COMMUNITY POLICING TO COUNTER VIOLENT EXTREMISM:

Evident Potential and Challenging Realities

Policy Report
September 2016

Cameron Sumpter

RSiS
Nanyang Technological University
S. RAJARATNAM SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

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Executive Summary

Community policing is an approach to law enforcement that stresses the need for strong sustainable relationships between the local police and the communities they serve. Through open communication and understanding of common interests, public safety then becomes a collective problem-solving activity, which ideally promotes societal cohesion and democratic values. Given the diffusion of terrorism in recent years, and the involvement of local people in plotting and staging attacks, police forces in different countries believe that community policing principles are crucial for countering radicalisation and violent extremism. Effective community collaboration enables the police to understand the issues and remain informed so that potential interventions can be conducted early and locally, before problems escalate beyond the community's control. This report evaluates community policing approaches in Australia, the United States, and the United Kingdom, with regard to countering violent extremism and terrorism. It finds that the construction of transparent relationships with communities is objectively advantageous as a counter-terrorism strategy, but obstacles to success remain. Covert operations, surveillance, and the heavy-handed tactics of federal agencies can erase the trust that police have sometimes spent years trying to build. If community policing is to be an effective approach to countering home-grown terrorism, governments need to consider the effects of coercive policies and practices on the people they seek to engage.

Introduction

Violent extremism is becoming both increasingly global and increasingly local. In September 2001, 19 foreign nationals staged an elaborate and devastating attack on symbols of the United States' economic and military power, resulting in significant military responses and a new global security paradigm. Today, terrorist operations in support of the same militant Jihadist movement are being carried out in a diverse range of nations, yet perpetrators have often been citizens or residents of the countries they wish to harm. Targets have also diversified; not only have the capitals of politics and commerce been attacked, but also seemingly unlikely small cities such as San Bernardino, Orlando and Nice.

An outcome of this evolution is the important role played by local police forces in preventing and countering violent extremism. Many nations have established specialised police counter-terrorism units which are well-armed and highly trained in operations more often associated with military action. However, it is the ability of a neighbourhood police force to know and understand the community it serves that may be the most effective tool for tackling violent extremism. In the past 20-30 years, a number of nations have adopted a community policing philosophy to law enforcement, which is thought to bring substantial benefits to the fight against terrorism, as it enables the police to anticipate problems and work collaboratively with the public to solve them. The problem is that a successful community policing approach relies on high levels of trust between officers and members of the community, and controversial features of state counter-terrorism policies and the actions of more heavy-handed security agencies can severely undermine such requisite trust.

This report will investigate the benefits of a community policing approach to countering violent extremism and the obstacles that impede its success. The first sections outline the key aspects and advantages of community policing, as well as its utility as a counter-terrorism strategy. The experiences of Australia, the U.S., and the U.K. are then analysed as case studies, before summing up the challenges involved in collaborating with communities in the current environment.

Community Policing

A community focus to policing emerged as a new approach following research conducted in the 1970s, which found benefits in increased interaction between citizens and the police.[1] In previous decades, police forces in the U.K. and U.S. had developed a reactive or "fire-brigade" style of crime response, brought about in part by the introduction of radio-fitted patrol cars in the 1930s and 1940s.[2] The general public was regarded as "relatively passive recipients of professional crime control" and while this proved successful for some time, social changes in the 1960s brought about a need to reconsider this top-down strategy.[3] In the 1980s, there was a resurgence of foot patrols. Police forces in different countries began to establish decentralised neighbourhood posts, which provided greater access for the public and enabled the police to focus on relevant community issues and crime prevention initiatives. Community members came to be regarded as "co-producers of public safety", while police would no longer simply react to emergencies, but were the "primary diagnosticians and treatment coordinators" in the fight against crime.[4]

Community policing has often been regarded as "a philosophy, not a program"[5], though a number of specific programmatic features have been associated with this contemporary approach to law enforcement. In 1988, Skolnick and Bayley identified four requisite elements to a community policing formula: (i) community-based crime prevention; (ii) reorientation of patrol activities to emphasise non-emergency servicing; (iii) increased

1 George L. Kelling & Mark H. Moore, "The Evolving Strategy of Policing", *Perspectives on Policing 4* (1988): 10

2 Mollie Weatheritt, "Community policing: rhetoric or reality?" in J.R. Green and S. Mastrofski (eds.) *Community Policing: Rhetoric or Reality?* (New York: Praeger, 1988): 155

3 George L. Kelling & Mark H. Moore, "The Evolving Strategy of Policing", *Perspectives on Policing* 4 (1988): 6, 9

4 David H. Bayley & Clifford D. Shearing, "The Future of Policing", *Law &Society Review* 30:3 (1996): 588

5 Gary Cordner, "Community Policing: Principles and Elements" (1996) http://www.ncdsv.org/images/communitypolicingprincipleselements.pdf (accessed 19 June 2016): 1

accountability to the public, and (iv) decentralisation of command.[6] Officers are stationed permanently in particular neighbourhoods so as to capitalise on local knowledge and build lasting relationships. They are also given greater autonomy to ensure prompt and appropriate responses to issues affecting the community. Contrary to the adversarial stance of past law enforcement agencies, a community policing approach conceptualises its role as one of customer service, whereby problems are solved collaboratively with all interested parties.[7] Citizens are not simply the referent objects of law enforcement, but can voice their concerns and hold police accountable for their actions.

Themes of cooperation and increased communication can be seen as objectively positive developments, yet there are obstacles that potentially hamper the implementation of a community policing model. Some police officers are said to rue the days of traditional policing when a sense of camaraderie pervaded precincts, and view the contemporary evolution as a "softer" style of policing.[8] Others complain that the model represents the "political correctness syndrome gone wild", and that increased collaboration with community members is simply a marketing ploy to ensure police forces are perceived as positive brands in the marketplace of public opinion.[9] Another issue involves human resources; community policing requires all officers to adopt empathetic perspectives and communication skills, which younger officers in particular may lack.[10] Appropriate and ongoing training is required in order to ensure effective interactions with the wide range of people an officer may come into contact with in a given community.

