



TOWARDS A SHARED VISION OF POLICE PROFESSIONALISATION IN VICTORIA

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Through developing this paper, the Police Registration and Services Board (the Board) has sought to better understand perspectives on police professionalisation in Victoria and the opportunities for the Board's Professional Standards and Registration functions to support this agenda. The Board consulted with key stakeholders from policing and government and drew on Victoria Police strategic plans, reviews of Victoria Police practice and policing literature.

Professionalisation is a stated goal in Victoria Police strategic planning documents such as the *Blue Paper*, the *Capability Plan* and the *Education Master Plan*. Professionalisation is a strong theme in organisational reviews of Victoria Police, which include discussion of national standards for policing, professional education and training and police career mobility (including lateral entry and re-entry). The *Victorian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Independent Review* (2015) and the *Mental Health Review* (2016) also include themes relevant to police professionalisation, in particular, the need to improve people-focussed leadership capabilities, support for career mobility and the setting of professional standards of conduct.

The term professionalisation was considered by stakeholders to be nebulous and a term used as a "catch all" for reforms and innovations in policing. Nevertheless, policing was seen to be on a journey towards professional status. This journey involves significant shifts in the areas of capability, professional standards, education and training, developing the body of policing knowledge and registration systems.

The overriding value in police professionalisation is to provide better quality and more consistent police services to the community. Participants identified benefits for individual police officers (status, reward, career satisfaction), police forces (increased capabilities, service quality) and government (value, responsiveness).

Participants viewed the Board's functions as contributing to the professionalisation of policing. The Board's independence was seen as valuable, as is its role in providing a fresh perspective on policing and exploring and testing new approaches. Part of the Board's role was seen to be in shifting police culture, in particular changing attitudes towards career mobility and the value of external experience.

The Board has planned a suite of projects to be developed and implemented over 2017 and 2018 which are strongly anchored in the professionalisation agenda and the findings of this Paper.



1. INTRODUCTION

Registration and professional standards are considered attributes of a ‘profession’ and feature commonly in discussions about the professionalisation of policing. Under the *Victoria Police Act 2013* the Police Registration and Services Board is responsible for registering former members of Victoria Police and members on leave without pay and secondment and has functions to advise on professional standards and support and promote continuing professional development of Victoria Police officers, protective services officers and reservists.

The Board identified a need to better understand how its functions relate to the police professionalisation agenda and how the Board can best support and advance police professionalisation in Victoria.

1.1 Purpose and overview of report

The purpose of this report is to inform the scope, functions and strategic direction of the Board’s Professional Standards and Registration Divisions.

The report explores different perspectives on police professionalisation and its value to the community and draws on Victoria Police strategic policy and planning documents, external reviews of Victoria Police and the academic literature.

The report will guide the future positioning of the Board and identifies priority areas of focus for the coming years. The report is set out in six sections:

- Purpose and overview of report (section 1)
- The Board’s functions (section 2)
- The strategic context (section 3)
- Summary of consultations (section 4)
- Discussion of police professionalisation (section 5)
- Conclusions: The Board’s role (section 6)

1.2 Stakeholder consultations

The Board consulted with current and former senior Victoria Police officers and executives, senior officials of The Police Association of Victoria (TPAV) and the Police Federation of Australia (PFA) and senior public servants from the Department of Justice and Regulation, the Victorian Public Sector Commission, the Department of Treasury and Finance, the Independent Broad-based Anti-Corruption Commission and other government departments and agencies.

The Board also consulted with other professional registration bodies in nursing, teaching and legal services. The breakdown of participants is summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: Stakeholders consulted by the Board

Stakeholders	No. of participants
Victoria Police	10
Government departments and agencies	12
Police unions	3
Australian New Zealand Police Advisory Agency (ANZPAA)	2
Professional registration bodies	3
TOTAL	30

Participants were asked questions about police professionalisation (see Interview Schedule, Appendix 1). Most consultations were recorded and transcribed. Themes and key insights were then identified.

1.3 Terminology

Capability – The term capability is used throughout this report to refer to the skills and abilities of individual police officers rather than ‘organisational capability’. The latter broader term encompasses organisational processes, systems, culture and structures to deliver business outcomes (APSC 2012).

Profession – The term ‘profession’ is contested and there is a wide variety of definitions in the literature. For the purpose of this Report, ‘profession’ is used in a way consistent with the definition advanced by Professions Australia; that is, a profession is *‘a disciplined group of individuals who adhere to ethical standards and who hold themselves out as, and are accepted by the public as possessing special knowledge and skills in a widely recognised body of learning derived from research, education and training at a high level, and who are prepared to apply this knowledge and exercise these skills in the interest of others’* (Professions Australia 2016).

Professionalisation – Similarly, there is a variety of definitions of professionalisation in the literature. In the context of this report, the Board considers professionalisation to be the process of an occupation becoming or being recognised as a profession. Appendix 3 outlines further definitions including setting out characteristics of police professionalisation from the literature.

1.4 Acknowledgements

The Board would like to thank all stakeholders who generously gave up their time to share their thoughts and ideas with the Board. The Board is grateful for the feedback provided on an earlier version of the report from Board members and from representatives from Victoria Police and the Department of Justice and Regulation.



2. THE BOARD'S FUNCTIONS

The Board is an independent statutory authority established under the *Victoria Police Act 2013* and has registration, professional standards, review and general functions. The Board's Review Division conducts promotion and transfer appeals and reviews of disciplinary decisions. This report focusses on the Board's registration, professional standards and general functions.

2.1 Registration

The Board registers eligible people on the Police Profession Register (s.202 (1) (a)). The registration scheme is limited to former Victoria Police members and current serving members on leave without pay ('LWOP') or secondments. The Registration Division can also provide advice to the Chief Commissioner on proposed appointments, for example, of police officers from other jurisdictions seeking employment in with Victoria Police.

Registration commenced on 1 April 2014. The registration process has been developed in consultation with Victoria Police. To date, the Board has registered 88 former Victoria Police officers¹. At this point in time, the registration of members on LWOP or secondments has not been activated.

2.2 Professional standards

Section 202(1) (b) of the Act defines the PRSB's professional standards functions as follows:

- (i) to advise the Chief Commissioner about competency standards, practice standards, educational courses and supervised training arrangements for police officers, protective services officers and police reservists;
- (ii) to support and promote the continuing education and professional development of police officers, protective services officers and police reservists;

To date, the PRSB has not received any formal requests to advise the Chief Commissioner on professional standards matters nor has it issued or commissioned advice on police education and professional development.

2.3 General functions

Section 202 (1) (d) assigns the Board the following general functions, being—

- (i) to advise the Minister and the Chief Commissioner about any matters related to its functions;
- (ii) to inquire into and report on any matter referred to the PRS Board by the Chief Commissioner or the Minister; and
- (iii) any other functions conferred on it by or under this or any other Act.

¹ This data is current as of 15 March 2017.



3. THE STRATEGIC CONTEXT

3.1 *Victoria Police Strategic Plans*

Professionalisation is a strong theme in current Victoria Police strategic planning documents. The *Victoria Police Blue Paper: A Vision for Victoria Police in 2025* ('Blue Paper') is the basis for the development of a long term plan for the period from 2015 to 2025 to meet the expectations of the community. The *Blue Paper* states that enhancing front line services requires policing to become truly professionalised:

'All Victoria Police members must come to see themselves as practitioners of a profession which requires skills and capabilities similar to those found in highly regarded professions such as law, medicine, engineering, accounting and the armed services.' (Victoria Police 2014, p. 40)

The *Blue Paper* recommends a number of strategies to support professionalisation including enhancing continuing professional development and initial recruit training forming part of an undergraduate degree.

The *Blue Paper* noted significant benefits for the organisation of new mobility options, such as lateral entry (older age recruits) and re-entry. The benefits include 'recruitment of experienced police in times of rapid expansion; more rounded leaders with wider experience; potential to reduce parochial and insular aspects of culture; stronger anti-corruption checks and balances; and attracting the very best talent and leadership in an open market' (Victoria Police 2014, p. 43). The Paper described a vision for the career paths of members in 2025: 'Career breaks or lateral exit and re-entry will not hamper careers: rather, they will be seen as experiences that enhance the capability of a member'.

The Victoria Police *Corporate Plan 2015-2018* supports the directions in the *Blue Paper*. A key goal is to create a 'flexible, capable and professional workforce'. This requires 'education and training that reflects the professionalisation of policing activities and expected performance standards' (Victoria Police 2015). The *Victoria Police Workforce Plan* (not publicly available) and the Victoria Police *Education Master Plan: Learning to Develop to 2020* (2013) (EMP) are two key plans being employed to achieve this goal.

The EMP is sponsored by the Deputy Commissioner Capability and is described as Victoria Police's 'professionalisation road map' guiding the evolution of professional education and development in Victoria Police. The objective of the Plan is to improve service delivery to the community by supporting three interlinked goals:

- **Professionalisation:** The EMP builds a culture of professionalisation and ensures Victoria Police and its employees are seen as professionals.
- **Vibrant Learning Culture:** Victoria Police employees can use their experiences as learning opportunities and, in doing so, can draw from internal and external opportunities to develop their careers and the organisations.

- **Capability and capacity:** Making sure learning and development is flexible, responsive and efficient, and aligns with organisational goals, will help build the capability and capacity of the organisation.

The centrepiece of the EMP is the Learning Model which is based on a contemporary model of continuing professional development and enabling structures. The Learning Model emphasises a whole of career approach to professional education with responsibility for learning and development shared between individual employees, managers and the organisation. The EMP states that ‘CPD in Victoria Police will include: a requirement that all employees have a personalised learning plan negotiated with a supervisor or mentor, that maps out their development activities’ (p. 9).

The EMP articulates the role of employees and the organisation within a professional policing model.

Employees build a professional culture through:	A professional organisation ensures the supporting structure through:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrating ethical behaviour, leadership and integrity; • being self-directed, highly skilled, and accountable; • being reflective practitioners, informed by a deep body of knowledge and part of an international community of practice; • contributing to the continuous improvement of shared professional practice; and • being capable of applying their knowledge and skills to novel or complex situations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • engaging in CPD; • supporting critical learning; • ensuring consistent standards for education and training; • supporting professional registration; • engaging employees in a career long learning partnership; • networking with research partners, other agencies, other policing organisations, and the communities it serves; and • driving enhanced community satisfaction (p. 5)

The EMP was released prior to the establishment of the Board, however, the Plan referenced the role of the future entity in the following ways:

- ‘Victoria is in the process of establishing a Police Registration and Services Board which will create a local framework that will support mobility and lateral entry, and will shift the focus from disciplinary accountability to professionalism’(p. 5).
- ‘Professionalisation of policing – The professionalisation of policing has become a central concern across jurisdictions globally and is a key part of the Commonwealth Ministers’ *Directions in Australia New Zealand Policing 2012-2015*. The pursuit of a more professional status for police is being driven primarily through the development of national practice standards for policing, and discussion around the right mix and level of professional development for police. At the Victorian level, it is being supported through the establishment of a Police Registration and Services Board’ (p. 1).

Another key strategic plan is the Victoria Police *Equality is not the Same Action Plan* (2015). This plan was developed in response to community consultations and external reviews into cross-cultural training and field contact policies (see table 4). A *Cultural, Community and Diversity Education Strategy 2015-16* (2015) was developed in response to the Action Plan to inform the development of

new and revised continuous professional learning, training and education on cultural, community and diversity principles.

There have been significant organisational changes since the Board commenced this work. The Deputy Commissioner Strategy role was renamed Deputy Commissioner (DC) Capability, signalling a greater focus on organisational capability and the capabilities of Victoria Police officers.

Victoria Police Capability Plan 2016-2025

The DC Capability led the development of a comprehensive *Capability Plan* which guides the development of capability across the organisation for the next decade and beyond. The *Victoria Police Capability Plan 2016-2025* was announced in late 2016 and takes a long-term focus to deliver transformational change and enhance service delivery to the community. The Plan progresses the *Blue Paper* and outlines changes to be made while maintaining and maturing existing capabilities and identifying new ones. The *Capability Framework* sets a foundation for the Plan and describes the fundamental inputs to capability: processes, people, infrastructure, equipment and technology. Transformation pathways highlight areas for capability development and will guide policy and planning decisions and investment priorities:

- Safety - more focused on the health, safety and wellbeing of our people
- Leadership - more confident, humble, respectful and people focused
- Agility - more responsive, agile and visible policing
- Evidence-Based - more evidence-based practices and decision making
- Victim-Centric - stronger focus on victims, prevention and reduction of harm
- Gender, Diversity and Flexibility - a more professional, flexible and diverse workforce
- Technology - leveraging technology to improve policing and business processes
- Partnerships - stronger partnerships and co-production with stakeholders

The Annual Plan then outlines actions to maintain or mature priority capabilities, implement recommendations from major reviews, and deliver on important projects making Victoria Police more responsive to community safety.

3.2 Victoria Police Mobility

This section provides an overview of existing data relating to PRSB's registration functions.

Former members

The Victoria Police Human Resources Department provided the Board with de-identified data on police voluntary resignations for the period 01 June 2001 to 30 September 2014. This provides an indication of the pool of former members eligible to seek registration².

There were 2,364 resignations of police members in this period³. Of this pool, one quarter was female, and two thirds were aged between 30-45 years at the time of resigning. The largest group of

² Members who have been dismissed from Victoria Police are not eligible to seek registration on the PPR.

³ This figure only includes members who held the rank of Constable, Senior Constable, Sergeant, Senior Sergeant, Inspector, Superintendent and Commander. There were six separations in this period for members at the rank of Assistant Commissioner and above which have not been included in this analysis.

former members had completed between four to ten years of service, followed by 11-15 years and 16-20 years.

The pool of potential applicants for registration is predominantly comprised of people who were Senior Constables or Constables at resignation (86%). There were 272 resignations at the rank of Sergeant or Senior Sergeant and 43 members who resigned at the rank of Inspector, Superintendent or Commander.

Over half of the former members who resigned in this period reported that their main reason for resigning was to seek other employment. A third of the former members resigning in this period did not specify a reason. Further details including gender, age, year of resignation, length of prior service, rank and reasons for resigning are in Appendix 2.

Leave without pay (LWOP)

The data on leave without pay is limited to figures as at April 2016. There were a total of 135 members on LWOP. Over two thirds (70%) were Senior Constables. There were no members at ranks of Inspector and above on leave without pay at this time (Table 2). Members on LWOP were spread fairly evenly across regions and departments (Table 3).

Table 2: Sworn Police Officer Leave without Pay (LWOP) by rank (as at April 2016)⁴

Rank	Headcount	Percentage
Constable	19	14%
Senior Constable	94	70%
Sergeant	18	13%
Senior Sergeant	4	3%
Inspector		
Superintendent		
Commander		
TOTAL	135	100

Table 3: Sworn Police Officer Leave Without Pay by Department, Region or Command (as at April 2016)⁵

Department Region Command	Headcount
Corporate Strategy & Operational Improvement	2
Crime Command	9
Eastern Region	27
Intelligence and Covert Support Command	1
Legal Services	8

⁴ This data is point in time as of 2 April 2016. Data excludes police officers on secondment and PSOs.

⁵ See footnote 5 above.

Media and Corporate Communications	1
North West Metro Region	21
People Development Command	3
Road Policing Command	1
Southern Metro Region	20
State Emergencies and Security Command	2
Transit and Public Safety Command	17
Western Region	23
TOTAL	135

3.3 External Reviews of Victoria Police

Victoria Police has engaged in several significant reviews of its culture and capabilities over the last five years. These reviews explored professional mobility (including lateral entry and re-entry), common national standards for policing and professional education and training. The Reviews resulted in substantial recommendations for change, many of which support career mobility, enhancing professionalisation of policing or the adoption of specific characteristics of a profession (Table 4).

Table 4: Relevant themes and recommendations from external reviews of Victoria Police

Office of Police Integrity (OPI) 2011 *Enabling a Flexible Workforce for Policing in Victoria*

The purpose of the review was to ensure that Victoria Police has a flexible and responsive workforce able to provide ethical and professional policing services for Victoria.

Themes related to professionalisation include lateral entry from other police forces, lateral entry of those returning to the workforce after an absence from policing, the potential adoption of a higher education model in Victoria and national police professionalisation.

The review recommended Victoria Police pursue a ten year strategic workforce plan which reflects the future policing needs of the community and consider ensuring operational police regularly demonstrate ongoing capacity to meet inherent physical, psychological and professional requirements of policing.

State Services Authority (2011) *Inquiry into the Command, Management and Functions of the Senior Structure of Victoria Police*

The State Services Authority inquired into matters relating to the structure, operations and administration of the senior command of Victoria Police including: effectiveness and functions of the senior structure of command; the extent to which that command structure provides the future capabilities to deliver best practice policing and can deliver major IT and administrative functions.

The Inquiry highlighted that lateral entry and re-entry was a feature of other professions and provides opportunities to enhance the recruitment of experienced police officers. The Inquiry recommended 'Victoria Police undertakes its workforce planning to allow for lateral entry at all ranks and for reappointment at rank, and recruits suitable applicants from outside Victoria Police when appropriate.'

The Inquiry noted support for a national approach to the policing profession including common national standards as a key mechanism for facilitating lateral entry across police forces but recommended that in the meantime Victoria Police pursue lateral entry including proper interview and assessment processes.

The Inquiry did not support the involvement of an external agency such as a Police Registration Board in helping to recruit suitably qualified police from other jurisdictions to all ranks noting that Victoria Police is able to determine for itself the competencies required at different ranks and for specific positions.

Centre for Cultural Diversity and Wellbeing, Victoria University (2013) *Learning To Engage: A Review of Victoria Police Cross-Cultural Training Practices*

The Review explored gaps and opportunities in cross-cultural education and training for police and/PSO recruits within the Police Academy curriculum; post-probationary serving police and/PSO members; and gaps and opportunities for leadership in advancing education and training in cultural and community.

The Review highlighted capability gaps in cultural diversity and community engagement and emphasised the need for police officers to have professional skills and values as well as technical and operational skills. For example, the importance of members developing abilities in critical thinking, reflection and evaluation to help not just 'do the job', but to think about *how* to do the job better was highlighted (Victoria University 2013). The Review recommended enhancing cross cultural education in foundation learning, promotional programs and continuing professional development using the ANZPAA Education and Training Guideline on Community Engagement as a benchmark.

Cultural and Indigenous Research Centre Australia (2013) *Victoria Police Review of Field Contact Policy and Processes, Final report*

The Review inquired into Victoria Police field contact policy and processes, data monitoring and receipting and Victoria Police relationships and recommended changes including increasing training

on field contact policy and processes to all members and recruits as part of the foundation training program.

Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission (2015) *Predatory Behaviour by Victoria Police Officers against Vulnerable Persons*

This report examined key trends and issues in sexual predatory behaviour by police against vulnerable persons in the community. It highlighted challenges with workplace culture and cases of tacit acceptance of poor behaviour due to inadequate supervision and management. It found ‘standards of supervision and management are critical to setting a benchmark for acceptable behaviour and preventing predatory behaviour’ (p. 14).

