time you can just use your voice without going into swearing or that because they know just how far they can go with you. It's funny...because some say "Oh she's a woman. It's all right. We can get out of this", and some of them think "Oh I can't give her a hard time" Different people think in different ways. It's strange. You might get a really big guy who's really giving a male person a really hard time.
>
> A: And then again there's those who don't want to be told what to do by a woman but as soon as the guy comes out they're fine.

This was however not seen to be unique to female officers. Several senior officers suggested that they were seldom exposed to violence or had to resort to the use of force, because experience indicated that this could exacerbate the potential for violence. As one male senior sergeant with 15 years experience indicated:

> ...the police had more experience on how to talk with people. That's why we may have been getting jacked up 15 years ago and today because we've had that experience and because we are older comparatively older than the people we are talking to they're a lot more likely to do as we want.

However it was generally felt that ultimately the power of negotiation is an important tool for a female police officer. As one with four and a half years general duties experience indicated:

> In a situation where it's strength type fighting, I think women maybe have the tendency to be able to talk their way out of things because we need to be able to be confident...because we're lacking in strength and in ability to overpower someone...

This was reiterated by the following comments of a female police officer with 5 years experience in community policing:

> So it is my mouth and my communication skills which have always got me out of a difficult situation rather than any supposed ability or power to use force. It's different with coppers of different sizes.

In some cases this can place women at an advantage over males who may be reluctant to use words rather than force as one female officer with three and a half years experience indicated:

> I've been in situations with some big blokes. They might not have the confidence to go in there and use it if they have to...some women are better than a bloke.

One female police officer with 5 years experience provided the following anecdote on how she dealt with an aggressive male who was substantially bigger than herself:

> So I knew that the most common sense thing was not to ask him to do anything he didn't want to do. Which was to keep him, stall him, make it clear he wasn't going anywhere but not lay a hand on him. As it turned out he was violent towards the male officers who showed up. It took 4 people to arrest him.

The result is that female officers, ultimately saw themselves as being less likely to use force than their male counterparts.

Some comments also revealed much about the differences between senior police officers and junior officers. While the junior officers were less likely to know how to negotiate violent situations, senior officers were seldom exposed to violence. Their experience enabled them to negotiate situations with a lower resort to violence. This was supported by another male senior sergeant with 17 years experience in the force:

> That's why they're constables. We projected that too when we were at that level. And now we go somewhere and a lot of the people still won't talk to anyone else; "I want a senior sergeant because he is the only one that I want to talk to."

Firearms and the use of force.

In relation to the use of force, there is the question of police shootings. In this respect, there was a general defence over current police tactics relating to firearms. In this respect, guns are a threat for both police and members of the public. While this does not necessarily excuse individual police officers for using lethal force, it certainly helps to contextualise why such force is used by police members.

This issue was illustrated by the following comments of two district inspectors, one with 25 years experience, and one with 30 years experience in policing:

> A: I think that went in a cycle. When was the date of our last police killing? They were all grouped together. It was a dramatic two year period where we had a core element of police. And I'm not saying there wasn't a war. We were chasing a core element of very heavy criminals and you had a very bad area that was related to a specific group. But how many police killings have there been since Walsh St? How many have we killed? None.
>
> D: There's a very heavy firearms training. We must now be qualified. I can't carry a firearm because I'm not currently qualified. You have to be qualified at least

every 6 months. The qualification now is much much more extensive than just go along and shoot a couple of shots. Now it takes a whole day.

B: I qualified with 6 shots at the back of the depot and I was qualified as a marksman.

A: You know, you turn round and then you start saying then this is the different degrees. All right there was a certain amount of shootings. Jensen, Abdulla etc, but if you look, if you did a study which I don't believe our force did, of potentially dangerous situations where guns are drawn by both parties, the number of times shots have been fired by police, you would say that we don't use that much force very often at all. The number of times the SOG had a siege situation, how many shots are fired in those? Truthfully. And this is the big perception the people get wrong is all right they see the SOG runnin up and down. The police are using force or whatever. We're not. We resolve most of those situations. The number of situations which occur on the street where it could easily be a stand off where he's got a knife and I've got a gun. But we resolve. Is that use of force? The next thing you'll get is seeing us graduating towards America. The American studies I think are wrong. You know when you are saying about Australia because the Americans are different. Our next move will be and there's no dramas that our mobile intercepts will do exactly as the American's do. I know that there will be a couple of problems. You'll have a cover man, "step from the vehicle please sir". But the reason it's not done now is that our public won't accept that. Our people would love to have those ... For 5 years. We would love to have been doing it like the Americans. But imagine the public outcry if we started pulling motorists over that way. The public won't accept it.

Thus the use of firearms is viewed in terms of the civil rights abuses that are seen to characterise the American experience. While in Australia, the use of firearms does present threats to police officers and members of the public, the controls adopted in Australia mean that the public and the police are generally more protected from the hazards of firearms. In addition, the use of firearms is not as great as is popularly portrayed by the media, because the majority of violent confrontations are resolved before firearms are drawn.

In general it was felt that weapons were a necessary way for police officers to deal with threats of violence which they are exposed to on the job. In this respect, CIB officers in particular, are seen to need guns to deal with the increased threats of violence they are exposed to on the job. The need for weapons was not only viewed to be specific to the CIB role, as all police officers will be exposed to dangers which must be quelled through the assistance of weapons. This issue was illustrated by the following comments by two male CIB officers with between 5 and 10 years experience in policing, who indicate that in their role, and in policing in general, it is necessary for police to be armed and have the ability to use force:

E: But that's because realistically you're (as a member of the public) not the one that's got to patch up the mess. If you had to go and patch up the mess you'd be wanting to carry a .38 too. The fact is that we're the ones sent out. But that's a

> very very small percentage of the violence that we face. We were saying before about the uniformed vans. They'll go to two or three domestics a night where you've got the husband in one corner wanting to kill his wife in the other corner, and you've got to stand between them and try and sort it out.
>
> C: And then they'll both turn on you.
>
> E: Don't they? Can you imagine being an 18 year old, 18.5 year old constable who has no life experience who has to go to a domestic between a 6 foot 4 Romanian ex miner and his wife who is 60 years of age or something. And he's bread half a dozen kind and his grand children are as old as the copper who's got to go and solve the problem. How the hell is he gonna do anything? You say they're given the ability to use force, but what he actually uses is his tongue. You can't use that. And if the bloke is about to squeeze him he has to revert back to the use of force.

The use of weapons does however create a dilemma for all police officers who are armed. This was illustrated by the following comments of a female police academy instructor with 11 years experience in policing, who suggested that retrospective accountability for firearms use by police officers often makes it difficult to properly account for the split second decision of the police officer at the time:

> We've got a problem with firearms. We've got a danger where somebody is put in a position where in firearm drill you've got a split second to decide whether you're going to use it. And people think, hang on you've got to run through the entire justification for firearms and that second might be too late. You know that 6 months, 12 months down the track there are going to be dozens of people pulling it all apart and saying well you should have done that, in that situation I would have done that.

One of the key justifications for the use of force is the proactive value this may have. The need to use force can have strong preventative effects, which not only help to prevent the occurrence of criminally violent activity, but also have the benefit of preserving the police in situations which are potentially violent. This comment was brought out by one district inspector with 25 years experience, who indicated that it may be necessary for police to adopt more forceful measures than they currently do in order to prevent the threat of violence directed at them from escalating in the future:

> Should we have to wait until they are high to adopt the correct interception procedure? No we shouldn't. What we do is work for our public and if our public won't accept it, well, we won't do it yet. And it's the same as give yourself another 10 years you see a policeman walking down the street without a gun. He'll say "that's strange, he hasn't got a gun". This is where our society is falling behind because we are not getting in front and we are now just reacting to problems. We saw in America with drugs and whatever instead of having procedures in place. So should we have to wait until that hits us? Should we in fact be getting more proactive which the job's trying to do, attack it with PSIP and those sort of issues. The only thing that hasn't hit here that has hit America is crack.

The reasoning behind this comment is that the more authority the police have, the greater the preventative value in the crime control debate. Thus, the more powers the police have, the greater the likelihood that crime prevention will be facilitated.

CIB officers generally indicated that they used their firearms rarely. The general conception of the use of firearms was that it was a last resort, and was generally for self preservation reasons. The fear and power associated with the use of a firearm, was seen in some cases to be a deterrent to it's use, except in extreme situations. Indeed, for some, there was a perception that they would rather not have the responsibility and the consequent risks associated with carrying firearms. These points emerged in the following comments of two male CIB officers with 8 and 9 years experience in policing respectively:

> C: I've withdrawn my firearm in a violent situation probably 3 times I can think of in 8 years. I've drawn it going into raids and going into situations like that a number of times but actually drawn it with the thought that I might have to use it, 3 times at most.
>
> E: With that thing I was talking about the other day I had the bloke within the sights of my firearm. I had my finger on the trigger and after 9 years on the job and all the stories you hear about. You have a few beers and say "Oh I remember the day this happened", and all that. I shit myself because I honestly thought I was about to kill someone. And it's a very...it's a strange feeling when you know that you're that close to pullin' the trigger. That close. I've never actually been that close to pullin' the trigger in my life. And he was dead because I was that close to him. The use of force. Everyone else seems to make a big issue. The people outside make an issue about the use of force.
>
> C: I'd much rather prefer a bullet proof vest. That was ultra light that you wouldn't feel. And you'd throw the gun away. You'd want to be invisible or something so you wouldn't have to carry a gun. The point I'm tryin' to make is that you'd rather have no weapon to confront.

The unpredictability of the need to use weapons was also a feature to emerge from the interviews. In this respect, in certain situations it is necessary for CIB officers to draw their firearms in situations which are generally ordinary and mundane. This was illustrated by the following comments of a male CIB officer with 11 years experience in policing:

> The classic examples that sergeant from Coburg a few years ago who went down the street to get his lunch and check his uniformed constable. And as he went past the bank he went "What's that in there?" And he put himself up to the bank and the next thing, bang! The bloke went bang. A bullet past his ears. And he was going down to buy his lunch!

Indeed, in some cases, the use of firearms, when fully explained to members of the public, often attracts public support. Take the comments of one male district inspector with 25 years experience:

I will tell you about the week long period in Mansfield where they stopped every car with a driver with a gun. The minute they explained to them that they were looking for those escapees there was no problems at all. There was no need to do it after those escapees were caught. Going back the worst time of my life was my three years at Fitzroy and without doubt every bloody morning when I came on and I had the van there and I opened it up there would be a flick knife in the back where our blokes hadn't searched. You'd bring these all out every morning. You know knives like this. "Oh we didn't find anything". In the bloody van or down the back of the seat where you put someone and they still did it. You know, I'll just throw them in the back, we'll sort it out later instead of checking them.

*****

SUSPICIOUSNESS

Suspiciousness as part of police work.

One of the cultural difficulties which was seen to emerge in the policing function is suspiciousness. This was seen to be both a legacy of the dangers of the occupation, and the nature of the work in dealing with aspects of society which are out of the ordinary. At times, this was expressed to extend to the off duty activities of police officers, but was fostered particularly by the nature of the occupation itself.

Suspiciousness was generally seen to be a tool of the trade of policing. Policing work opens people up to different things than other occupations such as information about the law and members of the public. The result is that the job itself is important in fostering suspicious attitudes amongst many police officers . This was indicated by one district inspector with 30 years experience in the force:

> Biologically, I would say that there is nothing special about police officers. I think the job itself, later on, because you are privy to information about people and things that go on that the normal public aren't, that information that's stored in your brain, it makes you suspicious. You've got to be suspicious to do your job. If you weren't suspicious you couldn't just do your job so you do develop this degree of suspicious. Suspicion against anyone. Personally, people say to me, if you've ever done a check on so and so in the street. Now I've never done that. It just wouldn't enter my mind to want to do that. But the perception of society is that we've got access to these avenues of inquiry where you find out about all our neighbours that it would be just natural for a policeman to do it. Now it just doesn't dawn on me to do that and I don't think it would dawn on too many police officers to do that. However in relation to a suspect to a particular crime, occurrence or incident, then you would do it and you would do it very well. I don't think we are biologically special at all.

Suspiciousness was seen by some to be part of the occupation. Because the policeman's lot involves looking for things which are out of the ordinary, and are to enforce the law in this respect, the powers of observation are seen as central to the police role. As such, the need to be suspicious in different circumstances was seen to be one of the tools of the trade in police work. This was evidenced by the following comments of a female instructor at the police academy with 11 years experience in policing:

> I suppose it is because we're paid to be observers. It doesn't matter whether you're shopping or out walking the dog. You probably tend to take more in from your environment than a non policeman.

Suspiciousness is viewed as a direct result of the nature of the job and the environment in which police officers deal with. Some of this relates to the behaviour of clients who complain about being victims of crime when they have failed to take preventative measures to preserve their property. In addition the lack of trust about the truthfulness of many individuals who they deal with reinforces that suspicion. As one female police officer with 3.5 years experience indicated:

> It's only because of being lied to and. I'm never trusting anyone ever again you know, because you've heard it all before. And...this lady left her car in the driveway and you think, well it might have been in your driveway but ... to us, you idiot. You leave the car, what do you expect. But to them it's their driveway, it's their property and they're not expecting anyone to come on it. You know what I mean, that's how we look at it, we look at them differently because they've done something that we wouldn't because...we're aware.

This point was reiterated by a number of officers in relation to the nature of the job itself. As one male senior sergeant with 12 years experience in the force indicated, the nature of the work feeds into the development of suspiciousness by some officers, particularly over time:

> I think that over time you do (develop suspiciousness as a result of the job). You might not accept something on face value from what you're told. You get that knocked out of you very quickly. And in relation to outsiders it doesn't take you too long to realise that a lot of people lie to the police.

And take the comments of the following four male district inspectors, ranging from 25 to 30 years experience:

> B: (I'm in various other organisations) and I trust no one. I don't trust their word. I don't trust anything. I'm suspicious of every action they make. I'll put it back to something that's occurred in the past. Are they really having a shot at me or are they just making a statement that that had happened to me a couple of years ago? So I'm extremely suspicious of everything outside the job.
>
> D: I think you do become suspicious. I think very much that you become a street psychologist, very much a street psychologist. You weigh people up just talking to them. At a party you may sit there and I might be talking to you for half an hour and at the end you say "I trust this bloke. I'll talk to him". But you know you get the same because you're there with the press.
>
> A: You can be asking questions of them for general interest and conversation's sake and they have in the back of their mind. Also they're very much street psychologists. You'll find that if a person accepts you like coppers do and you weigh them up and this bloke is trustworthy, they'll talk to you. If not you'll get that cold shoulder...suspicions. I just want to give one. My wife has taken me in and broken me out of the habit of where I sit facing everyone at a restaurant. It's a natural thing for a detective. If you're trying to find a copper in a pub look for the two with their back against the wall looking around at everything where you can see anything. Walk into a restaurant. My wife will walk to a corner. I will walk round before her and sit down so I can see the whole restaurant. I have been out with my wife and I've said I'm not going to do it, you sit over there. I'm going to face this lovely corner here.
>
> D: That's one thing that I hate about my job, that I am so bloody suspicious.

B: I just get paranoid. I go somewhere at a party so that they are in front of me. Same at the council. I have the same spot where I sit with nothing behind me. If people walk behind me I can see them coming from the right or left.

C: You think it overruns their lives and perhaps it does. I've never had the need to go to a restaurant and sit. I suppose that we're a little bit more suspicious than other people but I think now that society generally is becoming very suspicious, you know with good reason. But I don't think that I'm suspicious.

Cynicism.

The more severe form of suspiciousness, cynicism, was seen to be a legacy of two key features of the job. This was illustrated by one male senior sergeant with 15 years experience:

> In relation to cynicism there are two tracks which we follow. One is quite justified in that we are lied to a lot by a lot of people. The other track is that particularly with young members because they're role playing. They like to play up that they are suspicious of everyone rah rah rah... And after a few years you wake up to yourself and you stop role playing. But the other thing which relates to the police organisation...is seniority based and one of the things true or not true is that a lot of members who have seniority experience (they are followed by the younger members and influence them - so if they are cynical this transfers on)...they look up and...it's like a private in the army in relation to a sergeant...

Many of the issues relating to cynicism flow from the direct experience of police work and the ultimate exposure police officers have to various aspects of society outside the force. The result is that there are a number of internal and external factors which influence the perceptions of police officers of the world around them. As such, police officers can develop a strong sense of cynicism associated with the characteristics of police work, but in many cases, these values are also influenced by the history and social circumstances of the police officer while they are not involved in their work. In addition, while some of the negative aspects of society impact on this external role, there are numerous positives which must be considered by police officers in assessing the state of the world in relation to their occupation as law enforcers. These points emerged in the following comments of a male CIB officer with 9 years experience of policing in Victoria:

> When I joined the police force, I mean I was no angel. I've said that. I'm not going to tell anyone the things I got up to when I was a kid. I didn't lead a sheltered life. Even though I saw my father cry when I joined the police force I didn't live with my dad for many years so...But you talk about that we've got this cynical idea. One thing that this cynicism does is make it really refreshing when we discover that not everyone is like it. And I've recently bought a house in Preston and on one side of the house I've just found out that I've got a drug addict and on the other side I've got a woman with three kids and they're from 20 through to 15. And the boy is 18 and he's just started at University. I've moved in and she's brought these kids up on her own and they haven't got a father. She lives in a particularly nice house that she's done on her own and her kids are just

> wonderful. He went to Kingsbury secondary school. I'm absolutely amazed given their lot. They are what they are and they are fabulous kids. Out there shootin' baskets in the driveway. And I'm able to go and fix the basketball ring and he comes over and sits with me when I'm doing a bit of renovating on the house. When I moved in I thought it was going to be the end of the world because kids didn't do that in the city in that area.

In addition, cynicism tends to develop over time. The more problems which emerge as a direct legacy of the job and the problems of law enforcement, the more difficult it becomes to avoid cynicism. Ultimately, therefore, the matter becomes one of personal discipline and self perception about what the police officer is doing and how they are helping the community. This is evidenced by the following comments of a male police academy instructor:

> There's a distinctive pattern. People come out of the academy and they're all sort of wide eyed and you're going to solve all the crime that you encounter as an investigator, and eventually you get all that knocked out of you. You hit the cynicism rock bottom after 3, 4, however many years of seniority. If you remain at that sort of level you are going to have big problems. But most of us have dragged themselves out and recognise that maybe...they are contributing to the greater good. The people that don't get out of that trough we have to worry about.

Cynicism was seen to take many different forms. For example, as the following dialogue between a male and a female police academy instructor indicates, cynicism can have the effect of making victims of crime feel that their complaint was unjustified. This goes beyond the issue of treating every client of the police as a potential criminal, and treating each case as a matter of mundane routine:

> F(M): Probably we deal with more complainants that are just honest members of the public. They're victims of crime. So the cynicism doesn't mean that we treat everybody like a crook. The cynicism probably means there is not much point to what we're doing. That's the slant that I would take.
>
> B(F): It's just another burglary but we'll take the report because that's what we have to do.
>
> E(M): If you;re really cynical you'll make them feel like it was a complete waste of time. Nothing is going to happen.

Cynicism can however be overcome through education. As the following comments of a male instructor at the police academy indicate, it is often through education and developing a broader perception of the world around you that cynicism can be avoided:

> I grew up in a very poor area. I grew up to hate Aborigines, to hate Italians. And it wasn't until later in my career that I realised that those attitudes change. Once I became a sub-officer. Until I started tertiary education. The first interaction I had had with members outside the force. I joined as a 16 year old and I really did enjoy that education. And I saw the other side of the coin and it changed my

attitude completely.

The source of cynicism was seen to be the constant negative perception and role which the police are viewed in their day to day life. This goes beyond the negative contacts with the "criminal element" and hits at senior police officers, the criminal justice system in general, and social services with interests which are seen to conflict with those of the police. This was illustrated by the following comments of a male instructor at the police academy:

> Cynicism arises because of a continual negative confrontations and the negative confrontations are not just with the criminal element. I'm talking about confrontations with senior police, I'm talking about confrontations with the rest of the criminal justice system, with magistrates and so on. There's very rarely that [sic] you get a good job or a good crook. You go to court and they're locked up and everything works very nicely. It doesn't happen in the real world. There's a lot more bull shit involved in it and there's a lot more of the organisation trying to make it hard for you to do your job. And once sort of you get enough of these experiences you become cynical.

However cynicism was not seen to be a trait affecting only police officers. As the following comments of a male police academy instructor with 12 years experience in policing suggest:

> Police can't be singled out. Nurses are cynical about their job. Academics, most academics are cynical about the university administration. Students are cynical about academics.

If cynicism however manifests itself in policing it can lead to negative stereotyping of certain groups of people and a negative attitude towards the day to day routine of policing. As such it is imperative for individual officers to "pull themselves out" of the rut of the day to day reality of their work. This point was illustrated by the following comments of a male police academy instructor:

> I think that that's where you get to eventually if you survive. I went through it and I'm sure everyone goes through it. You hit rock bottom and you probably feel more demoralised than cynical and then you pull yourself out of that. If you don't you will be continuously getting yourself into trouble.

Often this may necessitate a change in the working environment to regain the desire to do police work. This issue emerged in the following comments of a female police academy instructor with 11 years experience in policing:

> I noticed that going back out to the station for 6 months that there is members in the trough and no matter what the situation is they'll take the negative view of it, and they can't see anything good out of it in regards to that situation. They may need to move on but they can't see that, because they want to be where they are and it suits their lifestyle and so on and so forth. For their work to be rewarding they probably do need to change their workplace.

Characteristics of suspiciousness.

One central problem of suspiciousness is the fact that it can lead to police officers stereotyping particular groups in the community and increasing their contact with law enforcement. There is a fine line between suspiciousness and its relationship with police discretion. In this case, police officers, in their attempt to maintain law and order and to detect crime, must look for signs of difference or disorder. In other words, they must be suspicious of when things are problematic in the community in order to detect criminal activity. On the other hand, they must not run the risk of stereotyping certain groups in the community and subject them to differential or excessive law enforcement contact. The result is that police must be careful not to stereotype certain groups as being involved in criminal activity, as these members of the community are likely to resent the police in carrying out their work.

In terms of suspiciousness and danger, many junior police officers were conscious that there are dangers of stereotyping certain groups. As such, police officers must make a conscious effort not to unduly or wrongly target particular individuals who look or may appear to be different or stand out. This also has implications for interpersonal dangers which may face police, as those who look as if they may be "dangerous" to police officers, may in fact be quite amicable and helpful to police in their inquiries.

Some police officers indicated however that it is difficult not to stereotype individuals in the community. Some of this issue depends on the types of people the police officer associates with outside of work. In the following comments by three male junior officers with two weeks experience, the first two people suggest that certain groups of people draw attention to themselves, regardless of what they have done. However, the comments of the final respondent indicate that outside social contacts have great implications for the individual officer on how they define whether or not a particular group is potentially troublesome or criminal:

> H(M): When we are talking about suspicion I think everyone's meaning when you see certain signs. It doesn't mean that you see a young kid with a shaved head
>
> D(M): I think it does. They draw attention to themselves. Whether they are doing anything wrong or right, you're thinking...
>
> B(M): Of course it's going to come down to your social life. Like a lot of bands I go and see, it's very much an alternative sort of crowd so if you see that sort of person out in the street it doesn't matter. I've been to university for three or four years and different sorts of people it just becomes part of your life. You don't think any more about them...it comes down to who you've had contact with. And that's who you come suspicious of and whether you know that sort of thing.

Central to the issue of suspiciousness is looking at the signs particular individuals give to police officer. The key issue is to look for things that are out of the ordinary, or are likely to suggest that individual is doing something wrong, regardless of how they look. This point was illustrated by the following comments of a female junior officer with 2 weeks experience in policing:

> You look for the actions. You look at somebody and you think "What is he doing? He's just standing there, and ducked down that laneway really quickly. Now I'm suspicious." Not because of his appearance and his oval shaped head, but because he ducked there. If he had have kept walking towards me and said hello or just looked away, that's not suspicious. I think I'm suspicious of circumstances, like a dog barking but I don't like to think that I'm a stereotyper and say that you're lower than me because of this or I suspect you would be a criminal because you look like this.

This was reiterated by the following comments of a male junior constable also with two weeks experience, who indicates that the issue is to look at things which are out of the ordinary, or which are suspicious in their nature as acts, rather than the characteristics of the particular individual:

> I think if I was at home or it was late at night, and I was seeing someone hanging around in the front yard or around the car, or whatever, I would be just as suspicious if they were in a suit as if they were dressed any other way.

Thus it is situations, rather than appearance, which ideally should govern the police response to the activities of particular members of the community. However circumstances are only part of the issue of suspiciousness.

The police academy training is highly conscious of the problems associated with stereotyping individuals. This is important, because many crimes can be missed if police officers are only targeting certain groups in the community. This point was illustrated by the following comments of a female junior officer with two weeks experience in the Victoria Police:

> I think it's drummed into us that we can't. And now becoming aware that the guy in the suit can do something wrong. And there have been a lot of cases where they have. I think we can't stereotype because if we are we are going to miss a whole portion...you've got to be careful not to miss anything.

Part of the response to suspiciousness for the police officer relates to the nature of their response to particular issues. As such, the demeanour of the police officer when dealing with members of the public suspected of criminal activity is just as important as the source of suspicion in the first place. In this respect, the individual police officer must negotiate each situation as it arises, rather than being heavy handed or judgemental in their dealings with members of the public. This point was illustrated by the following comments by a male junior constable with two weeks experience in the police force:

> I think it is still possible to be suspicious but approach everyone in the same tone as everyone else. You know when you approach someone you do not stereotype them but you can still be suspicious of them.

Youth and Suspiciousness.

Suspiciousness as a characteristic of police work is instilled in young police officers from

very early on in their academy training. In general, it was perceived that suspiciousness is a characteristic of good policing, and as such, it is difficult for it to be removed from the personality once the working day finishes. This was evidenced by the comments of 6 trainee officers with two weeks experience in the following dialogue:

> A(M:) A good copper will be suspicious about anything. They will be the ones that are looking for things. Finding about a burg in the back yard because of a dog bark, or looking for anything unusual.
>
> F(F): I guess we're trying to look after the public and protect things and protect people and you just can't turn that off. There's no point. It's in our nature really.
>
> D(F): It was told to us at the academy eventually it will be built into you, this suspicious nature.
>
> B(M): You become more aware of when people are doing things wrong. When they break the laws. You'll be driving down the road and think, he's done that.
>
> E(F): It doesn't mean you act on it. It' your job. It's just going down the street keeping an eye on things. And you can't sort of just stop doing that.
>
> C(F): When I went in I was very naive and that was one of the things that changed about me, is that I'm not as naive any more. And like you can't turn naivety on and off. You sort of realise that things are happening and have your eyes opened for you.

The question of suspiciousness was seen to arise when new police officers become accustomed to their environment. It was felt, as is evidenced by the following comments of a female police academy instructor with 11 years experience in policing that the longer that you are in the job the more likely you are to be suspicious of your external surroundings when executing the law enforcement role:

> I tend to notice particularly when we see recruits half way through their training for a week at a police station as observers, when they tend to get reasonably involved in what's going on. And the main comment is if they're out driving is that they don't see anything puzzling. And I think what's going on? But they don't have the powers of observation that senior police have.

Thus suspiciousness and awareness of what is going on around you is deemed by these new recruits to be an essential part of police work, and one that becomes a sub-conscious decision making process in observing what is right and wrong in the community. As such, it is often difficult for police officers to turn off after working hours. Because you have to be aware of things occurring at work, it is often the case that this awareness is transferred to your behaviour outside working hours.

The police culture can have definite effects on the development of certain characteristics of police officers which filters down the hierarchical structure of the force. One of these is a cynicism towards certain aspects of the job, which can be derived from a senior officer

who exhibits such a trait. This was elaborated by another male senior sergeant with 17 years experience in the force:

> We encourage a lot of our members to keep certain qualities of their supervisors that they like. And they might end up with 10 different qualities from 10 different people in the hope that that will stay with them. And these better qualities can look at them in their own character as police people and I think that they then perhaps follow a role and follow people with their certain character which appeals to them. If they pick a character who is a cynical character (then they are likely to become cynical too).

For junior officers, it was quite easy to see when a superior was cynical. The signs of cynicism were quite visible amongst some officers, which made it relatively easy to detect who to avoid and who to follow as a role model. This is evidenced by the following comments of a male junior officer with two weeks experience in relation to detecting cynical superiors:

> Some of them are pigs. When I was at the training station I was talking to one who was a top bloke. And then in come another one and he said to me what do you want the job for? You're going to be dealing with shit all the time. He was a pig. But the other bloke was really nice.

Suspicion after hours.

Suspiciousness can be a tool by which members of the public can pick out a police officer in a crowd. This is evidenced by the following comments of a male instructor at the police academy with 12 years experience in policing, who indicated that this point can emerge even though the police officer is in a recreational setting. Important in this extract is the potential ability of members of the public to detect who is a police officer in a particular environment, because of the way in which they are behaving. The need for suspicion in the day to day activities of police officers is seen to be a give away to their identity in crowded public areas:

> Recently I went out to a night club with a couple of members of the under cover course who'd been members. And I went to a night club and they said to me they could pick you out as a copper a mile away because of the way you go in. You're so suspicious. Looking around everywhere. And it's so hard, and it takes so long to get it out of your system, the way that you're just naturally suspicious and you're just looking at everything that's occurring around you.

One feature associated with suspiciousness was that it extends beyond the time spent on the job itself. As one female police officer with 3.5 years experience indicated:

> You don't switch off on things when you're away from work. Certain things that you hear on the news or in the newspaper, a fire or something, "Oh I bet that was an insurance job. There's something behind that".

And another with 3.5 years experience:

> You are always constantly doing it. You drive home in the car and you are looking at who's behind you. You are looking at everything. Doing surveys of what's happening around you.

This can also affect close family relations as one female officer with 3.5 years experience indicated:

> My boyfriend thinks I go over the top because I'm suspicious and changing everything. "Why are you doing that? What's that person done that for and why did they come over? What do they want from you?

And another male inspector with 25 years experience:

> One example I was going to give you of suspicion. I was in charge of the CPS squad and the policewoman, a detective sergeant, was married to a policeman who is now an ex policeman. And she had been in child sexual abuse for so long and she says she trusts her husband implicitly. And yet for some unknown reason on a regular basis she checks her daughter. And that's how it can get you. That's the extreme sort of thing. That's in an area where she trusts her husband implicitly.

This can even extend to social situations where police officers tend to weigh up other people more critically. This was illustrated by the following comments of a male inspector with 25 years experience:

> I think it is a bit more qualified suspicion. It has a bit more expertise to it. I dare say you put myself alongside someone else from the street and you put us both into a party. I'd say with my street psychology and my suspicion I'd probably weigh things up a bit more heavily and look at that person a lot more closer than this person here would take them on face value. I'm not saying that they might weigh them up and take them more on face value whereas I'd probe deeper and ask deeper questions to justify my opinion and say this person's right.

Part of the reason for the need to be aware, and hence suspicious, is seen to rest on the need for self preservation from danger from members of the public. This even extends to the private lives of many police officers. This point was illustrated in the following comments of a male instructor at the police academy with 16 years experience in policing:

> It's the notion of self survival too. You do become paranoid. Instinctively you get your phone numbers taken out of the telephone book. You know we're accountable at work but also at home. And most of us get strange calls at home and you bump into someone you know down the shopping centre or in the street that give you a hard time. And if that happens early in your career you just build up a defence mechanism. You just do become suspicious. I've been in for 16 years now and I will walk down the street and I'll be looking at every single face, looking for someone I know or identifying a crook or whatever. It's just a natural thing.

The critical issue here is that suspiciousness becomes such learned, and habitual behaviour, that it becomes automatically part of the baggage that police officers carry

around both on and off the job.

The negative sides are seen to affect the partners of police officers, particularly if they are not police officers:

> There is one main negative side to it and that is to your spouse if that person is a non police person. They're just so relaxed. "Again you're not working now, relax".(Female police academy instructor with 11 years experience)

or in public settings where there are large gatherings of people, where the standards of many of those who go to the event are seen to be different from the law enforcer. This latter point is indicated by the following comments of a male and a female instructor at the police academy:

> F(M): I find I don't like crowds. I get nervous in a largish crowd. I've never been agoraphobic in my life but that probably stems from the job. I like to go to places where there are fewer people. It's not that I feel threatened. It's just that I don't enjoy being in a crowd. For example, I've been to the cricket and I invariably end up chucking people out. So I think I might as well just not go (when I am off duty). So the last time I went I ended up going to the dry area. I just find that that sort of thing builds up over time. You find that your standards are not exactly what you would find in a largish crowd, particularly a sporting thing.
>
> B(F): Or if you go to say a pub environment with people who aren't police. There'll be other people there whose behaviour really bothers you because they're doing things that you as a police officer wouldn't approve of. As a part of a social group you've just got to be like the others.

One of the most negative legacies of the occupation rests on the fact that friends of the police officer will identify the police officer in a social setting. As the following dialogue between three male police officers with between 7 and 16 years experience indicated, it is problematic for the police officer to turn off after work if they are constantly being reminded by their peers that they are police. The result is that being a police officer provides messages of expectation or suspicion by members of the public even when the police officer is off duty:

> A(M): The worst situation then is one of your friends says, "Watch it, this bloke is a copper".
>
> E(M): You put your head down. If you're with a group of people and they know you're a policeman and they see some social wrong happening in front of you they look at you expecting you to do something, on a train, at the football, the cricket...
>
> F(M): In your own street too. The kid up the road has been riding his mini bike up and down and it's up to me to go up and tell him off. You know I'd like to go up there and have a go. It's a self imposed isolation.

There is a dilemma between solidarity and the characteristics of cynicism. On the one

hand, the police demand a certain degree of solidarity as an occupational necessity. As such, it is commonly felt that solidarity stands for supporting the deviance of fellow police officers, even if it may damage the reputation of the police force. Many officers disputed whether this was the case in practice. On the other hand, an informal cultural approach to solidarity would suggest that if the policing enterprise was reluctant to support fellow officers who had been behaving in a deviant fashion, then the concept of solidarity is eroding. It was therefore seen as crucial to the issue of solidarity to identify why it is being invoked and what internal and organisational pressures exist for its erosion in certain cases. The issues of large scale deviance were commonly cited as a primary motivator for the relaxation of traditional concepts of solidarity. This point was illustrated by the following comments of three male CIB officers with between 8 and 9 years experience in policing in Victoria:

> C: This is one of the overriding factors, that we are stopping people from doing the things that they are doing.
>
> E: And the integrity of the force is on the line. You've got to say that this guy is not doing any of us any favours. What's he done? he's just making us look bad. Those of us that wouldn't think in their wildest dreams have an allegation like that put against them whether it's true or not.
>
> B: You can talk about individuals and supporting an individual, or even solidarity and loyalty to the police force, but I mean even when you go back to the old situation at a party and someone says someone did this, or the police force is wrong because someone did that I stick up for them all the time. I don't sort of say that the job's fucked. You stick up for them. You say "Hang on. There's a reason for that". You might be having a go at his argument because they want to know whether speed cameras should be on the road. "Oh, I hate speed cameras", and you think, well I hate speed cameras too. But you'll stick up for it because if you do that in front of people that aren't in the job you're cutting your own throat. So you don't do that either.

Suspicion and community trust.

For some the line between suspiciousness and cynicism is very fine and even extends to questioning the trust of colleagues in the force. However cynicism is viewed as potentially damaging for the individual officer. As one female officer with 5 years experience indicated:

> I don't trust anyone. If you put us all in the same situation it may be different. I think a lot of police are at the other end of the scale and are very cynical and I think that's very bad.

Cynicism however did play an impact in the perception of police with certain criminals. This was particularly so when some members of the public failed to co-operate with the police or exercised their "rights" which impede such co-operation. Although such rights were viewed as necessary, the frustration can lead to pessimism about the job, as suggested by one male senior sergeant with 17 years experience in the force:

> We don't think that they're undue rights. If I was taken to be interviewed I think that the rights that we're given, I'd like to have those rights. I don't think it's undue. I think police are pessimistic about everything because the line of work that you're in, if you don't remain optimistic you're either going to leave the job...

Cynicism was also seen to be circumstantial, and relative to the situations which individual police officers experience in their day to day police operations. This point was illustrated by the following comments of a male probationary constable with 2 weeks experience in operational policing:

> I think you have weeks where you seem to meet every bugger on the road and it knocks you up and you think where are the good people again. And it just comes around. It comes around and goes around. You are going to have a couple of days where you don't meet anyone, not one good word said about you, and other days heaps of praise: "Oh you've done a good job". I think you've just got to remember that what goes around comes around.

Thus, the unpredictability of police work will mean that if there are bad aspects of the job, these will usually be balanced by the benefits at some other time. This point was reiterated by the following comments of another male junior officer with 2 weeks operational experience:

> You always have to keep it in the back of your mind that there are always good people out there. Like we're always in contact with the criminals and whatever.

Suspicion and internal police accountability: an IID perspective.

The sense of suspiciousness however varied depending on the division within the organisation the officer worked in. In this respect, the perceptions of suspicion of IID officers were vastly different from those in the general policing realm. This is as much a legacy of the nature of the task of the internal investigator, as it is of the individual perceptions of the officer.

Internal affairs officers have to negotiate two very problematic issues within their role. The first is to test the credibility of colleagues in other areas of policing. While IID officers may have an understanding of the nature of police work which may lead to an officer behaving in a deviant manner, they also must be aware that under their mandate, their task is to rigorously pursue matters against colleagues within the force. The second issue is that in many circumstances, there may be doubts as to the credibility of a complaint from a member of the public. The result of this is that an IID investigator must be impartial, whilst recognising the possibility that a complaint may be fabricated or that an police officer has engaged in a minor breach of the rules which does not warrant an ongoing penalty which will jeopardise their career. This issue was illustrated by the following comments of a male IID chief inspector with 21 years experience in policing:

> If you get a complaint and if that person is honest, if he is dead set honest right the way down the line, you think police would get a gut feeling. But in the large majority of cases people sink the boot in. They try and frame the coppers. You

> know they are lying because you straight out hear them lying. You can prove it, and you know there's always two sides to every story because we can tell them apart. If you get an incident in a pub you can't create the same atmosphere, the adrenalin, people's actions, their anger. You haven't got that when you sit down and are interviewing the complainant or the members only the week later. You can't create the same set of circumstances.

This comment has the air that IID officers often support the police version of events in the case of a formal complaint. However, those IID investigators interviewed indicated that it is extremely difficult in the investigation situation to distinguish between the stories of the complainant and the alleged deviant officer. Ultimately, the issue will turn on the evidence presented, which becomes a matter for the court, and invariably a jury to decide. The IID role then becomes one of merely gathering the evidence which can be construed in favour of either party, trying to be as impartial as possible. These issues and complexities are illustrated in the following comments of a male IID investigator with 17 years experience in policing:

> You have to turn your mind to the fact that they (the police officer might have done wrong...You've got to approach each investigation...you've got ..a) it's true or b) it's false. And you go out to collect the evidence to try and substantiate one way or the other. You can't just simply go and look at the information and say that the policeman's done no wrong.

