QPS BASELINE

FIRST NATIONS CULTURAL AWARENESS SURVEY RESULTS

FIRST NATIONS AND MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS UNIT 2021

Acknowledgement

The Queensland Police Service acknowledges the First Nations – Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, as the Traditional Owners of the lands throughout Australia, and their connection to country and community. We pay our respect to all Traditional Owners, and their Elders past, present and emerging. We pay our respects to the First Nations' ancestors of this land, their spirits and their legacy. The foundations by these ancestors — our First Nations people — gives strength, inspiration and courage to current and future generations, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous.

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Glossary

First Nations Communities	Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
FNMAU	First Nations and Multicultural Affairs Unit
QPS	Queensland Police Service

PART A

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 Introduction

In November 2020, the Queensland Police Service (QPS) officially launched the First Nations and Multicultural Affairs Unit (FNMAU) situated within the Communications, Culture and Engagement Division. The FNMAU aims to build internal and external organisational policing strategies to enhance how the QPS engages and responds to both First Nations and multicultural communities.

The FNMAU developed a state-wide survey to collect data to assist in the creation of purposeful policing strategies as well as,

1) better understand the QPS' current position concerning staff cultural awareness and capability and First Nations communities,
2) create an organisational baseline position to inform FNMAU before developing relevant cultural capability strategies and
3) seek feedback from staff about their perceived needs.

The QPS Baseline First Nations Cultural Awareness survey contained thirty questions and was divided into the following four major categories including,

1) participant information,
2) staff awareness about historical relationships between First Nations communities and the police,
3) staff awareness about current issues between First Nations communities and the police,
4) staff awareness about First Nations cultural protocols.

ELT approved the survey in November 2020. It was created for internal purposes only and distributed to all QPS staff on December 1, 2020, via email and WorkPlace. Overall, 1088 QPS employees voluntarily responded to the survey.

1.2 Findings

Overall, most participants received no training and lacked vital information about policing and First Nations communities in Queensland. The survey found that most participants lacked or had insufficient knowledge about how historical issues affect current day relationships between First Nations communities and the police. Most participants knew that contemporary problems (e.g. deaths in custody, Black Lives Matters, social disadvantage) impacted current relationships between the police and First Nations Communities. Many participants did not know why relationships remained contentious today. Furthermore, many participants were aware of cultural protocols but had limited knowledge about them. Most participants expressed that they did not receive QPS training regarding issues affecting QPS/First Nations relationships. Furthermore, if the training was available, they did not know where to access it. Most participants expressed that the QPS should provide training.

Whilst most participants wanted to see organisational changes regarding cultural awareness, some participants did not agree with this viewpoint. Several participants believed there should not be training. Some believe the QPS should not single out First Nations community issues, and all people should be treated equally across Queensland. This view personalises and individualises problems and does not show a willingness to understand the linkages to an organisation which has in the past has

mistreated First Nations peoples who still collectively acknowledge this. Whilst most of the survey offered multiple-choice answers, three questions offered free-text responses. These fields revealed valuable attitudinal insights across the organisation. The survey captured useful data for the FNMUA to utilise when developing response strategies regarding First Nations and policing. The survey highlighted the need for the QPS to create an educational approach to improve staff cultural awareness, which will contribute to overall organisational cultural capability.

1.3 Ways Forward

To improve how the QPS responds to First Nations communities, consideration should be given to the following recommendations and ways forward. The survey highlighted obvious participant knowledge gaps and service delivery gaps; therefore, it is recommended that the QPS,

1) Develop a QPS First Nations Education Strategy - The QPS in consultation with First Nations communities develop an organisation-wide education strategy for all staff to enhance knowledge and awareness regarding First Nations communities and policing issues.
2) Develop a QPS communication plan - The QPS be transparent about the educational strategy development process and provide communication to the workforce and broader community.
3) 2022 '12-month progress report' – In 2022, the QPS deliver a 12-month progress report to ELT regarding development and implementation of 'QPS First Nations Education Strategy'.

PART B

2. QPS BASELINE FIRST NATIONS CULTURAL AWARENESS SURVEY

2.1 Purpose

The purpose of this baseline survey is to gain a general insight into QPS staff awareness regarding First Nations communities and policing. The First Nations and Multicultural Affairs Unit (FNMAU) will use the survey data to develop appropriate policing strategies.

2.2 Scope

The survey was developed for internal purposes only. It aimed to gather information regarding,

- General staff awareness about historical relationships between First Nations communities and the police,
- General staff awareness about current issues between First Nations communities and the police,
- General staff awareness about First Nations cultural protocols,
- Whether staff had undertaken relevant training
- Feedback from staff about the need for relevant training
- Feedback from staff about what would be appropriate

The survey did not aim to explore in-depth the role of the Police Liaison Officer. After the survey, the FNMAU will analyse the data to identify appropriate strategies to enhance how the QPS engages and responds to First Nations communities within Queensland.

2.3 Methodology

The survey was developed by utilising Microsoft Forms. The survey contained thirty questions and was divided into the following four sections,

1. Section 1 Participant information
2. Section 2 Participant awareness of historical relationships between First Nations communities and the QPS
3. Section 3 Participant awareness of current Issues affecting First Nations communities and QPS
4. Section 4 Participant awareness of cultural protocols and practices

