

# Chapter 17

## Whakatupato: Community Policing or the Police Response to a Social Problem in New Zealand?



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### Introduction

The first form of control over firearms in New Zealand was the Arms Importation Ordinance of 1845. The ordinance codified controls over the importation of firearms and the changes of their ownership, but only with the objective of preventing the indigenous population, Maori, from obtaining and owning firearms, “rather than to regulate the ownership or possession of firearms by European settlers” (Thorp 1997, p. 9). The basis for the ordinance was a dispute about the acquisition and the ownership of land between the colonial powers in the United Kingdom and Maori.

The ordinance was the beginning of the different approach to managing and controlling the ownership of firearms in New Zealand. More significant controls were not introduced until 1920, when all rifles and shotguns were required to be registered, and the importation and use of pistols was almost totally banned. A more fundamental governance change to the administration of firearms did not take place until 1983. These changes were a response to the increase in the occurrence of criminal violence, especially gun crime, and the deterioration of the decentralized gun register system managed by the New Zealand Police (Thorp 1997).

The introduction of new legislation in 1983 and 1992 has had an impact on the use of firearms in relation to crime and socially, especially in regard to Maori living in rural areas. The inclusion of rural Maori within the formal firearms licensing system was non-existent until 2009 (New Zealand Police 2009). Anecdotal evidence provided the view that a large number of rural Maori owned firearms, but little was known about the Maori approach to firearm safety, their possession of firearms, and the state of repair of the weapons they used.

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This article examines a program called Whakatupato<sup>1</sup> which was introduced by the New Zealand Police in conjunction with the New Zealand Mountain Safety Council and iwi.<sup>2</sup> The program provides comprehensive firearms safety training for Maori, and for firearms users in rural communities who may not be able to access firearms and hunter safety training (Spray et al. 2010). The uniqueness of the program is that it is culturally based and delivered within Maori tribal and iwi areas, usually on a marae.<sup>3</sup>

The article discusses the program within the context of the community policing strategies of the New Zealand Police: 'Prevention First' and 'The Turning of the Tide' and explores the wider impact of the delivery of the program and the possibility of it being a catalyst for improving other social problems in rural Maori communities. The first section of the article examines the literature relating to the public's attitude toward police (ATP) within the context of community policing. The second section presents the major social issues facing Maori and this is followed by a discussion of the two strategies; The Turning of the Tide and Prevention First, which have been introduced to improve the relationship between the police and the community and to improve the delivery of policing services to the community. These sections are followed by a discussion of the Whakatupato firearms safety program and the reasons that led to its development and implementation. The article concludes with an assessment of the firearms safety program within the framework of community policing and the relationship of the police with the community.

## Police-Community Relationships and Attitudes

The approaches and processes involved in the delivery of police services to the community is extremely complex and multifaceted (Thurman and Zhao 2004; den Heyer 2013). Since the 1980s, the majority of western nations have adopted community policing approaches to re-establish or to improve the police-community relationship (Cao 2001; Eck and Rosenbaum 1994; Zhao et al. 1999). Changing to a community approach to service delivery has increased the need to understand what determines the public's attitudes to the police (Ren et al. 2005).

The implementation of community policing is associated with three fundamental assumptions. The first assumption is based on the assertion that the effectiveness of current police strategies in controlling crime can be improved if the police increase the quantity and quality of their contact with, and collaboration with the community (McElroy et al. 1993; Moore et al. 1988). The second assumption maintains that different communities have differing policing priorities and needs, and therefore, if policing is to be successful, it must be able to be adapted to those local needs and

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<sup>1</sup> 'Whakatupato' means 'take care'.

<sup>2</sup> Iwi is an identifiable Maori community and is often a tribe or part of a tribe.

<sup>3</sup> A marae is a communal or sacred place, usually a community building or hall, which serves religious and social purposes in Polynesian societies.

priorities (Kusow et al. 1997). The third assumption relates to both the first and the second assumptions and proposes that an increase in police community collaboration together with an awareness of the different needs and priorities of communities will improve the image of police, resulting in a stronger relationship with the community (Grinc 1994).

