NSW Police Force

Community Engagement Framework Development

September 2016

diverse
werks

ACRONYMS

ANZPAA	Australia New Zealand Policing Advisory Agency
ACON	Aids Council of New South Wales
CALD	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
DV	Domestic Violence
IAP2	International Association for Public Participation
LALC	Local Aboriginal Land Council
LAC	Local Area Command
LGBTIQ	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer
NSW Police	New South Wales Police Force
SSI	Settlement Services Inc.
UTS	University of Technology, Sydney
WA DFES	Western Australian Department of Fire and Emergency Services

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents an exploration of the development of a community engagement framework for the NSW Police Force. The aim of this project was to consult and engage with community members, stakeholders and the NSW Police themselves to inform a framework development process that provides a more consistent and meaningful approach to community engagement across the NSW Police Force. Specifically, the project investigated what meaningful engagement was, and how a framework could be developed to be practical, implementable, consistent, and relatable.

In order to determine the above, several forms of evidence were collected from July to October 2016. These included:

Phase 1: Contextual scoping;

Phase 2: Workshop with key NSW Police staff;

Phase 3: Six stakeholder focus groups;

Phase 4: Online community survey; and

Phase 5: Analysis and reporting.

Contextual scoping

Scoping focussed on current NSW Police engagement activities and engagement frameworks from law enforcement or emergency service agencies domestically and internationally. Similarities were found between existing frameworks used by the WA Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES), Australia New Zealand Policing Advisory Agency's (ANZPAA) Education and Training Guidelines for Community Engagement, and the principles underpinning community policing in Britain. These key themes were:

- ◗ The need for public cooperation and community resilience in law enforcement;

- ◗ Systemic, sustainable engagement that is embedded in the structures and policies of the organisation;

- ◗ Ensuring a culture of respect to support the key elements of community engagement as defined by the International Association for Public Participation (IAPP) (informing, consulting, involving, collaborating);

- ◗ Localised, community or neighbourhood based strategies.

Operational Programs Command has developed a draft framework building on the progression of community engagement work to date. The draft framework offers both process and key component areas that can be used as standalone planning tools. The four pillars of engagement (Communication, Consultation, Participation, Sustained Engagement) are synced to the key themes of the existing frameworks examined in the contextual scoping and were used throughout the public consultations.

Key issues for consideration emerged from Phases Three and Four.

Internal police workshop

The internal workshop participants identified the NSW Police objective for the development of a community engagement framework as '*working towards consistency and integrity across community engagement.*' Barriers were identified as:

◗ The impact of individualised experiences with police;

◗ The current police approach to communicating and engaging with the public; and

◗ A lack of trust in police both from individuals and the collective.

The workshop nominated four key areas for internal consideration as follows:

1. **Time considerations:**
   o The allocation of time as a consideration for task completion by police
   o Allowance for time to develop capacity and programs.
2. **Create meaning and benefit from good practice:**
   o Creation of a system that supports general duties officers to understand how good community engagement can assist them in their roles
   o Allowance for internal feedback processes
3. **Skills Development:**
   o Communications
   o Stakeholder engagement/ability to network
   o Community mapping
4. **Creating a cultural shift:**
   o Building respect
   o Improvement of the quality of instructions and expectations within the force
   o Attitudinal change (described as 'leaving your egos at the door' by participants).

Stakeholder focus groups

Six focus groups were held with communities nominated by the Operational Programs Command as most relevant to existing community engagement work being undertaken by NSW Police. These distinct groups were: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (Dubbo and Redfern), Culturally

and Linguistically Diverse (CALD), People with Disability and/or Mental Health issues, the LGBTIQ community and International Students.

Across the stakeholder groups key themes were identified that were consistent with the internal police workshop. They were:

- **Need for systemic best practice** across LACs.
- **Dependence on senior management** for filter down effect.
- A **lack of both communication and interpersonal skills** within NSW Police.
- Obvious **differences in how different communities or distinct cohorts within communities' experience interaction** with police.
- The need for **mutual respect**.
- **Desire to work** with NSW Police formally.
- **Resourcing** issues.

Two stakeholder groups – Disability and Mental Health and International Students raised issues that were specific to their communities. For International Students there was a desire for more widely disseminated communications from police and a higher level of engagement on campuses with police (either through student organisations or universities). Members of the Disability and/or Mental Health communities raised serious concerns with the way NSW Police currently approach dealing with people with disability. Disability was seen as the 'next big frontier' for NSW Police to both understand and operate in.

Across the six groups there was a strong belief in the concept of police community engagement and a strong desire to work in partnership with NSW Police. A common theme was that NSW Police should invest more in engaging with children and young people to break down barriers.
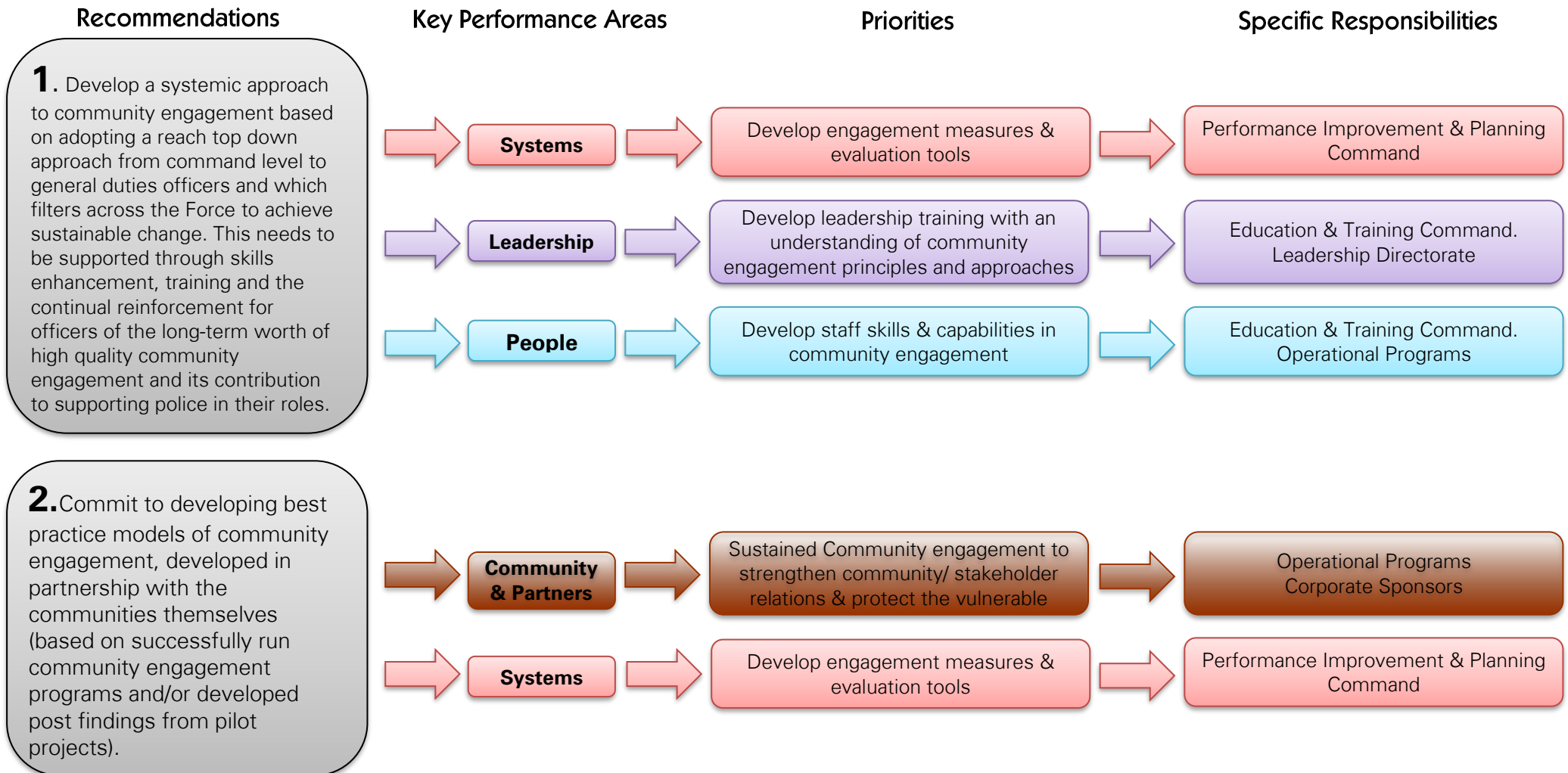
Online survey

The online survey was conducted over two weeks and aimed to ensure the wider NSW community had the opportunity to provide their feedback and share their perspectives on community engagement and the NSW Police. The Phase Two and Three findings were reinforced by the analysis of the online survey.
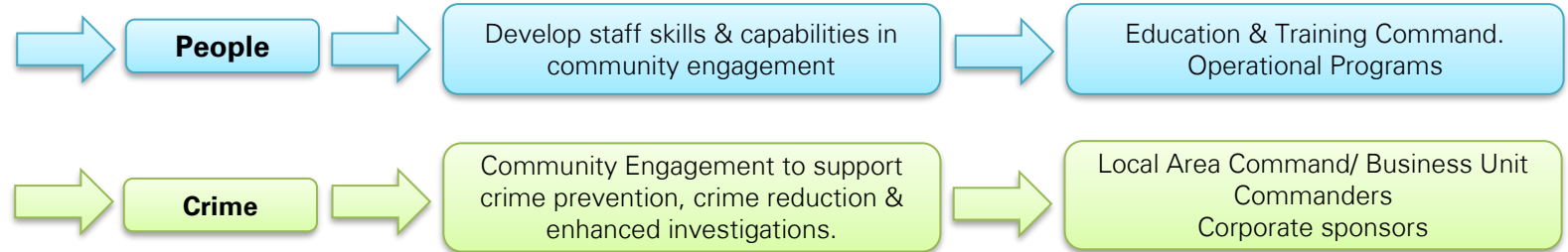
Online survey respondents firmly believed that NSW Police should be engaging with communities, in an open, constructive way that involves two-way communication. The majority also believed police would both listen to them and seriously take community views into consideration when revising how to change their engagement methods. Respondents wanted a more visible police force with a **high level of personal and communications skills**, who are considered as an **integral part of the local community**. **Mutual respect and trust** between the community and NSW Police was a consistent theme. One common minor theme throughout the online survey responses was the desire for police to work with children and young people, in school settings and through mentoring and other programs.
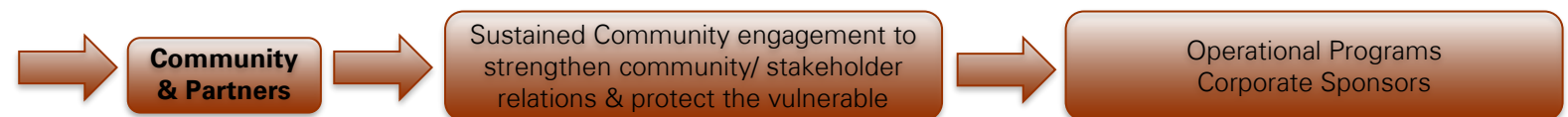
Recommendations