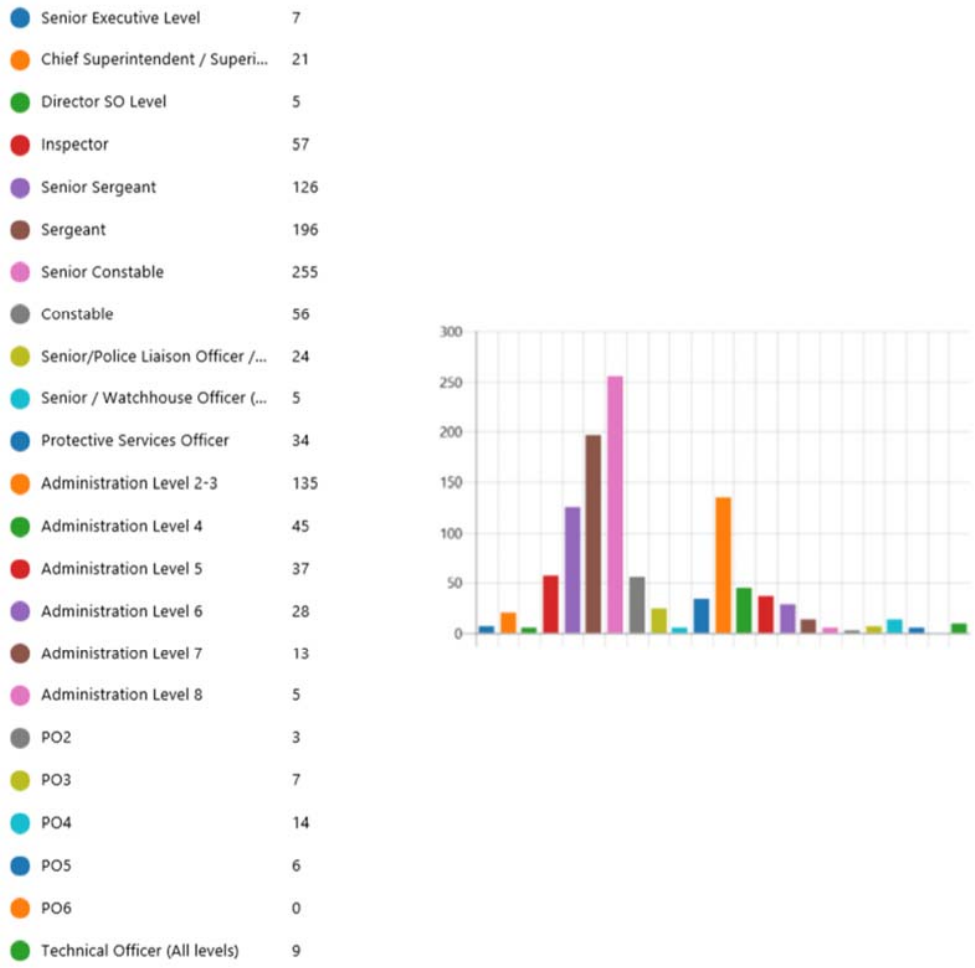
On December 1, 2020, the FNMAU distributed an email containing the survey link to all QPS Strategy and Performance Officers to distribute to their workgroups inviting staff to participate. Additionally, the FNMAU posted the survey link on WorkPlace. The survey remained open for three weeks from December 1, 2020, until December 21, 2020. Participation was voluntary, and participant details were only identifiable to the survey coordinators. For this survey report, all responses are unidentifiable.

2.4 Survey Results

Survey Timeframe	December 1, 2020, to December 21 2020
QPS Participants	1088
Average time to complete the survey	13:45 minutes

2.4.1 Section One Participant Information

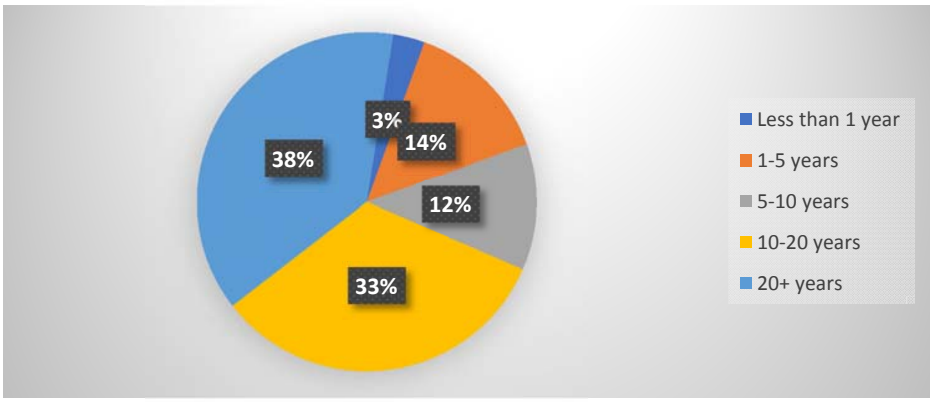
Q1. What is your rank level?



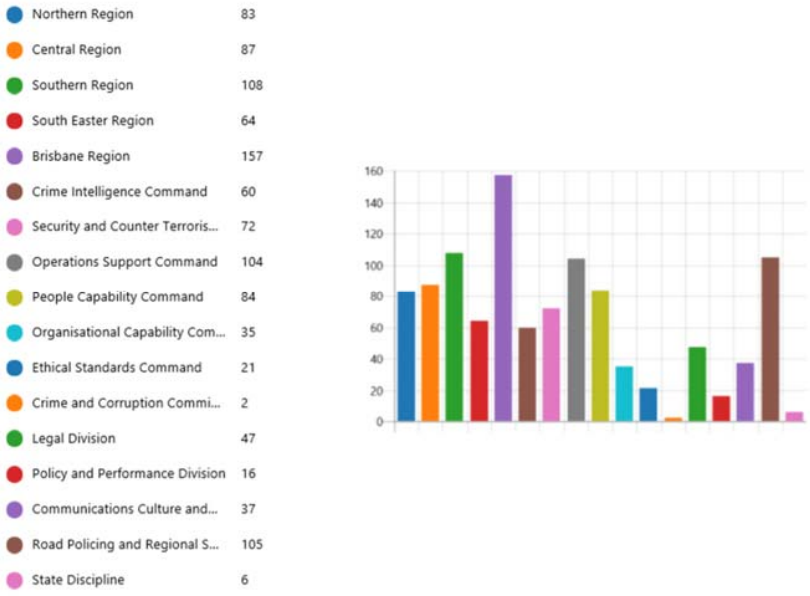
Q2. What is your length of service?

Participant Response

- Less than 1 year 29
- 1-5 years 155
- 5-10 years 128
- 10-20 years 360
- 20+ years 416



Q3. What region/command/division do you work in?



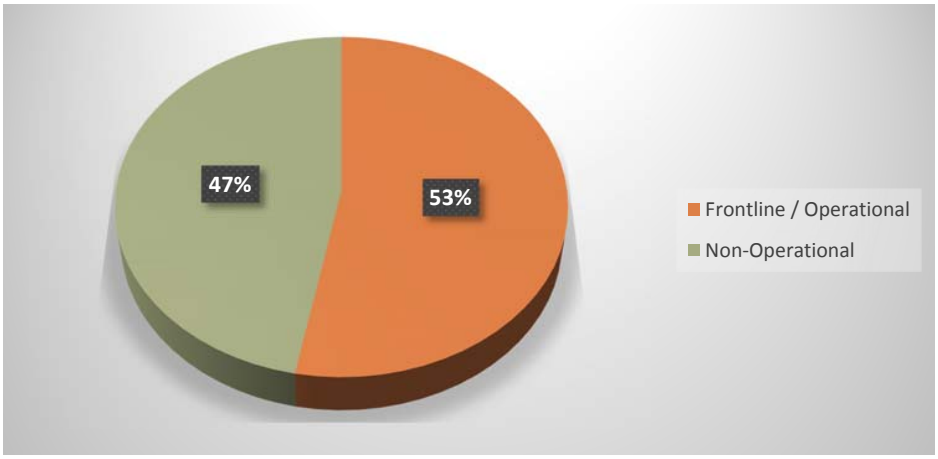
Q4. What district/business unit do you work in?

As per question three, responses were received from work units from all over the state.

Q5. Which best describes your role?