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6 Jerome H. Skolnick & David H. Bayley, "Theme and Variation in Community Policing", *Crime and Justice* 10 (1988): 5

7 Cordner (1996): 2-3

8 Jenny Coquilhat, "Community Policing: An International Literature Review", *New Zealand Police* (2008) https://www.police.govt.nz/resources/2008/community-policing-lit-review/elements-of-com-policing.pdf (accessed 19 June 2016): 10

9 Sharon Pickering, Jude McCulloch & David Wright-Neville, *Counter-Terrorism Policing: Community, Cohesion and Security* (New York: Springer Science+Business Media, 2008a): 93

10 Jerome H. Skolnick & David H. Bayley, "Theme and Variation in Community Policing", *Crime and Justice* 10 (1988): 19

Despite the desire to collaborate with the public, particularly for the goal of acquiring information, some police forces may still be reluctant to offer their own information back to the community.[11] While this lack of reciprocity may not be a significant issue in most constabularies, it does underline the most important aspect of a successful community policing model, which is the maintenance of trust and mutual respect between the police and the people they serve. The construction of honest and durable relationships is crucial to this collaborative problem-solving approach to crime prevention and law enforcement. In order to achieve this, the police must be regarded as both legitimate and approachable figures of authority.

11 Jenny Coquilhat, "Community Policing: An International Literature Review", *New Zealand Police* (2008) https://www.police.govt.nz/resources/2008/community-policing-lit-review/elements-of-com-policing.pdf (accessed 19 June 2016): 10

Procedural Justice

A concept known as procedural justice has come to be regarded as the most effective process of ensuring constructive engagement between the police and members of the public. Studies conducted by Thibaut and Walker in the mid-1970s found that an individual who deems a situation of conflict resolution involving a third party to be fair is more likely to be satisfied with the outcome.[12] Regarding law enforcement, when police are perceived as carrying out duties and interventions legitimately, citizens will be more receptive to interactions and more inclined to cooperate. There are four aspects to the attainment of this legitimacy: (i) people are given the chance to communicate their concerns to the police or share their perspectives regarding a particular issue; (ii) people perceive the police to be acting and communicating with neutrality and transparency; (iii) people believe the police are trying to do what is best for the community; and (iv) the police treat all people with respect and dignity.[13]

Studies have shown that the adoption of these procedural justice principles resulted in the general public placing greater trust in the police as an institution. Drawing on data from the 2010-2011 European Social Survey (ESS), which provided a sample size of over 50,000 people from 26 European Union nations, researchers found "clear and strong relationships between dimensions of trust in the police and dimensions of perceived police legitimacy".[14] Interestingly, the study determined that the "*quality* of relations between police and public" was even more important for conceptions of legitimacy than the perceived competency of the police.[15] Another experimental study in 2013 looked at the effects of a scripted procedural justice approach to routine traffic stops versus standard police procedure in Australia, with regard to attitudes towards the police. Results

12 John Thibaut & Laurens Walker, *Procedural Justice*, (Hillsdale, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Inc., 1975)

13 Tom R. Tyler, "Social Justice: Outcome and Procedure", *International Journal of Psychology* 35:2 (2000): 117

14 Mark Hough, Jonathan Jackson & Ben Bradford, "Trust in justice and the legitimacy of legal authorities: Topline findings from a European comparative study", in Body-Gendrot, S., Hough, M., Kerezsi, K., Levy, R., & Snacken, S. (eds.) *The Routledge Handbook of European Criminology* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2013)

15 Ibid. (Emphasis in original).

from over 2,700 drivers showed that “fair treatment by police in only one, short encounter can have a significant positive impact on recipients’ trust and confidence in police”.[16]

Community policing greatly enhances the frequency of police-community interactions and potentially improves the quality of communications. This problem-solving, customer service orientation reduces fear of crime among community members and builds trust between the police and the public. Honest and respectful relationships then led to greater sharing of information and strengthened societal bonds. Steve Dye, a police chief in Texas, asserted in late 2015 that community policing “should no longer be considered a ‘type’ of policing, but rather the default manner in which all law enforcement agencies operate”.[17] Given the current and diffusing threat of violent extremism in seemingly unlikely corners of the world, this nuanced approach to policing may be more relevant than ever.

16 Kristina Murphy, Lorraine Mazerrolle & Sarah Bennett, “Promoting trust in police: findings from a randomised experimental field trial of procedural justice policing”, *Policing and Society* 24:4 (2014): 420

17 Steve Dye, “It’s Time – A Commitment to Community Policing”, *The Police Chief* 82 (2015): 30

Counter-Terrorism Community Policing

A community policing approach to countering terrorism and violent extremism brings a number of potential benefits, which reflect the more general advantages outlined above. The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) outlined in a 2014 report how community policing can help prevent terrorism:

- Policing is anchored in a respect for human rights and the rule of law
- Public perceptions and interaction with the police are improved
- Communication with the public on counter-terrorism is more effective
- There is an increase in public vigilance and resilience
- Enhanced understanding of communities creates a strong basis for mutual engagement and cooperation
- The police can better identify and respond to community grievances
- Relations may be improved with individuals and groups that have been "hard to reach or not yet engaged with"[18]

One feature that has attracted particular interest in some corners is the potential for gathering information on suspicious individuals or potential threats. Following the Orlando nightclub shooting in July 2016, the presumptive Republican Presidential nominee Donald Trump said, "Muslim communities must cooperate with law enforcement and turn in people who they know are bad – and they know who they are".[19] This abrasive statement assumes an adversarial relationship between "Muslim communities" and the police, which is not the case with a community-focused, problem-solving police force. That being said, intelligence collection is at the core of more nuanced perspectives on the ideal relationship between police and communities with regards to counter-terrorism.