Based on the analysis of the findings a set of recommendations was developed to be taken into consideration by NSW Police in the development of the final community engagement framework. The 15 recommendations were mapped against the Key Performance Areas, Priorities and Specific Responsibilities that form part of the Community Engagement Framework.
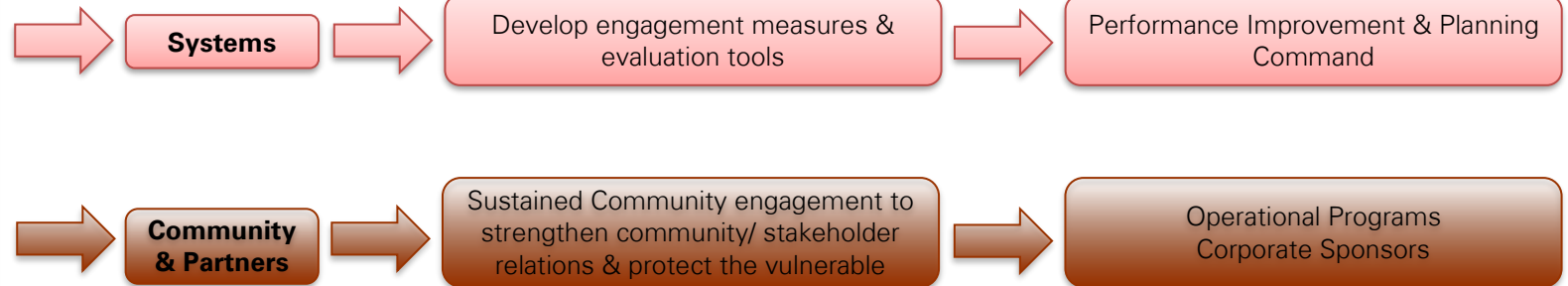
Recommendations	Key Performance Areas	Priorities	Specific Responsibilities
1. Develop a systemic approach to community engagement based on adopting a reach top down approach from command level to general duties officers and which filters across the Force to achieve sustainable change. This needs to be supported through skills enhancement, training and the continual reinforcement for officers of the long-term worth of high quality community engagement and its contribution to supporting police in their roles.	**Systems**	Develop engagement measures & evaluation tools	Performance Improvement & Planning Command
	Leadership	Develop leadership training with an understanding of community engagement principles and approaches	Education & Training Command. Leadership Directorate
	People	Develop staff skills & capabilities in community engagement	Education & Training Command. Operational Programs
2. Commit to developing best practice models of community engagement, developed in partnership with the communities themselves (based on successfully run community engagement programs and/or developed post findings from pilot projects).	**Community & Partners**	Sustained Community engagement to strengthen community/ stakeholder relations & protect the vulnerable	Operational Programs Corporate Sponsors
	Systems	Develop engagement measures & evaluation tools	Performance Improvement & Planning Command

3. Recognise that due to the diversity of the population in NSW, a 'one-size fits all' approach will not meet the needs of NSW Police in approaching the many different communities across NSW or within a particular Local Area Command (LAC). Develop specific community engagement approaches based on local needs, using community mapping and planning tools.
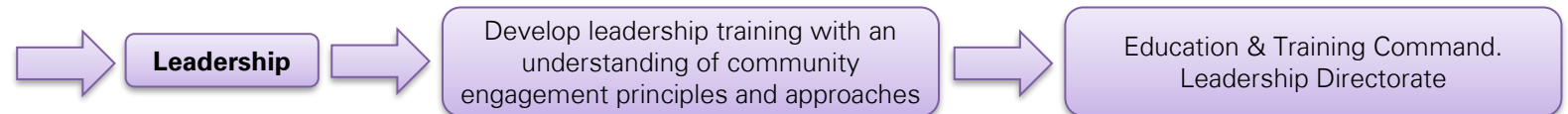
People → Develop staff skills & capabilities in community engagement → Education & Training Command. Operational Programs

Crime → Community Engagement to support crime prevention, crime reduction & enhanced investigations. → Local Area Command/ Business Unit Commanders Corporate sponsors

4. Approach consultation in a more collaborative way, co-designing approaches with the community. Involve community organisations & leaders at the local & state level where applicable in the engagement process, particularly when looking at creating solutions to current or emerging community problems.
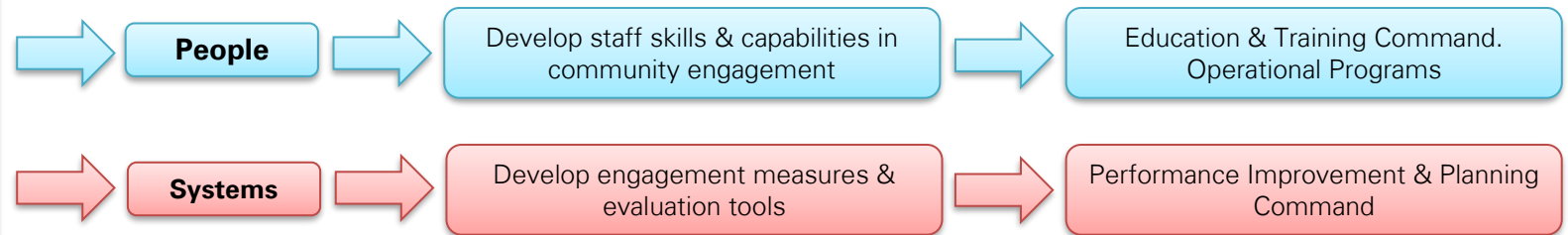
Community & Partners → Sustained Community engagement to strengthen community/ stakeholder relations & protect the vulnerable → Operational Programs Corporate Sponsors

5. Develop key performance indicators or a set of measurable outcomes that hold the NSW Police accountable to new ways of engaging with communities & that demonstrates to the community their views & input have been considered. These should be based on an influence/outcome model & should include existing metrics measuring the level of complaints, crime rates levels & reports, statements from the public. In addition, key performance indicators should include a measure of the influence of NSW Police Force community engagement, both from within the organisation & from the community perspective (is increased & improved community engagement having a positive impact on both policing & community perceptions?)

Systems → Develop engagement measures & evaluation tools → Performance Improvement & Planning Command

Community & Partners → Sustained Community engagement to strengthen community/ stakeholder relations & protect the vulnerable → Operational Programs Corporate Sponsors

6. Demonstrate to the Force & to the community that engagement is meaningful through designing engagement approaches with a two-way information exchange. Also demonstrate to both general duties officers & the community that they have been listened to & their needs are being taken into consideration.

Leadership → Develop leadership training with an understanding of community engagement principles and approaches → Education & Training Command. Leadership Directorate

7. Align all engagement activities with the existing *Customer Service Charter* including speaking to all community members with respect. Support officers to interact with the public on a personal, more human level through the development of strong interpersonal & communication skills.
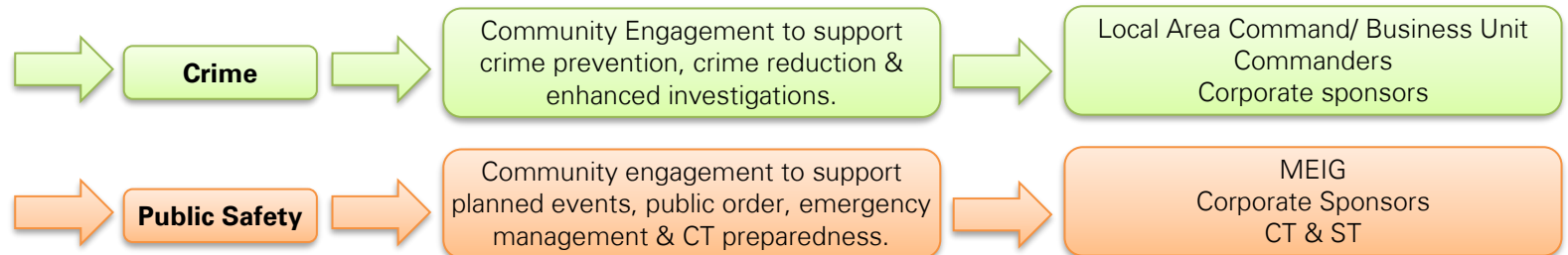
People → Develop staff skills & capabilities in community engagement → Education & Training Command. Operational Programs

Systems → Develop engagement measures & evaluation tools → Performance Improvement & Planning Command

8. Develop a staggered public campaign on the community engagement framework. Stage one is recommended as the public release of a *NSW Police Force Community Engagement Commitment* in line with the existing *Customer Service Charter*. Stage two is recommended as the development of a document like WA DFES as a public facing document to communicate NSW Police engagement approaches to the community. This document would evaluate the work to date by the NSW Police Force in implementing its new community engagement framework, & highlight the successes in working more closely at the local level, based on the pilot activities set out below at Recommendation 9.

Systems → Develop engagement measures & evaluation tools → Performance Improvement & Planning Command

People → Develop staff skills & capabilities in community engagement → Education & Training Command. Operational Programs

Leadership → Develop leadership training with an understanding of community engagement principles & approaches → Education & Training Command. Leadership Directorate

9. Pilot a series of engagement activities across the four pillars of engagement – Communications, Consultation, Participation & Sustained Engagement & make progress & findings available to the public to demonstrate commitment to new ways of engaging.
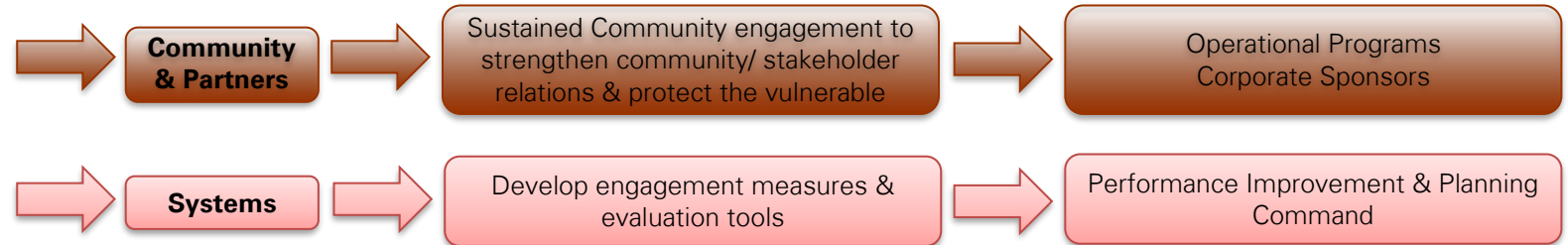
Systems → Develop engagement measures & evaluation tools → Performance Improvement & Planning Command

Crime → Community Engagement to support crime prevention, crime reduction & enhanced investigations. → Local Area Command/ Business Unit Commanders
Corporate sponsors

10. Ensure engagement is flexible & adaptable in order to respond to both the variety of local community needs and the change in needs.

Crime → Community Engagement to support crime prevention, crime reduction & enhanced investigations. → Local Area Command/ Business Unit Commanders
Corporate sponsors

Public Safety → Community engagement to support planned events, public order, emergency management & CT preparedness. → MEIG
Corporate Sponsors
CT & ST

11. Commit to developing a strategy & structures for meaningful information exchange that supports mutual benefit and joint decision-making where possible. This creates opportunities for empowerment for both police and community, which ultimately leads to positive behaviour change.

Systems → Develop engagement measures & evaluation tools → Performance Improvement & Planning Command

Community & Partners → Sustained Community engagement to strengthen community/ stakeholder relations & protect the vulnerable → Operational Programs Corporate Sponsors

12. Adapt the community engagement framework as & when community needs & priorities change. See it as a living document that is flexible, adaptable and meaningful to both the NSW Police and the community

Community & Partners → Sustained Community engagement to strengthen community/ stakeholder relations & protect the vulnerable → Operational Programs Corporate Sponsors

Systems → Develop engagement measures & evaluation tools → Performance Improvement & Planning Command

13. Develop a set of principles that underpin the community engagement framework that are based on the following areas – attitudes, knowledge, consistency, & skills. Communicate these to the community through both the *NSW Police Force Community Engagement Commitment* & subsequent public document

Systems → Develop engagement measures & evaluation tools → Performance Improvement & Planning Command

People → Develop staff skills & capabilities in community engagement → Education & Training Command. Operational Programs

14. Commit to undertaking ongoing cultural capability training for all levels of police staff in the NSW Police Force demonstrating to the community (particularly diverse communities) that NSW Police Force is serious about a cultural change with regard to meaningful engagement with the community. Such training should be implemented beyond the traditional short training currently offered and should be embedded onsite within each LAC. It is advised that Commanders and senior staff have responsibility for on the job training for junior officers in community mapping, engagement planning, & community engagement across the various communities within each LAC.

People → Develop staff skills & capabilities in community engagement → Education & Training Command. Operational Programs

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The New South Wales (NSW) Police Force is one of the largest police organisations in the English speaking world, employing over 20,000 staff and serving a population of approximately seven million citizens. The service plays a substantial role in crime prevention in NSW, with community engagement an integral part of this. NSW Police consider community engagement as a foundation for all local policing in NSW. When members of the community engage positively with NSW Police this results in more effective crime prevention and a safer community and quality of life for all.

The approach of NSW Police to community engagement varies considerably and is reliant on the capacity and resources available in each Local Area Command (LAC). While engagement is integral and embedded in some LACs, policing may be more difficult in LACs where engagement is a less substantial part of that Command's business plan or focus. Operational Programs Command within NSW Police are developing an overarching Community Engagement Framework to provide a more consistent approach to community engagement across the Force.

DiverseWerks was engaged by NSW Police to assist them in developing a Community Engagement Framework that is both relevant and meaningful for NSW Police staff but importantly, is also relevant for all members of the NSW community. DiverseWerks was engaged to work in consultation with key NSW communities and stakeholders to assist NSW Police to co-design and consult with these groups as a part of developing an overarching model to ensure that its implementation and the activities that result at a local level are meaningful and are therefore more likely to have an impact.

