

Can Reform of the Police Service be Achieved Through Tertiary Education?

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Introduction

This paper critically analyses recent reforms to education and training of NSW police recruits. The first half examines the arguments for and against professionalisation of the NSW Police Service¹ through higher education, the rationale behind the Police Recruit Education Program (PREP) and its immediate successor the Constable Education Program (CEP), the extent to which CEP overcomes the problems of PREP and the strength of CEP as a strategy for changing police behaviour.

The second half discusses organisational resistance - a major obstacle for reform strategies. We examine the major impediments to organisational change within the Service, and the reasons for resistance towards tertiary education. Finally, we draw upon the nursing experience to identify the factors which limit education as a reform strategy, and ascertain ways of achieving effective field training.

Educational reform: hopes and dreams, visions and goals

The development of police education and training in NSW has a long and substantial history. The catalyst for reform was the Lusher report (1981) which was especially critical of police education and training. The report precipitated the development of the Police Board and the Police Education Advisory Council (PEAC) to advise on education and training policy. Over time these bodies have facilitated affiliation with tertiary providers. The development of CEP is seen as the next essential step to address education and training (Nixon & Young 1993:1). This concentrates on the 'foundational studies and applied skills necessary for the modern policing profession' (Charles Sturt University 1998:1)

This paper accepts the notion that improved education has the potential to improve the behaviour and practices of police officers. This has been discussed in various reports including Fitzgerald (1989) and Mollen (1994). Research has identified the following benefits of tertiary education to include the promotion of different ways of thinking through exposure to pluralist perspectives and the facilitation of knowledge through access to

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1 Hereafter referred to as the Service.

intellectual material. Tertiary education also allows for improved interaction in changing social environs (Dantzker 1997), enhanced public service skills including conflict resolution and community relations (Wilson 1989), and accreditation for career development (Nixon & Young 1993) thus expediting the transformation to an profession (Bradley & Cioccarelli 1990:1-13)². It has been suggested that police who undertake tertiary education are possibly less authoritarian and putative (Shernock & Dantzker 1997:79), and better attuned to community values and problems. Whilst this evidence is inconclusive, the benefits of tertiary education should not be dismissed (Royal Commission into the NSW Police Service 1997:44). As Weiner states, although education cannot change people's attitudes, it may at least expose them '...to new ideas, new information and to new values' (1974:325). Tertiary education may therefore be an instrument for change (Shernock & Dantzker 1997:77).

This does not ignore the reality that police behaviour is influenced by a number of factors extraneous to tertiary education including; organisational culture, the character of police work, the socio-political context, the legal context and individual personality traits (Royal Commission into the NSW Police Service 1997). This is acknowledged and provides the foundation for this paper, however a discussion of the rationale behind the recent changes to police education in NSW, allows closer examination of these issues.

The Constable education program: a marriage for better, worse or much the same?

The Royal Commission's³ finding of systemic corruption within the NSW Police Service has triggered a frenzy of reform (Royal Commission into the NSW Police Service 1997:161). Officers have been sacked, command has been decentralised, new codes of conduct have been issued and a new Constable Education Program (replacing the Police Recruit Education Program, PREP) has been launched. The task of this new two-year Diploma is:

...to improve investigation practice, to address more effectively the impact of the negative aspects of police culture, and to educate its recruits in the nature and demands of professional ethics more thoroughly (Charles Sturt University 1998:4).

Similarly, PREP aimed to 'purge the police of corruption' (CARE 1990:6) through providing recruits with:

a high degree of moral awareness, self-monitoring, commitment to the pursuit of excellence and complete personal integrity in professional service (NSW Police Service 1992:46).

As the Wood Report makes clear, ten years of PREP have made little difference to the extent of unethical behaviour within the Service.

PREP has suffered a number of problems over the years. The 1990 CARE report (Royal Commission into the NSW Police Service 1992:46) found that during PREP's field training phase,⁴ probationers were attached to inexperienced and overworked Field Training Officers ('buddies'). Often this was followed by deployment into the worst of full duties,⁵ resulting in probationers suffering increased anxiety (from having responsibility

2 As representative of support for police professionalism. The drive to professionalism is navigated by the National Professionalism Implementation Advisory Committee.

3 Hereafter referred to as the Wood Report.

4 This is referred to as 'phase four' in the course materials. It lasted 48 weeks.

whilst still learning), and a perception that education was irrelevant to practice. These factors led to 'training decay' and rapid assimilation into police culture (NSW Police Service 1992:63-66).⁶ Often probationers suffered 'culture shock', caused by sudden exposure to the confronting realities of policing (Weiner 1974:324), thereby heightening probationers' anxiety and accelerating the adoption of police culture (NSWNSW Police Service 1992:61-63). In addition, field training was inadequate (NSW Police Service 1992:61-84),⁷ as Patrol Training Officers worked as administrators rather than educators and reflective de-briefings were not utilised.⁸ Moreover, practice was not open to critique and study guides made unrealistic demands on students.