Two major reviews, the *Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission Independent Review into Sex Discrimination and Sexual Harassment including Predatory Behaviour in Victoria Police* (‘VEOHRC Review’) and the *Victoria Police Mental Health Review* were released recently. These two reviews reinforce themes identified in the consultations, including the need for greater career mobility, capability building and education and training, which are areas of focus for the Board, as discussed below.

The VEOHRC Review (2015)

The VEOHRC Review identified widespread sexual harassment and sex discrimination across Victoria Police impacting on female police officers’ career progression, retention and welfare within the organisation. The report observed the capability of the organisation suffers from female police officers not being able to fulfil their potential.

The Review made a range of recommendations for change, all of which have been accepted by Victoria Police. It reinforced the importance of Victoria Police continuing to implement the *Victoria Police Education Master Plan* noting that the long term goals set out in the Plan provide ‘a good platform for the recommendations of this Review and seeks to build Victoria Police’ professionalism, its learning culture and its capability and capacity’. The Review stated:

‘...the Master Plan envisages a reorientation of investment of training effort and resources into the Office of the Constable to build professionalisation beyond traditional functional duties to enable them to “adopt a professional identity and internalise professional values”’ (p. 233).

The Review recommended an independent Academic Governance Board on education and training. The Deputy President of the Professional Standards Division is sitting on this Board.

Findings relating to performance, capability and capability development include:

- There were gaps in leadership capabilities at executive levels in relation to gender equality and preventing sexual discrimination;
- Training and education in people management was generally a low priority and under-funded;
- There were barriers to opportunities and access to training particularly for women;

- The characteristics or attributes needed to be a 'good police officer' reflect norms of masculinity;
- Operational and technical capability tends to be rewarded and valued in promotion and selection decisions over other forms of capability, particularly relating to people management. The development of people-focused leadership and management skills was especially important at the front-line Sergeant and Senior Sergeant ranks;
- Workplace values and behaviours are not seen as an essential element of workplace performance; and
- There is a lack of value placed on external experience.

These findings together highlight the importance of:

- Increasing the understanding of the types of capabilities required at different ranks, including those related to people-focused leadership;
- Understanding and developing the kinds of training, opportunities and experiences which will develop these capabilities, including external experience; and
- Human resources processes and systems that ensure the best candidate for a role (especially for front-line managers) is selected, having regard to these desirable capabilities. The Board's role in conducting promotion appeals (Review Division) is part of this process.

Workforce flexibility and career mobility is another issue which emerged in the Review and is of particular relevance to the Board's registration functions. The Review found a lack of career mobility and workforce flexibility impacts disproportionately on women's retention and promotion. The Review noted the lack of value placed on externally acquired experience and non-traditional career pathways and that accessing workplace flexibility tended to have negative career consequences. Recommendations included reviewing and improving arrangements relating to flexible work and promotion pathways, noting such measures would ultimately benefit all staff.

Victoria Police Mental Health Review (2016)

Victoria Police commissioned an independent review into the mental health of its employees. This Review also highlighted the importance of 'people-focused' leadership capabilities, namely:

'...qualities and behaviours including: integrity (i.e., values-grounded behaviours and congruence between actions and words); role modelling expected behaviours and values; empathy; effective communication; self-awareness; demonstrating understanding of the issues employees face; respectful interactions e.g., listening well and talking to anyone (regardless of rank or level) in the same way; transparent decision-making; building clarity and accountability for results and behaviours; and proactively initiating supportive conversations with at-risk individuals' (2016, p. 38).

The Review recommended collaboration with the PRSB around career break options:

'Recommendation 38: As part of the VicPol Mental Health Strategy, further consultation should be undertaken with the Police Registration and Services Board, to develop appropriate career break options, including:

- Planned (and unplanned) career breaks;
- Expansion of leave without pay policy;

- Review staff funding and counting model; and
- Consider the existing process around suspension of police powers (VP Act s.54) for extended periods of absence' (p. 13).

The Review noted process and policy challenges with the current approach to LWOP and highlighted potential mental and physical benefits for members of increased access to LWOP and secondments to less stressful temporary roles within or external to Victoria Police. The Review observed a growing organisational understanding of the benefits of members working in other sectors or fields.

The following considerations (including potential barriers and likely benefits) for enhancement of career break options were noted by the Review team:

- Broadening the accessibility of LWOP would require recruiting to provide backfill as part of the organisational structure and capacity and an acceptance that this was the reasonable cost of doing business. Staff funding and counting model would need variation.
- Strategic change could reduce the cost of absence and WorkCover premiums;
- Other benefits include allowing people to have other experiences and return to policing and providing respite from the demands of policing;
- There was potential for expansion of career breaks and to allow temporary work placements in other agencies, sectors and parts of the police force for personal and wellbeing reasons; and potential expansion of work opportunities during LWOP; and
- The PRSB has a strong interest in external mobility initiatives and collaboration with the Registration Division was proposed. Consolidation and expansion of the Police Profession Register process provides a base for management of some career breaks.

3.4 The National Professionalisation Agenda

The Standing Council on Police and Emergency Management outlined priorities for policing organisations to ensure a shared vision and commitment to public safety and security in *Directions in Australia and New Zealand Policing 2012-2015* (2012). It stated 'commitment to advancing the professionalisation of policing signals that policing is focused on providing the best possible service to communities' (p.15).

Professionalism and professionalisation feature in the principles and directions (table 5). Important dimensions of professionalisation are identified as 'leadership development and training and education'.

Table 5: Directions in Australia New Zealand Policing 2012-2015

Principle – Professionalism	Directions 4.3 Professionalisation
<p>Policing organisations should ensure professionalism is evident in the leadership and conduct of all employees by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promoting individual integrity and ethical behaviour • building respectful cultures • implementing strategies which enhance professionalism (p. 6) 	<p>Policing organisations should advance the professionalisation of policing and strive for the highest standards of organisational and individual integrity by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developing and implementing a comprehensive professionalisation strategy • working towards consistent standards for education and training, including alignment with Australia and New Zealand national education systems • ensuring a continuous focus on ethics • implementing strategies to identify and eliminate corruption (p. 14).

Australia New Zealand Police Advisory Agency

The Australia New Zealand Police Advisory Agency (ANZPAA) is leading the vision of professionalisation at the national level.

ANZPAA worked with the Australia New Zealand Council of Police Professionalisation (ANZCoPP) to develop and publish *The Australia New Zealand Police Professionalisation Strategy 2013-2018* ('the Strategy') (2013). ANZCoPP is a body made up of the Chief Commissioners of each jurisdiction and the national police unions for Australia and New Zealand.

The *Strategy* builds on the *Directions in Australia New Zealand Policing 2012-2015*, outlined above. The purposes of the Strategy is to align Australian and New Zealand projects and activities into one strategic document, to improve cross-jurisdictional coordination and visibility of activities and provide a single point of reference to support leaders in guiding professionalisation activities.

The *Strategy* is guided by three professionalisation principles: community trust and confidence; ethics and integrity, and transparency and accountability. It sets out three interlinked 'professional domains' setting out the activities and projects which aim for the ultimate strategic outcome of strengthening policing through a professionalised police service:

- **Police education and training** (*police practice levels, police practice standard levels and guidelines, police qualifications*). The desired outputs are: more police achieving practice standards and qualifications and guidelines being used in training and development programs.
- **Police professional development** (*leadership and executive development; occupational mobility; continuous professional development and professional certification or registration*). The desired outputs are: executive leadership is supported; certification and registration assessed; resource sharing in projects; continuing professional development trialled.

- **Police knowledge** (*connected body of policing knowledge, research, academic partnerships*). The desired outputs are: research connected to a policing body of knowledge; evidence informed policing practice; cross-jurisdictional knowledge exchange; and research partnerships.

The themes and concepts outlined in the Strategy were reflected in the Board's consultations.

ANZPAA has developed police practice levels and training and education guidelines to help establish consistent training and education standards for policing across jurisdictions. ANZPAA are currently in the process of transitioning the ANZPAA Education and Training Guidelines for the Practice Level of Police Officer to a Practice Standard.

In addition, ANZPAA has canvassed options for a national system involving certification, registration and continuing professional development. The relationship between the Victorian registration scheme and the national professionalisation agenda is discussed further in section 5 of this report.

4. SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS



This section provides a brief summary of the findings from the consultations. Appendix 5 outlines the full findings including quotes from participants which usefully illuminate the different perspectives on police professionalisation.

Current state of the profession of policing in Victoria

- Most participants expressed the view that policing has not yet attained professional status.
- There was a lack of understanding and clarity about the term ‘professionalisation’.
- Professionalisation was viewed as a continuum or journey. Improvements in education and training, reforms and innovations undertaken by Victoria Police, shifting trends in recruitment in Victoria and a high level of accountability were examples of police professionalisation.
- The limited opportunities and expectations for ongoing education and training of police officers, clear standards of practice and educational attainment at different ranks and workforce mobility and transferability are the main areas that participants considered as lacking for policing to be recognised as a profession.
- Some participants consider that policing requires a tertiary qualification to be recognised as a profession.
- In the national arena, the development of police practice levels and education and training guidelines were cited as key success factors in the national police professionalisation journey.

The benefits of police professionalisation

- Participants highlighted the importance of clarifying the value of police professionalisation for stakeholders. There were benefits identified for individual police officers, policing organisations, the community and government.
- The key reason to pursue police professionalisation was to provide better and more consistent service to the community.
- Participants identified a range of other benefits for police professionalisation such as: elevating and advancing the profession, protecting the profession, broadening career opportunities for members, attracting and retaining a workforce fit for purpose and professional status and recognition.

Aspirational vision of police professionalisation

- Participants drew on various other professional models during the consultations, but some participants queried whether those models were necessarily relevant or appropriate for policing.
- Professionalisation of policing involves interrelated components of: professional standards, education and training, the body of policing knowledge and registration.

- The vision of professional education and training encompasses initial education and training and continuous professional development.
- While some participants viewed tertiary education as a critical component in the future of police professionalisation, others challenged this view and questioned whether tertiary education as a pre-condition of entry to the profession would produce the most suitable recruits.
- Standards were described in different ways – a common view is that standards refer to capabilities, knowledge and skills required at entry level and to operate in the profession at different ranks.
- Professional standards in a profession also have an ethical and behavioural dimension. Professionalism requires a focus on developing an ability to work ethically throughout a person's career.
- There was potential for the current registration scheme to evolve. Some participants perceived the next step to be the registration of officers from other jurisdictions.
- Full registration of all police officers was identified as an option, although some participants questioned its value in a single employer state.
- Overall, the aspirational vision for the majority of participants is a national police professionalisation scheme.

The role of the PRSB

- Participants highlighted independence as being an important trait of the Board.
- The majority of the participants highlighted the value of the Board to Victoria, including the development of fresh perspectives on policing and providing the community with confidence that police officers meet minimum standards.
- The Board was perceived as playing a role in testing and challenging Victoria Police's standards rather than setting standards.
- Some participants viewed the Board as being a catalyst for shifting police culture, in particular improving attitudes towards former members and understanding the value of career mobility.
- The Board's role was viewed as advisory rather than regulatory.
- The Board could also contribute to thinking about the future of the profession of policing in Victoria in addition to helping progress the national police professionalisation agenda.

Moving forward

- Participants highlighted that elements of police culture (in particular, negative attitudes towards the return of former members and members taking breaks from policing) were key barriers in building upon the current registration scheme.
- The enterprise bargaining process was viewed by some as a potential enabler and by others as a potential barrier to reform.
- The need to engage with police members, police unions, community and government and gain support and commitment for police professionalisation within senior command of Victoria Police was identified as critical to the success of professionalisation initiatives.

- Maintaining links to the national professionalisation work was identified as an enabler for Victoria and for the national professionalisation agenda.
- Managing change effectively and approaching change incrementally were identified as important.

5. DISCUSSION

The consultations strengthen the Board's understanding of the police professionalisation agenda and its value to policing and the broader community in order to develop a clear strategic direction for the Board.

The Board has also been informed by current Victoria Police Strategic planning documents, findings from recent external reviews on Victoria Police practice (section 3) and the literature on police professionalisation (Appendix 3).

5.1 Police professionalisation in Victoria

There is a lack of clarity about the meaning of 'professionalisation' and what the profession should look like. Participants noted a tendency for 'professionalisation' to be used as a 'catch all' for policing reforms or innovations. Although the term is used frequently in strategic documents and reviews there is a lack of a single coherent strategy or vision for police professionalisation in Victoria.

I just don't think we have had a level of discussion in policing around what a profession is....

We are caught in that in-between space, we like to call ourselves a profession but we are just tinkering around the edges.

Professionalisation was viewed as a continuum or journey. Some noted that progress has been made at a national level, in particular with the development of the ANZPAA Practice Levels and Education and Training Guidelines for the Police Practice Standards Model (PPSM). Shifting trends towards older and better qualified recruits, a high level of accountability of police officers, improvements in education and training and other reforms and innovations undertaken by Victoria Police were all cited as examples of professionalisation. Participants drew a connection between the themes identified in the *Blue Paper* and the *Education Plan Master Plan* and police professionalisation.

For most participants, policing has not yet attained full professional status. Policing was viewed to fall short of being a profession in a number of ways. Participants noted the limited expectations and opportunities for police officers to engage in continuing professional development throughout a career in policing in comparison to other professions.

...whilst there is a lot of rhetoric around training and development, the test for me is some people come out of the Academy and they work for thirty years and they barely touch training and development after that initial academy stint.

There were strongly divergent opinions from participants about the desirable level of qualification for entry. Some participants viewed a pre-requisite higher education qualification as essential for policing to achieve the status of a profession. Other participants expressed concern that tertiary level entry requirements may pose barriers to attracting the most suitable recruits. This issue is discussed further, below.

Career mobility was viewed as an important attribute of other professions such as teaching and nursing and one which was lacking in policing. The registration schemes in these professions enable practitioners to

What else is missing out of professionalisation ...the capacity to move in and out of the profession or between streams of the profession so from one agency to another and back again seamlessly. We are a long, long way from that.

take a break but still maintain their currency and status as a member of the profession. Career mobility was viewed both in terms of the ability for police members to move in and out of policing jurisdictions or law enforcement agencies, or to take a break from policing, for mental health, family responsibilities such as caring for children or to pursue other career opportunities.

Clear professional standards were viewed as a missing component in policing at present. Standards were described variably as capabilities, capability requirements, competencies, professional standards, performance standards, skills sets and practice standards. For the most part participants viewed standards as defining what a modern constable looks like and what they are expected to achieve both on entry and for progression in the profession.

There is some stuff there about defining the different combinations of skills that add up to a rank. We are still as a default one size fits all.

I think there is probably some appetite to link professionalisation with very concrete outcomes for people in terms of career progression.

Professional standards in a profession also have an ethical and behavioural dimension. While generally there was considered to be a high level of accountability in policing in Victoria, some participants observed that there was a lack of focus on developing an ability to work ethically throughout a person's career. The notion of a professional being self-regulated where individuals take responsibility for adhering to the standards of a profession themselves and holding other members of the profession to account were viewed by some stakeholders as important principles underlying professionalism.

We are fabulous at responding to the crises... but it's the pro-active stuff that we don't do as well ... professionalisation has to be both sides of that. You need to hold people to account ... but you need to have a means of actually encouraging and developing people to have the right professional standards and I think that's the part we missed.

The real danger of the basic skills stuff is you do it once to get into the force and then 25 years pass and you have never revisited what it means to be ethical.

A few participants described an absence of looking outward or engaging with police work from the perspective of asking what the community needs and values. It was felt that this kind of external focus and "community lens" was needed for policing to truly achieve the status of a profession.

...we don't think about it sufficiently in terms of what police professionalism means for community and how would that increase the level of trust and respect and engagement with police. We lose sight of the community lens in terms of professionalism

Some participants observed that policing qualifications and experience are not well recognised outside policing and not well aligned to other professions. Within policing, there was a tendency to view the policing skills set as unique, not transferable and unable to be developed in other professions and sectors. This was viewed as a disadvantage for police officers who wanted to leave policing to pursue other careers and for members who have acquired skills and experience externally.

We make an assumption that we are quite unique, in some ways we are and in some ways we are not. There is certainly a range of skills that are transferable, like governance skills, leadership skills, financial skills, project management skills, people skills, none of those are unique to policing. They can be acquired in a whole lot of different spaces.

Comparing policing with other professions presents challenges. Other professional models may not be readily transferable to policing (or necessarily desirable). One important difference between policing and other professions is that there is a single employer in the State responsible for: setting standards for entry and career progress, holding members of the profession to account and the delivery of initial and ongoing education and training. In other professions, where there are multiple employers these various roles are undertaken by a range of external organisations including professional regulators, accreditation bodies and independent providers of education and training.

Victoria's relationship to the national professionalisation agenda

The Board has focussed this report on issues and steps that can be taken to support police professionalisation which are specific to Victoria. The Board notes there is strong support for a national professionalisation scheme based on common national standards and registration. A number of participants saw the potential to test out some of the concepts being explored in the national arena in Victoria, which may in turn help progress the full implementation of the national police professionalisation strategy. Others noted that it was desirable that any model developed in Victoria be complementary to a national approach, or at least, not act as a barrier to any future national model.

Eventually I would see it has to be a national model with one set of standards that everybody meets, so some of that work that ANZPAA has been doing... getting that work into reality

My thinking around this is that Victoria is just going to be the leader in this for a national outcome somewhere along the way.

The Board takes the view that the development of a national scheme for police registration or certification is the ideal in the longer-term, noting national schemes have been developed (after many years of effort) for the various health professions and lawyers consistent with the COAG national reform agenda. Such a scheme is an element of the ANZPAA *Strategy*, outlined earlier. Victoria's efforts, while focussed at present on outcomes for the State, may provide a platform for participation in bilateral mutual recognition arrangements between jurisdictions or any national scheme which may eventually emerge. Given that Victoria is the first jurisdiction to undertake registration, albeit in a limited form, the Board can contribute learnings from the development and implementation of the Police Profession Register to any such national discussions.

5.2 Elements of police professionalisation

The literature on the policing profession (see Appendix 3) suggests there is a lack of definitive agreement about the key elements or attributes of the policing profession. The core elements of four recent models (Table 6) illustrate the different ways police professionalisation has been conceptualised at the national level. While there are some distinctive elements, all models address initial education and training, continuous professional development, registration and standards.

Table 6: The core elements of four recent models of police professionalisation

Australian Police Staff College (1990)	Police Commissioners Conference (Lanyon 2009, 2010)	Australia New Zealand Policing Advisory Agency (2013)	Police Federation of Australia (2013)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National recruitment standards - Registration - Mobility - Tertiary qualification, tertiary education network & shared funding arrangements - Curriculum - National accredited courses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Definition of profession of policing - University-based education for policing - Body of knowledge - Ongoing professional development - Registration and standards - Professional body for policing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Practice levels - Practice guidelines and standards - Certification and registration - Continuing professional development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National registration, including standards of policing practice, police ethics, a police code of conduct and professional membership - Workforce mobility - High quality education and training - Rigorous and responsive assessment of overseas trained police - Continuous professional development

Based on its consultations, the literature and the ANZPAA *Strategy*, the Board has identified broad and interconnected elements of police professionalisation in Victoria:

- A **body of policing knowledge** which members both contribute to and engage with through a commitment to continuing professional development, sharing of knowledge and techniques, and commitment to research;
- Clearly articulated **professional standards** including capabilities required for entry and at each rank, education and training standards;
- **Ethical conduct standards** which comprise the shared values and expectations of members of the policing profession;
- High quality **education and training qualifications and programs** including a foundation qualification, promotional programs and continuous professional development; and
- A **registration scheme** which supports **career mobility** between policing and other occupations and between policing jurisdictions;

Underpinning these elements are notions of a ‘profession’ being self-regulated and self-organising, in the service of the community. Profession members are personally committed to continuous professional learning, to contributing to the profession’s body of knowledge, committing voluntarily to shared codes of ethics and conduct and to other actions which enhance the profession as a whole.