The proviso in relation to community policing is that it is not known whether programs established as part of a community policing strategy improve the community's confidence in the police or promote the image of the police within a community (Kusow et al. 1997). According to Kusow et al. (1997), realizing community trust and confidence must be seen as the cornerstone upon which community policing programs can be implemented.

The literature relating to the relationship between the police and the community, especially in minority communities, is based primarily on research conducted in the United States of America and the United Kingdom. This narrow base of research applies generally to issues pertaining to race or ethnicity or aspects of community policing and indicates that the most significant determinant of attitude towards the police is the individual's perception of how the police related to that person in previous encounters (Scaglione and Condon 1980). Although the majority of the earlier studies show that ethnicity had an impact on attitudes to police, a study by Fultz in 1959 suggested that contact with the police was the most important determinant of an individual's attitude towards the police (cited in Webb and Marshall 1995). The perception of a previous encounter has been identified as being more significant in the individual's attitude towards the police than all other socioeconomic variables, including the individual's ethnicity or income (Scaglione and Condon 1980). The significance of the previous encounter in personal attitudes towards the police suggests that one of the most important variables in the police-community relationship is the style of policing. Furthermore, the variable highlights that policing programs that stress respectful officer-community interactions will reinforce positive police-community relationships (Scaglione and Condon 1980).

Historically however, research on the public's attitudes toward the police has been in two areas. The first area focused on identifying the determinants of the public's attitudes towards the police and the second focused on the fundamental and complex structure of the public's attitudes towards the police (Webb and Marshall 1995). The research into police-community relationships highlighted that the nature of citizen attitudes toward the police and the police attitude towards the community or towards a group within the community is an important determinant of whether the two groups can work together in a community policing context, especially in response to community safety or security (Greene and Decker 1989). The effect of attitude towards the police was taken a step further by Murty et al. (1990), who suggested that the police needed to portray a positive image towards the community in order to be able to function effectively and efficiently.

A more direct perspective was taken by Decker (1981), in relation to the effectiveness of the police. Decker emphasized that the police, because they are a public sector organization, needed community support to meet its goals. However, this research was based on individual-level and contextual variables and maintained that

the most important predictors of attitudes towards the police are four individual-level variables – race, socioeconomic status, age, and gender (Decker 1981). Decker also identified that contextual variables such as neighbourhood culture, experiences with police, victimization, and experience with police programs could influence attitudes.

The one variable that can influence the public's attitude towards the police is the perception of police practices or the delivery of police services (Dunham and Alpert 1988). According to Dunham and Alpert (1988), the appropriateness of different police practices in some neighborhoods can influence the public's attitude, especially in neighborhoods that reflect distinct cultures or that have different values from what are identified as mainstream values. Perception of the delivery of police services by a specific group in the community could affect their attitude towards the police to such a level that the police service in that area could be totally ineffective (Dunham and Alpert 1988; Murty et al. 1990; Webb and Marshall 1995). Durham and Alpert (1988), concluded that the linkage between police practices and cultural appropriateness was fundamental and justified the use of different police practices in different neighborhoods or different communities.

In summary, the research revealed that a community policing program that has been designed to improve the interaction between the police and the community may not specifically reduce crime, nor improve the community's attitude or confidence in the police, but the program may still need to be implemented as part of a wider community policing strategy to enhance the objectives of the police. An alternative method to increase the probability of achieving an improvement in police-community relations from the introduction of a specific program is to ensure that strategies that improve the community's satisfaction with the police are implemented prior to implementing the community policing program (Kusow et al. 1997).

## Firearms in New Zealand

The statutory basis for the licensing of firearms and their use in New Zealand is presented in the Arms Act 1983. The legislation creates the environment where possession of a firearm in New Zealand is considered a privilege, rather than a right (New Zealand Police 2013).

The Arms Act 1983, replaced the earlier dysfunctional firearms registration system that required a firearms user or owner to be licensed and introduced an intensive screening procedure for firearms applicants and lifetime firearms licenses. The intention of the Act was “to consolidate and amend the law relating to firearms and to promote both the safe use and the control of firearms and other weapons” (Arms Act 1983). The Act is a “licensing/no registration” system and does not restrict the number of firearms that a licence holder may acquire or own. The Act provided legislation in relation to the following areas:

- The licensing of firearms dealers;
- The importation of firearms;

- Restrictions on possession of specific firearms;
- The issuance of firearms licenses; and
- The procurement of pistols and restricted weapons (Arms Act 1983).