However, if the individual has been suspected of deviant conduct previously, and has had many complaints made against him or her in the past, then IID it seems will investigate the matter with more rigour, working on the basis that this person needs to be formally dealt with for repetitive breaches of the police code. This was indicated by the following comments of a male IID chief inspector with 21 years experience in policing:

> E: Sometimes though, on the other side, if you do get a person whose name has cropped up time and time and time and time again...if you know that constable Smith has fronted up 10 or 15 times, and you discuss the case with someone who says "Shit, I had him for the same thing a couple of months ago", sometimes you will try and make sure that you'll look at it properly, and you don't automatically dismiss it. You'll probably take it a little bit more seriously.

Overcoming suspiciousness.

Often this may necessitate a change in the working environment to regain the desire to do police work. This issue emerged in the following comments of a female police academy instructor with 11 years experience in policing:

> I noticed that going back out to the station for 6 months that there is members in the trough and no matter what the situation is they'll take the negative view of it, and they can't see anything good out of it in regards to that situation. They may need to move on but they can't see that, because they want to be where they are and it suits their lifestyle and so on and so forth. For their work to be rewarding they probably do need to change their workplace.

Conclusion.

The overwhelming response was that suspiciousness was a tool of the trade. However in some cases it was a negative legacy of the occupation. As one female officer with 3.5 years experience indicated, the necessity of the work means that cynicism is at times unavoidable, but you adapt with experience:

> You just have to be. It's the way you are. It's built into you over the years.

The effect of suspiciousness however allows police officers to be more aware of the environment in which they are working. As one female officer with 5 years experience indicated:

> I quite think my memory has improved. I think it's part of being more aware of things. You're more aware of that car over there than you would have been.

LOYALTY

Loyalty is also viewed as an occupational necessity which makes police different from other occupational groups. The need to rely on your colleagues while you are on the job means that loyalty is a key variable in the assessment of police culture. This is a legacy of the nature of police work in itself.

Features of Loyalty.

There is an initial question as to who is solidarity applicable to within the police environment. As the following comments of four male police academy instructors indicate, the primary aspect of solidarity lies in the working environment and to your immediate and day to day colleagues. This is at the expense of solidarity to the Victoria Police as a whole:

> F(M): Firstly to your colleagues I think. If there is a trouble call you don't say who is it before you decide to respond.
>
> A(M): I think certainly the working environment. The people you work with every day.
>
> C(M): I think it's more like for the guys that look after you. Your working crew. Most people on the squads or station. And you like to keep that rapport with the station. There's always large cliquey groups at the police station and you'd like that to remain.
>
> E(M): I don't think it is universal throughout the department. When you're at Springvale you're loyal to the Springvale police station. You stay loyal to the station until you get transferred to the CIB. You go to a squad like the major crime squad and you're loyal to that squad.

However some were critical about the definition of loyalty for police purposes. In essence, there were two key characteristics of loyalty identified by police officers. The first is to defend your colleagues in situations where conflict and danger was necessary. The second is using loyalty for more surreptitious purposes: to support a deviant colleague. These two limbs of loyalty were illustrated by the comments of two district inspectors with 25 and more years experience in the force:

> A: Once again and this is one of the things you have to consider when you talk about the police force. There is so many areas that concern so many terms. Loyalty in what degree? I don't think that any of the blokes out there have any dramas that they race to a job or they're runnin' into a pub blew, they're gonna have the loyalty that the bloke with them is going to fight until he's black and blue too. To help him. The loyalty you're talking about is where there is troubles in the station and someone's done the wrong thing but all right I'll put it up higher. Maybe that side of the loyalty is gone. You don't lose your loyalty in that hey there's us two we're running into that operationally...are you going to be behind me or are you going to run back to the car...Pretending you are getting other units while I'm getting the christ punched out of me".
>
> B: The other loyalty you're talking about is that all the people will make up the story to protect the other member and certainly that may have occurred in the past. But I've never had dealings with it myself. I doubt very much that it would happen now for the various reasons we've mentioned before; short term occupation, fear of dismissal...

Not all officers indicated that loyalty is unique to the police force. Take the comments of two male senior officers with 15 years experience in the force in relation to whether solidarity exists in the police force:

> D: No more than in any other profession. You get the doctors they are all hanging around together.
>
> B: I think that the profile of your work might suggest a greater aura of solidarity. I think it's only the profile of the work. I think we're more exposed than everybody else...and you socialise more with your peers than what say a doctor or other professionals will.

The level of solidarity and the lack of tolerance for people whose manner is seen to threaten the normative behaviour of the organisation is seen to extend beyond operational policing, and impacts on the way even the police academy is run. The following comment from a male academy instructor with 11 years experience in policing highlights a situation where one academy instructor who was not seen by his colleagues to be training new recruits in the proper way, was marginalised from the job by his colleagues:

> His views weren't so much based on a fair assessment of the person. It was also one of rehabilitation, to be able to conform someone from civilianisation to policing. In other words (in this man's opinion) it was possible for everybody to be a member of the police force rather than do they have the basic requirements and

> can we fairly assess them. It was "I shall take you under my mother wing and I shall make you into the policeman". He was shunted out.

Loyalty, solidarity and criminal investigations.

Solidarity was seen to be a distinct part of certain divisions within policing. In the Criminal Investigations Branch for instance, it was felt by many police officers interviewed that the solidarity existed at two levels; the first was to the police force in general, and the second was to the members of the CIB division. In this respect, the following comments of three male CIB officers with between 11 and 7 years experience in policing are illustrative of the dual nature of the level of solidarity in the modern policing enterprise:

> A: I'd say yes, the way it's going but everyone here is very solid with all the police. Not just the CIB and all the people like that, but you tend to sort of stick together with the group you work with and probably with other CIB members and things like that.
>
> D: That's with any group. You're loyal to the blokes you come here with. Like a footy team or anything. You've got a group of people who are close together as opposed to anyone else in any field.
>
> E: It(s) certainly more intense with a group as you say within the organisation... We can say that we're loyal to the police force as a whole, certainly. Like if one of our members got into trouble and needed help every member would dip into their pocket...

In terms of solidarity, CIB officers were generally seen to have greater degrees of solidarity than many other services in the police force. In this respect, the fact that CIB policing is often independent from general duties policing, there is a certain sense of solidarity which means that CIB officers can specifically rely on those from their own ranks more so than from other areas of policing. This point was illustrated by the following comments of a male CIB officer with 11 years experience in the Victoria police:

> Among the guys in the CIB there's a job to be done and you do it together. If you can do it without involving anyone else, like uniformed members, and that I think most CIBs will do the same, and you do it and as a last resort. You'll get someone from the outside in.

Thus the reliance on members from other areas of policing in CIB roles is relatively low. As such this fosters the development of a particular degree of solidarity within CIB ranks.

One of the issues which was seen to promote the development of a particular degree of solidarity amongst CIB officers was the level of professionalism within CIB ranks. While the issue of police professionalism is generally seen to be growing in academic circles, it was felt by CIB officers that their level of professionalism was greater and fed into the greater levels of solidarity amongst their ranks. This was outlined by the following

comments of a male CIB officer with 8 years experience:

> But that's because this group here has reached a standard of professionalism in the job where. I can say to (a fellow CIB officer) and we don't work together, "Right let's charge that bloke with armed robbery". And I know (he) knows exactly what to do and he knows I know what to do and we can just rely on each other to do the job properly. But you couldn't say that to someone who's in uniform. They'll just sit there and look at you while you're doing all the work. And it comes down to a standard of professionalism where you know how to do your job and the best way to go about it without having to sit back and instruct other people on how to do it.

The other reasons indicated for this degree of solidarity amongst CIB officers was seen to be the level of trust which can be attached to fellow CIB officers in the carrying out of their tasks. The legacy of trust is the belief that these officers will share in the level of skill associated with the police work which is central to CIB policing. This issue overlaps the issue of CIB professionalism and is evident in the following comments of two male CIB officers with between 7 and 11 years experience in the Victoria police:

> C: Its not just that it's because (he) is obviously going to be a damn sight better at being an investigator than someone who's only been in the police force for 2 or 3 years, driving around in a car chasing speeding motorists all the time. You want someone who's good at what they're doing.
>
> D: If something does go wrong he'd instinctively do what you would have done anyway instead of someone who's unskilled.

The result is that in CIB ranks, because there are specialised roles and ways of doing things, the degree of specialisation and professionalism associated with that particular policing task make it difficult for members of other divisions of policing to be aware of how CIB roles are to be carried out. This helps to perpetuate a specific culture associated with CIB policing.

The purposes of loyalty.

One of the ways in which loyalty becomes necessary is relying on colleagues in times of danger. In this respect, loyalty is essential in ensuring danger can be adequately confronted by police officers. As one female officer with 5 years experience indicated:

> Loyalty, you have to be loyal to the people that you're working with. If you're not you'd get into a situation where you're on your own.

This was reiterated by the following anecdote by a male senior constable with 8 years experience who suggested that solidarity was becoming increasingly important in today's society where there appears to be less respect for the police uniform by members of the general public:

> I was working at the MCG, and there was a lot of blokes and I had to remove one. And because they were all together a couple of other blokes said "Take him on". The uniform meant nothing. It was just for a joke. You know that your not going to get a huge penalty. They knew that. Other mates came along and it sort of got worked out. Going back to solidarity and things like that, the situation was averted because of a combination of two things. One was because of the mates. But at the time I was fearful that he was going to take me on. And the other combination was that I put my hands up pretty quick and the other blokes from the top deck of bay 13 came down to help me out and that was a great feeling. And that's where you get the feeling of team spirit. Because when you are in that position that's when you rely on your mates. It's like the calvary were coming. At that specific time I really did think that they were ready to go. The leader was really going to take me on. And it would have done more damage to me. Years ago that was less likely to happen. In that situation you know that you are not going to win. Most of the blokes take you on do so because they know that they're going to do you. If he's prepared to take the uniform on and really mean it (he will).

The following comments of a male junior officer with two weeks experience in operations are indicative on the duality of loyalty for the purposes of safety, and reliance on your colleagues to back you up in the case of risks of violence. These features make police culture quite distinctive from other occupations:

> There is going to be one day where you are going to have to rely on others that might save your life. There's no other job where you do have the same danger apart from the forces.

However the loyalty leads to a perception of safety in dangerous situations. This makes it easier for officers to encounter potentially threatening situations. As one female police officer with 3.5 years experience indicated:

> And you just know that if you get into trouble that there's going to be other people there to help you out. You just know that they're around the corner. Everyone's watching out for you and if you go into a violent job or whatever you know that you're going to have someone there. And you can rely on that you can always rely on that. And no matter where you are you get help.

Loyalty and internal police deviance.

In general, most police officers, regardless of what divisions they come from, will assist fellow officers if they are in trouble. However if the issue related to a criminal allegation of a serious nature, such as theft or sexual assault, many officers indicated that there would be internal resistance to such assistance. Thus, the more serious the deviance in terms of the organisation of the police force, the less likely that solidarity is going to play an important role for the police. These points were illustrated by the following comments of four male CIB officers with between 8 and 11 years experience in policing:

> E:...if a member is in trouble for something which is something like a despicable crime I think he'd be pretty well on his own...

B: We don't tolerate thieves.

E: We don't tolerate thieves or sex offenders within our ranks at all. We wouldn't want our money, the money put into our association, spent on shit. Lookin' after people that shouldn't be in the job. Given that if a member is in need of our assistance and it's a run of the mill sort of thing, it's an allegation we consider to be a run of the mill sort of thing, not something that is organised like organised crime in the police force or something like that, you know everyone dips into their pocket. Rule 1, it's a brotherhood.

C: It's not only criminal allegations, it's family troubles, financial troubles anything. You might have a child in the family that requires an operation and you need $10000 to fly him to the States. No worries. The blokes will dip into their pockets to help out.

The issue of what behaviour, and how much of it fellow officers will tolerate from deviant colleagues, is critical in the decision whether or not to take action against a deviant peer. In this respect, the following comments by three male police academy instructors indicate that there are divergent views about what constituted deviant activity worthy of formal action against a colleague:

E(M): Always dishonesty. But what is the perception of dishonesty? People think that assaulting an offender is dishonest.

A(M): I remember a lot of stuff was tolerated in the police station because the guy was a footballer, and in the footy comp.

F(M): Stealing is the area that E is thinking about and it's relational to... Assaulting John citizen is probably never tolerated. Assaulting a crook at times probably is and at times it probably isn't.

The solidarity of police officers does tend to become polarised on serious cases of police criminality. In this respect, it is often difficult for police officers to decide what is in the best interests for the policing enterprise and the expenditure of police resources. Decisions involving whether to support a person alleged of criminal activity are often fraught with conflict which exacerbates the problems associated with the lack of police solidarity. This point emerged in the following dialogue between two male CIB officers with 9 years experience:

B: Probably the biggest issue that we've had, the police force I reckon has had in my memory, as far as loyalty and solidarity and that sort of thing...I remember the association meeting and they put it up to the vote of whether we were going to support him or whether we were not going to support him. And there were people going either way. People sayin' we're all together, we're all in the same job, who cares, we're going to look after him. Other people were saying, hang on why should we stuff ourselves up when we know it's not worth it? That was probably the biggest issue in solidarity.

> E: Basically the police force as a group believe that they were guilty and it's hard to put good money into a bad thing. We don't mind if it's going to send us broke as long as it was going to a good cause that we believed in. The bottom line is that we felt like we were being taken for a run by our own by a bloke who bucked the system and didn't deserve to be a copper. And we were being sent broke for an ideal about we were all one and you should support everyone right to the end. But that was the biggest issue about solidarity ever...I'd be surprised if anyone, even the people that wanted us to support them financially, I'd be surprised if they said that they wanted that because they felt that they were innocent. I think it was, no, we'd support it because otherwise we're hypocrites. And that's an understandable argument. But you'd be hard pressed to get any of them to say that he's an innocent man and that's why we want to support him.

It was felt that in cases such as this, where the credibility of an individual officer is on the line and has the potential to substantially influence the public perceptions of the policing enterprise, that it is more worth while for fellow police officers to relax the rules on solidarity, particularly when the case is fairly water tight against the accused. Where there is some sort of doubt about whether guilt or innocence will be proved, the solidarity of the police force is seen to be extensive.

One question posed was whether it was likely that these dilemmas would increase, given the development of disparity between many divisions of policing, and the overall perception that the traditional cultures of policing are being eroded for a more individualistic line in an organisational structure which is becoming increasingly accountable to the public. In this respect however, if the police feel that the deviance is abhorrent and damaging to the policing enterprise, then regardless of the levels of loyalty which are standard to the police force, the solidarity is likely to be reduced. This reiterated the key point mentioned previously, that those engaged in large scale deviance are ostracised from the every day policing function. The following comments of a male CIB officer with 9 years experience in policing are illustrative of this point:

> The policeman whose character is put in question has got nowhere to go if he can't rely on the people around him. If a policeman is cast out or an allegation is made against a general policeman the general public aren't going to support him. The only people that he can turn to are the people that he works with and the bottom line is that we won't even support him if he's done out and out the wrong thing. I think people think that we as a group all bloody all cover up, cover up stuff that just doesn't deserve to be covered up all for a piece of shit. And we won't do that. It doesn't sit comfortably with any of us. And of course solidarity comes into it I think. But if a bloke has out and out done the wrong thing we're not going to get into a huddle and protect him for what he's got coming.

Loyalty can lead to dilemmas for police officers, especially in terms of covering up for the deviance of fellow police officers. This was particularly evident in the comments of some junior officers, who recognised that the cultural aspect of loyalty could possibly lead some officers to compromise their sense of doing the correct thing whilst involved in police operations. In this respect, the following comments of a male junior officer with two weeks experience in operational policing were illustrative of the nature of this dilemma:

> If you're in a situation where you know that a couple of members have done something wrong, it's going to be very hard, depending on how seriously wrong. It's going to be hard to decide. I suppose discretion comes into it as well. What to do.

The conflict therefore is between sticking by your colleagues who you know have acted deviantly or wrongly, and keeping these people accountable according to your own sense of morality. This dilemma was also recognised by the following comments of another male junior officer with two weeks operational experience:

> It can be very conflicting, loyalty and your moral standards. You have to weigh up what's right and whether you go to someone and tell them. Where do you draw the line?

It was generally felt that accountability for police officers had increased over time. This was illustrated by the following comment by a male district inspector with 25 years experience in the Victoria Police:

> They would have shut the door and walked away and pretend it didn't exist.

Today however, there are a number of considerations which impinge on the greater accountability of police officers. Take the following comments from a male district inspector with 25 years experience in the Victoria Police:

> And that's reflected by the community. It's governed by community controls and you turn round and you would probably have a lot of blokes out there who hated the introduction of audio tapes because the "I said..he said" was easier to do than the audio tape and less demanding upon them. But times change and times catch up with people. And it's a matter of conditioning. See I've got one at the moment where detectives have traditionally been reactive. They investigate crime...to try and swap detectives to a proactive line of thought. You always get them falling back into that tortoise shell saying that "but we're locking up crooks..look at our clearance rate we're locking them up, what's the matter with our job?" But we're saying more than that. We're saying that you've got to get more involved in the proactive role of crime prevention but to try and change everything it's the hardest job in the world. Because they just crawl back in that tortoise shell. It's happening slowly because you get younger managers, younger senior sergeants who are thinking along these lines you know instead of the old died in the wool "this is how it happens son".

The result is that increased accountability and public perceptions of the appropriateness of the police role mean that deviance is difficult for police officers to negotiate. The nature of the penalties and fear of reprisals means that officers will be less likely to abuse their powers for personal gain. Indeed, the increase in accountability means that traditional loyalties to fellow police officers who break the law out of working hours are treated differently by officers on the beat. As one female officer with 3.5 years experience indicated:

> I think you're more inclined to think that I'll do the right thing so I don't get into trouble. Like a booze bus is a very common thing. And it used to be in the past that if ever a policeman came through a booze bus you wouldn't have been even asked to blow into the bag. You'd get told to drive on. And if they did blow into it and it was over you'd be driven home whereas if a policeman drives into it and is over he's caught. And I think that divides the police force.

This point was reiterated by a male senior sergeant with 15 years experience in the force who indicated that in today's climate where people expect greater degrees of police accountability:

> Members are a lot less willing to become embroiled in a conspiracy to cover up. Obviously that still happens to some degree but there is that reticence of certain members to (say) "I'll go right to the end with him because I think he's done the right thing". I don't think people are like that today...I think over the last 14 or 15 years things have changed. When we came in there was probably a continuance of that sort of behaviour.

This was reiterated by the comments of two inspectors with 25 to 30 years experience in the force, who suggested that not only have the additional pressures of increased accountability have made officers reluctant to abuse their position, but the changing culture of the force which treats policing as a job rather than a lifestyle, makes junior officers more prepared to look after their own interests by doing the right thing:

> D: I think that a lot of people are a bit more wary of the inquiries that have been going on that they think that, "Christ I'm gonna get into trouble if I get involved here".
>
> B: I never heard an inquiry until I was a senior sergeant but nowadays you get a hundred a year in this district alone. They make files out on things that would normally be dealt with by the senior sergeant. But going back to when we were young constables we'd think nothing of coming into work an hour early to make sure that everything was ready to go out. Staying back an hour afterwards and making sure our paperwork was out. The minute they're five minutes overtime they will be claiming overtime for pay and in that sense they are not mucking in but if they are working they're certainly mucking in. And there still are examples of people who go to that extreme. But there's not as many as there used to be. You used to get enthralled in it and on your days off you'd be wondering how the inquiry's going.

Internal mechanisms have been seen to contribute to the increased propensity of some officers to be more accountable in the past. This was illustrated by the following comments by one male district inspector with 25 years experience in the force:

> The new promotion scheme is looking for people that can actually say "well here's a situation and here's what you've done about it but shit, don't make the decision yourself. Make sure you get it sanctioned by someone higher up." I've been an inspector for 6 years and this has been the longest I've been in any rank and that's

> when you get crunching in organisations when people are stifled and won't make decisions. And this is what's happening. And I won't be promoted for another five years.

The fact that these matters also become public through the media also leads to the perception that the right thing must be done. In other words, the values of operational officers have changed over time which directly counteracts the traditional characteristics of police loyalty. Indeed, there is a greater perception by those interviewed that the community feel that the police must obey the law while on and off the job. As one female officer with 3.5 years experience indicated:

> People are more obvious about what police are getting in trouble for now. It's all right for everyone else to do it but when police do it it's just not on. I know you're enforcing that but the thing is it happens you know, and it happens and people can't accept that. People can accept Johnny down the street doing three or four burglaries but when a police person does four burglaries, you know it's just on a different scale. I know it's wrong straight out but it's on a different scale.

Some respondents indicated that the media are playing an increasing role in maintaining police accountability. The fear of the media's role was expressed in a variety of ways by a number of officers. As one female officer with 5 years experience indicated:

> You do anything wrong and they make it out to the media straight away and they stretch it out as far as they possibly can.

In fact, there was a general mistrust of the media's portrayal of police issues, particularly in terms of the stereotypes the media can generate about policing. Consider the following dialogue between three senior officers with between 12 and 20 years experience in the force (2 male, one female)

> E: No police like seeing headlines that police did this and police did that especially with the shit going on up in Queensland. The headlines are always police did this. You had to read the article to find out that it was Queensland police. The headline is just police did this and police did that. It just gives you the shits.
>
> A: If they have been charged and cleared they won't report the fact that they have been cleared. They will report that police have bungled this raid but they won't report the truth behind it all. It's not just newsworthy.
>
> F: The people think that because you're in the police, there is this misconception that you know everyone. You know what everyone's doing all that sort of thing. They think you are a book full of knowledge.

The result is that the media are perceived to be harbingers of stereotypes of police, many of which are negative and create false assumptions which affect individual members of the force.

The response to deviance will differ depending on the seniority of the officer in question.

However, it is generally felt that police are more vigilant in preventing internal deviance from occurring in the current climate of police work. This was represented by the following comment by a male senior sergeant with 15 years experience:

> I've never seen any thieving going on, and certainly as a connie I would have been in much less of a position to do anything about it than what I am now. If I saw it now the act wouldn't be completed.

Thus, as the culture of policing changes, and younger people with more education and more of a sense to change the administrative structure of the job, the greater the likelihood that proactive mechanisms of accountability will emerge.

The importance of a greater range of formal mechanisms of accountability was reiterated by various members with a range of experience in policing. The following comments by a male junior officer with 2 weeks experience, are illustrative of the importance police academy trainers place on the question of accountability in operational practice, particularly in relation to the use of force:

> Like in Western Australia where the security camera got the police beating into that bloke. Well that was brought up and we were told don't do anything if you're not going to feel good about it. And if you go around and punch people up in the cells well you're not going to be in a job.

Loyalty and new recruits.

It was felt that solidarity can be fostered through a particular form of police academy training. As such, allegations that the solidarity of policing is eroding over time may be more related to the way in which training occurs. As the following comments of a male police academy instructor indicate, solidarity can and does exist amongst the junior ranks, provided it is fostered by the instructors. However there is a likelihood that it will be eroded once the officers go to a particular station:

> (We have) just finished a course which I was instructing on. There was a lot of students on there and a lot of the students hated the other students...however the solidarity was immense. They provided welfare support even knowing they were losing. They knew that they were going to fail, even if they thought they were dickheads and useless. Now that will dissipate next Friday when the results are given and they will all go their own way. During that time it was great. Whereas the recruit squads, now it used to be like that but it's not.

Loyalty was seen to be instilled in a police officer from an early date. In this respect, senior officers often went out of their way to make a junior officer feel at home and part of the police team. This point emerged from the following comments of a male junior officer with two weeks experience in police work:

> I came in on Sunday night to drop my uniform in and I went into the mess room. And they all said g'day to me. They see you in the street and say g'day, how is it goin'. You go to the board of works canteen and they say nothin'.

Thus, police officers as part of their culture, attempt to foster loyalty informally amongst new officers, to make them feel at home and part of the crowd. This was also evident in the perceptions of junior officers about academy training. The following comments by several probationary constables of the nature of academy training instilling loyalty into new officers are illustrative of the way in which loyalty is viewed to be a central feature of police work:

> B(M): Yeah with the squads, very tight. Everything you do is just the squad. One bloke in the whole squad is like helping everyone else.
>
> H(M): If someone has to do push ups everyone has to do push ups with him.
>
> C(F): If somebody is not doing so well in a particular field everyone is there to help them out.
>
> F(F): I think they said to us in the very first week or something if you don't work together well in the squads...they want you to treat your squad as a mini police force. And if you can't rely on each other and look after each other and help each other in the academy there is no way that you'll be able to do it outside. Sometimes we would split up into four teams and there was the winner and the rest of you would do push ups.

However many of the issues where police accountability will be an issue are often impossible to teach in the abstract environment of the police academy. In this respect, strong moral training is something that is learned by individual police officers throughout their life time, whether by the experience of the job, or through other means of learning. As the following comments of a male junior officer with two weeks experience suggest, individual morality is something that police academy trainers cannot educate on effectively through the threat of accountability mechanisms:

> They shouldn't have to teach at the academy moral issues. It should be just standard. You just don't go around beating people up if they don't tell you their name. You don't go around teaching that sort of thing. You grow up with that sort of thing. But they do put the emphasis on the accountability on the job. Well, if you do something wrong it's your job. We're all adults. You don't really start to try and teach us moral issues.

The issue of loyalty and internal deviance creates a number of dilemmas for officers of all ranks. However, for junior officers, the tension is particularly great, as they are made aware in their academy training of the correct procedures to adopt, but are taught through the operational realities of day to day police work that these procedures may not be as important for them to follow. All junior officers indicated that the concepts of police loyalty, and accountability had the potential to conflict and cause dilemmas in operational police work. It was also widely acknowledged by new recruits that the academy spent a great deal of time illustrating how these dilemmas will manifest themselves in operational terms. However the consensus was that despite the importance of this problem, it was perceived to be difficult for academy trainers to outline how they would manifest themselves, and the ultimately correct action to take. This was seen to be a legacy of the

wide range of dilemmas which have the potential to arise in modern policing, and the broad features of culture and it's various manifestations in different police units. This point was illustrated by the following comments of a male junior officer with 2 weeks experience in operational policing:

> A lot of people were seen to be saying the right things. A lot of the things that were brought out, I know what you want to hear, but what I actually feel are two different things. So, you've got to do the right thing but there are so many different grey areas.

It is thus difficult to identify the precise way to deal with the deviance of fellow colleagues, particularly for younger officers who have had minimal experience and are still learning some of the facets of the job whilst on probation. As a consequence, training can only go so far in providing guides to how an individual should deal with the deviant activity of fellow officers. The contradiction between loyalty and accountability is thus central to the young police officer, and ultimately reflects the concept of police discretion, and individual decision making in how to deal with such problems. The dilemma this creates is that it may compromise the loyalty expected by police officers of their colleagues, even if the action the subject of intervention is both morally and legally wrong.

Part of the way in which the police academy deals with this dilemma in its training regime is to show video hypotheticals on the characteristics of these dilemmas, and the possible outcomes for individual whistle blowers. What this material indicates to new recruits is that ultimately the issue is one of individual discretion. There are no formal rules on how to deal with the misbehaviour of colleagues. The key seems to be to leave it to the individual officer in light of the circumstances of the case. This was indicated by the following comments of a male junior constable with two weeks operational experience:

> What the video is saying is if someone does do that and you're in a situation, don't say anything. It was just trying to get you to think what it was about. And it was also probably trying to say to you, if it's wrong, go ahead and say something straight away.

Thus, given the difficulty of explaining these issues in light of the cultural responses indicative in certain policing situations, any teaching materials focussing on the issue of police deviance are designed to get individual officers to think for themselves about the issues, rather than provide answers to these cultural dilemmas.

Danger and ostracism.

The result of not abiding by the necessity for trust in the dangerous situation is that the offending police officer can be ostracised by their peers. These points were elaborated by the following comments of a male CIB officer with 9 years experience in policing, who indicated that the level of solidarity has changed, because the motivations of new recruits are no longer exclusively devoted to being in the police force as an ongoing concern. In this respect, because it is difficult to know the ideal behind certain police officers in joining the force, it compromises the traditional sense of solidarity which has long been

viewed to be essential for effective policing:

> It's not so much not knowing the person you're working with. It's not knowing the ideal you're working with, but the ideals of the other person. A few years back everyone seemed to have the same ideals. You were all fighting for the one end. You seemed to count on just about everyone in a crunch. But now its not so much the person, the arms and legs and head, that you're working with sitting next to you in the car. It's what he's thinking. His ideals. Why he joined the job and what he wants to do in the job. And sometimes when you speak to these people their ideals can really worry you. They've got some really pie in the sky ideas about why they are in the police force. And they forget about what it is to do policing. And I think there's many people in this job of various ranks and...we see that the higher ranks have really lost their grass roots. Certainly there's good and bad in everything but the guys we work with on the street every day, the worker bee, are different to the worker bees that we had 10 years ago. And they're different for a lot of reasons. And one of the reasons is because of what's going on in the hierarchy of this job. What the hierarchy wants for the police force. What they're pulling in for the bottom drawer. What the top shelf is pulling in for the bottom drawer. We're the ones that have to work with it on the street every day. And every day I come to work it seems to change. You speak to someone with a different idea.

The legacy of this change is seen in this instance to come from two key sources. Not only are the motivations for individual officers in joining the police force changing, but the motivations of the police hierarchy are having an effect on who gets in to become police officers. The ultimate effect of these dual forces is the erosion of traditional solidarity which is seen to have important implications for contemporary police culture.

The whistle blower and police deviance.

Whistle blowers have always been seen to been part of the policing enterprise. However, in today's society they are viewed differently. Given the increased levels of accountability in contemporary policing, it is more likely that a whistle blower will take more formal measures to ensure that a complaint is being pursued. This was stated by a male district inspector with 30 years experience in policing:

> You are talking about whistle blowing. Whistle blower(s) have always been there. They've been there since the year dot. But the manner in dealing with whistle blowing has changed. It didn't always generate into an IID file. Your whistle blowing would have been solved by peer group pressure. It could have been handled by your local senior sergeant. It could have been handled by his immediate peers. This bloke has got a slight problem with the booze, what are we going to do with him. It didn't have to go higher. In this job whistle blowing has always been there. Everybody would have known who has done what.

This was reiterated by another male district inspector with 25 years experience:

> They were never stifled they were dealt with at the right level. And nowadays

> we've got members that put everything in print to protect themselves. They won't worry about the welfare of their peers or anyone like that. And we'll put it all in print and therefore the responsibility is off of my plate. We'll phone the inspectors or we'll phone the sergeant.

The presence of a whistle blower is generally seen to undermine the solidarity of the police environment. As such this can lead to ostracising the errant individual who is working against the grain of the dominant operational ethos. This feature was indicated by the following comments of a male police academy instructor:

> I've worked in small units where we had people who have been critical and I personally view that as a threat to the solidarity of the unit and I've taken steps to deal with those problems.

The following comments of three male IID investigators with between 15 and 22 years experience indicate that generally, whistle blowers may be ostracised from the dominant culture of policing, often leading to their careers within the force being destroyed. This is particularly so in relation to whether they can continue to work on a day to day basis with the support of their immediate colleagues. However, even though each situation will differ, depending on the nature of the deviance alleged, the overall perceptions of the "offender" and the whistle blower, and the way in which the whistle blower goes about making the complaint, the whistle blower does run the risk of being treated with suspicion by his or her immediate colleagues which can substantially affect their ability to carry out the day to day tasks of police work. This can ultimately affect the willingness of people who are in the position to complain to actually come forward and help IID to detect the "bad apples" within the force:

> D: I don't really know. It's very difficult to make a generalised...what the outcome is for those who have stood up. I don't think their career's wrecked as far as their promotional opportunity and things like that goes but I think their ability to work alongside people who...members... I certainly believe that the majority of members are professional and that they wouldn't really be too concerned. And I think what would concern them then is in the event of perhaps exposing them to disciplinary action or something of that nature, that their concern about whether or not this person is going to suddenly expose the fact that they went out to lunch and came back after 3 hours and they write it in the diary and record it. It's not necessarily criminal behaviour but I would say that people that do that once they stand up really find it very very difficult to gain acceptance at any point in the future. They become very well known throughout the organisation. They limit the areas that they can work in with any degree of satisfaction because of what's been displayed by the members, and something that's been addressed by the department. And there are supervisors who ensure that these people hang around and their opportunities flourish. But I really can't see how supervisors can be there holding their hand 24 hours a day. It's very hard.
>
> B: There's a problem of people not wanting to stand up and be counted. There was one situation where I was in charge of a young constable and all the feedback I've been getting since I charged him, and the charge was on the basis not of somebody

> standing up and saying what he's done, he was charged through other avenues... Ever since charging him members from various stations have come forward and said great you've charged him. I hope we get him out of the job. He's a mongrel and an arsehole. He shouldn't have been in the job in the first place. And yet no one was prepared at any time to stand up and be counted and say well this is what he'd done. I found it unacceptable. Just wanting someone else to take the action in the first place.
>
> D: Although we've just had a recent incident where a sub officer at a station was behaving in a way which would border on some degree of criminality, but more specifically disciplinary issues. Using a position to advantage and that sort of nature. And it got to the stage where the part of his whole attitude and the general approach to his work was slip shod. He was lazy, and the members of the station, some of the sub officers, got together and called a meeting, didn't invite him, sat down and discussed the issues, approached him as one at the end of it, voiced their concerns. He didn't respond. And consequently all made statements and produced him here and he's been dealt with. So I think there is in some ways a bit of a changing in attitude.
>
> B: Would that have happened if one of the sergeants was left to do it on his own, or did they need part of the group to do it?
>
> D: I don't think any one individual would have gone to that point. But again I think, in order to be satisfied, formed that collective to provide some sort of united front. And again there is no single individual being indicated to as having been the one who pulled the rope from underneath him.
>
> C: Just an off shoot of this is the members who show loyalty. There are instances where they become the people who are charged with offences rather than the instigators and that's a problem.

Some however argued that ostracising whistle blowers does not always occur. Take the following comments by a male district inspector with 30 years experience in the police force:

> I disagree. We've got a young fellow in our old district who blew a whistle on a detective who was subsequently charged with contempt and the judge described it as one of the worst cases of contempt he'd seen. The young uniformed constable was flanked in the court with his superiors when this detective was sentenced, when the pronouncement was made that he was guilty and with that, to my knowledge, this constable is down in A district and is co-existing quite well. And a lot of people accept that what he did was justifiable. There will be some that will say that we'll never forgive him, especially in the crime department. There will be a lot of people in there that will never forgive him. But generally he's been able to co-exist and work fairly comfortably.

When this issue was probed in greater depth, it was discovered however that the presence of whistle blowers does make fellow officers suspicious of the actions of certain

individuals. However it is necessary, particularly for senior officers, to encourage such people to pursue complaints, to ensure that corruption does not spread within the force. As one district inspector with 25 years experience indicated:

> What I'm also saying is that I'm also looking at it from our perspective as managers. It's very hard for me to sit here and say I'm working alongside a bloke who was a whistle blower as a young constable. I am saying as a management perspective that if we give that person the support we're going to let them know out there that that sort of behaviour is [sic] untolerable.

This was reiterated by another male district inspector with 30 years experience:

> Not only that but if there's a crook in amongst us it's like a cancer that we want to get rid of too. And I can tell you now amongst our officers conference we'll identify bash merchants in our district and everyone will do what they can to eradicate that problem I think.

Thus, from a management perspective, there are important motivations for pursuing complaints, and encouraging whistle blower to stick by their claims. The ultimate benefit is an improvement in the way in which the police force is run on a day to day basis.

Whistleblowing was generally seen to break down the solidarity of a police force. This point was illustrated by the following comments of a male police academy instructor:

> And that's another thing that's breaking down the solidarity. Whistle blowing. We used to get to the station, shut up, sit down, do whatever they wanted and it just went along for years. But now they want to do you in. If they don't get what they want they'll whistle blow and that does affect the solidarity on the station, particularly if there is a number of them.

However, as this officer later continued, as the management structure of policing has altered, so too has the level of tolerance for deviant practices and of the attitude towards younger people who may threaten to blow the whistle on those practices:

> I would not tolerate what I used to do now. I got away with blue murder. And I never had sergeants in those days that I could go to; sergeants were two or three levels above us. You couldn't go near them. But now the supervision's changed where the sergeants become one of the boys and it's going the other way.

The general level of tolerance of whistle blowing depends on the nature of the offence that is involved. In respect of major deviance with criminal consequences, it was felt that whistle blowing was indeed justified. However, as the following comments of a male instructor at the police academy with 16 years experience indicate, the possibility that whistle blowing can be used for minor malpractice warrants a cautious response to the practice of whistle blowing. In this respect, there is less tolerance of deviance in the present day, but one must be careful how deviance is defined in order to support the actions of a whistle blower, particularly if allegations are made against a long serving police member:

> Minor whistle blowing, the things that breach the solidarity...I have got no problem with dobbing in somebody for a criminal offence. I've got no problems with that. In fact I've had members thrown out of jobs. But I will not whistle blow on somebody who had been a good contributor for 10 or 12 years and has had one slight, bad patch. I treat that as a welfare or training responsibility rather than... You've got to address each individual separately. If this guy has been a good contributor for 12 or 13 years and he's knocked off $20 from the safe well I sit down and assess the situation and find out if he's got marital problems, he's got no money, he's on a downer...well I don't think he deserves to go to prison. If it is a consistent thing well...bad luck mate you're out.

However, the ultimate decision rests on the fact that whistle blowing can have the potential to undermine the solidarity of the organisation, even though the merits of particular cases may suggest that the whistle blower's actions were justified. This was illustrated by the following comments of a male IID investigator with 22 years experience in policing:

> That's where it all boils back to the fact of the circumstances of the situation. Each one had got to be treated on its merits. And I think that's really what they were trying to convey to the supervisors. I'm sure that they expound to the other members that are in the same working places that there is people and reasons why actions are taken. What the other outcomes were of the action of that person...it just reinforces to members that maybe these perceptions that he's a whistle blower, you can tell him nothing, you can take him nowhere, are not what's required.

The critical issue in respect of the deviance alleged, and whether or not to pursue a complaint internally, is the level of repetition associated with the deviant action. If the action is a minor and "one off" breach of discipline, than the colleagues of the errant officer will be more likely to give that member the benefit of the doubt, and refer them to additional training or counselling. However, if the deviance is severe, and repetitious, then the perception is that more severe action commensurate with the offence is seen to be warranted.

The general consensus was that informal measures of police culture were much more effective in making better police officers than strict formal mechanisms of control and accountability. In this respect, a number of senior police officers indicated that the culture of policing had changed substantially in recent years, which meant that informal mechanisms were being viewed in a much more critical light. This was evidenced by the following comments by two male district inspector with 25 years experience:

> A: I think you can find even nowadays at times it very much depends on the quality, standard and the approach by the sub-officers and the officer in charge. If your station has a very strong leadership from the cultural aspect you will find the troops tend to veer that way. If your station has a strong leadership along the rules and regulations, let's get the job done the way it should be, and devotes minimal time to (the) cultural well that's the way it goes. And there's a varying standard whereas years ago it was as B said, very much cultural. Everyone was..you'd go in and the sergeant would teach you his ways, what he thought and you'd listen to

him like god. Whereas now, your sergeants are there and they have taken the approach that this is the job this is the rules and regulations. That's the way the troops go.