1.2 Methodology

The methodological approach was developed to both include contextual scoping to ensure an understanding of other existing analogous frameworks and to allow various key stakeholder groups to have input. The project consisted of five phases:

- **Phase 1:   Contextual scoping**
  A contextual understanding was developed through a desktop review of the current community engagement work undertaken by NSW Police, and an investigation of community engagement frameworks in use by other comparative services, such as law enforcement agencies or emergency services in other states. Both the WA Fire Service community engagement framework, and ANZPAA's Education and Training Guidelines for Community Engagement, were both considered strong examples of such a framework.

- **Phase 2:   Workshop with key NSW Police staff**

    The first stage of the consultative process was to identify how NSW Police consider their current community engagement work, and how they see this draft framework. A workshop with key NSW Police staff, particularly Operational Programs Command and senior managers, was held to gain an understanding of where current thinking is at, what the NSW Police want this framework to look like and ultimately what it should help achieve.

- **Phase 3:   Stakeholder focus groups**
    A range of community sponsored, stakeholder focus groups were held to ensure that the opinions of special interest groups, particularly those key to Operational Programs Command, are closely considered in the development of a final Community Engagement Framework. The questions put to the focus groups were developed with Operational Programs Command and are included here at Appendix A.

    Six stakeholder groups were held across the following groups:

    ◗ People from CALD backgrounds, sponsored by SSI and the Multicultural Network and held in Bankstown;

    ◗ People who identify as LGBTIQ, sponsored by ACON and held in Surry Hills;

    ◗ People from Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander backgrounds, sponsored by Metro LALC, and held in Redfern;

    ◗ People from Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander backgrounds in inland NSW (held in Dubbo), originally sponsored by Dubbo LALC and held at the Dubbo Neighbourhood Centre;

    ◗ People with disability and mental health issues, sponsored by Northcott and the Transcultural Mental Health Centre, and held in Parramatta; and

    ◗ International students, sponsored by UTS, and held in Sydney.

- **Phase 4:   Online survey with the wider community in NSW**

    In addition to consulting with special interest groups, an online survey was conducted to ensure that the wider community had the opportunity to provide their feedback and share their perspectives on NSW Police community engagement. The survey questions were developed with Operational Programs Command and are included here at Appendix B.

- **Phase 5:   Analysis and reporting**

    This report involves a full analysis of all the findings from each of the preceding project phases. The exact nature of this report and how it was structured was determined with Operational Programs Command.

2. UNDERSTANDING THE CONTEXT AND SCOPE OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN LAW ENFORCEMENT

This contextual scoping enhances understanding of what other comparative frameworks have been developed that are relevant for NSW Police. Outlined below are some of the engagement activities that are currently utilised by NSW Police, as well as examples of good practice from other like services, specifically, the WA Fire Service community engagement framework, and ANZPAA's Education and Training Guidelines for Community Engagement. Additionally, this section touches on a long standing British model of community policing and the shift towards engagement-based policing that could be applied within the Australian context.

2.1 Current NSW Police engagement activities

The NSW Police draft community engagement statement is based on the belief that "Community Engagement is a long term process through which the NSW Police Force involves individuals or groups in identifying problems and in shaping and implementing decisions and programs that affect them. Enabling community involvement in addressing community identified problems and police initiatives enhances trust in and legitimacy of the police.[1]"

Community engagement is the foundation on which local policing should be built and the new community engagement framework means commands will be seeking to lift the level of engagement they have with their communities and making purposeful attempts to engage at the appropriate level.

There are a number of successful community engagement activities being carried out through the NSWPF. For the purpose of this scoping, this has been limited to three specific programs that facilitate community involvement and have a positive impact on participants:

◗ **Community Awareness of Policing Program (CAPP):**

CAPP aims to develop a greater knowledge and understanding of modern policing and build confidence in NSW Police within communities. It is a tool to facilitate two-way communication between police and their communities.

◗ **Clean Slate Without Prejudice program:**

Clean Slate Without Prejudice has been running since 2008 and consists of a three times per week boxing and fitness program run through the gymnasium at the

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[1] NSW Police Force, Operational Programs Command (unclassified 2016), *Community Engagement Policy Statement*

National Centre of Indigenous Excellence in Redfern for local Aboriginal youth. It involves active participation of community leaders and police officers from Redfern LAC, and works closely with the Tribal Warriors Association who provide mentoring for troubled youth.

▶ **Kid's Fishing Workshops:**

Lake Illawarra LAC Kids Fishing Workshops have been used as a way of engaging the community and police in a positive environment. The workshops have been running since 2011 and teach children aged 8-14 about fishing safety, responsible fishing, fish habitats, rigging, baiting and casting techniques. The *Cops and Koori Kids fishing workshops* program is now a joint program run by Lake Illawarra LAC, Department of Primary Industries and the Department of Fisheries.

While distinctly different activities, the commonalities among the existing programs that can be drawn on for future community engagement includes the following:

Working with communities

Working with communities through joint activities or shared experiences creates accessibility to NSW Police. It allows people to have a firsthand experience of working and engaging with police, rather than police being locked in the role of solely law enforcers. This creates an element of 'humanness' to NSW Police as community members are able to interact with officers and better relate to them on a personal level. It also facilitates two-way communication and can manage expectations about particular aspects of police work.

Creating supportive environments

Specifically, through the kid's fishing events run out of the Lake Illawarra LAC and the Clean Slate Without Prejudice program run out of the Redfern LAC, adult community members and children in particular are able to engage with police within supportive environments. This personal engagement improves the public perception of the police and creates more respectful relationships. Through these tailored programs, police can not only meet the needs of the community and facilitate environments where children can learn, but they can also guide and mentor, and create positive experiences that reduce violence and enhance respect.

Encouraging participation and relationship building

These three programs all encourage the community to get involved and build relationships with police. This has a positive impact because it increases trust in NSW Police and facilitates cooperation. It also opens up a two-way exchange of information and builds support within the community.

Fostering a culture of respect

Respect is possibly the most important outcome of the current NSW Police engagement events. Above all, mutual respect is what the community seeks from police. These programs demonstrate that NSW Police as an institution care about the community and are generally interested in working in collaboration with them. With sustained engagement, comes increasing support and cooperation leading to safer and happier communities.

2.2 WA Fire Service community engagement framework

The WA Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) developed a Community Engagement Framework to facilitate the expansion of approaches that foster community involvement and participation in achieving the goal of community safety. This framework was developed as a result of a national re-examination of emergency responses to major fire and flood emergencies from 2009 – 2012. For DFES the result was a complete rethink of its community engagement focus.

The main ways DFES changed their engagement methods were a move towards:

◗ Shared decision making;

◗ Two-way education and capacity building; and

◗ Building relationships and trust.

Much can be learnt from the DFES approach and applied within the NSW Police context. The Community Engagement Framework is modelled from the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Spectrum (below) and provides a strategic approach to the planning, development, implementation and evaluation of community engagement activities.

IAP2'S PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SPECTRUM

The IAP2 Federation has developed the Spectrum to help groups define the public's role in any public participation process.
The IAP2 Spectrum is quickly becoming an international standard.

INCREASING IMPACT ON THE DECISION →

	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision. We will seek your feedback on drafts and proposals.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work together with you to formulate solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

Source: http://www.iap2.org.au/resources/public-participation-spectrum

How each of these levels of engagement or public participation are carried out are outlined as follows:

1. **Inform**

Communication of information to the community or other stakeholders. The processes used can be *proactive* (information dissemination) or *responsive* (responding to questions from the community). Informing involves one or two-way communication over various timeframes, for example disseminating a media release or developing a brochure.

2. **Consult**

Eliciting feedback on information provided. The goal of this type of engagement is to obtain feedback on analysis, alternatives or decisions. Consultation actively seeks community views and input into policy, plans and decisions, for example written consultation or a focus group.

3. **Involve**

Working directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered. The key difference between '*consult'* and '*involve*' is the level of participation expected of the community and other stakeholders.

4. **Collaborate**

Partnering with the community in each aspect of the decision, including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred position. This method of engagement further

extends the level of participation and, consequently, the impact upon the community. Ownership is shared.

5. **Empower**

Placing final decision-making in the hands of the public. Empowered communities share responsibility for making decisions and accountability for the outcomes of those decisions.

The approach the DFES takes to community engagement is effective because it promotes community resilience and enables the community to fully participate in the safety of their own communities. Their objectives are:

- ◗ Raise awareness;

- ◗ Increase understanding; and

- ◗ Increase adoption of response behaviours.

All three of these are objectives that are transferrable to NSW Police.

Approaching community engagement as an essential component in developing community resilience ensures that communities feel empowered and confident to act. Not only this, but they are able to engage in decision making processes, which creates better outcomes because members of the public have been brought into the process and have a sense of ownership of outcomes.

Where there is shared responsibility, communities are given greater responsibility to act. Fostering this allows for two-way communication and education which enables greater understanding of a given situation, and establishes solutions appropriate to the needs of particular individuals or groups within that specific situation. The traditional approach of emergency services has been a one-way information exchange, which only raises awareness, but is unlikely to lead to behaviour change. Shared responsibility alters this as it builds capacity and more importantly, relationships and trust. While it is noted, that 'Empower' is not possible in the context of the NSW Police, the four preceding levels of engagement could be applied and improve community relationships, leading to more productive and collaborative ways of working.

The DFES community engagement framework seeks to foster a more localised approach to its programs to embrace this more complex process, therefore enabling the community to become active participants in the process. This localised approach matches the existing community engagement approach of NSW Police. Having a deeper understanding of different community needs will determine the level of engagement, and what methods will be most successful in any given situation. Relationship building and trust are fundamental in this process.

The DFES programs are developed around five core community-centred program principles: **collaborative arrangements**, **evidence based decision making**, **community and organisational needs, appropriate risk communication** and **treatment options**.

Relevant to NSW Police are the following principles:

◗ **Collaborative arrangements** to provide an open flow of communication, the exchange of ideas and shared decision making to foster ownership among all stakeholders of the program. This occurs at both the strategic and local level.

◗ **Community and Organisational Needs** to facilitate the development of shared understanding between the key stakeholders and the community. Establishing this shared understanding clarifies the difference between the actual and desired state of community resilience.

The DFES Community Engagement Framework also raises some important considerations for the NSWPF:

◗ Ensure adequate provisions are made to continue to build the capacity of the organisation and its key stakeholders;

◗ Develop organisational support and buy-in;

◗ Measure the effectiveness of the engagement programs to learn and improve activities; and

◗ Embed a culture of community engagement in NSW Police.

2.3 ANZPAA's Education and Training Guidelines for Community Engagement

The Australia New Zealand Policing Advisory Agency (ANZPAA) Education and Training Guidelines for Community Engagement looks specifically at how community engagement is a core function of policing and an important aspect of all policing roles. It details practical application of community engagement principles that NSW Police could embed as well as looking at the knowledge, skills and capabilities needed within the police force to undertake effective community engagement activities.

With these specific practice domains in mind, the training guidelines look at the relevant theory and practical application police need to understand in order to improve their capability to effectively engage with communities.

The four practice domains it covers are:

◗ **Community diversity** – police to effectively understand the scope of social and cultural diversity within their communities.

◗ **Crime prevention/reduction** – focussing on the law enforcement aspects of community engagement and supporting policing in building community resilience against criminal activity.

◗ **Engagement** – methods used by policing to effectively engage and communicate with their communities.

◗ **Stakeholders** – police interacting with stakeholders and partners when undertaking community engagement activities.

In addition to these practice domains and key knowledge components, there are several community engagement qualities that can be fostered within the NSWPF as fundamental to effective community engagement. These include

◗ Leadership

◗ Professionalism

◗ Engagement

◗ Decision-making and problem solving

◗ Communication and interpersonal skills

◗ Self-reflection

◗ Teamwork.

2.4 Ideas in British community policing and a shift towards engagement-based policing

Community policing in some form has been utilised by British police for the past two decades. Contemporary community policing involves a suite of interventions with several, interconnected purposes – public contact and reassurance is combined with deterrence, prevention, and intelligence-gathering. The contemporary vision of community policing is multi-dimensional:

◗ It advocates participation with the community itself having a major part in interventions;

◗ It promotes equity seeking interventions that result in manifestly fair outcomes;

◗ It is sustainable because it is not a 'one off' but is embedded in the legal and policy framework; and

◗ It is empowering because it affords access to services and encourages the public to participate in agenda setting. It plays a role in delivering democracy and helping community development.