The Act sought to control firearms users rather than the actual firearm and marked a new era in the control of firearms in New Zealand. This approach added to the concept that it was the firearms user and not the firearm which posed a potential danger and hinged on the assumption that a preliminary vetting/check of firearms licence applicants would eliminate or minimize the prospect of unsuitable or possible high risk people from using or owning firearms (Thorp 1997).

To comply with the Act, the police were to develop and implement a firearms licence test that would ensure that licence applicants had a basic knowledge of firearm safety and their legal obligations (Forsyth 2011). The test was designed with the assistance of firearms and hunting groups and the delivery of the test was outsourced to the New Zealand Mountain Safety Council (Forsyth 2011).

This liberal approach to the control of firearms changed following the shooting of 13 people on 13 November 1990, in a small town in New Zealand's South Island by a young man using two semi-automatic rifles. The tragedy raised questions about the adequacy of the Arms Act, as the offender had been issued with a new licence in 1984, and the tragedy increased the call from the public for the introduction of tighter controls on the ownership of firearms (Thorp 1997). In response to the tragedy, the government introduced the 1992 Arms Amendment Act.

The Amendment Act legislated that all Military Styled Semi-Automatic weapons were to be registered, changed the lifetime firearms licence to a 10 year licence and introduced a number of firearms security storage prerequisites. These changes also saw the police investigating the suitability of a person to hold a licence, which included interviews with the applicant and referees and visits to their residence to evaluate the security in place for the storage of firearms and ammunition.

In 1997, there were approximately 210,000 firearms licence holders and between 700,000 to 1 million firearms in New Zealand (Thorp 1997). However, these figures increased to more than 250,000 firearms licence holders and between 1.5 and 2.2 million firearms by 2016 (Gatland 2016). The actual number of firearms in New Zealand is not known owing to the emphasis of the firearms licensing system being on the licence holder rather than on the registration of firearms.

In relation to the number of firearms licence holders and weapons, New Zealand experiences a low rate of casualties from the unintentional discharge of a weapon, but a high ratio of deaths to casualties. From 2000 to 2015, there were 97 casualties from an unintentional weapon discharge, but 27 deaths (27.2%) (Forsyth 2015). The high ratio is caused by the large number of hunting rifles in New Zealand in comparison to other firearms. Hunting rifles have greater power, which reduces the chance of survival (Forsyth 2015), especially when the incident takes place in a remote hunting location. The number of casualties and the number of deaths from unintentional firearms shootings for the period 2000–2015 is presented in Table 17.1.

**Table 17.1** Unintentional firearms casualties and deaths 2000–2015

Year	Total casualties	Deaths	Year	Total casualties	Deaths
2000	17	4	2008	10	3
2001	14	4	2009	12	4
2002	4	0	2010	12	1
2003	18	6	2011	11	4
2004	6	1	2012	9	3
2005	9	1	2013	5	1
2006	11	1	2014	5	1
2007	7	1	2015 <sup>a</sup>	N/K	6

Source: Forsyth 2011; 2015;

<sup>a</sup>McQuillan 2015.

## The Challenge for Maori

Maori are the indigenous people of New Zealand and make up 14.9% of the total population (Statistics New Zealand 2016). They are the most victimized social group in New Zealand society and according to police, generate more resolved crime and prosecutions than any other social group (New Zealand Police 2012). Maori comprise of 45% of police arrests, 38% of court convictions and over 50% of sentenced prison inmates (New Zealand Police 2016; Statistics New Zealand 2010, 2013). According to Speirs (2002), Maori are also significantly more likely than non-Maori to be reconvicted and re-imprisoned.<sup>4</sup>

The over-representation of Maori within the criminal justice sector is compounded by other social ills experienced by the majority of Maori. Researchers have, for example, identified a number of other adverse social problems experienced by Maori, including mental and physical ill-health (Statistics New Zealand 2013), unsatisfactory progress in housing and health intervention measures (Flynn et al. 2010), low educational achievement (Ford 2013), and low salaries (Pack et al. 2016).