B: And to be honest I see nothing wrong with the cultural approach. It depends, none of them were completely one or the other. 25 years ago there was basically the law. You had to enforce the law and the rest was culture. You know you took them to court, the JP's were on the bench and you knew the JP. If I gave someone a good word about how well behaved they were, I rarely did that but that was how the informal organisations worked. Now you have barristers going against the magistrate. They're recommending, and I have got a complaint file at the moment where a court recommended someone complain. That never happened in the past. We're very structured in that regard...just as an example the social culture. Nowadays the members have formal functions with their wives. In a cultural sense that's good we never used to do that. Nowadays we go out. It's a truly work oriented situation among spouses. In that regard the culture around that is very important still but it's not the same sort of culture.

A: My thoughts on that are given my time again I would rather go through with the informal culture because to me it was a magnificent time. But it suited the time we were there. When I look back now and you say which ways are better you've got to have 75% formal culture and a quarter informal. The choice of people to go their own way. And I think we're working towards that. It's a sign of the times. If you ask me going back I wouldn't have changed the way I've come up.

Indeed, the general perception is that culture is in a state of flux, but specifically, it has changed over time. However the change in culture appears to be evolving rather than undergoing any substantive and overnight change. However public perceptions still deem that police officers should act and behave in certain ways. This was stressed by the following comments of one district inspector with 25 years experience:

I just think it's situational. I think it's just evolving naturally. Certainly the informal culture had more influence in the olden days. Nowadays we're more accountable. The pockets of so called culture in the major crime squad, that is now more identifiable. They've been decimated anyway. They've been reformed. There are new structures. Now if it happens in a police station, in West Heidelberg or down in Fitzroy or somewhere like that, again the district management is able to perceive that happening very quickly and stop it from spreading fairly quickly. That's the way it is. We react to the coroner's statements about different things. We react to various purges and inquiries that they've had and we are constantly reacting all the time. I reckon we are a fantastic organisation to be able to react to the public perceptions of us. We are taught to get our act into gear all the time. It worries me sometimes I think. People come up to me and say you're a policeman. And they start to tell me things they'll think that I'll accept because I'm a policeman. Quite honestly I sometimes think the exact opposite. Such as you're a policeman you vote liberal. Quite often the exact opposite is true. I don't think we are any different to the general public in relation to our political ideas and aspirations.

In general, therefore, the informal mechanisms of dealing with the deviance of fellow officers is the preferred form of negotiating police deviance. In this respect, not only do individual officers need to perceive that the deviance affects them personally in order for them to act, but informal action is to be preferred to formal action, particular when superior officers are involved. As the following dialogue between a female and a male police academy instructor indicates, the failure to deal with matters informally before filing a formal complaint can lead to negative feelings and negative repercussions from fellow officers:

> B(F): For me personally, the bottom line is that I want to be able to go home and sleep at night. If something happens at work that's going to affect that then I'll deal with it as I see fit. I was working once with a sergeant a few years ago who wanted to steal something and I managed to persuade him not to do it in my presence, but he may well have gone back and done it the next night. Now did I react in the right way? Should I have taken it further. I didn't take it further, but I dealt with it at a level where I could go home that night and feel that I had acted responsibly.
>
> E(M): Had you taken it further you probably wouldn't be sitting here today.
>
> B(F): That's exactly right. It was him and I together in a car working. And then it would have been my word against his...in that situation he didn't steal something. To take it further wouldn't have been appropriate because he didn't commit an offence but he was what I would call a stupid thief because given the opportunity he would probably steal.

The result of this line of action is that even if the errant officer repeated the offence at a later time, it was preferable for the individual colleague not to file an official complaint for fear of adverse repercussions affecting their own career. Thus, utilitarian reasons are critical to the decision of an officer to file a formal complaint against a colleague.

Whistle blowers therefore are generally not tolerated within police ranks. However, as the following comments from two IID investigators with over 20 years experience each indicate, there is a perception that whistle blowers are having a greater impact on contemporary policing. In this case, respondents are responding to the question whether whistle blowers are tolerated within the police force in Victoria, and whether the frequency of internal whistle blowing is on the increase:

> D: No.
>
> E: Yes and no. A couple of the ones I've been involved with, there was one we were discussing just before, and a few other blokes on the station accepted what he did because the person who was doing it was a bloody trouble maker who had been doing it for ages. He'd been told to pull his head in. But you would get a reputation up. They seem to accept that they will be ostracised. They're aware of that but they still do it. But they still go ahead. They're from society as we said before. They know it's wrong. They are trained for 6 months they know all these things, and they see a copper do it and they think stuff this I'm not going to be

> loyal. What he's done is wrong and I think I should tell about it.
>
> D: Something's been addressed departmentally over the last couple of years but I really don't think it's anything we're ever going to really truly overcome. They're a minority but they're there.
>
> E: Once upon a time you wouldn't have one but I could name four. They're on the increase.

The main form of ostracism comes from the peer group, which not only deters potential whistle blowers, but has the potential to marginalise good police officers from the mainstream culture of policing because they have the reputation of "lagging" on their colleagues. This point was illustrated by the following comments of an IID investigator with 22 years experience in policing:

> I think they get that from their peers and I think that makes life difficult. I don't know, I haven't really followed the path of what happens to the individuals involved but you know it's been an issue because it's come out in a number of publications and directives where they've talked about the Chief Commissioner has put out messages where we've got to take to court these people who stand up in times of crisis.

In the case of managerial deviance, the whistle blower faces a number of impediments. Take for example the comments of one female officer with 3.5 years experience in the force:

> People have put in complaints about things in stations and that and...it does travel with you for the rest of your career and I think that it's difficult. And you can understand people at these stations thinking what is she going to be like. But we're not going to just dob, we're talking major major things...you think to yourself that I want to know the full story. It's different just seeing a little bit of something. It's a bit different if it's something managerial.

Thus the nature of the misbehaviour and the context of its occurrence are important variables in choosing whether or not to take formal action at a particular station. Given the proliferation of information from station to station however, a whistle blower with a record of such activity faces difficulties in a new environment. The suspicion that a whistle blower faces can instigate many informal measures which work to marginalise that particular officer. This is further illustrated by the comments of another female officer with 3.5 years experience:

> You get things where you're dubbed the dobber and that kind of thing and people will watch you. Like you're in a conversation and they're watching you because you do this and you do this and you do this but the thing is if you're working with that person for a year and you think well I've watched myself for a year.

This point was reiterated by a male senior officer with 15 years experience in the force:

> But at the same time in relation to police who give evidence because they feel that what the person has done is wrong you have to live with the fact that you are going to be tarnished in the eyes of a lot of the other members.

The reputation for whistle blowing can obviously follow you in the job. There is therefore a need for whistle blowers to be cautious about what they complain about, and whether they have legitimate grounds for a formal complaint. The ultimate issue for the individual officer is to decide whether it is worth sacrificing their progress in the policing enterprise, by breaking the code of silence. This point was outlined by the following comments of a female junior officer with 2 weeks operational experience:

> When it comes to the crunch you've got to think is it worth losing your job over? And what personally you do. None of us is ruled by police culture. You've always got the influence of your own personal (beliefs) of what you should do in that situation.

This was reiterated by the following comments of a male junior officer with two weeks experience, who was concerned about the fact that promotion and transfer opportunities may be compromised if an individual officer decides to turn on their more senior colleagues. This was stressed by the comments of various academy instructors on this topic:

> The talk at the academy they make you seem like it's a bit accepted within the police force because if you go in and do over one of the connies or someone above you, you might have trouble getting into other stations. That'll follow you, also for future promotion.

A considerable difficulty therefore arises when the deviant member is a senior officer. As the following dialogue between three male police academy instructors indicates, when superiors are deviant it is often difficult for junior members to speak out against them, or avoid that member, and as such they are likely to be drawn into the bad practice themselves:

> C(M): Well, we've all worked with people who by just being with them you're going to get into strife.
>
> A(M): You try and avoid working with them.
>
> C(M): If they're more senior than you you're almost at their mercy. As a constable I've worked with people and I've got complaint files...
>
> E(M): You're ducking for cover basically.
>
> C(M): He's on his own and we're going to unify as a group and push him out. It really does depend on the perception of the dishonesty factor and most policemen will not tolerate dishonesty. And we will basically say you're on your own.

Most of the academy discourse on this area is substantiated by anecdotes of actual

experiences faced by operational police members. As such, there is little formal teaching material on the morality and practicality of dealing with the deviance of fellow officers. This was indicated by the following comments of one male and one female junior officer with two weeks operational experience who outlined that most of the practical tools in dealing with the deviance of police officers is derived from the stories of others and their experiences:

> D(M): Just through other members. I remember one lecture we had, an equal opportunity lecture, where the female constable dobbed on somebody else. She was ostracised.
>
> F(F): Instructors also.
>
> D(M): Especially when we've been told to do it the right way. But at the same time they've been at the station for 10 years. And they're part of the culture as well.
>
> F(F): Instructors are fairly good. They sort of tell you what they're experiences have been and they'll let you know what they have done.

Thus, informal culture is one key method of dealing with organisational deviance. This emerges from the wide range of circumstances in which such deviance can and does occur, and the wide range of responses which certain officers may be exposed to from their colleagues.

It is important to note that the threat of danger stemming from a fellow officer's deviant actions must have immediate consequences before a person will comment on those activities. This was a common response by most officers interviewed. If the threat of deviance is not immediate, then the need to do something formally about it is not as great.

There are a range of issues which may deter individual officers from making or pursuing complaints against fellow officers. This was illustrated by the following comments of one female and two male junior officers, in canvassing what would deter them from pursuing a complaint formally or informally:

> D(M): Being ostracised.
>
> F(F): Just being happy at work. You've got to be happy. If you're not friendly with whoever you work with, again, having to work with somebody else and they've got to put up with you and you've got to put up with them.
>
> A(M): There are going to be situations where you are going to need them to save your life virtually.

Thus the potential for whistle blowing to compromise loyalty amongst fellow officers runs through the possible deterrent features of maintaining formal and informal accountability against fellow officers. This was confirmed by the attitudes of junior officers in dealing with a senior officer who had been ostracised by their peers. As the following dialogue

between one male and one female junior officer suggest, there would be a general sense of wariness towards a senior officer who had been ostracised by other police members:

> D(M): Wary. I wouldn't completely black ban him myself unless I had reason to but I would treat him wary. Don't get too close to him and judge for yourself over time.
>
> F(F): I know one trainee who is resigning who has been in the job for over 12 months. And he didn't do something wrong but he's been ostracised. Not for dobbing someone in. But he did the wrong thing and they've all labelled him an idiot. No-one wants to talk to him or work with him.

Loyalty leads to the necessity to collectively sort out problems with particular officers who are acting defiantly. Thus, part of the essence of loyalty is that collective accountability for the deviant actions of particular individuals. However police officers must be careful in the manner in which they question the behaviour of fellow officers. As one female officer with three and a half years experience indicated:

> Because we're a team, we're together. We have to be professional I think in the view of the public and of course we have our differences and things like that but you know we have to work them out and we do it together you know. We work things out together.

Generally speaking, because the risk of marginalisation is great for whistle blowers within the force, informal complaint mechanisms are the first point of call. As one female police officer with 5 years experience indicated, it is often unwise to instigate formal complaint mechanisms until you have thought about the issues carefully and bounced it off some peers who can understand the predicament:

> I don't think you'd go straight to a boss anyway. You'd talk to other people about it and even someone senior that you trust, get that person to talk to them then if something happens... There are often sergeants at the station who you get on with and others that you wouldn't really approach so you go to the ones you might think may do something without this person getting into heaps of trouble or whatever. You wouldn't go straight to the top.

This was reiterated by a male senior officer with 15 years experience, who also indicated that the key is really substantiating whether the complaint is justified in the first place:

> You tend to take a bit of an each way bet until you find out the full circumstances. And then when you've got enough information you can make your informed decision about what way you want to go. If you've got a situation, like, I had one recently. Luckily I took the each way bet and it turned out that the member had let himself into more trouble than I thought about. And the file got taken off my hands. If I decided to run with him and basically work my way around it, I would have sunk myself as well. So you take an each way bet and when you've got enough information you can make a decision. And each circumstance has its own set of information.

Junior officers supported this course of action. In some cases, junior officers indicated that it would be inappropriate to informally consult with fellow police officers first, but rather outsiders may be able to provide more valuable advice on how to negotiate these issues. As the following comments of a male junior officer indicate, the best course of action when he has seen a colleague using excessive and unnecessary force would be informal consultations with a non-police member:

> I think I would definitely go and speak to somebody but it would be off the record. And see what they thought. I'd be doing it away from the police station.

The key dilemma for junior officers in this respect, is that their inexperience really makes it difficult for them to know just how they would act in certain situations involving the deviance of fellow officers. This states a lot about the difficulty academy trainers faces in preparing junior officers for the discretionary aspects of dealing with peers. This point emerged in the following comments of a female junior officer with two weeks experience:

> I think at the moment it is hard for us to know what to do and we need guidance in that area. And that's why you would have to be hypothetically speaking, a friend of a friend of a friend. What would you suggest in that situation and perhaps get that view from a couple of people. People you respect. Not someone who is the idiot of the station. And then from there draw your own conclusions.

However, even as these officers gain more experience, it was generally considered that informal measures would be the most appropriate way to deal with internal deviance. This was illustrated by the comments of two male and one female probationary officer with two weeks experience in operational policing:

> C(F): You'd probably still bounce it off someone. I can see myself always bouncing it off maybe just one person, even if they are not really involved or don't really know much about it. Just confidence for you in making the decision.
>
> G(M): The hard problem is that we've just started and the seniority and all that...In 10 years time we're going to be the senior members and it would probably be a lot easier. But at the moment being new to the job it is going to be the hardest to sort of deal with it.
>
> A(M): But you've also got to be careful that if you see someone cop a hiding in the cell you could become involved. You know it's happened, and you've got to go to IID and you've got to explain what is going on. If nothin' happens you're right.

One female officer with 3.5 years experience indicated that superiors may often claim that it is better to sort the matter out informally rather than making a formal complaint:

> The thing is they'd say "Why don't you work it out yourself. You don't come to us until you've tried to work it out yourself. Don't come to us with your problems, work it out yourself". And if you can't that's when you go and see a sergeant or a sub-officer, and he's the one who will go and approach the OC. I think that you've got to try and work it out yourself and if you cant then maybe take steps a little bit

further.

Indeed, this mechanism was seen to be generally more effective than the filing of formal complaints through official legal channels. As one male district inspector with 25 years experience indicated, formal complaints seldom succeed, which creates a sense of apprehension in the minds of the broader public over the effectiveness of formal police complaints mechanisms:

> I've been doing complaint files for 6 years and everyone has gone back either unfounded or unsubstantiated. And the public are getting no sense that they're being listened to whereas in the past they would come in to see the senior sergeant and there would be a negotiation as to what would be acceptable for both.

Generally informal mechanisms will have an effect. The key in this respect for the individual officer is to be strong in confronting the offending officer with the problem directly, rather than letting the issue slide. As one female officer with 3.5 years experience indicated:

> If that person knows that you're not going to put up with it then generally they won't do it in front of you again will they? But if you've had a pick about something then they kind of know "I know she doesn't like that"...Most of them are pretty good aren't they? And if there is a problem it's generally not just a problem with one person. It's like "I've had that problem with him too, I've had that too. We can discuss it with together". And it gets to the stage where he works by himself because no one will get in the car with him. So it's known.

This process illustrates the power of informal culture in marginalising deviant officers. If there is a general awareness that a particular officer is "letting the side down", informal mechanisms can be effectively invoked to alienate that person, or alter their behaviour.

Peer correction however is not always a viable option for police officers. In some cases more formal accountability mechanisms need to be employed. In this event, the first point of call will be an immediate superior who can assist with the situation. As one female police officer with 3.5 years experience indicated:

> One of them where I have (gone further than peer action) is just driving straight up to the boss and (saying) "I just will not go in the car with him again so don't roster me on". And they respect that.

This option is usually used where informal and direct communication measures fail to alleviate the possibility of danger among fellow officers. As the same officer indicated when elaborating on this point:

> Especially saying "slow down, slow down", (when driving), you've said that and there's no response well then you're going to have to do something else. The only reason being I don't care if they are going to get told off for driving or whatever happens to him but I'm not putting myself in a position where I'm being in danger. And I'll do that. I've done it before. So other than that if it's not affecting me then

you kind of keep it to yourself really.

But this approach remains problematic when a junior officer is critical of the actions of a senior officer. In such cases, junior officers must be careful in breaking the hierarchical disciplinary structure as it may have negative repercussions for their future careers. This point was illustrated by the following comments of two female police officers with 5 to 10 years experience in community policing:

> A: It takes a lot of courage to do this. If you're a trainee you'd think very carefully before you'd tell your Sergeant to back off because you'd put yourself on the list of unemployed very quickly.
>
> B: If you have a bad guy cop and you told him to back off it wouldn't necessarily mean that he'd stop doing it. So you wouldn't stop it necessarily but you would prevent it from happening around you. That's the major consideration.

Ultimately, therefore, the bottom line is to prevent yourself from being implicated in any deviant activity, and keeping the critique to as informal a level as possible. The dangers of going formal can be obvious, as the following comments from two IID investigators with between 15 and 21 years experience in policing suggest. Not only do formal charges often lead to dismissal through invoking public court procedures which can often be an over reaction to minor forms of deviance, but members must be cautious that if they do bring a complaint against a colleague which can lead to dismissal, however minor that complaint may be, they may be jeopardising the career and family life of the individual. This can be particularly relevant if the complainant can also be implicated in the deviance they are alleging against their colleagues, or, if a colleague is covering up the deviance of a fellow colleague:

> E: The thing that you've got to look at, if you're looking at criminality, and they're charged alongside the other bloody bloke and they're sitting in the dock in the county court charged with, it's not their job but their bloody freedom. And that is the ultimate disposition in some cases. It's very bloody difficult because if you've done nothing wrong and someone's done something very very seriously wrong right in front of you, can you imagine sitting there for 2 or 3 days and the jury's out and you know he's as guilty as sin and you're innocent, but you've stuck with him. I mean you'd be thinking to yourself well stuff him, if he goes down I know that I've got a couple of years down in Pentridge chewing my heels because I've backed up a colleague.
>
> C: It's also a social factor of men having wives and families. As their careers go on so do their relationships and then you're not just thinking of yourself. You're thinking of the whole family scenario. If you go to jail it also means that your wife and children suffer as well.

As a consequence, generally internal complaints are only pursued if the officer feels that they are justified. In some cases there have been instances where complaints however are not justified. In such cases, the informal culture of policing works to deter vexatious complaints. As one female officer with 5 years experience indicated:

> But see that's when people sort of complain because they don't like someone...In this job there are going to be people that you don't like so you can't just complain to get them in trouble...It's not school. People complaining just to get them in trouble...you just cant complain because someone gives you the irrates or shits. You think "Oh well", you're not going to stay there for ever...(you have to tolerate it because) if something happens they've got to be there for me. You've got to be there for me and I've got to be there for you.

Thus the loyalty appears to prevail over personal differences individual officers may have while on the job in order to counteract the negative possibilities of the dangers which the policing environment creates.

Support for deviant officers.

In some cases, it is argued that colleagues will support a junior member through an allegation of deviance, on the ground that they have the potential to be a good police officer. The result is that rather than "weeding" deviant junior officers out at the early stage, a decision is made by the immediate superiors to treat them leniently, on the basis that they will provide good service if they are admonished informally, and transferred elsewhere. Such people will therefore be retained, despite the fact that they may be engaging in substantial deviant activity which would warrant dismissal. These issues emerged in the following dialogue between four IID investigators with between 15 and 22 years experience in policing in Victoria:

> E: [They tend to treat them with kid gloves when they are at the trainee stage and this causes problems]. Occasionally a trainee was sacked but I think now what you tend to find is if you've got the opportunity to weed them out in the early days. If you get up and run with it there are many many instances that we've all heard about where they get up and they look after them like a bloody sore toe. Their period's up and they're hopeless all the way through their career. Some blokes might misbehave and wake up to themselves. They're fine. But if you've got a bloke who's arsed up all the way through his trainee ship, if he's a full member, they never change. They stay the same all the bloody time. And the real problem later on down the track an...if you take that action earlier on...'cause they no different. They may be on probation for two years and if they commit a criminal offence or they do something stupid, if they get booked for doing a hundred miles up the freeway or get charged for drunk driving, well really it makes you wonder. Well, what will society think. Here's a bloke wants to be a policeman and he's got a blood alcohol level of .15. How's he going to be enforcing the law...People are put on report and they still bloody hang on to them. Put them somewhere else, at least another station to try and bring them up.
>
> B: That's the thing. They try to transfer them around. Instead of doing something positive they shift them to another location where they don't have to worry about it any more.
>
> (Interviewer: Why are they retained?)

> D: Because his senior sergeant said he's a good worker, good at this and good at that. You know the same individual. You know when I pointed out in the file he was rung and asked by me as an officer whether he has made good through insurance or made good through his own pocket the cost of repair of the other vehicle, whether it was clear that he was in the wrong. He said yes it has been all sorted out. When I contacted the other person it was all sorted out because he had claimed it all through insurance.
>
> C: You're as only as good as your last mistake. You can have a good career but if you make that one mistake.

In some situations, even the fact of criminal charges can not erode the solidarity of particular divisions of policing. In the following example presented by a male police academy instructor, the culture can oppose the actions of particular errant individuals, yet still support the officer in criminal charges:

> Before they disbanded the major crime squad four or five guys were suspended and one of them was just committed to trial last week for theft. He allegedly stole a purse or something. And the solidarity is still there. And the whole squad supports him for the welfare side. But no one's condoned what he allegedly done. We're only relying on hearsay whether they're guilty or not. So we're still supporting him and he knows 100% that he's done that, he's in trouble and he's got to suffer the consequences. So it's a divided situation. When I went through the squad was a great team but now, it's getting a bit fragmented now.

Changing Perceptions of Loyalty.

One common feature to emerge from the workshops is that the levels of solidarity and loyalty appear to be changing over time. There are a number of factors which were identified by the majority of participants which lead to the perception that the traditional loyalties are gradually being eroded. These include not only the changing composition of members of the force, but the broader community environment which is more individualistic and self centred. There are difficulties in setting out to abuse your position as a police officer. As one female officer with 5 years experience indicated:

> I think it's just the community in general. Everyone's out for themselves more than they used to be. It used to be that you would stick up for one another whether it would be family or friends or whatever. But now the community seems to have changed everywhere. I think people are just out for themselves a lot more. There's definitely loyalty but you've got to look out for yourself. You could get yourself into serious trouble if you (make trouble)...if you get your supervisor down there and it's like...it would be a hard decision. I think the penalties are a lot more too. If you get yourself into trouble, especially in the police force, you'd be out I think.

Indeed some suggested that their perception of loyalty in policing was actually stronger than the reality turned out to be when they joined. This was illustrated by the following comments of a female police officer with 5 years experience in the force:

> The loyalty wasn't there the way I expected it to be. The team spirit wasn't there.

> It was more of your, society. People who wanted to look out for number one and be individualistic. I was disappointed that there wasn't more of this loyalty and looking out for each other. The loyalty is fading. You cannot depend on someone looking out for you more. You've got to look out for yourself.

Indeed, many participants indicated that policing was becoming much more individualistic. This was reflected not only in operational practice, but also in the attitudes of new recruits at the academy. As the following two female police officers with between 5 and 11 years experience indicated, loyalty can and does exist, particularly when there is a violent situation, but the general perception is of a police force which is comprised of a number of more self interested individuals:

> A: People now, whilst they're still loyal to a certain degree, when it comes to...people would have lied thorough their back teeth to back each other up. I think people are now more inclined to be more honest I suppose, and look after their own personal security.

> B: Expected people to give 100% when at the academy but this wasn't happening. They'd slacken off in doing their chores. 2 or 3 to do the work of 8 and they had to be chased up. In the old days in my husband's time that was not on.

Some officers indicated that this was just as much a legacy of broader changes to the issue of loyalty and in particular loyalty in terms of economic efficiency, in the general community, as it was indicative of the changing nature of police culture. This point was raised by a male officer with 5 years experience in the Victoria Police:

> It's a social thing. People these days are concerned with doing things as cheaply and efficiently as possible and they lose sight of the quality of what they are trying to achieve. And that would be the same with us. What is the most expedient way of getting through this?

There are two legacies of the issue of loyalty and its reduction in contemporary society. The first is the sense of loyalty stemming from dangerous situations. The second is the sense of tolerance for police deviance. In each respect, it was felt that the levels of loyalty for the police uniform are reducing in contemporary society. This is seen to be having a detrimental effect on the way in which operational police work is being carried out in contemporary society.

i) Loyalty and danger.

The common perception amongst CIB officers was that the levels of solidarity have eroded considerably over time. This is not only apparent in CIB work, but seems to be prevalent in all forms of modern policing. Because the motivations of new recruits have changed over time, and there are fewer people joining for life, the rationale for loyalty is changing. The result is that in situations involving the threat of danger, it is no longer as possible as it was in the past, to be able to rely fully on your colleagues. This point was illustrated by the following comments of a male CIB officer with 2 years experience in criminal investigations and 8 years experience in the police force:

> Like in the CIB we might be working on our own one weekend and you say to one of the fellows "Come with me. We have to go and knock on this door. There's a suspect." And you don't know what's on the other side of that door. You're there on a Saturday morning you've got your sandwiches at work you knock on the door and the bloke behind it could be a mad druggie behind the door with a shot gun. You just never know and you've got to be able to rely on that person you've just plucked out of the other room, you might not even know his name. And you've got to put your life in their hands no matter what the situation is.

The result is that in dangerous situations it is imperative that CIB officers are able to trust their colleagues, even if they do not know who they are or what their rationale in joining the force is. This is central to the effectiveness of the police in terms of protecting their own safety.

This was reiterated by the following comments of a male police academy instructor with 11 years experience:

> You've got to be sure that the person you're working with is going to back you up. You don't want someone who is, if you go to a fight or something you don't want someone who is going to hide in the van or leave you to it.

ii) Loyalty and deviance.

The issue of solidarity is often tested in the case of internal deviance. In this respect, as the following comments from two internal investigations officers indicate, younger officers are more likely now to report the deviance of colleagues to official channels, particularly where there are allegations of criminal misconduct, which alters traditional notions of police solidarity:

> E: Over the last couple of years I can think of three or four cases where young trainees now will be on the back of their own members in relation to complaints. They go through the academy, they get 6 months training and they get the "see no evil, hear no evil do, no evil", and when they go out to a station and they see a member assault someone. There has been three or four instances where they have stood up for their rights and they've said "No, I was there he assaulted that person with a baton", or "I saw him hit him in the chest or hit him and go over the top".
>
> B: They're more inclined to do that if there are allegations of criminality. If it's something you're looking at on the discipline side, you'll find that they had their head down while they were writing the running sheets and they saw nothing at the time because they were busy writing. But in the criminal sense they are more inclined to stand up and say I'm not going to tolerate that.

It was generally felt that whistle blowing was not a common phenomenon in contemporary policing. The police hierarchy often deters potential whistle blowers, and the informal culture of the police force works to marginalise whistle blowers from the day to day running of the police job. However, as the following comments of a female police

academy instructor with 11 years experience in policing indicate, the situation may be changing, with more people being prepared to tolerate less deviance, particularly where it has potentially negative repercussions for their own careers. This applies not only to immediate peers, but the deviance of superiors, and is more likely to be a factor in a police officer with some degree of experience in the job:

> If you have a more senior senior constable you won't stand up as much or put yourself in the position of wearing someone else's problem as you would have 10 years ago. As a trainee I had to help conceal something that someone else did or felt that I had to. Now I wouldn't get involved. It's being in the job for 11 years and realising that some things aren't worth (it).

However, as the following comments of a male police academy instructor with 12 years experience in policing suggest, there is a growing perception that junior officers are increasingly prepared to speak out against potentially deviant senior officers:

> I remember when I went to the station you would just be quiet and speak when you are spoken to and you wouldn't challenge anything, especially when you're on probation and you're a trainee. But I'm not sure whether they are actually taught to challenge things. There were situations recently where trainees were putting in reports about senior members. They didn't like their work practices or they didn't like the way they spoke to people. People from outside say "Shit, what are they doing in the training department? What are they teaching these people? or "Are they sending people out like this? They must be doing something wrong there ".

This was seen by many to be a legacy of the general education system where people were being encouraged to question things more readily than they were in the past.

The common result of the police culture is that the culture is changing and new recruits are less prepared to tolerate the deviance of fellow officers. Therefore, even though there may be acculturation in the police station, the willingness to question the culture which may cover up certain acts of deviance will override the negative effects of police culture:

> That's if they can conform to what they're required to do. But what we tend to find is that they don't really want to conform to the things that happen in stations because they are basically taught to question through the education system things that they have to learn...That's the way we get them in here. A classic comment from a recruit the other day was that when he was questioning an instructor about something and the instructor explained the situation, and he said "I'd agree with that". It doesn't matter whether he'd agree with him or not. The instructor is right in what he said. But that's their attitude (male police academy instructor: 12 years experience).

It was felt that the level of internal accountability and the ability of individual officers to be confident in reporting the deviance of their colleagues has increased with the increased professionalism in the force. In this respect, the following dialogue between four IID investigators with between 17 and 22 years experience in policing illustrates that the traditional rank structures and deference to authority which these entailed, have altered

individual perceptions of the effectiveness and willingness to pursue complaints against errant colleagues, as well as traditional discipline structures within the police organisation. As such, it is felt that there is in general a lower tolerance to internal deviance in the Victoria police as there was in the past, which is indicative of a broader cultural change on the issue of internal accountability:

> E: Just on that I think the problem is that when we joined, there was that defined rank structure. Like when the sergeant said jump you said how high. These days a lot of sergeants don't want to work as hard. They want to be one of the boy's, socialise, go out and drink and do all those sorts of things. And when it comes to say...they don't really want to maintain the ascendancy, and do what they're paid for to be a supervisor and a manager and control men. They want to be one of the boys. They're too closely aligned with the troops. You've got to maintain your role. You're the boss. That is your duty. And don't think there's a lot spoken about that in the job, where a good sergeant is one that will bloody control the men. You'll find that the others will slot into being one of the boys.
>
> B: It's probably verging on less tolerance today rather than what has occurred already. I think people are still more inclined to transfer their problems than they are to deal with them. It also might change like now if you transfer someone, getting him or her moved around. They're likely to jack up before some tribunal to have that challenged. So it's going to force people to have their power dried up.
>
> D: I think it has changed around. I think it has changed dramatically. When I joined the job there were a significant number throughout the job of alcoholics and members went out of their way, when they came to work, and poured themselves into their uniform. Usher them into the back room for 8 hours and let them drink coffee. And that was the accepted norm. When someone came to work and they were intoxicated you kept them out of the sight of the public and push them off to one side, and you'd no sooner consider making them accountable for that action than fly to the moon really. It's only if it became a problem and they did it for about 6 consecutive days that you'd go and talk to the boss about it and say hey what's going on here, it's a welfare problem. Well it's probably approached in the same way, but it's certainly not tolerated.
>
> B: As of 20 years ago until now, for someone to walk into a police station now and they were going to start work if they were intoxicated...
>
> D: It comes back to accountability I guess. I really think there has been significant changes in that way. Only yesterday I had a report on a file of another officer who obviously had significant personal problems which have been generating over a period of time and I had an encounter with him on a personal basis off duty and made it the subject of a report because he was off on sick leave, and I was quite concerned about the way he was talking. When I related that back to his senior officer I said I want to report about it straight away and take steps to have that member boarded out or because he was a veteran of war service pensioned.
>
> B: Has the tolerance towards the drunk that's changed or the drunk that's changed?

Like I'm inclined to think that you're not getting the people turning up to work in that sort of condition, or that if they did that it would be tolerated.

D: Do you think that if someone turned up to work intoxicated these days that you'd tolerate it?

B: No I don't but is that happening? Is it happening like it used to happen when you first started?

D: No, I'm saying it's probably changed in relation to the accountability but it's also changed by the fact that the ones that continue to do it over a period of time slowly got dealt with. The others that were around them again had a heightened perception that with a worker like that I'm going to get dealt with like that too.

A: I can give you an example. After a turn at a certain inner suburban station, a big Chrissy turn, the whole station turned up drunk, and the sergeant was the only sober bloke there and he wouldn't let anybody out on the roads and sent them all home. And no one worked from that station in that morning. 7.00 am and they were all crook still from the night before. So it's still happening. It shocked me because I thought it tailed off a little bit but that whole morning crew was drunk from that Chrissy turn the night before.

B: What happened to them afterwards though? Was that tolerated? Did it become an issue?

A: I think it did but to what degree I don't know.

D: But the fact that it became an issue is something that wouldn't have happened 20 years ago.

*****

DISCIPLINE

Discipline was viewed to be an essential part of the policing role. In this respect, it was felt necessary for new officers to be able to respect their superior officers, without the need for "bastardisation" or militarisation. This point was indicated by the following comments of a male CIB officer with 9 years experience in policing:

> I'm not saying that when you get out on the job it's all regimented and you salute your sergeant because that's not the way it works. It's character building. If you can't take an order you can't give one. If you can't respect an order you're not going to get out in the field and tell someone to do something and command the respect. If you don't know how to do it he won't know how to do it.

Discipline was seen to be highly necessary to the police role and in particular the integrity of the police force. Because of the police functions, and in particular the special powers that police have, there was a general sense that the disciplinary structure was central to the credibility of the police force. This point was noted a male junior officer with two weeks experience:

> When you look at other organisations from other forces from around the world, like say Asian forces, where their organisation is non-existent, or maybe even one of the the African nations where you get some person who will want to be up there and want to be the elite leader, policing goes by them and that's it. Not only people that you respect and are afraid of them. Of course you're going to get people who are afraid of police people in Victoria...

The point about discipline giving credibility to the police force was reiterated by the following comments of two male junior officers with two weeks experience. However, the discipline issue was not seen to be all that different from many other occupations:

> G(F): If you're not disciplined individually how can you expect to (other people) expect them to have discipline. If a police officer is not disciplined, how can you expect others in the force to be disciplined?
>
> A(M): Every organisation's got a rank structure though. You get your chief executives down to your workers. We're virtually kind of like workers at the moment taking instructions of the executives, the managers.

Indeed, discipline is very important in forging a good police culture. As one female officer indicated, discipline is a central feature of the police organisation, and therefore, the ability to respect disciplinary procedures was an essential part of good policing:

> You have senior members and you're willing to respect their seniority and so forth. I think it's true that they have a framework and they take it out on the street with them also.

The centrality of discipline as an occupational characteristic of policing, and the need to

experience. However habitual adherence to disciplinary conventions becomes a matter of habit over time:

> I think it's a big part and I think it has to be there and you'll abide by it and you know that if you don't there's disciplinary actions there. You just think it is natural to do what you do and so long as you put in 100% and as long as you do things honestly the disciplinary side of things is not a problem.

Less discipline.

There is a general perception that the level of discipline within policing ranks, particularly amongst younger recruits, is declining. Many senior officers in particular indicated that the current education system is making it difficult for new recruit to understand the reasons for discipline, and as such it is difficult to adhere to disciplinary principles when they are on the job. As one male senior sergeant with 15 years experience indicated:

> I spent three months as a law instructor and I thought there was a difference in the fact that they had a lot more trouble not only accepting discipline but understanding why it was in place. Most of us when we went through it didn't really have a problem with it. It was a necessary evil whereas they would question it. They would ask why rather than just accepting what they're told.

The education system was viewed to be one key precipitant in the change of new officers. This impacts on one of the key factors of the police role, the function of discipline. As one male senior officer with 15 years experience suggested, it was difficult for many new recruits to understand the occupational motivation for a disciplinary structure within the policing occupation:

> I spent three months as a law instructor and I thought there was a difference in the fact that they had a lot more trouble not only accepting discipline but understanding why it was in place. Most of us when we went through it didn't really have a problem with it. It was a necessary evil whereas they would question it. They would ask why rather than just accepting what they're told.

This was reiterated by a male district inspector with 26 years experience, who indicated that in a Rodney King type situation, not only would a junior officer be more likely to question the directives of a senior officer today, but the senior officer would expect such a response:

> I would dare say, because I have never been put in that situation and I'm sure that no one in this room has, we are talking operationally where there is a siege situation or where there is a crime scene or whatever, and there is a person armed with a gun. I wouldn't be surprised in this day and age that if I turned round and there is a bloke running away from an armed robbery and I said to a constable, because I'm not armed, to shoot him, he would turn round nowadays and quite easily question me. I would not doubt that and would probably expect him to.

As one senior officer with 15 years experience indicated, the history of trainees has always

seen "loud mouths" who have required different levels of discipline from the word go. As such, different educational standards which encourage students to question why certain structures are be in place may only provide part of the story of the erosion of discipline.

There were important reasons seen for the disciplinary function. For instance, consider the following dialogue between two male officers with 12-15 years experience. This dialogue indicated that the level of formal discipline has been eroded somewhat over time. Thus there is little excuse for such criticisms of senior officers, given the strict "bastardisation", and the impact this has on the abuse of power, that used to occur in the past:

> A: Basically they're all keen and do what they're told. But in the old days you would walk away and think why am I doing it but you'd do it but now, "I'll do it but why? They've removed a lot of the bastardisation from the academy where if you fell asleep in class you'd be outside and run four laps. Or if you stuff up you'd truly get a whack on the head whereas now... But I was more worried about having to run laps so I'd make sure I didn't fall asleep but now you don't give a shit. "Here's a piece of paper, here you go...". But I went in there as an 18 year old boy and I reckon I came out of there a man. It made me grow up. I had to polish my shoes and I had to make my bed. They don't even have to make their bed any more.
>
> C: I'm not saying that there shouldn't be discipline there but what I'm saying is that bastardisation isn't effective. Bastardisation by its very essence is an abuse of power and you're teaching people who you are trying to train properly to use power.

This was reiterated by the following comments of a male police officer with 15 years experience, who indicated that the level of discipline has changed dramatically at the police academy since he was first exposed to police training back in the 1970s:

> Is this inherent within the individual or is this learned behaviour? Because I've been through the academy twice. I went through in 1977 when it was the old school and we all used to get up and we all used to do our chores but then again it was under threat of death. I couldn't cope to go through that again. Now it's different because when I went through the academy the second time round, it was just so lax. We had a female in my squad who did quite well academically who told an instructor "No". It was something reasonable for her to be told to do and she just said "No". And nothing ever happened to her. Whereas the first time round you used to get into trouble for standing the wrong way.