It is important to note that community policing is not community engagement, however there are similar themes that are complementary to the ideas underpinning the NSW Police draft community engagement framework and approach to community engagement. These are the need for community buy-in, the need for police to understand local demographics, tailoring strategies for diverse sections of the community, and working in partnership with communities. With an ultimate aim to make the community safer, engagement with communities will increase individual community members' ability to participate and understand the context in which NSW Police operate. Building on this concept however, is the relatively recent shift towards engagement-based policing, which is more applicable in the context of the NSW Police.

This model is built around developing relationships, trust, transparency, and working towards a collective vision. Applied to the operational side of policing, it encourages officers to build their capacity to positively interact with the community, improve their trust and rapport with citizens across diverse backgrounds and cultural contexts, and generally improve the social interaction between officers and the communities they serve.[2] It explores the relationship between the police and community, and how community engagement is at its foundation. Through community engagement, police can develop trust and respect, and build relationships, which in turn produce positive outcomes for both the force and the community.

What is explored in building foundations for engagement-based policing is a need for a cultural shift within the police, which is built around improving police capabilities to engender trust, respect and productive social interaction. This needs to occur through a change in police perceptions, decisions and actions in the moment, developed through basic skills and learning in social interactions. There is a need for better relations with the communities' police serve and a need to rethink best practice to serve those communities. Training needs to be interactive, evidence based, and repetitious to gain the most benefit and improve community engagement within the police[3] The tactical human dynamics training is an example of training that empowers police to have a greater positive influence in the community, which is set around perceptual, cognitive and behavioural skills, as well as performance indicators. Supported by leadership, this is something that the NSW Police could investigate further and/or adapt to fit their needs and build the competency of its officers to more effectively engage with the communities they serve.

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[2] Major Cities Association, Major Sheriffs Association and Federal Bureau of Investigation National Executive Institute, 2015, Engagement-based policing: The What, How, and Why of Community Engagement
[3] As above

In addition, an active method of implementing change needs to be adopted to build this structure into a standard practice, , This comprise the following elements:

◗ Determining goals

◗ Determining communities to engage with

◗ Developing engagement strategies and prioritising activities

◗ Monitoring progress and maintaining relationships.[4]

Supporting such a structure would be principles to embed community engagement into police practice. According to Tom Tyler, Law Professor at Yale University, these could include:

1) Treating people with dignity and respect

2) Giving individuals 'voice' during encounters

3) Being neutral and transparent in decision making

4) Conveying trustworthy motives.[5]

This model of engagement-based policing is both relevant and practical in the context of the NSW Police and could be explored in further detail to foster a more systematic, embedded approach to community engagement.

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[4] Gottlieb, 2015, Creating the Future

[5] Major Cities Association, Major Sheriffs Association and Federal Bureau of Investigation National Executive Institute, 2015, Engagement-based policing: The What, How, and Why of Community Engagement

3. THE DRAFT COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MODEL

Community Engagement is a long-term process through which the NSW Police Force involves individuals or groups in identifying problems and in shaping and implementing decisions and programs that affect them. Enabling community involvement in addressing community identified problems and police initiatives enhances trust in and legitimacy of the police.

3.1 Commitment and Responsibilities

3.1.1   Commitment

Through the draft framework NSW Police offer the following commitments to ensure that:

◗ All commands have a detailed understanding of the demographics of the communities they serve.

◗ All commands facilitate, establish and strengthen ongoing dialogue with sections of the communities by regularly discussing, sharing information, listening to and acting on feedback from communities.

◗ All commands tailor engagement strategies based on understanding how different sections of the community feel most comfortable in interacting with the police.

◗ All commands provide ongoing feedback to communities about how their input has impacted on local policing.

◗ All commands identify and maximise opportunities to work in partnership with communities.

◗ All commands understand that engagement is not something to be done 'to' communities; they must participate in planning and choosing approaches.

◗ We will measure the effectiveness of community engagement activities.

3.1.2   Responsibilities

Senior Executive – Approve and support the NSW Police Force community engagement policy; regularly monitor and review the policy; and promote and support a culture that achieves effective engagement with the diverse communities of NSW.

Operational Programs Command – Design, develop, implement, monitor and improve community engagement policy, practice and practical tools to assist staff.

Commanders/Managers – Communicate, manage and achieve compliance with community engagement policy and practice within their command by identifying risks, obligations and opportunities; developing capabilities and controls; monitoring effectiveness of community engagement plans; and attesting to the effectiveness of command compliance/adherence.

All staff – Know and comply with the community engagement policy, undertake community engagement that is purposeful and based on set objectives, report any compliance or training and capacity issues promptly to management.

3.1.3   Draft Framework

Operational Programs Command has developed a draft NSW Police Force Community Engagement Framework. It builds on the progression of community engagement work to date within the organisation and offers both processes and key component areas that can be used as standalone tools.

Commands will be seeking to lift the level of engagement they have with their communities and making purposeful attempts to engage at the appropriate level.

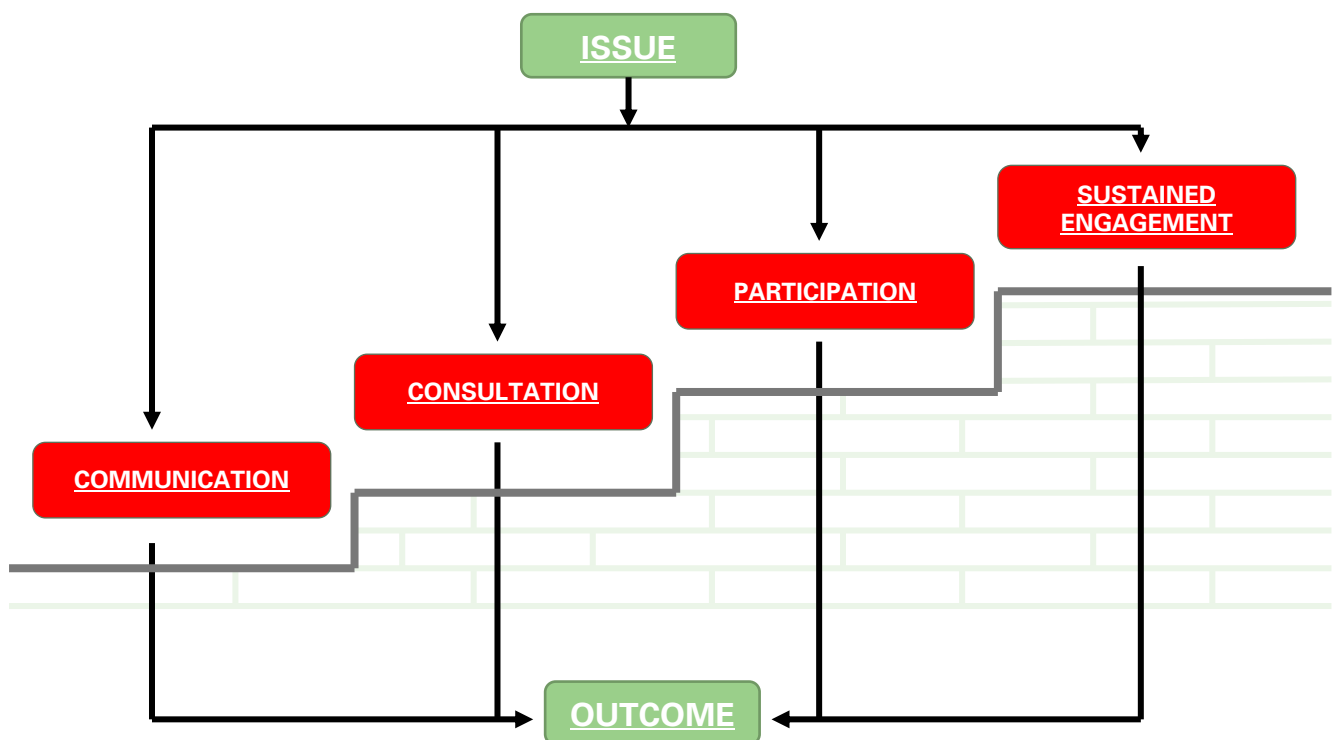Chart 1: Draft NSW Police Force Community Engagement Framework
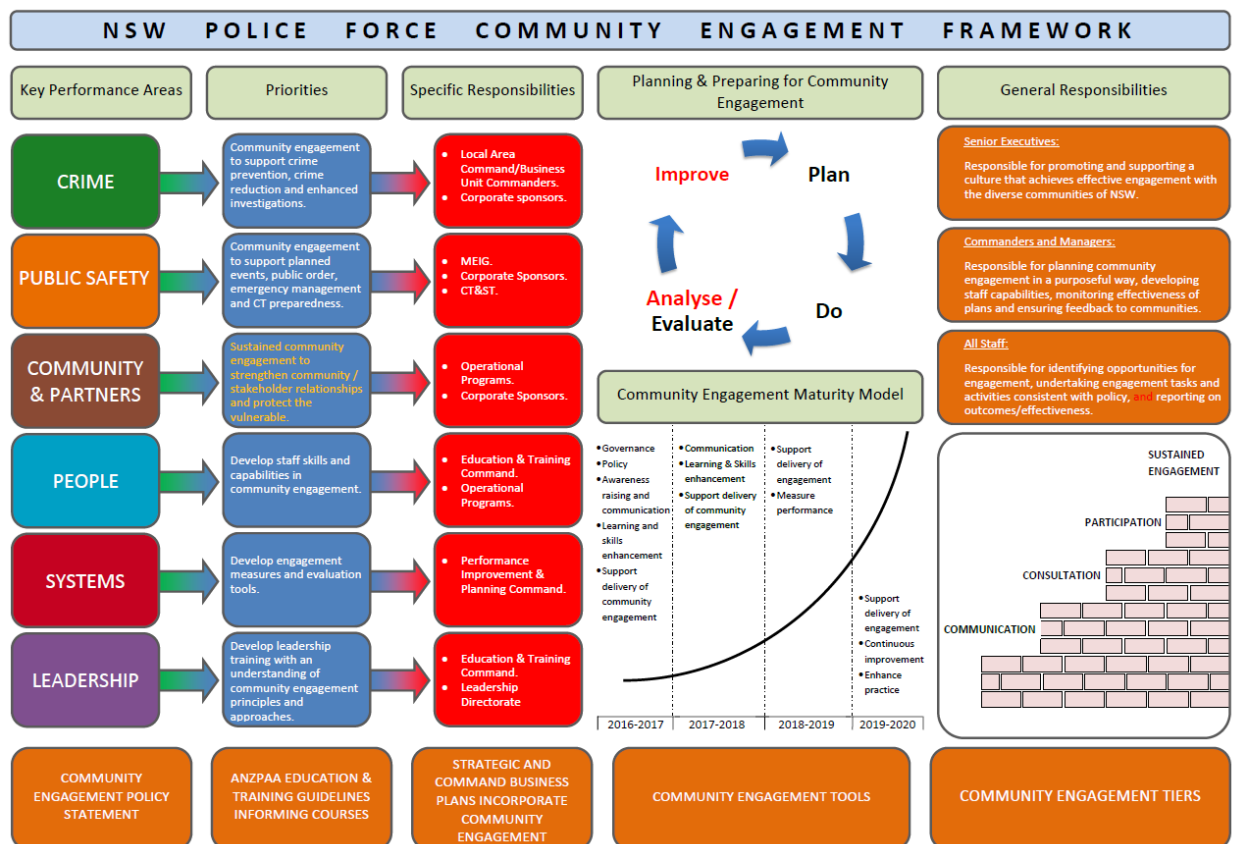
Central to the framework are four key pillars of engagement:

- ◗   Communication;

- ◗   Consultation;

- ◗   Participation; and

- ◗   Sustained Engagement.

These pillars set out levels of engagement that the NSW Police Force can adopt when interacting with the local community and addressing their needs. It provides a framework and guidance to assist in the identification of the level of engagement required for the specific issue or community of focus. The goal is to move forward towards sustained engagement where both the NSW Police Force and the community work in partnership in a mutually agreed and respected manner.

Chart 2: Four pillars of engagement

3.1.4   Using the draft Framework into the future

The draft Framework is a complex document that has been modelled strongly on internal NSW Police needs. During the community consultation process of this project it was decided not to share the draft framework as it was felt it would confuse general community members. The four pillars of Communication, Consultation, Participation and Sustained Engagement were instead used to explain to community participants the focus of NSW Police and their community engagement framework. This worked successfully and each community group quickly came to an understanding of the different pillars of engagement and the varying stages the police may be at when engaging with communities in NSW.