Participant Response

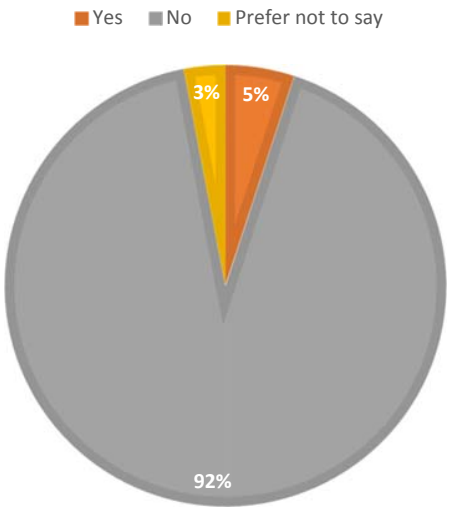
- Frontline/Operational 577
- Non-operational 511



Q6. Do you identify as First Nations Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples?

Participant Response

- Yes 58
- No 995
- Prefer not to say 35

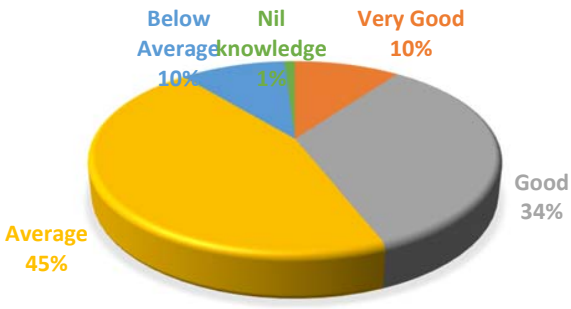


2.4.2 Section Two Historical Relationships

Q7. How would you describe your general knowledge about the history of First Nations communities in Australia?

Participant Response

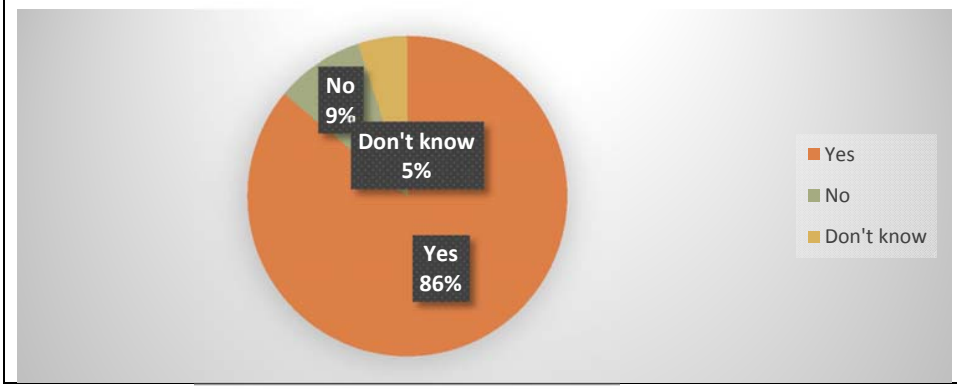
- Very good 121
- Good 365
- Average 488
- Below average 104
- Nil knowledge 10



Q8. Do you believe it is important for you to have general knowledge about the historical relationships between First Nations communities and the police?

Participant Response

- Yes (go to Q10) 934
- No 98
- Don't know 55
- Other 1



Q9. If you do not know about historical relationships between First Nations communities and the police, looking back, do you believe it would have been helpful?

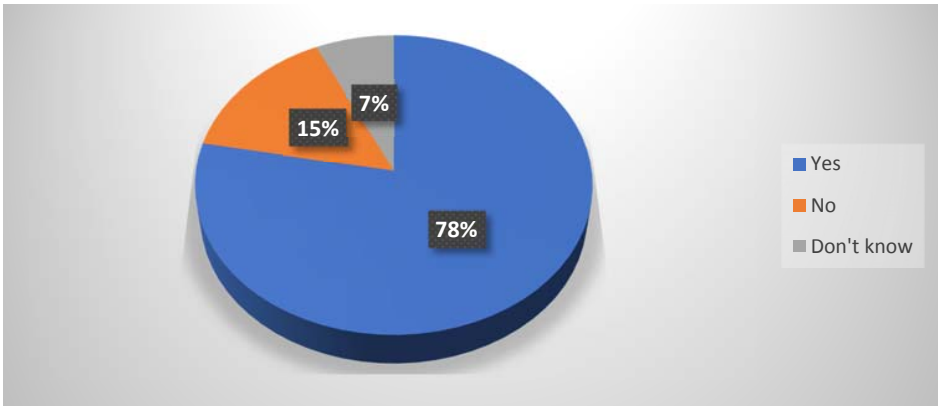
Participant Response

- Yes 44
- No 117
- Don't know 51

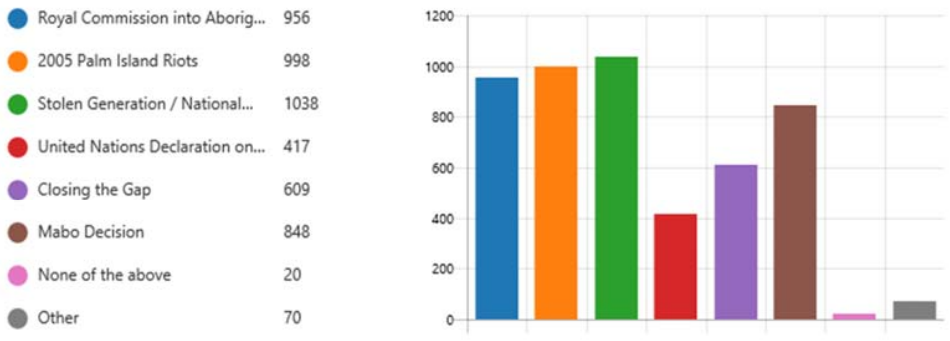
Q10. Are you familiar with historical incidents in Queensland and/or Australia that have affected the relationships between First Nations communities and the police?

Participant Response

- Yes 844
- No 157
- Don't know 77



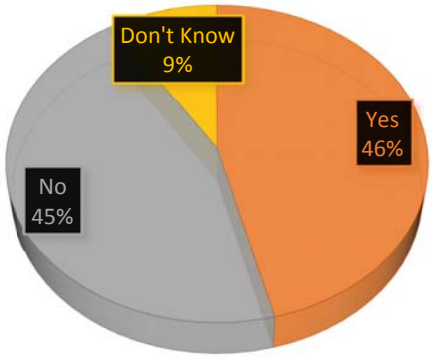
Q11. Please select incidents/events/strategies you are aware of?



Q12. Do you know why past governments formed remote discrete Indigenous communities?