The comments of this officer indicate that traditional methods of disciplining new recruits are essential to the viability of policing as a military and organised crime control service. This was stressed by the following comments of another male CIB officer with 9 years experience who indicates that not only is the academy training lacking the discipline it once had, but this is filtering down to the operational practices of new recruits:

> You've got to have discipline. You've got to have it. And you see it in the new blokes at the station. Someone goes and tell them what to do and, "go and do this

> will you". And he says "Well what for? If I said that when I was a trainee you wouldn't be game to speak.

This issue was reiterated by the following comments of a male CIB officer with 8 years experience, who indicated that when he was a new recruit, the discipline structure was viewed as an essential element to good policing. In fact, this applied to such an extent, that questioning superiors was not encouraged:

> When I first did the job I was 25 and I had a child I was married and I'd been working since I was 16. I was too scared to say boo and most of the people I worked with were younger than me. And no worries. Go and spit polish the hub caps on that motor car. No argument. You wouldn't say why. You'd just go and do it. And now everything is questioned. The fact that everything is questioned by everyone undermines the solidarity of the job. Number 1.

The issue of the loss of militarisation however is seen to be infiltrating the police force in a number of ways. The lack of discipline for instance, is seen by some officers to be eroding. This is evident even at the training level, as was illustrated by the following comments of a male CIB officer with 8 years experience in policing:

> I don't know about the people here but I was shocked a few years after I joined. I was shocked to find out what was going on at the academy. That there was no saluting and they didn't have to spit polish their boots (they don't even wear uniform now) you know. And it was all this. You don't have to come along to classes as long as you get the marks. Well as far as I'm concerned that is not where it's at. People don't like the phrase paramilitary but whether you like it or not you have to be that way or we'll cease to exist.

The following comments of two male and one female police academy trainers with over 11 years experience in policing suggests that the issue of discipline has changed substantially over time. In this respect, the drills and "bastardisation" which characterised policing up to a decade ago has been replaced with a greater emphasis on self assessment. In addition, the fact that new recruits are seen to be more expendable than they once were at less of an expense to the police organisation, indicates that those who do not show the sufficient degree of discipline can be more readily dispensed with:

> A(M): 11 or 12 years ago it was sort of much more emphasis on sort of things like drill, bastardisation and the sort of minor things like the hands in the pockets. You had to stay back on Friday and sweep the parade grounds. It was like the army officer academy

> D(F): There's more of an onus put onto the recruits now of self discipline and the fact that they're being paid to pass the course rather than making them pass the course and if they can't shape up they ship out.

> A(M): One of the factors that influences that is that when we came in we were sworn on the first day we came in, and now they're not sworn until they finish their training. So it's easier to get rid of them. And when we joined they were

> allowed to recruit a certain number of people, recruit a number of sworn members each year. If they lost 5 at the academy there was 5 members that they lost that year. But I think now if they lose people through the academy they just increase the next intake.
>
> C(M) The worm's turned. We were under an imposed discipline system when we went through but now it's more of a soft discipline organisation. But we do still impose some discipline for minor breaches of conduct, and for major breaches as well of course which ultimately lead in termination. But we don't stand above them by telling them "you must, you must, you must" because it's left up to their own devices now. You have to make the decision whether you are going to take on this task and complete it correctly or not and if they choose to do that we've achieved our goal. But if they don't come up to standard they're scrutinised. We show them what's required and they have to come up to it.

One perspective for this change in approach to police training was the need for modern police officers to be flexible in their approach. Given the importance of police discretion in operational policing, it is important for police officers to take a critical approach to ensure that their work is done correctly, and to identify mistakes at the training phase before they become a manifest part of the behaviour of new officers. Yet this is seen to erode the traditional sense of police discipline which was once central to the police occupation. This point was mentioned by the following comments of a female police officer with 11 years experience in the Victoria Police:

> The bottom line is that it can go too far the other way. I found it quite amazing the flexibility. I'm not saying flexibility is wrong because you don't always have someone standing over beside us every time you make a decision. But at the same time there's a lot of that discipline within the police service gone now.

Others look at the issue from the point of view that in the broader community, social standards are suggesting that discipline is less important. This was illustrated by the following comments of a male IID investigator with 22 years experience in policing, who suggested that in addition to police officers being a reflection of the society from which they are drawn, the loss of traditional notions of police discipline is reflective of broader notions of lack of social discipline, particularly amongst younger people:

> That's what I said before, that we're subjects of society. When we went to school and the teacher said jump we said how high? Now when you say to them out in the academy jump they say why? They question authority. There's no difference. That's part of the society you take them from. And when I joined it was short back and sides, no square backs, spit polished boots. But now you've got to be neat. There's no spit polished boots. Things are changing. Some of it's forced on you by legislation equal opportunity and all that sort of thing (the respondent then makes reference to the situation of a sheikh wearing a turban and where he puts his badge). You can't discriminate against him because of religion to join the police force so one day there will be a policeman with a turban on his head and a badge stuck on the turban...You've got within the police force your various differences. [Those of] my age and experience are going to be different you know. They've got

> different outlooks and values, different ways of life and that sort of thing. You learn to cope with it. You learn to adapt. You've just got to be more tolerant and patient.

One of the difficulties with the issue of discipline was the issue of contradicting orders in a formal operational setting. In this respect, senior officers would be reluctant to allow a junior officer to subvert operational orders and methods of carrying out complex operational tasks even though there is a largely self disciplining regime. This issue emerged in the following dialogue between 3 male police academy instructors with between 10 and 15 years experience, which suggest that disciplinary action should be available to senior officers where the operational procedures are criticised to the possible detriment of the operation, or to the danger of fellow colleagues:

> C(M): I think if we could impose a little bit more of the negative discipline by telling them that you cannot do that, that may change. With our self disciplining system it promotes people to think for themselves when they're in a situation, whereas years ago you were put into a situation and you were looking for a guiding hand coming over our shoulder saying this is what you should now do. But now we're pushing it up to them to say you've got a situation, you deal with it and we teach them to deal with the problem. But as (has been) said if they are told by a superior go and do this, they're questioning, well hang on well why should he tell me, I don't think that's the right thing to do. He's questioning authority.
>
> F(M): Well, talking about those examples, I know if it was one of my troops, I know that they'd only do it once. For me they either tow the line from there on in. They might do it once, "listen, that's not the way it's done", because in an operational situation they've got to obey orders.
>
> E(M): If it's too much of a problem they'll go to the other sergeant and bitch. And they'll go to the senior sergeant and bitch. And it creates conflict. And that's coming from...you know we put 300 sergeants through and it's a common problem that the PCs that are coming through are undisciplined etc etc....

Thus the level of discipline associated with a traditional military style organisation is being depleted, particularly at the academy.

Recruiting and discipline.

One feature which is important in the issue of discipline is the composition or ethic of the new recruits. In this respect, many experienced officers suggested that the younger recruits were less likely to show the loyalty which traditionally attached to police work. This was commonly cited in terms of the loyalty to the job. In other words, new recruits were seen as more likely to take sick days and "let the side down" in the administrative sense. The following comments of two female and one male police academy instructors with between 11 and 15 years experience suggest, the culture displayed by new recruits indicates a degree of absenteeism which was less prominent in the past. This issue relates specifically to the issue of discipline within the work environment:

B(F): The people are different. The kids that are coming through now that are 19 or 20 are different to what we were at 19 or 20.

E(M): We would never ever take a sick day. It was just never ever heard of. At D24 recently it takes 30 or 40 to staff a channel. 9 people went sick and 7 of them were trainees. Just apathetic. Couldn't be stuffed. Not doing the job that they wanted to do and therefore they just go sick. It's a great problem out there with the young trainees. Because they've got self imposed discipline they think they can do what they like.

B(F) ...you can't mould someone who is different they are different people than 20 years ago. The people coming into the academy have been educated to question.

D(F) That's right. And they come here and some of them for the first time in their lives are subject to discipline in some form, and they think right I'll sit here and I'll be quiet. I'll do what I'm told to do here but then when they're out on the street the real person suddenly comes through and...

Training, discipline and the informal police accountability process.

The process of discipline is forged in the academy. However, as suggested above, there is a greater emphasis within the organisation of the Victoria Police on self assessment and self discipline. This emphasis commences at the police academy, where junior officers during their training are encouraged to assess for themselves their own discipline structure in relation to study and the rules which they choose to adopt under that regime. This point was indicated by the following comments of two female academy instructors with 11 years experience in policing, commenting on the study and recreation regime in place at present at the police academy:

B(F) When we went through we couldn't go out at night we had to stay here every night Monday to Friday so we studied every night. These recruits can go out and play basketball Monday night, go to the pub Tuesday night, they can go home for tea, they don't have to come back. There's a requirement for them to say "No I can't play basketball tonight. I have to stay". That's a decision they'll make, or won't they?

D(F): If they don't make it (they suffer the consequences) they'll have a report put in on them. And this is the way it is supposed to be. You're not conscripted here. If you don't want to conform, leave.

The legacy of this position is that if a new recruit shows extreme problems of discipline, stemming from this largely self regulatory regime, they will be weaned out of the system, or would have exhausted their "fun" before they have the opportunity to cause any trouble when they are assigned to duties. As the following comments from one male and one female police academy instructor with 10 and 11 years experience in policing respectively suggest, the regime is geared to provide new recruits with a less militaristic and strict disciplinary code which allows for some leeway in the way in which discipline is constructed in the academy environment. This caters for an amicable relationship between

instructors and recruits within the confines of the 20 week training period at the academy:

> F(M): What I've found in my squad is that there are a couple of people who felt they were basically prisoners here. They were able to behave but they went berserk when they got out of here. Now they are given more latitude. If they are going to muck around they will muck around with the staff.
>
> B(F): That's certainly the philosophy of the hierarchy here that this will come through in training. If they are likely to go of the rails they do it while they're here.

Some officers expressed reservations about the issue of self discipline as it operates in the contemporary policing environment. As the following comments of a male police academy instructor with 12 years experience suggest, contemporary police administrations are in a double bind. On the one hand they are forced to relax the traditional forms of discipline to cater for the new culture of recruits which is emerging in the police academy. On the other hand as an organisation, policing must maintain a certain degree of internal, organisational discipline which reflects its quasi military structure. This results in a tension which places the issue of self discipline in contradiction to the formalised forms of "order making and following" which are characteristic of the police role. This is exacerbated by the existence of high numbers of older officers who still maintain traditional policing standards as being central to the effective running of a police organisation. Thus, not only is there a conflict of ideologies on how best to instil discipline, but there is a conflict in the demands of personnel, with young recruits being weaned on new methods of self discipline which often run counter to the ideals of the "traditional" police officer:

> What we seem to have a problem here is that they have has soft disciplining. The structure behind it is great in theory but the problem is that we're not. Any discipline has to be imposed because we have breaches of conduct and behaviour. Our guidelines are absolutely clear with what we should do and sometimes we lack a little bit of direction, as if to say you've done the wrong thing but our hands are tied. And we can only just note it on a report. Why can't we go a little bit further than that? And that's what seems to be the problem because they get out there and the sergeant gets them into the office, sits them down and goes "rah rah rah rah rah". He then walks out, walks into the senior sergeant's office and says "I complain with the way the sergeant just dealt with me". And it shouldn't be the way. We should be able to drag them upstairs and point the bone at them and put them back in their place without fear of retribution. This is here in the academy. Because when it goes out there we have had complaints that junior constables complain to senior sergeants about the way the sergeant has spoken to them.

As is also suggested by this comment, new recruits are more likely to be seen to invoke complaints procedures against their superiors in relation to matters of a disciplinary nature. This issue is a common theme suggesting that there is a potential clash of cultures between the old guard of policing, and the younger, more critical recruits. This feature of contemporary policing was reiterated by the following comments of a male police academy instructor with 15 years experience in the Victoria Police:

> In my capacity as instructor I speak to advanced phased people. Senior connies approaching the sergeant rank. We do the advanced skills course which involves sergeants of three or more years, and I lecture at Airlea at the senior sergeant's management course, so I've seen the perspective right from PC level right through to the senior sergeant level. And what I've determined is that in a period where we've got a clash of cultures. These people, the recruits here in the academy, have this philosophy where they can challenge authority, they can do what they want and they can be individuals, they get out onto the station where the old crew won't allow it. There's a clash there and the sergeants and senior sergeants are saying you're letting these dickheads out here that want to question our authority. You know if I go out on a house search and I go out and tell him to go to the back door and he will bloody argue and say I did that last week why can't Bill do it? And they hate that because it's causing them problems.

This issue was supported by the comments of many police officers from other divisions within the Victoria Police. An example cited was when uniformed police were doing work which involves interaction with criminal investigations officers. In this respect, the lack of discipline and respect for superiors in different divisions was seen to affect the efficiency associated with the co-operation of police from different divisions. This point was raised by the following comments from a male CIB officer with 7 years experience in policing in Victoria:

> These are different members of course, but if the discipline isn't instilled in them when they go through the academy, how do you expect it to flow on when they get into a station. When they haven't got respect for sub-officers directly under their control. Some of them don't have respect for the CIB.

In addition, the loss of discipline amongst new recruits is seen as having the potential to impede the effective internal accountability mechanisms fostered by the hierarchical structure of policing. There are several reasons for such changes, but ultimately they are seen to compromise the existing structures of discipline within the organisation. This was outlined by the comments of a male senior officer with 17 years experience:

> I think it's part of the changing community again. It's part of your research. It's part of the students being encouraged to research and to question why should you stand up when the inspector comes in. He's no different to you or me except he's got a different coat on. "Why should I do this? Why should I do that?"

There are however advantages with the issue of loss of discipline even though there is a general reticence about the changes occurring to police organisations through the lack of discipline amongst new recruits. The perceived loss of discipline amongst the younger generation of police officers was seen to have profound effects on the way in which IID operates and is designed to maintain accountability. As the following comments of a male IID inspector with 21 years experience in policing suggest, members of the public, and in some cases fellow police officers, are less inclined to "turn a blind eye" to the deviance or perceived misconduct of police officers:

> I suspect it doesn't make the IID function any easier because I think that when

> there was more discipline in the job, in the personnel within the job, people were I guess...inclined to take a little bit more than what they do now. Now you get the young people that want to smack someone in the mouth or give them a mouth full of abuse rather than bite their tongue and go through other avenues. I think they're more disciplined when they come to us (IID) because they don't have to say anything.

Community awareness of civil rights is also seen as important in creating a perception that policing has lost its traditional levels of internal discipline. This was indicated by the following comments of a male IID inspector with 22 years experience in policing:

> I think if you said from the times of the Beech Inquiry onwards, the community awareness of their rights in relation to treatment by the police has been heightened I would say probably by 1000% in the last 15 years. If that's the case I would say you could multiply that by 4 for police members. When I first became a member of the force I was almost an unquestioning agreement with anything that was even so much as suggested to you by anyone of sergeant rank or above. Now even advice I think tends to get ignored.

In addition, one potential down side to the issue of discipline was that it had the potential to stifle the creativity of junior members in their policing role. Because the hierarchical structure promoted conformity to the will of supervisors, it was hypothesised that junior officers with new ideas on how to deal with law enforcement or crime problems may be stifled due to their lack of seniority. However, as the following comments of a female junior officer with two weeks experience suggest, the need for creativity in law enforcement often contradicts the legal mandate and the appropriate methods of policing which are developed for specific reasons. In this respect, the need for discipline to be maintained in the policing environment works to ensure that the creativity of junior officers does not become too excessive and deviate too much from accepted procedures:

> If you are doing the right thing...I'm not saying that creativity should not be encouraged. But we all sort of have to go by the same guidelines. You can't sort of come up with the guidelines yourself.

Some saw the changes in disciplinary structure and the increased questioning by new recruits as beneficial to the force. However it could not be made to impede the carrying out of orders when it was necessary. This was illustrated by the following comment by a detective inspector with 30 years experience in the force:

> I think it's a good thing, I want my kids to question me. I'm rapt that they do it because once upon a time they were to be seen and not heard. But now they have the opportunity to stand up and take their place in society. Operational needs means that we do really have to be instinctive with the word of command in a battle situation. Because if you're out there in a situation and I say "Hats off" I expect the hats to go off straight away. If I say "guns holstered" they get holstered straight away. And really I don't think I've had any problems at all with that. That's always been the same.

This was reiterated by a male inspector with 26 years experience:

> We've got to give blokes rotten jobs at times and they could quite easily turn around and say "why pick on me?" But they don't. You go to a crime scene and you say "you're the lock man. Stand over there and don't bloody move." You'll get queried. I'll sit here and call of an SOG raid just like that and say that you're not going to be able to do that premises and they'll argue for three hours with you. You know instead of in the old days when the boss turned round and said "you're not doing it" and you'd scurry out the office. But now they'll argue and I think that that's good.

Therefore, the ability to ask why is seen as a benefit of policing if it is directed at issues beyond the day to day job. However when the criticism is of facets within the police force, or occurs at the wrong time, then the junior officer is viewed to be unduly critical. This is best summed up by the comments of a male senior sergeant with 15 years experience.

> There's nothing wrong with asking why but if you want something done and done straight away for a reason. If you want to ask why fine but can you go and do the job and then come back and ask and I'll explain. They seem to lose sight of when to ask why.

This was reiterated by a male inspector with 26 years experience in the force, who suggested that while many aspects of the military style remained today, the need to support criticism within that style was beneficial to the police force:

> Because they're in the military style. There's a lot of people around who are still in the military style. I grew up in the military style and I saw the mistakes that were made. I saw when I was a young detective who wanted to raid a place and I had a boss who just turned around and said "No" and I couldn't take it anywhere. So what I think you learn as you're coming through yourself is that we now as the officers of today are more tolerant. The days of every time an officer walked past and you gave them a 21 gun salute, those days are gone. You walk around now and the blokes say hello sir and that's their little bit of respect for us or they say hello Mr ... But the days of when an officer walked into a station and you had to jump up to attention, drop 21 guns with the phone in your ear talking to someone who's reporting a rape.

GOOD COP

Individual traits.

One of the key issues for investigation was how to define what made a "good cop". This provides some interesting insights into the desired traits of police culture which can be fostered through practical experience and informal cultural values. In this respect, we see a general reiteration of the key criteria for police loyalty and support which is required in

the operational environment.

The following comments by two male police academy instructors illustrate the characteristics of a police officer who is desirable for operational work:

> E(M): I'd like a member that you can send out on his own, unsupervised, who has got the brains to do the job basically. And it's a collective number of things (autonomy).
>
> F(M): Autonomy is really important.
>
> E(M): Common sense.

As one female police officer with 5 years experience in general duties indicated, flexibility was a key characteristic of good policing. A good cop was seen to be:

> One that treats every situation as they find it. You don't have a set way to deal with things (flexibility), patience, perseverance, treat others the way you would like to be treated.

Many individual characteristics were conducive to good policing. As one female officer with 3.5 years experience in general duties indicated:

> Someone who's understanding, who is able to listen, with common sense, genuine.

However physical strength was not seen to be as important. As one female officer with 5 years experience indicated:

> I don't think that's (physical strength) important. I don't think that's got anything to do with it. It's more of a mental thing.

One of these features is courage. As the following comments of a male junior officer with two weeks experience suggest, courage is viewed as a necessary part of modern day police work:

> I think it's good to have the ability but I think it's better to have the courage and the guts to do it. And if at the end of the day if you don't you have had the balls to get up and try....

The need to ask questions and inquire about situations was also cited. This was indicated in the following comments of a female senior sergeant with 14 years experience in the force who described at length the characteristics of a "good cop":

> An inquiring mind wanting to know more and why things sort of happen. When you join the job I find that you are sort of open to everything because people like you so much. Like if you pull over people that go through a red light you sort of learn that everyone doesn't see things basically in the same way as you do. People tell lies and big lies and that sort of makes you suspicious of everyone, especially

> when you get made to look like an idiot. One of the things at work is that you don't want to be seen to be made a fool of because of some crook sitting there and telling you a load of shit basically and you're sitting there accepting all this.

Thus given the nature of the work and the problems which the failure to co-operate by members of the public can lead to, means that in some cases you cannot afford to take things at face value. You have to use the techniques you are taught to see beyond the "lies" of some members of the public.

Strength of personality is often seen to be a characteristic of good policing. In this respect, it is often forged by spending time doing the job. As the following comments by an IID investigator with 22 years experience in policing suggest, if you do not have a strong personality when you commence the job, it will soon emerge when an officer is exposed to operational duties:

> I think if you haven't you quickly develop it by reason of the nature of the duties. Predominantly police members go into general uniformed policing duties for the initial part of their career and they have to start out as fairly shy retiring types. That fairly quickly is put to rest when you start confronting day to day policing situations, where if they don't become assertive and aren't able to take control of a situation and exercise some degree of clear thinking and application to the work that is put in front of them on a day to day basis they start to struggle and get stressed because they can't cope. So you either develop it or you fail or you become "unsuitable"." It shows when they go into operational areas.

However, those who do not have strong personalities can be weaned out of policing if their characteristics are deemed to be unsuitable for the job. As indicated by a male chief inspector of IID with 21 years experience in policing:

> Now it's getting harder because...with the restructuring... and that they're trying to push all the people out of their hidey holes and get rid of them. Now they're trying to weed them out or push them back at the coal face and they have to make a decision whether to stay or go.

However, others suggested that given the diversity of the police role, and the wide range of areas of operation which encompasses policing, a good police officer must be versatile and have a number of different qualities. These points emerged from the following dialogue between two male IID officers with between 15 and 21 years experience in policing:

> C: I think police wear many different hats. You can be shy and retiring but you adapt to any situation. How you speak to a criminal is one hat, how you speak to a person living in Hawthorn or an upper class area is another hat, and how you speak to your own members in your family is another one. So the person....(develops many different personality traits).
>
> E: The police force is like 1,000 jobs within a job. When I joined...you were either general duties, CIB or you rode a motorbike and that was it. Now there could be

> 1,000 jobs you can go into...computers (etc). Every day there is a new section opening up in the police force. Some blokes fit our police cars some drive police cars. It's not a job but a career path but there's thousands of different areas (country, metropolitan).

This was reiterated by another male IID inspector with 21 years experience in policing:

> The different personalities that you have...I wouldn't say that you necessarily have to have a strong personality to be an operational police member. There's so many different things you have to do and ways that you have to adapt to achieve what you're trying to achieve. I don't know, I guess it depends on what you define as a strong personality.

This conversation amongst IID officers continued by critiquing the concept of strength of personality. As the following dialogue between two male IID inspectors with between 15 and 22 years experience suggested, the issue of adaptability to the tasks of policing is perhaps more important to contemporary policing duties than strength of personality:

> C: Perhaps the problem is the adaptability. Some people don't adapt correctly to different situations. That's why you have a lot of complaints about the way members of the public are spoken to because they start to treat all people the same. That's why you need to wear those different hats.
>
> D: Strong and "adaptable". I don't mean that you have to have that approach or personality such as at home or elsewhere but I'm talking about the ability in yourself to be assertive when you need to be strong and to be able to be strong. I really think that people who don't have that capability, and they are about, to be assertive when they need to be very quickly find themselves put under pressure in this job I think. I'm talking about your strength of character when you're confronted with an angry man. You need to have a particular ability to be able to counter that. I'm not necessarily saying that you should counter it with force or with aggression but you need to have the assertiveness in yourself to be able to stand up to something like that and deal with it.

One of the key characteristics of good policing was communication skills with members of the public. However, the importance of good communication was seen to vary from region to region, depending on the geographic composition of the area. This was indicated in the following comments of two male CIB officers with 8 and 9 years experience respectively:

> C: (Communication skills are important) but in this area you're talkin' to different people than what you would be over in Glen Waverley. You can get out here and say how's it goin' scumbag, how's your old lady and all that. You talk to someone like that over in Glen Waverley and they'll go and complain about you.
>
> E: Communication goes with trust doesn't it. If you trust the person you're sittin' next to you'll talk to him. If you don't you're not going to talk to him. It all comes back to trust and the solidarity business. If you don't trust the bloke you're not going to talk to him and you're not going to tell him anything that's meaningful.

You undermine solidarity and you undermine everything.

Education.

Many police officers interviewed suggested that formal or tertiary educational standards were not necessarily conducive to forming good police officers. This point was indicated by a range of responses throughout the interview period. The following comments of a male instructor at the police academy with 12 years experience in policing are indicative of the reservations expressed about high academic standards being a pre-requisite for police recruitment:

> I think what we're doing with recruiting I think sometimes we're going off on a wrong tangent, looking at the wrong style of person. Getting our academics. Looking at future policing. But we're forgetting that we have to put them through the base level of policing first. Common sense is I think very high on the agenda. To be able to look at a good quality of a prospective police person.

However not all police officers had reservations about the value of higher education for police work. As the following comments of a male police academy instructor suggest, higher education can be of immense value to the modern police organisation. Nevertheless, problems can exist in relation to the value to which colleagues in the force can view education. As these comments further suggest, the officer wanting to undertake further education can face ostracism from within policing.

> I started as a street cop and had a very low education level. I did study and I'm an advocate for it (education) now. I was a detective with the major crime squad and to be doing a course I was ostracised. However, because of the benefits I stuck with it and now half the people that are there are doing academic studies because they can see the value.

However, there were substantial reservations about the value of higher education, especially for new recruits to a police organisation. As the following dialogue between three male police academy instructors with between 11 and 15 years experience in policing suggest, often police officers who have or continue to pursue higher education may have difficulty in relating to their colleagues or matters associated with the operational work environment of contemporary policing:

> A(M): I've taken out academic studies and one of the biggest things...is seeing how younger people react and associating with a peer group.
>
> E(M): It's the assumption that someone with an academic qualification has got the common sense to be a good street cop...
>
> F(M): Or he's qualitatively better than someone who doesn't have it. That is a very very bad assumption.

The nature of increasing education in society also made experienced officers somewhat suspicious of those seeking to join who had tertiary qualifications. While it is recognised

generally that the level of education generally does not facilitate good policing (see below) some senior officers were confused about the motivations of educated people to join the force. As one male detective sergeant with 15 years experience indicated:

> You get people that are joining that have educational qualifications which you think to yourself, "Why would somebody with a bachelor of economics want to be a cop?" And these are people we've got. Why would somebody with a bachelor of law want to join the police? If he's (sic) any good he'd (sic) make a lot more money being a barrister than a bloke (sic) who is a cop. So I suppose that's the sort of element of doubt as to whether people are joining. Whether he's (sic) joining for an actual career or whether he's joining because things are a bit tight outside.

Some people interviewed suggested that police organisations are in a considerable double bind in relation to higher education. As the following comments of a male police academy instructor indicate, education levels can help to set standards within the police organisation. In addition, they facilitate the attraction of a broader range of individuals to police work:

> There's a down side to that too because if we say that academic qualifications are irrelevant to policing, then we have no standard. Then we're attracting the wrong sort of people to policing. Because we want to attract intelligent people to be police men and police women so there is an intelligence level that you've got to be at to even think about being a police person. Because it's a hard job but academic qualifications can be counter productive.

One of the reasons for this attitude towards formal education as a criterion for good policing is that the educational structure within the police academy is designed to instruct recruits about the nature of police work. This differs markedly from the academic method which is aimed at instructing students on application of theory, and independent research and thinking on a particular subject area. As the following comments from a male police academy instructor with 12 years experience in policing indicate, this qualitative difference between education and instruction, can make the learning process very difficult for new recruits with an academic background:

> I think the recruits get very surprised when they come in here and we tell them about how they have to knuckle down and put in some study. And academics think this must be an extremely intense course. And then when they see what's required they say "This isn't hard", so it changes their view on thinking. You don't have to be an academic to go through this job because we basically teach people what they're required to know. It changes their whole ideas on the learning process...There are more practical exercises. It's the only way to go because when I went through there was next to nothing and you could not relate what you learnt into practice. But when you saw it being done here and the similar realistic situation out in the street it related to basically the same. They can still draw parallels on what they learnt here and they come back and speak to..."it's just like what we learnt".

The result, therefore, is that academy training is geared specifically to the nature of police work, and is therefore qualitatively different from academic education. The purpose of the academy is to train individuals how to become police officers. As the following comments of a female academy instructor with 11 years experience in policing suggest, the key to the success of academy training is that the recruits find some practical application for their knowledge in the operational setting of police work:

> Their (new recruits) experience reinforces that they come back and say we've learnt this and we've gone out and put it into practice, and it's not very far from what we learnt. And sure there are some differences, and we can see there are some instances where you can cut corners out there, but you learn the right way and it's up to you to make that decision.

However, as the following comments from a male police academy instructor with 10 years experience in policing indicate, many police officers find that the academy training is largely irrelevant in practice, primarily because each station has a specific way in which to do things. Modern academy training is attempting to negotiate this situation by placing a more practical emphasis on the training of new recruits:

> When I graduated and after a couple of months, after a couple of weeks really, I didn't see much relevance to what I had learnt. Half the course was tied up with irrelevancies and your focus was to go through this week and a half two weeks, learn what you needed to learn to pass the exam so you can get out there and do the real work. The courses now aim to equip people to do the job rather than give than a magical mystery tour of the law.

One of the ways in which a more practical training regime can be developed is through the use of case studies and situational learning methods. As the following comments of a female academy instructor with 11 years experience in policing indicate:

> For example, we now do a domestic prac where the recruits intervene in a domestic situation where none of us would have done that sort of thing. So the first domestic you walk into, we've simulated that. You pick up some problems where recruits can't communicate, they've got very poor communication skills...

One way around this problem of academic as opposed to instructional training, as suggested by the following comments of a male police academy instructor with 12 years experience in policing, is to improve the ability of members to attain necessary qualifications for promotion within the force itself. This essentially necessitates increasing the educational structure within the police force to cater for new developments which require further education:

> The department's looking at qualifying members according to what area you're going to so those qualifications can be attained within the job.

Many of the key skills for policing were seen to come from the job itself, rather than any formal educational grounding. As one female police officer with 5 years experience in general duties indicated:

> You've got to have a bit of something when you join I think. I don't think everyone has the (ability) to be a good cop but I suppose they get weeded out at the end of it. Especially what you learn once you're in has a lot to do with it. You have to be open minded though.

In addition formal education was generally not viewed to be important to good police work. As the following interchange between two female officers with 3.5 years experience indicated:

> C: You might have come from a bad background or grown up in a rough area or had little education but that sometimes makes the best police.
>
> D: People who have read books all their lives or been to university, most of them will not have any idea, they can't talk to people.
>
> C: You have a lot of people at the academy who have come straight from HSC and they have had no dealings with the public, and they cannot talk to people. They've got no communication skills

This was reiterated by a male senior sergeant with 15 years experience in the force:

> Just because you have tertiary qualifications or you're really well educated doesn't mean that you've got a lot of common sense. When you're in a job that's 95% common sense a bloke that's only got 5th form standard may be a lot more sensible than a university graduate: 95% common sense.

The consensus was that the majority of the best education for police officers emerged from on the job training. As the same senior officer indicated at a later stage in the same interview:

> You do get a certain degree of knowledge and in the police force in particular. If you have all the knowledge in the world but no enthusiasm you're useless. The converse is that you can have all the enthusiasm in the world but no knowledge; you're dangerous. So you need a combination of both. Knowledge is basically...you have a lot of in service courses now which are good but basically the experience is doing what you do on the job.

The perception of education for police officers extended to the use of police time in pursuing further qualifications while an officer was in the force. As one male detective sergeant with 15 years experience indicated, many police officers may be reluctant to pursue university qualifications whilst on the job because the culture of the force does not generally approve of tertiary education as a positive or necessary requirement for police work:

> I think people that don't use the approved study leave because other people will think, because they think that they're using the job and we have to carry them. We don't have to carry them really because we've got sufficient people to work the rosta anyway...you sit down and look at the amount of work and the amount of

> people you have to have to do a degree while still carrying on a full time job. I admire those people that have got the (desire) to go off and better themselves provided they are going to use it in the right way. And that's to help the police force because you do need people who are educated. We do need them because, as we said before, society's changing. A lot of our crimes now are fraud related and yet we've got prosecutors who may be good prosecutors who can't prosecute a fraud brief. We've got investigators who are top investigators and yet they shy away from fraud briefs. We need those people that really need that expertise to relate to the crimes that are being committed now.

Therefore while tertiary education was not seen as essential to general policing duties, it was a valuable asset for effective and specialist police activities which required higher degrees of technical and legal knowledge. However, even in light of this feature, officers would be generally reluctant to pursue such study because they would be seen within the force as a liability on resources.

Junior officers, and formal or informal training.

For junior officers, the perception of on the job training was different. In this respect, while the need for such training given the complexities of police work was unquestioned, junior officers were not viewed to be part of the police force. In some cases criticism was expressed over the way in which certain stations excluded junior officers from the general policing business. The result was that in some cases, work experience in a police station was a difficult process which did not lead to much learning for the new officer. This concern was expressed in the following comments of a female junior constable with two weeks experience:

> I think it was harder in that week out (at the station) because we weren't really treated as police. We weren't really treated as civilians. We were sort of half in between. We weren't totally involved in what was happening at the police station. We were sort of on the outer. And it was sort of hard to get other people, police, around you to relax and talk to you and tell you things.

This point reiterates that police culture can have an impact in marginalising new comers in certain situations. However this perception of on the job training was certainly not a uniform matter for all new police officers. For instance, one male junior constable with two weeks experience indicated:

> I found it totally different at the station I went to. You were involved in everything. If you had a question ask it, "We'll sit down tell you something, or explain something to you". They'd take you around the local area and show you where this goes on and this goes on.

In terms of completing formal training there were seen to be ideals which junior police officers received through their academy training which were likely to change once the officer reaches their station. The result of this is that on the job training may alter the attitudes of individual police officers. As such, it was difficult for junior police officers to determine exactly how they would carry out their job, and how they would relate to their

supervisors. In particular, it was difficult to estimate how they would select an appropriate "role model" in the police force, and the implications this selection process would have for the individual's future career. This point was raised by the following comments of one male and one female junior officer with two weeks of operational experience in the police force:

> F(F): At the moment we're probably about as motivated as we're gonna get as far as that's concerned. We're all fresh out of the academy. We all want to be the best police people that we can be and the instruction that has been given is to try and do it this way. And as I said before the only way we're gonna know if we can do it that way is through experience.
>
> A(M): When we get out into the station though we will be working with senior members. And we've got to start following their lead, and if we get a role model.
>
> F(F): But you don't have to follow their lead.
>
> A(M): That's what they said to us you've got to pick someone that's a good role model. You've always got something to follow on. You've got to get it in your own mind though.

Part of the dilemmas junior officers therefore face is selecting an appropriate role model who respects their ideals of policing. In some cases there are potentially negative role models who can influence the new officer's perceptions of police work.

One of the warnings which emerged for junior officers is the perception that the ultimate learning is done in practice, rather than at the academy. As such, there are certain short cuts in procedure which are highly necessary tools for operational police work. The general perception therefore is that the majority of learning takes place at the station which the new officer is assigned, with academy training providing the general tools for police work. This point was illustrated by the following comments by a female junior officer with two weeks experience:

> There were a few (more senior officers) that said your learning starts once you're out of the academy. But then I had one bloke say whatever they teach you in 20 weeks won't do anything in the real world. But then I had one bloke say well they're teaching you the right way but you've got to follow short cuts. So learn the right way first and then if you want to short cut then you've got to live with it and it comes back on your head.

Thus the general perception is that there is a great deal of discretion associated with operational procedures, many of which are learned in a theoretical context at the academy, while others are learned more in practice. The dilemma for new police officers however is that some of the procedures learned on the job can have negative repercussions, particularly if they lead to individuals taking short cuts if formal procedure. The result is that if the junior officer is advised to taking short cuts, if they are negative repercussions this must be worn by them. This was reiterated by the following comments of another female police officer with two weeks operational experience:

> That's what they said at the Academy. You can short cut if you like but then if something goes wrong then you have to account for why you did that short cut. You've been taught the right way and it's up to you whether you do it or not.

Yet academy training was seen as critical for new police officers. As such, not only does it provide the necessary knowledge for new recruits about what goes on in a police station, but it provides the theoretical tools on how police officers should exercise their powers. Despite the brevity of the course, the following two junior officers describe how necessary police academy training is:

> F(F): You've got to know it. If you've got no idea you're just like every Joe Citizen you really have no understanding.
>
> D(F): You are given a lot of power and you've got to know how to use it.
>
> F(F): It's a really brief course and they just touch on everything so you can't really forget about it. And you learn a lot more when you get out. 20 weeks is a very short time.

This creates a dilemma for junior police officers. On the one hand there is a need to consider what previous education has taught individuals about certain social and operational methods of doing police work. On the other hand, because the majority of police training occurs on the job there is a risk that previous education will be seen irrelevant when new officers are in the operational setting. The result is that supervising officers may advise junior officers to ignore their previous education in learning the tools of the trade. As such, junior officers may have the problem of deciding who to believe is correct in certain aspects of police work: their operational supervisors or their previous training and learning. In this respect, the following comments of a female junior officer with 2 weeks experience are illustrative of how to negotiate this dilemma:

> I would say that you are going to be under some pressure on how you will do things and if you have the back bone to stand up and say this is how I was taught, or at least for a couple, and let me decide whether I want to short cut or not. If it's taken me a week longer to finish this brief compared to you well then I might have a bit of a look and see what I come up with. Do it the right way to start with and then when you know the difference it's up to you.

Good Supervisors.

On the job training was seen to necessitate good supervisors in theory. However the practical experience of many officers suggested that this was not always the case in policing. This was evidenced by the two anecdotes provided by two male senior officers with over 15 years experience in the force:

> C: Although the hands on experience, for example training graduates who finish in Friday and line up at Fitzroy on the Monday, it won't be sergeants who are training them it will be connies that are training them. And that's one of the fall backs of the system. But that's probably one of the fall outs of the training. We've

got the inexperienced members.

E: It works both ways. Like I spent a lot of time working out at Knox. And there are a lot of connies and senior connies out there and supervision has taken out a whole new meaning out there. Whereas in town you get a lot of blokes that might not have the knowledge but they've got the enthusiasm. So you sort of reign them back and so on. "This is how you do it". Out there you might have all the knowledge but you've got bugger all enthusiasm. And probably some sub-officers are too. Sometimes I think supervising is probably easier around town than it is in the outer suburbs.

Much of the issue of supervision and how far to take on the traits of a supervisor is the strength of will of the individual officer. However because junior officers have a range of supervisors, each with different levels of experience and different attitudes to the job, much is left up to the discretion of the junior officer on who to consult, and who's image to follow. This was evidenced by the following dialogue of three senior officers (one female, two male) with 14 - 17 years experience responding to the question whether a good recruit can be ruined by a poor supervisor:

C: One of the attributes of the good recruit is strength of character. Now it may be that for a short time they will be with a supervisor that he will have the character that he should have in the first place.

F: He doesn't necessarily work with that same supervisor all the time. In different shifts the person that they didn't like on one shift you probably make up for it on other shifts.

B: The troops, they work out who they can get advice from and they know whether it's good or bad from the result. So that if you find out whether the supervisors are lazy or whatever, no one confides in him. No one puts their corro through to him.

So poor supervisors, like whistle blowers, can be ostracised by the informal culture of the force, or, as in this case, by the informal consultative culture which the junior ranks form on the job.