In 2012, just under 40% of Maori youth left school without any qualifications and approximately 25% of Maori youth were unemployed (Marriott and Sim 2014). In 2015, 12.1% of adult Maori were unemployed (Statistics New Zealand 2016).

<sup>4</sup>Over three-quarters (78%) of Maori are reconvicted within 2 years of their release from prison, a rate around 10 percentage points higher than that for New Zealand European (68%) or Pacific Peoples inmates (66%). At 2 years from release, the reimprisonment rate for Maori is 43%, around 10% higher than New Zealand European (31%) or Pacific Peoples inmates (32%) (Speirs 2002; Nadesu 2009).

## The Turning of the Tide

In response to the over-representation of Maori in the criminal justice system and the increasing importance of relationships and partnerships in community policing, the police developed and implemented a number of specific programs and strategies that would build the community's confidence in its procedures and its service delivery. It was hoped that the programmes and strategies would build a relationship with Maori and this would ensure that the police met their obligations under the Treaty of Waitangi.<sup>5</sup>

In 1996, the then Commissioner of the Police expressed his concern that the response of the police to the over-representation of Maori in the criminal justice system could be perceived as the police not being committed to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi (New Zealand Police 2014; O'Reilly 2014). To ensure that the police were able to succeed in accomplishing its vision of 'Safer Communities Together', the police needed to establish, maintain and develop problem-solving partnerships with Maori (O'Reilly 2014). This reasoning led to the development of the strategy 'Responsiveness to Maori' in the early 2000s, which became the overarching document for the basis for the development of strategies to address ethnic minority and Maori criminal offending.

The Turning of the Tide strategy was developed in 2011 and set specific targets for reducing the disproportionate representation of Maori in offending, victimization and crash statistics.<sup>6</sup> The targets that police are to achieve by 2014/15 and 2017/18 are presented in Table 17.2. The strategy consolidated the earlier crime reduction programs developed by iwi groups. A key feature of The Turning of the Tide was the recognition of the role that iwi and Maori agencies, groups, whanau<sup>7</sup> and communities play in achieving these specific police objectives and outcomes (O'Reilly 2014).

The vision of the strategy was that "all Maori will live full and prosperous lives, free from crime and road trauma" and was presented within four specific values:

1. Aroha – we all make mistakes. We stand by our people who accept responsibility for their mistakes and try to put things right. We do not turn our backs on them, or judge them. But we don't make excuses for them either.
2. Whakarira – each generation strives to better themselves, for their own sakes and for the sake of their children.

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<sup>5</sup>The Treaty of Waitangi is a Treaty between the Government (originally British and now New Zealand) and Maori signed in 1840 that established a British [Governor of New Zealand](#), recognized Māori ownership of their lands, forests and other properties, and gave Māori the rights of [British subjects](#)

<sup>6</sup>The Turning of the Tide targets to be achieved by June 2014 were: 15% reduction in prosecutions of Maori, 10% reduction in Maori repeat offending, a 5% reduction in Maori first time offenders, 10% reduction in Maori repeat victims and a 10% reduction in Maori victims of fatal and serious vehicle crashes. Similar targets are in place for Turning of the Tide phase 2, which are to be achieved by June 2018 (New Zealand Police 2011b).

<sup>7</sup>Whanau is an extended family or community of related families who lived together in the same geographical area.

**Table 17.2** Measuring success of the turning the tide strategy

Phase 1 – Comparing 2010/11 to 2014/15	Phase 2 – Comparing 2014/15 to 2017/18
A 5% decrease in the proportion of first-time youth and adult offenders who are Maori	A 5% decrease in the proportion of first-time youth and adult offenders who are Maori
A 10% decrease in the proportion of repeat youth and adult offenders who are Maori	A 10% decrease in the proportion of repeat youth and adult offenders who are Maori
A 10% decrease in the proportion of repeat victims who are Maori	A 10% decrease in the proportion of repeat victims who are Maori
A 15% reduction in Police (non-traffic) apprehensions of Maori resolved by prosecution	A 10% reduction in Police (non-traffic) apprehensions of Maori resolved by prosecution
A 10% decrease in the proportion of casualties in fatal and serious crashes who are Maori	A 10% decrease in the proportion of casualties in fatal and serious crashes who are Maori

