



**BJA**  
Bureau of Justice Assistance  
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**New Ideas  
in Policing**

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**Learning from  
Other Countries**

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# THE BJA INTERNATIONAL BEST PRACTICES PROJECT



U.S. policing has been an incubator of innovation. Practices developed here have been adopted around the world. Unlike most of the rest of the world, policing in the United States is a local—not a federal—responsibility. Law enforcement agencies in the United States have been free to experiment with different practices and policies as long as they are consistent with U.S. constitutional restrictions. The result has been many effective practices developed by local law enforcement agencies, including policies on handling domestic violence, early warning systems, and the use of laptop computers

and video cameras in patrol cars. The Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) has played a key role in recognizing and promulgating innovative practices and supporting the development of new technologies.

Many of these practices have been adopted by law enforcement organizations in other countries. COMPSTAT is a great example. Developed in the early 1990s by the New York City Police Department to raise accountability of police commanders, COMPSTAT spread to law enforcement agencies and other municipal agencies across the United States. BJA played a significant role in COMPSTAT's widespread adoption by providing funding to encourage agencies to develop the human and IT capacities necessary for implementation. Today, COMPSTAT-like programs can be found across the globe in both developed and developing countries.

In the following BJA-funded project, RAND Corporation looked at the opposite side of the coin: What programs and practices have been developed in other countries that might be applied to policing in the United States? This paper is the product of an intensive search across the globe. RAND contacted 131 police officials, academics, and human rights organizations in six continents, and asked them to nominate local best policing practices. Using information gained from this search, RAND compiled an initial list of 32 best practices. For programs that had been the subject of evaluations, we relied on the evaluation reports for our descriptions and conclusions. Many of the programs had not been formally evaluated. In these cases, we compiled information from local or program staff observations, media descriptions, and written materials published by the programs. The finalists were vetted with staff at BJA and eventually distilled to three topics consistent with current BJA priorities. The following three topics were presented during a webinar in March 2012:

- Programs to improve police-community relations, including an Australian program that teaches police officers to interact more respectfully with drivers stopped for random breathalyzer tests; a European Union (EU) program to reduce racial profiling; and an Australian program to map police misconduct complaints.
- British and German staff development programs designed to produce highly competent police leaders.
- A British social networking site for police officers designed to share best practices and personal experiences across police forces.

# IMPROVING RELATIONS BETWEEN POLICE AND THE COMMUNITY

## Introduction

Policing continues to change; it is organic in nature. As such, jurisdictions across the globe—large and small—are experimenting with best practices in attempts to improve the quality of police services within their communities. In this regard, nothing is more important than fostering a relationship between police and the community that is built on mutual respect and trust.

This study identified four best practices in the area of police-community relationships. Three of the identified best practices are broader strategic programs:

1. The Queensland Community Engagement Trial (QCET) aims to facilitate the establishment of police institutional legitimacy by promoting respectful interactions between the police and the public.
2. The Muslim Safety Forums developed in the United Kingdom provide strategies to enhance the relationship between the police and Muslim communities in the post-9/11 terrorism prevention era.
3. The Strategies for Effective Police Stops and Searches (STEPPS) program, an Open Society Justice Initiative tested in Spain, Bulgaria, and Hungary, focuses on ethnic profiling across Europe. New training programs that focus on developing clear and individualized reasons for police stops as well as more intense scrutiny of such stops by police supervisors show encouraging results in reducing ethnic profiling and increasing trust with minority communities.

The fourth program—the Australian effort to map police misconduct and complaints—is a relatively small technical effort designed to pinpoint areas where individual officers go awry. Focusing on environmental factors as well as individual behavior, the mapping of police misconduct and complaints through the use of geographic information system technologies examines the relationship between police misconduct and geographic location.

For these four case examples, the overall goal remains the same: improve relations between the police and community. Each of the case studies approaches this overall goal in a different and innovative way.

## Queensland Community Engagement Trials (Australia)

A country that has long been a destination for immigrants from the Middle East, Europe, Asia, and the Horn of Africa (particularly Somalia), Australia has seen mounting racial and cultural tensions, particularly in the last decade. In 2005, riots occurred in the city of Cronulla, a suburb of Sydney, after several violent incidents that involved purported attacks on Australian nationals by men of Middle Eastern descent. An initially peaceful protest of these attacks, which had been widely covered in the media, turned violent



after members of the crowd targeted a man who appeared to be Middle Eastern and assaulted him. That led to a succession of retaliation attacks that went on for several days, injuring many and causing extensive property damage. The police were widely criticized in the aftermath of the Cronulla riot for ignoring retaliation attacks, failing to apprehend instigators due to communication breakdowns, and generally being ill-equipped to handle the outbreak of violence.

More recently, Australian police were lambasted by Indian officials after a string of violent attacks against Indian students, particularly in the Melbourne area. Stabbings, beatings, and a particularly horrific incident where an Indian man was set ablaze caused mounting diplomatic tensions with the government of India.

Australia took a significant public relations hit as a result of these events, with many maintaining that the country—which has long struggled with internal racial tension—is becoming more and more informed by a right-wing populist mindset. Another potential casualty of these incidents is that both the immigrant and the aboriginal population of Australia, which makes up more than a quarter of the total population of the country, do not trust the police to protect them from racial or ethnically motivated attacks. Challenges to the fairness and effectiveness of Australian policing will continue as the country faces mounting racial tensions, marginalization of religious and ethnic groups, and sporadic outbreaks of violence. A population that sees the police as ineffective and unfair is less likely to cooperate and comply with police and report crime, and it is likely to have more citizen-police conflict, more opportunities for radicalization, and more social uprisings (such as riots). Police in these situations could easily react by asserting their dominance by use of force. Obviously, this is a frightening scenario for Australians of all backgrounds, as well as for the police.

QCET seeks to study these issues within Australian law enforcement and attempts to find answers to the problem of police legitimacy. QCET grew out of a collaboration between the Australian Research Council's Centre of Excellence in Policing and Security (CEPS) and four universities. A goal of QCET is to understand the following:

- ❖ The role of individual police officers in building citizen trust
- ❖ The role of police operational groups in building citizen trust and perceptions of legitimacy
- ❖ The dynamic community-level processes that facilitate or constrain the establishment of police legitimacy
- ❖ The impacts that interventions designed to improve citizen trust in the police and police legitimacy have on citizen cooperation, citizen reporting of incidents, complaints against police, and citizen satisfaction with police
- ❖ How these outcomes vary across different types of communities



QCET began with the hypothesis that greater community engagement using principles of procedural justice would lead to enhanced perceptions of police legitimacy. With increased legitimacy, the police would have a greater capacity to deal with conflict and violence among groups in the community. QCET defines procedural justice as requiring three elements: citizen participation during encounters with police, perceived police neutrality during the encounter, and the citizen's perception that they were treated with respect during the encounter.