Developing the body of policing knowledge

A shared body of knowledge is recognised in the literature as an underpinning of 'professionalisation'. While a strong feature in the literature and the ANZPAA *Strategy*, overall, the profession body of knowledge was a relatively minor theme in the consultations.

In other professions (such as law, teaching, medical and allied professions) members of the profession have a role and duty to undertake 'practitioner inquiry' and then to contribute to the shared body of knowledge through experiential learning and identification and dissemination of knowledge and best practices. Knowledge is shared through published papers, journals, conferences and other forms of engagement. Sharing knowledge allows faster progress in developing better practices, benefits individual members of the profession, improves the standing of the profession as a whole, and more importantly, benefits the community, through improving the quality of the services provided by the profession.

The profession of policing will not emerge in the true sense until its practitioners engage in the examination of their own practice. Practitioner-led research is necessary to build the knowledge base of the profession. Dissemination of that knowledge to other practitioners is critical (See: Green and Gates (2014); Bradley and Nixon (2009)).

The recent launch of a new journal titled *Police Science: The Australia and New Zealand Journal of Evidence Based Policing* (ANZSEBP) is a further promising sign of such practitioner-led development and dissemination of policing knowledge. The journal aims to share learnings about 'what works' (and doesn't) in police practice, based on evidence, to members of the profession. The founders were explicit about the role they see the journal playing in developing a shared professional body of knowledge for police to be applied 'into the streets' through police practitioners. The journal will share information and seek to engage police with the research and learning that affects their profession.

Chief Superintendent Alex Murray stated in the launch edition: 'The trouble is that real change will not take place in policing unless the police themselves drive that change and design the future for a professional service' (2016, p. 9). He went on to set out the vital importance of a culture of continuous and reflective learning.

There is a need to further explore how members can be encouraged to contribute to, and engage with, the policing body of knowledge throughout their careers. Other professions may provide models for driving such changes. Potential means of police officers engaging with a professional body of knowledge (both as contributors and beneficiaries) include:

- Foundation education and training;
- Promotion-based development and training programs (noting that the body of policing knowledge provides a basis for the descriptors used in professional standards and in setting required qualifications);
- Options for encouraging (or requiring) continuing professional development (training, publications, shared research, peer to peer learning, use of e-learning and other technologies, incentives and mandatory schemes);
- Support for the creation of practitioner-led specialist interest groups or communities of practice (local, state and national) including the option of specialist accreditation. There are a number of successful examples such as the Australia New Zealand Police Advisory

Agency (ANZPAA) e-crime working group which fosters intelligence gathering, sharing and collaboration between agencies, develops capabilities to combat capability gaps and educates the community and the work of the Society for Evidence Based Policing;

- The development of state and national practice standards and education and training guidelines (such as those published by ANZPAA in the areas of family violence, community engagement and policing issues involving mental illness).

Professional Standards: The capabilities, attributes, qualities of a professional police officer

Clearly articulated standards for police officers which reflect community expectations are an important component of police professionalisation.

Participants used a range of different terms, such as: standards, capabilities, capability requirements, competencies, education standards, professional standards, skills sets and practice standards. For the most part, regardless of the terminology used, participants were referring to members having the core capabilities required on entry into the profession and then as they progress up the ranks, as well as any specialist capabilities needed for particular policing roles.

Professional standards also encapsulate ethics and integrity, for example, the capacity to solve problems using ethical thinking and an understanding that *how* policing work is undertaken is vitally important to the community, as well as the outcomes achieved.

Ethics and integrity were viewed as a critical element of policing professionalisation and of a professional police officer by participants, but often viewed as related but separate to ‘capabilities’. There is an overlap: the knowledge and capacity to use methodologies to think and act ethically and to engage with concepts such as human rights, are also ‘capabilities’.

The Board considers that ‘professional standards’ therefore comprises:

- Capabilities at entry, for each rank and for specialisation
- Education and training standards
- Ethical codes and conduct standards.

All these standards inform initial and ongoing education and training as well as provide a baseline for registration. Ethical standards also are directly related to the profession’s disciplinary system.

The Board notes that Victoria Police have written standards in place which outline the desired capabilities, behaviour and values of the workforce (including the Sworn Capability Profiles and Professional Ethical Standards together with various directions and instructions within the Victoria Police Manual). Victoria Police has recently developed a comprehensive Capability Framework in response to recent reviews and the requirements of 21st century, professional policing.

Professional education and training

Professional education and training comprises initial education and training, promotional programs and continuous professional development.

The profession of policing requires high standards of education and training for entry into the profession which reflect the capabilities required of police officers today and in the future and build a capacity for members to act ethically and as highly-skilled problem solvers.

Continuing professional development was seen by all participants as critical to policing achieving professional status. This requires clear expectations that members are responsible for continuing to engage in professional development throughout their careers in order to maintain and develop required capabilities and engage with the policing body of knowledge. The Board acknowledges that increasing opportunities and expectations for continuing professional development is a clear goal of Victoria Police's *Education Master Plan* and that Victoria Police are in the process of implementing this plan.

The role of tertiary qualifications in preparing police officers for a career in policing divided participants. There is no doubt that a tertiary qualification is the requisite pathway into other professions and the term 'profession' is strongly associated with degree level qualifications. Other professions (such as law, teaching and nursing) have made the transition from what was initially a purely workplace-based training model to one which included elements of formal tertiary study, to a final model where a tertiary degree is a prerequisite for admission to the profession.

The question of tertiary study also needs to be seen in terms of long-term trend towards a much more highly educated population. Completion of high school was once a level of educational attainment well above the community average - this is no longer the case. In 1971, only 3 per cent of the population held bachelor degrees: that number will soon rise to near 40 per cent. The community in general is now much more highly educated. However, high school remains the entry standard for policing, while at the same time, policing (like other occupations) has become much more complex and intellectually demanding.

There are different schools of thought in relation to educational pre-requisites for entry into policing. One is that a requirement to hold an undergraduate degree would unnecessarily exclude recruits with valuable life experience, who reflect the community they serve and who are capable of learning on the job and providing excellent service. The evidence on the benefit of police having degree qualifications to service quality is unclear.

Another perspective is that the complexity and intellectual demands of modern policing mean that a degree qualification is now essential to perform police work at the required standard. Rounded educational experience also produces police practitioners who have the capacity to research and analyse, engage with and disseminate the professional body of knowledge. Education also supports the creation of communities of practice and practitioner-led transformations in how policing is done.

The question of which level of government bears the cost of police education and training is also a 'real world' factor influencing the making of such decisions.

There are a range of possible alternative models including a diploma qualification prior to recruitment, with further study after recruitment being applied to the award of a degree or holding of a degree as a prerequisite for promotion beyond a certain rank.

The Board recognises modern policing is significantly more complex than in years past and now involves a significantly greater body of professional knowledge and need for skills and capacity to engage in analysis and critical thinking. The Board also recognises the importance of developing approaches specific to policing rather than simply replicating other models of professional training.

The Board does not have a view at present about the desirability of tertiary qualifications as a pre-requisite to entry, and has not been asked to give this advice. This question requires careful and continued consideration by Victoria Police, Government and stakeholders. As Victoria Police

continues to recruit more people with undergraduate degrees, it would be useful to conduct research to identify underlying factors (including educational attainment) which may contribute to quality of service. This debate will continue to develop and will be informed by progress in implementing the national ANZPAA *Australian New Zealand Police Professionalisation Strategy and Police Practice Standards Model* (PPSM), experiences of other jurisdictions in Australia and internationally⁶, the Victoria Police *Capability Plan* and the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF).

Registration

A registration process was seen to be a key element in professionalising policing both to enable career mobility and development for members as well as a means of providing an assurance to the community that practitioners meet the requisite capabilities and character standards required for practice in the profession. Most participants viewed national registration of police as the ideal. This is not surprising as registration is of most value in the context of ensuring similar standards apply across multiple employers.

Participants discussed the benefits of the current registration scheme in helping facilitate career mobility for former members and for current members taking career breaks for personal, family or career development reasons.

Participants discussed opportunities to extend and advance the registration scheme in the future. Registering police from other jurisdictions was suggested by a number of members as a possible next step. Participants highlighted potential benefits in terms of benchmarking Victorian standards and approaches and facilitating lateral entry for talented police officers from other jurisdictions.

Currently, only former Victoria Police members can be registered. A registration process involving all members of Victoria Police (including current members) was discussed by some participants as a possible future development. Registration would then operate as a license to practice the profession of policing in Victoria (in the same way that registration by the Victorian Institute of Teaching allows a person to work as a teacher in the State). While a few participants noted some advantages, others struggled to identify the public value of such a requirement, given that there is a single employer of police in Victoria. These stakeholders viewed full registration as having utility only in the context of any national scheme or register which would allow for a truly national mobile police workforce, allowing people to move between jurisdictions.

Further work would be needed to identify the value of a full registration model for Victoria. Further expansion of the registration scheme should be considered in the context of any national or bilateral developments. There are four potential sequential phases which would expand upon the current scheme (registration of former members) and develop towards a full national police profession registration scheme:

Phase 1: Engage in the registration of Victoria Police members seeking to take LWOP or secondment, as well as former members (that is, move to a full activation of the current Victorian legislative scheme);

⁶ The Charles Sturt University and NSW Police Force Associate Degree in Policing Practice could provide a good starting point for better understanding advantages in adopting an external higher education model. In addition, the UK College of Policing are developing a Policing Education Qualifications Framework (PEQF) which may inform developments in Victoria.

- Phase 2:** Registration of police officers from other jurisdictions on the Victorian Register. This could also involve bilateral arrangements between jurisdictions to allow mutual recognition of capabilities and facilitation of transfers and secondments of police between jurisdictions;
- Phase 3:** Full registration of all Victorian police officers (current and former Victoria Police members);
- Phase 4:** Full registration of all members of the police profession (current and former) within a national registration scheme.

Moving between each such phase of registration would require detailed exploration and analysis of the costs and benefits in consultation with key stakeholders. The Board is focussing on phase 1 and 2 as these represent its current authorising environment under the *Victoria Police Act 2013*.

5.3 The value proposition for police professionalisation

Participants noted that there were multiple beneficiaries of police professionalisation including individual police members, Victoria Police, the Victorian community and government. These potential benefits for different groups ('value propositions') are discussed in detail in Appendix 5.

The Board has identified five overlapping value propositions:

- Professionalisation can deliver better and more consistent services to the community – Professionalisation can increase 'community confidence' in policing, raise or ensure consistent standards of policing and ensure police are more responsive to community needs. Professionalisation protects the quality of policing services provided to the public by identifying the skills and capabilities required for practice and by excluding those who have not met those standards.
- Professionalisation facilitates career mobility – Professionalisation can enhance opportunities and choices for police officers to move in and out of policing or between policing employers by improving the recognition and transferability of their skills. Common standards and approaches will support inter-jurisdictional operability, approaches to cross-border crime, joint taskforces and transfer of skills and learning between jurisdictions.
- Members of professions enjoy status and standing in the community and financial rewards which acknowledge and reward the expertise required and the value of policing to the community. Professional status can assist police employers to compete to recruit talented individuals who may otherwise be attracted to careers with greater public status. Professionalisation recognises the complexity and value of police work and the high level of expertise and intellectual challenges involved. Professionalisation provides individuals with recognition and status consistent with other professions.
- Professionalisation contributes to a culture of continuous, self-directed professional development and learning and to a co-operative endeavour of building and disseminating a body of professional knowledge and best practice. This grows the individual capabilities of police practitioners, builds the organisational capabilities of Victoria Police and ultimately, provides better police services to the community.

- A contestable value proposition is that professionalisation can protect members of profession from competition – the process of registration and other pre-conditions of employment can protect the policing profession from untrained practitioners and risks of privatisation or outsourcing of functions to non-police. Professionalisation can be used to define the core work that only members of the police profession should be given a social licence to perform.

While there are important benefits to individual police members, the Board considers the primary goal of professionalisation to enhance policing services for the community. This reflects the core purpose of policing itself: which is ‘to serve the Victorian community and uphold the law so as to promote a safe, secure and orderly society’ (Victoria Police Act 2013). This is consistent with the rationale of pursuing professionalisation articulated in both the *Education Master Plan* and the *Directions in Australia and New Zealand Policing 2012-2015*.

A number of participants highlighted the importance of identifying a clear ‘value proposition’ for police professionalisation and for the Board itself. The value propositions identified above will be further explored by the Board with stakeholders.

What value could the Board contribute to professionalisation?

Participants viewed the Board’s value to provide an independent perspective on policing. The Board could:

- represent the community’s interests (applying a ‘community lens’ to policing);
- look outwards rather than inwards and therefore introduce best practice from other police jurisdictions in Australia and overseas and from other sectors and professions;
- remain independent of individuals, institutions and governments, and
- be a catalyst to help shift police culture.

Some participants identified a desire for the Board to operate in a higher order space in terms of elevating or highlighting the status of policing as a profession and helping shape the future of the profession in Victoria.

It was also noted that there are other organisations involved in standard setting and supporting police (including The Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission; Australian New Zealand Policing Advisory Agency (ANZPAA), as the cross-jurisdictional agency pursuing the national police professionalisation agenda, and the Australian Institute of Police Management).

5. CONCLUSION: THE BOARD'S ROLE



Professionalisation is a dynamic, evolving and iterative process. The Board's professional standards, registration, review and general functions each support and help advance efforts to professionalise policing in this state. The Board can contribute to helping to better define 'professionalisation' and contribute to a strategic vision for the profession.

This Report will be the foundation for the Board's strategic direction and future work plans and support the Board to make a strong and informed contribution to the policing profession in Victoria.

The Board's role in professionalisation is relatively new. The Board has some of the functions of other professional regulators (such as the Victoria Institute of Teaching), but one fundamental difference: the Board's roles relates to a single employer, Victoria Police. Ultimately, Victoria Police is responsible for decisions on who to employ, for setting standards for entry and promotion, education and training and for conduct. The Board's registration role may be seen as advisory, as Victoria Police is not obliged to re-employ a registrant.

The true value of the Board's registration functions lay in supporting and facilitating career mobility: to facilitate and support members to be able to move to other employers and return with their externally-acquired skills appropriately recognised. Registration also serves to protect the public by ensuring returning members can perform safely at the required standard after an absence. The Board has a role in encouraging greater understanding of the benefits of mobility, for individuals, the organisation and the community.

The Board's review functions (of discipline outcomes and promotion and transfer decisions) are not the focus of this paper. It is noted however that some review matters highlight issues related to professionalisation, such as the need for particular approaches and capabilities, including those relating to leadership, inter-personal behaviours and ethical decision-making. In its promotion appeal functions, the Board assesses competing candidates for "aptitude, qualifications, merit, diligence, good conduct, quality of service, mental capacity and physical fitness." The professionalisation themes explored in this Paper will also guide the Board's approach to its appeal function.

The Board has a specific role to 'support' and 'promote' continuing professional development and has identified possible activities for the longer term consistent with this role:

- The development of self-directed learning and professional development tools
- Developing and promoting 'peer to peer' learning models, tools, guides or resources
- Certification and specialisation models (for example, see the Society for Evidence based Policing on-line certification program)
- Brokerage of external CPD programs
- Hosting seminars or 'alumni' type engagement activities, particularly in relation to supporting the maintenance of currency of policing skills for police profession registrants

- Building tools or models for the development of communities of practice, practitioner-led training or conference or specialisation communities to assist police officers initiate and engage in developing their own professional body of knowledge. An example of such a model is the development of peer-led, legal specialisation groups by the Law Institute of Victoria. Highly experienced profession members work with the legal community to undertake training, share professional knowledge and to certify practitioners as ‘specialists’ in the field.

It should be noted that although similarly named, the Board’s professional standards functions do not duplicate the functions of Professional Standards Command which is responsible for oversight of ethical standards, integrity, investigation of breaches and the application of legal or disciplinary consequences. Through its Professional Standards advisory functions, the Board could make a valuable contribution to:

- Consistent with the Capability Plan, defining the qualities and capabilities required of police officers, especially those involving ethical thinking, people-focused leadership, problem solving, approach to learning and development and other qualities connected with professionalism; and
- The types of education, training and professional development (including ‘peer to peer’ learning) which most effectively develop these capabilities.

The Board may provide advice to the Chief Commissioner on matters related to any of its functions and can take matters on reference from the Chief Commissioner or the Minister. Under this function, the Board could undertake reviews, environmental scans, research projects, engagement, facilitation or consultation activities and other types of reviews or projects.

The Board’s independence is an advantage in engaging in such activities, as is the composition of the Board. Members of the Board guide the overall strategic direction of the Board and contribute their personal and professional expertise and experience. The Board is structured under the Act to be comprised of nominees of the Chief Commissioner and the Police Association (who participate in their own right rather than as agents) providing the perspectives of the police profession as a whole. The Board also includes members who are academics, lawyers and people with broad organisational and community experience.

The value to Victoria Police, the profession and the community of the Board’s activities may be described as a broad agenda of independent quality improvement, including:

- Identifying emerging and innovative practices from other jurisdictions or employers ;
- Through its governance structure, providing a perspective made up of varied experience, expertise and perspectives, which also provides a means for broader community views and interests to be taken into account;
- Approaching issues with a wider lens and body of knowledge, beyond policing, to encompass the learnings and practices of other professions, occupations and workplaces, avoiding the risk of siloed thinking or ‘police exceptionalism’;
- Identifying organisational needs and gaps, testing or challenging assumptions and approaches, identifying blind spots and acting as a ‘critical friend’; and
- Providing additional, focused and expert research and advisory capacity.

The Board can present a broad and independent perspective on policing issues, including the community's perspective, and encourage Victoria Police to explore new areas or to make changes. At the same time, there is strong value in collaboration including by identifying the areas where the Board's activities can deliver the greatest value and benefit to Victoria Police, members of the policing profession and the community. This is the approach which will inform the Board's development of its work program for 2017 and beyond.

The Board has planned a suite of projects to be developed and implemented over 2017 and 2018 which are strongly anchored in the professionalisation agenda and the findings of this Paper.

The Registration Division's major focus will be on projects which support career mobility and career breaks. The Board will undertake a scoping study of measures needed to expand career break options; a survey of former members to understand career paths and capabilities and measures to enhance the Board's assessment of capabilities and character. Other projects will seek to improve the user experience of navigating the registration and re-entry system and build an organisational culture which understands the potential value of externally acquired experience.