Source: *New Zealand Police (2011b)*

3. Manaakitanga – we are hospitable, fair and respectful – to ourselves and others (New Zealand Police 2011b, p. 2).

The police implemented and delivered the strategy through a three-part operating model consisting of:

1. Mahi Tahi – everyone working together to prevent crime and crashes;
2. Whanau Ora – extended families preventing crime and crashes among themselves; and
3. Korororero – talking crime and crash prevention in our homes and schools and on our marae (New Zealand Police 2011b)

The preferred method for reducing the disproportionate representation of Maori within the criminal justice system was to include actions that would bring about change. These actions included working with iwi and establishing support frameworks to reduce Maori male absenteeism from their families, improving the supervision of Maori children, keeping Maori children in school and improving Maori parenting skills (New Zealand Police 2011b).

To coordinate the national implementation of The Turning of the Tide, the strategy included a two phase action plan, with phase one covering the period 2012–2015. Both The Turning of the Tide and the action plan drew heavily on the philosophy and infrastructure that underpinned the all of government strategy Whanau Ora<sup>8</sup>; to work more closely with extended families to bring about change in individuals and in the community (New Zealand Police 2012).

<sup>8</sup>Whānau Ora (*family health*) is a major contemporary indigenous health initiative by Māori cultural values. Its core goal is to empower communities and extended families (*whānau*) to provide support within the community context rather than to individuals within an institutional context (Controller and Auditor General 2015).

## Prevention First

Prevention First: The National New Zealand Police 2011a was launched in December 2011 and was the central element of the police service delivery model, which placed crime and prevention and the needs of victims at the front of policing (New Zealand Police 2011a). It was developed to provide the police with a platform to develop stronger partnerships with the community and to provide an opportunity to strengthen their responsiveness to Maori. Strengthening their response programs was to be achieved by working in partnership with iwi and local service providers to address the over-representation of Maori in the criminal justice system and as victims (New Zealand Police 2011a).

Prevention First sought a 13% reduction in recorded crime and as a result, had similar reduction targets as The Turning of the Tide (New Zealand Police 2012). The implementation of both Prevention First and The Turning of the Tide jointly in late 2011 provided a number of organizational synergies. Firstly, the strategies complemented each other through the provision of a similar prevention ethos to victimization, offending, and crashes among Maori, and secondly, both strategies committed the police and Maori to working together to achieve common goals (New Zealand Police 2012).

## The Beginning of Whakatupato

In the late 2000s, there were four firearm-related events that took place in the Central North Island that led to the implementation of the Whakatupato program: the findings from research that found that a large number of rural Maori in the Bay of Plenty did not have firearms licenses; the response by the police in 2008 to a security intelligence operation that identified that a number of young Maori were undertaking guerrilla-type weapons training in an isolated area of the Bay of Plenty; recommendations made in a Rotorua firearms safety training development workshop held in early 2009; and research conducted in 2005 by a Rotorua Police Firearms Officer that examined the increasing trend in the number of hunting accidents that involved firearms in the Bay of Plenty district. The research found that:

- approximately 25% of rural Maori who use a firearm receive formal firearms safety training, the remainder rely on casual training from parents, relatives and friends;
- approximately 60% of rural Maori firearms users considered that they did not need a firearms licence to hunt on tribal or privately owned property;
- approximately 50% of rural Maori in the Northern Te Urewera area who possess a firearm are unlicensed;
- the main barrier to rural Maori receiving formal firearms training and testing is the cost and the travel (often multiple trips) required from remote rural communities to towns for such services;

- approximately 90% of firearms used by rural Maori is for harvesting food; and
- approximately 30% of rural Maori women use a firearm for shooting opossums and/or in the process of generating income (New Zealand Police 2009).

