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**Crime victimisation and police legitimacy: the importance of beliefs and
experience¹**

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Abstract²

Community policing emphasises the importance of co-operative and supportive relationships between police and the communities they serve. Yet, community policing is characterised by conflict/s around a range of issues, including goals, priorities and resources. A key factor that mitigates the impact of such conflicts on public satisfaction with police is the extent to which people view police as legitimate. This paper explores police legitimacy among people who have been a victim of crime. Findings show that victims of crime had lower levels of satisfaction with police performance and police-community relations generally, but these views did not translate into negative judgements of police legitimacy. The paper suggests that the findings have significant implications for police practice specifically and contribute to existing theory on victimisation and attitudes towards police legitimacy. It is suggested that if police are to retain their legitimacy overtime more effort may need to be expended in building on existing levels of satisfaction. Such an objective would require a more proactive approach to working with victims of crime. In order for this to be a realistic policy option, changes to police practice, key performance indicators and measurement generally would need to be considered.

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Introduction

‘A willingness to submit to an order ... implies a belief in the legitimate authority of the source imposing it’, as long as that willingness is ‘not derived from fear or from motives of expediency’ (Weber 1978:37). Legitimacy is about people’s perceived obligation to defer to an institution, and to obey decisions made by that institution. Importantly, for the purposes of this paper, people’s feelings of obligation to obey an official directive or command comprise normative aspects, which are viewed as properties of the institution, and are not solely dependent on the institution’s instrumental capacity to reward or punish disobedience or non-compliance (Weber 1978). That is, people defer to and obey decisions by legitimate institutions because people respect (and accept) the institution’s authority to make decisions and not because of the threat of sanction for disobedience.

While basic social values (such as support for police as an institution) are learned during childhood, both direct and indirect experiences shape adolescent and adult behaviours and judgements of police (Tyler & Darley 2000). Therefore, the actions of individual police officers have a direct and fundamental impact on maintaining or challenging people’s judgements of police legitimacy (Reiss 1971).

In a democratic society, police authority rests on public consent. Without this consent, policing can not be effective. Public consent for police is evidenced in a number of ways, including compliance with the law, reporting crime events, the supply of voluntary information about suspicious behaviour and participation in community meetings and activities (such as Neighbourhood Watch), and tolerance/acceptance of variation in the exercise of discretionary decision-making (see Sunshine & Tyler 2003; Tyler 1990; Tyler & Huo 2002).

Studies have shown that ‘[c]rime victims report being significantly more satisfied with the police when officers demonstrate concern, compassion, and respect’ (see Robinson and Strohshine 2005:304). However, it is unclear at what point people’s experience of police after being victimised starts to influence people’s judgements about police legitimacy.

This study explores the impact/s of being a victim of crime on people’s views of police legitimacy and is, as far as we are aware, the first of its kind in Australia. This is important, nothing ‘so clearly symbolises the lack of sophistication in Australian public policy responses to crime [and victimisation] than the low level of investment in measurement, research and evaluation’ in Australia (Weatherburn 2004: 222). Such a dearth of studies of this kind means that there are some elements of people’s encounters with police as a result of their victimisation that are unknown. And, as a result, are rarely considered in policy options either by governments or police management. For example, we don’t know whether people’s views of police legitimacy are directly related to their satisfaction with police performance in response to their victimisation (eg., police response times), or from other incident/s or event/s, such as whether goods were recovered or offender/s identified and prosecuted (and see Brandhl and Hovarth 1991; Percy 1980). In this paper, people who have been crime victims in Australia offer researchers a unique opportunity to explore potential differences in public support for police based on judgements of police legitimacy as it may be influenced by police performance following a crime event. The following two sections of the paper consider the concept and importance of police legitimacy and community expectations in the context of community policing.

Police legitimacy

Both instrumental and normative perspectives shape people's assessments of police legitimacy. An instrumental perspective suggests that people are deterred from breaking the law by a belief in a credible risk of detection and apprehension by police (Nagin 1998; Paternoster 1987). That is, people's understanding about police effectiveness in identifying and apprehending people who break the law shape compliance behaviour via a rational calculation of risk of punishment by those who are apprehended, and generally by the law-abiding who see law breakers caught and punished (Kelling & Coles 1996; Nagin 1998).

