

Question on notice:

This requested more details and some references to the claim about an apparent decline in commitment towards community policing from NSW Police:

What I have referred to as a decline in commitment to “community policing” in NSW has been part of a broader trend and is not exclusive to engagement with any particular minority group. Community policing was advocated in the United States and elsewhere in the 1960s and 1970s as a means to restore declining public trust in police, and it was implemented around the globe in the following decades. In most jurisdictions (including NSW) its recent lower prominence has resulted from the rise of new rival strategies in policing and a stress on “heavier” forms of policing. An insider perspective on the actual perception of a lower level of commitment to this sort of community contact and trust building in the early 2000s, was given by a NSW officer writing in a journal issue that I edited in 2005 (CICJ). His view, at that time was:

Community policing is frequently seen, by city cops at least, as a responsibility of specialist liaison police. For many it is not a core policing function and regarded as a soft option to those that find 'operational' (locking up crooks) policing too hard. (P. 151)

During Commissioner Ryan's years in office there was an increased focus on targeting crime hotspots, recidivist offenders, and generally improving the capacity of NSW Police to investigate crime and bring offenders before the courts. Commissioner Moroney has consolidated that effort by increasingly relying on governance processes to build on Ryan's efforts. However, during this period there appears to have been a reduced commitment to the maintenance of Peelian principles that were so readily embraced during Commissioner Avery's tenure. It's not that community policing has been consciously abandoned it's just that it seems to have dropped down on the list of corporate priorities. (P. 152)

In recent years New South Wales Police have placed an increased effort on focusing on 'problem-oriented' and 'evidence-based' policing but we have forgotten the contribution of community policing that so solidly underpins the success of these two strategies. In the absence of community policing there is a real danger that the application of these two strategies may lead the community to view the police as an 'occupying force'. (P.153)

A more traditionally academic piece, tracing the complex shifts in different forms of strategy and management trends in NSW Police alongside the demise of community policing following the Wood Royal Commission (1997), was authored by Chan and Dixon (2007). This article concluded that:

The Royal Commission's influence declined when Police Commissioner Ryan established his own 'truth', an agenda for change based on crime-fighting. In a parallel development, police reform slipped off the political agenda in favour of simplistic law-and-order rhetoric.... (P. 463)

What's in a name? An organization that began in the 19th century as the NSW Police Force was renamed the NSW Police Service when enthusiasm for 'community policing' was dominant. The Royal Commission was committed to a vision of policing for which the title 'Service' would have been appropriate. However, as the Commission's truth was displaced, so the word 'Service' was dropped. In 2006, amid panics about public lawlessness, the Government endorsed the restoration of the word 'Force' in the organization's name. The story of the Royal Commission and of policing in NSW is encapsulated in the shifting name of the police department. (P. 464)

References:

Darcy, D. 2005. Policing the socially disadvantaged, the value of rekindling community policing in Woolloomooloo - A Police Commander's perspective. *Current Issues in Criminal Justice* July, pp: 144-153

Chan, J. & Dixon, D., 2007. The politics of police reform: Ten years after the Royal Commission into the New South Wales Police Service. *Criminology & Criminal Justice* 7 (4). pp.443-468.