Participant Response

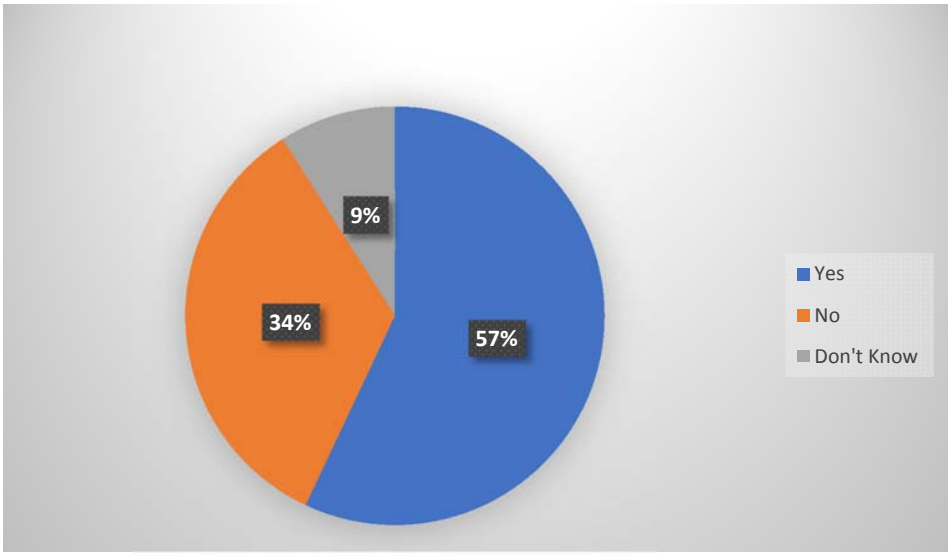
- Yes 489
- No 480
- Don't know 104



Q13. Do you know how legislation in the past has affected First Nations communities?

Participant Response

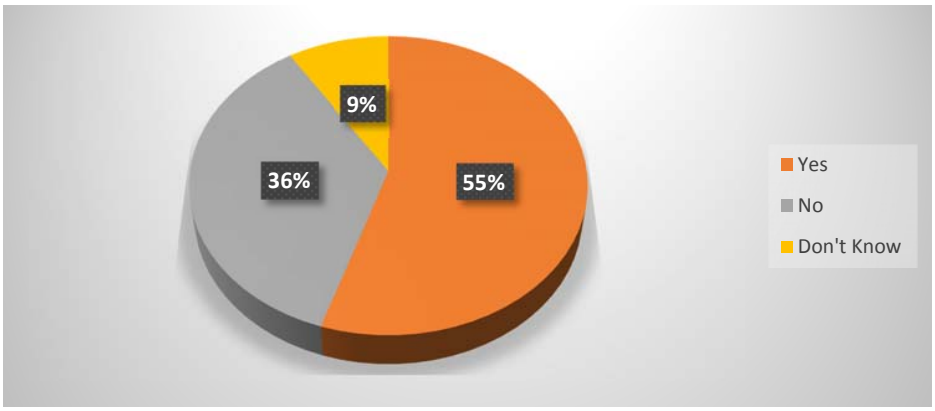
- Yes 611
- No 365
- Don't know 98



Q14. Are you familiar with the reasons why specific policies/legislation were formed pertaining to First Nations peoples e.g. safeguards in PPRA, Anunga Rules etc?

Participant Response

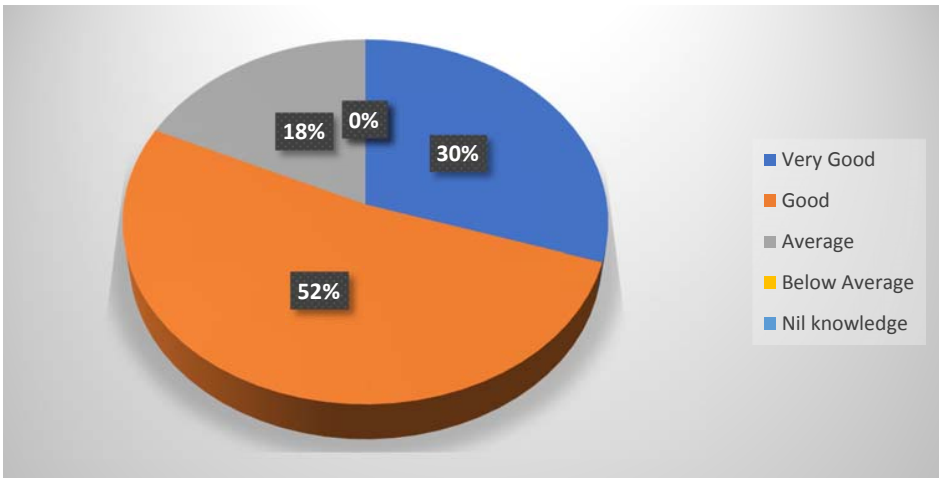
- Yes 597
- No 386
- Don't know 93



Q15. How would you describe your understanding of racism?

Participant Response

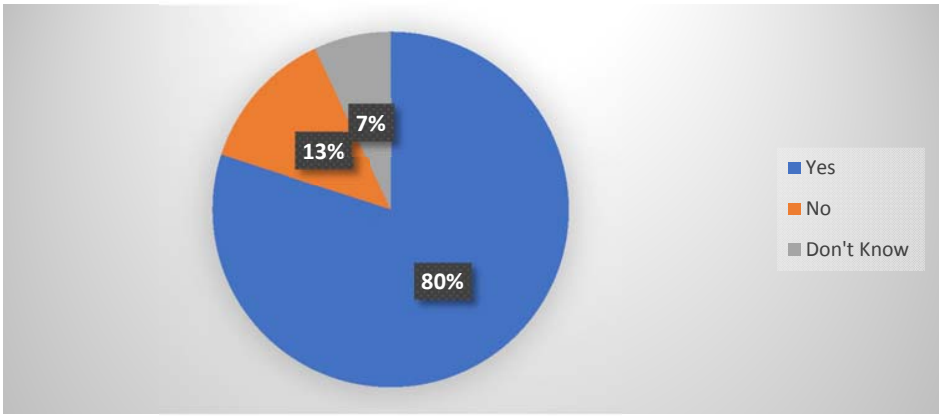
- Very good 326
- Good 564
- Average 194
- Below average 4
- Nil knowledge 10



Q16. Do you know how racism has affected First Nations communities?