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18 Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), "Preventing Terrorism and Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization that Lead to Terrorism: A Community Policing Approach" (2014) http://www.osce.org/cio/242916 (accessed 20 June 2016)

19 Donald Trump Addresses Terrorism, Immigration, and National Security (13/6/16) https://www.donaldjtrump.com/press-releases/donald-j.-trump-addresses-terrorism-immigration-and-national-security (accessed 14 June 2016)

Martin Innes proposes a deeper integration of "local neighbourhood policing (NP) into the counter-terrorism apparatus" in order to develop a "community intelligence feed" that would inform both law enforcement and prevention efforts.[20] However, Innes warns that only a "thin form of trust" is possible, as relations between minority communities and the U.K. police allegedly remain too problematic for genuinely cooperative relationships.[21] Instead of forming "strategic contacts" with key members of the community (which has been the approach taken by the U.K. police in the past), Innes argues that an "extensive network of weak ties" is a more effective intelligence collection strategy.[22]

Focusing on particular members of the community who are deemed influential or knowledgeable is problematic, but not because it represents a suboptimal method of intelligence collection. If only certain community leaders are engaged by authorities, they may be seen as colluding with police or "*selling out*", thereby cast in opposition to other community members.[23] Prioritising a community policing approach to counter-terrorism because of its potential for intelligence collection will generate distrust. The recruitment of community informants is a risky strategy when attempting to develop honest relationships with the public, because any information gained will be offset by the betrayal of trust if (when) the individuals are uncovered. A backlash is especially likely in the current climate; Muslim communities in the U.K., the U.S., Australia and elsewhere have often been forced to live under a cloak of suspicion in the post-9/11 world.

Observers have framed this phenomenon by drawing upon the concept of a "suspect community", which was first coined by Paddy Hillyard in 1993 to describe the experiences of Irish people in the U.K. during the Northern Ireland conflict.[24] Marie Breen-Smyth argues that while there is no monolithic 'Muslim community' with fixed features, Muslims in the West have been constructed

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20 Martin Innes, "Policing Uncertainty: Countering Terror through Community Intelligence and Democratic Policing", The Annals of the American Academy 605 (2005): 224, 232

21 Ibid: 239

22 Ibid: 232, 235

23 Adrian Cherney & Kristina Murphy, "Being a 'suspect community' in a post 9/11 world – The impact of the war on terror on Muslim communities in Australia", *Australian & New Zealand Journal of Criminology* 0:0 (2015): 13 (emphasis in original)

24 Paddy Hillyard, "Suspect Community", *Journal of Law and Society* 20:4 (1993)

as a "suspect community" through *"the imagined fears of its non-members*".[25] The language and imagery employed in media reports have played a role in this construction. One respondent to a 2015 study conducted in Australia to garner Muslim views on counter-terrorism said: "Every time we watch media, they associate Islam with the terrorism, they say Islamic terrorism or Islamic terrorists … this has a big impact on the way people are thinking".[26]

The term 'Islamophobia' is now a feature of contemporary vernacular due to the increase in reports of racist abuse toward Muslims in recent years. Women have been spat on and have had their hijabs ripped off in public,[27] countless mosques have been vandalised,[28] including one in Australia that received a severed pig's head in a nearby bathroom,[29] and children are bullied at school for being 'terrorists' – sometimes even by their teachers.[30] Islamophobic attacks in London nearly doubled from 2013 to 2015,[31] and following Britain's decision to leave the European Union in June 2016,

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25 Marie Breen-Smyth, "Theorising the 'suspect community': counterterrorism, security practices and the public imagination", *Critical Studies on Terrorism* 7:2 (2013): 230 (emphasis in original)

26 Kristina Murphy, Adrian Cherney & Julie Barkworth, "Avoiding community backlash in the fight against terrorism: Research report" (2015): 15, http://www.researchgate.net/publication/273575879 (accessed 24 May 2016)

27 Heath Aston, "dozens of anti-Muslim attacks as Islamic leaders warn of community fear", *The Sydney Morning Herald* (9/10/14) http://www.smh.com.au/national/dozens-of-antimuslim-attacks-as-islamic-leaders-warn-of-community-fear-20141009-113tmk.html (accessed 18 June 2016)

28 Christopher Mathias, "A Running List of Shameful Islamophobic Acts Since The Paris Attacks", *The Huffington Post* (16/12/15) http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/all-the-islamophobic-acts-in-us-canada-since-paris_us_564cee09e4b031745cef9dda (accessed 18 June 2016)

29 Briana Shepherd & Lucy Martin, "Severed pig's head left in toilet near mosque at University of Western Australia", *ABC News* (7/12/15) http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-12-07/severed-pig-head-found-in-toilet-near-university-of-wa-mosque/7006252 (accessed 18 June 2016)

30 Dean Obeidallah, "Anti-Muslim Bullying: Sometimes, It's Even the Teachers Doing IT", *The Daily Beast* (18/5/16) http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2016/05/18/anti-muslim-school-bullying-sometimes-it-s-even-the-teachers-doing-it.html (accessed 18 June 2016)

31 Thomas Burrows, "Islamophobic hate crimes in London have nearly doubled in the last two years as Muslims say they are 'very consicous of keeping your head down'", *The Daily Mail* (2 January 2016) http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3358535/Islamophobic-hate-crimes-London-nearly-doubled-two-years-Muslims-say-conscious-keeping-head-down.html (accessed 18 June 2016)

these hate crimes have increased significantly.[32] In this environment, the relationships forged over time between Muslim communities and the police have become more fragile, and attempts by the latter to engage the former have become more difficult.

Counter-terrorism policies and revised legislation on security measures can also have a detrimental effect on the way Muslim communities perceive state institutions, such as the police.[33] Muslims in western countries have reported being unduly profiled by security forces, including uncomfortable experiences during airport security checks and at immigration controls.[34] In the U.S. and Australia, federal agencies tasked with countering terrorism have been accused of using underhanded measures and/or excessive force to conduct operations, and are criticised for specifically targeting particular communities.[35] Such methods may be regarded as an efficient use of resources in the face of complex and serious threats to national security, but they also erode relationships of trust built between the local police forces and the communities they serve. This is a fundamental issue for efforts to counter violent extremism. Short-term operational responses such as police raids are critical to thwart attacks and save lives, but they run the risk of securitising and further alienating communities whose members already feel like suspects under surveillance.[36] Therefore, open communication is the best way to mitigate the adverse effects of neighbourhood counter-terrorism operations. For this reason, police in the U.K. and Australia have in the past displayed a willingness to share information, at times informing community councils of impending police raids.[37]

One difficulty experienced by local police forces in the U.K., the U.S. and Australia is navigating the cultural and linguistic differences that exist in their

32 Vikram Dodd & Ben Quinn, "Met police received more than 500 reports of hate crimes after Brexit vote", *The Guardian* (5/7/16) https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2016/jul/05/met-police-received-230-reports-of-hate-crimes-after-brexit-vote (accessed 5 Jul 2016)