The additional concern with supervisors and their capacity as informal instructors in the policing enterprise relates to the competency of supervisors. Because of the degree of informal training in policing, it is critical that supervisors are not only capable in what they do, but they convey that to those who are under their supervision. In this respect, the perceptions of new recruits about the quality of supervisors are of importance.

Most new recruits suggested that policing, like any other occupation, is likely to have people who are not geared to the supervisory role as supervisors. Some junior officers indicated that it was highly likely that they would come across sub-standard supervisors during their policing career. The reasons for this were generally seen to be promotion according to rank structure and length of service, rather than promotion through ability. This issue was raised by the comments of a female junior officer with two weeks operational experience:

> You can go up the rank structure and you can be a complete idiot to a certain extent. But you're going to get certain people that you mightn't work as well with. You have to deal with that.

Some however indicated that criteria for selection in positions of seniority was altering, to reflect broader social notions of ability and qualifications. This was seen to be an emerging characteristic right across the criminal justice system, particularly in areas which have traditionally had seniority based on length of service, rather than qualifications. This point was evident in the following comments of a male junior officer with two weeks operational experience:

> It has changed a little bit because I know in the prison system, it is not working on seniority any more for the officers. It's working on your qualifications. And that's happening in the police force. We're encouraged now to get qualifications and jump ahead of the ones who have just been lingering around for the last 10 years.

Traditional rank structures however still play a large part in the promotion process in contemporary policing. In this respect, as one male junior officer indicated, the existing procedures do ensure a certain degree of accountability in the promotion process which weeds the potentially bad supervisors out:

> By the same token, no one's going to get above their rank if they're not qualified. If they haven't done the job they're not going to get the promotion.

One of the key problems relating to supervisors is that they are seen very much by the lower ranks to be unmanaged. This point was raised by several lower ranking police officers, such as the comments of this male senior sergeant with 15 years experience in the force:

> One of the disciplinary problems I've found is that no one manages the supervisors. Once you get to the rank of sergeant, and if you (play up) no one ever seems to do anything about it. The senior sergeant and the sergeant are generally (more akin) than the sergeant and the connie. The senior sergeant is a lot less likely to say to the sergeant that they are useless, pull up your game or get out.

Good IID Investigators.

Some qualities were seen to be different for good investigative work in an internal investigations capacity. The following comments of two male IID investigators indicate that there is a need for a good investigator to combine the features of impartiality and fairness to be able to perform the task adequately. This is different from the general tenor of police work, because IID is ultimately accountable to the peer culture of policing in order to succeed. As such, IID investigator have the potential to be marginalised for their investigative work within the organisational structure of policing itself:

> E: I think to be a good complaints investigator, there's two things you've got to really maintain, and that's fairness and impartiality. You can never sway one way or the other because you never do your job properly. And we have a system of

justice. We collect the evidence as best we can. And if they beat it, you know we usually congratulate them, we shake their hand. They go back to work and that's the end of the game. We play by the rules and you abide by the rules. If you're going to hold a grudge you're not doing you're job properly. You've got to say all right, you beat it fair and square, good luck to you, back to work and you've got to accept that. If you don't you're not doing your job properly. You're impartial. You're showing impartiality towards the complainant. He hasn't been able to satisfy the jury beyond reasonable doubt, end of story.

C: Which may in turn be different to how police perceive members of the public. If a person is investigated and you believe other than this circumstance... If you're dealing with a criminal who you have formed for whatever reason that he is guilty and he gets off, well that may influence your decision making investigations in the future. I think there would be a different feeling of being let down by the criminal justice system in that regard. You've mentioned perceptions that you've already spoken to people about that where in this organisation you wouldn't have the same perception because you've got a code of ethics and you've got to.(be)..following a certain line of investigation, not swaying it one way or the other.

E: We have an image to live up to. Here it's like rent a mongrel. Years ago you would go out to a district and you'd go whack whack whack and charge them all. And the poor district sergeant would say "Bad luck Johnny, they're mongrels. Look at what they've done to you". We've really got to try and be very very fair, because if we go the other way... I think we've got to maintain our credibility, try and maintain it throughout the force and establish ourselves amongst the blokes that we do the right thing. If we do that, we've succeeded, if we don't, if we shit in someone's face in here (you're not going to get on). You try and do the best you can.

This indicates that internal investigations of members of the police force are qualitatively different from standard criminal investigations against members of the public. The characteristics of this difference, specifically the expectation that a charge against a police officer is less likely to be upheld in court, are outlined by the following comments of a male IID investigator with 22 years experience in policing:

You're approaching the job in that way and I think if you had that sort of approach you wouldn't really survive. I think there's two factors in that. I think in relation to the court results I really think you have a heightened perception of the likelihood of the police beating it at first instance because (of) the attitudes to the judiciary to police in relation to members of the public. Matters go to trial and to the jury. The complainants are less than desirable types in a significant number of occasions, particularly in relation to intimidation and assault and things of that nature. If he comes in to report his motor car being stolen, he doesn't generally get pulled over the counter and get beaten. You haven't got that sort of person in the witness box in the County court. You've got some person who has got 3 pages of priors, covered in tattoos from one end to the other, hasn't had a bath for a week, fronts up in jeans and a T shirt. That's really where the inherent problems will lie. I think that the mentality of 90% of the blokes here is that they see themselves just as a

messenger of either good or bad news at the end of it as far as the members are concerned. They merely go about the job of hearing the witnesses, proceeding through the evidence looking at it objectively and saying what's admissible and what's not, and formulating an appropriate recommendation on the basis of the evidence that's available to them once they've examined all avenues. If that comes down against a member, well they go out and hear other charges.

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SECTION THREE: CHANGES IN POLICING

The following section summarises workshop data relating to three major changes in the policing environment experienced by the participants and believed by them to be particularly significant. While the issues described here have been addressed in the previous section, it is useful here to reiterate them and give them greater depth, given their importance to the men and women who took part in the workshops. The changes dealt with here concern: the impact of 'doing policing' upon the individual; the changing dimensions of public support and community rights; and issues concerned with evolving forms of accountability.

POLICING AND CHANGING THE INDIVIDUAL

One important feature was whether individuals perceived that they changed once they entered the job. This is a central facet of police culture, as it indicates that the culture of the occupation has a bearing on the overall make up of the individual once they become acculturated.

Changed perceptions of junior officers.

Junior officers indicated that they had often received advice from friends that policing would change the way they are as a person. In this respect however, some were reluctant to accept the comments of their non-police peers. Many of these changes were perceived by the peers of new officers to be central to the role of law enforcement, rather than part of any fundamental change in personality brought about by the policing enterprise. However the nature of the work which police officers are exposed to does have some impact on the way in which police officers perceive the world. Thus, rather than the personality of the individual changing, the attitudes and range of experiences the individual faces has the ability to bring about change in some people. This was illustrated by the following comments of three male probationary police officers with 2 weeks experience:

> D (M): I think a lot of people believe that (police officers are different). A lot of my friends have said "don't change". Change into what? You become a mongrel?
>
> B (M): People say don't change, but with all my friends their personality hasn't changed whatsoever. It's just what they do has changed and the general public are not overly fond of what we do and (sic), enforcing the law. And they don't like us doing that sort of work. Well, our sort of attitudes, like that. They sort of have different attitudes when it comes to the law. But personality wise I don't think you change a great deal. It's just that your views on the law all of a sudden change.
>
> H (M): I definitely think that it could not be a true statement to say that we are different from other people before we joined. Because I look at myself and everyone else and we're just as normal as everyone else. The thing is you do change when you come in because not only as B said, but everyone in their suburban homes or wherever, they might...only see what they want to see. Whereas

> when we've gone out into the community, we can see a lot of other things that everyone else doesn't see. I mean even now coming from the academy I've seen things that I had no idea would go on. You know it just opens your eyes up. And it has to change you in some way. You do have to change.
>
> E (F): I wouldn't say that I've changed at all. I would say it's opened my eyes to what's going on around you. Like you know what happens but you just don't know how often it happens. That's what strikes me, it's everywhere
>
> F (F): (Such as) street kids living in the city square. You wouldn't know that it's happening as frequently as they do. And the general public do not realise that it's happening as frequently as they do.

Indeed, some officers were actively conscious of not changing despite warnings in their police academy training that the job was likely to change their attitudes about certain people in society who come into contact with police officers. This was noted by the following comments of a male probationary officer with two weeks experience:

> When I went into the academy I said to myself I didn't want to change. One of the statements said to us when we were doing defence tactics or something was to deal with some of the people you've got to change. So you have to change to deal not with most of the people but the other side.

However, despite the perceptions from some of their peers that they would change when they join the police force, some officers indicated that their peers outside the force supported their decision to join. The following comment by a female junior officer with two weeks experience indicates that her general peer network were highly supportive of her decision to become a police officer:

> My friends think it's fantastic, and they are proud of me and think the whole idea is great. And I guess that that's the part I look from with everyday people with respect to the police. Whereas if you've got a lot of friends who are offending all the time it will be different.

Indeed, some junior officers indicated that many of their peers from outside policing merely see police work as a job. Therefore, the nature of police work was not seen to change their views on how their friends had become once they joined the force. Indeed, there was a general perception by junior officers that police work is seen by their peers to be merely another job, and as such, has no impact on the way in which people view the world. This point was illustrated by a female probationary officer with two weeks experience:

> A lot of my friends don't really see me being overcome by the job. They see me as still being the same person that just goes somewhere different to work. A lot of my friends have never had dealings with a friend dealing with the police force or anything like that and in a way they think it's a bit of a joke. It's just something different. Some of them are worried about me when I go out or things like that, but, they see it as a job.

Nature of change.

A number of officers indicated that they had changed in a variety of ways since joining the job. Central to this is the nature of the work involved and the need to be "tough in your environment, and the need to develop strong peer support within the job to assist with the difficulties of operational work. The nature of the occupation and the hazards faced on the job therefore helps to develop a sense of solidarity amongst the individuals to assist in coping with the day to day working environment. This is best illustrated by the following dialogue between three female officers with between three and five years experience:

> A: To a degree you've got to have similarities (in the job). We are still different. We are individuals but there's something that changes you all. There's something in common (once you join).
>
> B: You toughen up a bit.
>
> A: Yeah, you all toughen up and you get more aware of things and...more suspicious of things.
>
> C: If there's two of you working together and you get a situation where one's coping with it and one's not kind of coping with it so much you kind of pull together and say "Come on, I've got to get you through this", and I think that's how you build up the similarities between one another working together.
>
> D: I think it's the kind of job where you can't do everything individually. You have to have the support of everyone you're working with.

This seemed to emerge particularly in relation to the claims of senior police officers with considerable experience in the force. As one male senior officer with 17 years indicated, although many police would like to consider that they had special characteristics which were conducive to police work, there is a lot of naivete which appears to permeate the lower ranks. This impacts on the way in which older officers perceive the motivations for many younger officers joining the force:

> I think a lot of us would like to think that we were (different or special). We look at some of the young blokes and think was I that bad? was I that naive?

Peer support.

One feature of the occupation which is important in fostering police culture is the alienation from family and peers once officers have entered the job. This is important, as it means the police officers are increasingly dependent on peer support for social as well as occupational reasons. This feature was prominent by the responses of many officers, who suggested that both family and friends had altered reacted to changes in the respondent when they joined the force. As one female officer with 3.5 years experience in the force indicated in relation to her family's perceptions:

> I think they think you have become a different person. Straight away they said you have changed. Nothing seems to bother you because you have so many different things going through your mind. The small things at home they can wait kind of thing. And it was like we never know when you're coming home. We never know when you work ... and ... I think you should move out. Not that they disowned me. It was just that they would lay awake at night just waiting for me to come home at 2 and 3 in the morning and they couldn't cope with that.

And another female officer with five years experience:

> When you join I think everyone gets told that you are going to change. You are going to lose a lot of your friends...but I have lost steady friends and I suppose in a way I have changed. In myself I've changed a bit but I don't think I've changed towards any of my friends or that but when it comes to meeting new people I've got a different outlook. When you meet new people...when someone says she's a police officer and they say "Well I got a ticket last week and I don't like coppers", that's what you're always wary of. You're wary of their reactions. You're on the verge of telling people don't tell them (you are a police officer).

However not all senior officers indicated that their peers were generally police officers. For instance, one district inspector with 26 years experience outlined his peer networks within the police force as follows:

> I can honestly say that I have no friends in the police force. I had one and he stepped in front of a truck and got killed. I've always been friendly with everyone but I don't have someone that I would call a friend. That would be a rarity for people from when I joined and I was a rarity because I didn't drink as well but that's not uncommon now.

And another with 30 years experience was conscious of maintaining strong friendship networks outside the job:

> I joined the CMF at about the same time that I joined the police force. I developed a wide range of friends in the normal public and maintained those friends. And possibly I would be a little like you. I don't socialise with policemen off duty, mainly civilians, teachers, truck drivers, whatever. But I've maintained a lot of civilian affiliations, you know, and this is one of the things I tell my young prospective recruits. Maintain your civilian affiliations. Stay in your sporting clubs. Stay so you can keep your feet down as a human being so you don't become totally nave blue.

However this may have been a legacy of the particular nature of the job at inspector level. As one inspector with 26 years experience suggested in response to the previous quotation:

> Do you find now that that's more because of your rank than it was previously. In inspector rank you get to that point of cut-off where you're an inspector now, you're part of management, you're a sir. You tend to change a bit of your lifestyle. As a senior sergeant in charge of a station you're still very close to your troops

and you go to social functions with the troops.

When probed about this issue, it was agreed that the higher up the hierarchy, the more likely people were to have independent networks from the job. Take for example the comments of a male district inspector with 30 years experience:

> Also as a young police officer both in the CI branch and in uniform it tended to occupy all your time and on your days off you'd wander back down to the police station hoping to get that bit of correspondence done and you didn't tend to worry about it. But all of a sudden you go to the local watering hole where the police and the people connected to the police - the local JP that got on with us and the crooks - and I think that the intelligence gathering aspect in those days was far greater on the personal level than what it is today.

However, not all agreed with the perception that more senior police officers would have fewer outside contacts in policing. The following comments from a sergeant with 15 years experience in general duties policing indicate that this is common amongst several professions other than policing. Therefore, contrary to the quote above, the more senior the police officer, the more likely that the majority of their social contacts would be with fellow police officers. This was seen to be a way in which the informal culture of policing assisted in supporting fellow officers. Often, non-police people would not understand the nature of police work. So police officers would fraternise with their peers both within and outside the job to aid in sharing life experiences which were common to their profession:

> Speaking of my own personal experiences and those of my friends, the vast majority of my friends with the exception of one or two are police. That's not because I don't trust non-police. It's just that I, like the vast majority of the population, develop their friendships at work. It's also the fact that you've got to talk about something. Now police, they share their common experiences at work... You probably find that with doctors and lawyers. It's something in any area where you do specialised work. They'll have contacts with their friends in that particular work. Even down to bar work you can work certain hours and go out after your bar closes to another. The other thing about the culture is that police are constantly under scrutiny. They relax and talk about the job and things which you really can't speak to other people about.

The feature of having shared experiences to relate to was important in fostering peer relationships outside of actual police work hours. As one male sergeant with 12 years experience indicated, it was quite possible for work place experiences to distance people from each other as they got older. The desired response was therefore to fraternise with work partners who understand what you have to say in social settings.

> When you first join the job too you are reasonably young. I was 19 when I graduated so you're in that culture of going to parties, 21sts, things like that. When you first joined you are quite prepared to listen to everyone's story about how their uncle got booked and he wasn't speeding and all that sort of stuff then after a while it starts to wear thin and grate on you so you look for friends that are in the job and aren't going to bore you to death with that sort of crap or a small nucleus

> of friends within the job who understand what you do and don't make it a big issue.

Peer support therefore was seen to be an important feature of police culture, because it enabled "war stories" of police work to be conveyed and understood by people who are familiar with the nature of police work. Take for example the following comment by a male detective inspector with 25 years experience, after conveying a story about entering into an armed robbery scene armed only with a clipboard:

> It does become a culture there because I truthfully can't go home and convey to my wife or my friends nowadays what that is like and explain that sort of thing to them. I can talk around and tell (a fellow officer) how I shit myself this day bringing that bloke back in or whatever and he can empathise with that. I go and tell the people at home about that same story it's for a laugh. But they don't appreciate that that's taken a big chunk out of me whereas (a fellow officer) realises that I'd be doing the same as you in that position. I tell it to other people as a funny story and that's where I think a bit of that culture and that loyalty comes back. You've got to be in these positions to relate them to people. It's like a doctor talking about a triple bypass that's never been done and it's the greatest thing since sliced bread. You tell that to a fellow surgeon and he can appreciate it. And that's an area where culture does come back in. And that loyalty and solidarity.

This feature was seen to be particularly relevant in the policing environment, given the fact that members of the public were often critical of their own or their friend's experiences with the police and was a common response tendered by respondents of all ranks.

However strong networks of peers who are outside the force were seen to be beneficial in helping to remove some of the negative aspects of police culture from individual officers. Indeed, as one male inspector with 25 years experience indicated, strong networks of friends outside the police force can reduce the possibility of cynicism becoming a tool of the trade which you bring home with you after hours:

> I don't think we are more cynical than others. In actual fact it is surprising that when you do have a good circle of friends outside the police force which a lot of us do have, you can find a lot of people outside the police force that do get much more cynical and much more set in their ways. And you think "Gee, you should be a copper instead of me the way you carry on." And it's amazing, people seem to see that but when you mix with the general public there's a lot of people out there who really have more narrow minded views than we as policemen have and we've been in it for 22 years.

This was reiterated by the following comments of one female and one male junior officer with two weeks experience in operational policing:

> F(F): You still probably take the suspicion home but really try and leave work at work. And they really try to emphasise that you gave friends outside the police

> force. So you have a balance and you're not just living, eating, breathing crooks, crime, and police mates. And you've got to have a balance. And that was fairly well emphasised (at the academy).
>
> A(M): When you've got the opportunity it is also good to keep up the old football ties so that you're associating with people outside the police force and seeing things from outside the uniform.

The structure of police work, which includes the hours of work and periods of leave, was also seen to be conducive to developing friendships on the job which continues after work hours. As such, because of the hours of shift work and the nature of holidays, it was often difficult to sustain friendships with people who were not police officers. As such, the nature of the work itself was conducive to fostering a greater level of support and peer association with fellow police than with civilians. As one male sergeant with 17 years experience in policing indicated:

> We've got 9 weeks leave a year. Most other jobs have got 4 weeks. So they put their leave together and on their days off you have a look on the roster. "Who's got a day off on Wednesday?" You know so they'll go and knock around together on the Wednesday...I know people that knock around together, have their holidays together. A lot of the young blokes at work organise cruises together because their holidays fall on the same time. They'll work the night shifts together and at the end when they get their 6 days off together they go and do something, especially the young blokes that come down from the country and we're a city station. They know absolutely no one apart from the blokes that they work with and they get pretty close with them I suppose.

This feature was therefore seen to prevent police officers from maintaining contact with old peers. Because the hours and the holidays were sporadic compared with other occupations, it was seen to be natural that police officers would develop peer networks which exist outside working hours. However not all people agreed with the extent of this development of peer networks. One district inspector for instance suggested that he felt the perception that the off duty togetherness is not there as it used to be. As such, the notion that individualism was taking over from the older conception of policing as a collective "life style" was eroding in the current policing environment.

Negative perceptions of police culture and peers

Perhaps the greatest down side to the problem of developing such strong peer networks within the work place is the development of suspiciousness in the minds of many police officers about members of the public who do not understand the nature of the police role. This can affect the relationships which officers develop outside of working hours, and was evident in the following comments of a male district inspector with 25 years experience:

> (I'm in various other organisations) and I trust no one. I don't trust their word. I don't trust anything. I'm suspicious of every action they make. I'll put it back to something that's occurred in the past. Are they really having a shot at me or are

> they just making a statement that that had happened to me a couple of years ago? So I'm extremely suspicious of everything outside the job.

This feature of meeting new people also suggested that people knew that they were being introduced to a police officer. It was almost a sixth sense that new friends could detect that they were being introduced to a police officer. This automatically led to stories about problems these people had faced with police in the past. As one female officer with 3.5 years experience indicated:

> when you meet someone and they straight away know you're a police person. They are like..."This happened to me, this happened to my friends" and you just don't want to talk about it...you just don't care.

This was reiterated by a male senior sergeant with 15 years experience in the police force:

> Where it gets up my nose is just where people are looking for ammunition against the police force. If people have a legitimate grievance it's not a problem.

Thus the perceptions of the level of suspiciousness police officers face varies depending on the perception of threat and worry associated with the public conception of police officers. This point was exposed in more detail by the following comments of a male district inspector with 25 years experience:

> Look I'm constantly reminded of this. It will get to the stage where I sit with my back to everyone and sit with my back to the wall and really relax but I find that I'm frequently reminded of who I am and then I think "Oh shit, everyone thinks I'm a copper". I can't afford to fart or pick my nose or whatever. Sometimes at the end of the day and especially in the army days I would go the opposite way. What you really get pissed off with is someone's asking you what's your opinion of this at the party. And I'd love to turn round and tell you this then all I am is a lowly inspector and for all I know you had dinner with the police commissioner and you have been playing up with his missus for the last three weeks. And the greatest of mates. I sit there and I say how much can I tell this man? How much can I tell him what I really think because I can get crunched on from a great height? That's a tradition of the police force. You can't speak your own mind and have your own feelings. We've got ingrained in us.

There is a pervasive perception that members of the public hold stereotypical notions of the police which automatically marginalises individual police officers from feeling comfortable in social situations. Such was the wide spread nature of this perception that it emerged as one of the most significant findings of the study. The result is that in the social setting, not only to individual members of the public hold these stereotypical notions, but conversation invariably revolves around how bad or negative the police as a generic entity can be in their dealings with members of the community. The constant reference to this negative public perception of police work leads many officers to become further dependent on their immediate peers for social support, at the expense of social and cultural marginalisation from non-police members.

The characteristics and extent of this situation of marginalisation in social settings was illustrated in the following comments of a male CIB officer with 8 years experience in the Victoria Police:

> Every bloke on this table would be able to tell you a story about he's been out at a wedding or a 21st or a party and someone's said a mate of mine got this and I got booked by. And you sit there for half an hour listening to their bull shit. Perhaps he got booked for doing the wrong thing. "Yeah but..."

The result leads to the practice of police officers, who are likely to meet new people in a recreational or social setting, to conceal their occupation for fear of negative repercussions from members of the public who are critical of the police role. This is seen to exacerbate the already existing rift between police and the community. This issue is illustrated by the following comments of two male CIB officers with between 5 and 10 years experience in policing:

> E: If I go anywhere that's a new place I won't announce to anyone that I'm a policeman. I don't like that. I'm married to a police woman and I don't like to speak about police work at home.
>
> B: You can't avoid it. Someone's got to know don't they. You don't walk around and say I'm a policeman; they know.
>
> E: I've spoken to people before at length. You can speak to them at length and you're having a beer and you're having a bloody great time. And then two hours down the track they'll say "Well what do you do for a living?" And I say "I'm a public servant." But there's always some clown standing close by who say (sic) "Yeah, yeah. The public servant. The public servant. What do you mean?" And they'll guess straight away, "Are you a copper?" "Yeah I am actually when I'm at work." That's the end of the day for me. I don't know how many times people. Even if they don't mean to be like that they suddenly clam up and they don't tell you about the time they bloody did this, when they got out at the traffic lights and threw a can of coke on the bloke because he cut em off. Something like that. They'd be telling you that story up until that point then all of a sudden we're no longer human. Of course that's to accentuate the problem but it happens and it's happened to every one of us at some stage.

The implications of this for the behaviour of many members of the public is that they either marginalise police officers from legitimate social activity, or alter their behaviour for fear that they are likely to be seen to be in breach of the law and face some formal repercussions in a social situation. These dual points were illustrated by the following comments of a male CIB officer with 8 years experience in the Victoria Police:

> A few weeks ago, the same thing. I didn't know anyone at the wedding except for my wife's friends and it had got to about 11 o'clock at night and one of the guys turned around to his mates and we were getting along real fine and talking about drag races up and down High St and all that sort of thing. I was having a good old laugh at it and I told them all about my younger days and what we used to get up

> to. And he'd turned around to one of the other blokes and said we're going out for a smoke, do you want to come out? And I said no I don't like that sort of shit. You know, I don't agree with it. And someone said fancy tellin' him, he's a copper. And these blokes just about fell off their chairs. And they come back in after they'd been out and had their smoke and they sat up the other end of the table. And I've thought I've had enough of this, I'll get into 'em. And I said come on you blokes you were me best friends before and now you don't want to know me. And they said oh oh oh. And after that they were fine, just completely relaxed.

These issues were seen to be a legacy of prevailing, and increasing lack of respect for the police in contemporary society. The implications of this perceived change in attitude towards the enterprise of policing, and those who are employed in that profession, are highlighted by the following comments of a male CIB officer with 8 years experience in policing, who suggests that it is becoming harder for police to trust members of the public, and this increases the reliance on peer support for individual police officers:

> The thing is I feel that the numbers we've got on the ground, as we said before, are getting thinner all the time. The people you can trust and the whole job seems to be closing for me. I don't know about the others here but for me the job seems to be closing in a little bit too much. It's going in a bit too tight in that it seems that everybody is looking at you all the time. And I'm talking about this business of people having conversations with you and backing off. 10 years ago there was an honour to being a policeman. When I was a kid to have a policeman at your party was just...you'd follow the guy around. You'd stand in his shadow, I mean. And now I'm not proud of it enough. I'm too scared to tell people I'm a policeman when I'm out because of the reaction that you get. You wear that around. You throw that in your ruck sack. And you wear what goes on at court and you throw that in the back with the stress as well. And then when something goes wrong and you look for people to support you, you're on your own. I don't mean about the people you work with. They'll always support you. The people you're on the shop floor with every day, they support you. But the hierarchy, the people who are supposed to look after you. In industry if you work in a factory you've got a bloke employed there. There's always one bloke or one woman employed there to look after your well being. If you can't bloody solder that last terminal because you've had a bad night you go and see the person and they sit you down and have a chat to you. In the police force we've got a welfare section. Welfare is just before you jump off the roof, and even then coppers aren't willing to go and see welfare. What we need is...what we used to have and what we still need is that support form the hierarchy. People that are willing to support you, willing to keep an eye on you not because of what you might do wrong but to see how you're gettin' on. If you need a bit of support, "How're you goin'?" No one ever comes down here and says "Listen mate, what's happenin'? Tell us what's bugging you".

There are several legacies of this marginalisation. First, police officers are no longer seeing themselves as being proud of their occupation and what it stands for. The constant perception that members of the public are critical of the police leads to an expectation that in the mind of the police officer that they are different, deviant, and unworthy of the usual forms of social interaction in a recreational setting. This creates a situation where

individual officers are reluctant to admit that they are part of the policing enterprise, or, more importantly, works to reinforce the need to socialise with fellow police officers who understand the nature of the occupation.

An additional feature which emerged in this regard relates to the way in which the internal organisation of the police department deals with individual officers. In some cases, it was felt that the internal hierarchy reinforce the negativity of the police role by failing to praise officers or allow for the collective negotiation of problems. The result of this lack of support for the activities of police officers in the operational setting by contemporary police management is an internalisation of the negative legacies of the police role. This is at the expense of collectively devising ways in which to assist in raising the public profile of the organisation. The perception therefore, is that the police organisation is more concerned with maintaining a check on their officers in terms of accountability, rather than general welfare in the occupation. This issue was elaborated upon by the following comments of another male CIB officer with 8 years experience in policing:

> There will always be a phone call from the bosses if you make a mistake. But, for example, we've had a huge amount of offenders through this office this month and no one rang up to say you did a great job. Mo one actually come out, sat down and had a cup of tea in the office and said (you're doing a good job) keep it up. If we make one mistake they come down on you like a ton of bricks.

This problem was seen to have emerged in more recent years. Previously, in the police force, the internal culture was viewed to be more supportive to it's operational troops. However, in more recent years, there is a perception that the hierarchy are neglecting the welfare of their troops, and are not providing the necessary encouragement which makes them feel happy about their work. The general cause of this is that the police hierarchy is more concerned with accountability and keeping the force clean, and has as such, lost contact with the ordinary police officer. These issues were raised by the following comments of two male CIB officers with 9 years experience each in policing:

> E: You didn't feel as alone I think. When I first joined the job you felt that you could count on more people right up the ranks because they'd talk to you. You know, "How you goin? How's the job goin' today young fella?" And things like that. They were a good bunch. Now they come for a visit. "We've got 4 minutes and we've got to be down at the next police station."
>
> B: "Oh yes, we've got to discuss this and discuss that." The problem is that the bosses have lost touch. They're not into policing any more. They're not into catchin' crooks. They're not into chasin' cars and stuff like that. They're into budget cuts (financial management).

RESPECT AND RIGHTS: THE CHANGING ENVIRONMENT

Public respect for the police.

One of the dominant trends to emerge from the interviews is the belief that the level of

respect for policing as an enterprise was declining substantially. This was seen to be a key precipitant of police officers socialising amongst themselves and being reluctant to trust or associate freely with non-police officers in social situations. There were a number of reasons posited for this loss of respect for police. This section will document the primary findings to emerge on the issue of public respect for police, and the rationales adopted by police for this perceived change in public attitude.

The fact that police were lacking the respect of many members of the community emerged in a number of comments during the interviews. This situation was seen to manifest itself in the perception of members of the community to view police officers as "different" from the rest of the community, often on a very negative basis. As such, there is an increasing level of marginalisation between the community and the police which is affecting the way in which the general public perceive individual police officers, and the way in which police respond to these negative reactions. This issue was illustrated by the following comments of a male CIB officer with 9 years experience in policing:

> There's a good story a few years ago. A friend of mine who's in the job told me she'd been to the bank and it was on her lunch break and she had a sandwich with her actually. There was a little kid with the mother watching him. He wouldn't take his eyes off her and she gave him a wink and all the normal things, the PR things, in the bank. And she heard him turn to his mother and say, "look the police woman's eating". To him the police aren't human. The police do eat. They have families of their own and they have a mortgage and they have to struggle to get the cheque together to pay the rates, and we get booked by speed cameras, and we have to pay up, and people abuse us in traffic, and our wives yell at us and our husbands. We go through everything. Pain and anguish. We hit our thumbs with hammers when we try to do a bit of work around the house. People forget about that. It seems to me they're just waiting, just waiting, for someone to slip up or seemingly slip up then they're onto us.

Not only was there a perceived lack of respect for the police in the recreational environment, but also in terms of carrying out their operational roles. The result is that there is a general lack of respect for police in contemporary society which was seen to substantially hinder the police role in modern times. On the one hand, police officers must convey to the general public that they have the authority to enforce the law. As such, they often require the assistance of the public to assist in quelling violent situations. On the other hand, there is a general perception that the public do not respect the police as they did in the past. As such, police officers either have to act more instinctively to quell potentially disorderly situations, or they can turn inward, and simply cover themselves, and go soft on law enforcement in particular communities to avoid increased accountability against their actions. This point was raised by the following comments of a female police officer with 5 years experience in the Victoria Police:

> With general duties police, they feel as if they are dealing with a culture from the general public that is not as respectful of the police and will have a go much more readily than before. And they're feeling as though maybe, they've got to be prepared to act faster. But they also know that there is a video camera around every corner that will record what they do and they'll look terrible. And they'll

> have those in the back of their mind and they can't expect to have all the loyalty, the support, and cover up that they had in the past. And the powers that be will come on them like a ton of bricks to make the police force look good in the eyes of the general public. I'll just do my eight hours, I'll cover my arse. I'll look after number one. I won't stick my neck out for anybody. It's not worth getting my butt kicked for. This leads to a cold feeling among uniformed coppers.

Part of this issue emerges in relation to the policing of particular communities which have traditionally been constructed as marginal or deviant in society. It has commonly been claimed in the literature that there is a cultural conflict between the police on the one hand, and groups of young people from multi-ethnic backgrounds on the other. The argument runs that because policing is a predominantly white, male, conservative occupation based on the premise of controlling the behaviours of particular groups, there is a conflict of cultures between the law enforcement ideal on the one hand, and the actual cultural characteristics and behaviours of particular groups on the other. This is seen to lead to a resentment of the police as individuals, and a generic enterprise amongst these groups which exacerbates a feeling of "us versus them" in both cases. The result is that police are generically viewed by these groups as "pigs" who have an intrusive and authoritarian approach to the task of law enforcement, while members of these social groupings are invariably viewed by the police as the "prigs" or those worthy of criminal justice processing because of their appearance, behaviour or demeanour towards the authority of the police.

The data suggest that this mentality does apply to policing in Victoria, and there were numerous examples given in the interviews where police felt that certain groups in the community had unduly negative perceptions of the role of the police which impacted on the nature of their work. Thus, as an extension of the social marginalisation noted above by many police officers, there were numerous examples of where particular groups in the community were seen to have a lack of respect for the police which impacted on the way in which individual or groups of police officers viewed these communities.

The following example presented by a female senior sergeant with 14 years experience in policing is indicative of this tension at the operational level. In this respect, the control and dealings with a population of Aboriginal Australians in an inner Melbourne suburb was viewed from the operational perspective to be highly problematic because of the perception by the group that all police are out to harass this community at the expense of dealing with the behaviour of other groups in the region. However, in contrast, there was a perception in the minds of the police that as a result of the lack of respect for police in this particular community group, that any formal police contact in their lives would invariably lead to a complaint being filed against the officers involved, even though there was objectively no justification for such action:

> I couldn't believe that they (Aboriginal people) would complain when they had been treated the exactly the same as everyone else. There was no preference, they weren't being picked on, they were the ones doing the offences of driving drunk and getting caught, that was just how it happened but they perceived that they are being persecuted because they're black.

The difficulty this poses for police is that the fear of constant complaints mean they may "go soft" against such populations, or in some cases simply not police these groups at all. This dilemma where there is a fundamental clash of cultures based on a mutual mistrust between the two communities, is illustrated by the following comments of a male senior police officer with 15 years experience on the state of a largely Aboriginal Australian community in an inner city high rise complex in Melbourne:

> The part Aboriginals around town call it the sacred site and there's generally ten people in a terribly drunken state. They rob people. The type of crime that is rarely reported. Little Asian blokes. And they go along and think they are going to get a few free drinks and they get a few free whacks around the head and lose their pennies. Now if that was anything other than part Aboriginals drinking there the police would be there hour after hour after hour chasing them away. If they are part Aboriginals, because of the political situation it's easier not to because of the issue of racism. And we're not doing our job properly. We're obviously taking the easy way out. But this is one of the facets of complaints and so forth. This is one instance where the increase in complaints and so forth has a negative effect.

There were several reasons posited for why this situation occurs and perpetuates itself in the context of police relations with particular communities.

Role playing.

Part of the issue of discrimination between the police and certain groups relates to the fact that both sides "role play" and provoke discord between each other. The psychological discourses of authority, deviance, victimisation, and contempt are negotiated to extreme degrees by both sides in the interaction. The result therefore is that effective law enforcement, based on trust and respect for each group by the other, becomes eroded, leading to mutual suspicion and mistrust, and ultimately a fear of peaceable interaction between the two. This leads to negative stereotyping by both sides which has important ramifications for the way in which the law enforcement function is at once perceived by certain groups in the community, and carried out by the police. This dichotomy was illustrated by the following comments of a male senior sergeant with 15 years experience, in relation to policing a group of "young thugs":

> Just as police role play so do young thugs. Now there are two groups of two or three young lads of 16 or 17 walking down the street. One two or three nice young lads, the other two or three shit-heads. You'll be able to tell the shit-heads by just looking at them and they're the ones that'll be spoken to by the police, not the others. And the reason you can tell the shit-heads is the way they dress, their demeanour and the way they're playing their role. You just have that perception that they are the ones to speak to and nine times out of ten the police do get it right. It makes them aware that the police are there and keeping an eye on them.

The role of civil rights in contemporary society.

Perhaps the most important precipitant of poor relations between the police and the community in contemporary times was the emergence of the civil rights movement. In

many ways, notions of civil rights are the antithesis of traditional notions of policing. Invariably, civil rights involve a challenge by members of the public to the authority of the police and the way they invoke their legal mandate in practice. This is the extreme form of disrespect for the way in which the police carry out their function of law enforcement, because it means that the police are being criticised constantly for their method of serving the community and detecting, preventing and solving crime.

Many respondents indicated that the notion of civil rights presented problems for the police in carrying out their role. In particular, civil rights arguments were posited to explain why members of the public resist the forcible intervention of police in certain situations. Thus, a greater community awareness of the role of rights, and the ability to invoke notions of rights as an accountability mechanism against the police directly, had implications for the way in which police exercised force in carrying out their role, and had the potential to apply to all police officers regardless of their rank or level of experience in policing. As the following comments of a male senior sergeant with 15 years experience in policing indicate, if there was violent resistance against the police, such resistance was often viewed to be a legacy of the fact that members of the general public are more aware of their rights and how much they can get away with. This in turn meant that if the police intervened in a violent situation, it was rare for members of the public to actively resist the police:

> People are more aware of what they can and what they don't have to do. Sometimes it is a lot harder for some people to move them along and things like that. People are more aware of their rights, so if they are arrested they don't have to be told.

This was reiterated by the following comments of a male junior officer with two weeks operational experience:

> I think it has changed nowadays because people are more aware of their rights. You seem to have more rights nowadays or there are more things you are made aware of that we didn't have years ago. Like years ago if you got picked up for a bit of trouble you used to get a bit of a clip over the ear for justice and you remembered it. But nowadays you go through...I don't know whether it's better or worse. It's just changed. The accountability and people becoming more aware about their rights.

However, perhaps the strongest critics of the civil rights were those involved in criminal investigations. It was in the situation where police officers were in contact with the hard core criminals on a regular basis that the notions of civil rights as a form of accountability were deemed to be most antithetical to the police role of "catching crooks" and removing the criminal element from the streets. The growth of the civil rights movement is thus not only seen to be an impediment to effectively achieving these goals in the minds of criminal investigations officers, but represents the ultimate challenge to the authority and the mandate of the police.

These comments emerged in the following discussion between two male CIB officers with around 10 years experience respectively in the Victoria police. The important themes to

emerge here are police perceptions of the negative perceptions the community have of the police, which lead to an increase in complaints against police activity which ultimately challenges the authority and motives for the police role in criminal matters. This ultimately impedes the ability of the police to carry out their law enforcement role effectively:

> E: Once again I may be suspicious and sceptical but this thing about, this term civil rights movement. I became aware of the civil rights movement probably 15 years ago. Everyone's civil rights movement. And since that phrase came along I see the police force and what its stands for fall apart. Everything that's done, we're always under the microscope and it always seems to be done under the banner of civil rights. The civil rights movement.
>
> C: You find a lot of these civil libertarians, spokespersons, are coming from the Fitzroy legal service or something similar. Government funded, to protect crooks that the government's paying us to catch in the first place. And they're speaking and saying that the police aren't doing the right job where we're the ones keeping them in work.
>
> E: I think it's out of control. I think. I'll be the first to say the idea of the civil rights movement when it was formulated was a good idea in theory but it's a snowball. I think the people got on the band wagon and they didn't realise. That basically they're on a steaming locomotive and when you start saying civil rights where do you stop? I mean do you say that you don't have to tell a policeman your name when you're walking on the street. Well when do you have to tell him? You don't have to tell him any time. Where does it all stop that's all I'm saying. I see it as already out of control. And most of the people that are still at the helm don't even realise it.