After an extensive review of literature on procedural justice and policing, CEPS determined that no studies had been done where police actions were actually altered to measure legitimacy in policing. As such, CEPS sought a means to implement an experiment in police legitimacy and procedural justice during police-citizen encounters. The random breath tests (RBTs) conducted by Queensland police offered the ideal opportunity for such an experimental design. The more than 3 million RBTs performed by the police each year would ensure a large enough sample to make clear statistical inferences about the success of an intervention.

The initial QCET experiment, a randomized field-trial, was conducted during the 6 months from December 2009 to June of 2010 in the Metropolitan South region of Brisbane. The trial involved 30 police officers, and more than 20,000 police-citizen interactions were studied. The control (business-as-usual) group consisted of officers who

stopped drivers for RBTs and at the end of each interaction, gave the citizen an envelope with a survey to be completed and mailed back; police officers were also asked to complete a survey. In the experimental “treatment” RBT stops, officers were given the above instructions but also followed a specific script that operationalized the core elements of procedural justice, as follows:

*“Have you ever taken part in a random breath test before? Well, this RBT is a little bit different. We are pulling cars over today at random. That means that you were not specifically singled out for this test. We are randomly testing drivers for alcohol use so that we can reduce the number of alcohol-related traffic crashes on our Queensland roads.*

*In Queensland alone, there were 354 deaths in 2009. One of the hardest parts of our job is to tell a person that their loved one has died or has been seriously injured in a traffic crash. Can you please help us to reduce these accidents by continually driving carefully and responsibly?*

*Here is a police bulletin that has additional crime prevention tips. It also tells you about what is going on in this community and gives you some important numbers if you want to get in contact with us for any event that is not life threatening. Please be aware that thieves are targeting money, satellite navigation systems, and mobile phones that are left in people’s cars. Please make sure you remove all valuables when you leave your car. Do you have any questions about this?*

*Researchers at the University of Queensland are running an important survey about this RBT for you to fill in at home. I have attached the survey to the bulletin. We would really appreciate your feedback. Do you have any other questions for me about this RBT or anything else?*

*I now require you to provide a specimen of breath for a breath test. [Give mandatory statement to driver.]*

*[If under the RBT limit finish with this statement] I just want to finish off by thanking you for [positive thing that driver has done such as...child being buckled up in a car seat/well-maintained car/seat belt use for passenger or driver etc.]. Thank you for taking part in this Random breath test, I appreciate your time and attention. [If over the limit...process as usual.]”*

Initial analyses have yielded hopeful findings. The analysis of the returned surveys from the Queensland trial showed that the procedurally just encounter had far-reaching and positive effects on citizen perceptions of police. The citizens that received the experimental condition—the procedurally just encounter—had more positive perceptions of police. Not only did they think that police were fairer, the citizens had more confidence and trust in the police and they reported higher levels of satisfaction with police compared to the citizens that received the control condition of the regular RBT encounter.

The QCET experiment continues, with trials in Victoria and New South Wales in the planning stages and completed trials in Oxley, Brisbane, and Wynnum regions. In addition, five police agencies elsewhere in the world (the United Kingdom, United States, Hong Kong, Norway, and Taiwan) are in discussions with the CEP research team to replicate the trial. A replication of the trial is already underway with the CEPS Adjunct Professor Geoff Alpert in South Carolina.

For more information on QCET, go to <http://www.ceps.edu.au/programs/vulnerable-communities/queensland-community-engagement-trial--qcet->.

### *How This Could Be Applied in the United States*

The QCET study, once completed, will be a fascinating look at whether efforts to enhance procedural justice will make a substantial difference in citizen perception of police. In the United States, which has long struggled with the negative perception of law enforcement held by minority groups, academicians and policing experts would likely welcome data on the effects of procedural justice. If initial findings are upheld by subsequent trials and procedural justice is found to have causal links to police legitimacy, it may encourage American law enforcement agencies to adopt the elements of procedural justice in their everyday contacts with citizens.

If QCET proves to be effective, there are still concerns about whether it could be applied as successfully in the United States. In the United States, the issue of police legitimacy is interwoven with grievances of minority communities. It is not known whether increased courtesy, shown to minority citizens during routine stops, would dramatically change the endemic distrust of the police that has built up over many years. However, the kind of respectful treatment of the public embodied in the QCET experiment would represent a significant start on the path to a new police-community relationship based on trust and mutual respect.

### **Open Society Justice Initiative's Strategies for Effective Police Stop and Search (Spain, Bulgaria, and Hungary)**

Ethnic, racial, and religious profiling in Europe has become something of a hot-button issue among human rights groups in the past decade. After the 9/11 attacks in the United States, the train attacks in Madrid in 2004, and the London subway bombings in 2005, ethnic communities in the European Union (EU), particularly those of Muslim affiliation, complained of systematic profiling by police as part of anti-terror operations. The practice, and the attitude of the EU governments that engaged in it, was explained fairly succinctly in 2005 by Great Britain's former Home Office Minister Hazel Blears who said, "If a threat is from a particular place then our action is going to be targeted at that area....It means that some of our counter-terrorism powers will be disproportionately experienced by the Muslim community."

As a result, ethnic profiling—which is defined as "the use of racial and ethnic stereotypes as a basis for making law enforcement and/or investigative decisions about who has been or may be involved in criminal or terrorist activity"—has become pervasive throughout the EU, according to human rights organizations. While profiling based on actual operational intelligence and specific patterns of behavior is widely regarded as the best way to target terrorist cells, global generalizations about ethnic groups have too often become the go-to tool for EU law enforcement. The Open Society Justice Initiative, in a report titled, *Eminent Jurists Panel on Terrorism, Counter-Terrorism, and Human Rights*, details the areas where ethnic profiling is most frequently employed in the EU and highlights the occurrence of the stop and search procedure known as the "mass identity check." The mass identity check is employed in sensitive sites, such as airports, train stations, and large commercial or retail centers, as well as in areas where Muslims congregate, such as mosques, restaurants, or markets; it consists of a stop and search procedure, ostensibly to check for valid identification or any materials that could be used in a terror attack.

In Italy, Spain, Germany, the United Kingdom, and other European countries, this method of profiling has become pervasive. German police, sometimes in riot gear, have surrounded mosques after Friday prayer and checked the identification of every person leaving the services. Those without valid ID were often detained until their identity could be verified. In Spain and Italy, large-scale initiatives in transit centers disproportionately affect those perceived to be Roma (of Gypsy origin) or Muslim, particularly those who appear to be Middle Eastern, Asian, or Black. And in Great Britain, until it was rescinded, Section 44 of the Terror Act of 2000 allowed police to stop and search without reasonable suspicion, resulting in a 12-fold increase in the number of Blacks and Middle Eastern/Asian ethnicities stopped and searched after 2005. However, despite the numbers of individuals singled

out as a result of their ethnic, religious, or racial identities in Europe, there is little evidence that this brand of profiling resulted in the detection of any terrorist plot.

