National Policing Strategic Framework

“With you, making Mauritius safer”

Community Policing
(greater accountability to the community)
“Community Policing”
(greater accountability to the community)

This ‘Blue Print’ is one in a series of six strategic documents, each of which deals with one pillar of the National Policing Strategic Framework. The others are:

- Achieving a Human Rights Compliant Organisation — a commitment to professional standards.
- Permanent Strategic Planning Capability — strategic direction at Force and Divisional level.
- Intelligence-led Policing — development of proactive responses.
- Enhancing Reactive Capability — a step change in the quality of reactive activities.
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COMMUNITY POLICING
(greater accountability to the community)

1. INTRODUCTION

The environment in which the Mauritius Police Force operates has significantly changed over the years. Globalization, transnational crime, new technologies and our fast socio-economic development, have impacted heavily on policing in the country. The complexity of certain crimes coupled with increasing anti-social behaviour mainly among the youth and drug and alcohol abuse are posing as a new challenge.

Against the backdrop of emerging crime patterns and increased demand for Police services, crime management now demands effective tools and techniques in the use of finite police resources involving, amongst other things, the targeting of active offenders with the full support of the community.

Policing is underpinned by the principle of public consent. Without the support of the public in reporting crimes and incidents, sharing their knowledge on perpetrators of crime, anti-social behaviour and public disorder, the reach of the Police is limited in its capacity to tackle such problems affecting our people, specially the young, the old and the vulnerable.

Community Policing has always been considered as one of the best approaches to help fight crimes and keep society safe. Community Policing was initially introduced in the Mauritius Police Force in 1994 and after two years of ad-hoc implementation, it was discontinued. However in 2003, it was reintroduced under the name of Police Public Partnership Programme (PPPP). It was never properly structured such that the community could be actively engaged in order to better understand their concerns, priorities and apprehensions. The proposed model for Community Policing in this NPSF will be embedded as part of a coherent strategy that seeks full commitment of all staff in order to achieve greater accountability towards the community.

Undoubtedly, Community Policing has become a core aspect of modern policing that characterises a service-led organization. To this end, the MPF will undertake active consultations with the public with a view to further improving the quality of service in areas where most needed, the concentration of resources where most required, and thus ensure a greater degree of involvement of the community in our policing strategy.

To achieve this objective, we will establish a permanent platform for regular meetings and consultation with members of the community. This process basically revolves around the new
concept of Community Policing which, in essence, rests on the collaboration between the police and the community with the purpose of identifying and solving community problems. This reposes on the premise that contemporary policing challenges require the police to provide full proactive as well as quality reactive policing by involving the community as partner. This new approach will invariably bring in its trail a cultural change within the Service and help in achieving “a police for the people and a people for the police”.

2. GOAL

The ultimate goal is to work in partnership with the community and all other stakeholders in order to make Mauritius the safest place to live in, by reducing crime and fear of crime thereby improving the quality of life.

We will do this by engaging effectively with them so as to identify their concerns, expectations and priorities through active listening in order to ensure that our services meet the local and individual needs.

Our motto will be:

- “We engage and ask” — engage with the community (consultation);
- “You say and we listen” — listen to the community to really identify priorities (community expectations); and
- ”We perform” — attend to priorities using every available resources (response).

3. INTEGRATION OF THE NEW COMMUNITY POLICING MODEL

The driving force behind Community Policing will be to work in partnership with the community to provide quality service and fight crimes in a concerted manner. We will endeavour to provide a flexible policing service that takes into account the needs of the community. Responding to local needs and priorities is fundamental to our new vision that is “With you, making Mauritius safer” and should positively impact on both crime level and fear of crime.

Moreover, effective community engagement will enhance public confidence, which will in turn increase the flow of information pertaining to criminal activities.
3.1 The Structure

The structure of the Community policing at Divisional level will be as follows:

Divisional Commanders will, through their T&CGs and the DPUs, implement Community Policing in their respective Divisions in the same way as they are responsible for Strategic Planning and Proactive and Reactive Policing. To that end, they will ensure that available resources are aligned with identified priorities in respect of Community, Proactive and Reactive Policing requirements whilst seeking to balance service delivery in those three areas.
3.2 Duties and Responsibilities

The responsibilities of officers involved at different levels for the smooth implementation of the Community Policing strategy will be as given in the succeeding paragraphs.