The CARE report also noted that police management styles hindered curriculum development, shaped teaching practice and possibly accelerated 'the induction of students into police culture'. Teachers relied on top-down instructions, engaged in self-censorship, and viewed their task in terms of quality control and accountability to management (NSW Police Service 1992:141, Police Board of NSW 1996).

To summarise, probationers rapidly lost the benefits of education because of organisational strategies which undervalued General Duties,⁹ failed to create incentives for staying in the front line of policing, ensured that probationers were given the worst work and threw probationers into full duties (NSW Police Service 1992:59,80).

The field training program also precipitated probationers' loss of the benefits of education because field training failed to adequately train and brief buddies and failed to brief and de-brief probationers. The programs utilised an unrealistic study program and failed to provide opportunities for critical reflection upon practice. Finally, the presence of police management in PREP aided to undermine educational aims.

Next, we examine whether CEP has remedied these problems. If so, it may be more successful than PREP in reducing corruption. First, we explore CEP's approach to field training. Second, we discuss CEP's collaboration with Charles Sturt University. And finally, we investigate ways in which CEP has moved beyond PREP.

The full professional model and field training

CEP consolidates three courses, namely PREP,¹⁰ the Constable Development Program (CDP),¹¹ and the Police Service Investigators Course. The rationale for amalgamation is the need to reduce corruption (noted above) coupled with the need for professionalisation. The push towards professionalisation is supported by various research which has concluded that

5 For example, such as cell duty and prisoner transport - mundane, repetitious and boring. Buddy attachments were for 8 weeks. After this recruits were on full duties.

6 This is attributed to; i) probationers often getting the worst most mundane work, ii) buddies teaching 'the way it's done here', iii) formal curriculum failing to acknowledge the realities of police work, and iv) probationers being thrown straight into operational duties (fostering anxiety and leading to the rapid assimilation into police culture).

7 The latter point was attributed to the fact that District Training Co-ordinators and Patrol Training Officers were involved in administration and compliance with the distance education study guide rather than education.

8 These could have: a) reduced culture shock, and b) enabled theory to be related to practice.

9 Described by officers as 'the lowest form of life'.

10 Leading to the Certificate in Policing awarded by Charles Sturt University.

11 Which was a pre-requisite to promotion to Senior Constable. This course lead to the Diploma in Policing awarded by Charles Sturt University.

the majority of police work involves order-maintenance and service functions rather than criminal law enforcement (Reiner 1992, Bittner 1980:125-133). Secondly, most police work takes place on the streets including, patrol and traffic regulation, usually staffed by young - inexperienced officers (Bittner 1980:125), and this consequently hinders the quality of initial response which is the key to successful investigations (NSW Police Service 1998:2).

CEP aims to create a full professional 'general practitioner'¹² who is able to understand the complexity of the police role and perform all its functions competently (NSW Police Service 1992:29; NSW Police Service 1998:1). PREP had similar aims. However, the department argues that PREP only produced 'beginner practitioners', whereas CEP is able to produce self-sufficient 'master practitioners' who are able to perform core functions and general investigatory functions on their own (NSW Police Service 1998:1). The distinction is overdrawn. However, this must be seen as part of a larger, multifaceted strategy which aims to address corruption. Such a strategy involves increasing the status and self-esteem of the patrol officer through 'professionalisation', providing opportunities for further specialisation and development as a front-line officer, and providing increased avenues for promotion in operational policing. In addition, this larger strategy must encourage critical thinking and self-reliance, and remove power from the generally corrupt crime squads (Bradley 1996:61-66, Australasian Police Ministers' Council 1996).

These strategies are able to tackle negative attitudes towards General Duties. Such views lead to inexperienced officers being assigned to operational policing and probationers being given the worst work. It may also address the problem of public hostility which Manning suggests contributes towards negative police culture (Manning 1979:118). However, values cannot change overnight. Many officers will still believe that operational policing is 'shit work' (NSW Police Service 1992:59)¹³ - despite 'professionalisation'. We argue that probationers' experiences of their second-year field training will not change until they are consciously placed in environments, exposed to experiences, and supported in ways which work against 'training decay' and enable the 'reflective practitioner' to emerge.