The identity check/stop and search tactic may be perceived as useful as a broad intelligence gathering technique or to show the public that anti-terror forces are quite serious about their efforts. The technique also has proven useful in immigration enforcement. However, the costs and benefits of the mass identity check/stop and search must be weighed when considering its value as a tactic in the fight against terror or any other criminal activity. Human rights organizations posit that the practice's questionable benefits come at too high of a price, including effects such as alienating the Muslim community, impinging on human rights, causing tensions between ethnic groups, and legitimizing racism and discrimination. The Open Society Justice Initiative offers the following statement:

“Any measures that single out individuals for differential treatment, and that interfere with basic freedoms and cast suspicion on persons as ‘potentially dangerous’ on the basis of their origin or belief cause immeasurable harm.”

The United Nations Human Rights Committee seems to agree with this statement. In a 2009 landmark case (*Rosalind Williams vs. Spain*), the Committee concluded that, while random identity checks that equally affect people from all ethnic groups have merit, "the physical or ethnic characteristics of the persons targeted should not be considered as indicative of their possibly illegal situation in the country. Nor should identity checks be carried out so that only people with certain physical characteristics or ethnic backgrounds are targeted. This would not only adversely affect the dignity of those affected, but also contribute to the spread of xenophobic attitudes among the general population; it would also be inconsistent with an effective policy to combat racial discrimination."

Drawing on these conclusions, the Open Society Justice Initiative launched the Strategies for Effective Police Stop and Search (STEPSS) project in January of 2007. The project, spread across eight pilot sites in Spain, Bulgaria, and Hungary, lasted 22 months, with attempts to achieve the following objectives:

1. Identify and reduce disproportionality in identity checks and stops and searches of ethnic minority and immigrant communities
2. Increase the efficiency of police stops through improved management and supervision
3. Improve police-community relations by sharing and discussing stop data and reviewing security concerns and operational priorities
4. Create models of good practice to share with other police forces

STEPSS did not specifically focus on anti-terror-related stops and searches, but rather it took an all-encompassing view of the law enforcement strategy, with results that are generalizable to many applications of the practice of ethnic profiling. STEPSS undertook an assessment of existing policy and practice, designed data-collection forms for recording stops, prepared and trained officers on operational protocols, and collected stop data for 6 months at the pilot sites in each country. Throughout the process, police engaged with local community groups to share and discuss the stop data. The stop data-collection forms included the following information:

- ❖ Personal data of the person stopped (name, age, address, etc.)
- ❖ Ethnicity and/or nationality
- ❖ Name of the officer conducting the stop
- ❖ Time, date, and place of stop
- ❖ Legal grounds for the stop
- ❖ Subjective description of grounds for suspicion
- ❖ Outcome of the stop (no action, fine, arrest, warning, etc.)
- ❖ Additional space to describe more specific situations

Analyzed data from the project revealed that at each and every pilot site, police were engaging in ethnic profiling. Minorities were more likely to be stopped and searched by police, but, almost without exception, they were not

found to be committing some kind of offense any more often than the majority group members stopped in each country. In some cases, they were significantly less likely to be found offending than ethnic majority residents.

According to the published report on STEPSS, the data also clearly showed that specific operations and types of deployment led to increased ethnic profiling. When officers had greater discretion to make stops, minorities were stopped at a disproportionately higher rate. However, the STEPSS requirement that officers gather data from each stop, as well as record a justification for the stop, appeared to reduce the number of unwarranted stops and increased the effectiveness of the officers' use of stops. In both Hungary and Spain, officers in the STEPSS project made fewer overall stops during the period that they were required to record stops. Interestingly, the proportion of stops that produced an arrest or other positive law enforcement action or outcome increased. The Open Society Justice Initiative concluded that STEPSS led to more effective operational outcomes by officers, as a result of a focus on developing clear and individualized reasons for stops, as well as accountability to their supervisors.

For more information on STEPSS, go to <http://www.csd.bg/artShow.php?id=9749>

### ***How This Could Be Applied in the U.S.?***

STEPSS provided support for the notion that gathering ethnic data as related to police stops, when combined with behavioral components such as training and community engagement, can reduce the practice of ethnic/racial profiling. The results are not immediately generalizable to other countries, mainly because, in the European countries where the data was gathered, immigration enforcement drives ethnic profiling. However, the results could potentially inform similar programs in other countries.

In the United States, for example, ethnic profiling has long been a point of contention between minority groups and the police. Though tensions with Muslim communities related to profiling have certainly been an issue ever since the 9/11 attacks, the bulk of complaints regarding profiling are not counter-terror related. African-American and Latino communities have complained of profiling by police for the better part of a century, and relations between these groups and the police are strained, particularly in large, metropolitan centers such as Los Angeles, Dallas, and Chicago.

Data regarding racial profiling is collected throughout the country, often by statute. Currently, 28 states require that law enforcement agencies collect racial/ethnic data on stops and searches. However, this data is largely not employed to inform police behavior in the way that it was in the STEPSS program. The information collected in the United States is roughly similar to the information collected in STEPSS, with the exception of the subjective reason for the stop. The major difference is that this data is mostly filed away and used retroactively (often to defend agencies against claims of racial profiling), instead of being proactively integrated into police training, community dialogues, and individual police accountability.

The results of the STEPSS approach are promising enough to encourage adoption in the United States, at least as part of a pilot program in selected cities with varying demographic and economic factors. The study could be set up in much the same way as STEPSS, with a handful of data collection sites that integrate monitoring with community partnerships. Input from community groups and racial/ethnic minorities is the crucial factor to taking a study of this sort beyond legislated data collection and really helping law enforcement to see and understand the effects of racial/ethnic profiling on their relationships with the community and their ability to prevent criminal or even terrorist events.

In conclusion, European counter-terror tactics involving ethnic profiling have served as the basis for new research related to the practice by law enforcement. The general consensus of academicians, human rights advocates, and even the United Nations is that the practice has no clear benefit and in fact causes tensions that hinder crime or terror prevention and aid in the further alienation of minority communities. This is true, also, in the United States,

where racial and ethnic minorities have long harbored a resentment of the police as a result of perceived systematic profiling. The STEPSS program, if adapted for implementation in the United States, could prove a useful tool in police accountability and in strengthening relationships between law enforcement and minority communities.

## Mapping Police Misconduct and Complaints (Australia)

The integration of sophisticated database operations, crime analysis, and high-level crime mapping has been a technological marvel for the police over the past decade. The merger of these powerful tools is commonly referred to as geographic information systems (GIS).