The Professional Standards Division will focus on exploring models for supporting professional development and specialisation and a project to examine learning models and norm-setting mechanisms relating to the avoidance of dual personal and professional relationships (the maintenance of professional distance or boundaries) between police officers and members of the public.

In developing these projects, the Board recognises that engaging effectively with stakeholders including members of the profession, Victoria Police, The Police Association and the community is critical to ensuring that approaches reflect the needs of police and the communities they serve.

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APPENDIX 1: CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

Areas of Inquiry:

Your thoughts on policing:

Past:

How do you see past efforts in trying to professionalise the role of police in Victoria?

What has worked? What hasn't?

What have been the key learning's about this to date?

Present:

As a profession how do you presently see policing in Victoria?

In regard to the professionalisation of policing - What's working well right now, and what is needed? What are the key issues that you see?

What mindsets exist that help or hinder? What are the mindsets that facilitate or impede the professionalisation of policing?

How do you see the role of your organisation/department in all of this? How do you presently see your own role in all of this?

How do you think others see the role of police professionalisation?

Future:

Do you see any opportunities for improvement at the moment?

In your view what does a mediocre, positive and then truly aspirational vision for the professionalisation of policing look like?

What are the key levers for change that you see right now? What is necessary to drive these levers for change? What would need to happen? As an independent statutory body, what or how do you see the role of PRSB in all of this?

What would be the key systemic blockers/barriers, to reaching a truly aspirational vision? What individual interests are at risk? What would you be willing to support or not?

What is needed from this PRSB process, what would success look like to you? Who else do we need to talk to or be involved in a process going forward?

What's missing: What's not being seen, talked about, or done? That is, are there any blindspots?

In what areas to start?

In all of this, what do you personally have energy for?

Finishing Up:

What important questions haven't I asked? What else do we need to know that hasn't been said?

APPENDIX 2: FORMER MEMBER DATA

Age and gender profile

- Three quarters of police members resigning were male
- Two thirds of the police members resigning were aged between 30-45 years of age
- Resignations peaked in the 35-40 age group for both males and females
- 90% of females were 45 years or below at the time of resigning, whereas a slightly lower proportion (81%) of males were 45 and below at the time of resigning

Ranks

- The majority (86%) of the resignations were constables and senior constables: 97% of the females who resigned in this period held the rank of constable and senior constable and a lower proportion (84%) of the males held the rank of constable and senior constable.
- There were 272 (11%) separations for members at the rank of sergeant or senior sergeant.
- There were only 43 separations (2%) in total at the rank of inspector and above.

Length of service

- The largest group (27%) of members had between 4-10 years length of service with Victoria Police.
- Males tended to have a longer length of service. Just under two thirds (64%) of female police officers who resigned had less than 10 years service. While just under a half (47%) of male police members who resigned had less than 10 years service.
- The majority (70%) of members whose age at time of resignation was 45 or above had 16 or more years of service at Victoria Police. In comparison under a third (30%) whose age at time of resignation was 45 or under had 16 years or more service.

Reasons for resigning

At the time of resignation members are asked to provide the main reason for their resignation from a series of standard responses⁷. Victoria Police reports on these responses by using the following categories:

- Leaving to State public sector
- Redeployed to Public sector
- Resigned - Commonwealth Public Sector
- Resigned - private sector
- Resigned - seek other employment
- Resigned - Self employed
- Resigned - care for family member
- Resigned - personal reasons
- Resigned – study

⁷ The data on reasons for resignation is collected through an End of Service Form which applicants fill out at the conclusion of their service with Victoria Police. Resigning employees are asked to identify the main reason for the cessation of their employment with Victoria Police.

- Resigned - unspecified.

Over half of the members (54%) cited employment related reasons for resigning from Victoria Police. This included almost one quarter (24%) who cited seeking other employment (although the sector they sought employment in was unspecified), leaving to state public sector, commonwealth public sector, private sector, or self-employment as the reason for resigning.

A small group resigned for either personal reasons (11%) or to care for a family member (4%). Both personal reasons and to care for a family member were more common reasons provided for resigning for females (25%) than males (11%). Only a small group (2%) cited further study as the reason for resigning.

Due to limitations in the collection method which rely on the former member to supply a reason for resigning in the end of service form on HR Assist, there is no data about reasons for leaving for just under one third (30%) of those resigning from Victoria Police.

APPENDIX 3: KEY THEMES FROM THE POLICE PROFESSIONALISATION LITERATURE

The Board undertook a review of the literature on police professionalisation to identify key themes. In particular the review sought to identify the ways in which police professionalisation has been defined in various models and different perspectives on police professionalisation.

Police professionalisation definitions and models

Professionalisation has been defined as the “transformation of an occupation into a profession” (Green and Gates 2014) and the process of achieving occupational closure or a ‘shelter’ from the labour market. The review of the literature reveals a multitude of definitions and models of ‘profession’ and ‘professionalism’ by practitioners, academics and other stakeholders with an interest in policing professionalisation. Common elements of a profession include: knowledge and skill in a body of expertise, commitment to an ethical code of how to practice and a significant degree of autonomy. Other common criteria used to define a profession include registration, membership, service to the community, a culture of life-long learning and reaccreditation and graduate level education. Table 7 describes the core elements of police professionalisation which have been explored by various commentators at the national level.

Table 7: The core elements of four recent models of police professionalisation

Australian Police Staff College (1990)	Police Commissioners Conference (Lanyon 2009, 2010)	Australia New Zealand Policing Advisory Agency (2013)	Police Federation of Australia (2013)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National recruitment standards - Registration - Mobility - Tertiary qualification, tertiary education network & shared funding arrangements - Curriculum - National accredited courses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Definition of profession of policing - University-based education for policing - Body of knowledge - Ongoing professional development - Registration and standards - Professional body for policing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Practice levels - Practice guidelines and standards - Certification and registration - Continuing professional development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National registration, including standards of policing practice, police ethics, a police code of conduct and professional membership - Workforce mobility - High quality education and training - Rigorous and responsive assessment of overseas trained police - Continuous professional development

Despite the lack of agreement on criteria, commentators have noted that there is common agreement on the criterion of an established body of knowledge. Heslop (2010) highlights the opportunities provided to policing in controlling a specialist body of policing knowledge, which is defined in three levels (based on the model of medical practitioners): foundation knowledge of police work, advanced theoretical knowledge and a coherent and consistent overarching policing philosophy.

Dale (2004) notes that professional control and application of the body of knowledge ensures members of the profession maintain standards, including ethical standards. The body of knowledge is the primary characteristic of a profession which serves as a resource and justification for other characteristics and structures associated with professions, such as professional bodies, training, standards of qualification and codes of conduct.

Professionalisation is strongly linked to the raising of police education standards and the 'academisation' of police (Green and Gates 2014). The literature has noted that policing has not progressed to deliver a professional education equivalent to other professions in the UK (Waddington 2008) and this seems to be the case across Australian jurisdictions. A key challenge is the potential gap between the theory of university programs and the valuing of experience-based knowledge which is characteristic of the practice of policing (Heslop and White 2011). This means that a model of professional police education should account for theory and the practical professional field experience and knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviour required for police work, including the instilling of an ethos of professionalism in students.

Professionalisation and police reform

The successful implementation of a professionalisation model may be impacted by the broader agenda of police reform. For instance, a prominent view in the literature is Stone and Travis's (2011) model of 'new' professionalism, favoured by the likes of Neyroud in the UK. The model consists of:

- Increased accountability: Accountability for crime, cost and conduct.
- Legitimacy: Legitimacy is conferred by law and earned through police professional integrity and public trust.
- Continuous innovation: Innovation in strategies, tactics and technologies, knowledge development and learning.
- National coherence: National standards and protocols, shared functions, coherence in skills, training and accreditation and mobility across jurisdictions.

The 'new' professionalism model has a greater focus on individual officers exercising greater objectivity, expertise and autonomy. The model builds on community policing models and attempts to shift policing away from the 'old' professionalism of crime control, objective scientific decision making and a centralisation of authority (Stone and Travis 2011; Sklansky 2011).

However, the degree of change towards the 'new' professionalism should not be overstated. This can be attributed to the highly developed bureaucracy of policing agencies and tensions and potential conflicts of the new model within policing. For instance, police executives may retreat from community based approaches towards more traditional crime reduction models in response to populist concerns regarding crime levels and disorder (Fyfe 2013).

Government policies, organisational arrangements and rationalisation (including outsourcing) may pose challenges to the funding and support provided towards professionalisation activities and may have the unintended consequence of 'deprofessionalising' an occupational group (Heslop 2011, Gunhus 2012). Police executives and police unions may have different conceptions of what 'professionalism' is, with unions likely to use professionalism to defend the profession from internal and external threats (Marks 2007). It should be noted that police unions may also be agents for police reform as is the case with the introduction of the PRSB in Victoria and the introduction of the *Australia New Zealand Police Professionalisation Strategy 2013-2018* through the Australia New Zealand Council on Police Professionalisation (ANZCoPP). Police union commitment to professionalism in recent years seems to counter the stereotypes of police unions as "reform bashers and innovation blockers" (Marks 2007).

The support and engagement of professionals around aspects of professionalisation is also important. For instance, Timmons' (2010) case study on professionalisation in the UK documented an occupational groups experience with professionalisation. Practitioners were dissatisfied with the academic level of the professional qualification and cost of registration. The register established by the professional association was voluntary and failed to demonstrate value for money for the registration fee.

What is the case for the professionalisation of policing?

Timmons (2010) surveys the theories of professionalisation to provide an understanding of the motivations for professionalisation amongst the key parties. The following points are pertinent for this report:

- Professionalisation involves the aspirant profession and the State (as the party who can license or create professions).
- Professionalisation can be demand driven (e.g. occupational group seeks a monopoly in delivery of its service and becoming professional serves to protect its interests) or supply driven (i.e. the state leads the process as professionalisation serves the interests of the state).
- Controlling and defining an area of activity and technical knowledge is necessary for an occupational group seeking to persuade the state to protect and license them.
- Competing professional groups may play a role in the professionalisation process (e.g. for example other occupational groups involved in policing, PSOs, private security firms).
- It involves economic aims (e.g. improved pay) and social aims (e.g. improved status for members of an occupational group)
- The process of professionalisation is a desirable end in itself although there are exceptions to the rule.

Chan (cited in Fyfe 2013) noted that 'police professionalism is contested territory which has different meanings for different parts of the organisation'. Green and Gates (2014) have noted the different grounds for the professionalisation of policing in terms of 'academic interest' which is focused on 'engaging the police in more theoretical scholarly practice' and 'practitioner interest grounded in the impact on terms and conditions of employment as well as improving the level of service provided to the communities they serve'. Appendix 4 contains a table outlining different perspectives of police professionalisation.

A brief review of the literature indicates that police professionalisation models are not limited to changing attitudes and behaviour but are linked to systemic reforms of policing. For instance, key elements of the professional infrastructure, such as the development of a policing body of knowledge, higher education and continuing professional development, are drivers for innovation in police work, including crime prevention, problem solving and building relationships with stakeholders.

Summary

Police professionalisation is an attractive proposition to a range of stakeholders. What is apparent from the literature is the notion that professionalisation should be practitioner-led rather than driven by academia or external bodies. A major point of resistance by police to professionalisation will be the real or perceived imposition of a reform program by external parties which have little or no knowledge and experience of police work. Importantly, police executives pursuing professionalisation will have to balance their commitment to a professionalisation model with pressures from government, including political influence on priorities which may be counterproductive to the notion of a professional policing service (e.g. rapid increases in police numbers).

APPENDIX 4: PERSPECTIVES OF POLICE PROFESSIONALISATION

Perspective	Key arguments for professionalisation	Illustrative example/s
Victoria Police	<p>Contributes to Victoria Police's strategic planning and service delivery goals</p> <p>Overcomes barriers to re-entry for former officers seeking appointment to police roles</p> <p>Enables mobility of police professionals across profession and outside profession which complements goals of employee engagement and professional development</p> <p>Provides police command with greater flexibility in workforce planning</p> <p>Supports the development of a policing body of knowledge and fosters an evidence based policing approach</p>	<p>Victoria Police Blue Paper</p> <p>PRSB Police Profession Register</p>
Police Educationalist	<p>Results in the formal recognition of body of knowledge, skills and competencies specific to policing</p> <p>Supports the development of a policing body of knowledge</p> <p>Shifts policing towards evidence-based policing which, in turn, contributes to proactive and more effective decision making in policing</p>	<p>Victoria Police Education Master Plan (2013)</p> <p>ANZPAA Police Professionalisation Strategy</p>
Police Member and Union	<p>Protects policing from competition posed by other occupations or disciplines</p> <p>Enables mobility of police professionals</p> <p>Contributes to police practitioner control of innovation and the reform process and the policing profession</p> <p>Formalises police power, autonomy, status and tradition</p> <p>Provides police with leverage in wage negotiations</p>	<p>MOU Government, Victoria Police and The Police Association (TPA) 2011</p> <p>Police Federation of Australia's Pre-Election Document (2013)</p>
Community	<p>Meets community expectations of police professionalism and ethical conduct and improves community trust in policing</p> <p>Meets public expectations of police service delivery (e.g. consistency, transparency, ethical practice etc)</p>	<p>Police Federation of Australia's Pre-Election Document (2013)</p> <p>ANZPAA Police Professionalisation Strategy</p>

Government	Protects public confidence in policing Supports government policy commitments relating to policing Supports other government policy priorities (e.g. labour market flexibility, 'value for money', labour market participation esp. older workers)	MOU Government, Victoria Police and The Police Association (TPA) 2011
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APPENDIX 5: FINDINGS FROM THE CONSULTATIONS

1. Current state of the profession of policing in Victoria

Participants were asked how they viewed the profession of policing in Victoria at present. Participants shared their views on policing as a profession, what's working well and where improvements could be made, the journey towards becoming a profession, elements of a 'profession' that were missing from policing and past professionalisation models, including national professionalisation projects.

Views about policing as a profession

The majority of participants described policing as having aspirations of being a profession but not having attained full professional status. Some expressed this in terms of policing either being on a journey or in the process of evolving or adapting.

It is increasingly becoming more relevant and valid to say that we are a profession, although we are not there yet.

We are caught in that in-between space, we like to call ourselves a profession but we are just tinkering around the edges.

I would start by saying I am not sure that there is at the moment a profession as such, there is a workforce that is working to a set of policies, rules and processes that we have inherited over time, some for very good reason ...

A few participants expressed the view that policing was already seen as a profession either by police members themselves or the community. For example, one participant stated, 'It is always 'let's make it a profession' and I keep saying 'why isn't it now?' and 'according to whom is it not a profession now?'

Some expressed the view, including participants from within Victoria Police, that there was a lack of clarity about what police professionalisation means and what the profession of policing should look like.

I don't know that there is within senior levels of police a firm view, real understanding about what this issue should look like.

For me there has not been much emphasis on it as a theme. It is something that sits in there but hasn't got any significant primacy within the organisation.

I just don't think we have had a level of discussion in policing around what a profession is....

Views about the term 'police professionalisation'

A couple of participants commented on the term 'professionalisation' and its use. One participant described professionalisation as potentially being 'everything to everyone' and another observed that it 'means different things to different people'. The term 'professionalisation' and 'professional' could also be used in a counter-productive way as observed by one participant in the following statement.

One of the negative things I have seen around it is professionalisation is often used as a defence when things go badly. We often say police are professional, they will act professionally in this matter. Quite often that's a defence that's used when we know we haven't done as well as we could of... It tends to be a catch all and there's this gut feeling out in the community [which] might be that we don't think that was particularly professional. So if that's what professional means to police, it sort of dilutes the significant potential of professionalism.

One participant commented that the term was not a helpful 'tag' and that 'fixing up your service delivery or reforming your service delivery' 'can be done without the tag or the rationale of professionalisation and the professionalisation model'.

Views about aspects of policing in Victoria

Participants posited views about aspects of the profession. Improvements in education and training, reforms and innovations undertaken by Victoria Police, shifting trends in recruitment in Victoria and a high level of accountability were cited as examples which supported police professionalisation. Participants also posited views about the elements that needed to be addressed for policing to be recognised as a profession. In particular standards of policing education and training in Victoria were viewed as inadequate for a profession for many participants.

Shift towards a profession

A number of participants observed that a shift towards policing becoming a profession was happening in Victoria. The growing number of recruits who enter with prior higher education qualifications, expectations that members at senior ranks attain higher education qualifications and members taking their own initiative to develop their careers were all cited by participants as aspects of policing shifting towards a profession. One participant expressed the view that changes were inevitable and another described the change as 'happening organically.'

We are a fairly well educated workforce, around 30% are coming in with some sort of tertiary qualification. I am not one who says that everyone has to go off and do a masters in policing and leadership, it is about going through the conceptual process and people are coming in with those, no matter what qualification they have, it's great.

I think there is a pretty clear expectation for people to get to the senior commissioner level they will have picked up a degree somewhere along the way, but I don't think that is particularly written down.

I get the sense that the professionalisation of policing quite often happens a lot from their own initiative, certain people take on certain roles, they do ANZSOG, they go off and do particular courses... I get the impression that sort of thing is working well...

Improvements in Victoria Police's foundation and executive training and other innovations were also cited by participants as positive reforms and supportive of police professionalisation.

There have been definitely improvements in the way we train and develop our members. The foundation is a lot stronger than it once was.

We have got the Education Master Plan, we are building our capacity and capability out of the Academy, and via some succession planning, executive development all of that, which could probably fit under the professionalisation banner...

The Victoria Police Blue Paper

Some participants drew a connection between some of the themes presented in the Victoria Police *Blue Paper* and professionalisation. One participant highlighted that there needed to be a lot more discussion about lateral entry, stating:

...probably we need to just take the time to test it out and see what it really means, I think some of the discussion around lateral entry when you don't actually have a professional body up and running, you don't actually know what a professional body is, what a professional set of practices are, to then try to embrace lateral entry is a great idea but how does that practically work, what are you actually looking for in the people that you are laterally bringing in. Are you just employing them for a set of skills for a particular job, well that's not a professional body of work. I think again we are just a bit ahead of ourselves. It's good that we are going down there, it's just maybe we haven't done enough work around what that means.

In addition, a couple of participants discussed the nature of roles requiring policing functions raised in the Blue Paper and suggested that this was part of professional thinking.

...you just have to read Ken's Blue Paper well, we actually don't need more blue shirts, lets swap some blue shirts for some specialists in other areas and ultimately if we get much much better at this proactive work then let's give up numbers and dollars to DHS and anyone else where that investment should be made. It's that bit about, if you are doing your job really well you are almost doing yourself out of a job... That's professional thinking.

Continuing professional development

A gap in ongoing training and education for members was noted by the majority of participants. In comparison to other professions such as nursing and teaching, opportunities and requirements for training throughout the course of a career in policing were viewed as limited.

So there is nothing in Victoria Police that requires you to actually do professional training or really to do any course, unless it's a qualification to carry a firearm. So I think there are a lot of members within Victoria Police who often say "I don't get any opportunity to do training"

The focus has been very strongly on the training and development of our people and whilst there is a lot of rhetoric around training and development, the test for me is some people come out of the Academy and they work for thirty years and they barely touch training and development after that initial academy stint. That's not for me what a professional organisation does with its people.