Indeed, a number of CIB officers indicated that not only was the civil rights movement a growing menace to effective policing, but it was also self defeating, and losing the consensus of society. This is exacerbated by the role outside forces, in particular the media, play in promoting issues of police deviance and civil rights through journalistic discourse. The media, are commonly seen as "aiding and abetting" the civil rights movement, by providing a publicly critical focus of police activity, which is ultimately seen to distort the realities of operational policing, and thereby compound the problems for police in the operational realm. This point was illustrated by a male CIB officer with 8 years experience in policing:

> The thing is not too many people do agree with them. They'll make an outrageous statement or make accusations against a policeman or a politician or someone, and the newscaster is sitting in his office saying we haven't got anything for the 6.00 news, go and grab 30 seconds off this bloke we'll put him on. It starts a controversy. He'll be on Neil Mitchell the next day. People start talking about it. But 90% of the people couldn't give two hoots about it. They'll say right all right he'll be gone in a minute lets forget about it, but they're still getting the public exposure. People in the hierarchy are starting to panic. The politicians are starting to panic. They'll jump on it straight away and they're creating situations that really

> don't exist. The media are taking the sensational line to sell papers or news services. I mean a classic example is if a policeman gets charged on day 1 of the court case it'll be on the front page of every newspaper. The allegations that he's hung a man by his feet from a ceiling fan while he spun around and whipped him with a chair. But 4 months down the track when he's found not guilty it will be halfway down the sports pages and about that big or not in at all.

The implications of the greater knowledge of civil rights meant that the role of the police is becoming increasingly difficult at the operational level. Suspected offenders are more aware of their rights, and are prepared to exercise them, even though the police perceive that they have a solid basis to suspect that a person is guilty of a criminal offence. Thus, although police view themselves in some cases to be more at risk from other factors in the community, such as increased violence, the effect of the greater knowledge of civil rights in the community was seen to be a key impediment to the contemporary police role. Through a greater willingness for members of the public to exercise their rights, and media and other public agencies to promote the failings of the police, there is a broader social and cultural misunderstanding of the role police play in "catching crooks" and the benefits this has for the broader social good. This means that police are increasingly being tested by members of the public about the way in which their authority is wielded, and ultimately scrutinised by the public, the press, and the lawyers who represent people in court. This point was evidenced in the following comments of two male CIB officers with 8 and 9 years experience in policing respectively, commenting on whether or not there are rising levels of violence directed against police in contemporary times:

> C: Not so much physical violence against us. But they've got more bravado about them. They seem to have been to school and done a bit more legal studies and they know everything there is to know. And they want to test you at every turn.
>
> E: Yeah. I'll ring the solicitor and the solicitor gets there and don't tell them nothing. The fact of the matter is you've got this bloke in here who's alleged to have raped three small children. Abducted and raped them in bushes and parklands somewhere. The fact that he's done that and you know that it's him, he's been spotted there, he's been caught with the kids, and it's him. And he rings his solicitor and he says don't tell them anything. And you say do you realise that your client has just raped three children under the age of 7. Bad luck. The man's got civil rights you know. Tell them nothing. Tell them nothing. And it's just this whole respect business. I'm not necessarily asking them to respect me as a policeman. I'm just asking him to respect the law. Without respect for the law and what it stands for we have nothing. The civil rights movement is just saying you know stuff them. Don't worry about that, civil rights come first.
>
> C: Then you meet up with the legal fraternity. There's an old saying that you're innocent until proven guilty. And then as long as you've got more money your solicitor will keep trying to get you off.

This situation was seen to lead to a general reluctance of the members of the community to assist. This means that it is becoming more difficult for the police to investigation crimes, and deal with suspects alleged to have committed crimes. In this respect, the

culture of society has changed considerably over time with members of the public being better educated about their rights which facilitate maintaining silence during police questioning. As one male senior sergeant with 15 years experience indicated:

> I think that the most important evidence you can get and that's just from my experience is a confession. Now I'm not sure but if you took a survey of the old record of interviews, the typed record, and compared where admissions are made and no comments were made, and compared those with tape recorded interviews...I'm not saying that the blokes were verballed. But if they've got someone on tape, the crook on tape would feel a lot more secure (than with the typewriter). And also of course with the extraordinary lengths they go to to protect their rights and contact their lawyers they feel very secure. Much more secure about saying no comment or telling lies that what they did in the past.

The ultimate result is that there is a perception, particularly amongst those involved in criminal investigations, that an increasing sector of the public has lost the trust they once had for the police force. The effect of this is that police are ultimately impeded in effectively carrying out their law enforcement role, something which the general public seem not to understand. The public are more concerned with making the police accountable for the way in which they carry out their role, rather than considering the more beneficial roles the police are playing for the long term benefit of the public. This issue was raised by the following comments of a male CIB officer with 9 years experience:

> People can trust the police force. If you go back to trust, if people had values about the police force and say "Right oh, lets trust the police force for 6 months. Trust them and see what they want. No rules. No rules at all". Actually I don't think, I really don't think that they'd have a big problem at the end of the 6 months. There'd be a hell of a lot of people in jail. What I'm trying to say is that these people out there that don't want us to have these powers and won't allow us to go through the middle think(ing) that we're going to abuse the powers that we have. And we're gonna make the streets a worse place for the average law abiding citizen. And that's not what we're about at all. We're trying to make it a better place for people like that. They honestly seem to me to think that we are locking up innocent people. We are locking up innocent people and that's not the case. The word trust. The fact that I feel there is a lack of trust for the police force with the power to police any more. And I get back to the civil rights movement. The civil rights movement is undermining trust. Not the original concept, just what its become. People don't trust us with the power. We can't give the police that power because he will abuse that power.

The media and the civil rights movement.

As indicated above, the media was seen to have an important role to play in the promotion of civil rights issues at the expense of the good of policing and police work. It was felt in this respect that the media generally distort the true nature of the role of the police and the difficulties which associated with police work in contemporary society. In general, the media was seen to be the agent through which the civil rights causes which impede the

police role are publicised, and very often, the portrayals of police malpractice, or civil rights causes was viewed as a distortion of the real issues relating to policing the community.

The issue of media distortion of the police role and the nature of operational police work was a common theme to emerge in the discussion with CIB officers. The following comments are indicative of the cynicism with which this division of police officers view the media and its effect on the "ordinary punter's" perceptions of the policing enterprise:

> But the punters at home all they read. The poor old bloke sitting there with his 3 kids and a mortgage, he doesn't know anything about policing. Doesn't give a rats arse basically. Because he's a good bloke and he doesn't really care. If he reads in the paper police have flogged another suspect, police have done this, police have done that, that's all he reads. That's all he sees. And then some months down the track when it's all proved to be bull shit he doesn't read that. He doesn't read the fact that it's all crap it doesn't happen. He's still got the thing in his head. "4 weeks ago I read in the papers that the coppers bashed this bloke". You don't want to get paranoid about it but there's plenty other groups in society that feel the same way. That they always get the raw deal. It doesn't matter who it is. Sometimes it's the unions, sometimes it's the politicians. The media, the problem with them is they're in the game just to sell papers and advertising space on the late night t.v. shows and stuff. Basically they don't give a rat's arse.

This perception of media distortion of the day to day facts of the police role and motives even became an issue in terms of the nature of the present study. In the preliminary discussions on the nature of the topic under inquiry, two respondents, one male with 30 years experience, and one female with 11 years experience, made the following comments on the potential for negative publicity to emerge from the study:

> E: I can just envisage when the results are released the press will say police they predominantly bash people within Victoria and all the other issues are pushed aside.
>
> B: I think the major concern for most people here is the fact that any statistics of information that comes out of this may be misrepresented in the press at a later stage.

Thus, there appeared to be a general questioning of the motives of the present study, despite constant assurances that the final report was primarily of significance to the administration of policing and the academic audience. The ultimate suspicion of the study was not so much directed at the content of the information presented, or our aims as researchers, but with the way in which the media would portray the information once it was publicly available. It was felt that once the media obtained the results, the publicity would invariably be negative and critical of the police and their role in the community.

The impact of negative media publicity was not seen to be directly influential on the way in which police perform at the operational level. However the perceptions which members of the public receive about the police through the media were seen to be primarily

negative. This results in a compromise in police relations with the community which can have considerably negative results for the credibility of the police. This point was indicated by the following comments of a male CIB officer with 8 years experience in policing:

> It doesn't have so much of an impact on us because 9 times out of 10 we know that it's bull shit. But the people that you deal with, you walk into their house and you see the newspaper on their breakfast table open on that page and you walk in and you think, oh yeah here you go again. Or they say when you catch the crooks are you going to do what this bloke did? And you sort of turn over inside. You can't explain to them. Only when you get them one on one and you say to them that the bloke that's made these allegations is the biggest liar and thief and vagabond in town. You tell them the truth and they go oh I didn't know that.

The key criticism here is the perception that media coverage portrays police action in a false way. The public are given a particular image of police work which is seen to be counter the realities of the situation, or does not adequately reflect the difficulties associated with the day to day policing role at the operational level. Members of the police force are seen to be largely aware of how media practice creates these distortions, because they understand the characteristics of real policing on a day to day basis. However, some police were generally suspicious of the impact such portrayal has on members of the public and their overall perceptions of the police. The result is that the way in which the media deals with policing issues can have substantially negative impacts on the relations between police and the community, by feeding a highly negative public perception of the police through sensationalist and often incomplete articles on police conduct. This issue emerged in the following comments of two male CIB officers with 9 and 8 years experience in policing respectively:

> C: It affects the respect of the community.

> E: They say if you throw enough shit some of it will stick. And that's what's happening with people out there in the community who are starting to wonder what's going on.

The way in which CIB police officers deal with bad media publicity varies depending on the perceptions of the individual officer. However the general consensus is that it is up to the individual to try and forget the impact of such publicity. Changing the standards of the media is seen to be largely beyond the power of the police. As such, it is up to each officer to tolerate the process and try to ignore the negative publicity. This was illustrated by the following comments of three male CIB officers with between 5 and 10 years experience in the Victoria Police:

> D: There's nothing you can do with bad press.

> E: What you do is you wear it on your bloody sleeve. You carry it around with you every day.

> C: You throw it in the bin. What's what the Truth's all about. All these bull shit

> newspapers, Picture, People magazine, it's all just rubbish. How do you control it? Why don't they control it? What about all the public personalities who are put through shit and bull shit stories? How do they cope with it? They just throw it in the bin.
>
> E: You put it in the sack that you carry around on your back. You keep throwing it in there until one day some idiot at a party says "Have you shot anybody?" And you take it out on him.

Some indicated that the understanding of the policing role and the "truth" about the nature of crime control was an important legacy in negotiating negative portrayals of policing through the media. In this respect, the police and their families have a different understanding of the nature of crime portrayal than the rest of the community, even though at times it may be difficult to distinguish facts about crime from fiction. The result of this is a perception by many police officers that the public are unaware of the truth of the media publicity about crime that they receive through the news, and as such, have the ability to develop false and primarily negative stereotypes about police behaviour. This in turn feeds into the lack of respect the public has for the police in contemporary times. The police however are reduced to acknowledging the falsity of media portrayals of crime and policing matters, and turning to their families or immediate peers to deal with the realities of the situation from a more critical, and factually based perspective of these issues. These issues were raised in the following dialogue between three male CIB officers with between 8 and 9 years experience in the police force:

> E: We go home with the ability to cut through the crap. And when you turn on the telly and you see the news report, we look at it with the way it really is. And it's people like you who are out there that are watching the way the media present it and...it's not even in the same ball park. What I'm sayin' is while you don't always believe it you still don't know. You say "I don't think I believe that." It's not because you know it's not true it's because, "Jesus, that's a bit bloody rich." We go there and we say that is not true that is bull shit because we know.
>
> B: You'd be a bit more educated than most of the punters out there. Most of the blokes, half of them, don't speak English. They don't know. They watch the tube and they believe what's on the tube.
>
> C: You go and see them and (they) say wasn't it terrible what happened the other night, what was on the news. And you say what was on the news was bull shit. They are believing all these things. And then they turn on the news at night and they read it in the papers the next day and they think it must be true.

As illustrated above, one of the critical issues relating to the misconceptions of the police role in crime control lies with the nature of police relations with people from different ethnic backgrounds. In this respect, it was felt that the media feeds the process, by portraying negative stereotypical images of the police role which, not only are invariably false, but which are also difficult to understand for people who do not comprehend English. The result is that the media portray messages in a way which can exacerbate negative perceptions certain groups of non-English speaking origins have of the police,

which contributes to the way in which these groups interact with the police in reality. This point was evident in the following comments of a male CIB officer with 9 years experience in policing, who is also from a non-English speaking background:

> I come from an ethnic background and not only that I go back to the country to be with my family. And they don't know what's goin' on in society. They just don't know. One, because they're ethnic and they have real values still, being Italian, Northern Italians. When I became a policeman my father cried. He was that proud of it. And he has real values. And he can't believe for the life of him what goes on in the city. He's got no idea. And one, he doesn't understand because he's an ethnic. And two he doesn't understand because he lives in the country he's got no idea what's going on out there.

Implications of civil rights and media portrayals of policing.

The effect of the combination of civil rights politicising particular aspects of policing, and the perception of adverse media publicity of particular policing roles, is ultimately that the general public have a distorted understanding of many policing roles. As a result, there is a general misunderstanding of the pressures facing criminal investigations officers and the pressures facing them to be correct in their procedures to avoid being made liable for their errors. Yet, central to this misunderstanding is the issue that the public, and the law makers, are concerned with making police liable without understanding how police perceive the value of their work, and the implications of mistakes for personal and collective liability of police members. The result is an increased set of accountability mechanisms which impede effective crime control, which give criminal investigations officers little leeway in the way in which they carry out their tasks.

One legacy of this is that it is the police, rather than the real criminals, who are ultimately on trial. The negative perceptions of the police are so pervasive, that the legislature and the judiciary, through their formal law making powers, are working to subvert the role of the police in preventing crime and "catching the crooks". Thus, the combined power of the civil libertarians and the media leads to a greater level of legal controls of police actions, which ultimately challenges not only the role of the police in contemporary society, but the operational boundaries within which that role is carried out. The nature of these additional controls and their implications for the criminal investigations role are spelt out in the following comments of two male CIB officers with 8 to 10 years experience in policing:

> E: Look, the community don't understand at all what we're going through. If the community as a whole knew what we do from day to day in order to make their homes safe they'd be mortified. We wouldn't even want to tell them... The bottom line is with our job in order to get a crook, someone who violates everyone's personal space, some low life gutter crawling rapist paedophile, whatever, you name the crook. What's the worst crime you can think? In order to get him to court and get him convicted we have to fact the wrath of the civil rights movement and everything that the civil rights movement brought with it in the way of legislation.

> am allowed to be offended by now. It is is not deemed offensive by magistrates even though you are personally offended by it. I wouldn't have brought the charge if I wasn't offended by it in the particular situation but I've been called a number of other things and not done anything about it. It's all in the context.
>
> E (M): I'm personally offended by very little but I'm offended for other people
>
> A (F): There are certain situations where language is used quite a lot by females and males and it's not necessarily the words but it's the way in which the words are used and the context in which they are used and I don't particularly look at the words themselves. The way and the inflection at the time.

The ultimate result of this position is that it places increased stress on police officers at the operational level. The implications of these combined issues of lack of trust, adverse media publicity, and cynicism about the judicial process, is that police officers in contemporary times are becoming disillusioned with how their role in the criminal justice process is developing. This issue was illustrated by the following comments of a male CIB officer with 9 years experience in the force, who indicates that all of these pressures are making the job more difficult for contemporary police officers, and ultimately necessitates police taking short cuts to get the job done effectively:

> That's correct. You know the old saying, adapt and overcome. But you can only adapt and overcome for so long. And sometimes we see it every day. Even in these times where the job security isn't there. There's still colleagues of ours that have had enough of adapting and overcoming. And it's just, "I've got to get out of here" because their sanity comes first. Their health comes first. They're trying to do the right thing. That's why they come to work. They come to work to do the right thing and they get their bloody face cut every day, you know? They keep getting hauled in on that bloody rope and after a while you think you'll get around it this way. Don't worry about that, we'll get around it this way. That's what we're doing every day when we come to work. We're getting around something because no one's letting us go through the middle. They forget that what we're here for.

The pressures of these changes are impacting not only on the individual police officers but their families too. While it appears from some respondents that it is advisable to leave the troubles of police work at home, often the immediate family of the police officer is aware of the problems facing the job, and the publicly portrayed misconceptions which infiltrate the media and other the public realm. This point was indicated by the following comments of a male CIB officer with 11 years experience in policing, who indicated that his partner had developed a clear understanding of the pressures of the police role over time:

> It's not only a frustrating thing for the police man. It's frustrating for the policeman's family...I'm just saying as an overall occupation your wife understands the pressures you go under. And my missus might hear something on the news and knows my feelings on it. And she's got the insight into the concept of a policeman and what I do and the values I've got and what for and the way the community's going. And when something comes up adverse, or some rubbish comes on the t.v. she makes the comment "Yeah, that's all bull shit". She hasn't been swayed by me

> but she's got an insight into the occupation and I feel the same as the members of my family...she wouldn't read the newspaper and say "Oh yeah the newspaper said that". No. She's got more of a perspective of the occupation.

The legacy of this is that the families of police officers can in some cases share the beliefs of the nature of police work. As such, they can help to erode the difficulties of the work environment for their partners.

Summary.

The result is that the contemporary police officer feels a general sense of marginalisation in his or her day to day role which results in increased reliance on peers and colleagues in the policing fraternity to deal with the stresses of the job, and to relax with in a social setting. Through the combined effects of the civil liberties movement, the media, and the courts, the public are being marginalised from the day to day realities of police work, and the impacts this has for the individual police officer. The result is that the public are receiving constant negative images about the police through public discourses on the occupation, which are ultimately leading to a loss of respect for the police in contemporary times. This leads to a situation where the public constantly and generically deem *the police* to be negative, and treat them as *the enemy* in both law enforcement and recreational settings. The result of this process is that police, in order to cope, turn to their colleagues for support and recreational purposes, because only a fellow police officer can understand the day to day problems of police work without constantly being critical of the policing enterprise. The cycle of disrespect for the police continues as long as the media continues to portray policing issues in a negative light, and the courts and the legislature continue to criticise police actions and pass legislation which restricts the good operational goals of crime control.

This perception has seen to have deteriorated from the point of view of the police over time. In other words, because of the increase in the impact of the civil rights movement and the power of the scope of the media in dealing with policing in recent years, the police role is in a state of crisis at present. This was the general conception of CIB officers interviewed. The situation is best summed up by the following comments of a male CIB officer with 9 years experience in the Victoria Police, who indicates that this combination of civil rights, media, and hierarchical forces are compromising the role of the CIB in recent years and ultimately, threatening the public by eroding the general law and order focus in society:

> It's seriously got worse and my way of thinking the bottom line is we're a dying race and we're on our own out there. We're trying to hold society up basically. Without law and order we're buggered. We're all buggered. And you can scream from the highest tower. We've all got rights. We've all got rights. But when it comes to the crunch you've got to have a copper who's willing to go the whole way with a crook or bloody board up your house and don't walk outside because it's going to be that dangerous to do that in the end. But whilst we're doing that we need a bit of support and we need people to recognise that we're human beings.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND CONTEMPORARY POLICING

Types of accountability.

One of the key issues relating to police accountability is the types of accountability mechanisms police can be subject to. Not only are there more avenues of accountability, but their effects have more personal and indeed financial consequences for individuals and police organisations. The threat of civil action, as illustrated in the following comments of a male police academy instructor with 12 years experience, indicates that police must be constantly personally wary of their actions and their lawfulness:

> (I)n relation to consequences of your actions it seems to be more so with costs going against members in court, that a lot of sub-officers are under the belief that they could be held liable for wrongful prosecution. Or they're found not guilty in court and they may have to desist or if not pay costs. It comes back to the situation where they're much more accountable.

This was reiterated by the following comments of a female academy instructor with 11 years experience in policing, who indicated that the media is also a powerful influence in the accountability process, particularly when there are allegations that police officers have used excessive force:

> What's going to happen in the courts? You've also got the added pressure that if you do make a decision like when (an officer in Victoria) pulled the firearm on the 20 youths or whatever, trial by the media. We can't say anything in our own defence and you've got months and months of it being brought up again. And all these people can make statements but we cannot do that. And it's just an added pressure as well.

Many of the accountability mechanisms are coming from within the ranks of policing itself. As such, the police organisation at certain levels is not looking after its own numbers. Instead, there appears to be less willingness from the police hierarchy to allow complaints against police to go un-investigated. On the other hand, rank and file police feel that there is a need for the hierarchy to understand that police do make mistakes, and in certain circumstances, complaints against police can be vexatious. These points were illustrated by the following comments of a male police academy instructor with 15 years experience in policing:

> A lot of it seems to come from within our own department. Our own officers trying to improve the image of the force. I remember just before I came here there were two aboriginal escapees from Brisbane, and we did between 50 and 60 raids on Aboriginal houses around Shepparton and around that area. And knowing the accountability we did everything by the book. Now one of them, he went to hospital because of alcoholism. No indication of violence whatever. He was quite amicable, but what had happened is the Aboriginal legal aid had heard he was in hospital, knew the police had been there during the day, assumed that we belted him, hadn't even been to see him, rang IID, rang the assistant commissioner. We were eventually ordered back to Melbourne. I was counselled, and we hadn't even

> got the offenders at this stage, and then all of a sudden they said sorry, we've made a mistake. And what does it do to us? We said all right, you go and do the raids. There's 10 of us up here, we've put our lives in jeopardy on 50 different occasions, if you're prepared to counsel us for that then do it yourself. But that's the way it's going in the CIB. There's just no protection.

Part of the way in which to avoid too many allegations of misconduct is to teach recruits initially to treat people equally. However, in practice, it is often the case that misconduct is prevalent. This was indicated in the following comments of a male chief inspector of IID with 21 years experience in policing:

> If you can instil that in them when they learn, like to treat everyone like you'd like to be treated yourself, you'll never have any complaints but...but at the watchout counters if you have a bloody hidden microphone or camera there... The way some people are treated sometimes you'd be appalled.

Levels of Complaints against police.

There is a general perception in modern policing that there are greater levels of accountability to negotiate in contemporary policing, and in addition, there is a greater tendency for members of the public to file formal complaints against the police. This leads to several implication for officers who are alleged to have engaged in misconduct and are formally dealt with by these various mechanisms. As the following comments of a male IID investigator suggest, police officers who become involved in the accountability process are more conscious to justify their actions after the event. This applies to police officers of all ranks and in all divisions of the organisation:

> They're more conscious that at a later stage before an inquiry that they may have to justify their actions. That's in relation to the use of firearms, SOG, high speed pursuits, the supervisors, the D24 operators and patrol officers now. They're accountable too. That they should be pointed off...I mean some of these chases where they go up to 160 km, if someone's killed it falls back on the D24 operator and the sergeant. "Why didn't you stop it? why did you allow it to go on?" And they've got a checklist from A to Z of all the things you've got to consider in a split second. And everyone's got that fear, if you use a firearm you'll think IID in their mind in a split second, and at some later stage before the inquiry, or someone else, they have to justify their actions to be accountable for what they do. I think that they make slower decisions, more considered decisions, these days operationally anyway.

The general perception, particularly amongst IID investigators, was that because of the greater levels of accountability in contemporary policing, individual officers have to make more calculated decisions about how they act and react in dangerous situations. This point emerged in the following comments of a male IID chief inspector with 21 years experience in policing:

> If you're standing there and a bloke's got a gun pointed at his head and thinks that I'm going to be shot dead, if they've got time to think I'm sure that they would

> (make more considered decisions). In a high speed pursuit that goes for a long period of time you have time to make a conscious decision, but if you've got a split second decision, kill or be killed....

However, as the following comments of another male IID investigator with 22 years experience suggest, because the range of situations which confront police are vastly different, it is difficult to generalise about how individual officers will react to the potential for accountability in each case. In particular, the more spontaneous and split second instances where danger is likely, the less able the individual officer is to think about accountability and the consequences of their actions:

> You're talking about a variety of incidents though. (Before) they were talking about instances of public contact and the perception of a member of a level of accountability where circumstances could be far different than when he's confronted with someone wielding an iron bar as to whether or not he should shoot him, or whether he should ram him with the police car, or whether he should go and find a longer piece of timber than what he's got, and try and bop him over the head with that. I think it's very much dependent on the situation.

The general conception of complaints against police is that they are seen to have increased in number in recent years. People are more aware of the fact that they are able to complain against the actions of police officers, and often, the nature of these complaints is becoming more and more trivial. These issues were raised by the following comments of four male CIB officers with between 7 and 11 years experience in policing.

> E: I don't have a little bead board to count them.
>
> B: I would say that there would be more. I mean cases of complaints there would be more complaints than there used to be.
>
> E: There's a lot more complaints.
>
> C: People are more aware of the fact that they can complain and you will have that complaint against you when it gets to court.
>
> A: I believe that they teach it at Pentridge or whatever. Now it's among the crooks. "Listen, lets give him a hard time. Charge him. And that's happening a lot. And I find out that there's more complaints against myself. Not assault. Just stupid things. Because they know if they complain the bosses will come after you and you give an explanation and try and unsettle you and give you the shits for no reason.

On the other hand, despite an increase in overall complaints against police, according to Internal investigations officers this increase is not necessarily a function of more vexatious complaints. As the following comments (outlined above) from two IID officers with 22 and 21 years experience respectively indicate, the vexatious complainant is a rare phenomenon. The more common issue is that a complainant has a poor recollection of the incident which makes it difficult to substantiate the complaint. As a result, rather than being completely unjustified in their complaint, the individual is exaggerating the incident

in an attempt to remember the incident and maximise their argument. In addition, there is a large "dark figure" of potentially justifiable complaints against police which remain unknown to the official mechanisms:

> D: I think you've got to take into account, and I don't know how the other people think about it, but certainly from my experience...and certainly the circumstances have changed since I was at that coal face... I've really been at this place for about three or four years but the majority of people who complain by reason of their own character, invariably I would say there is certainly a reasonable number of people who lodge complaints want them because they genuinely believe that they have been wronged in some way, or they have been wronged in some way but they can't accurately record the way in which they have been wronged. It's the nature that the minute they get a sympathetic ear they then exaggerate, and invariably, during the course of the investigation, their own credibility suffers a great deal because the complaint can't be substantiated on the basis that it is generally untrue. I don't know what the percentage is but I would believe from having spoken to a number of complainants that there is certainly a reasonable percentage of them that genuinely feel as though they have been wronged. But when you're not there, who are you to assess whether or not they are truthful or otherwise. But in the course of the investigation I think, and from talking to other members that investigate complaints, there is certainly a significant proportion of people who either are wronged or believe they are wronged that exaggerate their claims and that really is probably one of the greatest contributing factors for such a low substantiation rate of complaints.
>
> E: See one of the big things that we face is that, it's like rape. You talk about x number of rapes reported each year and it probably sounds as if... We get x number of complaints per year. We investigate them. But how many complaints don't we get. You know, unless we do a survey of the community, perception of the police attitudes, how they have been handled, if you do a survey of 100 people who have been charged and how have they been handled you might know. But really the number of complaints we get in here, you can't say that it's a true reflection on how we perform our duties. Hopefully it would be about that but I'm sure it would be more significant than you hear about. There are a number of people who have been through the system and are happy about it. Or whether it is people who are not going to bloody complain because it is my word against the police I'm not going to get anywhere.
>
> D: I think that's a fair comment though. It's a small percentage which are actually vexatious. I think there is a substantial percentage of people who believe they've been wronged but whether they actually have or have not by police is another issue. I've investigated a number of files where I have no doubt that the complaint was genuine, but I have serious doubts as to whether he was wronged by the police. There are a lot of different areas but the actual vexatious crook who complains for absolutely no reason what so ever and has been fairly dealt with from A to B is I think...there is certainly a percentage of them, but I don't think it would be a substantial one.

The increase in complaints against police however was seen by some operational police to have little impact on the way in which their role is carried out in practice. Indeed, as was evidenced by the following comments of three CIB officers with between 7 and 9 years experience in policing, there is a general acceptance by current police members that there is little that they can do to alter their behaviour in light of the increase in police complaints. The key issue is that it increases the stress police face, often as a result of the fact that many of the complaints are of a trivial or inconsequential nature:

> E: You accept it for what it is.
>
> C: It's a worry that you take home to your family and that.
>
> B: Well there's nothing much you can do about it. Because most of the complaints, that's what they are. It doesn't matter if you have the standing orders in front of you. And you go "Yes, now I'm going to take your finger prints. Now I'm going to take your photo." You always get it.
>
> C: Blokes complain and 2 or 3 weeks down the track, some inspector will lob on the doorstep and waltz in and say, "Oh, you didn't bloody cross your t's and dot your i's". You know, that's bull shit. What are you doin' here? And they do it because they're told to do it. This could all be short circuited if someone came out here and said "Mate you're a wanker. Now piss off. You've been charged (and that's it)."
>
> E: Because everyone is basically just covering their arse because of the civil libertarian, the ombudsman, they want to make it look as if they've done somethin'. So they'll follow it through. Like you said, instead of knocking it on the head they'll go the whole hog which they always do. And they offer you an explanation or a statement or something. Even though it was bull shit at the start. Just to knock it on the head they'll go through the whole rigmarole. We're all sitting here analysing why this? And do you think this is because of this reason and all this. And the bottom line is the reason all this has happened is because there's been a complete total change in values in society. Now that's happened, it's gone. It's finished. We can't change that and we're never going to change it. And that's what I mean about the stable or the steaming locomotive. We can sit here and discuss why it is happening until we're blue in the face but we're not going to change a damn thing. The cat's out of the bag.

The result of this is that some police officers feel that there is nothing that they can do to improve the situation they are facing. On the one hand they are facing a number of key changes in society which are impacting on the way in which they are able to carry out their operational role. On the other hand they are facing change in the internal organisation which is again stifling their ability to carry out their role, thorough increased accountability. The bottom line is that it is difficult to negotiate these issues in terms of operational change, so there is little the police officer can do other than accept these pressures or quit the job. These issues were raised by the following comments of two CIB officers with between 8 and 10 years experience in policing:

E: You're not allowed to change. That's what I'm saying. You're not allowed to change. You've got to do your job. That's it. That's what I'm saying before. There's nowhere for us to go and discuss this. And that's the other thing. The cat's out of the bag and that movement's changed the way every one lives now and particularly changed the way we can police society. We can't change it. We can sit here and bitch about it till we're blue in the face but we've either got to carry it with us or get out of the goddamn job 'cause no one's going to help us any more.

C: If we get out who else is going to do it?

E: You just adapt and overcome. If a 10 year old kid comes up to you and the minute he finds out you're a copper he spits at you, what are you going to do about it? There's not a damn thing you can do about it. He's 10 years old and he's already started. You're not going to change him. He's just one and there's billions of them out there that are wanting to do the same thing. And it's because it's been instilled into them that the wrong values. They've been told the wrong things about what we're trying to do every day when we're at work.

C: The classic is a job that we were on when we were in the District Support Group. A 6 year old boy. "Sit down", and the police sergeant started to talk with him and he said "What do you do?" and the sergeant said "I'm a policeman". He said, "Oh" and kicked him fair square in the nuts. This 6 year old kid knocking around with one of the best known drug dealers in the district.

On the other hand, there was a general perception amongst IID investigators that police are behaving better in relation to their job now than they were in the past. This was illustrated by the following comments of two IID investigators with between 15 and 21 years experience in policing:

E: I really think they are (behaving better now). I think if you look at the...in the last 12 months, in this state we're down 24% on last year's figures. All the crap that they had in the paper last weekend. It was just all crap because it was a beat up just so they could get funding for the legal service. We are finding, we are working and answering the phone on complaint days and they have dropped to buggery in the last couple of months. All the districts now are becoming accountable for their complaints. Their...and it is working...complaints have really dropped off in the last couple of months. Normally in a meeting like this wouldn't get four or five people. They are normally flat out. But it has eased in the last couple of months.

C: I think we are probably behaving equally as well now as we were when I first joined the job but the shift has been that we're more professional.

There are several reasons for this perceived improvement in police behaviour. Professionalism is one key issue. Another is the increased vigilance of the accountability process. One of the key features of contemporary police accountability mechanisms is that more people are likely to be detected and formally charged for deviance than was once the case. The result is that increasing professionalism is seen to stem from the greater

likelihood of being caught for engaging in deviant activity. This was illustrated by the following comments of two male IID investigators with 21 and 22 years experience in policing respectively:

> E: I think here, in the last couple of years, there are a number of that are charged. That has escalated a lot too. Say for example you get a big police station. Where there is a lot of assaults and you charge more people with assault, you get a massive reduction in the number of complaints for assault because the members know that we're doing our job. We're putting them up before the courts and they think "Shit, I better be careful. I might be next". That's the reality.
>
> D: We were discussing the road toll at the officers' college and E was driving home one day that the one thing which caused...in relation to speed reduction, whether effective or otherwise, what made people effectively travel slower in the long term was a heightened perception of the likelihood of being apprehended in relation to what they were doing. And if that perception is reduced more people commit offences. And I think that leads into what B was saying, very clearly. I think with more and more police members now whether or not they in effect in the long term manage to beat it, there are recent ones where there has certainly been a strong probability at least on the evidence that has been available that the police have been acting improperly and they have been found not guilty in the long run for one reason or another in the courts. And that's probably because...the prosecution hasn't been held up. I think certainly the heightened perception amongst police members has the same effect now.

The following comments by two IID investigators with 21 and 22 years experience indicate that a more responsible attitude towards alcohol and drinking is also conducive to this improvement in behaviour. While this is a reflection of the broader attitudinal changes towards alcohol in the community, it has also had an impact on the culture of policing. In particular, police officers are more likely to formally deal with a colleague for a drink driving offence which may not have been the case in the past:

> E: It might be because they are all light beer drinkers. That may be true, because when we joined the job that wasn't introduced then. You go to a police turn now and coppers would drink heavy beer. Nut now coppers are more conscious of drink driving and things like that. Once upon a time you'd probably have a few, 15 or 20 years ago, you wouldn't be as worried about being pulled up.
>
> D: When did you hear about members being prosecuted for drink driving off duty? You didn't have it. Now you tell them you're a police member and you're pulled up for a breath test and, it's your bad luck mate. You drive past in a marked car and you get pulled in. If you're in uniform. They do it all the time. With the duty officer checking them they're too frightened not to give you a PBC.

Many of the problems associated with police accountability are seen to stem from the changing nature of society in modern times. In this respect, many police officers indicated that there appears to be a fundamental rift between the public perceptions of the police, and what the police can do to overcome this rift. In essence, some police suggested that

they are in a double bind. Because society is seen no longer to support the police as it once did, young people in particular are developing bad attitudes towards the police and what the policing enterprise means. Part of the dilemma here is that much of the blame for this emerges from the family. It was seen by some police officers, as evident in the following comments of three male CIB officers with between 7 and 11 years experience in policing, that ultimately the police are the ones who have to use the public relations mechanisms to improve relations with young people. The trouble is that often the police roles conflict with the messages which young people are receiving from the family. As such, the effectiveness of these measures of police re-enlisting the young community are seen to be minimal:

> E: What they're doing by doing that is admitting the parents aren't doin' it so they want us to go out there and tell the kids that we're good guys. Send the police force out there to tell the little kids they're good guys. Well, they go home and their parents say they're dogs. I mean if parents can't teach their children what life is about and what coppers are here for. Once again the bloody bull has bolted and you're tryin' to pick em up at school because they can't get their mum and dad or their bigger brother or their sister or whatever they've got. You can be as nice to them as you like but they're goin' back to their home and they've got to move the syringes off the bed so they can sleep at night.
>
> B: The police school's involvement, how would you judge whether it's been effective or not? What sort of things do you look for? Lots of people go "Yeah, it's really good", but how do you know? How do you know whether it's workin' or not? There might be a lot of kids comin' up and sayin' my bike's been stolen.
>
> E: Someone comes up and says I've got a really good idea, lets spend millions of dollars cleaning up the mess that the parents can't clean up. We'll go and do that and we're good. And gee, isn't it working?

The key feature to emerge from these comments appears to be the cynicism associated with measures to promote the police role in the community as implemented by the police themselves. Not only is there cynicism about the value of these initiatives, but it is very difficult to measure their effectiveness in today's society, given the complexity and demands placed upon the police role to negotiate a wide variety of issues.

Impediments to complaints against police.

There are however more predictable situations which confront police officers which can generate the need for accountability. If a young person is threatening police, or claiming that he or she has been roughed up, then police are in an assertive position. The issue here is that the police officer will invariably rely on the notion that the individual will have to prove that the police officer has acted in a deviant way. In this respect, the following comments of two IID investigators with between 17 and 21 years experience in policing are illustrative of this issue:

> B: The accountability gets down to you prove that I did something wrong. There's no effort made by the individual to say, all right I did overreact, or I did do the

> wrong thing and I'm going to take more personal steps to behave more professionally in the future. It's a matter of, I've done something wrong you prove it and I'm innocent until you've proved it.
>
> E: In relation to strong personality and things like that if a bloke jacks you up, they know how timid you are. But if you take control over the situation and say "Listen, you pull your head in or you'll be locked up and you won't get bail". You trod on them and they shut up. But if you let them go and if they go and they know that you're not going to stamp on them they'll give you buggery. They'll get you into a corner unless you're going to come out fighting...The police will still stand up for their rights which they're entitled to if you consider a criminal offence. Most of them will deny the allegations. The people that are making the complaint will complain about anything. You have to look at the common thread of complaints against individual members. Because most times they'll know that they've done it.

This mentality, where the errant police officer maintains that a complainant must prove any allegations of deviance in order for it to succeed, can have important repercussions for a police officer who systematically engages in the excessive use of force. As the following comments by two IID investigators with between 17 and 21 years experience indicate, a deviant officer will not be too concerned about the existence of accountability mechanisms. Yet this does not mean that they will be allowed to continue with their errant behaviour. If there is an identifiable pattern to allegations of complaint made against a particular officer, it is very likely that they will be detected by the accountability process:

> E: ...because what happens is if you do get complained against and there's a record kept of all the complaints you find that there's a thread running through it. And you do get some people who have 5, 10 or 15 complaints, all of which have a similar thread. Then at the manager's school you have to look at that bloke, even though there...they are complaining about the one man doing the same thing.
>
> B: Unfortunately the mentality is, All right, I've had these 15 complaints, and I was found innocent because nothing was substantiated." And nothing can be further from the truth.