In the final summary of the research, the Firearms Officer made three observations: that the research findings indicated that there was a need for a comprehensive firearms training program which is tailored to the culture and interests of rural Maori communities; that such a program be delivered locally by the community for the community; and that the program is self-supporting for the long term (New Zealand Police 2009).

The second event that led to the development and the implementation of the Whakatupato program was, what has been colloquially referred to as, the Te Urewera raids, in 2008. The raids were the result of the monitoring by the New Zealand Security Intelligence Service of a group of young Maori training in the use of guerrilla-type weapons at paramilitary camps in isolated areas of the Te Urewera region. The intelligence gathered during the monitoring of the group led to the consideration of charges being laid under the Terrorism Suppression Act 2002. During the execution of the arrest warrants, police cordoned large areas of the district, including towns and communities, restricting the freedom of movement for the residents. The charges against the group were eventually dropped or re-laid as minor firearms offences.

The raids resulted in a number of complaints by the community and in allegations of a heavy-handed police response and the Police Commissioner subsequently apologized to Maori, especially the Tuhoe tribe, upon whose land and tribal area the raids took place.

The final event which led to the development of the Whakatupato program was a workshop hosted by the police and the New Zealand Mountain Safety Council in Rotorua in February 2009, which sought input into the development of a firearms safety training program specifically for rural Maori communities. Attendees of the workshop included local police officers and Firearms Officers, police management from national headquarters, local Maori Kaumatua,<sup>9</sup> and New Zealand Mountain Council Safety firearms instructors and administrators. Also in attendance was the mayor of one of the largest cities in the district and the Police National Manager of Maori, Pacific and Ethic Services, as well as a number of Police Maori Liaison Officers (New Zealand Police 2009). The workshop concluded with the development of three recommendations:

1. Local people that are suitably qualified and supported should be selected to deliver the firearms safety training to their communities;
2. Any specifically designed firearms safety training program should initially be delivered in the Northern and Central Te Urewera, Northland and Maniapoto regions; and

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<sup>9</sup>Kaumatua is a local or iwi leader or elder. It is a title of respect.

3. All firearms safety training material should be specifically designed to ensure that it is suitable for delivery to rural Maori, especially in relation to cultural awareness (New Zealand Police 2009).

## The Design of the Whakatupato Program

The information gathered from the research completed by the Rotorua Police Firearms Officer in 2005 and the three recommendations made by the workshop held in Rotorua in February 2009 formed the foundation for the development of the program. The intent of the program was founded on three overarching principles. The first principle was that the program must be delivered in a way that was culturally appropriate for Maori. The second was that the program was to be accessible to rural Maori and other rural community members, not only Maori, but members of other ethnicities and finally, that the program addressed the reasons for Maori possessing and using firearms (Spray et al. 2010, p. 4).

The design of the program included factors that would enable an understanding of firearms to be embedded and the skills and knowledge to not only ensure safe firearms practices but to also provide the opportunity for those in isolated communities to obtain a firearms licence (Spray et al. 2010). The program also recognised a number of Maori cultural factors, including the importance of firearms to Maori in supporting their traditional practices of food collection and the eradication of pests and the program was to be delivered as a cooperative program using the resources of police, the New Zealand Mountain Safety Council and iwi (Spray et al. 2010).

The police viewed the development of the program as a critical initiative for improving their relationship with Maori, and as a part of the apology process to the Tuhoe tribe in the Te Urewera region (New Zealand Police 2009; Spray et al. 2010). The view that the program would assist in improving relationships with Maori was also shared by the Mountain Safety Council (Spray et al. 2010). Both institutions identified the program as a vehicle to further integrate the needs of Maori into their policies and service delivery procedures and as a method for developing an improved understanding of the outdoor safety needs of Maori, especially in relation to hunting (Spray et al. 2010).

The initial aims of the program were to promote the safe use of firearms in rural communities and to encourage people to gain their firearms licence to comply with New Zealand law (Wakefield n.d.). The intention was that the program would be extended over the 5 years following its introduction to eventually being offered throughout the country and it was for this reason that it was believed that it was important that support for Maori be established and their input included in the program development. Maori support was essential in order to ensure that the program would be integrated into a range of iwi settings and communities (Spray et al. 2010).