Traditionally, map data and attribute data (textual or tabular information) describing locations or a specific geographic form have been analyzed to provide police with information regarding crime and calls for service. However, the technology of desktop mapping expands this capability by allowing the display of geographical information (spatial data) at various levels—topography, natural resources, transportation hubs, roads and highways, utilities, political boundaries, neighborhoods, and police beats or reporting areas. GIS combines these spatial representations with almost any other type of data a decision-maker wishes to examine. Textual and tabular data (e.g., population density, crime locations, traffic patterns, demographic profiles, and socioeconomic makeup) can be displayed and manipulated against map backgrounds. From this type of analysis, it is possible to overlay multiple map sets, so that police executives and researchers can pictorially view the interrelationships among multiple variables. Thus, GIS technologies differ from previous types of crime analysis techniques and information systems in that their primary purpose is not purely cartographic, with emphasis on display and graphics, but rather the analysis, manipulation, and management of spatial data.

GIS technologies have far-reaching implications not only on crime analysis, but also as a decision tool for the effective and efficient allocation of police resources. Additionally, GIS has been employed in real-time “fusion centers” in order to combine intelligence data with real-time data in an attempt to analyze various information on crime and police calls for service, as well as to predict crime and potential acts of terrorism.

In an effort to comprehensively examine police misconduct and complaints, the Queensland Police Service in Australia has embarked upon a novel and technologically astute examination of the problem with the application of GIS. The idea is to apply the same technologies used in crime analysis and forecasting in an effort to reduce and prevent police officer misconduct. Complaints against the police are often indicative of undesirable conflict between the police and the community. Specifically, such complaints may be indicators of levels of corruption, racism, excessive use of force, rude behavior, and other unethical or illegal conduct on the part of the police. Complaints are rich sources of information and data about police practices (and potentially police misconduct) on which to build preventive and diagnostic strategies. For instance, the analysis of allegations of excessive use of force by police might show the need for better training in communications and physical restraint techniques.

Drawing on a variety of criminological theories that refute the concept that police misconduct and corruption may be more than the conscious illegal behavior of individual officers or the result of a “few bad apples,” the Queensland Police Service attempted to focus on the geographic setting of the complaints. The researchers examined the distribution of complaints across police units, standardizing complaint figures by the number of officers in the unit. The analyses controlled for “task environment” defined by whether the unit was a general station, criminal investigations branch, traffic unit, or other duties unit (e.g., Divisional Inquiry Offices or Water Police). Controlled analyses were used so that units operating in high-risk environments would not be compared to those in a low-risk environment. The analyses showed that, indeed, particular units did have disproportionately higher numbers of complaints, information that can be used to encourage unit commanders to take action.

For more information on mapping police misconduct and citizen complaints, go to <http://www.premiers.qld.gov.au/publications/categories/reviews/qps-complaints.aspx>

### ***How This Could Be Applied in the U.S.?***

Criminologists have found that crime is often concentrated in relatively small areas, often called “hot spots.” The physical and social characteristics of hot spots can be analyzed with the view of “treating” the area differently from a police strategy perspective. The same concept may be applicable to citizen complaints. The Australian research could be extended by using GIS software to add community context to the analysis. This would help to identify whether the difference in concentration of complaints between police units can be explained by demographic factors such as concentrated disadvantage, crime rates, or other contextual factors. This kind of analysis would go well beyond the simple identification of concentrations of complaints; it could examine in detail the relationship between the police and the community. Developing creative and effective prevention programs requires accurate assessment and analysis of the problem from a variety of perspectives, some of which can be managed by police executives, while others may require a broader application of interventions designed to address the greater relationship between the police and the community.

Most medium- to large-sized police agencies in the United States use an automated database to track officer complaints and misconduct and to manage internal affairs cases. Many of the commercial software packages available for this use (e.g., IAPro, On Target Performance Systems, PoliceTrak, and Internal Affairs Municipal Software) can also serve as early warning systems to identify problem officers for early intervention. While some of these databases can be converted to standard file formats and then uploaded into a separate GIS, none of these systems have an integrated mapping capability.

The concept of mapping police officer misconduct and complaints is potentially a very important element in analyzing individual officer behavior, as well as the relationship between the police and specific parts of the community. Identifying and monitoring potential problem officers may be greatly aided by the mapping application. Simply changing officer beat assignments may well reduce their misconduct or, in other instances, reduce the potential for complaints against officers that are due to general relationship decay between the police and the community of a given area. Several policy and management actions may also prove to be useful, such as rotating officers out of tasks that have a high potential to lead to misconduct, as well as physical patrol areas of high complaints. Most interesting, the mapping of such actions may also show that time is a critical variable. An officer in an area populated by a high number of bars and taverns during the 6:00 pm to 2:00 am shift may well receive a higher number of complaints than an officer working the same area during the 2:00 am to 10:00 am shift.

There are a number of key research questions that may arise from the application of mapping to officer misconduct and complaints. Clearly, an early intervention software program or internal affairs case management system is limited. Combining the data from these systems with mapping software may well enable much more creative, innovative, and novel analyses, leading to the design of more effective diagnostic and preventive measures to reduce officer misconduct and complaints.

# STAFF DEVELOPMENT

## Introduction

Staff development and leadership training have only recently been recognized as important to the quality of law enforcement. There are a growing number of facilities that offer training at various administrative levels for police agencies. In the United States, however, there are no uniform education standards for police officers. Moreover, opportunities for staff development courses are inequitable in quality, and many involve residential programs that are expensive, therefore limiting the number of officers that agencies can afford to send. In many EU countries and other countries around the world, police recruits undergo several years of initial training that leads to a college degree and advancement to higher ranks requires participation in rigorous leadership training programs. The result is a highly educated and professional force.

This brief describes two exemplary staff development programs that we found in our search. The United Kingdom, actually, has two programs—one for identifying promising executives early in their career, and the other to prepare candidates for senior command posts. Meanwhile, North-Rhine-Westphalia, Germany has an extensive training program for new police recruits. The final section of this chapter discusses how some of the ideas from these programs might be applied in the United States.

## Staff Development Programs in the United Kingdom

Policing in Great Britain is under a national authority, but it also emphasizes local control. In England, Wales, and Northern Ireland, there are 43 police forces, with an additional 8 in Scotland. The system is a “tripartite arrangement”: a balance involving the local chief constable; the local police authority, made up of local counselors that essentially oversee the work of the chief constable; and the Home Office, as part of the UK government.

Division commanders have a lot of control over their staff and are well respected in the local community. But promotion to chief officer involves becoming part of the executive team, which requires a very different set of skills. Networking, negotiating, and influencing others become essential skills. Chief constables need to have a clear sense of direction and a superior set of business skills. As part of an executive team, the chief constable must assume responsibility for budgeting, project management, performance management, organizational efficiency, and possible management of big change programs involving large amounts of money. Being the chief officer requires the person to take on the role of both a business executive and operational commander.



## High Potential Development Scheme

Sponsored by the UK's, National Police Improvement Agency (NPIA), the United Kingdom's High Potential Development Scheme (HPDS) identifies future leaders from within the ranks of chief inspector and puts these officers on an accelerated promotion track. The national application process is open to more than 120,000 officers, resulting in the selection of between 30 and 260 each year. Those who successfully complete the program are placed in a pool of officers waiting for a chief constable post. HPDS officers will normally be promoted to the next rank when they satisfy the Chief Officer that they are competent.