A couple of participants identified a discrepancy between requirements for police officers below the rank of Inspector and above the rank of Inspector which are required to have the skills of a professional. A few participants noted the significant work Victoria Police had undertaken in executive development, however, highlighted that the non-commissioned ranks were currently not as well served.

I think you could actually trace the antecedents of issues we have at the middle management level to the abandonment of certain training and skills acquisition.

Some participants highlighted that a prevailing perception by many members that training was the responsibility of the organisation was at odds with 'professional thinking'. For example, one participant stated, 'The thing that still strikes me is the expectation from a very large number of staff that all of their ongoing training has to be provided by the employer in work time'.

Foundation education and training

For some participants, the level of foundation training for policing was inconsistent with the notion of a profession. Some participants compared the entry level standards in policing to professions such as teaching and nursing to highlight this point.

Looking at teaching, parallels with teachers, nurses, accountants and lawyers, I think the characteristic for all is that they get a university degree level qualification before they start work. So I think there is something around that and I look at the NSW model [Associate Degree in Policing Practice], where that seems to be how they have modified their intake system, it is pretty much there is a partner university and you do a degree which may or may not guarantee you admission into the academy. I think there is something around getting a university level degree as a pre-requisite.

Skills and capability gaps

Gaps in skills and capabilities in particular areas of the organisation and at certain ranks were identified by some participants. Participants discussed a range of different areas where capability could be enhanced including financial management, project management, IT management, leadership and governance. Working in partnership with government and community, strategic thinking and writing were also raised as possible capability gaps by a few participants.

One of the gaps I'm seeing organisationally, others may or may not be seeing this, is how you take that step from being a practitioner, operational practitioner and when you come up into Inspector, it starts at Senior Sergeant but particularly when you go into Inspector and above that is, it is a different competency or capability that you are looking for. It is fundamentally about how you influence, how you work in the broader context of government and or community partnerships, and equally your strategic thinking and there is a core gap in writing and analysis that you see and taking that step from tactical operational applying policing in practice and managing people in that stream is a big gap.

Some participants also discussed the changing demands on Victoria Police and the challenges that this presented in terms of adjusting the mode of operating. One participant noted that the organisation was not well equipped 'to adjust our standards as the demands on us evolve'. This participant highlighted that in particular the capacity to understand e-crime and the challenges around e-crime' and 'the entire social media space and what opportunity that provides us with' is an important part of the business.

Professional standards and accountability

A few participants expressed the view that clearly articulated standards in terms of both educational attainment and practice across the organisation were lacking in policing.

We have a lack of clarity for members around what's expected in terms of their formal educational attainment. ... I think there is a bit of an unwritten rule about expectations about qualifications at certain ranks...

We have the capability stuff which I suppose is part of it I guess. If you were to say what are the standards you would say those are it because they feed into the KPCs [key performance criteria] but they are not what you are thinking of as a set of standards.

... what I don't see happening is, the perspective of rigorous basic standard training that has to be applied across the organisation to get the sort of standards across the board lifting the average standard, that's what I don't see.

While a few participants observed that there was a high level of professional accountability in policing in Victoria, some highlighted there was a lack of focus on building or developing professional standards in the ethical standards sense throughout a person's career.

We are fabulous at responding to the crises... but it's the pro-active stuff that we don't do as well ... professionalisation has to be both sides of that. You need to hold people to account ... but you need to have a means of actually encouraging and developing people to have the right professional standards and I think that's the part we missed.

The real danger of the basic skills stuff is you do it once to get into the force and then 25 years pass and you have never revisited what it means to be ethical.

Workforce mobility

Lack of professional or career mobility was raised by many participants as a missing element in policing. Professional mobility was raised as a feature of other professions. Mobility was discussed in terms of the ability for members to move in and out of policing jurisdictions or law enforcement agencies, in addition to the ability to step out of policing to either take a break or build or gain experience in other sectors.

If I think about the nurses and the teacher, that ability to stop for a while and then come back, I actually think is one of the characteristics of a profession.

What else is missing out of professionalisation, what we would probably look for in a profession ...the capacity to move in and out of the profession or between streams of the profession so from one agency to another and back again seamlessly. We are a long, long way from that.

When you talk in terms of nursing ... you'll talk to people about what they do and they say I am doing X and Y and Z but by profession I'm a nurse. I mean I could be off doing something else but by profession I'm a cop but one day guess what, I might actually want to go back.

The registration systems in other professions enabled practitioners to take a break but still maintain their currency and status as a member of a profession. For example, one participant referring to nursing and teaching stated 'if you take a break, you keep up your skills and then get re-registered'.

Participants discussed the range of reasons why members might want or need a break from policing, such as mental health, family responsibilities such as caring for children or to pursue career opportunities. Participants highlighted the difficulties members faced taking breaks from policing when they needed it. Some also highlighted that Victoria Police failed to capitalise on opportunities where former members had gained experience outside policing that would be valuable to the organisation.

... sometimes people need a break particularly my observation of what our people on the ground experience now ...much more likely to take a mental toll in the longer term. There is also the case of people saying look this is a fantastic opportunity I have been offered outside and you won't let me pursue it but I would love to pursue it knowing that it will only last for two or three years and I will come back in and bring value back to the organisation. I think we are missing out on that. When you follow that through, we are actually driving people to a decision point that people don't want to get to. Do I stay or do I go knowing that I might have burnt my bridges or if it's around mental stress which some of these would be, then we actually might be encouraging people to take risks and risk their own wellbeing.

Some participants discussed current improvements in relation to bringing former members back into the force as a positive step towards workforce mobility within Victoria. Participants noted that some of the barriers had been addressed through legislative reform, the enterprise bargaining process, and policy changes within Victoria Police. However, participants also discussed cultural barriers to workforce mobility, a theme discussed further in section 5.

Victoria Police according to some participants missed opportunities for retaining the expertise of retired members of Victoria Police. For example, one participant expressed this in the following way:

That's green fields, that's in the Blue Paper again there's a person who has actually been through the organisation and has a lot of skills and knowledge and experience, we are just letting that go like a wake behind a boat.

A couple of participants also noted that mobility was limited for members from other policing jurisdictions coming into Victoria Police.

We have never accepted I can remember a police officer from another state or territory at the higher ranks other than commissioner. ...from your constables to your superintendent we have never had any, so there is a blind spot.

At the moment if we have people from other jurisdictions or from other streams of law enforcement applying to the organisation, we struggle to know what standards they have been trained to particularly if it is outside Victoria. We have no objective means of assessing their qualification level.

Transferability and portability of policing qualifications and experience

Policing qualifications and experience were considered by some participants to be not well recognised or meaningful outside policing and not well aligned to other professions. This was expressed in the following way by a couple of participants:

The problem is you get a piece of paper signed off by the Commissioner that doesn't really fit anywhere, where an outside employer can look at it and say where does this actually fit in the bigger scheme of things...

The other thing that challenges it as a profession is an alignment of the professions, recognised standards, values ...

In addition, some participants highlighted a tendency within policing to view the policing skills set as entirely unique and not transferable beyond policing.

We also make an assumption that we are quite unique, in some ways we are and in some ways we are not. There are certainly a range of skills that are transferable, like your governance skills, your leadership skills, financial skills, project management skills, people skills, none of those are unique to policing. They can be acquired in a whole lot of different spaces.

Incorporating the community perspective

For a few participants a missing component for a 'profession' was responding to the community or external perspective on policing.

.....we don't think about it sufficiently in terms of what police professionalism means for community and how would that increase the level of trust and respect and engagement with police. We lose sight of the community lens in terms of professionalism and I don't think we have ever done enough thinking to get it clear in our heads what that needs to look like.

...I am not sure that there is a professional body at the moment because I don't think we have looked outward enough to do that at this point. I think we are still very inward looking within the police force but also within the state.

National professionalisation models

Some participants discussed national efforts towards professionalisation including the work of Australasian Police Professional Standards Council (APPSC), Australia New Zealand Policing Advisory Agency (ANZPAA), Australia New Zealand Council of Police Professionalisation (ANZCoPP) and the Police Federation of Australia (PFA).

A couple of participants discussed attempts to develop higher education courses and noted that these attempts failed in several states in the past including Victoria. One participant expressed views on ANZPAA's predecessor, APPSC's approach to policing standards noting that '....APPSC was doing all this certification stuff, they almost got down to the TAFE sector, ...spent too many years in that space trying to work out what a good surveillance practitioner is ...you don't want to go there, it's not going to help.'

ANZPAA's Practice Standards and Education and Training Guidelines were cited by some participants as a positive step towards progressing professionalisation of policing across Australia and New Zealand.

It was an exercise that always had to be done before you could move to registration. I didn't see how you we would ever have registration without some sort of policing standards and I take my hat off to ANZPAA ... it was something that had to happen before we could get to the debate we are having at the moment, so I have been a great supporter of it.

One participant described the standards as helping to articulate what is required in the education space and therefore enabling the development of a more mature relationship between external educational providers and policing organisations.

Overall, however, participants viewed progress towards national professionalisation of policing as relatively slow and hampered by difficulties in gaining widespread support for professionalisation from commissioners. A few participants posited views about why it has been challenging.

I think that too many people have individual views, too many people have seen it as an assault on their power base, if that makes sense.

The challenge is in anything to do with the federation is you have eight different jurisdictions with all different views and those views change regularly enough so that if you line up a set of ducks, by the time you have lined up six, the seventh and eighth will have changed...

Really I suppose up until now why the commissioners haven't bought in is because they have taken on the pseudo role of registration themselves. They have ensured that there are accountabilities, that there is a code of ethics in place ...So I think up until now there has been no urgency to create a professional registration system.

Summary of findings

Most participants expressed the view that policing has not yet attained professional status.

There was a lack of understanding and clarity about the term 'professionalisation'.

Professionalisation was viewed as a continuum or journey. Improvements in education and training, reforms and innovations undertaken by Victoria Police, shifting trends in recruitment in Victoria and a high level of accountability were examples of police professionalisation.

The limited opportunities and expectations for ongoing education and training of police officers, clear standards of practice and educational attainment at different ranks and workforce mobility and transferability are the main areas that participants considered as lacking for policing to be recognised as a profession.

Some participants consider that policing requires a tertiary qualification to be recognised as a profession.

In the national arena, the development of practice standards and education and training guidelines were cited as key success factors in the national police professionalisation journey.

2. The benefits of police professionalisation

During the course of the consultations, participants discussed their perspectives on why professionalisation of policing was worth pursuing, what the benefits were and to whom.

Participants expressed various perspectives on 'value' from the perspective of individual police members, the policing organisation, community and government.

A number of participants observed that there was a lack of understanding of what professionalisation could deliver and hence the role of the Board and highlighted that clarifying why we need to do this is a critical piece of work. Some of the participants described this in terms of developing a clear 'value proposition' for police professionalisation which in turn helps clarify the value of the proposition of the Board.

Defining the value of police professionalisation

A lack of understanding of the benefits of professionalisation was raised by a number of participants and some participants emphasised the importance of better defining the purpose of professionalisation.

An important part of this is around getting a pretty clear sense of what are the benefits of doing this ... Your value proposition, nailing it, is a really important piece because otherwise it remains, why bother ...

I would always go back to why do you need a professional workforce, that's what I would go back to ...: Is it portability across jurisdictions? Is it just the returning workforce? Is it lifting standards? Is it to take the conversation out of the very limited confines of the industrial conversations that happen between Victoria Police and the Police Association?

...what's in it for me is always a big factor, so why do we need this, and I think those of us that have taken an interest know but I guess we've got a fair bit of work to do to convince others.

One participant stated that they were '...yet to be convinced about what the burning platform is in the grand scheme of things ... there hasn't been an identified need or a burning platform from the community, from government or from Victoria Police...'. This participant also noted that they have never been 'provided with the underpinning rationale, other than nurses do it, teachers do it'.

Benefits identified by participants

Participants identified a range of overlapping potential benefits for police officers, the policing organisation, the community and to a lesser extent government. The following benefits were identified by participants:

- Better and more consistent service to the community
- Elevating and advancing the profession
- Protecting the profession
- Broadening career prospects for members through workforce mobility
- Attracting and retaining a workforce fit for purpose
- Professional status.

Better and more consistent service to the community

A key reason to pursue police professionalisation was for the benefit of the community. Participants described the value in terms of increasing 'community confidence' in policing, raising standards or

consistent standards of policing for community or being more responsive to community needs in the delivery of policing services.

Participants expressed the notion of professionalisation delivering better service to the community in the following ways:

So in community terms, coming back to the question of what's the value for community, community can be assured that the police we employ are of an acceptable standard by national standards.

I think those things come with professionalism. Better police, mean better service. Better police or more professional police mean that we are more likely to be responsive to the community need

There are many benefits for the individual and the organisation but it is a public good, fundamentally when you boil it down...

...when they originally started to move to the 11 health professions the argument behind that was that if you had any form of healthcare be that doctor, nurse, chiropractor, whatever... in Melbourne today and you were in Brisbane tomorrow you should be able to guarantee that the quality of health care you are going to get is the same because you have a national set of standards for all of those professions. My argument has been why shouldn't the public expect that? If they deal with a police officer in Melbourne today and find themselves in Sydney tomorrow they should expect the same standards of policing to apply.

One participant discussed this theme further and suggested that focusing on the value to community engendered a shift from disciplinary accountability to building and developing police members' capabilities.

If you form a view that the value proposition about the professionalisation is nothing to do with licensing and registration system but it is about equipping police to be more responsive to what the community expects them to do and how they expect them to behave then you refocus a lot of your attention away from the 'after the fact stuff' to the 'before the fact stuff'. You'd want them to be building capability and building capacity to increase the level of trust in the community, the level of respect. Because all those things that we want from the community, we want them because we want the community to allow us to do things that other people aren't allowed to do, and we want them to support us.

A couple of participants also highlighted that improving the community confidence and satisfaction with policing had flow on benefits for policing agencies in terms of 'less reputational risk' as well as increasing the level of 'engagement with police'. In addition, benefits were noted by a couple of participants for government in terms of broadening the potential for service delivery including detecting more crime and meeting government expectations of standards.

A few participants expressed the view that the community perspective to date has been not adequately addressed in this debate. For example, one participant stated, '...we have paid lip service to it to a degree but of course this is all about the community including them as active contributors to their own safety.' Some participants noted, however, the challenges involved in gaining the community perspective. This is addressed further in section 5.

Participants comments about the value to the community were often discussed in the context of the role of the Board as an independent entity, a topic discussed further in section 4.

Elevating and advancing the profession

Participants highlighted that police professionalisation was a means of elevating, raising or advancing the profession of policing. This was linked to the notion of professionalisation delivering a 'better service and more consistent service to the community' discussed above. A couple of participants made a distinction between a model of professionalisation focusing on members meeting minimum standards as opposed to a model seeking to enhance or elevate the profession.

...what we are doing is trying to increase the standard I suppose or the level of competency whatever you might want to call it but we are trying to do it in a way that we get an agreed set of standards.

.... I think there is another role for professionalisation which is about stretching and expanding and building the practice, so it is kind of lifting the game, getting innovation, getting people to invent a future for the practice and take it somewhere which is ... another kind of value. It is space to talk about the practice of policing and what it's going to look like in the future and practice wisdom ... so that moves it from simply just being a kind of baseline assurance, tick a box, basic quality assurance to a think tank, innovative, growing the profession.

Professionalisation was also viewed by some participants as a means of shifting away from disciplinary accountability towards proactively encouraging and developing police officers that behave ethically.

..the extent that you can educate and arm people with either an understanding and an internal ethical dial that tells them 'this is wrong, and I should not be participating', so if everyone does that it might not emerge, you might have the one bad apple but it won't affect the whole barrel.

It is much more pervasive about expectations of behaviour, expectations about what you do when you see another officer doing something that is aberrant....We see professionalisation as a way of getting to grips with that sort of thing because what you are doing is starting to develop in each individual a much more thinking approach to their role and their interactions with others and what community expects from them.

One participant highlighted that professionalisation was also a means of raising the profession by assisting 'to work through who is no longer capable for a whole range of reasons, whether it is their physical capabilities, their mental capability...'

Participants also viewed police professionalisation as a means of meeting the challenges facing policing agencies such as changing patterns of demand and evolving roles and functions of police. The shift towards more pro-active policing in particular presented challenges in terms of the skills and capabilities required by police officers.

...do you see it as a functional role where you roll out a task list when you are confronted with a situation or do you operate in a field of human emotion, constantly varying dynamics, judgement calls required constantly all of that stuff goes with the thinking practitioner, an educated practitioner one that can access information when they don't have it to hand?

Policing in the 19th century and early part of the 20th century was very heavily blue collar ... These days that just won't fit the bill ... It strikes me that it is important that the concept does gain some traction because without it, it's going to be difficult for police to meet the challenges that are now being thrown at them.

...in some sense the value is intangible because you are getting that change in attitude and if you can reinforce that by getting people to think more creatively about the proactive space ...

Protecting the profession

Professionalisation as a means of 'protecting the profession of policing' was discussed by some participants. One participant identified the primary benefit of professionalisation to police members as preventing encroachments from untrained practitioners and the private sector.

I see the profession very simply as how our profession started hundreds of years ago it was about protection of turf. ... I've always worked on the notion it is about us 'ring-fencing' our profession and us determining the quality and standards of people who can work within it.

This same participant also viewed professionalisation as a means of 'protecting' police jurisdictions authority from developments such as the UK Police and Crime Commissions.

I think one of the game changers here in Australia was when the UK started to introduce things like the Police and Crime Commission and those sorts of things. Then those senior police who may have historically thought this was a threat to their authority realised that if we didn't do something then there would be more than a threat to their authority, someone would be supplanted over the top of them.

A couple of participants highlighted that this view of police professionalisation as a means of 'protecting the profession' largely reflected a union perspective. For example, one participant stated 'That is a union position about registration, as we know it today this is what policing is and we have to protect it...'. This participant suggested that this view might be contrary to growing the profession.

A couple of participants proposed either 'defining the profession of policing' or defining 'our value add compared to private industry' as an alternative way of expressing the concept of 'protecting' the profession. In addition, a couple of participants viewed professionalisation as potentially a means of managing the extended police family by imposing standards of education and practice.

Broadening career prospects through mobility and transferability

A key benefit of professionalisation for police members was identified as enhanced employment options through professional mobility and transferability. The participants in policing roles mostly

viewed the benefits in terms of police members being able to move from one policing jurisdiction to another. For these participants, the value of professionalisation and a registration scheme was largely contingent on it being national. For example, one participant noted that the 'real value in registration is being able to take the practising certificate to another [policing] employer'.

Professional mobility across law enforcement agencies and related fields and other professions and occupations were also identified as potential benefits for police members by some participants. Professionalisation was a means of broadening career options for police members outside policing. In addition, the benefit of enhanced mobility was also viewed by some participants as critical to the wellbeing of police members by providing options for career breaks.