The following CEP initiatives may help to achieve this. Firstly, CEP aims to develop the probationer as part of a team so that he or she has access to the expertise and views of many diverse buddies (or mentors).¹⁴ Secondly, CEP aims to ensure that there are extensive briefings and de-briefings which prepare the probationer, and allow him or her to reflect critically upon what has occurred (NSW Police Service 1992:154) Thirdly, CEP aims to establish greater numbers of training centres, and finally, CEP seeks to increase the time students spend observing policing from PREP's 4 weeks to 6, and include an additional 6 week attachment to community agencies. The latter should be useful in providing insights into the social context of policing, helping students appreciate the 'service' function of policing, and reducing 'culture shock' (NSW Police Service 1992:126). These issues are discussed below.

However, strategies for the implementation of field training for 2nd year CEP students are not fully formed. Consequently, many issues remain unanswered. For example, it is not clear what the age and experience of mentors will be, nor does it ensure that buddies

12 Rather than a limited expert.

13 It is also possible that many officers will resent and resist changes. This is discussed in part two, *Infra* in text.

14 Conversation with Senior Sergeant Flemming, 3/6/98.

are the 'cream of the crop'.¹⁵ It is unclear what kinds of briefing and preparation of trainers will take place,¹⁶ and whether mentors/buddies will have to undertake full duties, in addition to their training responsibilities, making them vulnerable to 'burn out'.¹⁷ In addition, it is uncertain whether enough resources will be deployed to prevent probationers being used to 'shore up General Duties strength', and whether field placement will include 'catch-up' tasks which have not been taught at the Academy, such as data entry for Computer Operated Policing Systems (COPS) and the ability to take particulars and statements from accident scenes.

The first three points relate to the buddy system. The CARE Report found that most probationers believed the buddy system was 'the single most necessary aspect of...training' (CARE 1990). This was confirmed in interviews with officers. It provided support, developed confidence, put theory into practice, and provided role models (CARE 1990). These are positive attributes that could be harnessed to help probationers consolidate their Academy learning and apply it to the field. However, if role models engage in unethical behaviour, if practice involves shortcuts, if probationers are taught to be loyal to traditional police values, if there are no briefings or de-briefings, then this system will simply perpetuate corruption.

The last issue relates to the levels of pressure that on-the-job trainees are under. Being able to make mistakes is crucial for effective learning. However, probationary constables who have the same powers and responsibilities as regular officers will be reluctant to commit errors - or admit to them. Moreover, Manning has argued that the need to reduce uncertainty (including the risk of being punished for errors) contributes to police sub-culture (Manning 1979:117-122). However, under both PREP and CEP at least half the course is spent as a probationary constable undergoing field training!¹⁸ This situation is far from ideal. There should be no 'apprenticeship on the street' (Bult et al 1996). Our preference would be for longer periods of field observation, followed by on-the-job training whilst on strictly limited duties. This would allow for a smoother transition into police work and overcome many of the difficulties noted above.

Having addressed CEP's approach to field training we now examine its approach to staffing and management.

CEP: the collaborative approach

The Wood Report and CARE have pointed to problems caused by the Police Service's involvement in police education. The undermining of educational aims through the presence of police management has already been noted. In addition, the following concerns have been raised including the fact that the 'Police Service has ignored recommendations of the advisory bodies or otherwise maintained its dominance of the Academy' through strategies such as retaining high numbers of sworn teaching staff, the

15 CARE discovered that buddies often only had 13 months experience. As one buddy commented 'You're still feeling your way and you're having to train someone yourself and you don't know' (NSW Police Service 1992:146).

16 The Directorate of Field Training currently has responsibility for training buddies (field training officers) and Patrol Education Development Officers. However, it has been noted that trainers still neglect to apply field and adult learning theory (Mansfield & Burnard 1981-1995).

17 CARE found that the workloads of many buddies effectively doubled. Hence buddies often had no time for training (their main concern being to clear the message pad) and suffered physical and emotional exhaustion.

18 48 weeks out of 76 under PREP, and 42 weeks out of 84 under CEP.

fact that the Service appears to have been resisting the move towards pre-service policing degrees (The Royal Commission into the NSW Police Service 1997:272, 273),¹⁹ and the excessive cost of maintaining the Police Academy at Goulburn.²⁰ In addition there is the inevitability of a clash of cultures between sworn and non-sworn educators (*Sydney Morning Herald* 17 June 1995:31), and the militaristic nature of some teaching practices which encourages bullying and perpetuates an 'us and them' mentality (*Sydney Morning Herald* 14 June 1995:1).

There have been various recommendations for dealing with these problems. The CARE Report, for example, recommended injecting more non-sworn educators at the management level (NSW Police Service 1992:142,170). More recently, the Wood Report has suggested making the acquisition of an approved university degree or diploma (preferably delivered by civilian educators at a campus other than the Academy) a pre-requisite to recruitment, and having practical skills training delivered by both sworn and non-sworn educators at the Academy, and by police in the field (The Royal Commission into the NSW Police Service 1997:276).