The HPDS is a method for accelerating promotion within the English and Wales police forces of a relatively small number of officers identified early in their career. It is a process for serving police officers that is designed to develop the most talented individuals to become the police leaders of the future.

It is a national scheme to identify talent and get people to the higher levels of command at a faster rate, while their ideas are still fresh and while their energy levels are high. Candidates who have been identified as having a high level of potential go through the national assessment center and receive accelerated promotions to move through the ranks quickly. Officers not chosen for the HPDS can still advance through the normal promotion routes, at later points in their career, and then be pushed forward to apply through the national assessment center for the strategic command course.

The HPDS is a 5-year program delivered with an academic partner, Warwick Business School. It uses a range of innovative approaches to challenge and equip future leaders. The initial stage of HPDS leads to a postgraduate diploma in police leadership. After completion of the postgraduate diploma, HPDS officers undertake a period of professional consolidation, where they apply their learning on the job.

### *Years 1 and 2—Postgraduate Diploma*

The key activity in this phase is the completion of a postgraduate diploma in police leadership and management, provided in partnership with Warwick Business School. The academic program emphasizes leading-edge thinking concerning the policing, business, and executive skills needed to succeed both now and in the future, and it includes a work-related dissertation. Topics include:

- ❖ Leadership and Public Value
- ❖ Managing People and Change
- ❖ Operations and Performance Management
- ❖ Partnership Working, Stakeholder Management, and Community Engagement
- ❖ Policy Making and Strategy
- ❖ Managing and Using Resources

Phil Davies, Superintendent,  
Greater Manchester Police

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*"Now, I've been a police officer for 13 years. I was promoted to superintendent with about 12 years' service, and that was at the age of 35, so I am pretty much on the thin side of the wedge in terms of age and career length for this rank. My particular journey has been a very rewarding one. I initially spent my time on the beat doing response patrol, attending incidents; I moved from that into the High-Potential Development Scheme. There are 140,000 federated ranks within the service in this country and they only take 60 a year onto this scheme, so it was pretty tough order to get through the process; it was very grueling and rewarding at the same time. I got through the process and I quickly moved to a sergeant. From that, I started branching out to criminal investigation. The High-Potential Development Scheme allowed me to pursue my interests in this area: child protection work, murder investigation. I spent a year down in London working on counterterrorism, and that was a thoroughly rewarding job. I moved back to my original force, homicide police, where I was quickly promoted to Detective Chief Inspector. The High-Potential Development Scheme helped me get a Master's degree in police leadership and management, and also helped me pursue one of my particular interests at the minute, and that's looking at the business world and how we get business skills, vocational business learning, into the police service. I feel confident that I have got the broad range of experiences now to really push on in my career and hopefully have a command of my own one*

### *Years 3 and 4—Professional Consolidation*

During this period, officers consolidate and build on their learning, undertaking a development plan incorporating activities that reflect their particular needs and circumstances. HPDS members are expected to devise a development plan for their consolidation period which is supported by their force. HPDS development advisers provide guidance and advice to members and forces as part of the process.

During this period, officers may undertake one or two *secondments*—temporary assignments—in which officers will learn about procedures and operations of policing units outside of their current assignment. Secondments give officers a broader view of the local context for local policing and provide opportunities to network. Normally, they are short-term assignments to minimize the officers' absence from their assigned workplace. Secondments may involve attachments to other departments in their force, to other forces or national police organizations, to other public sector organizations such as the Home Office, or to private sector organizations. The NPIA provides support to forces and individuals in organizing and identifying development opportunities that have demonstrable value for the individual and the force.

### *Year 5—Final year*

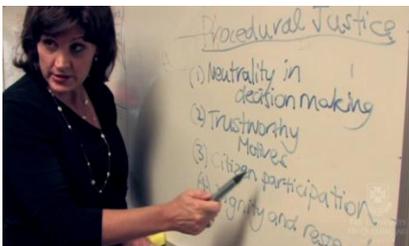
The final year involves further development of career management skills and self-awareness to ensure that HPDS members have the capacity and capability to manage their careers successfully as they move beyond the scheme. The program links members with other development and training opportunities provided by the NPIA and other partners such as the Senior Leadership Programme. HPDS members have the opportunity to apply to undertake study towards a Master's degree. The Master's degree is also delivered by Warwick Business School and builds on the postgraduate diploma completed in Years 1 and 2. The Master's degree includes both residential modules and a substantial piece of research that is relevant and beneficial to the members' force or the wider service. The residential modules cover the following topics:

- ❖ Advanced Leadership and Strategic Management
- ❖ Research and Evidence-Based Policy Making
- ❖ A dissertation demonstrating a substantial piece of research that is relevant and beneficial to the members' force or the wider service

## **Strategic Command Course**

The Strategic Command Course (SCC) is regarded as a prestigious senior leadership development program in policing. It is a prerequisite for officers and staff seeking to attain the rank of chief police officer in the United Kingdom. The goal of the SCC is to prepare selected UK and international police officers, police staff, and delegates from other preferred agencies for appointment to the most demanding executive roles in their parent organizations.

The SCC is a statutory requirement for officers seeking promotion to ACPO ranks and is attended by police officers at superintendent and chief superintendent ranks from all UK forces who have shown the potential to progress



further in their careers. Candidates are selected through a rigorous national selection process, conducted by the Senior Police National Assessment Center. Selection into the course is based on individuals' demonstrated potential to progress further in their career to become executive team leaders. The SCC is a 9-week assessed course that is held at the National College for Police Leadership in Bramshill, near London. Participants who successfully pass the SCC can apply to police authorities to fill chief officer vacancies.

The course is primarily delivered through a series of strategic/operational exercises designed to enhance each participant's knowledge, skills, attitudes, and abilities in three key areas: business, executive, and professional. A significant amount of learning also takes place with peer support, in the form of daily interaction with senior leaders and subject matter experts, augmented by external speakers.

The SCC encompasses the following nine learning objectives:

❖ Business objectives:

1. Demonstrate the essential strategic leadership skills required to manage the risk created by the increasingly fluctuating demands of a difficult financial environment
2. Further develop business skills in order to promote efficient use of assets, productivity, preparedness for rapid change, and understanding of policing priorities
3. Create an organizational culture that encourages innovation and engagement from the entire workforce, value for money, and improving performance

❖ Executive objectives:

1. Demonstrate the adaptive leadership characteristics necessary to lead policing through a complex, challenging modern landscape
2. Understand and influence the current and emerging constitutional position of policing in a democratic society
3. Articulate an inclusive vision for the future and be able to communicate that vision

❖ Professional objectives:

1. Have the ability to balance the demands of civil liberties and civil legitimacy
2. Develop high-level competence in critical incident management of local and national situations
3. Take on the challenges and responsibilities of leadership in high-risk operations and demonstrate the necessary skills of negotiation internally, externally, and with government agencies in order to achieve the most appropriate outcomes

For more information on UK staff development programs, go to <http://www.npia.police.uk/en/2211.htm>.