A lot of our people hang on and they survive, we survive but there are others that actually do need a break from policing, mental health for wellbeing, lifestyle and they just won't go, can't see themselves doing anything else and that's part of the culture you are either in or you are out, you can't be out and them come back in again in a couple of years. So I think there is a joined up psychological culture issue that as a by-product registration can help with....

A few participants also highlighted that professionalisation would ultimately improve the recognition and transferability of policing qualifications and experience for members who leave policing.

...you give them something so that if they do decide to leave the job after 5, 10, 15 or 20 years what have they got that they can show a prospective employer that they picked up in policing..

If you look at the young people they tend to seek proper recognition for the stuff they are learning. They want to get credentialed so they can take it somewhere else if they want to and they might want to take a career break and go and do something else and go to another jurisdiction. The whole concept of staying, joining and retiring is not the same.

I actually think there is a benefit for our workforce if they have a base degree level qualification I think it makes them both more employable and more promotable. It is interesting looking at some of our workforce demographic data we see a lot of people that leave the job after somewhere between 4 and 8 years so I think setting things up so that they have a recognised qualification plus the 4-8 years work experience is going to serve them a lot better in terms of where do they go after policing.

One participant highlighted that professionalisation may have the potential to support the opening up of more alternative employment options for police members, stating 'I think there is something supportive for the workforce if we go down the professionalisation model that opens up the prospect of more employers'. This same participant also noted that the ability to be either employed by the government or private sector was 'probably one of the characteristics of a profession'.

Attracting and retaining a workforce fit for purpose

Enhancing the capacity to attract and retain a capable workforce through greater workforce mobility was the main benefit identified for the policing organisation for police professionalisation and registration. This included attracting talent from across Australia, retaining members and attracting a more diverse workforce.

The potential for recruiting talented police officers from across Australia was cited by some participants as a key benefit. One participant used the analogy of the 'arts centre spire' to describe the rank structure and the decreasing pool of potential leaders in the top ranks, stating that while there are a 'good people', 'frankly this is such a narrow pool' and 'there is a world out there.' Other participants made the following comments:

There is definitely a need to cross pollinate senior levels much more.

You have got to turn the questions around does the future of your agency exist within the current workforce, does the future of policing in Victoria exist entirely within your borders? If you put it in that way the answer has to be no ... how are you going to make sure you have got the best in flow and out flow to serve Victoria, are you going to take the best of the people in Australia?

There was also thought to be value in allowing members to pursue experiences outside the organisation in terms of retaining members and being seen as an 'employer of choice'. Some participants discussed this in the context of the organisation being able to attract and retain new generations who are not likely to have one career in their lifetime. Others expressed the view that professionalisation may help attract a more diverse workforce.

...if you wanted to be an employer of choice you would be talking to your employees about what their intentions are, how they are going and what they see themselves doing and if they did say to you know what I actually think I want to move on in a few years' time, then if you want to be considered an employer of choice then you would be helping them. What are your skills gaps? What are you looking at? What are the gaps? Maybe over the next few years you might consider doing this, this and this.

I just think the nature of the people coming in these days will have a different set of expectations of their employer as well.

I would of thought that some sort of registration would enable us to attract and retain women, would allow us to attract and retain people from different cultural backgrounds who we would value.

Some participants noted both the potential cost advantage of re-hiring experienced former members as well as what members may be able to bring back in terms of skills, experience and perspectives gained in other sectors.

Say would a Commissioner look at a police registration system along the lines you have spoken about before where people can leave the profession say at a sergeant level for family reasons and then come back at a future time. Is that an advantage for a Commissioner? It probably is on the basis that they already have a trained person there who can come back at rank.

It could be valuable in the context of utilising the members who have gone out to give insights back to members inside the force.

I think it provides a better overall view like police sometimes have tunnel vision, they don't look outside the square.

Professionalisation and a registration scheme more specifically was also viewed by some participants as a means of maintaining a connection with non-practicing members. There were benefits for the organisation in terms of having access to experienced police officers when surge capacity was required. For example, one participant described the potential for registration 'To keep the

workforce ready that's larger than the immediately employed and engaged workforce, it's the expanding, flexing workforce to some degree.'

In a national model, the benefits to policing organisations could also possibly extend to interoperability and simplifying legislation.

Probably we didn't talk about the synergy between legislative reform and policing standards, this is the national thing I am talking about here to some extent but it has a local dimension as well. We have got to try to simplify legislation and if it is nationally consistent it will be more simple. We have done it in road policing to some extent ... I think having national standards to some extent pushes the national project along, look you can't make this too complex. It becomes a driver to want to simplify legislation.

Professional recognition

A few participants highlighted that police members wish to be recognised as a profession equivalent to other professions. The benefits were viewed by these participants in terms of recognition that the role of a police officer is more than an occupation.

I think there is a genuine appetite amongst police to be seen as professionals akin to other industries. I think reliance on the uniform and the powers that accompany the role no longer sustain ...

The status of it is, our organisation would aspire to demonstrate to the community, which is the recognition of professionalisation, that we deliver a service which is what we say is complex, requires good problem solving skills, is more than just a blue collar craft related occupation or vocation.

Summary of findings

Participants highlighted the importance of clarifying the value of police professionalisation.

There were benefits identified for individuals, policing organisations, the community and government.

A key reason to pursue police professionalisation was to provide better and more consistent service to the community.

Participants identified a range of other benefits for police professionalisation such as elevating and advancing the profession, protecting the profession, broadening career opportunities for members, attracting and retaining a workforce fit for purpose and professional recognition.

3. Aspirational vision of profession of policing

Participants were asked to consider what an aspirational vision of the policing profession would look like in Victoria. Participants discussed a number of components of police professionalisation including, but not limited to:

- professional standards,
- education and training, including initial training and continuous professional development,
- the body of policing knowledge, and
- registration.

Many participants emphasised the inter-relationship or inter-dependence of these components.

Participants also discussed themes related to professionalisation such as the core principles of self-regulation and individual responsibility.

Many participants discussed a truly aspirational vision as being national. Professional mobility and transferability, particularly the ability for members to move to other jurisdictions was highlighted as a key feature of policing becoming a profession.

During the consultations, participants referred to other professions, such as teaching and nursing, when exploring the possibilities of police professionalisation. While participants thought that there were lessons to be learnt from other professions, in particular in relation to requirements for ongoing professional development they didn't consider all elements of these models to be readily transferable to policing.

Vision of professionalisation

Some participants shared an overarching vision of what professionalisation of policing would encompass. Participants tended to place emphasis on different elements. While some participants focussed on professional education and training others focussed more on the ethical or behavioural dimension of professionalisation.

...it is around registration, it is around academic qualifications, it is around a body of research that says this is what a practitioner does, but the fourth part is around the regulation of the profession by the profession itself.

So what are the elements of that, there would be a higher education attachment, there would be a requirement for them to continue their ongoing professional development in whatever is determined that would be and there would be underpinning processes of certification of that, and then that's where you've come in at the start with registration, registration is somewhere in there too as to how those people come into the stream of professionalisation.

For me if in ten years' time if we get to the point where we have an understanding of what a professional practitioner of policing looks like, and it is a clear discussion, absolutely crystal clear, we hold people to account and then the second part which is part of the independence of the office of constable, the discretion that we have is a discussion about the human rights issue, about the role of policing in human rights...

... that's this piece around professionalisation, it's the cultural, it's the attitudinal and it's the programs...

For many participants a truly aspirational vision of policing was a national professionalisation scheme. The importance of national standards for policing in Australia was emphasised by a number of participants in addition to a registration process. For example one participant stated, 'Eventually I would see it has to be a national model with one set of standards that everybody meets, so some of that work that ANZPAA has been doing... getting that work into reality'.

Some participants identified that a Victorian model may help drive or progress the national professionalisation agenda.

... if we have a really clearly articulated concept of what professionalisation looks like and why it's important, we can do this ourselves... Look if we build a good model, others will come eventually.

My thinking around this is that Victoria is just going to be the leader in this for a national outcome somewhere along the way.

Participants drew on other professional models to describe elements of a vision of the policing profession. They suggested looking at defence, teaching and nursing in addition to efforts in the UK around the College of Policing. However, some participants also emphasised the need to build an approach that is appropriate for policing. For example, one participant stated: 'We don't have to fit anyone's particular mould if that makes sense. There is not a check list that someone goes along and we are going to give you a certificate to say you are a profession. That is sort of up to us to build it in some respects in the best interest of policing'.

The notion of 'self-regulation' was discussed by a few participants as a common feature of many professionalisation models. However, one participant highlighted that given the context and history of policing it was difficult to see how policing could be 'self-regulating' in the same manner as the legal profession or other industries.

Professional standards

Participants identified the need for clear standards for police officers within a police professionalisation model. For the majority this was considered a core aspect of professionalisation which underpinned both initial and ongoing education and training and registration. In addition, standards were highlighted as a key mechanism to facilitate professional mobility for police members.

Standards were described variably as capabilities, capability requirements, competencies, professional standards, performance standards, skills sets and practice standards. Although some participants described standards relating to educational attainment and ethical behaviour or conduct for the most part participants referred to standards of practice, that is what is expected of members to do their job both on entry and for progression in the profession.

Participants discussed standards in the following ways.

Some of the professional standards would also be about the type of capabilities wouldn't it...to maintain and to be contemporary within policing and what that looks like, because it changes over time, there are some core and foundational capabilities.

..then I suppose then the work involves identifying what is expected of people at each rank, what does government expect of more senior managers who have got their hands on the till and what do they expect of middle ranking people...

There is some stuff there about defining the different combinations of skills that add up to a rank. We are still as a default one size fits all.

I think there is probably some appetite to link professionalisation with very concrete outcomes for people in terms of career progression.

Participants sought to describe the type of standards required in policing. One participant highlighted that the standards should not just relate to an 'educational achievement in an academic sense, it's in a skills based sense'. This participant further described the need to define 'what a modern constable looks like, what do we expect them to be achieving' and 'How do we think from a principles base we expect them to be operating...'. This participant also noted that because policing was a largely compliance driven workforce, there was a 'place for a bit of a principles based approach and then detail in terms of some other things'. This participant also highlighted that the standards needed to be 'reasonably accessible to the community and police members because you are talking to range of participants within and outside.'

Some participants highlighted the need for community expectations to help inform professional standards. For example, one participant stated:

I think the role of reinforcing and communicating the community's expectations and professional skill levels for individual officers is certainly something that should form part of the professionalisation strategy because ultimately the benefit of professionalisation has to be for the community.... so any effort that's made to improve that has to be done with a view to say, how are we going to improve this for the community.

On the other hand a couple of participants discussed the need for the standards to be not too prescriptive and ensure that they didn't lead to the public having unrealistic expectations of policing or prevent good people from entering the profession. For example, one participant discussing the under representation of women and certain ethnic groups, stated that the challenge was to 'to make sure that anything you develop doesn't detract from enhancement in those areas, so either helps or doesn't hinder that of which sometimes models of capabilities can'.

...I think standards are good but if that then translates into having an expectation that it always looks like this as an outcome then that is fraught with risk. ... I think policing is much more complex and dynamic than that so if it is about, are there some core competencies and capabilities that exist within all policing services [for the] Victorian Police member, then yes...

The challenge is to set standards that are not going to block good people out.

A couple of participants highlighted that there were some generalist standards as well as the need for specialist standards. For example, one participant distinguished between community members' expectations of a first responder and a specialist who can provide a greater depth of knowledge in a particular area.

I think the community expect that there is this level of first responder capability But depending on the problem that you get it pretty quickly will go beyond the skills set ... So if it's a family violence issue and the guy is a recidivist then pretty quickly the local constable attending will say I have got your details, I will refer you to the family violence unit. Then the family violence unit delivers the depth of speciality in the topic. So if you are a repeat victim of family violence, then you are expecting I think some considerable depth of knowledge and experience so the challenge for us is standards this way [stakeholder refers to vertical rank structure] but also standards this way [horizontal specialisation].

Some participants discussed the link between professional standards and other components of professionalisation. Professional standards underpinned and informed registration and education and training requirements. For example, a couple of participants talked about the relationship between registration and standards in the following ways:

I would of thought entry level testing and the standard of what that is, is a task for us, it's not actually a hands on task for a registration system but it is certainly something a registration system can test to make sure that it is up to scratch and I can't answer the question as to whether it is or not. I certainly think entry levels are a very relevant part of a registration system.

...it is providing that clear framework to express not only what are the qualities and attributes that you require of a police officer but also what is the kind of experience that you would expect which links in with the registration processes and the assessment that needs to be made there. I see there is a clear relationship...

Ethics and integrity

Some participants discussed the ethical and integrity dimension of professional standards. Generally, participants emphasised that ethics are an important part of professionalisation and being a professional police officer. While some participants distinguished between ethical standards and other types of standards, other participants posited the view that if professional standards identified how police officers were expected to do their job, ethics and integrity were very much intertwined.

Professionalisation of policing in the model I would think about is not about professional standards in the ethical and integrity sense but that is a component of a professional police officer.

There has to be some expression as to the ethics of policing I think with respect to that but I agree with you, the issues around the whole detail of that is another area, this is what our expectations are around police members. There is an element there that needs to be principles based ...

It's also conduct and perception isn't it, a professional does certain things that are not skills based but about commitment and integrity, saying the right things...

It was acknowledged that there were existing areas within and outside Victoria Police responsible for accountability of police member's ethical conduct and integrity. Professionalisation would not duplicate the role of these areas, but rather most participants viewed professionalisation as a means of reinforcing and better developing police members' capacity to regulate their own and others behaviour. For example, one participant posited the following view of a professional police officer, 'Open and receptive, I think it is holding yourself to a particular set of standards and being open and receptive to being reviewed against those standards, held to account by your peers. Another stated:

...what is the profession of policing, what does it look like, what does it mean for the practitioners so that they actually get the message around self-regulation, setting standards, holding each other to account, setting those standards yourself and living to them...

One participant described the relationship of integrity to professionalisation as central, stating ‘...the integrity stuff for me is also core which then raises issues about what is the relationship around professionalisation in terms of expressing and promoting standards of conduct and professional conduct that is required for police and then the role that the Board for instance might have in terms of identifying misconduct’.

Body of policing knowledge

Some participants discussed the body of policing knowledge as an integral component of a police professionalisation model which informed both standards and continuing professional development. A couple of participants discussed the body of policing knowledge in the context of evolving police roles and operating models.

For me the thing that is probably most important in the policing context is this body of knowledge that is constantly evolving and to which the members are expected to contribute and which they are expected to stay on top of through professional development.

Largely dealing with what's the standard body of knowledge and skills that is required and how do we express those in terms of standards for entry ... and standards to progress through the ranks....

One participant referred to functions of professional associations in terms of the involvement of practitioners in supporting and building the body of knowledge, noting that ‘a lot of the professional bodies have special interest groups and communities of practice where that’s the other advantage of professional standards is that you can then look at, define particular areas of practice’. This participant also highlighted the value of registration allowing people who are no longer with the organisation to continue their engagement in policing and contribute to policing knowledge.

It keeps an ‘engagement with practice’ wisdom, it’s a knowledge bank, they can provide advice, they can be mentors, they can participate in conversations about policing because we know they are meeting the criteria.

Education and continuing professional development

High quality education was highlighted as a core aspect of a future vision of police professionalisation. Participants discussed initial education and training for policing as well as ongoing professional development throughout a person’s career. Some participants raised options for externalising elements of policing education and partnerships with vocational and tertiary institutions.

Foundation education and training

Participants generally agreed that raising educational standards was a critical component of policing becoming a profession. However, there were divergent views regarding whether the baseline qualification should be a higher education qualification or remain a vocational education qualification.

Some participants expressed the view that a pre-requisite for entry into professions was a higher education qualification. Others posited the view that a degree should not necessarily be the required standard for entry into the profession. One participant, for example, expressed the view that a higher education qualification may help with standardisation in a national approach but in Victoria without any of the 'advantages or benefits, I would say why.'

A middle ground between higher education and vocational education and training was proposed as an option by some participants.

I think with policing you can fall into the trap of going one way or another. I think that middle space is where we need to be more.

There would be an argument I suspect that it is simply a tertiary qualification recognising the program of training that is already there. So most professions start that way, if we looked at nursing we would probably see it started that way, the practice of nursing that then got taken into the formal qualification of nursing.

A number of participants discussed educational requirements in terms of the type of policing practitioner they believed was most desirable.

I'm not against education, but if I had a choice between an academic and someone with life skills, I would choose the person with life skills.

It's like moving from the trained practitioner to the trained and educated thinking practitioner supported by really good research and evidence base. It is moving the whole model, the whole mentality shift.

Some noted that the ideal recruit had elements of both, but acknowledged that these recruits may be difficult to find. For example, one participant stated that the ideal police officer 'can respond to the intellectual challenges of the job while retaining a blue collar resilience'.

The military's approach to different pathways and educational requirements for officers and soldiers was raised as a potential model for policing by a few participants. These participants, however, also highlighted potential drawbacks of applying the military model to policing.

I think to get the best service for the public I think we need professionalisation. I am still not 100% convinced it is the whole workforce and I am not sure where the boundary line is if it's not. I'm inclined to go for everyone. The military model is probably they are prepared to take a lot of people at the junior level with the expectation they'll never move any further and maybe that is not our model maybe we have got a higher minimum standard we expect all our members to meet when dealing with the public, so I don't have the answer.

In the military they are not going too bad with their specialist people but their general troops they fall over. They have got demanding intellectual challenges that are growing in the military space, about their theatre of operation ...as soon as something happens, they fall over.

Continuing education and training

While there were divergent views regarding the type of baseline qualification, there was agreement amongst participants that raising expectations and opportunities for continuous professional development throughout a career in policing was a critical component of policing professionalisation.

I think there is some potential for us to be clearer about the professional development framework and specifically the professional development programs that we think police should commit to throughout their career...

Professional development was seen as a key way for Victoria Police to be able to respond to changing organisational needs.

I suppose we are getting a better understanding of the environment in which we are operating, really understanding again where's global policing going, where's community going. So looking at tailoring our programs to where we want to go as an organisation, so we are not just training and developing people for the sake of training and development, there is some purpose.

Some participants also highlighted that in their vision of professionalisation members would take more responsibility for their own ongoing professional development. In addition, participants also highlighted that the organisation has a responsibility to provide the structure and more opportunities for training for members.

... is that people would take that responsibility to keep their development also upgraded without us having to spoon feed them as well. But we have got to have a structure, we have got to have things we can provide whether it is from our own or an external perspective if we are going to deliver specialist training.

...there is a little bit about this that needs to be self-directed as well as what the organisation invests in people.

Professional development was also viewed by some participants as a way of ensuring that members maintained currency while not practicing as a police officer. The participants that discussed this noted that for these people the onus to maintain their skills and fund professional development was on the individual rather than the organisation.

Externalising education and training

A few participants discussed the delivery of education and training opportunities in a future vision of professionalisation and raised the option of either all or elements of education and training being delivered by external institutions.

One participant highlighted the need for 'some sort of testing, some sort of rigour attached to those tertiary institutions'.

I think there is plenty of opportunity to outsource a lot of the development and education... Need to provide opportunities for pathways to meet them [the standards] which are reasonable. Not sure what the mechanisms are, but you would be starting to ask the question is there anything else, can anyone else help people to get to those standards from the outside. In theory you could use RTOs to do some components, possibly not others.

