



Independent research shows the Canberra community has positive views of ACT Policing.

# Canberra community confident in ACT Policing

Independent research commissioned by ACT Policing has shown that the Canberra community has positive views of its police service.

The issue of how well ACT Policing understands its audience and, in turn, Canberra community's understanding of ACT Policing was raised at an executive level in 2010, specifically community expectations in terms of police visibility.

Consequently, Grey International and Colmar Brunton Social Research engaged with more than 1000 Canberrans to find out what they think of their local police service and more importantly – what they expect.

Happily, satisfaction of police was high across the board with 57 per cent of respondents rating police performance as 8 or above (where 10 was the highest score and 1 the lowest).

Blue collar workers were more satisfied with police than white collar, and the most positive

groups were those with lower incomes, and those not working.

All participants mentioned the AFP and ACT Policing as having responsibility for protecting and safeguarding the ACT community.

Importantly, locals understood the role of ACT Policing to be in traffic law enforcement and road safety, crime prevention and local crime such as burglaries, homicides and assaults.

The way the community interacts with its local police service and the way they'd prefer to engage with police were also questioned.

Telephone remains the primary method of contact with ACT Policing in the first instance, but most participants could not recall the police assistance (131 444) phone number, which is of great concern.



Thousands of Canberrans seized the opportunity to take a 'behind the scenes' look at the new Belconnen Police Station.

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**“They do a good job and I have a lot of respect for them,” male, under 20 respondent**

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More than 7 in 10 people who participated in the research didn't know what number to call, and would instead call Triple Zero (000) – something we clearly need to work on.

This wasn't a great concern to the younger audience though, who would

simply 'google' or use their smart phone, or go online to get through to police.

While 64 per cent of people said the level of communication was 'about right', 32 per cent felt there was too little.

More information about police activities via the media (traditional and non-traditional), and online was highlighted as a key need.

While satisfaction with police is high, people expect to see more police at community events, on the road, and through roadside messaging. An increase in foot patrols during the day was also raised.

While not reflected in crime statistics, crime in the ACT was felt to have increased over the past decade or two.

Many believe this is due to a cultural shift and changing social norms and, interestingly, greater access to information about crime in recent times.

## Research objectives

The research was explorative using qualitative analysis (focus groups) and used a quantitative computer aided telephone interview survey of 1200 Canberrans.

The objectives were to:

- understand perceptions towards, and attitudes/opinions about, ACT Policing
- explore the understanding and visual appeal of ACT Policing's look and feel, profiling/positioning and the role of ACT Policing
- identify levels of understanding between the AFP and ACT Policing
- gauge requirements in terms of public/police interface, visibility of policing and future needs/wants
- identify audience segmentation and preferred communication channels, including outreach.