The response to dealing with complaints however is the critical issue. In this respect, when confronted with the possibility that an individual with a long history of complaints may only be transferred as a punishment, the following comments of an IID chief inspector with 21 years experience in policing indicate that very often, this occurs because there is insufficient evidence in each case to warrant harsher action. In such a situation, the fact that many complaints will be unsubstantiated will have implications for the official outcome imposed on the officer subject to the complaints:

> You've got to put the balance on that though. Where someone has ten complaints alleging assault, all occurring in an interview situation in a police station, all denied and none of the complaints either substantiated or unfounded, or falling into this area of not being able to be substantiated on the basis of the evidence available. They do look at the complainant in each of those issues and they look at

> the circumstances of each one. They look for any relationship between the complainant to see whether there is any common thread between... The complainant likewise. Any common thread within the organisation. So there is a balance put on that. Obviously if the department is getting into a very touchy area then you start inquiring into people you haven't been able to substantiate anything with.

IID and internal accountability.

The role of IID was sometimes viewed to be valuable. For instance, several junior police officers indicated that academy instructors indicated that IID could be the first point of call in some cases of police deviance. However, there was also a general suspicion of the role of IID among rank and file police officers. This was indicated by a male probationary officer with two weeks operational experience:

> I spoke to one of the instructors at the academy for a while and he was saying there was nothing wrong with it (IID) at all. It's an important role but I think it's one that no one wants anything to do with.

The general consensus, among junior officers in particular, was that IID was an important part of the police organisation, to allow the public to make complaints against the police, and to make police officers understand that they are not above the law. These points are illustrated by the following comments of two male junior constables with two weeks experience:

> G(M): It's an important role where the citizens can go to someone to complain.

> H(M): Just because they've got the uniform doesn't mean they're not human, or they're not above the law or anything. You've just got to abide by the law. And you have to answer to someone. If you don't have someone policing the police there is going to be a lot more corruption. And we don't know a great deal but we're pretty sure that the Victorian Police Force has got a better reputation than a lot of others. And maybe without IID it could be a lot worse.

There was a recognition by many junior officers of the problems with exclusively internal forms of accountability. In this respect, it was argued that many outsiders do not know the impact IID has for police officers themselves. Indeed, one of the key issues to emerge in the perception of junior officers in relation to the public conception of IID is that it generally ignores how the police feel about the power of internal investigations. This point was made in the following dialogue between two male and one female probationary officers with two weeks experience:

> F(F): With IID when something big comes up all the community groups come up with this uproar that we need an independent party. The police are not seen to be impartial.

> B(M): I think IID seem to do all right. If they've got the cops scared well there can be no question of them looking after us. It's not that appealing. If you've got

> IID on your back then you've got something to worry about.
>
> G(M) We'll probably get against us a file or a complaint made against us at sometime. Whether it is looking at someone and I didn't like the way he looked or something like that. Just something little like that.
>
> F(F): That's where our own accountability comes up too. Who you're accountable to.

Thus there is a perceived failure of the general public when talking of IID accountability to recognise that police are subject to a number of forms of formal and informal forms of accountability.

However some officers indicated that IID was not always heavy handed in response to public complaints against police officers. The result is that because IID departments are aware of some of the hazards which face the police role, they are less likely to be heavy handed against senior officers. As one male senior sergeant with 17 years experience indicated IID are:

> Probably not heavy handed dealing with some officers, because they have been in so long and they know the ropes. With the younger blokes, perhaps yes.

Indeed there was a general criticism of the way in which IID deal with complaints and attempt to keep individual police officers accountable. One of the key criticisms relates to the fact that most investigations involve ex post facto judgements about the behaviour of police officers which involved split second decision making in the particular context. The result is that formal mechanisms of accountability lead to distorted conceptions of the facts, and the appropriateness of police behaviour in tense situations. This point was raised by the following comments of a female police officer with 11 years experience of policing in Victoria:

> You've got to be accountable after the event too. In the heat of the moment you've got to make the decisions which afterwards are passed around the boardroom table. The people in the boardroom table, it's all very nice for them after the event. You're there and you have the pressure on and you have to make the brilliant decision that you can justify later on.

One common concern stated by many police officers was the heavy handed nature which IID investigate complaints against police. This suspiciousness of the IID role was reiterated by the following comments of a female police officer with 5 years experience in police work:

> You secretly support the investigative process when it's investigating people that you know deserve it but at the same time you've got your concern about the investigative process like IID collaring people who might have just stepped out of line once or twice and you don't want them to come in crushingly. But I would like to see a process which is more successful at weeding out the so called bad cops.

As such, some police officers actively pursue more informal mechanisms of control, particularly in situations where there are minor incidents of deviance. In such a case, more formal measures of accountability will be used only as a last resort, and only where the individual is certain that their peer is guilty of misconduct, and it is threatening to their own career. This point was mentioned by one female police officer with 5 years experience:

> I would not dob in. I would back up my partner if it was a relatively minor issue and just sort it out personally. But on a serious issue, a serious assault I would co-operate with the authorities even if it meant that I'd have to leave the job.

One of the primary criticisms of IID was the administration and the way in which it deals with police complaints and charges against police. In this respect, it is felt that IID are more often pursuing a greater quantity of complaints against police, rather than quality complaints. Increased demands for greater levels of internal accountability are seen to be strongly affecting the way in which IID is carrying out its function. As such, the effectiveness of the IID administration is being compromised by the increased demands for more, rather than better forms of accountability. This point was illustrated by the following comments of a male CIB officer with 8 years experience in policing in Victoria:

> A lot of that's got a lot to do with the IID administration too. A couple of years ago you might have had 50 complaints proceeded against and members charged in a year and when the new hierarchy come in and took over it went up to 600 a year. There is no way in the world that the quality of the complaints went up by that percentage. Look at all those cases that went up to the County court. That's it. If you don't present a case you don't lose. You can be charged and don't present a case if you don't want to.

Thus, the way in which IID creates rules on internal accountability can compromise its own effectiveness. As such, the perceptions of this inadequacy resulted in a largely negative conception of the IID function.

Many were critical about the level of investigative powers vested in IID. It was felt by many operational police officers, that the procedural powers vested in internal investigations, and the rights these conferred on accused officers, were unduly harsh. As such, there was a general perception that IID had the power to unduly victimise police officers accused with deviance. There was a conception that police officers were not given enough protection to counteract the power that IID could potentially wield. In sum, as the following comments of two male CIB officers with 7 to 9 years experience suggest, IID have a number of rules and the ability to bend those rules to produce results:

> E: I might be struck down because I don't think IID's relevant...Relevant as a group. I don't think they should exist. There's a lot of coppers that agree and a lot of coppers that would disagree. They say that you should never be investigated by your own and I think that's proven to be absolute bloody nonsense of late. IID aren't just up to interviewing us because I see them as bending every rule in the book. Investigating a complaint that you've bent the rules...they compromise themselves just by being in existence. All I'm saying is, we're investigated by

> people that aren't coppers because we're all part of a level playing field. If they're investigating us they have to employ the same rules and regulations that we have to when we're investigating someone else and that's not the case when IID are investigating. You're a second class citizen when you're being investigated by IID and it's not fair.
>
> C: You're guilty until proven innocent and you don't have any rights. And usually in the questioning you're automatically under suspension for breaching standing orders.
>
> E: In our standing orders for a disciplinary matter, just an internal disciplinary matter, you must answer the questions. And for a criminal matter you can elect not to. It's just like everyone else. But the problem is we had a safeguard there that anything you said in a disciplinary matter, because you were forced to, could not be used in a criminal matter. But that's not what IID are doing. They've tried, very recently they tried to get in things that were said by members during a disciplinary hearing into a trial, a criminal matter. You've got no safeguard. Basically they are saying you've got no rights mister. You've got to answer this question and you say all right I'll answer it because I know they can't use it later on against me or somebody else. And then they go and pull that rug out from under you.

In addition, the perception that IID was too heavy handed in dealing with the misdemeanours of police officers was prevalent amongst non-IID members. As such, in the case of one off deviance, or deviance which could be dealt with informally at the peer group level, the policy of IID to charge was viewed sceptically.

> It's very common. We get supervision papers every course where we sit down and answer those types of questions on the board and say what they'll do. Now, IID expect us to straight out charge them... (male police academy instructor: 16 years experience).

The result of this policy appears to be that rank and file police officers prefer to by-pass IID, knowing that the results of their policy may be unduly severe on errant officers, particularly in informal matters where counselling was viewed to be the more preferable option, and IID could develop negative perceptions of the whistle blower:

> Another thing is that it might be that some officers might be more inclined to take that counselling type line because if someone under your control gets charged with a deviant act or act of deviance it sort of reflects on you to a certain extent: A lack of control and all that sort of stuff (male police academy instructor: 12 years experience).

There was also a great deal of criticism amongst the rank and file police over the ability of the Chief Commissioner to terminate police appointments without prior review. A number of officers indicated that this was damaging to the police force, as there was little possibility of reviewing such a decision. As the following comments of a male CIB officer with 9 years experience indicate, in light of the fact that many complaints against police may be vexatious, the power to terminate appointments without review is potentially

discriminatory towards many police officers, unlike previous practice:

> This is where we get back to the police culture and our job's different from what it used to be. It is different because you deal with different sort of people. It's not like you get the sack because you turn up late for work or you haven't had a shave or whatever. It is a lot of the complaints that come through are complaints made by criminals who are for its gain. And they take the investigation and you can't take the complaint and say well obviously that copper's bent or he's on the take therefore I sack him. And there's just no safeguard against that. If he makes that decision well there you go that's the end of it...It's not as simple as just like sort of sayin' it's not like any other job. I want the powers that any other corporate manager would have. The power to hire and fire. Unfortunately it's not a corporate situation. It's not McCains or Coles Myer or whatever. But the issues that are involved in police complaints are just different from any other profession.

This point was reiterated by the following comments of a male CIB officer, also with 9 years experience, when this initiative is compared to other forms of accountability, where the courts and the open judicial system play an important role, the contradiction in position, and even the potential for abuse of the power is particularly damaging:

> You put it back to its basics. Here we are we, come to work and we've got rules to follow and what we try and do is go and get the bad guy that did the bad thing to you. Take him before the court. Everything we do along the way is open for scrutiny. Open. It's all a matter of public record. It's in the god damn court for everyone to hear and see. How we get a conviction, what we did to get the conviction, here's the evidence, he's got a right of appeal, we've got a right of review. The whole thing is there. That's what we do. And here we've got the man that's supposed to be hitting us is saying no he's going to place himself above the judicial system. We go before an independent body. We go before a magistrate or we go before a judge and a jury, our peers, to determine whether or not the person's guilty. Now he (the chief commissioner) wants to say right oh I'm the head of the police force. And we do all that every day. We've got those rules to follow but I don't want to follow those rules, I want to be god. I don't want to have to present evidence to an independent committee. I don't want to have to present evidence in a disciplinary hearing to a magistrate which is what we've got now. A magistrate, how more independent can that be? I don't want to do that I just want to do it through the back door. The head of the people that's supposed to uphold the judicial system doesn't want to follow the judicial system and I can't understand that...Having said that he's not political at all. It can't be anything but political. To me it just seems contradictory. You're basically just tearing down your entire beam. I'm a police man and I follow the judicial system. All my disciples here have got to follow the rules but I don't and they've already said this in black and white. You're not permitted to have legal representation. They're telling you you can't be represented legally.

This was viewed to present additional problems for new recruits, who often sacrifice much to join the police force, only to be under the threat of being retrenched for minor issues, such as "a bad attitude". This issue was illustrated by the following comments of a male

CIB officer with 8 years experience in policing:

> But you hear some horror stories coming out of the academy of blokes that have been out there for 14 and 15 weeks and they get sacked because their attitude's not right. Surely they must know that when 14 weeks are up in the course. Anyway guys put their whole future on the line for this job and some bloke says Oh no, your attitude's not right, we'll get rid of him.

IID was also seen to undermine the traditional solidarity of the police force. As indicated by the following comments of a male police academy instructor with 7 years experience in policing, IID frown upon traditional notions of solidarity which are seen to be central to day to day police work:

> I think they see it as a negative. That's a pretty naive thing to think on their part. But I think they see solidarity as a negative. I think they will see that members rather than report breaches and act upon breaches that are serious...real criminal activity...

Internal investigation officers however indicated that many of the criticisms expressed by members of other divisions of policing about the investigation process were false. Not only did IID officers perceive that the rest of policing tended to overlook the fact that IID officers have extensive policing experience and can thus understand many of the problems facing individual officers in the contemporary working environment, but few of the allegations of heavy handedness in internal investigations are based on direct experience. Rather, IID officers felt that it was the fear of being made accountable, rather than it's actual occurrence, which led to this negative perception of the internal investigations process. This point was raised in the following comments of two IID investigators with between 17 and 22 years experience in policing:

> D: They lose sight of the fact that some of these individuals that...we've come in every case from mainstream policing. We've been out there and worked amongst these people. They come in here and suddenly grow an armoured shell. And have your memory taken away from you. They think you're IID clones or something. I know what the level of professionalism is out there in the area from the conditions I worked in. I know what it is amongst the members because I worked amongst them. I was one of them. So I don't really have any jaundiced view or any overly heightened perception that members out there are running around and constantly doing the wrong thing. I know that's not right. I know that far and away the majority of members out there are very professional in the way they go about their job.
>
> B: It's probably based on very limited personal experience. From my own point of view I don't see any difference in my role here with IID investigations to what it was with senior detective or CI investigations. I get a crime or an alleged crime reported to me and I'll investigate it the same as I would as if I was an ordinary detective, and the only offshoot of that is that usually the suspects of the crimes I'm investigating are a police member. But I don't approach it any differently to what I would approach an investigation.

As a result, the general police perspective of IID investigators being mongrels does not seep to reflect the IID perspective of their investigatory role. As the following lengthy dialogue between three IID investigators with between 17 and 22 years experience in policing indicates, IID investigators pride themselves on their ability to maintain fairness and impartiality in the internal investigation process, in the face of the ever increasing complexity of the investigation process, and the degrees of accountability IID members must have within their own organisation. The majority of rank and file police however are seen to misunderstand the nature of and difficulties associated with the investigation process:

> E: I think coppers are the worlds worst gossipers. Those people that have said that to you if you said all right have you been interviewed by IID and how did you find it, speak to people who have been interviewed or dealt with by the department and find out. Everyone says they're mongrels. They charged everyone of our bloody fellow workers. But a lot of them don't understand the workings of the department. We get an investigation in here we gather the evidence. Say it's an assault. It gets reviewed. You get the statements from the doctors that treat the victim. That goes to the office of forensic medicine. A doctor up there reviews the medical evidence. What the (complainant said) and what the police member said. Then it all goes up to the ombudsman and then the ombudsman reviews it all again... And then it can go to our legal advisers. So all we do is gather it and really it's people above us that make the final decision. And they don't understand that. And another thing is we only do a very small minority of the complaints. Most of them go back to their own offices. So the percentage we deal with is very very low and it's only the serious major ones.
> (Interviewer: So the perception of IID investigators being mongrels is totally wrong?)
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> F: No it's 95% wrong. We've had an odd individual in here from time to time who has developed that very attitude that you were talking about before. Who I think by reason of the length of period of service here, who had a heightened perception that..."jesus you know I've had 50 bloody justified complaints, what the bloody hell's going on out there?" And the next minute you're reading through a complaint and I can't believe someone's up here...
>
> B: If you've been here too long I don't think the perception is going to change very quickly that 95% of the coppers out there are crooks behind badges. But when you come in here and you're in for a short time it's the opposite. That 95% are out there and trying to do the best they can, and there's one or two individuals who perhaps shouldn't be in the job.
>
> E: You can suffer from tunnel vision, doing the same thing all the time. And you can't see apart from that. But if you go out there quite a few have been here and then they go back for 6 months and you see that some of the things that they did and they could be out there doing it all the time...
>
> D: The files arrive here with about 11 folios in them and depart anywhere between, what's the average? Between 120 and probably 250 pages. So they sort of come in

like this and they go out sort of anywhere between an inch thick in a full page binder. And the minute one comes off the other sits on your desk. So I mean you're really just constantly exposed to this situation in dealing with that particular type of matter all the time. It's just complaints against police. So I think that you stay here for your term and ...

E: When I first come here 2.5 years ago the compliant file they called a yellow back...it would be a big yellow card from top to bottom and it would probably be as thick as that (about an inch) and they've grown. Like when I started they were like that and then they got the three inch folders. And I've got one on my desk at the moment which is bloody four three inch folders thick, and the final report investigation on that thing is 75 pages and everything else. Like they're like a bloody university thesis. They're that big. And over the years they have tended to grow this big and they're like that and they're getting bigger and bigger all the time. The problem now is that you've got to carry them in a cardboard box. They're more complex.

D: And the accountability too. You've got to know that every single absolute avenue of inquiry a reasonable person on reading the complaint in the first instance could assume, because the complainant says he walked into the hotel toilet and was assaulted by a member off duty. But perhaps one of the three hundred in the hall was in there at the time and not seen by anybody, so they'll all be spoken to.

B: And the ombudsman will want to know why he didn't sign off on the day before.

E: Why he didn't have his hat on. Why wasn't he given a blanket? Every location has got to identify who was there when they make a complaint and they've all got to be eliminated. The volume of work that goes into them. Usually when you see a complaint in the first instance, when you read the complaint statement, you can tell what the result's going to be very early on in the piece. You know very early on whether there is any evidence which leads you to uncover something. Although if you've got a few witnesses when you first get them you know you might have a fight on. But most of the time as soon as you look at it you can probably make a pretty fair appraisal of what the final decision is going to be.

D: You very rarely get admissions.

One of the issues associated with accountability from the IID perspective was the way in which the public view the police. As the following comments of a male IID chief inspector with 21 years experience in policing indicate, it is often difficult for juries to convict an errant police officers because of the general sense of esteem in which the policing profession is held in the community:

But the public too hold the police in very high esteem. Where we have to charge police and bring them before courts, it's a lot more difficult to convict a policeman in front of a jury than what it is judges because the public, especially in Victoria, they really see the police as being up on a pedestal. I think the things that go

> through their mind when they have to put a policeman down is that he'll have to go to jail and all the good work he's done right throughout his career. And you look at your victim who...invariably has got a long criminal history and that sort of thing. And they weigh up the character of the victim against these upstanding policemen doing their job that maybe made one mistake through a 20 year career.

This was contrary to many operational perspectives of the accountability process. Many police officers in operational fields indicated that the investigative process for internal and external disciplinary matters was often too strict. As such, IID were seen as the "demons" about which no body was willing to speak in favourable terms. When confronted with these claims, IID officers indicated that often operational police officers have little sense of the complexities of the internal investigation function, and the nature of the deviance which is formally proceeded with by IID. These issues emerged in the following comments of three male IID officers with between 15 and 21 years experience in policing:

> E: But a lot of them haven't seen...where we see it is in the end result of a major investigation with serious allegations, and you're going before the trials. I mean we get people that actually admitted when they're interviewed and things like that. And the juries let them go. They talk about this Aboriginal that was belted the other week...well there was another one at Robinvale. A member belted another one with a baton and it was a lay down (massier) massacre and the jury bloody was out for 5 minutes. It was the shortest time it was out in virtually identical circumstances but the jury's out there...innocent.

> B: There's a lot been said about us having a siege mentality. I think a lot. And particularly junior members hold that siege mentality in high regard and they think that the world's full of scum. Really I think that the contrary's true. That the public do hold the police in fairly high regard.

> C: And with that I always fall back on one rule with the troops. How would you like your mother to have walked to the counter and be spoken to like that? Or in the street? Just to throw it back onto their own personal perspective.

There was a general fear from non-IID members that the levels of accountability against police are greater than they were in the past. When responding to this issue, the following comments of a male IID investigator with 22 years experience in policing indicate that members of the public are more likely to file a complaint against a police officer in contemporary times in light of how easy it is for a member of the public to utilise the complaints mechanisms. However, the best officers are still unlikely to have a complaint filed against them. The key issue with a complaint is whether it can be substantiated against the individual officer:

> ...I do a lot of lectures in the department of detectives on that and that does come up, but what we've got to try and get across to them is that it's very easy just to walk out the front door and have a complaint made against you. So they should be more concerned about complaints which can be substantiated. People are more willing to complain these days. When I first arrived here every time someone was turned over for drugs there was an allegation of the police having ripped off money

> or jewellery. It was just standard that when you come to do a drug raid that you come to expect those allegations. It's a very easy thing to say...But I know personally from having worked in different divisions that certainly the best workers in those divisions have hardly had a complaint against them.

The following comments of a male IID investigator with 17 years experience in policing indicate that it is often the case that a person has not had a complaint made against them because of luck, rather than their abilities as a police officer:

> ...In putting balance again, there is an element of luck in it. I, personally I have worked in the Western Suburbs in Melbourne since I went out there in '85. And I've spent a considerable time in the job since then in the Western Suburbs in charge of the old district special duties and the crime cars and we never attracted a complaint. Now there is an element of luck in that too. It would have only taken the right offender to be dealt with, who was prepared to make a totally unfounded allegation and there would have been a complaint brought against them. So there is an element of luck. But why is it that the Sergeant who, perhaps working as a uniformed sergeant, who's carrying half the work load that I'm carrying attract 5 or 6 at the same time?

The following comments of a male IID investigator with 15 years experience in policing also suggest that the issue of a complaint ultimately turns on the way in which an individual officer deals with a member of the public, because in the long run, all officers make mistakes on the job:

> It's obviously got to do with the way you deal with people and I've got no doubt, I would be naive to suggest that I didn't wrong people in the time that I performed duties in that area. You can't by reason of the nature of the work from time to time speak harsher to someone who later in retrospect you find that would be exonerated later in an inquiry, and I think it's how you deal with them or the approach you make subsequent to having things that you subsequently find...

Perceptions of accountability in contemporary policing.

There were seen to be few positives to the increase in police accountability from a police perspective. This was illustrated by the following comments of a male academy instructor with 15 years experience in policing, responding to the issue of whether there are any positives to police accountability in modern times:

> There is to the public but not to the police. They believe that they're getting a better police force. They believe they are getting a more efficient and effective (police force)...

It was often felt that the conception of a publicly accountable police force under the current regime was somewhat misguided. Indeed, there is a conception by police that many members of the public are starting to become suspicious of current accountability mechanisms, as they are impeding the effectiveness of police in controlling crime. This issue emerged in the following comments of a male police academy instructor with 10

years experience in the Victoria Police, responding to the question of whether the public's views of accountability are misconceived:

> I think they are. If there were excesses they've been stopped along with the effectiveness. I think the members of the public are recognising now that the police force is not as effective. I think maybe they are more regretful now that they've got more accountability. The crooks are getting away. When I was a connie you never lost a case. It was unheard of...it would never happen. These things would never happen. Never be suspended. It was just out of the question. Unheard of. But these days it just seems to be all the time.

This critical perception of the accountability process exists, because many police officers feel that the mechanisms in displaying public accountability are inefficient, slow and have little value for operational police officers. This has many implications for the way in which police officers exercise their role, and perceive the security of policing as an occupation. These issues were raised in the following dialogue between two male police academy instructors with between 10 and 15 years experience in policing, who indicate that ultimately, the accountability process as it works in practice, lowers the morale of members of the police because of the dilemmas it creates for individuals who's career is halted while an investigation is in process on a split second decision of an individual officer:

> E: I've got no problem at all with being accountable. However when I'm operational I might be making 100 decisions a day and 80 of those decisions might be life threatening or have some important impact on the department. Now out of those 80 decisions one of those might be astray. And the accountability means that my job security is threatened because of that wrong decision. If we had a mechanism whereby...the Chief commissioner used to come here and open up our course and he would say we want you sergeants to make decisions. If you make a decision in relation to your job, we'll back you to the hilt. But that is not the case. So this is the perception at the moment when in actual fact it's not working.
>
> F: They'll back you to the hilt but in actual fact they will suspend you if you're lucky with pay after a long winded inefficient investigation. They'll probably go to court and embarrass themselves severely and at the end of the day you'll get your job back but you'll be so cynical and so (jaded) by the whole experience that you'll maybe ineffective for the rest of your career.
>
> E: But that sticks with you in the station when you come back into the work-force. If one of your peers is suspended for something you know is wrong the whole group will support him and it just lowers the force morale.

Thus in general, the accountability process, and its long winded power of investigation, was seen to be an impediment to the morale of the police force, and the security of members in the job.

One positive aspect of increased accountability is it makes police less inclined to make unworkable legislation work. This is so because if police do try and do the right thing, and

fail, they will be made accountable for a mistake which is essentially the fault of unworkable legislation. This issue was raised in the following comments of a male police academy instructor with 10 years experience in policing:

> Police have got a great tradition of making unworkable legislation work in practice, and I think these days police are less inclined to. If the law sux so be it. The Child Exploitation Unit having the victims, instead of being able to bulk bill the crook. You have to prove each individual case instead of going to town and going berserk to make it work. I don't know how you're going to do that. And of course the media are up in arms about these people with 5 or 6 years of paedophile activity and they're only getting 2 or 3 informations, but that's all we can actually do. So I think that that's perhaps a benefit to come out of it, the increased accountability. Police are less likely to stick their neck out and make crappy laws work.

Occupational legacies of increased accountability.

Some officers indicated that informal culture is not changing as much as anticipated within the force, given the external demands for improved accountability. This was illustrated by the comments of one district inspector with 30 years experience in the Victoria police:

> The chance of keeping informal culture healthy now is greater than it was 20 or 30 years ago. Informal culture tends to have pockets of corrupt behaviour but nowadays I think with the management set up and the accountabilities...

Thus, the new mechanisms are viewed as eroding the old sense of culture within the police force. This, lamentably for some, means that traditional structures and ways of doing things were being formalised and working to change the traditional police culture. However, when combined with changes in attitudes by new officers to policing, it was felt that many of these changes were unavoidable.

One of the reasons posited for the increase in police powers in Victoria was the fact that increased police accountability mechanisms had made the police less effective. As such, the cycle of empowerment for police has to be increased to improve their effectiveness in combating crime. This was illustrated by the comments of a male instructor at the police academy with 12 years experience in policing:

> Why do you think the government is introducing new powers? Purely and simply because we're not being effective. New powers in relation to demanding name and address, new powers in relation to Crimes Family Violence, the powers of entry, blood samples, finger prints. Because we're not being effective. So they've had to introduce more powers. You know the changes in the way people see the police, the avenue of complaints...

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SECTION FOUR: CULTURES OF POLICING IN VICTORIA

This final section returns to the major theme of the present project: the existence and nature of police culture. The previous sections have described the constituents of culture and the many factors that can be associated with it within the policing environment. Here the particular concern is the general and specific shapes that police culture can assume, through the words of the workshop participants.

While it is not explicitly a cultural characteristic, a detailed critique by participants of academy training is included here as well, as it represents an important insight into the perspectives of various officers about the cultural legacies of training.

Cultures of Policing.

The existence of a police culture was supported by most police officers interviewed regardless of their level of experience or the division of policing in which they worked. However, it was often difficult to pinpoint exactly what constituted that culture. In some cases the relevant variables which emerged included the immediate geographical and socio-demographic environment of the region in which the individual or groups of officers worked. In other cases, the sub-cultures of different divisions of policing were conducive to forming different occupational cultures.

In some cases, it was generally felt that there was a generic aspect to police culture. The following comments from a male IID officer with 22 years experience in policing suggest that there is a distinctive police culture which applies to all police officers, and stems directly from the nature and secrecy surrounding the work, and the inability to relate these features in a meaningful way to people who are not police members:

> What you're saying basically is that their behaviour and attitudes are being guided by reason of that occupation and their exposure within that occupation to it. And yes I do think there is a police culture. I do think there are particular things that are inherent to policing. And the solidarity is brought about in a lot of cases by restrictions of secrecy. The fact that you can't discuss with a lot of people the things you're exposed to on the job, and a lot of things that perhaps we should disclose to other people we don't by reason of not wanting to appear weak. There's probably a lot of things that each of us have been exposed to over our policing career that really we should have spent some time over a psychiatrists table getting clear in our own mind how we dealt with it in a certain way and why we dealt with it in that way, so at least we get a clearer understanding and no hang ups about it. I think really that we don't seem to do that enough. I'm not sure we should all... (go the other way) either but I think there's got to be a balance there between a lot of the things we do and the fact that you can't sit there and talk to a neighbour about you're response to picking up a 5 year olds brain that's been hit by the Geelong flier at Laverton station. You just can't do that. So you either talk with it amongst your peers within the work area or you keep it to yourself. And I think that that little discussion about crime issues, individual's rights and wrongs, what they're up to and what they're not up to and that

> sort of thing is not something you can go running around the community and discuss. So it tends to breed that unity within the group. And I think it's a good thing. It's certainly got it's for's and I think it's got it's against. I think one of the things that is changing is that when I first joined the job most police associated with other police members off duty. And that's something that over the years, something I've noticed I think now the average police person tends to associate more with the general community off duty. I don't think we quite had that fortress mentality or that isolation from the community that they had years ago.

The inherent nature of different activities and functions within policing also was seen to contribute to the formation of different cultures of policing. This point was illustrated by the following comments of a male junior police officer with two weeks experience:

> And the need to be a group too. I'm sure the SOG have a very strong bondage because of the high danger. Whereas the administration side have the same culture but different (tasks)...

The existence of sub-cultures within policing was seen to be a central legacy of the way in which policing organisations are structured. This was indicated by the following comments of a male police academy instructor with 10 years experience, who indicates that there are a number of divergent cultures within policing, depending on the area of expertise you are working in. This is common in both organisational and cultural terms:

> That sort of island mentality which you can just put a label on it, that applies everywhere. Every separate area of the police force sort of isolates itself from other areas. When there's a police in trouble call every man and his dog comes out. It doesn't matter what your persuasion is, whether you're in TOG or CI or what have you. But potentially that exists everywhere...Look at areas like the SOG. They're cliquey. PSG, TOG, uniform versus CIB versus admin areas.

These divergent cultures within the organisation are seen to extend to all areas of policing. As the following dialogue between two male police academy instructors with between 10 and 15 years experience in policing indicate, in general, police academy trainers and new recruits often bear the brunt of cultural "stirring" by operational police members:

> F(M): It's also a part of police culture I think to hang it on the trainees and to hang it on the academy. The sergeants probably said the same thing about us when we were trainees.
>
> E(M): Two years ago if someone said to me that I would be instructing at the academy I would have laughed at them. It never ever ever entered my career path. But a detective sergeant from the armed robbery squad went across here and he rang me up and said it's a great job and it's not what you think it is. So I went in and put in for it. Our perceptions change throughout the job.

The following comments of a male IID investigator with 22 years experience in policing indicates that not only has the culture changed over time, but his perceptions of the cultures of policing have changes as he has moved from one area of policing to another throughout

the years:

> I can see that it's changed but then again I've gone from 20 years ago as a cadet to an inspector now at IID so my perception of the job even on today in 1993 is very different from a constable working in Fitzroy. It's quite opposite.

The Academy and its implications for cultural differences.

In general the perception of policing activities at the police academy was viewed as a "soft option" and not in terms of "real" policing. Although it was perceived by some to have changed over time with changing attitudes in policing generally, there was little consensus, particularly amongst academy officers themselves, that the police academy was generally viewed as an easy option for promotion by the general police staff. This lack of consensus was illustrated by the following comments of two male police academy instructors with around 12-13 years experience in policing:

> A: 10 years ago it might have been more valid that sort of opinion: it was a retirement home basically. The law instructors would just come out here and stay here for ever.
>
> C: I tend to disagree with you somewhat. I would say that my perception of coming here as an instructor is a stepping stone to promotion.
>
> A: I'm talking about 10 years ago.
>
> C: So am I. That's always been my perception. But over with the new promotional system it seems to be more of you're here you're basically stuck here. That seems to be more recently the perception.

Part of the perception of police academy trainers being judged as "sub-standard" to conventional police lies in the fact in practice, standard procedures as determined by police administrations are not always followed in practice at each station. Moreover, there are substantial differences in executing operational procedures from station to station. This point was indicated by the following comments of two female and one male police academy instructor, who suggest that this difference between the ideal method, and the practice, often leads to criticism directed at academy training over the teaching of procedures which have little relevance in operational practice, even though there is the ultimate purpose of assisting with the accountability process and maintaining a known set of standards within police organisations:

> B(F): There's certain things that we have to teach that we all know isn't done in the street but we have to do that.
>
> A(M): Just so they don't get into trouble later on. The department will say this is what they were taught. I swear that this is what they were taught and he's deviated from this.
>
> D(F) Certain things in the arrest procedure that aren't always adhered to.

> A(M): It's like with the police stations there's a mobility maintenance. They've got this folder. It's got their police standards for police stations, and none of the stations conform to it...if someone hangs themselves in the cell they can say that's our standard, that's our force standard, but the budget didn't allow us to build that. So it's just sort of to cover their arse really.
>
> B(F) That's why we've got things in the syllabus that really we're wasting our time even teaching.

One way to negotiate this difficulty is suggested in the following comments of a male police academy instructor with 12 years experience, who indicates that liaison between the academy and operations for recruits, and greater field experience can bridge the gap between ideal and practice in police training:

> It's at least changed through field experience and whatever. Now they've got that contact with one week with operational stations. We're getting positive feedback from the operational stations. They're saying the quality of the recruits you're sending...and it's amazing what they learn...what they're doing is they're relating what they learn here to the members at the station and they're seeing, hey, that's right. And it's fresh and it's only 9 weeks of learning.

However, a number of officers suggested that the training at the police academy works to undermine the solidarity of the police force. The concept of doing the correct thing in terms of police training is gaining so much weight, that the practical implications of police officers making genuine mistakes is being overlooked. As such, younger officers are viewed to be more prepared to complain about what they perceive to be bad practice within the force. The current emphasis in academy training was seen to precipitate this dilemma.

This position was illustrated by the following comments of a male CIB officer with 9 years experience in the Victoria Police:

> They're teaching them things at the academy. They're telling them things at the academy which immediately before they get out there on the street undermines the solidarity of the police force. The loyalty, the solidarity. They're pushed out there and all they're taught at the academy is if you see something you don't like you tell everyone and you go to the paper and the press and you get on the typewriter there and you post it to the press and do the whole goddamn lot. How can a person stay at a job like the police force where he's got to work with a bloke that could save his life the next day and be instilled with this trust before he even hit's the street. You don't trust anyone and you go straight to the man with the pips on his shoulder and you tell him if you don't like what you saw if you don't like it. And you can't work that way.

A number of operational police officers expressed criticism that the police academy is not run by operational troops. Instead, the instructors at the academy were generally viewed to be distanced from the operational realities of day to day policing. This point was illustrated by the following comments of a male CIB officer with 7 years experience in policing:

> The fact that now in the academy has been run by boppers that have all done the same

> courses on how to clean up... Whereas when we went through the academy I would say that our law instructors would have said every single word. Whereas now we've got senior connies who can't get a job in their local district applying to be instructors so they get the allowance so they get the cushy 8 to 4 job out at the academy. And they're tryin' to teach these kids what to expect out on the street and they've been sitting in a cosy office doin' files for the last four years and wouldn't know what to expect themselves.

The following comment was repeated by the same officer later on in the interview in relation to police academy instructors:

> They're getting less and less experienced people teaching totally inexperienced people. We had ex CIB sergeants who told us the 'why's' and 'where fors' when we first went out there. Now you're getting blokes taking promotion to senior constable who quite feasibly could have only been in the job for 4 years, and two of them as trainees...whereas the blokes before that have had 10 or 12 years experience. You just cannot buy that experience. Basically, they haven't got the experience behind them so they're given one set of lectures themselves on how to be instructors and they're taking that verbatim into the next room and teaching that to trainees.

Indeed, it is felt that many of the issues which are necessary for police work, such as learning the law, have not changed over time, which reinforces the need for academy training to remain the same. However, when combined with the inexperience of many academy officers, the focus of learning the necessities of the law has altered for new recruits. As such, the impact of learning the theoretical application of various rules necessary for policing are effectively "useless" in practice. As the following comments of a male CIB officer with 8 years experience indicate:

> I mean the law's still the same. The laws haven't changed. You can learn the laws parrot fashion. But an instructor, to be able to relate how to use those laws to you, he needs to have that experience behind him. That's what I say. You can't have a bloke who's been out on the street doin' files for the last few years come in and start telling young blokes how to utilise those laws when they get out onto the street. It's like a tradesman with his tools. You've got to know how to use them when you get out there otherwise they're useless to you.

An additional aspect cited for these problems in terms of the inexperience of police academy instructors is the issue of cost cutting. Officers with lesser experience, yet a desire to teach, are seen by some to be a financial benefit to the police force because they do not cost as much. As the following comments of two CIB officers with 9 and 8 years experience indicate, instructors at the academy are increasingly coming from the lower ranks of the police force, and are facing less and less supervision. The ultimate benefit of this for the policing enterprise is reduced cost:

> E: Why do you suppose they take a perfectly good ex detective sergeant who's lecturing out at the academy and displace him? Take him out of that position and replace him with a senior connie that may never have been there? What could the reason be? All the lecturers are senior connies and they've only got supervising to

have x amount lecturing senior connies. You're not the same the senior connies. You've got x amount of lecturers who are senior connies and you've got one sergeant to oversee those lecturers.

C: In the past the lecturers had to be 2 clear ranks above the people they were lecturing. We were sworn in as constables so they had to be sergeants or above. To get over the expense they've made senior connies instructors and then said now you will be a trainee constable or a recruit and you don't get sworn in as constable until the end of your term, so they save $20000 on their instructor on wages.

The key difference from a police academy officer and a CIB officer was seen to be the fact that CIB are doers, rather than teachers.

It was felt that junior officers no longer have the respect for police academy trainers that their predecessors had. This was viewed to be a direct legacy of the change in composition of academy staff. The result is that given the marginality of academy trainers from the day to day functions of policing, and combine this with their general inexperience, the result is less of an authority figure and role model to look up to in the force. Ultimately, the compromise on the service model of police recruiting is seen to play into this process. These points were raised by the following comments of two male CIB officers each with 9 years experience in policing:

E: We've been to the academy and we were taught by these people that we looked up to, and they had ideals. And they were lecturers at the academy. Now the lecturers that are out there now aren't saying the same things that the lecturers we had were saying.

B: The lecturers out at the academy used to be a have a position. It used to be highly respected.

E: Over the years it's directly reflective of the people that taught us at the academy. So the answer that we give you is the answer you would have got from the lecturers of our time, in that we are saying there is a difference in the way the lecturers think now, what they're doing and what they hope to achieve, to what the lecturers did back then...The ones that taught us were doing the job of service. They were there to do the job of service, to help us along. Now I really do feel that they're there as a cog in the machine.

The other issue to emerge is the issue that academy policing is "soft" policing, involving members who have never really been part of the "real" policing environment. This was illustrated by the following comments of a male CIB officer with 9 years experience in policing:

E: I would like somebody to do a cross section on where the origins of those lecturers who are out there now because I think you would find a lot of ex TOG members and things like that out there.