The police service has responded to these suggestions by establishing the two-year university Diploma in Policing Practice (CEP) which is offered on the basis of a collaborative model. Staff from Charles Sturt University and Police Service staff, accredited by the University 'jointly develop, deliver and evaluate the course and assess students' (Charles Sturt 1998:3). It will be conducted at the NSW Police Academy for most of the first year (where the majority of students also reside) and in the field, and involves students being recruited at the end of their second year.

The main problem with CEP is that although it has realised some of the advantages of the Wood model (raising the age of recruits to a certain degree,²¹ increasing the prestige of policing, and increasing the amount of civilian education), it fails in two crucial aspects. First, it fails to expose students to the influence of a civilian campus.²² This limits their contact with diverse people, prevents them from interacting with differing ideas and perpetuates cultural isolation. The fact that the Academy is residential exacerbates this problem. However, presently it would be impossible to move the Police Academy from Goulburn because of the local political fallout that would result from the depletion in the local economy if the Academy were to relocate. Moreover, even though CEP involves collaboration with a university,²³ the presence of police management structures will continue to be felt. Second, students continue to be confronted with the shock of probationary policing after only one year of study. This supports our view that the formal components of police education must be conducted at independent tertiary institutions, and courses must involve a number of practicums which do not involve students carrying the responsibilities of attested officers.

In the following section we investigate additional ways in which CEP has moved beyond the boundaries established by PREP.

19 Interestingly, one source of information we spoke with refused to provide any details about pre-service degree on the grounds that 'some people in the Service don't want this to happen'.

20 The cost of producing a constable is around \$90,000-\$120,000.

21 It must be noted that although the age of students has increased this has occurred through enrolment practices rather than through CEP itself. The first intake comprised 26% who were under 21, 47% who were 21-25, and 27% who were over 26. Information obtained through the NSW Police Academy.

22 This was advocated by Justice Lusher in 1981.

23 Charles Sturt University.

CEP: ethics and service

CEP differs from PREP in two additional ways. First, CEP delivers more detailed and comprehensive ethics education than PREP. This reflects the Wood Report's recommendations and its faith in the ability of ethics training to address integrity issues (Royal Commission into the NSW Police Service 1997:39-40, 543). However, it must be recognised that there are many dimensions to ethical dilemmas. For example, there are good moral arguments supporting the 'code of silence'. Ultimately, a decision maker must be persuaded that the ethical benefits of one course of action outweigh another. So long as police continue to see their mission in terms of 'crime fighting' they will see the greater good in terms of arrest rates and convictions. Also, they will perceive 'others' who hinder the pursuance of this 'good' as immoral. The following comments, from a National Police Research Unit (NPRU) survey on ethics, illustrate this point (McConkey 1996:41)

The law has no balls. Offenders have all the rights. Victims have some and police have none....We just don't have the tools to...do the job. So we have to bend the rules.

It is hard to have a completely ethical Police Service when dealing with what mainly appears to be an unethical public.

Most unethical behaviour is the result of the police officer being frustrated with the concept of justice and defendants' rights....if we obeyed all ethics, no offender would be caught.

Educating police in human rights would help to challenge these attitudes. Unfortunately, this does not appear to be a part of the CEP curriculum.²⁴ The NPRU survey also discovered that respondents believed that unethical behaviour by management and operational police is treated differently. As the survey points out such beliefs influence behaviour (and undermine ethics education) (Miller et al 1997). This can only be addressed within the organisation through measures such as changing management strategies (this is discussed further below).

Interestingly, the second way that CEP differs from PREP is in its interpretation of the police role. CEP emphasises community service rather than crime control. Consequently, the curriculum focuses on: (Charles Sturt University 1998:6)

- 'providing appropriate customer service and support',
- 'communicating effectively',
- applying 'conflict resolution skills', and
- applying 'problem solving skills in a community context'.

It also removes PREP's focus on 'reducing fear of crime and disorder'(NSW Police Service 1992:46). This is a positive approach with the potential to support ethics education (noted above) and to address other factors associated with the perpetuation of negative police cultures. These include police believing they have a mission to fight the 'war on crime', the isolation of police, and the perpetuation of an 'us and them' mentality (Reiner 1992:110-113; Manning 1979:117-22). However, it is questionable how far education can go in countering a discourse of 'crime fighting' which is fuelled by politicians, the media and the community at large.