33 Tyler *et al.* (2010): 387

34 David Schanzer, Charles Kurzman, Jessica Toliver & Elizabeth Miller, "The Challenge and Promise of Using Community Policing Strategies to Prevent Violent Extremism", *US Department of Justice Research Report* (2016): i

35 Sharon Pickering, Jude McCulloch & David Wright-Neville, "Counter-terrorism policing: towards social cohesion", *Crime Law Soc Change* 50 (2008b): 104

36 See OSCE (2014): 90

37 Pickering *et al.* (2008a): 68

increasingly multicultural societies. Foreign language skills have not traditionally been assets that police recruitment departments look for in candidates, although this is changing. Some agencies, such as the London Metropolitan Police, now require aspiring officers to speak a second language.[38] Knowledge of religious and cultural norms and protocols is also important for police officers to interact effectively with people in their homes and communities. Specialised divisions have been created in some forces – such as the "Muslim Contact Unit" in London[39] and Multicultural Community Liaison Officers (MCLOs) in Australia.[40] These diverse teams are equipped with a number of languages and are generally regarded as successful at bridging cultural divides. However, there is a risk that police forces may become overly dependent on their assistance, thus it remains necessary for every officer to be at least culturally literate in the customs of the community he or she is serving.[41]

A community policing approach to countering extremism and terrorism has been difficult to actualise for a number of reasons. Although the police and the public are supposed to collaborate as co-producers of public safety, counter-terrorism policies tend to turn 'engagement' into a top-down process. Residents of affected neighbourhoods are rarely consulted about what they believe are the problems and how they can be addressed.[42] It is essential for police forces and their communities to be on the same page; cooperation must start with a common understanding of the issues.[43]

The next section will address the specific experiences and obstacles faced by police forces in Australia, the U.S., and the U.K., in their efforts to counter extremism through community policing.

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38 The Guardian, "Budding police constables must speak second language in Met pilot scheme" (20/7/15) https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2015/jul/20/police-constables-second-language-metropolitan-pilot-scheme (accessed 08 July 2016)

39 Tom R. Tyler, "Mechanisms for eliciting cooperation in counter-terrorism policing: Evidence from the United Kingdom", *Journal of Empirical Legal Studies* 8:4 (2011): 731

40 NSW Police Force "Cultural Diversity", http://www.police.nsw.gov.au/community_issues/cultural_diversity (accessed 6 July 2016)

41 Pickering *et al.* (2008b): 104

42 Floris Vermuelen, "Suspect Communities – Targeting Violent Extremism at the Local Level: Policies of Engagement in Amsterdam, Berlin, and London", *Terrorism and Political Violence* 26:2 (2014): 304 (286-306)

43 Georgia Holmer with Fulco van Deventer, "Inclusive Approaches to Community Policing and CVE", *United States Institute of Peace*, Special Report 352 (2014): 1

Australia

The Victoria Police is considered to have put the greatest emphasis, and met with the most success, in implementing a community policing approach which is sensitive to the different cultures represented in the state.[44] In its 2013 Counter-Terrorism Framework, the Victoria Police stressed that "community is a crucial element in all aspects of counter-terrorism" and that its "relationship with community groups is based on trust and a long history of engagement around an equally diverse range of issues and concerns".[45] The framework goes on to state that the Victoria Police "do not target specific religious or ethnic groups … [and] see all communities as partners, not as threats or adversaries".[46] Effective collaboration is a common theme throughout the document, and in conclusion, it is asserted that "only by being inclusive and building genuinely trusting and mutually beneficial relationships will we ensure that counter-terrorism remains everyone's responsibility".[47]

The New South Wales (NSW) Police Force also acknowledges the need to work with communities in its efforts to counter terrorism. A specialised division of the NSW Counter-Terrorism and Special Tactics Command (NSWPS) called the Community Contact Unit (CCU) has been established to "increase community awareness of counter-terrorism arrangements and to build police understanding of their impacts on the community".[48] Researchers from the University of Western Sydney teamed up with the CCU in 2011 to survey Muslims in Sydney on their opinions of the Unit's efforts. The findings were published in 2016 and reported that 67 per cent of respondents believed the NSW Police's "counter-radicalisation community engagement initiative had been successful".[49]

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44 Pickering *et al.* (2008a): 72

45 Victoria Police Counter Terrorism Framework: Protecting Victoria from Terrorism – Everyone's Responsibility (2013): 3, https://www.police.vic.gov.au/retrievemedia.asp?Media_ID=99883 (accessed 21 May 2016)

46 Ibid: 3

47 Ibid: 9

48 NSW Government "Working with the NSW community" http://www.secure.nsw.gov.au/working-with-the-community/ (accessed 6 July 2016)

49 Kevin Mark Dunn, Rosalie Atie, Michael Kennedy, Jan A. Ali, John O'Reily & Lindsay Rogerson, "Can you use community policing for counter terrorism? Evidence from NSW, Australia", *Police Practice and Research* 17:3 (2016): 203

While this represents a generally positive perception, it is not an overwhelming endorsement and the low sample size of just 33 returned surveys does little to instil confidence in the findings. The team asserted that building relations with Muslim communities had been "an urgent focus" of the NSWPS since 2009. However, doing so had been difficult due to a number of contextual factors, such as the "high levels" of racism experienced by Australian Muslims, and perceptions of "over-policing and procedural injustice" among some sections of the communities.[50]

Other findings have also stressed obstacles to effective engagement and collaboration with communities. A 2007 study by the Alfred Deakin Research Institute looked at attitudes among ethnic minorities toward the Australian police based on 198 returned surveys. The resulting report in 2010 revealed that those "who identified themselves as belonging to an ethnic minority group were more likely to question the legitimacy of police authority, less likely to feel the police adhere to principles of procedural or distributive justice, and were less likely to want to cooperate with police if asked".[51]

In 2008, a study involving hundreds of Muslim people in the state of Victoria highlighted concerns of profiling and a "gung-ho approach to counter-terrorism by some federal agencies".[52] The increased powers given to the Australian Federal Police (AFP) and Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) through counter-terrorism legislation were thought to have eroded relations with local police.[53] The leader of one Muslim community group said: "…Victorian police have visited and spoken to my community. They were very nice. But when we see on TV the raids of Muslim houses by Federal Police or ASIO, we feel frightened. Laws only create fear and terrorism…"[54] The detrimental effect of police heavy-handedness on community relations was witnessed in 2015, when over 500 people signed a petition to boycott an *Eid al-Fitr* dinner with the AFP