I think you can marry up with educational institutions to provide training.

If you looked at the nurses, they have gone from an internal focussed training development through nurses hospitals to a lot of their professionalisation is linked to higher education and higher education institutions so that would be something that I draw a parallel to.

Registration

Most participants viewed registration as part of their vision for the professionalisation of policing. Participants discussed the registration of all members, registration of members from other policing jurisdictions and national registration. Some participants discussed a phased approach to registration building on the existing Victorian scheme. In addition, participants also discussed de-registration and how this would work within the current policing environment.

Registration was presented as interconnected to the professional standards area in a couple of key ways. The role of standards in informing the qualification for registration was highlighted by some participants. Generally, standards were considered to underpin the registration system. For example, one participant noted that ‘...in an ideal world you would nail the standards piece and then that would help guide the process through the other.’

Registration was viewed as a means of ensuring that members meet and continue to meet required standards of practice and had a potential role in terms of providing the community with confidence that this was the case. In addition, registration was a key means of enabling professional mobility in policing.

Current registration scheme

Although the current registration scheme was identified as limited, some participants viewed the commencement of the scheme as positive and the basis for developing a more comprehensive scheme in the future.

It could have sat for years working out how it might work. You have just got to press go and see what happens. ...You are trying to get to there, it is a quantum leap from registration as a concept to where it has to be, so you have started ...

One participant described the current scheme as an interim step and stated that in step one ‘deemed registration would be the purview of the Chief and you just wouldn’t operate in this space at all’. This participant highlighted that this might require slight changes to the Act.

Registration of interstate members

Registration of interstate members seeking employment with Victoria police was viewed by some participants as a potential next step for the Victorian registration scheme. Attracting talented police

officers from across Australia as well as ensuring Victorian standards are benchmarked against national standards were identified as potential benefits.

That's the key, not this Victoria focus on ex-police officers coming back in, it's a national focus of any police officer coming back and particularly as a direct feed into Victoria Police, consequently it's a win for you and a win for me.

If you were a registration board that was not just registering former members of Victoria Police who may be seeking to return, you'd start to get some visibility of standards in other jurisdictions as well and you might start to see that and that might start to influence the standards or the development of what you expect in Victoria because otherwise you will be just endlessly fed by what's in Victoria. Whatever comes out of the Academy is the standard.

Without a national scheme in place, a couple of participants questioned whether registration of interstate members was worthwhile. For example, it was noted that 'access to Victoria Police from other jurisdictions has been raised as a potential benefit, although it doesn't have immediate benefits for Victoria Police'. Another participant highlighted the potential resource implications stating that '...the challenge for you is determining whether they meet the standards that you want to apply in policing in Victoria and at the moment unless you have got the capacity to evaluate every jurisdiction independently and where they might fit within that jurisdiction ...it is a bit problematic...'.

Registration of all members

The potential for the current registration scheme to lead to a full registration scheme where registration would function as a pre-condition of employment was highlighted by some participants. For example, one participant stated that '...in due course if this model was evolved you could end up with almost if you like a license to practice'. Another, stated, that 'The vision was for it to move to a full registration and I think it has to, to be viable'.

Some participants, however, questioned the value of having full registration in Victoria where there was a single employer of police.

I am not sure when you have a single employer, registration adds a lot of value.

A true [registration] system won't work in one state as it is supposed to.

...if we keep operating on a model where Victoria has its registration process and its professionalisation process we are always going to struggle with well what does that mean for somebody coming from Queensland where do they fit that picture.

Registration in other professions provides the community with assurance that a practitioner meets the requisite skills of the profession. However, the following participant questioned whether registration could function the same way as it does in other professions, stating:

What is the difference between a registered constable and one who is not registered, can the community have more confidence in them, we have to work on that because the community has probably got confidence in its police force as a whole rather than looking at individuals whereas other professions individuals are looked at more so.

On the other hand, some participants highlighted benefits for a full registration scheme in Victoria from having a process in place to driving quality improvement.

...it is not always about systems and process but a process like registration would support what I am talking about but again it is not just about a process there is a need for cultural change thinking about the way we go about what we do. But to set up a process around registration locks us into doing something.

So you could argue that putting adherence to ethical values as a condition of registration you could actually drive an extra incentive to maintain the best ethical standards.

The benefits are the improvement frame and picking up on the continuing development stuff because I am not sure ...we are good at that ...this almost goes back to the measuring stick thing for lateral entry to almost broaden the capability of the organisation to bring clever skilled people in...

Registration was also identified as a potential mechanism for maintaining a connection with members on leave and members who retire.

A registration system provides some sort of link to coming back.

It is not just keeping those who are employees or potential employees in the conversation or group but there is a benefit in having some kind of registration to allowing those who have already served, almost like an alumni of experts in policing who want to be part of the conversation, what the police profession is.

...then when we have got an emergency and disasters it would be nice to tap into four or five people in a region who have got local knowledge and are capable of being put to particular functions and tasks. Those sorts of things are useful for thinking about from the perspective of registering all.

One participant identified the need to provide some benefit to members for registration, stating that, 'As part of the registration for all, the other professions provide something for that registration.'

Suspension and cancellation of registration

The removal or suspension of a person's right to practice in a registration scheme was discussed by some participants. Participants discussed the relationship between registration and the Police Commissioner's right to hire and fire and observed that a registration system was associated at least implicitly with firing.

...provided the person meets the standards and they have got their certificate to practice then go for your life and hire them, you hire who you want and if you decide to fire them that's your call and there are processes they have got to go through At the end of the day you as an individual Commissioner don't have the right to take away their registration, the professional body has the right to do that ... But that doesn't mean you have to employ them just because they are registered...

... under the registration model in nursing once the registration is withdrawn they can't work so you implicitly have a power associated with firing but not hiring.

You probably get the right to fire rather than the right to hire.

The following participant, however, noted that registration may also influence the decision to hire, stating 'If you are moving to a full registration scheme by implication you do have hiring and firing because you are saying by implication those that aren't registered won't be a police officer...'.

While other professional registration bodies undertook investigations to determine whether to remove or suspend a member of profession's registration, some participants observed that there was no need for this in policing. For example one stated, '...unlike a lot of the professional bodies or registration boards we don't need an investigative arm because we have that in every jurisdiction in Australia'.

A few participants discussed the need to work through how a police registration system would deal with practitioners who are dismissed from the Police Force. In addition, a couple of others questioned how this might work if the reverse occurs where the registration body elects to cancel a member's registration who is still employed by the policing agency. In explaining how the former might work, the following participant distinguished between registration and employment:

If a Commissioner in Victoria decides they are going to dismiss an individual and they proceed to dismiss the individual then the matter comes well do they lose their registration. It is no different to what happens in hospitals or schools if someone gets dismissed in a hospital for whatever reason that doesn't strictly mean they can't get a job in another hospital or school unless they are de-registered...

There was recognition that a full registration model required careful thinking through the relationship between discipline and registration. One participant stated in relation to this 'I think we have to be mature about working out systems about how we do deal with that'. Another posited the view that in the future if the model evolved discipline may be 're-oriented around de-registration, the ultimate sanction is de-registration, you can't practice'.

Summary of findings

Participants drew on various other professional models during the consultations, but some participants queried whether those models were necessarily relevant or appropriate for policing.

Professionalisation of policing involves interrelated components of: professional standards, education and training, the body of policing knowledge and registration.

The vision of professional education and training encompasses initial education and training and continuous professional development.

While some participants viewed tertiary education as a critical component in the future of police professionalisation, others challenged this view and questioned whether tertiary education as a pre-condition of entry to the profession would produce the most suitable recruits.

Standards were described in different ways – a common view is that standards refer to capabilities, knowledge and skills required at entry level and to operate in the profession at different ranks.

Professional standards in a profession also have an ethical and behavioural dimension. Professionalism requires a focus on developing an ability to work ethically throughout a person's career.

There was potential for the current registration scheme to evolve. Some participants perceived the next step to be the registration of officers from other jurisdictions.

Full registration of all police officers was identified as an option, although some participants questioned its value in a single employer state.

Overall, the aspirational vision for the majority of participants is a national police professionalisation scheme.

4. The role of the PRSB

Participants were asked to consider whether a Board such as the PRSB was needed and what the Board could contribute to the professionalisation of policing in Victoria. Participants shared views on the purpose and role of the Board under both current legislation and for future professionalisation models.

Purpose and value of the Board

Overall, the majority of participants expressed the view that there was value in having an independent Board in Victoria. The Board's independence was viewed as an advantage in terms of being able to provide a broad perspective on police professionalisation.

I guess what I am looking for from you guys is to do a lot of work on what's out there, to help Victoria Police look out so I think that is the real opportunity here and to test some of our thinking ...

Influence a little more looking outwards as well as inwards.

I would see that its role is very much to engage with Victoria Police obviously in holding a mirror up to the organisation as an external observer and providing another perspective on how police are viewed and whether there are opportunities for change. And sometimes it might be to reinforce current strategies, the ones that should be pursued other times it will be identifying other opportunities for improvement.

Some participants observed that it was challenging for the organisation itself to do this work. The demands of the day-to-day operation of the business and cultural barriers such as institutionalisation or insularity were cited as reasons why an external agency was in a better position to pursue this work.

I think history would show that to do something like this needs really dedicated focus and you know there are a whole lot of obligations that already sit in the organisation.

...an external body would help us overcome some of that institutionalisation that we suffer from.

The answer to that is we always have the solution in Vic Pol, it's this piece about being an insular organisation, that's where it comes in for me.

Some participants posited the view that the Board's 'independence' could provide the community with confidence that police in Victoria meet the requisite standards and, or ensure that community views are taken into account in setting standards for policing.

... the community gets the comfort that the evolution of the professional standards is done independently, so there actually is an organisation which is .. independent and has its role to assess from time to time what it is that makes up a minimum standard for the profession.

Participants appeared to value independence and a certain level of autonomy from the influence of individuals, institutions and government:

Again I'd point out in the teaching model although the Institute of Teaching is funded by the government it is deliberately separate from the Education Department so it can do that regulatory function without being caught in the day-to-day policy directions of the current government. I think I am getting to being independent and being seen to be independent is important.

In essence what it does is ensure that the standard is consistent and it's applied consistently and it's not just changed at the whim of a government of the day or a minister of the day or someone else, a Police Commissioner of the day.

Other participants highlighted that the Board's value may lie in being a driver or catalyst for helping shift the culture of the organisation or for the commitment of further resources.

For me the registration Board is actually pushing the issue and for the Chief and command to have to say, it is easier to sometimes push culture by saying the legislation has changed we are moving on ... before it was like, what's the burning platform...

....I think if Victoria Police is going to become more outward looking ... it might need to be driven there by an external body.

This might be the means by which we start to say we now have a reference point for professional development and we want that reference point to be reflected in a resource commitment not just with you, but within the organisation.

Some participants discussed the relationship between the Board and Victoria Police. Participants perceived the Board to be more an ally and an advisor to Victoria Police rather than a regulator or service provider. The Board was at 'arms length' from the organisation but not unconnected. One participant described it in the following way: 'I think the value add comes from actually being outside the organisation but not disconnected from it'. This participant further stated:

A couple of participants identified the potential for tension between Victoria Police and the Board. For example, one stated, 'looking at the advisory capacity and the relationship is an interesting one because obviously there is potential for high tension but done well it could be a really useful adjunct.'

The 'Tablets from the Mount' approach won't work and I am really focussing on the professional standards area here and it does say advice. So in theory the Chief can accept, reject, accept in part, modify and put into play...

Victorian context

A few participants questioned the utility of an entity such as the Board operating in a Victorian model on the basis that there was only a single police employer which could largely do the work required.

I still struggle with your Board's role in light of the monopoly employer... I don't know why government wouldn't look to, if there is going to be professional registration of police, why it would be restricted to people that have been through the Vic Police training academy. Why wouldn't you have it for people coming from elsewhere who meet the standards.

I simply asked the question is there a role for the board, probably not because it's too resource intensive, Victoria Police are probably doing it in one sense or another now.

As I said there is no reason why Victoria Police can't do it themselves. There is external registration they still have to apply for jobs which they are already doing and we will get them irrespective and the fact that you have registered them. I am not sure what huge impact that will have on whether they are deemed suitable for a selection process....

As a police officer, I don't see the need for one.

All these participants, however, expressed the view that they could see the need for an independent entity at a national level in the context of a national registration scheme or could see the value if the Board opened up registration in Victoria to members from other policing jurisdictions. In addition, a couple of these participants observed that the nature of the Board's independent status could provide value within Victoria, despite not being a national scheme.

Roles and responsibilities of the Board

Participants described the nature of the role of the Board. Some discussed this in the context of the functions under the current legislation, others focussed on the role of entities such as a Board for future professionalisation models.

Registration

A number of participants commented on the Board's role in relation to the registration of former members. The Board's role in registration was primarily viewed as assessment of the suitability of a former member for re-entry into policing rather than registration as a pre-condition of employment.

Registration is a bit of misnomer in the current frame because what you have just described is an assessment function.

The current function that you are doing which is an assessment where people have been outside makes sense but probably in my mind as a kind of delegated function from the Chief Commissioner. I know it is not strictly a delegated function but that seems to me the concept of it.

You are not really doing license to operate because that still rests with the Chief Commissioner.

Some also highlighted that there was value add in assisting the organisation better assess and value the skills sets gained outside policing. One participant, for example, noted that the Board could look at a former member's skills and determine 'where they fit in' and another highlighted that the

benefit the Board could provide is in 'helping us value those skills sets'. Other participants described the role in the following ways:

...we've got to stop thinking of police who change roles as being expended, no longer worth it, you know feather dusters and we still have that attitude, the Registration Services Board needs to have some wisdom about it and that wisdom has to be fed back in a credible way to the organisation.

...if a person leaves for whatever reason they leave some of the knowledge and expertise they pick up outside our organisation could be highly valuable. The bit there is making the judgement call it is almost like we are not a mature enough organisation to make those judgements competently.

Another participant noted that having the Board look at applicants could help Victoria Police consider other things 'rather than just the circumstances under which someone left the organisation'. However, on the other hand this participant also highlighted that there was a need for the Board and Victoria Police to understand whether an individual was still a good fit with the organisation:

...okay so they have got these experiences and skills one would hope they have picked up while they are out there but where's their relationship and their thinking with the organisation today compared to when they left.

Registration of members taking career breaks or retiring

A few participants discussed the role of the Board in relation to members leaving the organisation. Registration was viewed potentially as a means of people maintaining a connection or link with policing. Participants described the Board's role in registering members leaving the organisation as follows:

The way I envisage what would happen as part of the separation, the employee would be given a notice on separation about the steps they would have to go through to maintain their registration. From that point on the relationship is between them and the registration Board not between them and Victoria Police....

You might want to do something in your local area, contribute at your local station....This might be a mechanism through which they could get some direction in where they need to stay current... It would be nice for them to meet some contemporary standards as well as calling on their experience.

A number of participants highlighted that there was work needed in relation to identifying the skills and knowledge people on career breaks needed to maintain to remain contemporary and current in policing. In addition, some participants also raised the need to identify how people could maintain their skills and how people's skills could be tested as other areas requiring attention.

...there is a bit about, you have missed a lot of what has been going on for the organisation, so how do you bring and expose them to build that capability You potentially set people up to fail coming back in if you don't have a way of giving them that knowledge and that capability or testing that in some way. Whilst there are some generic skills that are really valuable to the organisation that they still have the contemporary policing leadership skills that have to be blended with that ...

One participant noted while there was value in the Board registering members on career breaks, Victoria Police needed to undertake further work to better understand how to manage the mobility of members and optimise the value they bring back to the organisation. For example, this participant stated:

Why are we bringing former members back in. We recognise that yes there is an ideal about increasing the knowledge and skills within the organisation and if you like the professionalisation of the organisation by allowing people to get out and get other skills and experiences and making it easier for them to come back in. So that ideal in itself is a good one and is practical but what are we actually looking at when they go out. What guidance do we give them when they go out about where they go, what they need to do? How do we guide what benefit they bring back into the organisation because if they just go off and do something that suits them, well terrific for them, but how does that help the organisation grow when they come back or do we take the view that any experience outside Victoria Police is well worth having. It's an interesting conversation.

Future registration scheme

Some participants discussed the Board's role in the event that the registration scheme was expanded to members from other jurisdictions or all Victorian members. The expansion of the registration scheme had potential implications in terms of the breadth of the Board's role and functions.

A few participants discussed the Board's role in the event that Victoria decided to open up registration to police members from other jurisdictions seeking employment with Victoria Police. For example, one participant described the Board providing 'valid reliable independent standardisation of their skills set and applicability'.

Some participants also discussed the role of the Board in a more comprehensive Victorian scheme involving registration of the existing workforce. This was expressed by one participant as 'making sure that people have developed the right skills and maintained them.' A few participants also highlighted that full registration meant re-thinking the approach to discipline and professional standards.

So I think you maybe need to think about the scenario because if you are in a full registration model you are in a very different space. You are giving everyone their ticket to operate otherwise what is the point of it then that's the relationship with integrity, disciplinary and performance management and the professional standards piece is different.

Concerns were raised by a couple of participants about potential conflict between registration and Professional Standards Division and the Appeals Division of the Board if all Victoria police officers were registered. For example, one participant stated that 'From a governance perspective' having the multiple roles 'sits uneasily' and 'ideally you would separate out those appeals from the setting, monitoring and assessing of standards. So the chief commissioner dismisses someone because they have done something, then you de-register them and that person puts in an appeal and you've already de-registered them'.

Professional standards

Participants discussed the Board's role in professional standards for policing. A couple of participants expressed the view that the Board had a role in terms of contributing to thinking about the future of the profession of policing.

...that's the other part of your role around professionalisation that's clear thinking, it's not tied up with the mundane running of an organisation and policing the state, it's clear thinking, and really clear advice coming from you around what does a professional police force look like.

For me I would prefer that you spent your time on the high order stuff, what is the profession of policing, what does it look like, what does it mean for the practitioners...

Discussing the nature of Board's role, some participants distinguished between the Board taking a regulatory role as opposed to one which supports advancing the practice of policing and helps the organisation with cultural change.

Defining and advancing the practice of policing, and creating a space for that, which again I think it's a very valuable space but also posits it in a very positive way, it's not an organisation that's going to tell you off when you don't meet the standards, it's an organisation that's going to help you exceed the standards and get ready for the next thing and also shape the future of policing in a practical sense.

You are much more than just a functional bureaucracy carrying out a statutory duty with a database alongside it. You could be rooted at that end of the continuum or you could be much more. The chief commissioner is looking for something and of course it's more than that, it's the broader Victorian community interests.

What's the value add from having a Board...It may be in not so much regulating, it may be in some of the cultural change stuff that needs to occur for a registration system to be effective.

There was a potential risk identified by one participant in the Board becoming a 'defacto talent pool' for Victoria Police. This participant highlighted the need for the Board to take the 'role around building, developing, defining and leading the profession'. Similarly another participant highlighted a potential tension between the Board's quasi regulatory role in a registration scheme and the role of professional standards as more one of quality improvement. This participant described it in the following way:

...can you perform those two things in the one place because they are different skills sets to start with the yes, no licence to operate you are in a compliance space versus quality trying to write practice improvement. You are kind of doing both...