3.2.1 Divisional Commander

The Divisional Commander will have the overall responsibility to plan, organize, implement, monitor and evaluate community policing at Divisional level. He will be assisted in this task by the Sub-Divisional Commander. He/she will:

- submit regular report of progress made to the Commissioner through the Police Strategic Planning Unit;
- balance operational demands against the principle of community policing whilst at the same time monitoring abstraction (release) of dedicated community policing resources;
- ensure that the release of resources is properly monitored and recorded; and
- develop competence; assign duties and responsibilities and other visible support.

3.2.2 Station Commander

He/she will:

- ensure smooth implementation, monitoring and evaluation at station level;
- ensure that the aims and objectives are communicated to station personnel and the community;
- conduct regular reviews to gauge compliance; and
- provide necessary support and encouragement.

3.2.3 Station-In-Charge

He/she will:

- regroup his/her station area into local sub-areas, wards or a number of villages as appropriate;
- sensitize his/her personnel on the importance of community policing for the MPF and the community at large;
- ensure that dedicated resources are judiciously used in an effective and efficient manner;
• ensure that necessary intelligence is provided during Tasking and Coordination meetings and intelligence received through community policing is fed back into the system; and
• ensure that necessary actions are initiated to attend to problems and priorities.

3.2.4 Community Policing Officer (Insp/Sl/Sgt)

He/she will:

• be fully involved in the implementation of Community Policing within his/her station area in the Division;
• monitor release of resources including Neighbourhood Officers on a daily basis;
• ensure that staff consistently record their duties in station Diary Book and their computer and submit regular reports for action and onwards transmission to Divisional Commander;
• promote an understanding of dedicated community policing in the neighbourhood;
• ensure that this policy is considered prior to any abstraction of human resources;
• ensure that daily activities are based on effective tasking and coordination and intelligence;
• support Neighbourhood Officers and community representatives; and
• inform the In-Charge station about problems, priorities and how they are being dealt with, in an effective manner.

3.2.5 Neighbourhood Officers (CPL/PC)

They will:

• have one defined sub-area each or more, where they will promote an understanding of the dedicated community policing role;
• effectively engage with local residents and identify neighbourhood priorities and undertake problem solving activities;
• inform the Community Policing Officer about problems and priorities within their sub-areas in a timely manner;
• provide a highly visible and accessible presence within their sub-area/s;
• reassure the community and work closely with local partners; and
• encourage local residents to nominate community representatives, who will act as coordinator and be the contact point between the police and the community.
3.3 Methods

Community Policing as a whole involves a series of methods/processes with a well-defined structure in order to be successfully integrated in the Mauritian context. Setting up a structure alone will not suffice. We will introduce the methods as enumerated below in order to implement our new Community Policing model.

3.3.1 Customer Care at every Point of Contact

The constant attainment of customer satisfaction through continuous improvement of all organizational processes will be at the heart of our Community Policing philosophy. Quality Management is a commitment to continuous improvement.

The aim is to make every contact with our valued customer, a positive experience as goes the saying “you never get a second chance to make a first impression”. It is a fact that any episode in which the customer comes into contact with any member of the organisation provides an impression on the quality of service. Managing that contact effectively is of vital importance to officers on both foot and mobile patrol as well as those providing counter service at the various police stations and units. As such, effective contact management will be the responsibility of every member of the MPF.

The quality of our interaction with the public at the very first point of contact be it telephone, internet or face-to-face, will be the indication of the standard of response that we will be providing to meet their needs and expectations. We will ensure that every contact counts so as to achieve high levels of customer satisfaction and thus gain public confidence. We will support greater public engagement in policing through:

- enhancing channels of access to our public service;
- empowering police officers — involve officers in the front line in the improvement process;
- improving the quality of service by introducing quality circles at the level of police stations where officers meet regularly to discuss identified problems, investigate causes, recommend solutions and take corrective actions;
- supporting a collaborative approach to solve problems; and
- measuring performance with regard to quality and comparing it against standards in order to identify problems and attend to their causes.