It is not possible to ascertain fully the likely success of CEP. However, the following issues give rise to concern. Firstly, half of CEP is an 'apprenticeship on the street' during

24 It appears that the text for CEP ethics is Miller et al 1997. Although exemplary in its use of case studies and coverage of issues relating to negative police culture, it only dedicates about 12 pages to rights issues. Moreover these are couched in terms of victims right's v offender's rights. See pp 198-202.

which students are both trainees and officers. Secondly, students are not eased into full duties. Rather they are thrown into them after only 6 weeks of policing observation. Thirdly, formal education is still conducted at the Academy. Fourthly, CEP's collaborative model does not fully address the negative influence of police management structures. Finally there is virtually no human rights content in CEP, and the 'role' of police will continue to be defined by the media, political rhetoric and community attitudes.

In addition, the following problems may arise including inadequate field training because of the fact that demonstration patrols (exemplary patrols used for training) have been scrapped. This suggests that field training is not a priority, and consequently probationers will be used to shore up general duties.

We have already noted our preference for conducting police education at independent tertiary institutions. However, making degrees a pre-requisite to recruitment may generate substantial organisational resistance.

Resistance to tertiary education within the service

The implementation of change through higher education is fraught with difficulty because of a 'strong suspicion, even a conviction, that long periods of formal higher education will, if anything, breed-in an impractical reflection in officers and breed-out practical common sense' (Bradley & Cioccarelli 1990:6). Operational police are critical and exhibit contempt for 'university officers' with shallow policing experience' (Pater, M (1997) 'The Credibility Gap' *Police News*, January, pp 19, 21).

A limited survey²⁵ by Bult et al of the orientations of operational police to education and training revealed an overwhelming rejection of university education for police.²⁶ Whilst some positive responses to tertiary training included the capacity to learn, have open minds and not be hindered by war stories, the many negative responses are a cause for concern. These included the belief that 'academics' (tertiary educated police officers on the street) seem inadequate; and secondly that psychology and sociology are irrelevant to policing and 'easier than the HSC'. These attitudes are also reflected in police journals, which often state that the best learning is on the job. Also, many operational police are critical of the adoption of 'management gurus' practices and 'change for change's sake' (Bow, J (1997) 'Change: Too crucial to be cosmetic', *Police News*, November, p 29).

Comparative analysis with the transition to tertiary education in the nursing profession.

Both policing and nursing have been resistant to tertiary education because of, among other things, perceptions that academics may attempt to establish agendas about training and practice which are at variance with practitioners' views (Etter 1995:248). However unlike the Police Service, nursing seized the opportunity in 1984 for Federal Government higher education funding. The Service has now recognised the financial benefits of this approach. CEP will receive 50% Commonwealth funding²⁷ for the estimated education

25 The Service has conducted questionnaire in early 1998 and Janet Chan is also conducting surveys. Neither results are available to date.

26 Bult et al conducted a survey in 1996 however there were only 19 participants (Royal Commission into the NSW Police Service 1997).

27 Statistics from Goulburn Academy.

and training budget for \$30 million (Royal Commission into the NSW Police Service 1997).²⁸

Nursing education and training shifted nationally from hospital based training (equivalent to patrols) to university based training. This changeover was completed in NSW in 1984. A Commonwealth Steering Committee was established in 1994 to assess this transition. It found that, despite the 'tensions and sporadic resistance, higher education has become established as the learning and career framework for nursing and nursing culture will become transformed' (Reid 1994:337). Tertiary education has aided the establishment of nursing as a profession with a strong commitment to encouraging students to develop critical thinking abilities and apply this to clinical practice.²⁹

A comparative analysis is useful to discuss the conflicting expectations of graduates and their ability to make a successful transition 'on the job'. Some of the problems experienced by nursing graduates are likely to be replicated in the Service. These include (Kilstoff 1993)

- lack of practical skills on entry to the workplace,
- negative attitudes and non acceptance by staff,
- reality of workplace values in conflict with professional ideals developed during study,
- lack of confidence.

How to change an innovation smothering organisation?

The Service is described as an 'innovation smothering organisation'³⁰ because of a rule bound and authoritarian hierarchy in which change is resisted (Nixon & Reynolds 1996:52) and a persuasive organisational culture (Dixon 1997). This results in the Service being reactive rather than proactive to change (Lansbury 1992:16-18). Nixon and Reynolds (1996:45) argue that a paradigm shift requires more than just tinkering with the organisation, it requires redefining the 'ethos and purpose of policing' (Dixon 1997).³¹

Educational reform alone will be ineffective unless there is a recognition that the nature and structure of police work must be substantially revised (Adie 1998:29; Brogden & Shearing 1993:102). Indeed, 'bottom up' reforms are likely to fail (Bradley 1996; Australasian Police Ministers' Council 1996). Police organisational reform reflects the general trend of wider public sector reform. This involves flatter organisation structures, industrial relations changes, public sector accountability and the ever increasing politicisation of policing. A discussion of organisational change to the Service per se is beyond the scope of this paper, however organisational impediments for the successful implementation of CEP will be examined.