According to the normative perspective, people's support for police and compliance with the law is based on a normative belief that the police exercise legitimate authority. Such authority, according to Tyler (1990) comprises three elements. In the first instance people hold general views about feelings of obligation to obey the law and police directives in enforcing laws. Second, interactions between police and the public at the individual level are important to the extent that they shape notions of legitimacy and third, people's understanding of police performance at the community level, whether based on personal contact with police or not, is a significant determinant of whether or not they perceive police authority as legitimate.

The most significant normative reason linked to people's assessments of police legitimacy and consistently identified in the research literature is procedural justice. Procedural justice refers to police decision-making that is viewed by individuals as fair, objective and trustworthy (Tyler 1990; Sunshine & Tyler 2003). Procedural justice research finds that people's views of police legitimacy are more strongly linked to perceptions of the fairness of the procedures used by police to make decisions, than to the actual outcome of their encounter with police, or the effectiveness of the police in controlling crime (Tyler 1990). That is, perceptions of fair procedural decision-making by police mitigate negative outcomes (in the context of domestic violence victims see Robinson and Strohshine 2005:302). Strong satisfaction levels also correlate to the levels of cooperation police experience in prosecuting their cases (Lurigio and Mechanic 2000).

Not everyone has had direct contact with police. People who lack direct contact with police rely on their general views about police performance and obligation to obey the law (see Sunshine & Tyler 2003). Research conducted in the United States (US) finds that particular groups of people are consistently less satisfied with police: those who live in economically disadvantaged communities (Reisig & Parks 2000; Sampson & Jeglum-Bartusch 1998), and people from minority races and ethnic backgrounds (Weitzer 1999).

Key aspects of procedural justice reported by Tyler (2004) include people:

- i) actively participating in discussions prior to police decision-making (i.e. being given the opportunity to explain their views/behaviour before police decide on a course of action);
- ii) observing neutrality/objectivity/fairness in police decision-making (evidence that police treat everyone in a like manner); and
- iii) being treated with dignity and respect.

According to research in the US, procedural justice is more important to people's views of police legitimacy than are instrumental reasons. This is argued to be a positive for police,

given that police control over their effectiveness in managing crime and maintaining order cannot be their sole responsibility, while they can exert some influence over the way they interact with the public (see Sunshine & Tyler 2003). Clearly in the context of community policing with its emphasis on partnering with the community and its customer focused approach to service delivery (Crawford 1997) such knowledge can be a powerful tool for police management seeking to enhance public support for police.

Value Conflicts

The theory and practice of community policing has re-emphasised the importance of public support to the successful policing of crime and disorder during the last two decades. While definitions of *community policing* continue to be the subject of debate, in this paper we consider the following to be the essential elements:

- i) a customer-focussed approach to delivering police service/s;
- ii) an emphasis on developing partnerships with local communities to solve local problems; and
- iii) a greater openness and sharing crime prevention knowledge with local communities (Crawford 1997; O'Malley & Palmer 1996).

Developments in policing since the 1960s/70s are characterised by the shift from a welfare-oriented Keynesian approach, in which police relations with the community are hierarchical and centred on interventionist, police-determined priorities in the provision of services, to a post-Keynesian, voluntary and co-operative police-community partnership that is localised by community diversity in knowledge and expertise (Crawford 1997; O'Malley & Palmer 1996). Partnering with communities offers police the opportunity to increase their legitimacy by strengthening community support for police services provided to local areas. This is particularly the case in diverse and disadvantaged communities where tensions between police and community members may already be long-term and a continuing source of mutual antagonism and mistrust.

Thacher (2001) has argued that community-police partnerships are inextricably riven by multiple and conflicting *value conflicts* over the type of policing services communities seek and those that police provide. Thacher (2001) describes a process of change whereby police values and practices alter, sometimes in conflicting ways, as policing responds to community expectations and demands. The necessity for change by police is in part based on community expectations, management demands on police to partner with communities and performance management requirements that increasingly emphasise customer satisfaction levels. Customer satisfaction is sought from all members of a variety of communities including those who have been victimised. How satisfaction, and ultimately legitimisation can be secured from all citizens is an important part of police management strategy.

This paper seeks to expand our understanding of how police legitimacy is influenced by crime victimisation. The research literature generally considers the impact on law breakers (primary deterrence) and the law-abiding (secondary deterrence) of police performance as it relates to the instrumental goal of crime control. That is, traditionally, research has been directed towards the deterrent impact of police efficiency and effectiveness in controlling crime. This paper explores whether crime victimisation negatively impacts on perceptions of poor police performance, and whether this negativity is sufficient to reduce police

legitimacy. Does being a victim of crime erode people's support for police and as a result their views of police legitimacy? The following sections provide a context for the data and the methodology used in this research.