In order to ensure a high quality service, we intend to develop a Quality Service Commitment in terms of the quality of our responses that will be incumbent on our officers as defined in the Blue Print on Enhancing Reactive Capability.
3.3.2 Effectively Engaging with the Community

For Community Policing to generate the desired result, it is vital to involve the community throughout the process in the identification of problems and evolving solutions. It is a systematic reassurance strategy where:-

i. dedicated and locally devolved officers who are familiar with the neighbourhood are visible, accessible, well-informed and able to enforce order;

ii. the use of Signals Crime Perspective (SCP)\(^1\) and intelligence ensures the targeting of problems that matter most to the local people. In so doing, public problems become policing priorities;

iii. joint actions are undertaken to find solutions involving every stakeholder;

iv. there is sensitivity to the needs of victims, the provision of victim support and action to avoid repeat victimization; and

v. prevention of re-offending is achieved by reintegrating offenders into the community.

Putting the needs and priorities of the community first will be at the heart of our local policing. The thrust behind our community policing is to involve local people, other government agencies and volunteers in identifying priority problems and finding solutions to them. We will listen to those who live with problems in as much as they are best placed to find long term solutions. We will meet initially on a bi-monthly basis (subject to later review). Due care and attention will be given to ensure that the views and opinions of a cross section of the local population, including small groups who may have different needs and views, are taken into consideration whilst designing delivery of police services. It is our belief that the existence of regional police advisory councils will be a valuable additional means of ensuring our services meet the needs of the community.

3.3.3 Policing Pledge (placing the community at the core of our service)

The public must have a clear understanding of what they can expect in terms of Police response

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\(^1\) The Signal Crimes Perspective (SCP) is an approach used in the UK which has shown how people make sense of disorder and crime – how they feel, think, and behave in response to perceived risks. By using this approach the Police can better understand the impact of these issues and can effectively target them together with the community and local agencies. The idea of ‘signal crimes’ is important in achieving engagement with the community. The key idea behind the Signal Crime Perspective is that an individual’s perception of safety determines their sense of security in an area. This perception is built up from selected, observed or reported events that the individual regards as significant signals. Most people are not victims of traditionally defined criminality but they do come across signs of disorder and crime, such as large groups of youths misbehaving or damage to property. In characterizing the security of an area, individuals often base their understandings of their security on such signs. Officially gathered crime statistics are virtually blind to disorder events – these are not counted. So, official statistics are a poor indicator of the sense of security in neighbourhoods. This explains the so-called ‘reassurance gap’ phenomenon: where overall crime figures can fall but many of the population think that crime levels have increased. It explains why a police force that is judged successful by traditional measures (such as tackling serious or ‘priority’ crime) may still not enjoy the confidence of its local community. What is needed to assess neighbourhood security, and what the ‘SCP’ provides, is a systematic method for identifying and quantifying the concerns of local people to prioritise police and partner response to disorder and crime.
to calls, access to police services, dealing with complaints as well as victim support. Presently, the MPF has a Citizen Charter which describes the service we provide to the community. We will revisit the said Charter with a view to developing a Policing Pledge which is a ‘contract’ between the police and the public we serve, so as improve public confidence. It will be an opportunity to show what we, members of the MPF will do to provide a higher level of service. We will proceed as follows:

- Identify those things that matter most to the community;
- Communicate them to our staff with a view to developing a Policing Pledge; and
- Inform the community what we in the MPF expect them to do to make our neighbourhood safer.