Participant Response

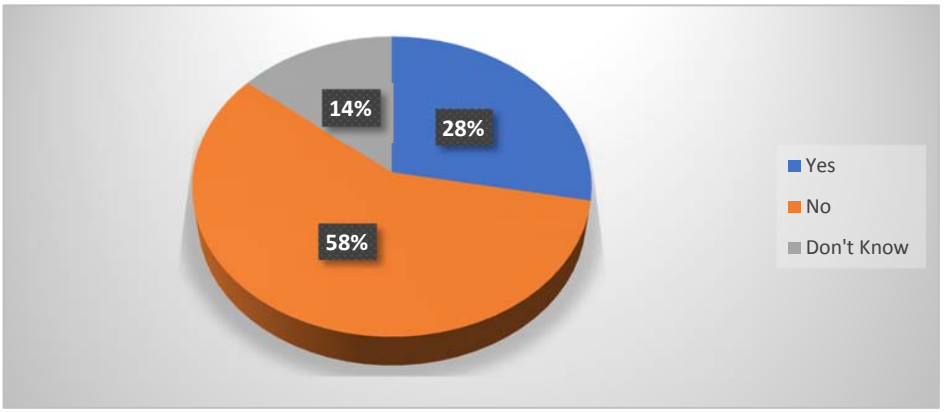
- Yes 865
- No 138
- Don't know 85



Q17. Did you receive QPS training about historical relationships between First Nations communities and the police?

Participant Response

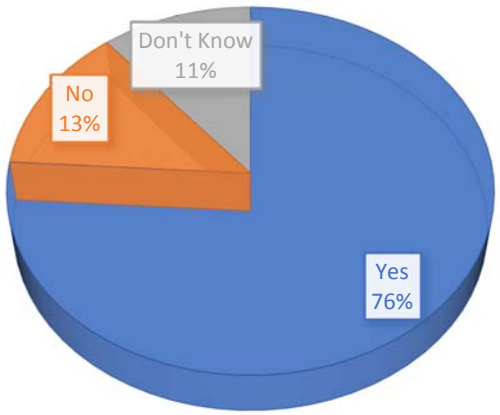
- Yes 310
- No 630
- Don't know 148



Q18. Do you believe there should be QPS training about the historical relationships between First Nations communities and the police?

Participant Response

- Yes 830
- No 144
- Don't know 114

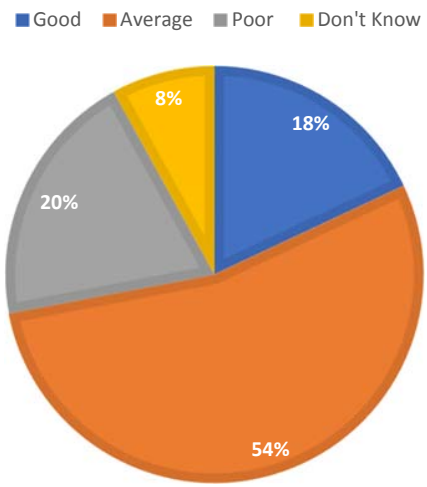


2.4.3 Section Three Current Issues

Q19. Generally, how would you describe the current relationship between First Nations communities and the police?

Participant Response

- Good 194
- Average 585
- Poor 222
- Don't know 87



Q20. What current issues are you aware of that have impacted relationships between First Nations communities and the police?

Participant Response
819 responses were received. See below list, in order of contemporary issues which participants believe have impacted the relationship between the police and First Nations communities.

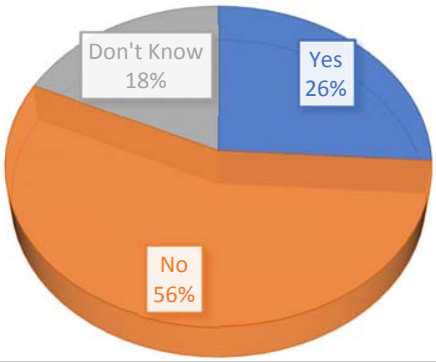
1. Deaths in Custody
2. Lack of understanding of cultural differences /mistrust between police and First Nations communities
3. Black Lives Matter
4. Racism / Bias
5. Alcohol Issues
6. Historical Issues (stolen generation, paternalism, colonisation)
7. Media hype/misrepresentations of police treatment/ negative police stories
8. High incarceration rates
9. Youth Issues
10. Unfair Police Treatment of First Nations peoples

11. Stolen Generation
12. Palm Island Riots
13. Land rights issues

Q21. Did you receive QPS training regarding First Nations communities and contemporary social issues?

Participant Response

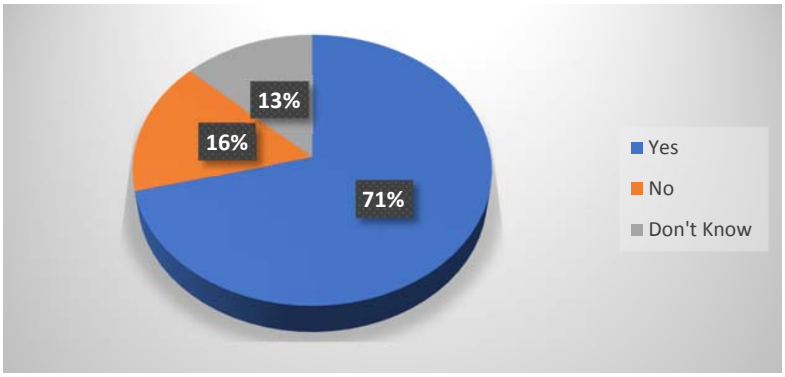
- Yes 278
- No 609
- Don't know 201



Q22. Do you believe there should be specific training to enhance your knowledge of First Nations communities and contemporary issues?

Participant Response

- Yes 771
- No 173
- Don't know 143

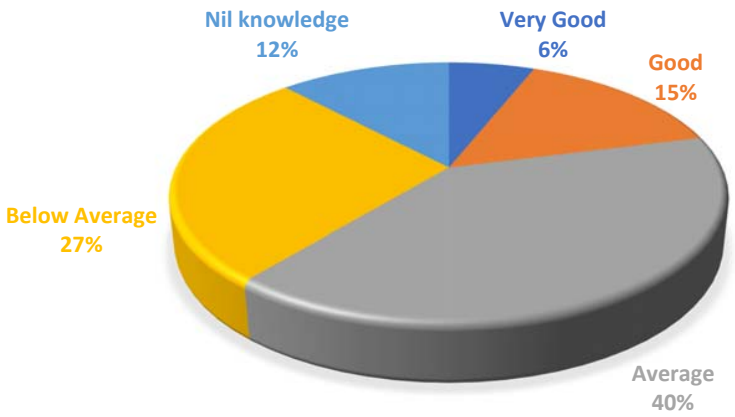


2.4.4 Section Four Cultural Protocols and Considerations

Q23. How would you describe your knowledge about First Nations communities' cultural protocols?

Participant Response

- Very good 60
- Good 167
- Average 434
- Below average 292
- Nil knowledge 135



Q24. What cultural protocols are you familiar with?