The Service should not adopt a unitarist organisational change theory because this fails to acknowledge the incompatible powers and interests *within* an organisation between management and employees. Conflict that exists in the service is seen by many as a result of poor communication, mismanagement or external agitators such as unions (Wright 1995:18). Alternatively, a pluralist frame of reference which identifies the inevitability of conflicting interests in the workplace should be applied. For example, 48% of police agreed there was poor police and management relations. However, whilst conflict is seen as inevitable, 'compromise and collaborative work are still possible' (Field & Ford

28 Based on 1996/1997 statistics.

29 University of Sydney submissions.

30 Conversations undertaken during 1998 field research.

31 Community policing is offered as an example.

1995:43). The implementation of CEP will challenge traditional power relations and boundaries and it is 'only natural that some negative and disgruntled feelings will emerge alongside the optimism and hope' (Field & Ford 1995:43).

There are numerous impediments to the successful implementation of CEP.³² Some of these impediments include a lack of strategic assessment to determine the required scale of change, 'bottom up' recruit changes (that is the influx of new trained recruits without changes to senior ranks) are insufficient, and the inadequate resources to implement change. For example the abolition of Demonstration Patrols for recruits as discussed above. The size and diffuse nature of police organisations provides an additional impediment of which Nixon advocates the establishment of regional education centres to amalgamate field education resources and enable educators to develop local strategies.³³ A more problematic obstacle is the emphasis on reactivity. Police reform has largely been a reaction to crises,³⁴ which 'unsettle expectations about how police should behave' (Etter 1995:285). Within the Service, there is a lack of appropriate internal and external marketing to limit resistance to reforms from the Service and the community in addition to clarifying issues and quelling rumours. The importance of this is underscored by cultural surveys which indicated 55% of officers agreed that decisions are made without input from those actually doing the job (Aptech Australia 1994). Intensive marketing is essential for the successful implementation of CEP.

A wider obstacle to the implementation of CEP is the conflict and confusion over the role of policing. The community's expectations of the Service are often vague or in conflict (Hunt 1995:48), with diverse 'customer groups', whose interests are often inconsistent (Smith 1994:187).³⁵ This creates difficulty for recruits in establishing clear priorities, especially when senior police espouse views of 'urban warfare where self discipline and leadership are more important than being warm and caring' (Etter 1995:30). This is compounded by resistance (often generated through uncertainty) from the police associations and unions. The NSW Association has criticised the way CEP was presented as a 'fait accompli' (*Sydney Morning Herald* (1998) Saturday 4 April). The Associations must not find out about changes 'through the back door', as this creates uncertainty and rumour.³⁶ This stems from low morale generally within the Service, as a result of 'being kicked from pillar to post'³⁷ with the average length of service being 12 years (Public Sector Management Commission 1993). Operational police are critical of limited advancement opportunities within the Service, with 46% of officers agreeing that there is no open forum to discuss goals and priorities (Hunt 1995). To change police behaviour there must be personal and career development to avoid boredom and cynicism (Mollen 1994).

This has in turn creates a conservative and negative police culture, which whilst the target of CEP, also create a barrier to its successful implementation. The value framework of policing has been described as unreflective, anti- intellectual, subject to siege mentality and vulnerable to ethical compromise (Bradley & Cioccarelli 1990:76). Policing is

32 Etter (1995) provides a valuable albeit rudimentary framework for discussion.

33 This is advocated by Nixon & Young (1993) in their unpublished Discussion paper prepared for PEAC. She suggests regional location such as Campbelltown, Lismore, Armidale, Bathurst, Wagga, Wollongong, Parramatta, Newcastle and Sydney.

34 For example the Royal Commission Inquiries.

35 Smith discusses evidence of the QLD police service actively aligning with political parties to avoid investigations in to police misconduct (Smith 1994:187).

36 NSW Police Association Executive quoted in Etter (1995:296).

37 Mark Burgess, Deputy President of the NSW Police Association quoted in the *Sydney Morning Herald* (1998) Saturday 4 April.

governed by situationally justified actions rather than organisational policy. As a result, whilst senior management are enthusiastic and optimistic about prospects for change, for patrol officers it is 'business as usual' (Chan 1997:55). The Service consists of rigid and hierarchical structures. Police bureaucracies have been associated with 'luxury ocean liners in an age of supersonic jets: big, cumbersome, expensive and extremely difficult to turnaround'.³⁸ Police bureaucracies must accept that the introduction of CEP and the benefits will be incremental (Etter 1995:191).