## The First Whakatupato Course

To identify the locations that would receive the delivery of the first series of Whakatupato courses, the police conducted a number of consultation sessions in mid-2010 with local Maori leaders and elders and those who had an interest in Maori firearms safety in the Bay of Plenty region (Spray et al. 2010). These meetings led to the first Whakatupato courses being delivered in early 2011 in the Te Urewera and in the East Cape region, both of which are extremely isolated and suffer from a number of social deprivation and poverty issues. The courses were based on the Arms Code, firearms safety, firearms legislation, types and uses of firearms, firearms handling, transporting, care and maintenance, safe hunting practices and guidance with applying for a firearms licence (Wakefield *n.d.*).

In the program's first year, six one-day courses, each having a budget of \$50,000 were delivered to between 40 and 50 participants (Spray et al. 2010). During the period 2010/2011 to 2014/2015, the same delivery model and budget remained in place with the program delivering between six and eight courses a year to 15–25 course participants in rural communities in the Bay of Plenty, Northland and the East Cape.

The importance of the program was finally recognized in mid-2014, when one of the largest Maori tribes in the North Island, Tuwharetoa, approached the Mountain Safety Council to deliver the program across its 26 marae. Tuwharetoa were primarily interested in improving the safety of the people in their tribe and in improving firearms safety in all of its rural areas and proposed that the tribe would pay the firearms licence fee for 20 iwi members from each of its marae over the following 3 years (Pyatt 2015). From April 2015 to January 2016, the program was delivered to an approximately 20 participants at three different marae.

## View of Whakatupato Participants

The quality of the content and the delivery of the program has been measured since the first course was delivered in 2011 by surveying the participants at the conclusion of the course. The survey included six Likert-type questions pertaining to the level of quality of the course, whether the safety information was delivered in a way that the participants understood and whether the course would make a difference as to how the participants would use a firearm in the future.

The return rate of the surveys varied between 85–100%, while the overall satisfaction with the course ranged from 90 to 100% (McKee 2016a, b). The lowest overall satisfaction score was recorded for the first course delivered in Te Urewera in 2011 at 75% (Pyatt 2015).

Since the introduction of the program, another area that has improved is the delivery of the content to suit the participants. 60% of participants in the first course claimed that the course was very easy to understand and 25% maintained that the course was easy to understand (Pyatt 2015). These results improved to 75% and 25% respectively by 2015 (McKee 2016a, b).

## Discussion

The past 40 years have seen numerous efforts by police around the world to implement specific community oriented service delivery programs to regain public trust. Programs have been introduced to address specific vulnerabilities within communities, particularly when the vulnerability is relevant to the policing process (Williams 1982; Tyler 2005). In this case study, the term 'vulnerability' pertains to the possibility that the police have ignored the issue that a large percentage of the rural community have access to firearms and that a large percentage of the users of these firearms are unlicensed or have not received any firearms safety training. This perception was substantiated by a number of commentators when this information was linked anecdotally to the number of unintentional firearms discharges that resulted in deaths to hunters (New Zealand Police 2009; Wakefield n.d.).

The design and the implementation of Whakatupato were in response to the perceived risk in vulnerability and in response to the three firearm events that occurred in the central North Island in the late 2000s. Central to the development of the program was the result of the research examining firearms related deaths in the Bay of Plenty. The findings of the research indicated a need for a comprehensive firearms training program that was specifically tailored to the culture and the interests of rural communities, especially Maori (Wakefield n.d.).

Although the Whakatupato program has been operating since 2010, police have been reticent in realizing its full benefit and potential. However, this approach may be changing. In November 2015, a report was prepared for the Deputy Chief Executive of the Maori, Pacific and Ethnic Services outlining the benefits of the program. The report identified that the program could provide some assistance in the implementation of the three police strategies: Prevention First, The Turning of the Tide and Iwi Partnerships (Taikato 2015).

In relation to Prevention First, in the wake of an increasing number of unintentional firearms incidents by recreational firearms users in 2015, the Whakatupato program enhanced the expansion of the firearms safety message and increased the awareness within the rural and Maori community of the need to provide adequate security storage for firearms (Taikato 2015). These safety messages would also have an impact on the operationalization of the Turning of the Tide strategy through the program's heavily reliance on productive partnerships with iwi and the rural community. This could mean that there maybe a factor of efficiency with the implementation of both the strategy and the program.