Data

The data on which this paper is based was obtained from a single jurisdiction in Australia using a comprehensive survey conducted in 2005 (see below). Policing in this jurisdiction, like other Australian states, and indeed like other public agencies, is consistently appraised in terms of its performance. Performance measurement in police organisations takes many forms. The central idea behind such monitoring is that a police organisation will foreshadow a series of performance objectives and then define performance indicators by which that performance will be measured. Driven by notions of effectiveness, efficiency and ultimately accountability, performance measurement allows governments and police management to demonstrate the rationale behind resource allocation and policy generally. Notwithstanding the paradoxes associated with managing performance in the public sector (De Bruijn 2001: 115-119), performance measurement is a significant and pervasive managerial tool in Australian police organisations (Fleming 2006).

In this jurisdiction the police organisation has a formal Agreement with the state government. This Agreement outlines a number of measures, including crime levels; road safety; police response times and crime prevention. Almost 40 per cent of this Agreement is related specifically to public satisfaction levels with police (for example, in terms of their interaction with the community, police professional performance and police services) and fear of crime measures. All measures are fixed and assessed in the context of the national average. Such an emphasis on community perceptions of police performance makes police legitimacy a pertinent issue for police management and policy.

The jurisdiction of interest is a medium-sized Australian city. It has lower than national average levels of violent crime, and higher levels of property crime (Productivity Commission 2006). Other social characteristics that are relevant to the theoretical interests of this paper are outlined below.

For all crime types except one, people in this jurisdiction are less concerned about crime problems in their local area compared to other Australians. Survey respondents indicated that family violence, sexual assault, physical assault, illegal drugs, motor vehicle theft, speeding cars, dangerous or noisy driving, graffiti or other vandalism, louts or gangs, drunken or disorderly behaviour were not 'a major problem' or 'somewhat of a problem' consistently less than the national average (Productivity Commission 2006). For example, in 2004/5, compared with the national average of 41%, only 33% of people in this jurisdiction said family violence, sexual assault and physical assault were either 'a major problem' or 'somewhat of a problem' in their local area (Productivity Commission 2006).

What concerns people in this jurisdiction is housebreaking. Respondents report that it is either 'a major problem' or 'somewhat of a problem' consistently more than the national average. Compared with the national average of 65%, in 2004/5, 71% of residents in this jurisdiction said housebreaking was 'a major problem' or 'somewhat of a problem'. As well, survey results show that 76% of residents are more fearful of being a victim of housebreaking than the national average of 72% (Productivity Commission 2006).

Table 1 outlines some features of existing data on people’s satisfaction levels with police in this jurisdiction. Such data offers some insight on the current relationship between police and communities.

Table 1: People’s satisfaction with police service/performance in 2004/5

	Jurisdiction	Australia Average
General satisfaction with services provided by the police	64%	69%
Satisfaction with police dealing with public order problems	46%	51%
Satisfaction with police support for community programs	58%	67%

Source: *Productivity Commission 2006*.

Overall, people’s general satisfaction with police services, satisfaction with police dealing with public order problems and satisfaction with police support for community programs are below the national average. These have been consistent trends since 2001.

A 30 day status measure applied in this jurisdiction indicates that the organisation is generally above the national average in finalisations for crimes against the person: murder, sexual assault, armed robbery, and unarmed robbery. However, as Table 2 shows, concomitant data on outcomes of property crime investigations, demonstrates that police in this jurisdiction have the lowest level of investigations finalised of all states/territories in 2004.

Table 2: Finalisations by police (30 day status) for property crimes (2004)

	Jurisdiction	Australia Av.
Unlawful entry with intent	3.6%	7.8%
Motor vehicle theft	7.7%	10.6%
Other theft	10.3%	14.5%

Source: *Productivity Commission 2006*.

Method

The data to be analysed in this study was gathered from a jurisdiction-wide postal survey about safety and security in mid-2005. The 26-page survey was posted to 5800 residents, selected at random from the electoral roll. The survey canvassed residents about (i) levels of satisfaction with existing police services, (ii) perceptions of police responsiveness to community concerns, (iii) police effectiveness at dealing with crime, (iv) people’s fear of crime, and (vi) public safety concerns/problems. 2611 (45 per cent) completed surveys were returned for analysis.