Coupled with this is the need for sustained leadership. Commissioner Avery's ability to withstand resistance to his 'academic' vision was crucial to his success in striking down traditional policing values (Etter 1995:154). Senior police management 'must possess the courage to move into the un-chartered waters of free thinking and look at what police need from a police perspective' (Etter 1995). This lack of understanding of the importance of strategic planning and the belief that 'real leadership' is not to be found in books, must be addressed to limit resistance to the introduction of CEP.

Reasons for resistance to CEP

Resistance to CEP by operational police may occur for the following reasons (Jamieson & O'Mara 1991; Plant 1995:293, 294)

- lack of understanding or information about change and therefore a lack of perceived benefits
- fear of personal loss, or threats to core skills through changed work practices causing feelings of incompetence
- a low trust organisational climate, evidenced by coercion and authoritarian regulation (Fox 1974), which results in a low regard for change initiators
- strong peer group norms, and persuasive police culture which seek to maintain the status quo.

What should be expected of tertiary educated recruits?

CEP aims to improve the Police Service's capacity for learning, and it is therefore 'imperative to make room for different viewpoints, rather than driving dissent underground' (Field & Ford 1995:44). Operational police must be divested of the view that education is unnecessary for policing reform.³⁹ This can be achieved by encouraging participation to ensure that conflicts are acknowledged. Addressing these attitudes is essential for the acceptance and integration of recruits at the workplace (Ledwidge 1989). This is a cumbersome task.

The nursing profession, 10 years on, is still grappling with these issues. For example, the Steering Committee found that 87% of tertiary prepared nurses and managers agreed the transfer to tertiary education benefited the profession whereas only 27% of hospital prepared nurses and managers held the same view (Reid 1994:217). Whilst employer hospitals appreciated the broad theoretical base and interpersonal skills of graduates, they believed that they were unable to 'hit the decks running' (Reid 1994:110) In addition, conflicts between academics and practitioners at the academy must be resolved to ensure a consensus of learning outcomes. In nursing there was found to be little agreement within the profession on what clinical skills can reasonably be expected of new graduates.

38 Osborne & Peters quoted in Etter (1995:292).

39 See for example comments by senior police against the reforms of Commissioner Ryan, *Sun Herald* (1998) 19 April.

Addressing the fears of lost career opportunities

Field and Ford maintain that organisational learning will be lower, and resistance higher, 'if change techniques are pre-packaged and tightly prescribed. Often it is the process of struggle and experimentation, and not the change technique itself, which brings the most benefit' (Field & Ford 1995:49). This change process however, must be incremental to avoid large scale 'culture shock' (Palmer 1994:89). An estimated 80% (Etter 1995) of the personnel of the Service were trained before PREP or CDP. These police, who counted on the value of their experience, believe that they will be denied promotional opportunities because they do not fit the 'management ethic'.⁴⁰

Traditionally the 'training dollar' has been 'disproportionately concentrated on recruits' (Centre for Applied Research in Education 1990:27). This has disadvantaged senior officers. However resistance to CEP can be reduced by providing a Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) for academic and operational expertise. This would enable the majority of the Service to gain accreditation through advanced standing and minimise duplication of education costs (Nixon & Young 1993) There is little evidence to suggest this has been addressed to date.⁴¹

In 1993 only 8% of all nurses were hospital trained (Reid 1994).⁴² Consequently, the profession has experienced difficulty in meeting the demand for conversion of hospital trained nurses.⁴³ Those nurses who were unsuccessful in entering a conversion course often acted as preceptors ('buddies'). This, coupled with perceived threat of new graduates, created a hostile workplace.⁴⁴ However there is evidence that those chosen for this task were recognised as exemplary professionals. Such problems are likely to be replicated for police where a tertiary degree is held as a prerequisite for promotion.

Field training requirements

Education alone is not a panacea for changing police behaviour (Royal Commission into the NSW Police Service 1997:171). CEP must endeavour to address practical concerns and tasks. Moreover, as noted above, learning must be supported by field training. Field training and 'buddy' systems are essential to avoid 'training decay' and socialisation into negative police practices. These have been noted above. Other effects include 'on the job' exposure to the often distressing and dangerous tasks of policing having a deliberalising effect on recruits attitudes despite tertiary education (Christie et al 1996:300). A related problem is that lack of role models outside the Service for probationers through the training regime which ensure that 'new ideas and attitudes rarely penetrate' (Fitzgerald 1989; Christie et al 1996:299). Despite the often high motivations of probationers during training, poor performance inevitably begins for recruits as the 'canteen culture' requires recruits to conform to station norms.⁴⁵ This includes experienced officers lecturing recruits to 'forget all the Academy crap' (Cioccarelli 1989:33-45; Bayley & Bittner 1989). Further

40 Conversations with operational police in a Sydney Patrol.

41 Conversation with operational police revealed that none were aware of RPL or similar initiatives.

42 A slightly smaller percentage than policing.

43 For example the University of Sydney had 309 applications for 60 places (Steering Committee report:145).

44 Conversations with nursing educators described this as the 'most awful' experience that they would never repeat. Nursing literature refers to this as 'horizontal violence'.