A couple of participants expressed ambivalence about the role the Board would take in relation to the development and setting of standards for the profession. Overall, however, participants tended to see the Board's role not so much as to set standards, as to advise on standards for entry and at rank as well as education and training. This was viewed as a quality improvement type role. Participants described the role variously as to reinforce current strategies, make suggestions for changes, test assumptions, identify organisational gaps and blind spots and ensure community views are taken into account.

...what you might be able to do is say to Vic Pol what do you say are your capability requirements for these jobs. Look at the Blue Paper, for example, you say you want to go here, how are you going to achieve those sorts of things...

... Victoria Police does its environmental scanning and all that sort of stuff could it then go to your body and say do you agree with this, that is what we see are the standards going into the future...

More an accreditation type role than a setting role, you are kind of looking at what's out there and saying that course or that set of standards passes muster...

A few participants highlighted the importance of ensuring that any advice given by the Board incorporates a community perspective on policing standards.

There is a very clear role for the PRSB to ensure that community views are represented in those discussions, and with the lens of if we are talking about registration, if we are talking about the nature of the skills and capabilities that a police officer should have and the types of training and experiences they should have along the way, then we need to incorporate in that the community perspective. That is not to overplay that and say that that is the sole conduit for that information but if you didn't do that the nature of the advice perhaps wouldn't be as thorough.

...it even might be the matrix gap analysis audit and then opening a discussion with chief and command around well maybe even developing a set criteria to work out where are the biggest problems or gaps here organisationally using the benefit to community type yardstick.

One participant described the connection between the function of the registration and the professional standards divisions in the following way:

Then if you look at the standards piece. It is an advisory one. Goes back to almost the second limb of the registration prescribed experience and qualifications.

Another aspect of the Boards' role was identified as helping determine what skills and knowledge need to be maintained by members taking a break from policing, how they should maintain their skills and how they should be tested. For example, one participant stated the need to address the following questions, 'What skills do they need to maintain in their absence or do they need to maintain any skills in their absence. Do they then have to have a skills gap filled before they can continue on?'

In relation to education and training, participants discussed various potential aspects of the role. For example, one participant highlighted that part of the role may be to encourage Victoria Police to increase education standards of police officers across the Board and 'not just to maintain a minimum requirement to be registered.'

A couple of participants questioned whether the Board may have a role in terms of interacting with the tertiary sector.

I don't know whether it should be the Board that forms relationships with academic institutions to provide thought starters for Victoria Police or to provide a how to guide or to actually partner with them in the development, I don't know.

I suppose that's another thing if you are having a regulatory body then is there actually an interface that the regulatory body does with the tertiary sector in terms of what should be covered in the curriculum.

Another possible function of the Board was the recognition of interstate qualifications, although this was suggested in the context of a possible expansion of the registration scheme to include members from other jurisdictions.

Other participants suggested that the Board may be able to operate in the leadership space or contribute to standards around promotion and transfer.

I could see the Board do some stuff in the leadership space. There is a really interesting discussion to be had between generic rank positions versus specialist skill positions. I think the Board again being a bit separate and with a bit of space could make a valuable contribution to that.

...the other thing we haven't discussed is promotion and transfer within Victoria. Once again I'm asking rhetorically what would a registration system have to contribute to promotion and transfer, anything, I'm not sure but it's worth having a think about and if there are certain standards required to be a superintendent for example should a registration board contribute to that, contribute to setting those standards.

I think there is probably some appetite to link professionalisation with very concrete outcomes for people in terms of career progression.

Assisting to advance the national professionalisation agenda was also identified by a few participants as another way that the Board could add value. In addition, participants working in the national arena, expressed the hope that the approach that Victoria came up with is consistent with the national model.

I think our challenge is to build a model both for you guys in Victoria but nationally that are consistent with each other and we don't end up with potentially two different models and potentially with eight or nine different models ...you know my hope would be that we would develop the standards at a national level that would be how we work at agreed protocols and processes that would be at the national level and then states would be free to implement them how and if they choose if that makes sense.

Summary of findings

Participants highlighted independence as being an important trait of the Board.

The majority of the participants highlighted the value of the Board to Victoria, including the development of fresh perspectives on policing and providing the community with confidence that police officers meet minimum standards.

The Board was perceived as playing a role in testing and challenging Victoria Police's standards rather than setting standards.

Some participants viewed the Board as being a catalyst for shifting police culture, in particular improving attitudes towards former members and understanding the value of career mobility.

The Board's role was viewed as advisory rather than regulatory.

The Board could also contribute to thinking about the future of the profession of policing in Victoria in addition to helping progress the national police professionalisation agenda.

5. Barriers and enablers

Participants were asked about mental models and mindsets which impede or could help facilitate police professionalisation. The most significant impediment was viewed by many as police culture, in particular mindsets relating to the view of former members and attitudes towards professional development. Participants also discussed other barriers including, resourcing, industrialised nature of policing, and level of commitment by the Victoria Police as potential barriers to police professionalisation.

Participants were asked about what they viewed to be key levers for change. Responses included opportunities presented by enterprise bargaining, current legislation and future legislative change as well as community engagement. The need for managing change effectively and also ensuring that an incremental and phased approach was taken were identified by a number of participants as critical to the success of any police professionalisation initiatives.

Police culture

When asked what mindsets or mental models impede professionalisation of policing, participants cited aspects of police culture as the most significant. Although some acknowledged the culture to be shifting, it was still seen to be present at least to some degree.

In particular, participants highlighted that there were mindsets which potentially could impact on the registration of former members or professional mobility more generally. These mindsets related to a view of members leaving as disloyal or uncommitted to policing. In addition some also referred to seniority and fairness mindsets.

Say it was the case some time ago and it is still hanging around a bit, if you leave Victoria Police to try something else out, you are more or less treated as a "persona non grata".

I think there is a little bit of the old seniority sitting in there you have got to do your time, you have got to be someone who has remained committed. There will be a sense that these people have been uncommitted to policing and that is why they have left. It is hard to describe but I get the sense that will have a part of play in those discussions when they occur about when to bring someone in, even if it is not overt, it will be there... Again the model that we espouse from day 1 is you are part of the team...

Well the big elephant in the room is the fairness mindset, I'm a current employee of the organisation, I've done twenty odd years, why should someone who hasn't been loyal to us get a job over me? That's the big player in this... I reckon that prevails through every level of the organisation.

A couple of participants emphasised the importance of a merit based selection processes to recruit former members back into Victoria Police to ensure a 'level playing field' for former and current serving members.

Well there is a lot of value in that, the downside is those who remain and build their capabilities will see it as a disadvantage potentially and you have to manage that... I think the model isn't just a given that you can come in at that level, I think they still have to be competing on merit for positions.

On the other hand a couple of participants highlighted that these mindsets may play out in terms of a bias on selection panels involving former members wishing to be re-employed with Victoria Police. One participant discussed the need to upskill recruitment officers to ensure they 'run these recruitment panels in a way where there isn't any bias against people trying to get a job coming back in because you will have Senior Sergeant, Inspector level as the senior levels on those panels.' The participant further stated that 'you would probably think the maturity is not there'.

A number of participants highlighted that cultural traits such as insularity were also potential inhibitors to professionalisation.

I mentioned insular thinking. I think there are cultural barriers to get over as well.

I think what would hold it back is a view of only a police perspective on things rather than take experience more broadly and see that there are parallels. Police are unique in some ways but not everything is unique to policing...

Participants described a number of other cultural traits that may be potential inhibitors such as a 'blue collar' work ethic and tendency to be reactive rather than pro-active.

As I said before the organisation still has a 'blue collar' ethic and an anti-intellectualism and a real adherence to the 'university of hard knocks' and therefore can discount some of the benefits that come through formal educational opportunities and experience elsewhere.

I am sure when most coppers ... sit the interview to join the organisation they talk about keeping the community safe, helping those in need of assistance then when they join they talk about catching crooks. When does that happen? How does that happen? How do we ensure that our members keep that open mind and think more about the proactive work that needs to be done ?that is a cultural issue again

The culture is very defensive. It is very reactive to what goes on around it. That may mean that professionalism, as a development idea, has always been secondary to the normal mode of operation to defend and respond...

One participant highlighted the importance of command and control particularly in crisis situations and in high pressure operational scenarios but stated that 'of course it is not the best way to advance some of these other things...'

Some participants emphasised that the prevailing view of training by members is that it is provided by the organisation and that there would need to be a shift in thinking towards at least some responsibility residing with the individual.

... this view that there is no personal responsibility or obligation it is the organisation's responsibility to grow those capabilities, so that mindset of members that the organisation needs to invest in me instead of me investing in myself and my self-directed learning, that perhaps I should be equally accountable for, it's that mutual obligation... I think that still exists in a lot of our workforce that is a limiting factor not all ... there is still an element of that and I don't think that that is a reasonable proposition that the employer has all of the obligation in respect to that...

Large groups of police officers who haven't had to undertake CPD in the past...might be perceived as another thing they have to do for little gain.

Some participants noted that the registration scheme itself was a lever for shifting the culture. For example, one participant described the potential for the registration system to 'help overcome the stigma of someone leaving'. Another noted that in the past there were issues with the reintegration of people who had been on international deployment back into the organisation and there 'is the bit about the organisation's obligation about the re-integration of those people.

Another key lever for change may be the workforce wanting to be recognised as a profession. A couple of participants suggested that incoming recruits may have greater expectations of policing as a profession in terms of level of education and training, recognition and options for professional mobility.

I think the appetite is one, professionalisation comes hand in hand with qualifications and continuous learning and I think there is a cultural shift towards people wanting that...

....probably the recognition as a profession, I think the workforce wants to be recognised as a profession, I think they are sick of being in that grey area they are not a trade, they are not public servants, they hold the office of constable and there is a level of independence to that office ...but they are not a profession either so what are they, I think we are a bit lost so the ability to come out you know what you are a profession I think will drive change...I suspect even at the leading senior constable level they want to see themselves as a professional...

Enterprise Bargaining

Some participants discussed the role of the enterprise bargaining process in the development of the current Victorian scheme. The current scheme emerged out of this process.

The industrial implications for further police professionalisation efforts were also discussed by some participants. The Enterprise Bargaining process in Victoria was both viewed as an enabler by some participants to advance aspects of professionalisation and a potential barrier by other participants.

I wonder if there is something in the EB. If you look at nursing there is a commitment of time. Nurses have overlapping shifts. It is a massive time commitment from the organisation. I am not sure if we are in the position to do it but if you don't create the space for people to progress their professional development then you are not going to increase their professionalism. So you have got to make some hard decisions.

This is just speculation if the industrial framework will lead to a muddling of professionalisation and pay claims and that kind of stuff which obviously there is a cross over but you wouldn't want to sink your value of getting people to contribute and develop the police profession you wouldn't want it to get sunk by an industrial frame ...there is that danger in an industrialised environment that potentially everything is seen through level and entitlement and pay and they will only do things because they get paid.

A few participants emphasised the need to work closely with the Police Association. For example, one participant described the need to 'engage with the industrial environment and work with it rather than against it' and 'keep a close dialogue going with the TPA' as critical to the success of any professionalisation initiatives.

Legislation

Legislation was recognised as a key driver for the Victorian scheme. Some participants highlighted that legislation was helping drive cultural change and provided the opportunity to test some of the elements of professionalisation explored at a national level and for Victoria to take a lead role in this.

So whilst you've got the legislation here, you'll be first off the block

Further legislative change was discussed as an option for future professionalisation models by some participants.

Well you have got legislation, maybe think about what further legislation. It's not so much a leverage point but you need a platform.

Resourcing

Cost was raised a potential barrier by some participants. For example one participant stated that 'everyone is fearful about what this all is going to cost'. Cost related to running a registration scheme, increasing the expectations and provision of professional development and testing to see if people had maintained their skills. Developing a scheme which was rigorous and credible was identified by one participant as potentially resource intensive. A few participants also discussed cost for registration for individual members within a full registration scheme.

Enhancing professional development for police officers was considered a key piece of work for Victoria Police and one that required substantial resourcing and investment in infrastructure to realise. In particular developing infrastructure associated with distributed learning and business models for outsourcing training were identified as areas requiring further resourcing.

We have been popping out stuff on e-learning for the last couple of years but you can hardly get to a computer. So there is a bit of infrastructure thinking if you are going to really reconfigure professional development.

Distributed learning is our big challenge. We can't keep bringing people down from Mildura for training. Ideally there are providers out there that could deliver training that we could sub-contract.

In addition, one participant cited internal capability and capacity such as diminishing VPS staff in specialist areas as potential challenges in delivering more training. While another discussed the potential cost in relation to allowing police members time to participate in training and development.

So a number of barriers will be time constraints and the volume of work you have to do in your day-to-day tasks which doesn't give people the space to do some of things they may like to do.

Cost for people to maintain their skills while unattached from the organisation were also discussed by some participants. However, costs were seen to be the largely individual's responsibility in these cases.

For me that is the simplest way to articulate it, it has to be at the person's cost because they are not an employee of the organisation unless we found a need, worst case scenario terrorism issues become significant, emergency management becomes significant, we have some people we are prepared to run, that's a decision for the chief commissioner of the day and the government.... people will invest in their career when they are outside the organisation. They are not necessarily keen to invest in their career when they are inside the organisation.

Some participants also highlighted potential barriers around resourcing for the PRSB which might limit its potential to provide services.

That's the harsh reality of this type of job, see you need dollars if they are not going to invest the dollars in it and the Chief Commissioner is not going to be prepared to give you funding...

That may be the other part that you will be limited by your capacity to deliver a program of registration/professional development type assistance in the policing space by the fact that you don't have a resource base to do it.

A few participants noted that other registration bodies self-fund through registration fees and or the provision of continuing professional development activities. Fees generated through a full registration scheme were viewed as an option for the Board to self-fund in the future.

Engaging stakeholders

Engaging participants in any police professionalisation initiatives was recognised as critical to success. Clarifying what the benefits are for members and other stakeholders, selling the message about the value of professionalisation and involving stakeholders in planning and development were highlighted by some participants.

Engaging community and government

Engaging the community to better understand the benefits to community were viewed as a potential lever for police professionalisation by a few participants. In addition, one participant highlighted that a leverage point may come from government integrity or oversight bodies.

Other leverage points if you can get the community engaged in terms of what they expect from a professional police force, then you will always find some advocates in the community that will say positive things. Once the public and the community start saying that they value professionalism then the politicians will to and it will get matched with the resourcing. There is a piece of leverage there for me, if you can get the right people saying about the importance of police professionalisation, then you can make a strong argument for investment by government.

The other thing might be a stick so either the Auditor General or the Ombudsman or someone makes an observation that the policing profession is insular and community safety is suffering because Victoria Police is insular. That would be a real catalyst.

An important part of this is around getting a pretty clear sense of what are the benefits of doing this ... and actually measuring this against benefits to the community.

A few participants described community perception of policing as positive at present and highlighted that gaining the community perspective might be challenging. As one participant stated the 'community may not understand the benefit to them' of police professionalisation. Nevertheless, involving community perspectives and expectations were viewed as important.

I think the community's current satisfaction around police is by the standards imposed by Victoria Police with regard to the action they take to allegations of criminality, discipline, malpractice. So that is a significant hurdle to overcome. So you talk about the community lens and rightly so. Then how do you convince the community that registration of police is necessary for police when the community already have some comfort in knowing that Victoria Police is a pretty good employer and not likely to have people in their ranks that are drug affected or convicted of offenses?

How you get the community lens though is still a bit interesting ... The majority probably has a reasonably positive view of the police. It has got to be a balance between what the large proportion of the community perceives but is not vocal about and then what a smaller proportion is vocal about. It is an interesting space but one that has to be confronted because by not doing it you don't have sense of whether the community appreciates what you are doing.

Engaging Victoria Police

A number of participants highlighted that without support from the senior leadership within Victoria Police and or government efforts towards police professionalisation could be difficult to achieve. For example, one participant emphasised the need to ask the Chief Commissioner about the space the organisation is willing to occupy in terms of professionalism and professional development 'because you can do what you like in terms of your space but unless the organisation is matching it in terms of its own commitment, it will struggle'.

Several participants identified that a key lever for change could be a clear commitment from senior leaders within Victoria Police to support police professionalisation efforts. In addition, other participants identified the need for 'champions' or 'sponsors' from within including former members that have successfully been re-employed by Victoria Police.

It's about having a registration board having a thing and having the Police Commissioner saying this is a very important thing ...

You need a uniform sponsor and vision going forward...

Well you would obviously have to have agreement up to the highest levels about the model

...change champions, people that have done it and been successful...

Other levers included demand for suitable recruits although this was not considered to be relevant in the present environment.

One of the leverage points would be demand, we have no problem at the moment attracting plenty of suitable recruits, if the well suddenly dried up we would want be going to other jurisdictions.

Engaging police members

Some participants highlighted that a challenge was to better engage police members in the dialogue around professionalisation including better articulating what it means for them and what the benefits are.

I still think part of the challenge, part of the big issue for us is to bring our members along and I don't think we have done that yet at all and I think this is part of the challenge for us as we move our way forward. But then again part of the other issue is you don't want to build massive expectations and then not be able to deliver on them.

The participant expressed the view that engaging police members in the development of a model and police members being able to see the value of it was a potential lever for change.

... then you have to have acceptance by the workforce so the levers are in them engaging in the development of what that model is ..., at the end of the day the real lever with the workforce is, is there advantage in it for me, everyone will be what's in it for me. If there is value in it for them, if not personally about what it brings to the organisation in terms of capabilities, that's where you would get your acceptance.

Links to the national work

Links between the Victorian and the national professionalisation work were identified by a couple of participants as a potential enabler for both the development of a Victorian model and the progress of the national professionalisation strategy. For example, one participant highlighted that the Board in regards to the national professionalisation strategy, 'with your work you will build a platform for it'. Another participant stated the potential for ANZPAA to help influence and guide the Victorian model in order to 'catapult the national agenda in a certain direction'.

Change management

Participants highlighted the need to manage change effectively and also emphasised the importance of changes being incremental. Many suggested a phased approach in particular to any further developments of the Victorian registration scheme.

You have got to bring the culture with you.

... in the current climate it needs to be incremental if it's going to achieve.

A couple of participants highlighted the need for responsibility to be shared amongst stakeholders. For example, one participant stated that, 'It's not an easy thing to do ... It's a challenge all right' but emphasised that it shouldn't be done in isolation.

Summary of findings

Participants highlighted that elements of police culture (in particular, negative attitudes towards the return of former members and members taking breaks from policing) were key barriers in building upon the current registration scheme.

The enterprise bargaining process was viewed by some as a potential enabler and by others as a potential barrier to reform.

The need to engage with police members, police unions, community and government and gain support and commitment for police professionalisation within senior command of Victoria Police was identified as critical to the success of professionalisation initiatives.

Maintaining links to the national professionalisation work were identified as an enabler for Victoria and for the national professionalisation agenda.

Managing change effectively and approaching change incrementally were identified as important.