The efficiency of implementing both the strategy and the program together could be realized through the strategy's key operationalized component; iwi ownership and delivery of the program. In this sense, efficiency would be increased through iwi taking responsibility for ensuring their members attend the Whakatupato program, which would result in an increase in firearms safety awareness and the participants of the program obtaining a firearms licence (Taikato 2015).

Delivering the Whakatupato program in partnership with iwi could provide a number of benefits to the police. These benefits could be achieved through the Police Firearms Safety Officers and Iwi Liaison Officers working with iwi to deliver

the program on maraes. This would ensure that the firearm safety message is disseminated widely within the rural community (Taikato 2015). A joint approach to the delivery of the program should improve iwi-police relationships (Taikato 2015).

The relationship between police and Maori, or individual iwi is the crux to improving Maori confidence in the police, increasing firearms safety in rural Maori communities and reducing the occurrence of crime in rural communities. However, to start building a relationship with Maori, any police crime prevention program must be based on Maori cultural values (Doone 2000). According to Doone (2000), using Maori cultural values in crime prevention programs is successful in reducing offending by Maori because the approach:

1. builds cultural knowledge, self-image and pride in being Maori;
2. creates a sense of identity, belonging and confidence;
3. improves retention in programs;
4. breaks down barriers to learning and gives a sense of achievement;
5. enhances willingness to learn other skills; and
6. builds positive attitudes towards program providers, whanau and wider society.

The use of Maori cultural values in crime prevention is supported by earlier research by Maxwell and Stephens (1991), who claim that given the right type of police contact with Maori, it is possible that the police will increase their understanding of Maori and promote positive responses that are more widely accepted by the Maori community. However, O'Reilly (2014), noted that such an approach by the police will take time to produce a tangible result because establishing a relationship takes time and needs to be in place before a relationship can be developed into a partnership.

The development of a partnership with Maori is not only important in the current context of Maori being the most victimized social group in New Zealand, but is important because indications are that the Maori population will increase which will result in larger numbers of Maori offenders and victims. This creates a pressing need for a better response by government agencies to address offending and victimization among Maori, especially young Maori. Maori have a youthful population, and the number of Maori in the 15 to 29-year-old age group is projected to increase by 28% by 2021 (Statistics New Zealand 2013, 2016). This means that a reduction in demand from Maori for police services will have more of an impact on the performance of the police and the achievement of their strategic goals than if there were a similar reduction in the level of offending in any other social group.

## Conclusion

The Whakatupato firearms safety program is different from other programs because it is culturally based and includes a specific venue, presentation style and course content that has been adapted to suit the audience. As a result of the community focus

of the program, its delivery is bringing a sense of awareness, safety, education, pride and legality in the handling and use of firearms to rural communities (McKee 2016b). According to the program's participants, the cultural approach has also been the basis for its success (McKee 2016a, b).

The police need to build on the success of the program. This is something that the police are not currently doing, but should strongly consider. The program should be expanded to other tribal areas in the North and the South Islands which will strengthen their relationship with Maori and will allow other crime prevention programs for Maori and rural communities to be developed. What is not associated with the program, is the level of associated social capital. In the reports prepared by McKee (2015, 2016a) and Pyatt (2015), it is noted that the completion of the course by the participants and the obtaining of their firearms licence is regarded highly as a personal achievement, and for some participants, the first educationally-based achievement in their lives. This achievement, for some participants, is a catalyst to seek legal employment (McKee 2016a,b). It is the economic and capability components that are missing from any discussion of the benefits of the program.

This article has discussed one crime prevention program that has been designed to address a specific problem affecting an indigenous community but is capable of being adapted as a response to other crime problems in indigenous or ethnic communities. The Whakatupato firearms safety program provides an avenue for the police to improve community trust and to further develop their relationship with Maori. However, a more in-depth evaluation of the program is required in order to determine its suitability as a crime prevention model for use by other police agencies to improve their relationships with their ethnic or minority communities.

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