45 Interview by L Taylor with Commissioner Ryan in Taylor, L (1997) 'Police News interviews; Commissioner Ryan' *Police News*, April, p 21.

attempts by probationers to act outside the bounds of this process will be met with personal threats.⁴⁶

'Field training' in the nursing profession

This section will address similar influences in the nursing profession and the mechanisms implemented to counteract these forces. Nursing studies have shown that many graduates experienced 'role deprivation' whereby the values and behaviour developed by tertiary education were in conflict with the bureaucratic value system of the workplace. Kilstoff (1993) found that most graduates expected to carry out professional ideals such as total client care. However bureaucratic constraints of efficiency and outcomes coupled with a high workload and administrative responsibilities often resulted in value capitulation. This 'reality shock' often resulted in graduates forfeiting their ideals as they were unable to fulfil both their own expectations and those of the employing bureaucratic organisation.

Hospital trained nurses were initially better performers in terms of efficiency and outcomes as they were well versed in the 'politics' and the 'nuts and bolts' of the workplace. Graduate nurses who were interviewed revealed that this bias required them to develop a 'thick skin' and to put their 'heads down and bums up'. As a result graduates may experience low self esteem and motivation, anger toward colleagues; and loss of pride in their work (Kilstoff 1993:216). Similar experiences will result in policing if recruits are expected to 'hit the decks running'.

The nursing profession introduced Graduate Nurse Programs (GNP) to 'bridge the gap' between educational and bureaucratic values (Sheetz). Clinical educators see this as a means to consolidate skills, develop an orientation the workplace, and importantly, to provide guidance and support (Reid 1994:221) The GNP assists graduates to adjustment to their perceived 'role' (Kilstoff 1993:21) and facilitates understanding of the value of both hospital and tertiary training. One hospital trained educator described this process as showing that 'cocky youngsters don't know it all but at the same time a new RN [registered nurse] can bring something valuable to the profession'.⁴⁷

GNP's vary from six weeks to one year and include workplace orientation and a period of pre-ceptorship/ mentoring/ or buddying. The report identified that the initial three months was crucial for a successful transition. Kilstoff's study revealed that unless the program ran for a substantial period, the benefits of a 'buddy' system were minimal. In addition those who received career orientated support were more contented than those who received short periods of clinical orientation.

The police 'buddy' system consists of 2 x 4 week placements. The field training competent of CEP has yet to be finalised and funding is uncertain. It is suggested that the 50% saving in Academy budget through Federal Government funding could be diverted to Field Training initiatives. Also, it is suggested that the absence of consultation with Education Development Officers⁴⁸ will inevitably detract from the benefits of wider educational training. Moreover, many of the existing problems could be replicated, as discussed above.

46 Recently the Police Integrity Commission reviewed a complaint by a probationer who reported misconduct and who received a threatening note stating 'really think before you act in future. A fool like you can cause a lot of damage. You have been warned' Brown, M (1998) *The Sydney Morning Herald* 3 April.

47 Interviews with nursing educator.

48 Who implement field training programs.

Conclusions

It is not possible to ascertain fully the likely success of CEP. However, the following issues give rise to concern. Principally, half of CEP is an 'apprenticeship on the street' which ensures that students are not eased into full duties. The course content of CEP is deficient as it lacks a human rights content. In addition, the Academy will continue to conduct formal education whilst there has been inadequate attention paid to field training and most importantly a lack of consultation with operational police.

There has been a lack of intensive promotion about the changes within the organisation, resulting in a lack of support for those who bear the brunt of the changes and who are most threatened by them.

It is suggested that the following may be useful in addressing the problems we have identified. For example, the benefits of formalising field training through strategies such as 'learning contracts' and extending the period, and improving the quality of 'buddy' attachments. We advocate the re-establishment of demonstration patrols, the establishment of regional learning centres, and the progressive deployment of recruits into full duties. Inherent in this process of change is the creation of compulsory open forums for discussion encouraging operational police to express towards this process. In addition, the service should investigate and facilitate the establishment of components at independent tertiary institutions.

The interplay between the various factors which impact upon police behaviour is complex and multi-dimensional. Consequently, a strategy which focuses on one dimension will be unsuccessful in changing police behaviour. CEP has the potential to impact upon key problems in policing. However, its success will depend upon a number of other organisational reforms.

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