Respondents in the final sample were between 16³ and 94 years of age (M = 48.54, SD = 16.17) (only two respondents were younger than 18 years of age), 44% were male, 61% had

lived in the jurisdiction for more than 15 years, and 90% identified their main ethnic or national group to be Australian. Seventy per cent of respondents were married, and 43% had attained a University degree. Using 2001 Australian Census data, the sample was found to be broadly representative of the overall population living in that jurisdiction (e.g., gender, income, education level, number of people living in household). However, like many mail surveys, older people were over-represented.

Due to the higher than national average levels of property crime in the jurisdiction, respondents were asked about their recent experience of crime: 'Have you, or anyone in your household been a victim of household theft or criminal damage in the last 12 months?' Seventeen percent (n=451) of survey participants answered in the affirmative. The most significant feature of respondents was age. People aged 60 years and over are significantly less likely to be a victim of household theft or criminal damage, compared with other residents ($p < 0.001$). People aged 29 years and younger are significantly more likely to be a victim of household theft or criminal damage, compared with other residents ($p < 0.001$). Other demographic characteristics are also significant, but not after age is controlled for.

Findings

Survey findings tell us that being a victim of crime (household theft or damage) increases overall fear of crime and decreases feelings of safety. Using chi-square tests, and controlling for age, the following results were found:

- i) people who had been a victim of household theft or criminal damage in the last 12 months were significantly more worried about having their home broken into and something stolen, compared to people who had not been a victim of household theft or criminal damage ($p < 0.001$);
- ii) people who had been a victim of household theft or criminal damage in the last 12 months said that crime in their own suburb was 'a bit' or 'much higher' than crime in other suburbs significantly more than people who had not been a victim of household theft or criminal damage ($p < 0.001$);
- iii) people who had been a victim of household theft or criminal damage in the last 12 months said that crime in this jurisdiction was higher compared to other Australian capital cities significantly more than people who had not been a victim of household theft or criminal damage ($p < 0.001$);
- iv) there were no significant differences in reported victimization between people who said they locked themselves in when they were home alone and those who did not.

Survey findings confirm that the impact of crime victimisation influences views about police. Chi-square tests, controlling for age, show that people who have been a victim of household theft or criminal damage, are more likely to say police:

- i) in their suburb are unresponsive/very unresponsive to community concerns ($p < 0.001$);
- ii) are doing a poor job dealing with the problems that really concern people in their suburb ($p < 0.001$);
- iii) are doing a poor job working together with residents to solve local problems ($p < 0.001$);
- iv) are doing a poor job in preventing crime in their suburb ($p < 0.001$).

Compared to non-victims, people who have been a victim of household theft or criminal damage:

- i) disagree/strongly disagree that police 'do their job well' ($p < 0.001$);
- ii) disagree/strongly disagree that 'I have confidence in the police' ($p < 0.001$);
- iii) disagree/strongly disagree that 'I am very satisfied with the services provided by the police' ($p < 0.001$);
- iv) disagree/strongly disagree that 'I have great respect for police' ($p < 0.001$);
- v) disagree/strongly disagree that 'police are actively working for the community behind the scenes' ($p < 0.001$);
- vi) agree/strongly agree that 'police can't be bothered about minor crime' ($p < 0.002$);
- vii) agree/strongly agree that 'police give too little attention to minor crime such as vandalism, disturbances, drunken and disorderly behaviour' ($p < 0.01$).

Crime victims rate their expectations of police as a service to the public as low, or very low, significantly more than people who have not been victimised by crime ($p < 0.001$).

In summary, data from this jurisdiction shows that there are significant differences between the views of victims and non-victims of household theft or criminal damage. People who have been a victim of household theft and burglary have lower trust and confidence in police and believe that police are less responsive and doing a poorer job than people who have not been victimised. There are mixed findings in relation to the fear of crime, with victims of the same crimes reporting higher concerns about having their home broken into. These data reveal a disparity in service expectations between police and the public. People in this jurisdiction say that housebreaking and other public disorder offences should be given higher priority by police. Most survey participants feel that police pay too little attention to minor crime. Does this conflict between the public and police impact generally on people's judgments of police legitimacy? Do crime victims see police as having less legitimacy than others in this jurisdiction? These questions are explored using stepwise regression. We seek to explore the influence of an apparent conflict of values in police service among people in this jurisdiction generally, and to assess the impact of crime victimisation specifically on people's views of police legitimacy.