It is recommended that the community engagement framework in its current form not be used as an engagement tool and remains an internal Police document. The use of the four pillars of engagement as a public tool is advised, in the immediate term as the basis for a public commitment to community engagement and then in the medium term as the basis of a community engagement strategy designed for public release.

> **"**
>
> # Community engagement is the foundation on which local policing should be built.
>
> **"**

4. GROUP FINDINGS

4.1 Internal Police Workshop

A workshop of senior police and staff from Operational Programs Command was held prior to the stakeholder focus groups with the aim of identifying:

- An internal definition of community engagement;
- The objective of police community engagement;
- Barriers to engagement;
- What is required internally by NSW Police to commit to genuine community engagement; and
- Key current police activities used to engage with the community across the police command tiers and with diverse communities.

4.1.1 Definition of Community Engagement

The participants agreed that community engagement is foundational for police, and that it is the base upon which all local policing in NSW should be built. The definition of community engagement was broad, with the workshop agreeing that it encompasses both the formal methods NSW Police engage with local communities through events and meetings, as well as the way they interact through daily policing work with individuals and groups. In summary, community engagement for NSW Police is about all their interactions with the various communities in NSW, across the command hierarchy.

4.1.2 Objective of police engagement

Participants identified their objective as **working towards consistency and integrity across community engagement.**

4.1.3 Barriers to engagement

The following barriers to engagement were identified:

- The **impact of individualised experiences** with police
- The **current police approach to communicating and engaging** with the public
- A **lack of trust in police** both from individuals and the collective.

Specific examples to support the identified barriers were raised by the workshop. These included the need for police to uphold the law, within the family unit or within the broader community which may have a negative response; issues arising from naming issues, e.g. the Middle East

Organised Crime Unit; the problem with operating within a bureaucracy and the command chain for decision making to support change; and perceptions of police themselves.

4.1.4 Internal Police requirements

The workshop nominated four key areas for internal consideration as follows:

5. **Time considerations**:
   - o the allocation of time as a consideration for task completion by police
   - o allowance for time to develop capacity and programs.
6. **Create meaning and benefit from good practice**:
   - o Creating a system that supports general duties officers to understand how good community engagement can assist them in their roles
   - o Allowing for internal feedback
7. **Skills Development**:
   - o Communications
   - o Stakeholder engagement/ability to network
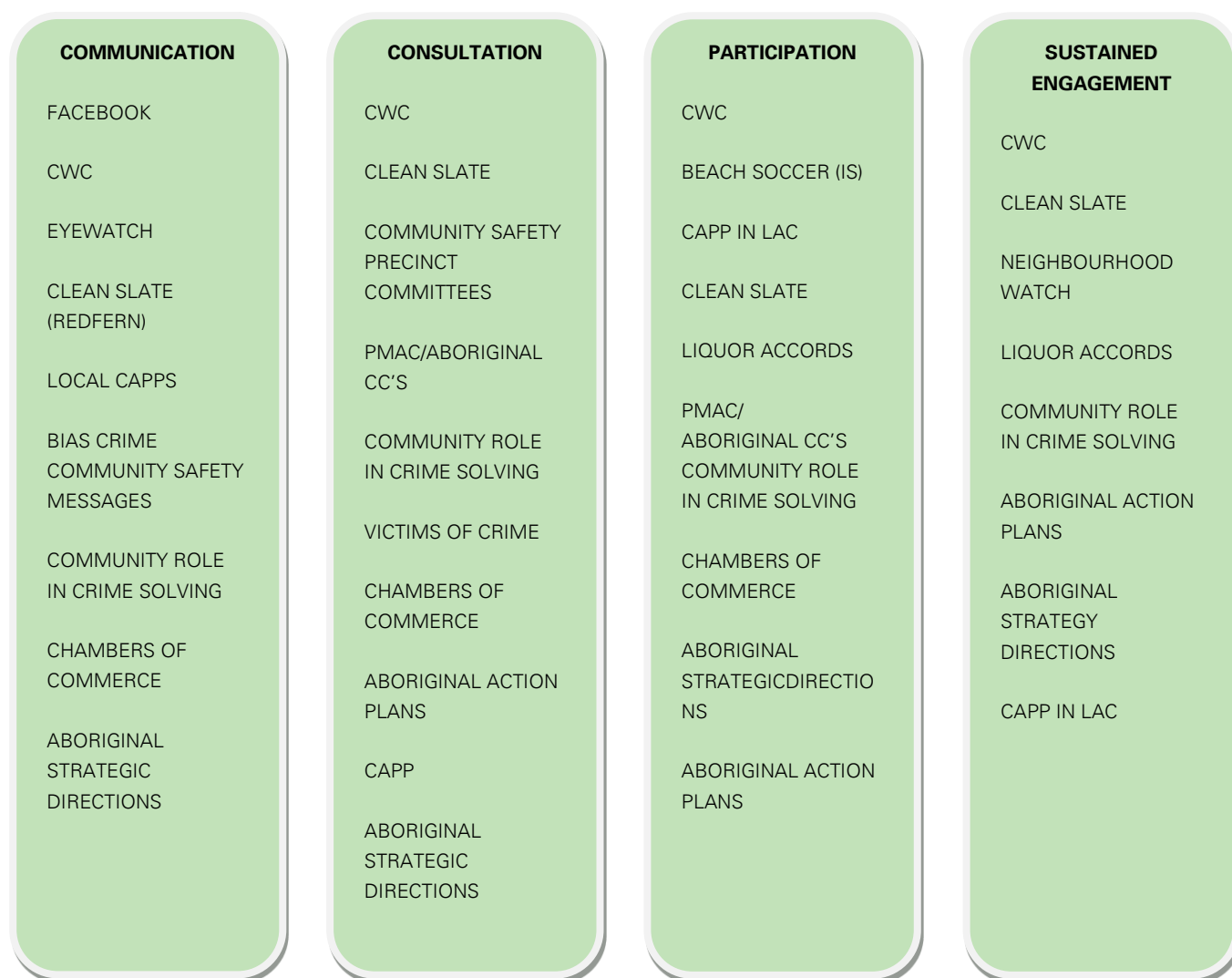   - o Community mapping
8. **Creating a cultural shift**:
   - o Building respect
   - o Improving the quality of instructions and expectations within the force
   - o Attitudinal change (described as 'leaving your egos at the door' by participants)

4.1.5 Key current engagement activities

Participants were asked to list existing NSW Police community engagement methods within the four pillars of the draft community engagement framework. The following chart is a summary of the outcomes of the exercise:

Chart 4.1: Mapping existing NSW Police community engagement methods

COMMUNICATION	CONSULTATION	PARTICIPATION	SUSTAINED ENGAGEMENT
FACEBOOK	CWC	CWC	CWC
CWC	CLEAN SLATE	BEACH SOCCER (IS)	CLEAN SLATE
EYEWATCH	COMMUNITY SAFETY PRECINCT COMMITTEES	CAPP IN LAC	NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH
CLEAN SLATE (REDFERN)	PMAC/ABORIGINAL CC'S	CLEAN SLATE	LIQUOR ACCORDS
LOCAL CAPPS	COMMUNITY ROLE IN CRIME SOLVING	LIQUOR ACCORDS	COMMUNITY ROLE IN CRIME SOLVING
BIAS CRIME COMMUNITY SAFETY MESSAGES	VICTIMS OF CRIME	PMAC/ ABORIGINAL CC'S COMMUNITY ROLE IN CRIME SOLVING	ABORIGINAL ACTION PLANS
COMMUNITY ROLE IN CRIME SOLVING	CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE	CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE	ABORIGINAL STRATEGY DIRECTIONS
CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE	ABORIGINAL ACTION PLANS	ABORIGINAL STRATEGICDIRECTIONS	CAPP IN LAC
ABORIGINAL STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS	CAPP	ABORIGINAL ACTION PLANS	
	ABORIGINAL STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS		

4.2 Focus Group findings

Six stakeholder focus groups were held with communities nominated by Operational Programs Command as most relevant to existing community engagement work being undertaken by NSW Police. These distinct groups were: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (Dubbo and Redfern), Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD), People with Disability and/or Mental Health issues, the LGBTIQ community and International Students. An initial workshop was held internally with senior NSW Police staff and Operational Programs Command. The results then guided the design of the focus group questions (attached here at Appendix A).

A community sponsor method was adopted for the focus groups, allowing community members to recognise and trust the level of commitment of NSW Police to the consultation process. The support of the following organisations is acknowledged:

◗ ACON

◗ Dubbo Aboriginal Land Council

◗ Metropolitan Aboriginal Land Council

◗ Northcott Disability Service

◗ Settlement Services Inc.

◗ Transcultural Mental Health Centre

◗ UTS International

The stakeholder groups were comprised of a mix of staff from service provision agencies and community organisations within the designated communities, and general community members. The majority had some experience in engaging with police. In total 61 people attended the focus groups.

The six stakeholder groups were asked a series of questions in two components – how do NSW Police engage with you in the present, and how would you like them to engage with you into the future? Across the groups there was remarkable consistency in response, and some community-specific issues raised. The following section analyses the outcomes of the groups, identifying the consistent themes raised across the six stakeholder groups and where these intersected with the issues raised during the police workshop, as well as those issues that were specific to community cohorts.

4.3   Consistent themes

The six stakeholder groups offered similar views of community engagement that included open-mindedness, being willing to learn from each other, being transparent and having positive relationships. Community engagement beyond formal methods were also raised regularly, with all groups seeing engagement in a similar way to that of the police workshop – that it encompasses all dealings police have with community.

"

Community engagement is the police out there in the community, talking to people, getting involved.

"

The following table found over pages 22-31 is an overview of the key consistent themes raised during the focus groups, across current and future police engagement.

"

Table 4.2: Perceptions of current NSW community engagement methods

Lack of systemic best practice across LACs			
Group	**Current experience**	**Future experience**	**Quotes**
LGBTIQ **Aboriginal – Dubbo** **Aboriginal - Redfern** **Disability/Mental Health** **CALD** **International Students**	▶ The current lack of any systemic best practice across LACs and the distinct geographic differences in the success or otherwise of police community engagement was raised in all six stakeholder groups. ▶ What was described as a '*hit and miss*' approach was strongly reinforced in and across each group. ▶ The belief that successful community engagement with police is dependent solely on the personality and attitude of individual commanders, or individual officers was discussed in detail by every group.	▶ All the groups expressed a view that NSW Police need to identify their best practice engagement models and implement a systemic best practice approach – embedded across the force regardless of geography. ▶ It was seen that such a systemic model could both avoid the current practice of what can be seen as a geographic lottery based on a mix of location and commander, as well as being adaptable to local circumstances and communities. ▶ Capacity building across the force to provide consistency and implement an evidence-based	"*I think it depends on what area you are from.*" "*What you get from one officer, you are not going to get from others. It depends on the person…there is no proactive or continuous engagement from police.*" "*You can get some coppers that are really good but it's not consistent.*" "*We had a positive experience with a youth liaison officer in one LAC but not so positive in the LAC next door.*" "*Things are good in Redfern, a lot of time and effort has been put into talking to the local Aboriginal community. But if you go down the road to Glebe or Surry Hills, it's a completely different story.*"

| Inconsistency was the general theme in opinions of current community engagement by police. | approach to engagement methods was also suggested. | *"The successes are very Surry Hills focussed and they are great but it needs to be replicated."*

"*Police are difficult in the outer suburbs and the regions. Racist, misogynist and homophobic. Locked in their own understanding of the world. A couple of hours training doesn't change the fact they go back to their own world where they think that sort of behaviour is ok."* |

Dependence on senior management for filter down effect			
Group	**Current experience**	**Future experience**	**Quotes**
LGBTIQ **Aboriginal – Dubbo** **Aboriginal - Redfern** **Disability/Mental Health** **CALD**	▶ The dependence on the attitude and level of engagement from LAC commanders and the filter down effect on station staff was a consistent theme. ▶ It was also viewed as both a positive and a negative. This discussion was had across all six groups, and there was recognition	▶ Leadership driven community engagement was viewed as a necessity in a hierarchical command structure such as NSW Police. ▶ The need to broaden both positive attitudes toward	*"It depends so much on the relationship you have with the commander."* *"I think the higher up blokes are more involved in the community than the other blokes are."* *"Three things I see in a good commander: Empathy, someone who has an understanding of their community. Someone who can separate from their power and*

International Students	among the participants that a 'good' or 'bad' commander fed into the geographic inconsistency in community engagement.	community engagement and incorporating evaluation methods into KPIs to ensure motivation is sustained, and results are measurable, was agreed across most groups.	authority in their community dealings. And cultural sensitivity and awareness." "We had a commander who identified an issue with young people from a particular background, as we had. He would come out on a Thursday night to where they were gathering and do a walk with community members, go and talk to the kids. It changed perceptions. But when he left it all changed back." "It is very much based on the chain of command. And it's regionalised from our point of view. We are state-wide and we know it's very hit and miss.
A lack of both communication and interpersonal skills within NSW Police			
Group	**Current experience**	**Future experience**	**Quotes**
LGBTIQ **Aboriginal – Dubbo** **Aboriginal - Redfern**	▶ Across the stakeholder groups the inability of NSW Police to understand and deal with youth, mental health and people with disability (in particular mild to moderate intellectual disability), people from particular CALD	▶ Across the focus groups recommendations for future action centred on increasing approachability, improving interpersonal skills, ensuring police are open and respectful. Sensitivity in recognising how to	"There is a lack of knowledge and understanding from police of mental health and wellbeing and what to do with mental health presentations, or just generally showing some empathy for people in difficult circumstances."

| **Disability/Mental Health**

CALD

International Students | backgrounds and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people was raised.