3.3.4 Victim Support and Advice

The main focus for policing has traditionally been offenders-oriented and we have the tendency to forget about victims. We will develop policies and practices which are sensitive to the needs of victims so as to reduce the fear of crime, prevent further victimization and assist in their recovery. We will:

- examine the underlying reasons as to why some people become victims of crime and what Police and other agencies can do to reduce the effect of victimization;
- review the way victims are treated and identify particular scope for improvement;
- develop a statement of service standard for victims of crime;
- develop a community-based approach whereby members of the community can help each other to overcome emotional trauma;
- provide psychological support;
- distribute brochures on crime prevention; and
- provide specific information relating to their case.

3.3.5 Mediation

Mediation is a process for resolving disputes where a third party helps to negotiate a settlement. It has been found that mediation is useful in a wide variety of conflicts and more precisely after an incident when emotions have sufficiently eased for the parties to negotiate.

Mediation can resolve conflict and diffuse tension that may have prevailed over several years. The Police will spend less time investigating petty cases and can redirect resources to serious cases. We will also use mediation to resolve disputes amongst conflicting groups within the community.
However, it is to be noted that mediation will be applicable depending on the nature of the dispute. This also implies that recourse to mediation will not hamper investigation duties by police officers or prevent them from taking legal action where an offence has been disclosed.

We will proceed as follows:

- Train our officers on the importance of mediation in maintaining public peace, tranquility and harmony;
- Sensitize the community and in particular parties to disputes to consider mediation as a solution to their problems;
- Solicit the services of independent mediators from external agencies; and
- Encourage community representatives (coordinators) and other members of the community who enjoy the esteem of the community to act as independent mediators.

3.3.6 Crime Mapping

Crime mapping consists in displaying on a map, the geographical distribution of specific crimes for a given period which offers vital clues to channel police resources and thus, improve our responses. It will also be used to sensitize the public on crime prone areas (hot spots) and the necessary precautions to be taken when in such areas. Crime mapping will provide more information to the public about crime in their area.

We will proceed as follows:

- Inform the community on a regular basis, about local crime trends and pattern;
- Develop crime prevention measures in partnership with the community; and
- Review effectiveness and initiate remedial action.

4. HOW TO ACHIEVE OUR GOAL

4.1 Implementation

Setting up the appropriate structure for Community Policing and laying down the duties and responsibilities of officers within the hierarchy of the Division are not adequate. Organizational development requires new practices that focus on empowerment, team-work and participative management. We will proceed as follows:

(i) The Crime Prevention Unit which is responsible for crime prevention and neighbourhood matters, will be reorganised;
(ii) the knowledge and skill of police graduates who are conversant with Community Policing issues, will be tapped;

(iii) Community Policing will not be the sole responsibility of the dedicated team. All station personnel need to support the team; and

(iv) the Divisional Commander will, through the T&CG and DPU, evaluate the quality and level of all policing services provided at Divisional level so as to keep up with the set professional standards.

### 4.2 Training, Learning and Development

We live in an era where change is constant. This demands not only new knowledge, skills and attitudes but also, a change of the mindset. In this vein, we will equip our officers with such knowledge, skills and attitudes through the following:

(i) identification of core tasks pertaining to community policing and development of the appropriate skills and attitudes;

(ii) a training philosophy that will encompass community policing concepts and values;

(iii) setting up of formal and informal learning processes; and

(iv) availing ourselves of local, regional and international training opportunities.

### 4.3 Cultural Issues

Police culture in essence can be termed as the continuity of traditional values and their incorporation into prevailing patterns of behaviour. One enduring trait of police culture is the value attached to a high sense of discipline in individual officers as well as strict adherence to rules and procedures. Police officers are very often perceived as professional crime fighters. It can be inferred that the present culture is firmly anchored on reactive policing.

Whilst there are strengths in the present culture, it is fitting to reflect on the present ways of doing things. The success of Community Policing relies on a way forward based on innovation and creativity to novel situations in an ever changing and dynamic society.

We will shift to a service-oriented organization in the following ways:

- Amending the Police Act 1974 to include the service role of the Police in light of the implementation of the NPSF.
- Inculcating and reinforcing the service dimension of policing through training, sensitization campaign and conveying of consistent messages through the use of posters, banners and leaflets.
• Promoting and encouraging trust between the Police and the Community through joint activities (Campaign on Road Safety, Crime Prevention, Drug Awareness, Protecting the environment, Social events and sporting activities for our youth).