50 Ibid: 208
51 Kristina Murphy & Adrian Cherney, "Policing ethnic minority groups with procedural justice: an empirical study", *Alfred Deakin Research Institute*, Working Paper No. 2 (2010): 14
52 Pickering *et al.* (2008a): 120, The book is not clear on the exact number of respondents but implies that it is between 200-500
53 Ibid: 118-119
54 Ibid: 119

following a series of counter-terrorism raids.[55] One comment on the site hosting the petition said: "it is incredulous that the same agencies that harass, discriminate and target the Muslim community would expect it to break bread with them".[56]

There have been genuine and diligent efforts by local police forces in Victoria and New South Wales to cooperate with Muslim communities on a level playing field, yet there is a perception that engagement is essentially a top-down exercise.[57] Respondents to a comprehensive survey of 800 Australian Muslims in Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane in 2013-2014 generally felt that police did not consider their views on how best to deal with issues of radicalisation in their communities.[58] Despite this lack of communication, the majority of respondents believed that the police generally acted with procedural justice and conveyed a sense of trust in the police, though lower levels of trust were recorded regarding counter-terrorism policing.[59] The survey found that many Australian Muslims felt "under siege" due to increased scrutiny from both the authorities and the wider public, but this was tempered by the level of procedural justice that respondents perceived in police actions.[60] The more people believe that police are being fair, the more likely they are to cooperate.

The Victoria Police working in culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities has previously expressed concern over "language barriers and levels of cultural, religious and gender understanding".[61] More recent findings suggest that this divide is still an issue. The 2013-2014 project cited above included a series of 14 focus groups involving 104 Australian Muslims across the three eastern Australian cities. A recurring theme in discussions was the need for police to learn more about Islam and "engage with Muslims

55 Natalie O'Brien, "Muslim leaders urged to boycott Eid dinners held by AFP in 2015", *The Sydney Morning Herald* (5/7/15) http://www.smh.com.au/national/muslim-leaders-urged-to-buoycott-afp-eid-dinner-20150704-gi53vx.html (accessed 2 July 2016)
56 Ibid.
57 Cherney & Murphy (2015): 12
58 Murphy, Cherney & Barkworth (2015): 42
59 Ibid: 41-42
60 Ibid: 44
61 Pickering *et al.* (2008b): 103

in a way that respected religious practices".[62] Liaison teams such as the Community Contact Unit may be well-prepared for engagement with Muslim communities, but it remains important for all officers to have the relevant skills and knowledge to connect with members of the communities in which they work.

The focus group participants also believed that Australian Muslims were painted with broad brush strokes and collectively considered as either "potential terrorists or terrorist sympathisers".[63] A separate report using the same data noted how this feeling of being under suspicion had a chilling effect on expression, and that an "atmosphere of self-censorship was beginning to pervade the Muslim community" out of fear of even closer scrutiny by authorities.[64] One participant noted the "risk of the j-bomb [j meaning jihad]. It's very hard for us even to bring that word up, you know".[65] Restricting opportunities for deliberation only drives certain views further underground. Moreover, when people are fearful of certain topics of conversation, it is difficult to have open and constructive dialogue, in which all relevant parties can express what they perceive the problem to be. Community policing is about the police and public co-producing public safety; with regard to violent extremism, it is important to have firm agreement as to where the dangers do and do not lie.

62 Murphy, Cherney & Barkworth (2015): 24
63 Ibid: 11
64 Cherney & Murphy (2015): 8
65 Murphy, Cherney & Barkworth (2015): 18

The United States

Local police forces in the U.S. were early implementers of a community-focused philosophy to law enforcement, but the utility of this approach for countering terrorism is a more recent priority. In 2011, the White House released a strategy called *Empowering Local Partners to Prevent Violent Extremism in the United States*, which stressed that the "strength of communities" was essential to its prevention efforts.[66] "We are fortunate", the authors stated, "that our experience with community-based problem solving, local partnerships, and community-oriented policing provides a basis for addressing violent extremism as part of a broader mandate of community safety".[67] The strategy sought to leverage existing instruments, such as the Building Communities of Trust initiative established by the Departments of Justice (DOJ) and Homeland Security (DHS) in 2009, which focused on "developing trust among law enforcement, fusion centers, and the communities they serve, to address the challenges of crime and terrorism prevention".[68] The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) has also highlighted the importance of community engagement. In 2014, the Bureau argued that "breaking down barriers and promoting open communication between the community and police are critical", but added this was "challenging work that requires open dialogue and a willingness to cooperate.[69]

The St Paul/Minneapolis twin cities, along with Los Angeles and Boston, established pilot programmes for the federal government's strategy for the prevention of violent extremism, which included a commitment to community

66 The White House, "Empowering Local Partners to Prevent Violent Extremism in the United States" (2011): 2, https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/empowering_local_partners.pdf (accessed 21 June 2016)

67 Ibid: 3

68 Department of Homeland Security, "Building Communities of Trust Fact Sheet" (2013) https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/building-communities-of-trust-fact-sheet.pdf (accessed 21 June 2016)

69 Federal Bureau of Investigation, "A New Approach to Counter Violent Extremism: Sharing Expertise and Empowering Local Communities", *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin* (October 2014)

policing.[70] The Minnesota cities are home to large Somali communities that have grappled with issues of radicalisation and the recruitment of youth by extremist groups since the late 2000s. In response, the St Paul Police Department "trained over 600 sworn officers in the Somali culture", and implemented a number of community programmes that have allegedly "built trust, cooperation and friendships".[71] As part of the initiative, the Minneapolis Police Department "increased its number of Somali police officers", who have "helped to increase legitimacy in the community" and taught colleagues about Somali culture and practices.[72] More recently, the New York Police Department (NYPD) reaffirmed its commitment to a community policing approach, and in 2015, Commissioner William Bratton announced "a new patrol model" aimed at improving police-community relations and listening to neighbourhood concerns.[73] In the same speech, however, Bratton unveiled a new unit called the Strategic Response Group, which is essentially a well-armed paramilitary force of 350 officers trained in counter-terrorism operations and "advanced disorder control".[74]