◗ The intersections between these cohorts was also raised as a particular problem police continue to grapple with, without much perceived success. | approach different situations and people was very important.

◗ Particular situations that require sensitivity and a variety of police responses need to be part of the police tool kit in terms of ongoing training and skills development.

◗ A common theme was that police need to understand how to engage and how to change approaches depending on the situation they are faced with. | *"If you think of disability as a spectrum, it's the people with the moderate disability, not the profound ones, who have the problems with police. Because they are not visible. It's that inability [of police] to recognise disability and to de-escalate the problem."*

"It's all in the delivery, know how to talk to each other – be appropriate, be sensitive. Have the education and training to help officers de-escalate situations." |

Obvious differences in how different communities or distinct cohorts within communities' experience interaction with police			
Group	**Current experience**	**Future experience**	**Quotes**
LGBTIQ **Aboriginal – Dubbo** **Aboriginal - Redfern**	◗ Despite the various communities represented in the focus groups, each group had perceptions, and cited experiences of obvious differences in interactions with police. ◗ This was described as being both between communities, for	◗ A need for better diversity training was suggested across some of the groups. ◗ Building an accountability system into how police deal across and within communities was also a common desire.	*"There are different police ways for different communities."* *"It is definitely different from CALD community to CALD community."* *"The police see Aboriginal people and all the old stereotypes and stigmas come out. They can't recognise us for who we are."*

Disability/Mental Health CALD International Students	example CALD or Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander communities, and mainstream communities, or within different cohorts within distinct communities, for example the experience of young people, or people with mild to moderate disability.	▶ The need to understand the rich diversity and intersections among and between the many communities across NSW was a common theme. ▶ Again the need for localised approaches was raised, through the development of different consultation strategies for different groups or communities.	*"It depends on the colour of your skin, how they pick on you."* *"I think the experience is also about young people having a perception of not being treated fairly. And when it comes to the crossing of cultural diversity and mental illness, things get even more complicated. Because it is a double whammy."* *"If the police see a group of young Aboriginal boys walking along the street, they'll always pull up and see what they're doing. If they see a group of young white kids walking up the street, they drive past and don't worry about it."*
The need for mutual respect			
Group	**Current experience**	**Future experience**	**Quotes**
LGBTIQ **Aboriginal – Dubbo** **Aboriginal - Redfern**	▶ The desire for mutual respect between NSW Police and the community they serve was a theme common to all focus groups, with the exception of International Students (distinctive	▶ The need to demonstrate the value of sustained community engagement and its benefits to police was seen as a necessary step towards a new community engagement framework. The	*"I know they've got a job to do but they can do that with respect. We have a job to do to, and we do it with respect, so you know."* *"Children need to be taught a bit of respect for police too...but maybe that's because*

Disability/Mental Health	issues for some groups are dealt with below).	concept of mutual respect was at the heart of the discussions.	*police aren't speaking to them with any respect either."*
CALD	◗ Some groups believed that at present they could not say that NSW Police as a whole worked on a basis of respect for the community. ◗ The concept of mutual respect was raised, most strongly in the CALD and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups. With both these communities, the need for children and younger people, and newly arrived migrants to understand the need to respect police and their role, and to have the respect of police in return was strongly supported.	◗ Viewing the community as a part of the solution and not the problem was a widespread desire for future engagement with police. Participants thought it important that NSW Police avoid what they termed a 'tick a box' approach to community engagement. Working with children and young people through the school system, to empower and educate children and proactively to break down the barriers with police was raised in both the CALD and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups.	

	Desire to work with NSW Police formally		
Group	**Current experience**	**Future experience**	**Quotes**
LGBTIQ **Aboriginal – Dubbo** **Disability/Mental Health** **CALD** **International Students**	▶ The perception that police do not want to engage formally and work in partnership with service providers and community organisations was strong. ▶ Numerous examples across the groups reinforced the view that police are not currently effectively engaging with representative bodies, community organisations and service providers with expertise in their particular communities. ▶ This was particularly the case for the CALD group, the disability and mental health group and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander group held in Dubbo. The Aboriginal group held in Redfern identified an existing framework that enables them to work formally	▶ A variety of methods were suggested across the groups, some of which are already in existence but not operating at a level that meets community expectations. ▶ Steering committees made up of community members and service providers were a common suggestion. ▶ Engagement with all segments within a community was important. – we are not homogenous even within our groups. Use existing structures and available resources in the community sector to help police be more accessible. (e.g. disability tools, CALD interpreting services). Make more use of community expertise to assist with	*"Work with us, not against us."* *"Work with us!!!"* *"Drop the tokenism. We are here to work with you."* *"There is a desire to work with police, to co-design, to identify problems and find solutions together."* *"We know the police have a hard job but working with us, using our expertise, will make their jobs easier."*

with the local police however that was distinct to Redfern only, and not neighbouring inner city LACs.

▶ The existing difficulties in getting police to engage was consistent, as was the theme that where police are already part of formal engagement processes, the level of genuine commitment is not consistent.

▶ Again it depends on the officers involved. Some groups, like the LGBTIQ group, felt that existing engagement structures had become more about the community engaging with each other, rather than the police.

▶ And that some of these processes were merely aimed at police collecting information, rather than a meaningful, two-way exchange of information.

competence building within the force

▶ Create partnerships with sectors and within communities to recognise and include the diversity that exists within communities (age, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, religion etc.) to avoid a homogenous approach to engagement.

▶ Create a framework to allow community into the policy development process. Use goal or purpose specific working groups to consider the impacts of new legislation/policies/procedures to avoid community misunderstanding, cultural problems.

▶ Active participation by police at interagency meetings to be part of the identification of problems and

	The Aboriginal stakeholder group held in Redfern was unique in their view that great efforts had been witnessed in the Redfern LAC since 2008 to work with local Aboriginal organisations.	the development of solutions was also a common theme.	

Resourcing issues			
Group	**Current experience**	**Future experience**	**Quotes**
LGBTIQ **Aboriginal – Dubbo** **Aboriginal - Redfern** **Disability/Mental Health** **CALD**	▶ All of the groups except International Students believed that current resourcing levels to support successful community engagement are low. ▶ They cited a need for systems and policies to create connectivity in engagement work. Examples were given consistently of the problem with one dedicated diversity leader and one staff member to support them as insufficient to create positive change and outcomes.	▶ Across the groups a series of potential methods and tools were raised. These included both simple and more detailed resources. ▶ The simple included community phones at the front desk of each station that link to TIS interpreting services for people from CALD backgrounds. ▶ The more complex end of the scale included police education vans that travel around and between neighbouring LACs – an	*"Staff who are already undertaking engagement work often have it as an add-on to their duties. They are crying out for more help."* *"Introduce an off side team of lay people, like social workers. The UK model of community policing is an internationally great model. Civilians, not enrolled officers, bridging people between community and police. Not cops."* *"The ACLOs are not able to really engage with the community on a real level. And often the positions stay vacant for extended periods of time."*

		interactive and educational resource. The idea of a social worker model similar to that of the NSW health system, where social workers as non-commissioned staff operate out of each station to support community members where required to free up the liaison officers to undertake more engagement work, was a popular idea and raised in more than half of the groups.	

4.4 Distinct community issues

The views across the groups regarding how they perceive the success or otherwise of NSW Police in their community engagement had more variety from group to group. There were also distinct community issues raised by some groups.

International Students

The International Student group was distinct in their positive attitude to NSW Police. This attitude was self-identified by the group of students from across Sydney metropolitan campuses as being due to living in a country away from their homes. The group view was that police in other countries are always perceived as more helpful, and as a point of assistance and security. While police were seen as generally very helpful and responsive, issues were raised around a lack of partnerships between universities and police, in particular around student safety. Difficulties in getting police to attend campus based activities or student council meetings was highlighted. There was strong support for more widely disseminated information about police to newly arrived students, either through pre-departure seminars offered by education providers in countries of origin or at orientation on campus. On some campuses police were actively involved, while at others this was not the case.

Disability and Mental Health

The disability/mental health group raised issues expressly pertinent to their communities. Similar issues were raised by other groups and referenced to people with disability or mental health presentations. Police were generally seen as not coping or not being equipped to cope with dealing with people with mental health issues, although there was acknowledgement that this is an area NSW Police are focussing on. However, the disability sector raised serious concerns with the way in which police approach dealing with people with disability. The following key issues were raised:

- o Inability of police to communicate with people with disability often leading to situations escalating and getting out of hand
- o Inability of police to distinguish diversity within the disability community and the different ways people may communicate
- o Problems with intersectionality, e.g. where youth/ethnicity/disability/gender/mental health intersect police are not skilled in nuanced approaches to dealing with people with complex presentations in a sensitive manner
- o Lack of any real interaction with the disability sector for expert assistance beyond some training, e.g. no formal advisory councils or networks
- o Reluctance from police to engage formally, for example through Disability Justice Project.

Disability was described as the 'next big frontier' for NSW Police to operate on. The group view was that people with disability generally had concerns when having to deal with the police, fearing they would be misunderstood and end up in a serious situation.

The Disability Justice Project was raised as an existing state-wide program that NSW Police could immediately engage with. The aim of the Disability Justice Project is to build the capacity of Government and Non-Government agencies throughout NSW, to effectively assist people with cognitive disabilities at risk of, or in contact with the Justice System.

A major component of the project is implementing Communities of Practice (CoPs) across several locations in NSW. There are currently 17 groups. Most of these groups have representation from the Sector and key stakeholders who play a huge role in supporting people with cognitive disability in the Justice System, including Education, Juvenile Justice, Justice Health, Local Court Personnel, Legal Aid, Disability Service Providers, NSW Housing and other groups. The project has had Professor Eileen Baldry present about the importance of Police involvement in this process, to ensure people get supports from service providers where appropriate and use diversionary measures to alleviate police involvement in matters that should be supported by service providers. The hope is that the CoPs continue with multi stakeholder participation, with each group having a local purpose and response to local issues for people who are at risk, or in contact with the Justice System, and ultimately work on any systemic issues that arise through the groups collaborating on their outcomes. Further information about the CoPs groups is available on the DJP website here: http://disabilityjustice.edu.au/communities-of-practice

5. ONLINE COMMUNITY SURVEY

In addition to the face to face consultations held with special interest groups, an online survey was conducted aimed at ensuring the wider NSW community had the opportunity to provide their feedback and share their perspectives on community engagement and the NSW Police Force.

The online survey ran from 12 September and 23 September 2016 and during that time was promoted widely through NSW Police social media platforms, DiverseWerk's social media platforms and through those community organisations who had taken part in the focus groups. A total of 968 responses were collected for the five-page survey which was conducted in English. The 22 survey questions were developed in conjunction with Operational Programs Command and are attached here at Appendix B.