The key criticism for these changes is that rank and file police officers are seldom consulted

about the nature of these changes. The result is that the changes are implemented, often without an understanding of the overall effect they are having on the policing enterprise. This issue was raised by the following comments of a male CIB officer with 9 years experience in the force:

> E: The underlying thing is that we'll never know because no one ever consults us. No one ever comes to us and says listen we're thinking of probably a better idea than what's going on now, what do you think as a group. Ask the police force. Half the changes that have been made have been made.

Academy trainers were seen by CIB officers to counter these claims by either alleging that the rank and file police officers do not understand the nature of academy training, or by claiming that they are just doing their own job and are therefore merely concerned with maintaining accountability to their own superiors - even though there may be a broader level of criticism of their role by the operational police fraternity. These points were evident in the following comments of two male CIB officers with 8 and 9 years experience in policing:

> C: (Academy trainers will) turn around and say they won't understand. They don't know what we're doing out here.

> B: They would say we've got a syllabus to teach, we teach the syllabus, and we've got a responsibility to our bosses...the old coppers go out there and they're accountable and stuff so we go out and that's our responsibility and we teach them straight down the line so we can't get into trouble.

All of this indicates that at the operational level, CIB police officers felt that learning the "tools of the trade" whist actually in the job, produced more effective police officers than traditional police academy training.

It was also felt that the nature of academy training did not help to negotiate the problems which emerge in light of the rapid changes in society. In this respect, as the following comments of two male CIB officers, each with 9 years experience, the ways of teaching under the previous syllabus, now that they are no longer in place, are impeding the development of modern police to negotiate the new crime problems which society is posing:

> E: Look at where we are today. Look at society and refer that back to the way police are being trained. The bottom line is what was society like 20 years ago, 30 years ago. People didn't go out and wreck havoc on society every day. Police were looked up to. It was safe to walk out on the street at 12 o'clock at night. Women weren't being raped every night of the week.

> C: When you went out you didn't even have to lock our house.

> E: Society's always had problems. It wasn't such a disgusting place to live in really. When you were a kid ask your parents what it was like to live. I mean there were good stories and it was a clean place to live. Why change the syllabus?

The key issue is that these officers see that the change of the academy syllabus, and the effect

this is having on new recruits, may actually be contributing to the problems current society is experiencing.

One of the key problems in respect of academy training is the problem of training new police officers only in the theoretical aspects of law enforcement. While some felt that this was a valuable process, others were critical because of the need for on the job training. Indeed, there appeared to be somewhat of a conflict between the notions of academy training and learning the tools of the trade for policing on the job.

The quality of supervision was seen to be just as important in terms of training junior officers in the intricacies of operational police work as academy training. In this respect, junior officers have great scope in determining who are the good sergeants to follow, and who are those likely to misguide them in their learning on the job. It was generally felt that the sergeants make the station, rather than the troops, and as such it was imperative for the sergeants to pass on the best possible training for all aspects of policing that they can. This was stressed by the following comments of two male CIB officers with 7 and 8 years experience in policing respectively:

> B: The sergeants run the uniformed station. It's not the troops, it's the sergeants. If you've got a good bunch of sergeants that are all together, your uniformed troops will be the best you've ever seen on regular jobs. Better than you would ever expect. The duty officer will say "Jesus, have you already done that?"
>
> C: And the young blokes can pick out a sergeant.
>
> B: You've got your good ones and your bad ones as well.

One of the key qualities of good supervision is the strength in leadership and the absence of cowardice. This was illustrated by the following comments of a male academy instructor with 15 years experience in policing:

> I did an interesting exercise. I instructed on matters of leadership in the sub-officers course and we had 30 students there and I said to them write out what you'd like to see in a leader, and what you don't like to see in a leader. And the biggest response against was cowardice.

The negative aspects of current training mechanisms at the police academy are illustrated by the following comments of two male CIB officers with 9 years experience each:

> E: Because they tell you to do that, because you know why you're at work. You know what the game plan is. You're out there to catch the crooks. You're out there to make the streets safer for the next bloke. These people aren't taught that. They're too mechanical.
>
> B: No. They're taught that this is the way it's done under standing orders. If it's not done like that when you go out into the station well you go and tell someone about it. It's a nightmare.

Academy officers respond to these criticisms by claiming that their training does not really have influence beyond the first 20 weeks of a police officer's career. As such, the actual impact of academy training was seen to differ, depending on whether you are an operational police officer or an academy instructor:

> B(F): I don't know whether we impact that much on their career. I think we certainly influence their time here but I think it would be foolish to think that our contact is going to carry them much beyond their 20 weeks here (female academy instructor: 11 years experience).
>
> F(M) I think B is right but I think the perception out there is that the academy has an incredible influence and ...the recruits come here and they're more academically oriented. They're more mature. They're more questioning, their background and maturity and that. Teaching them the recruits are jacking us up (male academy instructor: 7 years experience).

CIB Culture.

It has been noted previously that there are distinct cultures of policing. This was particularly evident in the distinction between uniformed and CIB policing. The general conception was that there was a rift in cultures between CIB and uniformed policing which counteracts the common conception of a uniform police culture.

Some of the differences between uniformed and CIB police cultures was seen to stem from the fact that many uniformed officers not only have trouble in understanding the CIB role, but because there is a perception of greater professionalism in CIB policing which uniformed officers aspire to, this demarcates CIB from general duties. As such, there is viewed to be a general rift between these two divisions of policing, because of the different roles, and different levels of expertise CIB in particular possesses. These issues emerged in the following dialogue between three male CIB officers with between 7 and 10 years experience in policing:

> D: In general I think most uniformed blokes look up to CIB because a lot of them want to get in.
>
> E: But there's others that think that they are a threat to everything they do and they won't talk to anyone in the CI because they think that the CI...
>
> C: Or they've got no real prospect of getting there because they are either not keen enough or not that interested. And they bitch about it to sway other people away from it.
>
> E: There's always that off the cuff stirring about the CIB and uniform and how the CI will stir the uniform and how more often than not the uniform will stir the CI. "Here's a couple of detectives. We'd better spell it out from them so they don't stuff it up. We'll hand the crime over to you now that we've fixed it up". It's all good sport really.

This was reiterated by the comments of two male senior sergeants with over 15 years experience in the force, in relation to the differences between general duties policing and Criminal Investigations:

> C: It's been my experience...there is such a gap between divisional CI and uniform, that the best way is to give them a smack in the mouth (laughter). But it is split down the middle. But if I'm not happy with the way someone, another sergeant, is performing his duties. I see my role is to ignore it as best you can and get on with your own job. I'm not going to be losing sleep. It's probably not the right thing but it's the practical thing.
>
> D: If you're in general duties and you come across a problem that you can't handle, and it's crime related, you'll get the CIB there and say "Right, they've got it we, can go and do something else." The CIB man will say "This is an easy thing to do. Take a 95% practical approach". And they can handle it themselves. (But) don't they realise that we're investigating, more ongoing investigations all the time and we can't be understanding all these little arsehole things? And then if they say that the general duties fellows then get their backs up and as far as they know these CIB blokes sit in their office with their hot wire and criticise what the uniformed blokes are saying. I don't think it's a big problem.

In a practical sense, the first officer indicated that if there was a rift between two different divisions the best thing to do in practical terms is to accept it and ignore the problems this can and does create. While this may not resolve the situation therefore, at least you are covering yourself and avoiding unnecessary conflict between different styles of policing practice.

This issue of sub-cultures within policing was reiterated by the following comments of a male detective inspector with 25 years experience in policing, who indicates that even though the differences may be marginal, they still exist:

> I say detectives perceive there is a difference in their culture and the uniform culture. But really if you sit down and examine them there's not that big a difference. It's just that you make your own little sub culture that we detectives, although I must admit, probably because detectives (are) not dealing with brand new people. You've got that 5 years where people are there training detectives have got a fair bit of experience and therefore they've got pretty set in their ways. Now after 5 years they become a detective...and they are very hard to change in their ways. Detectives like you could turn around in a uniform tomorrow and say "you know, we are going to change this procedure. Do this". And they seem to say all right, that's fair enough, we can mould you. That's going to be o.k. We'll do it. And I find it very hard to be in with the detectives and say "well tomorrow you know what you've done for the last 20 years, we're going to change from that and we are going to do this". Well you will get the arguments from left right and centre. They're very pig headed in their attitudes. What's been good for the last 20 years should still be good enough.

Some officers indicated however that the culture of CIB policing was little different from the general police culture. This point was illustrated by the following comments of a male CIB

officer with 9 years experience, in explaining the intricacies of CIB policing and culture:

> There's nothin' special about being a good detective. If you're a good crook catcher, you're able to follow a lead and catch crook you'll be able to be a good detective. If you're saying if you can catch crooks and follow a lead there's no reason why you might not become a good detective because that's what you're out there to do. You're not out there necessarily to be the PR machine. You're not the first cab off the ranks to do all of that. You've got to be able to talk to the local shop keeper, you've got to be able to catch the crook. You've still got to be able to go out there and be the PR machine as well as catch crooks. You've got to cover all the bases. Whereas as you say a good uniformed copper. What's a good uniformed copper?

On the other hand, as this officer continued, there is a legacy of differences in culture between uniformed and criminal investigations divisions of policing:

> There's little pockets in a day's activities for a police force. There's different personalities in the police force that fill those pockets. There's heaps of things that we hate to do because we're not good at it. So we look to people who can't go out and catch a crook and follow a lead and fill those roles and they do it well. I take my hat off to them. If they want to go out and be the PR machine and do the foot patrols and something and have a cup of tea with the old lady around the corner to make her feel good or something because she's on her own. There's not all of us that can do that on a regular basis or would want to do that. And there's other ones that would want to do that role and that's part of being a uniformed policeman or part of being a police man. It's part of the PR machine and part about making people feel good about the fact that they've got a police force to protect them. That's just one small thing. And I class that as being a good uniformed policeman. Because he's doing part of the uniform charter. And even if he can't catch a crook as long as he doesn't bull shit about the fact that he can't catch a crook and big note himself. If he's good at somethin', if he's a good files man, a bloke who can get around and knows where all the crooks are, not so good at talking to them and getting admissions out of them but he knows where they are. He knows where they live and he knows who's payin' the rent and he knows how to get his job done he's a good uniformed policeman. But he may never be a detective. No hope.

It was therefore viewed in general terms that there was a police culture. However, the culture of policing often contained a number of sub-cultures specific to individual divisions of policing, and the jobs and tasks that entails. This was illustrated throughout the interview schedules, but perhaps best summed up by the following comments of a male CIB officer with 9 years experience in policing, responding to the question of whether there is a thing called police culture:

> There's a police culture and the CI culture is I suppose catchin' crooks. That's our job, (to) lock up crooks.

CPS Culture.

There is an obvious constrast between perceptions of the work of Community Policing Squads

and other police which carries a sub-cultural implication. Take for example the following comments of a male police officer with 5 years experience in the CPS which deals specifically with domestic violence in the community:

> General duties police tend to put band aids on the problem whereas CPS go to long term solutions to heal the wound.

Indeed, community based police officers indicated that their role primarily involved counselling and social work services, which differs markedly from the general conception of policing as a crime control occupation. Community policing is generally viewed to be "victim orientated rather than crook orientated" which can lead to conflict with other divisions of policing. Some involved in community policing felt threatened by the comments of Criminal Investigations police that their role was not "real policing".

There are several implications of this difference in approach in terms of reinforcing a different culture within the Victoria Police. Community police respondents generally indicated that because the skills you attain in CPS are seen to help you in general duties policing but the same does not necessarily apply in the reverse, there is a fundamental rift between different styles of policing. This means that general duties police officers may not be able to adequately carry out the roles of the community police officer. Some community police officers criticised the way in which general duties officers dealt with the preventative and caring roles demanded of community police officers who deal with a wide range of sex offences, and tense domestic crises. There were often criticisms expressed about confrontational tactics, inadequate communication and inability to conduct mediation in domestic settings. There was also an importance expressed on the need to adhere to specific rules dictating the role of the community police officer, given the often tense nature of domestic situations. This point was illustrated by a female community police officer with 5 years experience in police work:

> You can never be certain what will happen in a domestic situation. A lot of police don't mind a scuffle with a crook from time to time. They actually enjoy it. A bit of a show of physical force. A bit of adrenalin rush. However those police would loathe being pushed around and spat at at a domestic. There you are told that you have to play it cool and you can't fight back.

Ultimately this means that community policing is substantially different from standard forms of policing. In addition, there is a general failure by many police officers to understand the nature of domestic disputes, particularly in terms of the role of the parties to the dispute. This was illustrated by the following comments by a female police officer with 5 years experience:

> The attitudes are not as bad as before but some young officers still have chauvinistic viewpoints. There are just as many who are more liberated. Most police are assertive individuals by nature. Therefore they cannot understand a situation where a woman puts up with being clobbered. They wouldn't conceive of it themselves.

The result of this is that general duties policing is more conflict oriented, and adopts less of a crime prevention ideal. As such community police praise themselves for "problem oriented" policing, which differs markedly from the reactive approach normally associated with police

work. This was illustrated by the following comments of a male community policing officer with 5 years experience in the Victoria Police:

> (The) problem with dealing with the issue of young people leads to most police just booking young people because it is the easier way to deal with the problem. You must look to what's the root cause so maybe we can work it out. Maybe there's not an answer but maybe there's an answer for three quarters of them and maybe we can work on that.

The effect of this differences in cultures of police work with regard to community policing is that often community police officers are not understood by other members of the force. This has the potential to reinforce contacts with fellow community police members by sharing experiences of the particular nature of their work. The result can be considered to be a spiral of marginalisation for community police officers, who have to rely heavily on each other for understanding of the particular nature of their work, yet at the same time receive criticism from other divisions of policing for not engaging in real police work. The "in-group means that the CPS are perhaps more close knit. They are not as close to the uniformed blokes", and work very much as part of a team with fellow community police members.

Culture, sex and gender roles.

Gender differences are an important variable in the operational tools available to males and females in the force. In this respect, female officers indicated that the force is very male dominated. Yet for female officers, the best way to deal with this is to ignore the male competitiveness, but gain support from their paternalistic attitudes. Take for example the following interchange between three female police officers with 3.5 to 5 years experience.

> B: We don't care as much about the ego. You get called everything under the sun anyway so a few more things won't matter.
>
> A: It's also because they're with other men and they have to prove something to them.
>
> D: But then again you get the guys who are out there and someone will say something to you and they say "Don't you talk to her like that", like a big brother. And you just think that they do care in their own way.

This approach was supported by the following comments of two female police officers in relation to the sexually related comments they received at the police academy. The more the harassment comes it seems, the more female police officers tend to ignore it:

> F(F): At the start it really shits you but after that you just get used to it.
>
> C(F): Half the time they say it just to shit you. Initially it gets to you though because you start to feel, "Why am I here? No one wants to work with me. I'm inadequate. I'm female. I can't do the job as well as a male can." But once you start to get to know the job a bit more you know you can and you get to know it.

The enterprise of policing was seen to provide few opportunities for female officers to

develop a distinctly gender based sub-culture. As one female officer with 3.5 years experience indicated:

> I don't think there is a real lot of organisations for policewomen. I think they are trying to make us a group of police women and when we are criticised you are going to be treated equally but then you've got organisations. so you want to be treated equally but you want this and you want this.

In other words, separate organisations for women officers are seen to split the force into different groups. The result is that they are less likely to have a valuable effect on the pursuit of aims for female police officers within the existing environment. However most female officers agreed that the situation is better for women now than it would have been several years ago, because the males are more receptive to equality in the police role. This is evidenced by the following dialogue between two female officers with 3.5 years experience:

> C: They were doing mundane tasks.
>
> D: They were treated more as a low life, whereas now we do everything equal to the guys.
>
> C: It would have been tougher back then. I wouldn't have joined.

The result is therefore a greater perception of gender equality in the day to day culture of the Victoria police. There is no perceived need to adopt formal networks of female support, as the culture in itself has altered to allow women greater equality and understanding in their operational tasks. While informal networking between women may occur on occasions, the general tendency is to remove gender as a variable completely, and treat problems as police problems rather than gender issues. As such, when the shift is over, you socialise outside the force, rather than maintain the ties within the job. As one female officer indicated, the current trend in the occupation respects the necessity for both women and men to co-exist in general policing duties:

> I don't think a station could run without a mixture (of men and women). I tend not to hang around with police. As soon as I've finished work that's it. I mean it's a fine line if you're going to have to go to functions and start socialising with the people that you work with but because I'm there for 8 hours a day and because I live so far away I just don't want to be there after work so I mean each to his own. Some like to go out with the girls from work whereas I just want to go home. I don't want to be around.

It was relatively rare for female respondents to have been the only women working at a particular station. However, when this was the case, there was little reticence about how the male culture of the station impacts on work performance. In fact, in stations where women were relatively isolated, it was felt that the culture could facilitate a good working environment. In this respect, as one respondent with 5 years experience in general duties indicated, the males at the station offered a degree of protection which created a good working environment. However the presence of other women at the station provided informal assistance in negotiating some elements of the male culture of the station:

> Well, up until a month ago I was the only woman, there were 6 of us at our police station and I was the only girl and I thought it was great just because there's no bitchiness. I'm not saying all girls bitch but some girls can be bitchy. We're lucky that we don't have that. But you must admit that at a lot of stations you do get that. But when it came down to it like you said before they will protect you so I thought it was great, it didn't worry me at all. There's another girl there and that doesn't worry me either, it's great having her there. You can say comments and that sort of thing. I can't believe that I'm the only girl there and I have to put up with this and that sort of thing.

The general attitude to women on the job was seen to have changed in recent years. In this respect the new recruits at the academy were well educated on aspects of equality in the work force. Those who were seen to be more problematic were men with more experience in the force. As one female officer with 5 years experience indicated:

> I think that anyone in the last 8-10 years have been pretty good. I think that if you've got people with problems with women that they have been in the job for longer than 10 years. (The peers that come through the academy) they're great. You've done exactly the same stuff as them from the word go. And a lot of the time you didn't know them.

In some cases, organisational policy provides practical advantages to help women on the job. As one female officer with 3.5 years experience in general duties indicated, women are rarely placed in situations where they have to work alone in operational activities:

> You don't have two women working on divisional vans...in case you get into a situation. (But) they will not swap who you're working with. They're not going to say we want two blokes to go there you come off. But if you were all in the station and there was a big brawl somewhere then it would be different. You'd still go out but they'd partner you up with a bloke each or something. But that's natural. I don't see anything wrong with that

Despite the administrative concern for violence against female officers, there were times when women were assigned on active duty together. However at times there were problems associated with this policy. As one female police officer with 3.5 years experience in general duties indicated, there were times where she felt inhibited working alongside other women. This was primarily due to the perceived threat to personal safety. However the policy of protecting women could lead to stifling the opportunities for female police officers:

> I've worked a night shift where the roster was drawn up and there was two women and another one that was working the van...they think they're doing the right thing when they're not and I don't know. I don't like going out with a woman. But some women are not getting the opportunity to work the van, every now and again, like I don't think they should do it all the time.

However if there was a brawl they would generally not assign a large police man to a small police man. The way to deploy officers would largely depend on who was available for duty at the particular time. As one female officer with 3.5 years experience in general duties

indicated:

> Generally...there is only enough members to put two in the van, two in the watch house and a sergeant and that's it. So whoever's there...If they're going to have a brawl shift and a brawl van working they wouldn't want to have four people working on a brawl van.

Culture and age.

Senior officers often felt that new recruits were facing many negative effects of the change in culture. In particular, not only is the society seen as becoming more violent, but there is greater accountability and frequent changes occurring regularly to legislation, and within the job which mean that increasingly new recruits are having to become adaptable to new situations. The following comments of two IID investigators with 17 and 21 years experience respectively, are indicative of the nature of the changes facing contemporary policing, and their potentially destabilising effects on new recruits:

> A: I feel sorry for the young ones now and in fact the people who have approached me now generally at my age, it's people whose children are making a decision whether or not to join the job. My advice invariably is obviously they've got to make their own mind up but my advice to them is to think about it very very carefully. I guess my perception of where it's been very difficult for them is based on the heightened accountability and the changes I've seen take place over the time I've been in the job. And I hark back to how well I coped when I was a young constable and then look at the degree of the level of expectation on the young police. In the course of it they've got to cope with things and it's very hard for them. Working with a senior member was always the go. You'd never see junior people working in a situation where the senior member of the unit is now 14 months out of the academy and the other one was brand new out of the academy.
>
> E: The other thing is that a policeman, apart from other careers, is that a policeman...you don't pass after 2 years. There's 140...how many?...in training service courses are there. Legislation changes. You've got to learn that. Investigative techniques change. You've got to learn that. We've got four circular memos, daily memos. There's millions of things every day you've got to sit down for about an hour to keep abreast of things that are happening. You can't. Our manual, our standing orders... If you look back 15 years ago we had bugger all. We used to call it the brown bible. It was this big book with a brown cover on it and that was it. We didn't have to worry about nothing. These days we've got everything thrown at us. Every bloody day. Even in here when we've got to charge someone for doing something wrong you've got to bloody research it and run around all over the place and try to find out what it is yourself sometimes. We had one book, we used to have the bomber and the manual. Now we've got the bloody standing orders, the manual, we've got the procedures. There's about 5 bloody books and you have to try and bloody find out which one its in.
>
> A: I think you adapt to that though.

Some people indicated that different cultures can exist between younger and older members of police stations. This point was illustrated by the following comments of a female junior officer with two weeks operational experience:

> Younger groups coming out: a younger type of station is likely to have a different culture than one which is set in the more older ways.

However not all respondents indicated that external factors which have implications for the development of police culture are changing. As the following comments of a male IID officer with 17 years experience in policing suggest, the stories of new recruits are generally similar to those of experienced officers when they were in their early years in the police force:

> I've got three younger brothers that are all constables in the job too. And it might be just because we're in the South Eastern suburbs. The stories that they come home with are the same as the stories that I used to come home with when I was a constable in the 70s in the Eastern suburbs. They're probably exactly the same.

Cultures and hierarchical changes in policing.

The hierarchical structure of the police force is viewed by some police officers as a primary source of stress within the force. This was illustrated by the comments of a male senior sergeant with 15 years experience:

> Regardless of the rank you are at the time, I think the stress mainly comes from above. If you're a connie or a senior connie the stress is formed by us. If you're a sergeant the stress is generally caused by inspectors or senior sergeants.

When probed about the nature of hierarchical change, it was felt that the hierarchy has distanced itself from the rank and file police officers. There seems to be no consultation with rank and file police officers, which is leading to a change in culture which is beyond the control of most police officers. This was illustrated by the following comments of two male CIB police officers with around 10 years experience in Victorian policing:

> E: I don't know what the hierarchy is attempting to impose but all I see is that the hierarchy is moving away from the shop floor. Moving away from the shop floor. And they're not in touch with us. They're bringing something in the main door but without consultation.

> B: It's trying to be run like a corporation and it never will run like a corporation. It's got to be run like, the military. It's almost military and it's got to be that way. You can't sort of run it like Coles Myer or something like that. You just can't do it.

The key issue appears to be that the militarisation of policing is being eroded. This is principally due to the management imperatives being imposed in the present day, and the quality of the new recruits which is beginning to erode the traditional police culture. As such, rank and file members in certain policing divisions, particularly criminal investigations, are resentful of the nature of these changes on the day to day running of the police. The emphasis

is thus on results in the abstract, rather than the effectiveness of the police force in their operational milieu. This point is illustrated by the following comments of a male CIB officer with 8 years experience in the Victoria Police, who indicates that accountability is occurring in an abstract manner by the police hierarchy which is beyond the comprehension of many operational officers:

> Your own office is no problem. You can always get around problems in your own office and you always support each other in your own office. But the difference is going from say that office to this office. All they see is the figures they don't know about whether (he) has been working a 24 hour shift chasin' a rapist or whether the other troops have been out havin' a barbecue. All they see at the end of the month is the figures. "Oh, he's only charged one bloke for the month." Big deal. The fact that he's spent 4 weeks working on it 24 hours a day doesn't mean anything.

It was felt that the effects of this dilemma between management and operations was indicative of a series of police cultures, not all of which are cohesive in terms of assessing operational effectiveness. This point was illustrated by the following comments of a male CIB officer with 11 years experience in policing, who suggests that supervisors with generalised levels of experience operating in a managerial capacity, may have little or no understanding of the intricacies of CIB policing. As such, it makes the internal accountability process difficult for some operational police to comprehend:

> It would be hard for a uniformed inspector who's never been to the CIB who had been in TOG all his life to come out to a district office like this and just get a file and chase it up. He wouldn't have the faintest idea where to start. He wouldn't know what the pressures of the relevant CIB people work with.

This point was reiterated by the following comments of a male CIB officer with 8 years experience in operational policing:

> The point is that they're losing touch with the floor because they haven't been in the CIB, the uniformed inspectors. So they wouldn't have an idea or comprehend what pressures we're under. How we operate and what we do. What we basically do from day to day. They wouldn't know. How can they be in touch with our level of policing?

The failure for management personnel to understand the culture of CIB policing also extends to the views of appropriate resources needed in the criminal investigations role. This point emerged in the following comments of a male CIB officer with 8 years experience in policing:

> We might need a night scope and a mobile phone and a listening device and he'd (the manager) say "You don't need that. They cost too much." Then if he wants to organise it for us any way he goes to our old DDI who's in charge of those.

The following comments of another male CIB officer with 9 years experience indicate that ultimately, at the management level, the duplication of resources, and the consequent lack of knowledge of many managers of CIB operations, leads to an unnecessary "paper chase" which

is seen to be inefficient and out of touch with the realities of operational criminal investigations:

> We've got two uniformed inspectors in charge of two different areas. Like for instance I'm up at Epping and Preston. Preston's in another division. We've got different uniformed inspectors in charge of us but we're in the CIB and we've got X here who's a detective inspector. And he's not supposed to have any part of us. Basically now he's in the DSU and the DSG and those squads. So we've got one inspector and the other inspector and we've got crossed paths they set the paper chase. And I really just don't know why they even changed.

Indeed, it was felt by some officers that the stresses directly associated with police work itself were conducive to developing a strong occupational culture geared to dealing with those stresses. The following comments of a male IID chief inspector with 21 years experience in policing illustrate this point:

> I think the big thing these days compared to a couple of years ago with the job is this thing about stress. A lot of that has either been proven as bull shit or, police these days, they reckon they're not concerned about their jobs or the violence, the danger and all that. They accept that. A lot of the stress they talk about comes from within the organisation. And where everyone years ago sort of left in their droves to take their (super) and run, they're all queuing up in their droves to get back in now. And people within the job now are seeing it more as a job you go thorough until you retire and that's it. And if they get on with doing that, no one is forcing them to go out and get pissed all night and get drunk and turn up to work. No one forces you when your marriage breaks down, when you go out playing up all night. A lot of the stress is self induced. If you have stressful problems it is not caused...I suppose people say that we're a cause of stress or other things like the paper trail and all that. Our problem is that the average bloke doing his job on the van catching crooks, he's got no problems at all it's only the other factors that lead to stress.

Culture and professionalisation.

One of the key issues facing policing in the future is the issue of professionalisation. As policing is becoming more management oriented, there is a need to provide rewards for those officers working at the street level, in order to keep them motivated and to provide an incentive for good officers to stay in those positions. This issue is gaining momentum in the police force, and, as the following comments of a male police academy instructor with 16 years experience in policing indicate, these changes are necessary to keep street policing incentives in line with the incentives attaching to contemporary police management:

> ...they're going to have training ranks in that like the American street cops if you are good and happy on the beat you can remain as a constable or a senior constable without having to promote yourself further. Similarly if you know you can't go any further, if you've reached your peak, if you're good on the street, you can maintain that rank, but you get (an improvement in pay). So if you retire as a senior constable after 20 years, you are earning more than a chief inspector. That's going to come in and that will enhance that sort of argument...that we are discussing. There is reward.

> As the department becomes more management orientated, more corporate orientated, they're introducing all these outside corporate initiatives. We can't reward people because we don't produce the product. We can't be gauged by income. We can't be gauged by productivity. The evaluation methods we've got now are ineffective. They're introducing all these corporate initiatives but we haven't got the rewards to keep people motivated. We've got adverse effects where instead of rewards we've got punishments... There will be a natural path of police studies. And to get to the rank of chief inspector you have to have 20 components to get to that rank. At constable level you must achieve 3 or 4 of those components to achieve senior connie rank. You must have 10 to get the diploma to become a sergeant etc. Whereas if you want to stop as sergeant you get your diploma and you can stay at that rank.

This initiative was seen to have benefits as it has the ability to reward effort and initiative at the operational level. As such, in the future, management will not be the only avenue for individuals to gain promotion and financial rewards. This issue was indicated by the following comments of a female police academy instructor with 11 years experience in policing:

> It should mean that productivity should improve because you can stay within the job you like if you're good at it because you wouldn't go up for the dollar. You go up because you want to be a manager.

This was reiterated by the comments of several junior officers, who suggested that the current composition of members of the police force, greater accountability, improved administration, and higher educational standards is having a gradual impact on changing police culture. These points emerged in the following dialogue between two male junior officers with two weeks operational experience:

> D(M): That they are going to be accountable, people are thinking to themselves can I cover him up. But now there is IID.
>
> A(M): The force is better educated and organised now as well. They've improved a lot. Like if you ever had problems with handling stress you couldn't go and see anyone. You can go and see someone now. The administration is a lot better now, being computerised. They are not just getting the thugs in or the big blokes and education is encouraged.

The relationship with law and culture was seen to co-exist. As the following comments with one female and one male junior officer indicate legal regulation of policing, and the informal culture of the organisation can co-exist in policing, as in any other occupation. The ultimate issue is that of the individual doing the correct thing, both under the law and at a moral level. It also encompasses doing the right thing in terms of occupational culture and in the on-going relations with your peers:

> D(M): They (informal and formal legal cultures) normally get along. Day to day it shouldn't be a problem.
>
> F(F): If you do the right thing they will go hand in hand. It's like any other group. I don't think you can carry out your legal and other responsibilities if you can't work

and get on with those around you.

Culture and the geographic environment.

Culture was also seen to emerge from the location in which a person, or group of police officers work in. This was illustrated by the following comments of a male police academy instructor with 10 years experience in policing in Victoria:

> I remember when I was at Broadmeadows we absolutely hated the arseholes at Glenroy and Fawkner that never did any work. It wasn't hatred, it was friendly rivalry. You have healthy rivalry between the Broadmeadows police force, the St Kilda police force, the Geelong police force...

These comments relating to different rivalries and cultures between different stations were reiterated by the following comments of two male police academy instructors:

> A: Separate police stations have different sort of cultures I suppose. I know I worked at St Kilda for 4 years and I remember that blokes who transfer out and they come back to court and they say how are they going at Mooroolbark. And they de-train themselves. And people in Mooroolbark aren't used to being stopped in the street and saying hey you've got to empty out your pockets.
>
> E: Policing environments are so different. When I was in town as a major crime squad detective duty (sic) at the Dandenong CIB for 8 weeks and I just couldn't believe the change in the people there. When we were dealing with good crooks they respected us and treated us well. I've gone out to Dandenong and you just say hello to somebody in the street and they say "get fucked". I couldn't believe it. We were at loggerheads with every single person. I spoke to the sergeant and I said is it me or the people. And he said they were all like that you've just got to ignore it and after a couple of weeks I did. It's a totally different environment.
>
> A: If you work at St Kilda and the next station up the road is Caulfield. I suppose it's different area. Like Caulfield is basically residential, middle class. Whereas St Kilda has got a bit of everything. Just the way the public treats you is totally different.

It was felt that not only did the public behave differently to police in different areas, but they also expected to be treated differently by police. This was indicated by the following comments of two male and one female police academy instructors with between 10 and 12 years experience in policing, in response to the question whether differences between localities are derived from the way in which police treat the public or the public treat the police:

> A(M): It's a bit of both.
>
> F(M): The public expect to be treated differently in those areas.
>
> A(M): Like the people in Caulfield expect the police to be polite, and a lot of people who have been in St Kilda for a while certainly don't have those expectations.

> D(F): You have to find out the level of the person with whom you are dealing. That's really part of the job to find that level.

These differences were seen to be mirrored in the way in which different police stations relate to their members. As the following comments of a male police academy instructor with 15 years experience indicate:

> It's the same with police. You go to a station like St Kilda and you've got preconceived ideas and personal values which differs from everyone else in the station. Everyone's an individual however you can't be an individual in that sort of organisation so there has to be a mean. And some people have to come down and others have to put their community standards up because collectively if you're not part of the clique you are not effective.

As this comment indicates, the need to be part of a clique is almost essential to any policing environment. As such, police members have to adapt to the goals and orientations of each environment, in order to be accepted by that environment. This applies to either the way in which cultures emerge in different divisions of police speciality, or the way in which the policing organisation relates to its urban environment.

The issue as to whether the culture of a particular station could outlive the people who were part of the station was an interesting one, which was not really resolved in the workshops. While some claimed that the culture of the station could outlive the individual members because of the way in which certain individuals are attracted to a particular region or area of policing, others suggested that management and administrative policy had the potential to alter the culture of a particular station over night. As such, it was difficult to work out whether the culture of the station was governed by its members or the external (police) community. This was indicated by the following comments of two male and one female police academy instructor with between 10 and 12 years experience in policing:

> A(M): I suppose in a place like St Kilda it seems to attract sub-officers who are more sort of squad types. People in CIB. People in squads people who like to work in busy stations. So people who have been in busy stations just go back to busy stations as sub-officers. The people who have worked in suburban back quarters tend to go back to them.
>
> F(M): But you can change it almost over night with a batch of newly promoted.
>
> B(F): District policy can effect policing greatly. There's a policy out at H district at the moment that a sergeant has to drive the van every shift. Now that would have a big effect on the way policing is being done out at H district and yet 5 years ago it wouldn't have because there was no such policy. So district or station policy can have some bearing on the culture of that station.

In the case of senior police officers therefore, it was felt that the culture of the police force was changing significantly. The dangers against police were seen to be increasing, and the general attitude towards police professionalism was eroding long standing cultural values which were seen to be significant to police work. The key test, therefore, of whether senior

officers approved of these changes, lies in whether they would approve of their children joining the police force. In this respect, the responses of two district inspectors with between 25 and 30 years experience are illustrative of the future direction of the Victoria Police:

> D: One of my boys has professed that he'd like to be a policeman and I don't think he will for physical reasons. I'm proud that they want to try and emulate their dad. I would try and talk them out of it but if they were satisfied that they were content then I'd pull all stops out to help them. Basically the main reason is the danger. I perceive there to be more danger nowadays. And also I want to keep them innocent you know as much as I can. If they can go through life as oblivious as they can, I don't think there's any innocence with kids now a days. Years ago the only people that say a dead body was the police and hospital staff. With T.V. there is just so much shown in the news. Detailed operations on programs. You see the people in Bosnia.
>
> A: I've got four boys and I dare say one of them will want to join. The eldest is 15 and all he wants to do is be a lawyer at the moment so he can get his dad in the witness box, just so he can argue with me and prove himself right but... What I perceive now, the young blokes on the van. I perceive it as very dangerous for them. I also see that they're placed in a position, in our days in the van we went to an accident, we went to a domestic, we'd sort it out and that would be it. There's paperwork for everything. To me I could never work a van now. The divisional van, the workload and the intensity that's on those kids it's just incredible and that's what I worry about when I think about my boys joining. But I would very much relent on that if as was stated it was truly recognised that the police force was a profession and we didn't stuff around with three months or six months training and there was a proper qualified university degree and it was recognised much like the medical profession and the nurses profession. Whatever other profession. And our blokes were in a position to get the proper training instead of three months and you learn it on the street as you go and you make your mistakes or whatever. You have some sort of proper tertiary qualification to become a policeman then I'd be much more happy. But you know there's a lot of people that can go out there and do their degrees and become a professional then swap into other degrees or something else. You become a policeman, you leave the police force, you have no tertiary qualifications as such unless you've got them yourself during it, or a degree which had nothing to do with it. You are not regarded as a professional and if that was the case I'd have no hesitation if my boys were interested.

The station environment and physical surroundings of the police station was also seen to impact on the culture and morale of the people in the policing environment. This was indicated by the following dialogue between three male police academy instructors with between 12 and 15 years experience in policing:

> C: I was at Cheltenham where we had two moves from an old station to a temporary station and you could certainly see the change, I suppose, in the way that policing was done because of the environment. I mean you would be more comfortable with your atmosphere. You tend to work differently.
>
> E: That's been brought up at St Kilda police station, Prahran police station. The

> change of environment changed the nature of the members in it, positively. The professional image. At St Kilda you're walking down blood splattered walls interviewing people. It just doesn't work. It's just totally unprofessional. You've projected yourself unprofessionally. All of a sudden you're in a greyer environment because you've acted unprofessionally. You didn't fit in. If you had to increase your previous standards to suit the environment...
>
> A: If there was blood splattered in a new station someone would run into it and put a hole in it. There wasn't enough resistance to it because of the blood.

The nature of the job itself provided a difficult environment for new officers. While the culture of a particular police area would differ depending on the nature of the crime problems, the bottom line was that there was a constant interaction with "bad" or "nasty" people which had an effect on the way in which you view the world. As one female officer with 3 and a half years experience in three very diverse locations indicated:

> Just by constantly associating with a certain type of people, depending on what kind of area you're working in, you're constantly dealing with crooks ... and you go out to a different area and you see people like coming out from Hawthorn where it's a quiet area and you come from Preston or Heidelberg and it's like because they've been dealing with this type of person over there ... they're different. They act differently towards different people. Whereas over in Hawthorn we don't act like that because there's no need to. (at) different stations there's different cultures I think.

Culture, personalities and significant events.

In some cases the personalities of senior officers can influence the culture of the station and the attitudes of its members. This was illustrated by the following comments of a male police academy instructor with 10 years experience:

> There is a difference with the senior sergeant. When I was working out at Broady we had a senior sergeant out there who used to parade us in the back yard. He'd make us march and inspect our batons and really blast anybody whose shoes were dirty and all that. We were going to bring the tar and feathers in. But when he transferred we had a big party. It really changed. The whole nature of the station changed. The way we went about our work changed. We started to enjoy ourselves again...

Many of these features, while not appearing to be cultural facets of policing, do actually impinge on the culture of the organisation. This was indicated by the following comments of two male and one female police academy instructor with between 10 and 15 years experience in policing, who indicated that it is often events which precipitate the change in culture of organisational policing:

> E(M): Policemen get shot dead the whole force changes. Their attitude to the way they approach those situations. I know that happens in a lot of situations. In the stations, somebody goes down or gets charged by IID, their methods may change or their perceptions or their pre-conceived ideas.

A(M): It's like after Walsh St. Every suspect car that was given out on night shift they'd send 2 cars to for about two months.

D(F): You've got it in the back of your mind. I think there's a fair bit of paranoia.

Conclusion.

However some officers felt that the variation in cultures had little impact on fragmenting the overriding police culture which is seen to exist in the Victoria police. This point emerged in the following comments of a male junior officer with two weeks operational experience:

But I think at the end of the day if you see anyone in the street with a badge in their pocket they are still one of them no matter whether they are with the schools program or anywhere else.

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