## Training of Police Cadets in North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany

The North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW) Police Force is the largest of the 16 German state police forces. The NRW Police Force consists of approximately 50,000 officers, who police the 19 million persons who live in the state. The majority (95%) of newly hired police officers do not have a Bachelor's degree. Beginning in 2008, as a condition of employment, the NRW Police Force has required all of the cadets hired annually to complete a 3-year Bachelor's program leading to a degree in police administration. While in the program, trainees are paid a salary of about 40% of the income they earn upon becoming an officer. Tuition is free, but if a recruit leaves the program, he or she is required to reimburse the tuition amount.

The degree program at the University of Applied Sciences for Public Administration of North Rhine-Westphalia (UPA NRW) is distributed over five campuses located throughout the state of North Rhine-Westphalia, so that all cadets are able to participate in the program in their local area. In 2006, the UPA NRW trained nearly 6,000 students from 6 departments.

The 3-year program consists of alternating modules of:

- ❖ Theoretical instruction at the University of Applied Science
- ❖ Training, held at the State Bureau of Training, Education, and Personal Matters
- ❖ Practice, held at the police constabularies

Academic courses fall into three areas:

1. *Operation and Crime Sciences*: These courses include patrol operation methodology, criminology, CID techniques, and traffic management.
2. *Law*: Courses in the law area include legal methodology, national and European law, penal and procedural law, police powers, traffic law, and disciplinary code.
3. *Human and Social Sciences*: Courses under this area include management, psychology, sociology, political science, and ethics.

Training courses include the following areas of specialization:

1. *Daily operations and measures to avoid dangerous situations*: Courses in this area of concentration cover topics including crowd control, handling disturbances, dealing with homeless people, responding to crime and domestic violence complaints and traffic accidents, hostage situations and bomb threats, communications and information systems, and photography.
2. *Traffic safety*: In this area of concentration, courses cover topics including checkpoint procedures, issuing traffic citations, responding to and investigating accidents, conducting sobriety tests, and driver's license regulations.
3. *Crime control*: Topics covered include burglary and robbery prevention, responding to vehicle crimes and child abuse, and investigating robberies, shoplifting, larcenies, narcotics offenses, homicides, and other crimes.

Courses incorporate the use of role playing, especially situations in which there is a need for communication skills and interpersonal coordination, such as domestic violence situations or dealing with persons under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

During the practice modules, recruits work out of police constabularies under the supervision of a sworn officer. Until they earn their degree, trainees do not have full police powers and are not allowed to use their weapon, unless in self-defense.

Training institutions operate from 7 am to 7 pm each working day to accommodate overlapping shifts (8 hours each), with an overlap time of 4 hours in order to make optimal use of personnel and equipment. Trainers are police officers with at least 5 years of experience. The selection process for trainer candidates is competitive, and successful candidates are given intensive instruction in their specialty before stepping into a classroom as an instructor.

One of the benefits of the commitment to education is that policing is looked upon as a high-status job. Consequently, retention rates are very high, even though the pay of police officers is average among careers in Germany.

The commitment to training that begins with the undergraduate degree program continues throughout officers' careers. All senior police officers are trained at the German University for Police (Deutsche Hochschule für Polizei) in a program leading to a Master's degree in public administration, with a specialty in police management. This includes future senior police officers from the 16 state police services, as well as the 2 federal police services. Candidates are fully paid during the time that they are in the program. The program is highly selective: Just 1 percent of the 45,000 NRW Police Force officers go on to become senior police officers.

For more information on police cadet training in North Rhine-Westphalia, go to <https://www.ncjrs.gov/App/publications/Abstract.aspx?id=68524>

### ***How This Could Be Applied in the U.S.?***

The Caruth Police Institute (CPI) at Dallas is a good example of what can be done to make staff development an integral part of a police career. Funded through an initial grant of \$9.5 million from the Communities Foundation of Texas, the CPI partners the Dallas Police Department (DPD) with the University of North Texas at Dallas and the University of Texas at Dallas. The CPI's primary objectives are to provide transformative leadership training within police organizations and to act as a "national think tank" on police research providing agencies with the ability to solve complex problems, implement best policing practices, and evaluate agency performances. The CPI offers courses for sergeants and lieutenants in six 1-week modules, for which participants can receive nine college credits. It also offers a weekly leadership course for assistant chiefs on a drop-in basis and works with the Dallas Police Academy to revamp academy training. Officers can take the courses while living at home and without lengthy time away from their jobs. Evaluations by RAND have found that the CPI has found that the courses produce cohesiveness and common approaches to police leadership among sizeable cohorts of mid-level managers that create pressure for positive change in the DPD culture.

The extraordinary level of funding makes the CPI a unique case. However, partnerships between police agencies and local universities can be formed for the purpose of creating opportunities for staff development and to create partnerships for solving complex law enforcement problems such as patrol allocation. In such partnerships:

- ❖ Universities could provide the course offerings and teaching expertise.
- ❖ Law enforcement agencies could provide the incentives for officers to take courses by making participation in the courses and earned degrees important factors when considering salary increases or promotions.
- ❖ Municipalities could finance much of the cost through tuition reimbursement for officers participating in courses.

One such example is the Broward County Executive Leadership Program in Florida. This program partners the Broward County Sheriff's Office with Nova Southern University, and offers three courses for which participants earn academic credit. The time of the program coordinator is donated by the Sheriff's Office; instructors are regular Nova Southern faculty whose time is covered by the tuition fees paid by participants, who are reimbursed by the county.

The payoff for investments in staff development programs such as this would be better educated, more professional local police forces. If such an effort were undertaken on a national scale, U.S. policing could also begin to match EU forces in terms of enhanced status for police officers and improved retention rates.

Another lesson that could be applied from the United Kingdom is the concept of secondments. Partnerships could be set up between law enforcement agencies in which officers are exchanged between agencies for a period of time. For example, mutual exchanges of watch commanders in patrol units could bring new and innovative ideas for policing strategies and tactics into each of the participating departments. One-way exchanges, in which a small agency sends an officer to a larger regional agency for investigative experience, could increase skill levels and operational knowledge in small departments.

# INFORMATION SHARING

## The Police Online Knowledge Area (POLKA)

### POLKA Statistics

- There are more than 40,000 members of POLKA, representing more than 90 different police forces and partner agencies.
- 1,500–2,000 new members join POLKA every month.
- There are more than 200 different communities in POLKA, each supporting a different policing area.
- More than 1,000 new documents are uploaded to POLKA communities every month.
- More than 400 new discussions are started in POLKA every month, with more than 1,200 replies being received.
- The average POLKA community exceeds 300 members; the largest community (Criminal Justice) exceeds 12,000.