5.1 Online Survey Results Analysis

Survey respondents represented a wide range of age groups from across NSW. The highest level of respondents were aged 36-45 years of age (25 per cent), followed closely by those aged 46-55 years (24 per cent). People aged between 26-35 years of age and those aged between 56-75 were each 20 per cent of the total number of respondents and those aged between 18 and 25 years represented nine per cent of the total number of respondents. People aged under 18 years and those 75 years and older were represented in the much smaller combined percentage total of 1.5 per cent. The majority of respondents, or their parents were born in Australia (58 per cent) and 82 per cent spoke English at home. Eighteen per cent of people participating in the online survey identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. A higher number of respondents were living with a mental health presentation (17 per cent) than a disability (12 per cent). The majority of people who self-identified a sexuality were heterosexual (69 per cent), however it should be noted that 23 per cent of respondents did not disclose their sexuality.

The majority of respondents had some history of contact with police, most commonly as citizens requiring assistance, or in a professional capacity. When asked if strongly agreed or agreed that this contact had been a positive experience, 59 per cent agreed however 34 per cent nominated their experience of contact with police as either neutral or not a positive experience. The majority of survey participants wanted to engage with NSW Police (75.2 per cent), and 68 per cent were either very or moderately comfortable doing so.

When asked if respondents thought police should engage with the community or remain as purely as law enforcement officers, an overwhelming majority at 95 per cent agreed that NSW Police should engage. This result is below in Chart 5.1.

Should police engage with the community or remain purely as law enforcement officers?

No — 5.3%

Yes — 94.7%

0.0%   20.0%   40.0%   60.0%   80.0%   100.0%
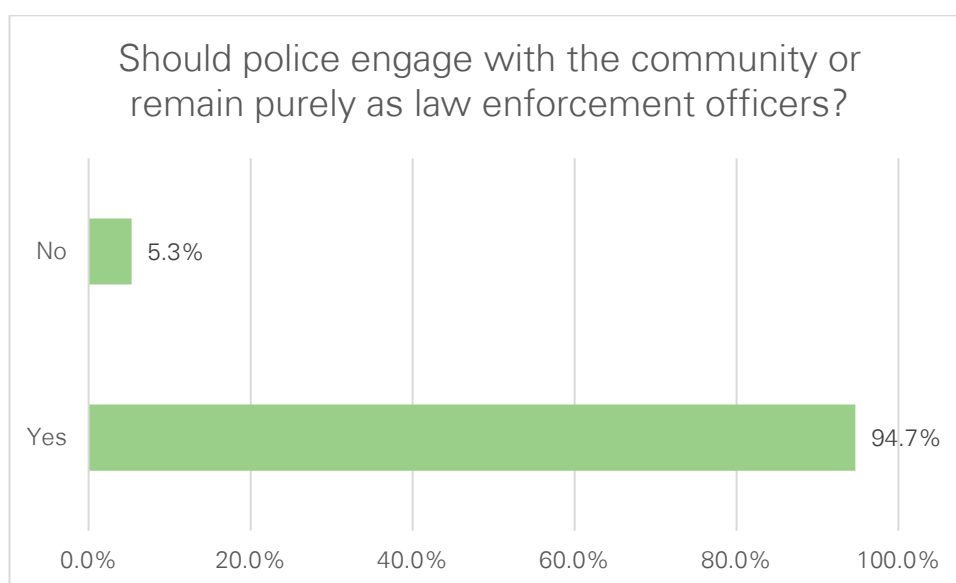
> **" I would love to be able to engage with police and not be made to feel like it is a burden for them. "**

Respondents were then asked a series of questions about their experience on how police currently engage, or how they could engage into the future. Most respondents had seen NSW Police at community events (74 percent), with the next highest response groups seeing police at local schools (46 per cent) and at local sporting events (35 per cent). A smaller group (7.4 per cent) had seen police engaging through local religious organisations. Of the respondents who had not seen police engaging themselves, 14 per cent had heard about police engagement and 10 per cent had not seen any police engagement.

Respondents were very supportive of a variety of examples for how NSW Police could conduct community engagement. The following chart (Chart 5.2) presents an overview of these responses to seven proposed methods of engagement (attend community event, meet with

community leaders, talk to school groups, mentor young people, organise sporting activities, organise community events, attend churches, temples and mosques).

Chart 5.2: Question 7 results, Online Survey

Q.7: How should NSW Police engage with local communities?

- Attend community events
- Talk to school groups
- Meet with community leaders
- Organise sporting activities
- Mentor young people
- Attend churches, temples and mosques
- Organise community events
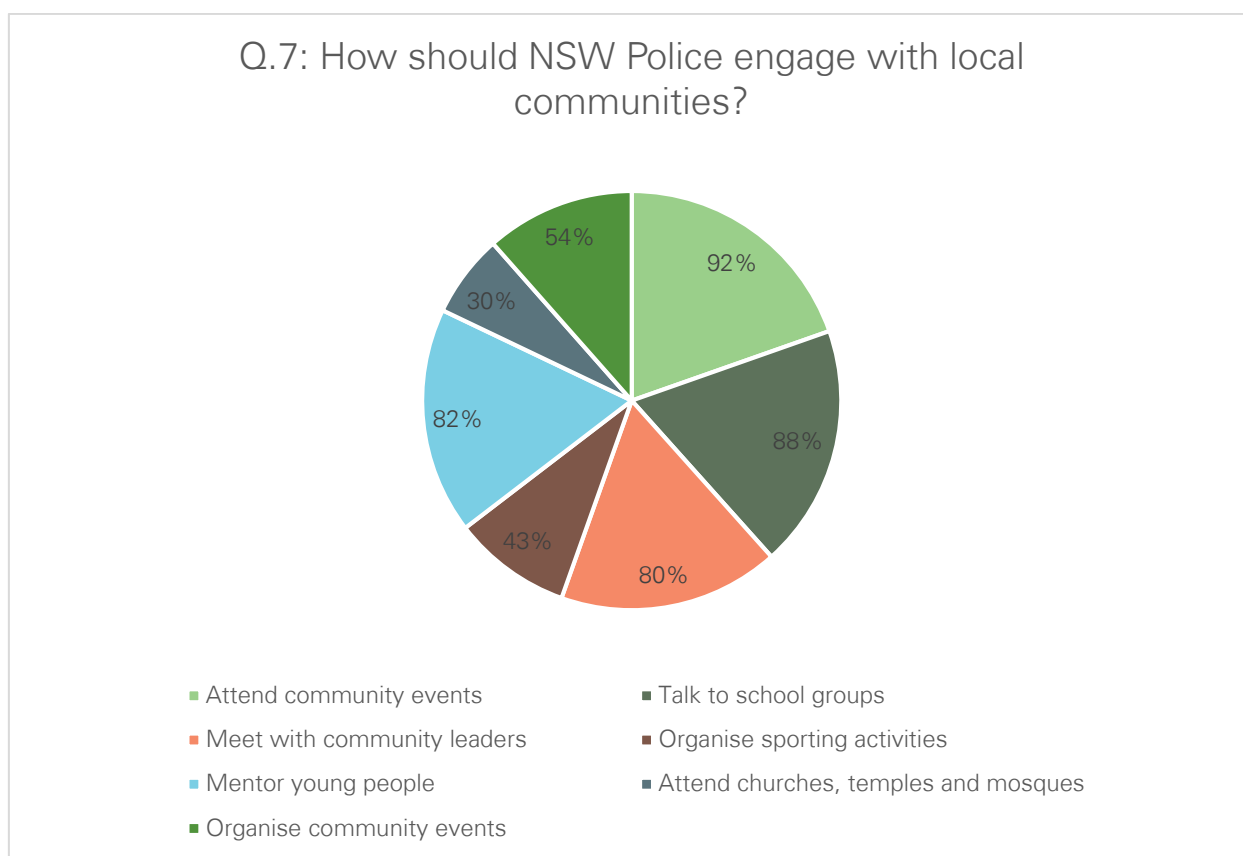
Respondents were also asked to suggest other ways for police to conduct community engagement. While the responses varied, a common theme from the majority of people who made suggestions revolved around three key themes – increasing police presence on the street by **walking** around the beat, **talking** either with people during duty and on the beat or in the setting of formal meetings, community events and engagement activities, and thirdly, **engaging** with local services, community organisations and government agencies. Coffee with a Cop was also a commonly nominated suggestion.

People participating in the online survey overwhelmingly viewed community engagement between police and the community as a two-way conversation, with 98 per cent of respondents agreeing.

5.2 Analysis of open-ended question results

A series of questions then asked respondents to provide their opinions on three key areas – what good police engagement looks like to them, how they feel in terms of safety through police

behaviour and whether they felt police would listen to them and take their or their community's views seriously in changing the way they engage.

The responses for each of these questions fell into distinct categories as follows:

Q8: What does good Police community engagement look like to you?

Of the 498 people who answered this question, the responses fell into four distinct categories:

- **Personal attributes, communication skills and ethics** (n=242 responses);
- **High visibility** and **police presence in the local community** (n=111 responses);
- **Working directing with communities, their organisations and the service sector** (98 responses); and
- **Focussing on working with young people and children** (n=36 responses).

Perhaps the most difficult category to enact cultural change in – personal characteristics and attributes – rated the highest among respondents. Common responses spoke of the desire for police to be approachable, positive, friendly, having open communication skills (including listening skills), being supportive. Also in this category of responses were themes that are best described as ethical – or those which can be dealt with under a governance framework, such as respect, integrity, transparency, responsiveness. Respondents spoke of wanting a police force that was part of the community, a trusted, respected and approachable service with whom community members felt comfortable and confident to approach.

> **"It is where the community feel that the local police are a part of their community and not just there to enforce the law."**
>
> **"Police are part of the community and should be seen as that. It is not good for them to try and engage only when they need information to solve a crime."**
>
> **"Good police community engagement looks like people being comfortable enough to turn to the police in times of trouble, and the police being comfortable turning to the community for information and assistance with law enforcement."**
>
> **"Being seen to be approachable and building positive relationships with community members of all ages and backgrounds. This assists them with their image and people become willing to step forward with issues or concerns about their community and crimes they witness."**

Q9: I feel safe when Police are….

Responses to question nine fell into two distinct categories: **visibility and presence** and **personal attributes and communication skills**. The majority of respondents cited police visibility and presence as making them feel safe (n=268 responses). Respondents wanted to see police in the community, walking the beat and patrolling, visible at community events. There was cross over in many responses, with a desire for visibility and approachability – friendly police present in public areas. There was cross over in many responses, with a desire for visibility and approachability – friendly police present in public areas. There was considerable cross-over among responses, with a desire for highly visible police who were 'friendly', 'approachable', 'relaxed' and 'trustworthy'. Good communication skills again rated highly in responses.

> **"Visible in their local community, providing positive role models for all and having good people skills."**

Q11: Do you feel the Police would listen to you and seriously consider your/community views in changing the way they engage?

Responses to question 11 fell into four main categories – Yes, Maybe/Hope So, No and Unsure. The majority of respondents (n=218) agreed that police would listen to them and seriously taken into consideration their views in changing how they engage. A number of respondents cited the online survey as proof of this. The next largest response group was those people who answered maybe, or showed a level of hope in their answer (n=178). The next response group was those who did not feel police would listen and consider their views (n=75). There was a smaller group (n=30) who were unsure in their response.

The overwhelming majority of respondents therefore felt that police would either listen to them and seriously consider their views, or expressed some hope that this would be the case. There was however a level of cynicism in many responses, ranging from identifying the need for cultural change with NSW Police to a belief that while some officers were capable of change, many were not.

> **"It depends on the LAC. Different superintendents rule the roost in different ways."**
> **"Definitely. We have a great and very active Superintendent who is very much engaged and works well with our community and is very passionate about positive change.": "Yes, I would hope so but I'm not sure how far up the chain community voices go."**

In summary it is clear that the online survey respondents firmly believe NSW Police should be engaging with communities, in an open, constructive way that involves open communication. The majority also believed police would both listen to them and seriously take community views into consideration when considering how to change their engagement methods. Respondents wanted a more visible police force with a high level of personal and communications skills, who are considered as an integral part of the local community. Mutual respect and trust between the community and NSW Police was a consistent theme. One common minor theme throughout the online survey responses was the desire for police to work with children and young people, in school settings and through mentoring and other programs.

6. IMPLICATIONS FOR ENGAGEMENT

6.1 Resilience of the Model

The draft community engagement document is a complex diagram that should not be used as the 'public face' of NSW Police community engagement. It should be used internally as a strategic document only. In particular during the police internal workshop there was some confusion around the four pillars of engagement – Communication, Consultation, Participation and Sustained Engagement. There was a lack of clarity around the distinct categories, and confusion about how to define existing engagement methods within the four pillars.