This combination of soft and hard measures presents a difficult balance. The FBI and NYPD may publicly espouse the virtues of building bridges, maintaining trust, and collaborating with communities to counter violent extremism, but the covert aspects of their operations do little to instil confidence. Investigations by the Associated Press (AP) in 2011 revealed that the NYPD had "become one of the country's most aggressive domestic intelligence agencies" and had worked with the Central Intelligence Agency

70 US Department of Justice, "Pilot Programs Are Key to Our Countering Violent Extremism Efforts", https://www.justice.gov/opa/blog/pilot-programs-are-key-our-countering-violent-extremism-efforts (accessed 21 June 2016)

71 US Attorney's Office, "Building Community Resilience Minneapolis-St. Paul Pilot Program: A Community-Led Framework", (February 2015): 3, https://www.justice.gov/usao-mn/file/642121/download (accessed 2 July 2016)

72 Ibid: 3

73 J. David Goodman, "N.Y.P.D. Plans Initiatives to Fight Terrorism and Improve Community Relations", *The New York Times* (29 January 2015) http://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/30/nyregion/nypd-plans-initiatives-to-fight-terrorism-and-improve-community-relations.html (accessed 2 July 2016)

74 Ibid.

(CIA) to spy on ethnic communities in the U.S.[75] The NYPD reportedly recruited a network of informants, nicknamed "mosque crawlers", to visit sermons, talk to people, and report back on any news that may be of interest to the police.[76] One 19-year-old American named Shamiur Rahman told AP that he earned up to $1,000 per month spying on "everything and anyone" in New York's Muslim communities, after being recruited by the police in a Queens prison where he was serving a sentence for drug charges.[77]

The FBI also makes use of informants[78] and has adopted tactics for arresting suspected terrorists that involve what some consider entrapment.[79] Commenting on a 2009 case of an American man sentenced to 25 years in prison for plotting terrorist attacks, Law Professor at New York's Fordham University, Karen Greenberg, said the "target, the motive, the ideology and the plot were all led by the FBI".[80] According to Greenberg, "If suitable suspects are identified, FBI agents run a sting, often creating a fake terror plot in which it helps supply weapons and targets".[81] The New York Times reported in June 2016 that the FBI had "significantly increased its use of stings in terrorism cases … [and had] helped people suspected of being extremists acquire weapons, scope out bombing targets and find the best routes to Syria to join the Islamic State…"[82]

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75 Matt Apuzzo & Adam Goldman, "With CIA help, NYPD moves covertly in Muslim areas", *Associated Press* (23/8/11) http://www.ap.org/Content/AP-In-The-News/2011/With-CIA-help-NYPD-moves-covertly-in-Muslim-areas (accessed 14 July 2016)

76 Adam Goldman & Matt Apuzzo, "Informant: NYPD paid be to 'bait' Muslims" *Associated Press* (23 October 2012) http://www.ap.org/Content/AP-In-The-News/2012/Informant-NYPD-paid-me-to-bait-Muslims (accessed 14 July 2016)

77 Ibid.

78 Michael Hirsh, "Inside the FBI's Secret Muslim Network", *Politico Magazine* (24 March 2016) http://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2016/03/fbi-muslim-outreach-terrorism-213765 (accessed 3 July 2016)

79 Glenn Greenwald, "Why Does the FBI Have to Manufacture its Own Plots if Terrorism and ISIS Are Such Grave Threats", *The Intercept* (26 February 2015) https://theintercept.com/2015/02/26/fbi-manufacture-plots-terrorism-isis-grave-threats/ (accessed 3 July 2016)

80 Paul Harris, "Fake terror plots, paid informants: the tactics of FBI 'entrapment' questioned", *The Guardian* (16 November 2011) https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/nov/16/fbi-entrapment-fake-terror-plots (accessed 3 July 2016)

81 Ibid.

82 Eric Lichtblau, "F.B.I. Steps Up Use of Stings in ISIS Cases", *The New York Times* (7 June 2016) http://www.nytimes.com/2016/06/08/us/fbi-isis-terrorism-stings.html (accessed 3 July 2016)

The efficacy of these operations for law enforcement is that undercover stings, unlike electronic surveillance, do not require a warrant from a judge, which may be seen as time wasted in rapidly progressing scenarios.[83] Many observers argue that the use of informants and sting operations are a violation of civil liberties, while others believe that they represent a resourceful strategy for thwarting imminent deadly attacks. What is certain is these covert tactics do not help the police to build and maintain trust with Muslim communities.

A study by researchers from Duke University entitled *The Challenge and Promise of Using Community Policing Strategies to Prevent Violent Extremism* was published in early 2016. The project involved surveys, telephone interviews, and site visits with hundreds of police officers from across the U.S., as well as interviews and focus groups with around 200 "community members, representing all major segments of Muslim American communities".[84] Respondents identified fears of surveillance and entrapment as significant obstacles to developing relationships with the police in their neighbourhoods. One focus group participant said police "openly tell us that they're sending agent provocateurs, so how could we possibly trust them?"[85] Indeed, the report detected "deep suspicion of direct interaction with government authorities" among Muslim communities in the U.S., who believed they were unfairly targeted and that police engagement was simply another form of surveillance.[86]

That being said, the report's authors do point to "promising practices" among some local police forces that are helping to build trust within communities. A strong sense of belief was found among police leadership that community policing methods were positive, and that enhanced relations with members of the public would benefit everyone, though funding was seen to be inhibiting efforts.[87] Despite the challenges posed by the substantial deficit of trust between Muslim communities and law enforcement agencies in the U.S., working constructively to improve relations is still possible. The report recommended that the police recruit officers who reflect the ethnic

83 Ibid.
84 Schanzer *et al.* (2016): 10-11
85 Ibid: 46
86 Ibid: i
87 Ibid: 35

and religious composition of the communities they serve, train officers in the cultural norms and practices of local communities, and ensure that outreach efforts remain separate from intelligence gathering initiatives and investigations.[88] The more local neighbourhood police distance themselves from the coercive and covert activities of larger agencies, the more likely they will be to maintain effective relationships with the communities they are protecting.

88 Ibid: 40-41

The United Kingdom

The London Metropolitan Police is considered to be the first modern police force in the world, and community policing methods have been implemented throughout British police forces since the 1970s.[89] Following the July 2005 attacks on public transport commuters in London, the Metropolitan Police established the Communities Together Strategic Engagement Team (CTSET) to improve collaboration with "strategic partners" and "London's diverse communities, within the context of counter-terrorism and security".[90] Working with communities is seen as "fundamental" to the Metropolitan Police's approach to law enforcement, and effective engagement is considered "key to providing a policing service that the public trust and have confidence in".[91] The U.K. police introduced non-warranted Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) under the 2002 U.K. Police Reform Act to improve communication and relations with the public.