Social networking has become a way to instantaneously share knowledge across widely dispersed networks of people with common interests. Through these media, knowledge and experience can be shared and opinions exchanged. Such exchanges would be useful in the rapidly evolving field of policing, especially in the United States where police agencies are independent and often do not have common sets of policies or orders that communicate how officers should handle specific situations. Responding to this potential, the United Kingdom developed the Police Online Knowledge Area (POLKA); a platform for information sharing that allows officers with common interests to share ideas and information and also provides online information resources on policing best practices.

The POLKA platform was developed in 2008 by the British National Police Improvement Agency (NPIA), a non-departmental public body established to provide projects and ideas to enhance the effectiveness of policing in the United Kingdom. The NPIA provides critical national services and expands the capabilities of and offers professional expertise to UK police forces and authorities.

*POLKA Basics* POLKA is an online collaboration tool— to enable knowledge and information sharing across the police service.<sup>1</sup> Founded on social media and Web 2.0 principles (updated October 2012 to v3.0), it offers a new, efficient way of communicating valuable information. POLKA brings together users from across all UK

police forces to form communities of practice to share, discuss, and collaborate on a variety of information, documents, and practices, using a range of modern web-based technologies such as blogs, discussion forums, and shared document libraries. All content is user-generated, meaning that every user of POLKA has something to offer. There are currently more than 40,000 registered members of POLKA, participating in 200 active communities and representing more than 90 different organizations, including all 43 police forces, across the United Kingdom. Users range from line officers to police administrators.

A POLKA community is a way of bringing together people with shared common policing interests, experience, expertise, or skills. An active community can help provide instant feedback, nurture new knowledge, and stimulate innovation. This can provide faster problem solving and access to a vast range of expertise, which helps reduce costs and avoid duplication of effort. Users can request to join an existing community or create a new community based on their area of practice. Such communities can be created and used for a specific initiative; have a defined

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<sup>1</sup> The National Institute of Justice (NIJ) has a similar-sounding project—the Policing Research Platform—but the purpose is completely different. The NIJ project is a method for conducting research studies in multiple police agencies using common methods and measures.

lifespan or be of ongoing interest; involve a project team developing a new product or strategy; include a dispersed department, business area, or special interest group; and consist of a small or large number of people. Several examples of existing communities in POLKA are Criminal Intelligence Analysis, Police Driver Training, and Uniformed Operational Support—Public Order.

Every community must have an “owner” and at least two “facilitators” with relevant knowledge to ensure appropriate content and usage. For all communities, the community owner needs to be an NPIA contact at business unit head level or above. They may choose to delegate the practical day-to-day responsibility of community ownership, but the NPIA contact/owner is required when the community is established. The system is designed to be intuitive, but guidance notes for processes are available and users can ask for help from other community members. Some training is also available to support community owners and facilitators. All content is moderated, and POLKA provides community facilitators with the tools to remove content and ban users if rules are broken. All user activity will be readily identifiable by their name and e-mail address to encourage responsible contribution.

POLKA is protectively marked up to the level of “restricted,” and appropriate security measures are in place to reflect this. The system has been accredited and is hosted by the NPIA, and more recently by the Home Office, in a secure environment. Users accessing the system from secure networks have direct access to POLKA. POLKA also has three types of community—all system users, open, and closed—with different levels of visibility and privileges to help manage access to individual areas.

POLKA offers a full range of web-based communication options, including blogs and discussion forums; document libraries; static web pages; private messages; e-mail alerts; tag clouds; and event calendars.

*Blogs:* A blog is an online posting of information or insight that can be used to encourage debate or bring a sense of perspective to a discussion. There are both personal blogs and community blogs. Community blogs can only be created by the community owner, but everyone in the community can add comments. Community blogs provide a way for facilitators or community leaders to communicate with the group. Members can add comments and rate blog posts, and all blogs are archived and searchable.

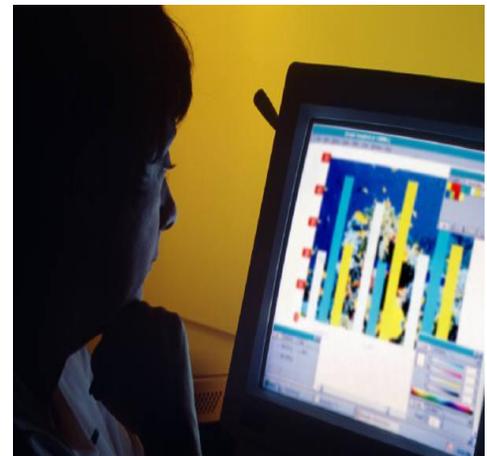
*Discussion forums:* A discussion forum is a place for community members to openly discuss topics and share information and best practices. Any member can post a message, and multiple people can reply to it. A discussion board displays the most recent discussions first, indicating the number of replies for each message. This is a quick way of assessing which discussions are the most popular. Discussion topics are searchable so members can easily locate topics of interest.

*Document library:* This is a repository available for community members to upload and download documents. All documents are searchable, and version control is available when members are working collaboratively on the same document.

*Events calendar:* Each community has an event calendar for posting details of relevant upcoming activities and tracking event attendance.

*Wall:* A wall is like an online whiteboard or Post-It® note. It is an instant and direct method of sending short messages. Wall postings are the least formal of the POLKA collaborative tools; they are public and can be viewed by everyone.

*In Detail: The NPIA Knowledge Bank Community on POLKA*



The NPIA Knowledge Bank is an example of a community on POLKA. Its aim is to share evidence-based knowledge across the police service. It is populated with information provided by NPIA staff, and its content is controlled by the NPIA. The community provides a “one-stop shop” for accessing police knowledge, and members are encouraged to share their own information to help grow and develop the bank.

The knowledge bank aims to make it easier for policing practitioners and policymakers to find and share knowledge and evidence about “what works,” helping improve their ability to plan, make decisions, implement practice, and increase the cost effectiveness of the services they provide. Information is also provided to guide users in the interpretation and use of the knowledge.

**POLKA Home**  
NPIA Policing Knowledge Area

**Communities**  
Grow your network and share knowledge

**My Profile**  
My contacts, My Blogs, etc

**Messages (0)**  
My Inbox and Notifications

**Home** | Blog | Documents | Wiki | Wall | Image | Discussions | Members | Events

**Practice Bank**

- ▶ Policing Research
- ▶ Horizon scanning and futures
- ▶ Intelligence & Analysis
- ▶ Practice Improvement Publications
- ▶ Useful Links
- ▶ Knowledge Bank Glossary

**NPIA Knowledge Bank**

Here in the Knowledge Bank you can **access, share** and **collaborate** in the development of **local policing practice, good quality policing research** and **information on future issues impacting on crime, policing and/or public safety** amongst other things...

You might be an expert in tackling anti-social behaviour, trying to find out what works to reduce local burglary, or perhaps even researching your dissertation ... either way join or follow this community to **access, share** and **collaborate** in developing the latest police knowledge.