The resilience of the model will depend on the principles that underpin it, and the practical application of the model in terms of the measurable success of its useability and outreach into communities. The framework must exist as a living document that guides a new approach to active and genuine community engagement that can be both recognised by the community and measured by both police and the community in terms of success and accountability. The example of WA DFES is highly relevant in terms of an emergency service organisation re-evaluating its approach to community engagement and actively applying a new approach to embed community engagement at the heart of its service.

Measuring the resilience of the model against the core or guiding principles raised through the focus groups and online survey is a reliable methodology for police to implement to be able to gauge the success of their engagement processes.

Engagement Implications:

◗ Only use the draft community engagement model as an internal strategic document for the NSW Police, do not use it as a public facing document.

◗ Develop a community engagement framework document like WA DFES as a public facing document to communicate NSW Police engagement approaches to the community.

◗ Pilot a series of engagement activities across the four pillars of engagement – Communication, Consultation, Participation, and Sustained Engagement and make progress and findings available to the public to demonstrate commitment to new ways of engaging.

◗ Develop key performance indicators or a set of measurable outcomes that hold the NSW Police accountable to new ways of engaging with communities and that demonstrates to the community their views and input have been considered.

◗ Adapt the community engagement framework as and when community needs and priorities change. See it as a living document that is flexible, adaptable and meaningful to both the NSW Police and the community.

6.2 Guiding Principles

Across all the project components the concept that cultural change is required in how the NSW Police engage with communities was agreed. Common themes emerged and have been identified as the core, guiding principles of the NSW Police community engagement framework. These are **Attitude (know why we are engaging), Knowledge (we know who to engage with), Consistency (building good practice across our Force) and Skills (we will build the capacity of our police and communities to participate in engagement activities)**:

Attitude – Respect, Equity, Integrity. Recognition among NSW Police of the benefits of engaging with community. A mutual recognition between police and community and the role of both in keeping NSW safe. Knowing why we are engaging and the benefits.

Knowledge – Awareness of communities and diversity, knowing who we need to engage with, acknowledgement of distinctions across and within communities, understanding local needs and issues, seeking and utilising expertise from the community and its organisations through partnerships.

Consistency – Systemic good practice embedded across NSW Police, built in and transferrable skills, appropriate resourcing levels, using good and best practice.

Skills – Building the interpersonal and communications skills of NSW Police, investment in skills and knowledge development across and down the command structure, and within the community to fully participate in the engagement process.

Engagement Implications:

◗ Develop a set of principles that underpin the community engagement framework that are based on the following areas – attitude, knowledge, consistency, and skills. Communicate these to the community.

◗ Commit to undertaking cultural awareness training for all levels of police staff in the NSW Police Force to coincide with the release of the community engagement framework, that demonstrates to the community (particularly diverse communities) that they are serious about a cultural change in the force with meaningful engagement with the community.

6.3 Recurring information

The following points were recurring across the project components:

6.3.1 Systemic capacity

The message around systemic capacity and best practice measuring was extremely strong. This was the key message delivered – that NSW Police must introduce a systemic approach to community engagement, to avoid a continuation of the geographic lottery. Good community engagement can no longer be left to individual officers and their capacity and attitudes. Best practice, as highlighted in internal police reports such as the July 2016 review of two community engagement programs in the Redfern LAC (*Clean Slate Without Prejudice* and *Never Going Back* review) are available tools that need to be broadened out, and able to be used in a localised manner according to local community needs.

Engagement Implications:

◗ Develop a systemic approach to community engagement that comes from the top down.

◗ Commit to developing best practice models of community engagement, developed in partnership with the communities themselves (based on successfully run community engagement programs and/or developed post findings from pilot projects).

◗ Develop specific community engagement approaches based on local needs, rather than a one-size fits all approach.

6.3.2 Consultation

Genuine, two-way consultation was seen as necessary in good community engagement. Current consultative practices are seen as having fallen into a pattern of 'information gathering' for police.

Engagement Implications:

◗ Approach consultation in a more collaborative way, co-designing approaches with the community.

◗ Demonstrate to the community that engagement is meaningful through designing engagement approaches with a two-way information exchange and that demonstrates the community has been listened to and their needs been taken into consideration.

6.3.3   Engagement

There is an expectation that NSW Police engagement will be proactive, flexible and able to adapt according to local community or cohort needs.

Engagement Implications:

◗ Underpin all engagement activities with strong interpersonal and communication skills. This includes speaking to all community members with respect and on a personal, more human level.

◗ Ensure engagement is flexible and adaptable in order to respond to varying local community needs.

6.3.4   Joint Decision Making

Allowing community into problem identification and solutions using skills and expertise of community leadership and sectors to address problem areas is viewed as beneficial to both parties. The guiding view is that successful engagement and joint decision making will ultimately make policing easier.

Engagement Implications:

◗ Involve community organisations and leaders in the engagement process, particularly when looking at creating solutions to current community problems.

◗ Commit to developing community forums and structures for meaningful information exchange that supports mutual benefit and joint decision-making where possible. This creates opportunities for empowerment, which ultimately leads to positive behaviour change.

7. APPENDICES

A: Stakeholder focus group questions

NSWPF Community Engagement Framework Project - Key questions for community consultations

Context (these details will be asked of the community contact prior to the session to gather information regarding the group characteristics)

- *Where do they live with?*
- *Where do they socialise? Close to home or somewhere else?*
- *Do they engage with Police in a formal way already? Through a community process or formal police process?*

1. **Introduction**
- Explain purpose of the focus group and the role of the project team

We have invited you here today to talk about the NSW Police and how they engage with local communities across NSW. This discussion is part of a project to understand how the Police currently engage with the community and how they could undertake community engagement into the future. This focus group and your opinions will help in the development of the NSW Police's new *Community Engagement Framework* which will guide how the Police approach talking to, listening to and interacting with the many varied communities across the state.

Through this next phase of their formal Community Engagement Framework they will seek to life the level of engagement they have with communities and make purposeful attempts to engage at the appropriate level within communities in NSW.

So I really want to hear about your thoughts and experiences. You will notice that there are a few unfamiliar faces in the room – this is the research team. I'm Cecilia Anthony and I'm a diversity consultant from a company called DiverseWerks. Also with me today is my colleague Kirsty Carr. She will also be listening and taking notes throughout our time here today.

- Confidentiality and how information used. Consent - If necessary say:
By you taking part in the discussion, you're happy for us to use this information in our research

- Reiterate that this is a safe space – we want all sorts of feedback, both good and bad, and we are wanting to encourage everyone to have a say

- Reiterate they can speak with either of us after the session if they think of something else after the discussion

- Emphasise that the information collected on the day will help improve policing services for their community – improve police and community relationships and help make our community safer for everyone.

2. What do you think Community Engagement is?

Community Engagement can mean many things to many people.

NSW Police senior management consider community engagement as the Foundation on which local policing should be built.

When we talk about community engagement today, we are talking about both the formal way NSW Police engage with local communities through events and meetings, as well as the way they interact with individuals and groups.

What do you think community engagement is? How would you describe it? What does it look like?

How do you think NSW Police engage with communities?

Is it different from community to community?

Or within communities? **[prompt if necessary]** Say with older people and younger people?

3. their current experience of engagement or interaction with police

What is your experience of how the Police currently engage with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities?

[prompt] Was it a positive experience? Why?

[prompt] Was it a negative experience? Why?

4. their impressions of how police engage with community (name some examples)

How do you think Police engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities generally in NSW?

The Police in NSW have a number of ways in which they engage with the many communities who call NSW home. Can you share some examples of how they are engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities?

How successful do you think they are? **[prompt]** Can you think of examples where NSW Police are successfully engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities?

What about times when they are not engaging successfully?

INTERACTIVE EXERCISE

5. Their views of how the police could engage with community (name some examples)

Communication	Consultation	Participation	Sustained Engagement

We've discussed ways that the Police are currently engaging with communities. Now I'm going to ask you to think how the Police could engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities into the future. Up on the wall are 4 pages, each with a different heading – Communication, Consultation, Participation and Sustained Engagement. These are the four areas NSW Police have identified as their priorities for engagement. I'm going to ask you to tell me ways that are appropriate for Police to engage with your community, and we are going to write them up in the column you think they belong in.

[prompt] So, what do you think are appropriate ways or methods for Police to engage with your community?

What should stay the same? What should change? What could they do differently?

[WRITE UP RESPONSES/EXAMPLES INTO THE CORRESPONDING COLUMNS ON A3 BUTCHER'S PAPER ON WALL]

Each of you have been given 3 sticky notes, one in each colour. I'm going to ask you now to come up one by one, and rate your top 3 examples by placing your sticky notes on them. Yellow is your no. 1 choice, Pink is no. 2 and Blue is no. 3.

[call people up one by one]

6. Thank you and close

Thank you for taking the time to join us tonight and share your views.

What community members are telling us in focus groups will feature in our report to NSW Police and inform their final community engagement framework. Once their senior command has approved the framework it will be publicly available on the police website and in hard copy at Commands and external agencies.

If you would like to leave your contact details to receive a copy of the final Police community engagement framework, we can pass on y our details to NSW Police.

B: Online Survey questions

Welcome to My Survey

Community Engagement is a long term process through which the NSW Police Force involves individuals or groups in identifying problems, and in shaping and implementing decisions and programs that affect them.

Enabling community involvement in addressing community identified problems and police initiatives enhances trust in and legitimacy of the police.

Community engagement is the foundation on which local policing should be built.

1. Have you ever had contact with the police?

☐ Needed help from police

☐ Police needed your help

☐ Required information from police

Other (please specify)

[   ]

2. How was that experience?

○ Positive

○ Negative

○ Neither poistive or negative

○ Other (please specify)

[   ]

NSW Police Community Engagement

3. Do you want to engage with NSW Police?

○ YES

○ NO

Please explain your choice

[ ]

4. Do you feel comfortable engaging with NSW Police?

○ Very comfortable

○ Moderately comfortable

○ Neither comfortable or uncomfortable

○ Moderately uncomfortable

○ Very uncomfortable

If uncomfortable, why?

[ ]

5. Should police engage with the community or remain as purely law enforcement officers?

○ Yes, Police should engage with the community they serve

○ No, Police should remain exclusively law enforcement officers

Should NSW Police engage with local communities?

6. Have you seen NSW Police engaging with your local community?

☐ YES at community events

☐ YES at local sporting events

☐ YES through local schools

☐ YES through local religious organisations

☐ NO but I have heard that police do engage with the local community

☐ NO I have not seen police engaging locally

7. How should NSW Police engage with local communities?

☐ Attend community events

☐ Talk to school groups

☐ Meet with community leaders

☐ Organise sporting activites

☐ Mentor young people

☐ Attend religious sites like churches, temples and mosques

☐ Organise community events

☐ Are there any other ways you feel NSW Police could engage with local communities?

[   ]

8. What does good police community engagement look like to you?

[   ]

9. I feel safe when Police are....

[   ]

10. Is community engagement a one-way or two-way conversation between Police and the community?

○ One way conversation

○ Two way conversation

11. Do you feel the Police would listen to you and seriously consider your/community views in changing the way they engage?

Demographics

To help us understand who has responded to this survey we are collecting demographic information. Your responses will be anonymously grouped and analysed to help us gain a greater understanding of what people think about NSW Police community engagement. Thank you for taking the time to complete this section.

12. How old are you?

○ Under 18

○ 18-25

○ 26-35

○ 36-45

○ 46-55

○ 56 - 75

○ 75 years and older

13. What is your gender identity?

[   ]

14. What is your sexual orientation?

[   ]

15. What is your postcode?

[   ]

16. What is your ethnicity?

[   ]

17.
Were you or one or both of your parents born outside of Australia?

○ YES

○ NO

If yes, where?

[   ]

18. Do you speak a language other than English at home?

◯ YES

◯ NO

If yes, which language(s)

```
[                                        ]
```

19. Are you Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander?

◯ ABORIGINAL

◯ TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER

◯ BOTH ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER

◯ NEITHER

If Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, what is your First Nation?

```
[                                        ]
```

20. Are you living with a disability?

◯ YES

◯ NO

21. Are you living with mental health issues?

◯ YES

◯ NO

Thank You

Thank you for taking the time to take part in this survey. If you would like to enter the draw to win an iPad Mini valued at $538.00 please continue to the next page to provide your contact details. Your survey responses have been de-identified and will not be linked to your contact details.

22. Please provide your name, address and phone number to enter the draw to win an iPad Mini valued at $538.00.

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