Participant Response

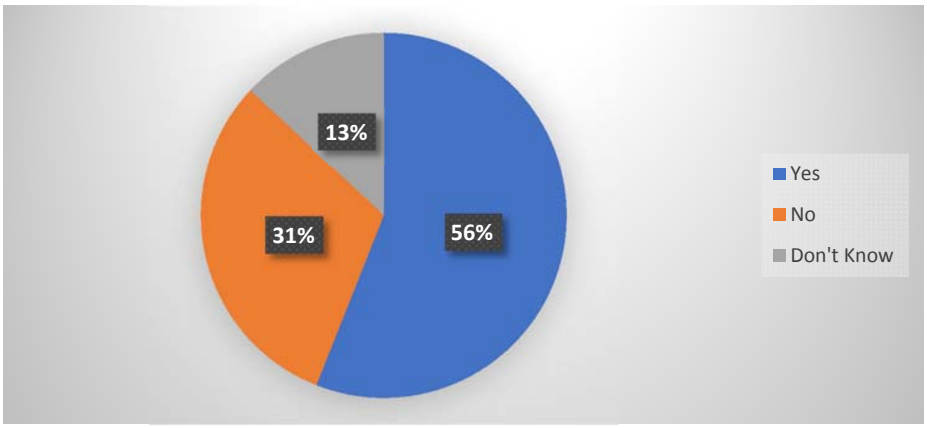
700 responses were received. See below the list of cultural protocols in order in which the participants were most familiar with,

1. Acknowledgement Traditional Owners/ Welcome to Country
2. Sorry business / Not naming deceased / show photos etc / Tombstone
3. Limiting eye contact
4. Smoking ceremonies
5. Respect for elders / Aunty / Uncle
6. Kinship/ Family relationship meaning
7. Lore
8. Men's business, Women's business
9. Connection to land
10. Sacred sites

Q25. Do you consider cultural protocols in the course of your role?

Participant Response

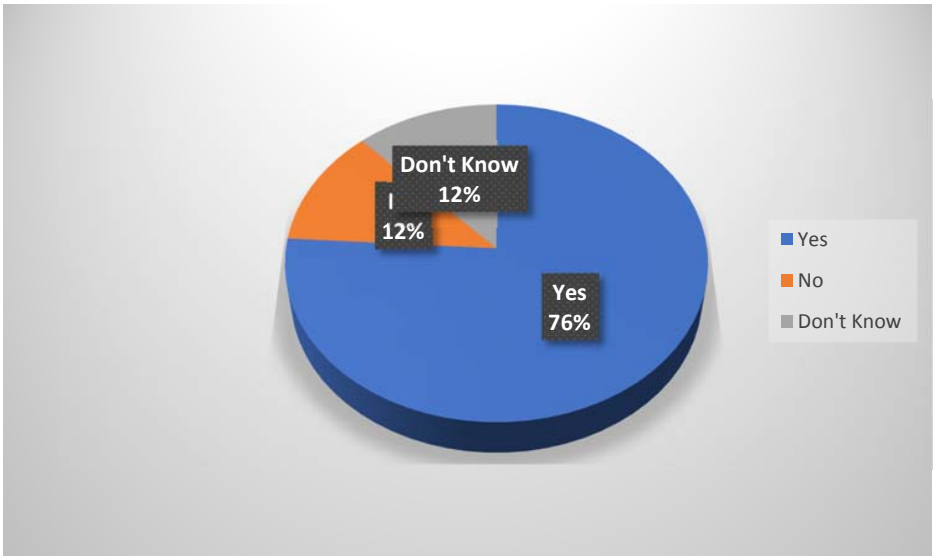
- Yes 604
- No 337
- Don't know 137



Q26. Do you believe there should be specific training to enhance knowledge of First Nations and cultural protocols?

Participant Response

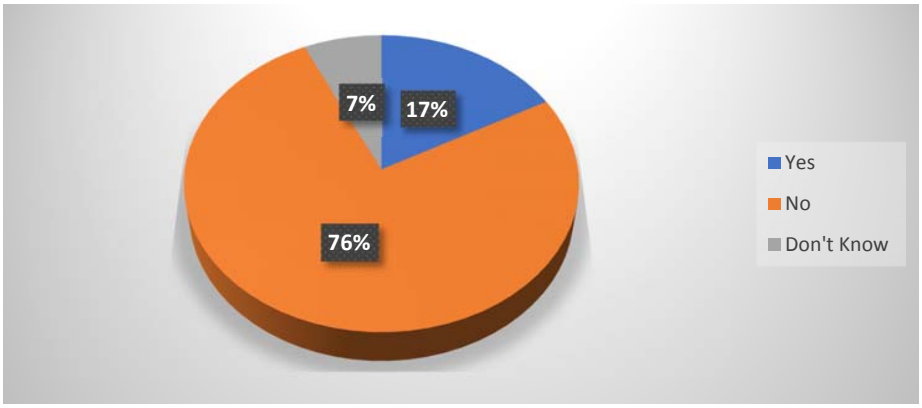
- Yes 826
- No 133
- Don't know 129



Q27. Have you ever received orientation or training regarding local First Nations communities/cultural protocols/community issues etc when starting at a new workplace?

Participant Response

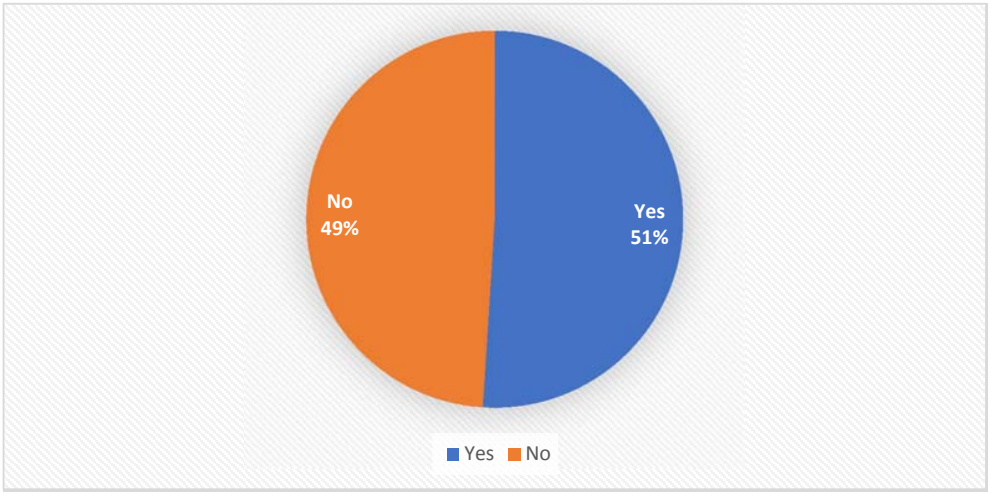
- Yes 190
- No 823
- Don't know 75



Q28. Do you call upon local Police Liaison Officers / Torres Strait Islander Police Support Officers to obtain local knowledge about the community/family groups/cultural protocols etc?