Unlike Australia and the U.S., the U.K. is not a federal system and has no federal police agency. But in 2003, a national counter-terrorism strategy known as CONTEST was initiated, and has developed into a wide-reaching programme involving four key components: Pursue, to stop attacks; Prepare, to build resilience; Protect, to strengthen safeguards; and Prevent, to stop people becoming involved in violent extremism.[92] U.K. police forces play an important role in each of the four branches of CONTEST, but it is Prevent – introduced in 2006 – which has the greatest community focus. Police officers responsible for Prevent functions have had a particular interest in engaging community members to gather information, and attempting to identify individuals deemed potentially problematic or 'at risk' of radicalising to violence. A research team at the Police Science Institute at Cardiff University identified three main features of Prevent policing:

89 Fielding 2009 pp. 1-2

90 Metropolitan Police, "Communities Together", http://content.met.police.uk/Site/communitiestogether (accessed 9 July 2016)

91 Metropolitan Police Authority & Metropolitan Police Service, "Community Engagement Commitment 2010/2013" (2013): 4

92 HM Government, "Prevent Strategy" (2011) https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/97976/prevent-strategy-review.pdf (accessed 5 July 2016)

- Community engagement and community intelligence generation
- Identifying and mounting disruptions against resenting risks
- Community impact management [93]

Prevent teams have reportedly found utility in being more open about their policing activities, and some officers who had previously taken a covert approach to intelligence gathering began to build networks of contacts through open discussions about their role and objectives.[94] In the late 2000s, Prevent police officers were seen to "act as a bridge" between community-focused neighbourhood police officers and operational counter-terrorism police units.[95] More recently, the role of Prevent police has been described as having evolved into a "blended methodology" of "traditional" counter-terrorism policing and a neighbourhood or community policing philosophy.[96] Mixing the methods may prove problematic, however, as controversial aspects of the broader multi-agency Prevent Strategy, and the adversarial nature of reactive policing, can have detrimental effects on crucial relationships of trust within communities.

Following pilot projects beginning in 2007, the Channel function of the Prevent Strategy was implemented across England and Wales in 2012 to focus more attention on finding people "vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism".[97] Teachers and healthcare professionals were imposed with a statutory duty to look out for signs of radicalisation among their students and patients.[98] In early 2016, the BBC reported that 415 children

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93 Martin Innes, Colin Roberts & Helen Innes with Trudy Lowe & Suraj Lakhani, "Assessing the Effects of Prevent Policing", *Cardiff University Police Science Institute* (2011): 3

94 Ibid: 18

95 Ibid: 18

96 Paul Dresser, "Understanding prevent policing through dispositive and reflexive risk", Unpublished PhD Dissertation, Manchester Metropolitan University (2015): 41

97 HM Government, "Channel Duty Guidance: Protecting vulnerable people from being drawn into terrorism" (2015): 5, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/425189/Channel_Duty_Guidance_April_2015.pdf (accessed 5 July 2016)

98 Homa Khaleeli, "'You worry they could take your kids': is the Prevent strategy demonising Muslim schoolchildren?" *The Guardian* (23 September 2015) https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2015/sep/23/prevent-counter-terrorism-strategy-schools-demonising-muslim-children (accessed 11 July 2016)

under 10 years old had been referred to de-radicalisation programmes in the U.K. since Channel's inception.[99] Figures such as these, along with specific examples of farcical connections between kindergarten children and extremism, have some parents worried and angry. Former chief superintendent of the Metropolitan Police Dal Babu said in 2015 that "Prevent has become a toxic brand and most Muslims are suspicious about what Prevent is doing". In December 2015, a U.K. council of mosques representing 70,000 Muslims announced that it would boycott Prevent, calling the strategy "ill-conceived" and "racist".[100]

Another example that illustrates the potential for broader counter-terrorism strategies to diminish community trust was a 2010 initiative called Project Champion in Birmingham. Over 200 surveillance cameras, including 72 that were hidden, were installed in two largely Muslim neighbourhoods in the Midlands city, paid for by funds from the government's counter-terrorism budget.[101] Local representatives were not consulted over the cameras and the ensuing anger resulted in the police quickly backing out of the scheme in fear of losing public support for their activities.[102] One community member commented: "We felt totally betrayed … The relationship between the police and the community was severed, you know there was a void left there; it was like total mistrust".[103] Another added: "This has set relations back a decade".[104]

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99 Sima Kotecha, "More than 400 children under 10 referred for 'deradicalisation'", *BBC News* (21 January 2016) http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-35360375 (accessed 11 July 2016)

100 Diane Taylor, "Society of mosques to boycott 'racist' anti-terror Prevent programme", *The Guardian* (17 December 2015) https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/dec/17/society-of-mosques-to-boycott-anti-terror-prevent-programme (accessed 11 July 2016)

101 http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/police-apologise-over-cctv-in-muslim-areas-2094167.html

102 Paul Lewis, "Birmingham stops Muslim CCTV surveillance scheme", *The Guardian* (17 June 2010) https://www.theguardian.com/uk/2010/jun/17/birmingham-stops-muslim-surveillance-scheme (accessed 11 July 2016)

103 Innes *et al*. (2011): 24

104 Danielle Dwyer and Wesley Johnson, "Police apologise over CCTV in Muslim areas", The Independent (30 September 2010) http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/police-apologise-over-cctv-in-muslim-areas-2094167.html (accessed 11 July 2016)

A study published in 2015 sought to measure confidence levels in the police among communities in a "metropolitan area in the United Kingdom".[105] The project drew on data from an extensive survey conducted by an independent research company for the local police, which involved over 30,000 surveys.[106] A major finding was that "ethnic minority Muslims" had lower confidence in police than any other defined group, and confidence was especially low in areas where "vulnerability to violent extremism is highest".[107] Another study from 2011 interviewed 300-400 individuals and looked specifically at the willingness of Muslim communities in London to cooperate with the police in their counter-terrorism efforts.[108] According to findings, attitudes either against or in favour of British foreign policy, opinions of the contextual legitimacy of terrorism as an instrument of political change, and varying levels of religiosity did not have an influence on the readiness of British Muslims in London to cooperate with counter-terrorism police.[109] What proved to be a better predictor of cooperation was procedural justice.[110] If people perceive police officers to be acting fairly and to have the community's best interests at heart, they are more likely to cooperate, regardless of political and religious views.