• Gaining commitment to the concept of community policing (Work out performance indicators and their inclusion in the new performance appraisal and management system).

• Introducing a reward system to motivate our officers by:
  ♦ award of prizes to the best Police station and the best Community Policing Officer and Neighbourhood officers; and
  ♦ commendation with entry in record of conduct will include success in attaining the aim and objectives of community policing.

5. TIME LINE — ACTION PLAN

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<tr>
<th>SNo.</th>
<th>Activities/Events</th>
<th>Deliverables</th>
<th>Time scale for Implementation</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Decentralizing community policing at station level Setting up permanent structure at Divisional level - Dedicated Community Policing Team Setting up platform (community forum) at station level (See Serial No. 6 for details) Providing Customer care at every point of contact</td>
<td>Setting up Structure</td>
<td>Short term</td>
<td>Tasking and Coordination Group</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Setting up quality service improvement team within Divisions</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Setting up quality circles at station level</td>
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<td>4.</td>
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<td>Open discussion with the community and police officers</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Training Identification of core-tasks (Training Need Analysis)</td>
<td>Processes</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Formal and informal learning:</td>
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<td>Developing Training Programme</td>
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<td>Conducting Workshop with Divisional and Station Commanders</td>
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<td>Conducting Train the Trainers Course</td>
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<td>Integrating Community Policing with Recruit Training Package, InsP/Sgt Development Course</td>
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<td>Training of station personnel</td>
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<td>6.</td>
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6. EVALUATION

Evaluation is necessary to assess the extent to which community policing is being implemented. It is equally important to have both qualitative and quantitative evaluation which will be an opportunity to measure progress, identify set-backs and unforeseen circumstances so that necessary and timely adjustment can be made. We will proceed as follows:

(i) Divisional T&CG will conduct monthly and periodic reviews to assess progress;

(ii) Evaluate the effectiveness of customer care by:

(a) measuring quality of service against set standards;
(b) filling of customer satisfaction cards; and
(c) conducting Witness And Victim Experience Surveys (WAVES) in order to capture local views, experience and perception;

(iii) Evaluate the effectiveness of the engagement and consultation process by ensuring that the public have the opportunity to consult on areas that they define as important;

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<td>Reinforcing service role</td>
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<td>Conduct WAVES</td>
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<td>Engaging and Consulting with the Community Mediation</td>
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<td>Organised Mystery shopping</td>
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<td>Conduct Interview/ Focus group</td>
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<td>Conduct Police Confidence Survey</td>
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(iv) evaluate the number of cases in which mediation has been successful;

(v) introduction of ‘mystery shopping’ concept where volunteers (community and independent evaluators) will test our compliance with the policing pledge (standards of service);

(vi) conduct interview and/or Focus Group Discussion with vulnerable groups; and

(vii) conduct police confidence surveys with the assistance of an external agency such as the Mauritius Research Council.

7. CONCLUSION

One of the fundamental aspects of Community Policing is to move towards our valued customers instead of waiting for them to come. This will bring positive engagement that will allow the identification of problems at the early stage and attend to the root cause and subsequently help in designing and delivering services in line with local realities.

However, we must not lose sight of the fact that implementation will take time, and therefore, patience and careful attention at all stages (planning, implementation and feedback) remain absolutely critical to successful outcomes. Supportive leadership, motivation and commitment at all levels are strictly required to move from the initial planning stage to that of implementation, allowing community policing to continue its journey towards building a safer Mauritius.

We will need an organizational culture which is open, flexible and geared towards attaining set goals by constantly receiving inputs and ideas from the community.

We stand at a crossroads where we have to make firm and bold decisions on the changes that need to be brought in the present system. The new policy allows us to adopt a modern approach whereby the actual loopholes can be addressed.

The new model of Community Policing will bring about a paradigm shift where the expected outcome will be a new era of policing geared towards “With you, making Mauritius safer”. We will move gradually but resolutely from traditional policing approach to a service-oriented model.