Participant Response

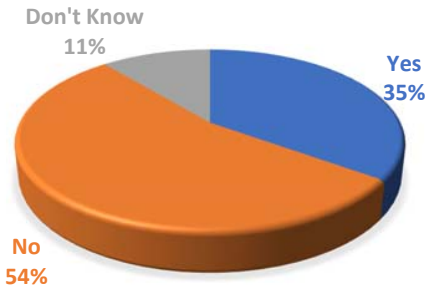
- Yes 556
- No 532



Q29. Do you know where to access QPS training regarding First Nations communities?

Participant Response

- Yes 383
- No 580
- Don't know 125



Q30. Generally, what training do you believe the QPS should have in place in relation to First Nations communities and the police?

Participant Response

Six hundred ninety-five responses were received. See below list for general sentiments expressed about what training should be in place,

1. Basic understanding of cultural awareness / cultural considerations
2. Historical issues / intergenerational trauma
3. Specific localised cultural awareness training
4. Training should be in place for police who respond to First Nations communities.
5. As much as possible,
6. The QPS should not offer training, and everyone should be treated the same
7. Face to face training
8. Not an OLP / ineffective
9. The community should learn about police / teach respect on both sides.
10. Video / documentary product
11. Social issues
12. Podcast series
13. Utilise PLOs for training

PART C
3. DISCUSSION

3.1 Part One Participants

3.1.1 Key Points

- The Queensland Police Service as at November 30, 2020, had a total of 16111 employees.
- One thousand eighty-eight employees took part in the survey equating to 6.75% of the workforce.
- 5% (58) of participants identified as First Nations peoples, 91% (995) of participants did not identify as First Nations people whilst 3% (35) preferred not to say.
- The survey data can be utilised to predict how the entire workforce would have answered questions by utilising 'survey confidence level 95%' and a margin of error 3. To speak to the data with 95% confidence, with "3" margin of error, the survey required 1001 participants from the workforce of 16,111. For example, if 47% of participants said "yes we need training" (margin of error 3),I have a 95% confidence level, that if all 16111 people participated, between 44% (47%-3) and 50% (47%+3) would have chosen "yes we need training".
- The survey was voluntary, and responses were received from all regions/commands and divisions.
- Responses were received from both frontline/operational and non-operational areas, adding to the organisation's depth of representation. 53% (577) were from frontline/operational positions whilst 47% (511) participants were from a non-operational position.

3.1.2 Summary

- Overall, there was good representation from First Nations and non-First Nations communities, across the state, across geographical areas, ranks, levels, work units, frontline areas and non-operational areas.

3.2 Part Two Historical Issues

3.2.1 Key Points

- 56% (602) survey participants expressed that they had average, below average and nil general knowledge about the history of First Nations communities in Australia. Yet, 86% (934) of participants agreed that it was important to have general knowledge.
- Overall, most participants knew that historical incidents and legislation had impacted the relationship between the police and First Nations communities. However, given the lack of historical knowledge, it can be assumed that most participants do not have insight as to how the past continues to impact present-day relationships.
- Most responders believed they had a good understanding of racism. The survey did not offer further questions about racism to test the subjectiveness of the participants' responses. 45% (489) knew why discrete Indigenous communities were formed, however, 55% (580) did not know why. Given the lack of historical knowledge of impacts from participants, it could be assumed there is a lack of knowledge about how racism has impacted First Nations peoples.
- 58% (630) of participants indicated they had not received QPS training regarding historical events affecting the police and First Nations peoples' relationship. Yet, 76% (830) of participants believe there should be QPS training in place.

3.2.2 Summary

- We can assume that the lack of insight into historical issues would impact how police generally view First Nations communities. The findings from this section indicate a service delivery gap created by the absence of training offered to staff.
- The officers only saw themselves as part of today's police organisation and not representative of the organisation responsible for the historical ill-treatment of First Nations people. They felt they were not directly accountable for the past injustices and it was unfair that First Nations people were angry with them. This sentiment outlines the apparent clash in thinking, which training may assist in resolving.

3.2.3 Literature

- For an estimated 40,000 to 60,000 years, First Nations peoples existed in Australia where they maintained hunter-gatherer customs and practices. In the 1700s, First Nations peoples's existence was significantly altered after colonisation and domination of Australia by Europeans' arrival.
- Every part of First Nations peoples' society was attacked during the colonisation process.[1],
- Australian history has been one of controlling, confining and imprisoning First Nations peoples whilst simultaneously denying them their civil and political rights.[1]
- The police were an integral part of that system which marginalised and destroyed First Nations peoples' social structures, patterns of authority and customary laws. Through the historical phase of coercion and control, the foundation was laid for the existence of ongoing contentious relationships between police and First Nations Australians.[2] [9] [3]
- The officers' lack of historical knowledge causes officers to individualise about why trouble occurs and restricts understanding about why the relationships remain contentious today. [4]

3.3 Part Three Current Issues

3.3.1 Key Points

- To better understand why relationships between police and First Nations peoples remain contentious today, it is imperative to examine and have insight into the contemporary situation as well as what has occurred historically between the two groups.
- 74% (807) of participants describe the current relationship between the police and First Nations communities as either average or poor. This sentiment indicates that most staff know the relationship is not always positive and present efforts can be futile in fixing the relationship.
- 69%% (753) of participants did not receive or did not know if they had received QPS training about contemporary issues.
- 71% (771) of participants believed there should be QPS training in place.
- This part of the survey highlighted attitudes towards current issues between the QPS and First Nations communities including,

> *"The ongoing of this being shoved down our throats. There was the public apology. Do not guilt this generation about what happened prior to me being alive". Senior Constable, Northern Region.*

[1] Cunneen, C & Rowe, S 2015, 'Decolonising Indigenous victimisation', in Crime, victims and policy, p. 10.
[2] Blagg, H 2008, Crime, Aboriginality and the decolonisation of justice.
[3] Mazerolle et.al 2003, 'Policing the plight of Indigenous Australians: past conflicts and present challenges' pp. 77-104.
[4] Hogg, R & Carrington, K 2006, Policing the rural crisis.

- *"We work under QLD law no other. All persons need to be aware of this. There is no white law v black law". Sergeant, Southern Region*
- *"Obviously, the fact that they are overrepresented in jail and are more likely to have a criminal record is not police fault, but this constant contact can lead to officers becoming racist". Senior Constable, Northern Region.*
- *"Leniency. Not treated the same as everyone else. One rule for all and it should not be based on your background. everyone should be treated the same. There should be NO special treatment for any race, religion etc". Senior Constable, South Eastern Region.*
- *"Failure of people to recognise that they are responsible for their own behaviour. Indigenous people continually claim that non-indigenous owe them this or that. That governments must do more. Well the people themselves need to get off their backsides and get jobs and participate in community instead of blaming and living in the past". Sergeant, Southern Region.*

3.3.2 Summary

- The finding from this section indicates a service delivery gap. Staff need training regarding First Nations communities, police and factors that impact the relationship.
- Some staff expressed how relationships were positive. Therefore, it would be worthwhile to explore how the successes build and sustain relationships and how this information could be shared in future QPS educational methodologies.