A number of scales were constructed for the analysis (see Appendix 1):

Procedural justice. A procedural justice scale was created from responses to three survey questions that asked about police fairness, equity and respect when dealing with people. Each question consisted of a five-point scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree (Cronbach's alpha = 0.7; $M=9.9$; $SD=1.76$).

Police performance. Responses to three police performance questions were combined into a single measure on a five-point scale ranging from 1 = poor job to 5 = very good job (Cronbach's alpha 0.84; $M=4.6$; $SD=4.4$).

Police-community relations. People's views of police-community relations were measured from responses to three survey questions that used a five-point scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree (Cronbach's alpha 0.68; $M=9.53$; $SD=1.7$).

Fear of crime. A fear of crime variable was created from people's responses to four questions about how safe they felt at home and at local shops by themselves, both during

the day and after dark. Responses were on a five-point scale ranging from 1 = very unsafe to 5 = very safe (Cronbach's alpha = 0.82; M=16.1; SD=2.6).

Police legitimacy. The dependent variable, police legitimacy, was constructed from responses to four survey questions using a five-point scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree (Cronbach's alpha = 0.73; M=13.9; SD=2.6).

In terms of demographic variables, chi square tests established that both prior victimisation and age were significant influences on survey respondents' views of police. Both age and prior victimisation were included as statistical controls in the stepwise regression: 'prior victimisation' (0 = no, 1 = yes); age (respondents' age measured in years).

Results from the stepwise regression, which are presented in standardised form in Table 3, show that all variables are significant, (except fear of crime, which was excluded from the model because its contribution was so small). However, there was a large variation in the amount each variable contributed to the model.

Table 3: Explaining Police Legitimacy: Stepwise regression co-efficients

			R Square Change
Step 1	Procedural justice	.502***	.503***
Step 2	Police performance	.227***	.070***
Step 3	Police-community relations	.198***	.031***
Step 4	Victim	.046***	.002***
Step 5	Age	.044***	.002***
	Fear (excluded)		
	Constant (unstd)	-.920***	
			***p<.001
	Adj R ²	.607	

Overall, the model explains 61% of people's views about police legitimacy. The most significant explanatory component was procedural justice, which contributed 50% to the model. Police performance explained 7%, while police-community relations explained 3%. Both prior victimisation and age contributed very little to explaining people's views.

Discussion

This study supports a body of existing research that people's judgements about police legitimacy are not based primarily on police performance, but on broader normative beliefs that police are deserving of community support because they are viewed as a legitimate institution. This is evident in the large contribution of procedural justice to the model, and the relatively small contribution of the police performance and police-community relations variables.

The study finds that people's views of police legitimacy are not negatively influenced by crime victimisation. While people who had been a victim of crime (as defined in this study), compared to those who had not been, expressed significantly lower satisfaction with

police performance and police-community relations, these views did not translate into negative judgments of police legitimacy. This finding is consistent with existing research that the most salient determinants of people's judgments of police legitimacy are positive global normative views of policing as a legitimate institution.

The finding that the key antecedent of legitimacy is not police performance, but people's normative judgements that police are fair and trustworthy is consistent with the procedural justice literature. In the absence of research on these issues in Australia and many other places, this study, while confirming existing research in the US in a number of ways, provides a relatively new framework within which research in this area may proceed.

There is evidence of a conflict in values between police and the community in this jurisdiction. Respondents consistently say they are most concerned about being a victim of housebreaking. Yet, police are perceived to not give enough attention to this type of crime. Currently there is no evidence that this value conflict has negatively influenced people's judgements of police legitimacy. People who participated in this study view police as legitimate based on global normative beliefs in the value of policing as an institution, rather than their assessment of police performance.

The significant findings here of police-community value conflict may be a warning of potentially negative outcomes for police. While people in this jurisdiction currently support police, it is appropriate to ask at what point 'tipping' may occur, and the evident police-community conflict over values starts to negatively influence people's global judgements of police legitimacy. When we consider customer satisfaction levels are decreasing in this jurisdiction the point is salient. While police may be able to ignore these police-community value conflicts now, in the future it may be crucial to resolve these to maintain satisfaction levels and potentially police legitimacy.

The study provides empirical data to support the view that people's judgements about police legitimacy are not based primarily on police performance, but on broader normative beliefs that police are deserving of community support because they are viewed as a legitimate institution and are deemed, fair and trustworthy in the way in which they deal with the community. As Wells et al point out (2005:171), although many police organisations survey the community, they generally do not spend too much time utilising the information received, nor are the survey results provided to police officers by way of constructive feedback. In light of such research (and clearly further research is required) it would be potentially beneficial if such feedback were to be provided to police officers on a regular basis with a view to improving attitudes towards the communities they serve. What do these findings mean for community partnerships/policing, police practice and management policy?