Despite the clearly stated views of the British Government recognising the utility of a community-focused approach to policing, funding shortages have created difficulties in recent years. A 2016 report by the U.K. trade union, UNISON, revealed that Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) numbers across the U.K. had been reduced by 30 per cent since 2010, with the Metropolitan Police witnessing almost a 64 per cent drop in PCSOs.[111] According to a survey respondent, "community engagement is now not

105 Alex Murray, Katrin Mueller-Johnson & Lawrence W. Sherman, "Evidence-Based Policing of U.K. Muslim Communities: Linking Confidence in the Police With Area Vulnerability to Violent Extremism", *International Criminal Justice Review* 25:1 (2015): 68

106 Ibid.

107 Ibid: 74

108 Aziz Z. Huq, Tom R. Tyler & Stephen J. Schulhofer, "Mechanisms for Eliciting Cooperation in Counterterrorism Policing: Evidence from the United Kingdom", *Journal of Empirical Legal Studies* 8:4 (2011)

109 Ibid: 750

110 Ibid: 749

111 UNISON, "No Time for Community Policing Anymore", *PCSO Cuts Report no. 3* (April 2016): 2, https://www.unison.org.uk/content/uploads/2016/04/No-Time-for-Community-Policing-Anymore.pdf (accessed 14 July 2016)

possible. We are now deployed to incidents and home visits with no time for patrolling and talking to the public".[112] One police officer said simply that there was "no time for community policing anymore".[113]

Writing in the Guardian after the November 2015 Paris attacks, Chief Superintendent Gavin Thomas stated that in "the fight against all types of terrorism, we know that the long-term answer lies in families and in communities – and therefore, in neighbourhood policing".[114] Unfortunately, priorities appear to be changing. In late 2015, former Prime Minister David Cameron announced that the U.K. Government would be hiring an additional 1,900 intelligence officers to bolster counter-terrorism efforts in the face of increasing threats of violence.[115] It may be that the government sees the threat of terrorism as coming from abroad, but it does suggest that a more covert approach to gathering information will be preferred, and relations between authorities and Muslim communities are likely to diminish as a consequence.

112 Ibid: 6

113 Ibid: 7

114 Gavin Thomas, "Cyber intelligence can uncover terrorism, but neighbourhood policing can defeat it", *The Guardian* (19 November 2015) https://www.theguardian.com/public-leaders-network/2015/nov/19/cyber-intelligence-terrorism-neighbourhood-policing-paris-attacks (accessed 24 May 2016)

115 Kylie MacLellan, "Britain to hire 1,900 more spies to combat Islamic State militants", *Reuters* (16 November 2016) http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-g20-turkey-britain-security-idUKKCN0T500520151116 (accessed 15 July 2016)

Conclusion

It has often been said that it will not be possible to arrest our way out of the current scourge of terrorism. The implication is that so-called 'softer' measures must be taken, such as encouraging diversity and dialogue, revitalising marginalised neighbourhoods, providing constructive life paths for wayward young people, and collaborating with communities to improve public safety and tolerance. The three countries covered have put great emphasis on both the implementation of a community policing approach to law enforcement generally, and the employment of this philosophy as a counter-terrorism tool. However, all three have also met significant and similar obstacles to building and maintaining the requisite trust with Muslim communities to develop collaborative and sustainable responses to potential problems.

Communities that have come under the authorities' spotlight for concerns of extremism feel like suspects; police informants infiltrate community networks, CCTV cameras glare down on neighbourhood streets, and social workers take away children suspected of radicalising. Heavily armed counter-terrorism police have raided suburban houses with arguably excessive force. Muslims feel unfairly profiled when they are stopped at airports. Alarmist and reductionist media reports of terrorism have spread fear and helped to provoke Islamophobic attacks, which have risen sharply in a number of countries. Taken together, these unfortunate realities have exacerbated the 'us-and-them' tensions that terrorist organisations seek to provoke.

Regardless of the environment in which a community policing approach to counter-terrorism is implemented, three conditions remain essential. First, the gathering of information should be the result of effective engagement with communities, not the motivation for collaboration. Second, the police should not selectively engage community leaders or so-called strategic partners, but should attempt to develop transparent relationships across the board, especially with the youth. Third, people should feel free to express their views without fear of being detained, as this will only drive the dangerous further underground and inhibit open dialogue between communities and authorities.

The major challenge for governments is to find a way of balancing the need for steadfast responses to imminent threats of violence with long-term initiatives that address the foundations of extremism. Engagement and collaboration through community policing to counter terrorism is undoubtedly a desirable way forward; no serious argument is refuting this. What is up for debate is where this approach ranks on the list of a government's counter-terrorism priorities. When security agencies employ adversarial strategies such as covert operations, profiling, and surveillance, communities lose faith that authorities have their best interests at heart and become reluctant to collaborate. Not only does this represent the loss of a vital human resource, but it risks alienating sections of society that may be already prone to anti-establishment sentiment and the potential for extremist convictions. Effective community policing provides strategic assets and creates constructive channels of dialogue between the state and its people, thereby addressing grievances and promoting the benefits of inclusive democratic values.

About the Author

Cameron Sumpter is an Associate Research Fellow at the Centre of Excellence for National Security (CENS) at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS). He holds an MA with first class honours in Politics and International Relations from the University of Auckland, where he wrote his thesis on prison-based disengagement strategies, focusing on the experiences of Indonesia. Prior to commencing his postgraduate study in New Zealand, he worked as an English teacher and journalist in Asia, Europe, Africa, and Latin America. His research interests include initiatives aimed at countering violent extremism (CVE), processes of radicalisation, extremist organisations and intra-movement dynamics, disengagement programmes, and social movement theory.

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RSiS
Nanyang Technological University
S. RAJARATNAM SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

Nanyang Technological University
Block S4, Level B4, 50 Nanyang Avenue, Singapore 639798
Tel: +65 6790 6982 | Fax: +65 6794 0617 | www.rsis.edu.sg