3.3.3 Literature

- The views we hold about why people commit crimes profoundly influences our ways of dealing with them[5].
- When policing First Nations peoples it must first be acknowledged that a long-term distrust exists between these groups and the police in many jurisdictions[6].
- Concepts of racism (individual bias) and 'institutional racism' (broad social practices) has been a prevalent feature of many government reviews regarding the police and First Nations communities[7].
- Australian history has been one of controlling, confining and imprisoning First Nations people whilst simultaneously denying them their civil and political rights. The police were an integral part of that system which marginalised and destroyed First Nations people's social structures, patterns of authority and customary laws. [7]
- Aboriginal Australians have in the past been the subject of highly discriminatory and prejudicial treatment at the hands of police and others within the criminal justice system'.[8]
- Whilst colonisation laid the foundations, contemporary issues have, at times, intensified the animosity many First Nations people have towards police. First Nations people are incarcerated at a rate of nearly 18 times that of non-First Nations Australians, with nearly a quarter of the First Nations male population having been arrested in the last five years. [6]

[5] Broadhurst, R 2002, 'Crime and Indigenous people', p. 256.

[6] Jones, NA, Lithopoulos, S & Ruddell, R, 2016 'Policing rural Indigenous communities', pp381-384.

[7] Cunneen 2006, 'Aboriginal deaths in custody: a continuing systematic abuse', p. 33.

[8] Weatherburn, D 2014, Arresting incarceration: pathways out of Indigenous imprisonment, p7, p54

- Resistance was important in Aboriginal culture to show opposition to power and over-policing, which has resulted in increased demands for more police resources and a greater use of power. Resistance to over-policing has been the nature of the relationship; if Aboriginal people did not challenge authority and accepted an inferior position, the continuous regulation by police and the criminal justice system would not have been necessary[9].

3.4 Part Four Cultural Protocols

3.4.1 Key Points

- 21% (227) of participants felt they had good or very good knowledge of cultural protocols. Whilst 79% (861) of participants had an average, below average or no knowledge of cultural protocols.
- Most staff expressed awareness that cultural protocols exist; however, the survey found a broad knowledge gap about cultural protocols.
- 56% (604) of participants do consider protocols in their role, which is positive.
- 76% (826) of participants believed training should be in place. 76% (826) of participants did not receive training or a local orientation, highlighting significant First Nations cultural protocols or information.
- 64% of participants did not know where to access relevant training, contributing to the gap in service delivery.
- The participants were split down the middle when calling upon Police Liaison officers for assistance. Many variables could affect this finding, including not needing PLO assistance in the course of one's role. However, it could also indicate that half of the participants do not understand how PLOs can contribute to their responses.

3.4.2 Summary

- This section's findings indicate improvement to service delivery requires staff training on First Nations cultural protocols. This has the potential to increase trust with First Nations communities.

3.4.3 Literature

- Historically, the First Nations way of life has not been accepted as the norm nor understood by police. [1] **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
- This difference in ideology explains why a clash of thinking occurs between police and First Nations people. Officers from mainstream areas in Australia operate with a level of individualism and self-reliance and hold the expectation that others will as well. In contrast, the literature suggests First Nations people may not hold this self-reliant view and will often utilise police to solve their issues. [4] [10]
- 'First Nations values are based around deep connection to social groups and kinship which is in contrast to Eurocentric values based around individualism'. [11]
- First Nations peoples hold onto history and relate it to how they view police today, as they value and feel compassion for the wider family groups. They value what has occurred in the context of the wider world to them as a group[11].
- In contrast, the participants from non-First Nations backgrounds who value individualism do not see themselves as part of history or as part of the white regime that dominates First Nations people. Furthermore, they do not feel a connection to the people or police in the past who were responsible for the ill-treatment of First Nations people. The officers who value

[9] Cunneen, C 2001, Conflict, politics and crime: Aboriginal communities and the police. P79

[10] Jobes, PC 2004, 'Colonialisation and crime: contemporary consequences of invasion on indigenous peoples in rural places', pp. 118.

[11] Walter, M 2015, 'The vexed link between social capital and social mobility for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people', p. 69.

individualism see themselves only in today's context, hence the cause for frustration and the belief that the racialised animosity and abuse towards them is not necessary. [11]

- First Nations social groups' stories about negative police treatment are passed around, which contributes to the group subsequently maintaining the feeling of hostility towards police. [12]
- Community police liaison officers are points of resistance to non-First Nations forms of governance, as well as being a conduit between the First Nations world and the non-First Nations world. They further observe that community police work in the 'uneasy space between the Aboriginal domain and the "white-fella" society'.[13]
- Community police liaison officers are able to offer First Nations people (who frequently hold negative views of the police) a non-threatening police presence and assist in promoting trusting relationships.[12]

[12] White, RD & Perrone, S 2005, Crime and social control, p32.

[13] Blagg, H & Value, G 2003, 'Self-policing and community safety: the work of Aboriginal Community Patrols in Australia', p. 317.

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PART D
4. WAYS FORWARD

4.1 Recommendations

The survey highlighted obvious participant knowledge gaps and service delivery gaps; therefore, it is recommended that the QPS,

1) Develop a QPS First Nations Education Strategy - The QPS in consultation with First Nations communities develop an organisation-wide education strategy for all staff to enhance knowledge and awareness with regards to First Nations communities and policing issues.
2) Develop Communications Plan - The QPS be transparent about the educational strategy development process and provide communication to the workforce and broader community.
3) 2022 '12-month progress report' – In 2022, the QPS deliver a 12-month progress report to ELT regarding development and implementation of 'QPS First Nations Education Strategy'.

4.2 Value Adding

The following considerations should be given to add value to the ways forward,

1) **Consultation with First Nations peoples** - Appropriate consultation should be undertaken to gain insight from First Nations communities (internal and external to the QPS) about the information they believe QPS staff should be taught in respect to their communities, culture and history.
2) **Inclusion and Diversity** – Consideration given to how an educational strategy supports the QPS Inclusion and Diversity Strategy. Recognising internal member's intersectionality.
3) **Racism** - Racism underpins the contentious relationship between First Nations communities and the police, therefore, the acknowledgement and promotion of understanding of the concept needs to be built into any future QPS educational strategy.
4) **Examination of effective educational strategies** - It would be beneficial to examine various educational methodologies' success to better understand which would be the most effective for the QPS First Nations educational strategy.
5) **Comparative analysis –** Consideration should be given to undertaking a comparative analysis of national and international jurisdictions and Queensland government education programs specific to policing and First Nations communities to find material relevant to QPS.
6) **Current QPS Material** - Continue to utilise current QPS educational material that is effective.

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