Community partnerships have provided police the opportunity to increase their legitimacy by working more closely with communities. However as Fleming has noted, such partnerships are not adequately provided for by existing organisational performance mechanisms. Australian police organisations are essentially committed to corporate governance and the culture of managerialism, they are out-put focused and their operational practice relies on hierarchies of objectives, targets and a high performance culture. A preoccupation with measurement is evident on an individual, local and organisational level (Fleming 2006).

Despite the emphasis on customer satisfaction with police services in this organisation's performance management policy statements, there is little provision for proactive policing strategies that would enable police to develop stronger relationships with various communities and thus build on existing perceptions of the fairness and trustworthiness of police. Performance indicators are largely determined by what can be measured and those activities that the organisation will be held publicly accountable for. For example, the number of road fatalities, the number of primary school children that are put through road safety courses and how many briefs are sent to the Director of Public Prosecutions each year.

If we understand that working with communities, building legitimacy and improving general satisfaction with police services is invariably time-consuming, expensive and inevitably requires long-term strategies rather than short-term fixes, then a high performance culture poses problems for such activities (Fleming 2006). What gets measured gets done. If police organisations are serious about their public commitment to communities and enhancing levels of satisfaction with police services, then a 'more sympathetic set of [performance] measures than exist at present' are required (Fleming 2006: 109). Research such as this can provide some guidelines as to how such measures may be revised.

The data in this study makes clear that this jurisdiction is more apprehensive about becoming a victim of housebreaking and/or criminal damage than they are of other suggested crimes. In this climate of high performance expectations, both from the community and from governments who allocate police budgets, it is important to take note of community concerns in this context. The use of such data should be informing to a significant extent, management's resource allocation policies and other initiatives directed at reconciling police organisational imperatives and residents' expectations.

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APPENDIX 1

This Appendix details measures used in the analyses of this paper. It also sets out the original scale formats, and the recoding of data if applicable (reverse scoring indicated with the letter 'r').

Procedural justice

The procedural justice scale measured respondents' *general* views about the way in which the police generally makes its decisions and treats citizens (measured on a 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree scale). Those who agreed with these statements saw police decision processes to be procedurally fair.

- i) Police are concerned about respecting a citizen's individual rights.
- ii) Police treat people as if they can be trusted to do the right thing.
- iii) Police treat people as if they only do the right thing when forced to (r).

Police-Community Relations

A police-community relations scale was included to measure people's views on how well police consult and communicate with community members about safety and security issues (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). People who agree with these statements were more likely to say that police consult with communities.

- i) Police consult widely about how communities can take more responsibility for their own safety and security.
- ii) Police strongly support community programs such as Neighbourhood Watch, Crime Stoppers and Blue Light discos.
- iii) Police go to great lengths to talk to people on safety and security issues.

Police performance

The police performance scale assessed whether residents thought police do a good job in controlling crime (1 = poor job to 5 = very good job scale). People who score high on this scale see the police as performing their job well.

- i) How good a job are the police doing in dealing with the problems that really concern people in your suburb?
- ii) How good a job are the police doing your suburb in working together with residents to solve local problems?
- iii) How good a job do you think police are doing to prevent crime in your suburb?

Fear of crime

A fear of crime scale was constructed from responses to four questions about safety in four situations measured on a 1=very unsafe to 5= very safe scale. People who scored higher on these questions feel safe and secure:

- i) How safe would you feel at home by yourself during the day?
- ii) How safe would you feel at home by yourself after dark?
- iii) How safe would you feel at your local shops during the day?
- iv) How safe would you feel at your local shops after dark?

Legitimacy

The legitimacy scale was designed to measure the extent to which the police are seen to have legitimate authority. The scale assessed whether citizens had confidence in and respect for the police, and believed police directives should always be obeyed (measured on a 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree scale). Those citizens who disagreed with the statements that made up each scale were deemed to be those who questioned the legitimacy of the police's authority. A higher score on the scale suggests people view police as legitimate.

- i) Police treat people fairly and equally.
- ii) I have confidence in police.
- iii) People should always follow the directions of police officers even if they go against what they think is right.
- iv) I have great respect for police.