**Thank - you** to members who shared practice examples which demonstrated value for money. These have included [a review of force suggestion schemes](#), the [Preston city centre citizen kiosk](#), [intranet crime mapping](#) and [Airwave Max](#). If you are still completing your [Practice Form](#) - please share as soon as possible by following the instructions on the form.

**Latest News**

**Practice example - Preston City Centre Citizen Street Kiosk**  
Inspector [redacted] has shared details of the Preston City Centre Citizen Street Kiosk which was developed by Lancashire Constabulary in partnership with their local councils. It was commissioned and built as a robust street information kiosk to help manage public concerns at the closure of a number of operational stations.

**Latest Discussions** 70 active discussions | [see all](#)

[Start a new Discussion](#)

**Community Management**

- ▶ [Leave Community](#)
- ▶ [Unsubscribe from community email](#)

**Community Facilitators**

**Community Owner**  
[redacted]

**Community Facilitators**  
[redacted]

**Logged in**

**POLKA DEMO**

[Change Profile](#)  
[Help](#)  
[Logout](#)

Recently visited communities:

- ▶ [NPIA Knowledge Bank](#)
- ▶ [Learning to POLKA](#)

**Our Community**

Find out more about the Knowledge Bank with the [Community Charter](#).

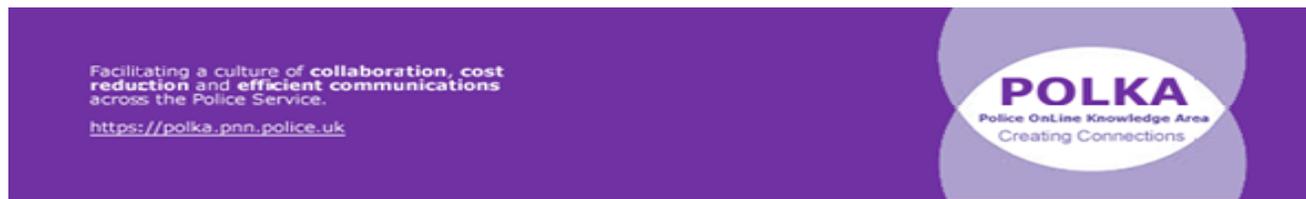
Don't forget that you can access **useful links** and share your own useful links in the [WIKI](#)...

[Search the National Police Library](#)  
New user?  
[Register here](#)

The knowledge bank is where users can access information about issues that may affect the future of policing. Visitors can read—and add to—articles from colleagues across the United Kingdom about recent or future developments. If users are looking for ideas on tackling a local policing problem or trying a new approach, there is a

section on best practices that serves as a source for learning about and sharing examples of local practices. If the practice is supported by a research-based evaluation, NPJA can review the evaluation to determine the quality of the evidence and how well the local practice would work for others considering adopting a similar approach. The knowledge bank also contains a policing research area with a wide range of research reports, including detailed systematic reviews and easy-to-follow synopsis reports.

For more information on POLKA, go to <http://www.npia.police.uk/en/16173.htm>



## POLKA Case Study

### Occupational Health Nurses Advisors to the Police Service (OHNAPS)

*With the introduction of a POLKA community, occupational health nurses and advisors for the Police Service around the UK are now able to quickly and effectively connect and communicate.*



#### The challenge?

- Isolated individuals doing the same role in different forces;
- Inability to communicate efficiently between OHNAPS members;
- Requirement to share knowledge & expertise internally & with other organisations.

#### How has POLKA helped?

This specialist area of medical and nursing practice covers the management of workplace health for officers and police staff, and is vital to make sure front line policing is delivered effectively.

POLKA is now the primary means of all communication between members of OHNAPS and is critical to the delivery of their key objectives: ensuring members are represented as “one voice” on police national working groups and facilitating best practice.

The NPJA workforce strategy team develops health and safety policies, so needs access to the knowledge of occupational health professionals and to have a firm understanding of the impact their policies will have at the point of delivery.

Matt Johnston from the workforce strategy team said:

“...through POLKA we can not only directly tap into the knowledge and experience of individual professionals but also instigate national web based consultations. From this, when we seek sign off from ACPO or the Home Office, we can go forward safe in the knowledge that our policies are underpinned by their clinical expertise and have already obtained a broad consensus of occupational health professionals working up and down the country.”

“POLKA is our lifeline for assisting communication between respective forces in what is a very specific and lonely field of work,”

*Maria Van Der Pas, OHNAPS Executive Committee.*

#### New to POLKA or want to find out more?

Visit POLKA at <https://polka.pnn.police.uk> today to find out more about how it could help you and your team to be more efficient and effective.

The POLKA team also provide training face-to-face and via NCALT Live – details are on the POLKA home page. You can also find out all the basics from the Learning to POLKA community.



*How POLKA Could Be Applied in the United States*

U.S. police agencies are increasingly using social media in a variety of innovative ways. Agencies use social media to send alerts to the public, warning of situations, providing general information notices, and describing ways that people might take precautions to avoid being victimized. Some agencies use social media to post videos or other information (e.g., in an effort to encourage citizens to submit information needed to solve crimes), to scour Facebook pages of suspects for evidence, or to solicit feedback on public opinion of the police. In addition, the U.S. government currently sponsors several web sites (e.g., [crimesolutions.gov](http://crimesolutions.gov) and [popcenter.org](http://popcenter.org)) that feature best practices in various areas of criminal justice. However, POLKA seems to be unique in its vision and scope. The NPIA effort to develop an information-sharing platform is a sophisticated and generously funded national effort that goes well beyond the capabilities of individual police agencies to implement. If a tool such as POLKA were to be implemented in the United States, it would have to be done on a national level, by BJA or other federal agency. BJA could create a knowledge bank of “what works,” similar to POLKA, in a way that would be user-friendly to officers at all levels of an agency. This could be done independently or in collaboration with the NPIA. Through collaboration with NPIA, BJA could provide best practices information from U.S. studies and other sources and link to the NPIA library for relevant materials.<sup>2</sup>

While a POLKA-like platform would have to be implemented at a high level with significant funding, our research did encounter an effort in Poland that allows information sharing across departmental lines that was done at the grassroots level without any funding. The site is used by Polish police officers to share best practices and to discuss their complaints and grievances. Anyone can join, and users have a choice of identifying themselves or remaining anonymous. Information shared includes topics as diverse as promotion policies and police shootings. This kind of basic information-sharing web site could be developed at low cost by regional partnerships wanting to share experiences, trainings and other events, and information on best practices.

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<sup>2</sup> DHS has a couple of sites that have some of the POLKA functionality. They can be found at: <https://communities.firstresponder.gov/web/guest;jsessionid=E938FAC2890456288AA49B08EA2A6E9D.w5> and <https://www.llis.dhs.gov/about.do>

**For More Information  
Please Contact:**

**Robert Davis  
RAND Corporation  
email: [robertd@rand.org](mailto:robertd@rand.org)  
1.703.413.1100 ext. 5199**