

Pearls in Policing

‘Policing the Future or Future Policing?’

Thirty-two executive police leaders from 24 countries and international organisations discussed challenging questions around the theme ‘Policing the Future or Future Policing?’ from 15 to 17 June 2008.

Inspiration for the setup of the *Pearls in Policing* conference came from the so-called Bilderberg meetings which have been organised at the initiative of the father of the Dutch Queen Beatrix, the late Prince Bernhard, from 1954 onwards. Its characterisations are: small-scale and interactive meetings; participants are speakers, and away from the prying eyes of the media.

This was the second *Pearls in Policing* conference after the success of the first conference which was held in The Hague in June 2007. The Hague, the city of Peace, Justice and Security, hosts numerous international law enforcement and justice organisations and embodies the founding principles that are consistent with the aims and ambitions of this initiative. By providing an informal setting, ‘out of the box’ thinking could be stimulated in the pursuit of finding innovative answers to the challenging issues facing the international law enforcement effort. The idea for bringing together such an international think tank was developed by a strong cooperative framework of representatives from the Police Academy of The Netherlands, the Netherlands Police Agency (KLPD), the Royal Netherlands Marechaussee and the Ministries of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, and Justice. Valuable support and advice was given by Chief executives from Europol, Eurojust, the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and the International Criminal Court (ICC).

International Pearl Fishers Action Learning Group

The conference was informed by the work of the International Pearl Fishers Action Learning Group (IALG), who challenged the participants with a set of four possible scenarios that may confront police executives in the year 2020. The Pearl Fishers, 10 senior police executives from 8 countries worked both virtually as well as in person together in meetings held in Canberra (Australia), Ottawa (Canada), The Hague (The Netherlands) and Brussels (Belgium), over an eight month period to develop the use of Scenario Thinking as a tool for strategic foresight in a law enforcement context.

Australian Federal Police Commissioner Mick Keelty, as chair of the Scenario Working group developed at the 2007 Conference, tasked the Pearl Fishers to consider the question: *Moving towards 2020 what must the focus of police leaders be in order to address the globalisation of crime, while preserving public safety at local level?*”

The Pearl Fishers presented four compelling views of society in 2020 based upon an axis of an inclusive or exclusive society and a regulated or deregulated use of technology. The scenarios range from a world with a tolerant and accepting society, where technology is tightly controlled, known as ‘The Symphony,’ to one where police are confronted by a society characterised by social and economical disadvantage and highly unregulated use of technology. This world in particular confronted all police executives, and became known as ‘The Jungle.’ Other possible futures included a highly exclusive society with regulated technology, known as ‘Big Brother,’ and a society characterised by unregulated use of technology, but a very inclusive society. This world was affectionately known as ‘Utopia.com’.

Academic conference

The *Pearls in Policing* conference was again supported by an Academic conference, who met on 13 and 14 June. The group of approximately 20 international academics as well as practitioners, supported by the Police Academy of the Netherlands, agreed with the basic challenge of understanding the implications of the globalisation of crime while maintaining a commitment to local safety. The UK Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA) showed the added value of integrating scenario planning with concept mapping. The importance of technology was underlined but the group also warned for too much focus on high technology. Simple innovations can change everything as Professor Stone, from Harvard University USA, mentioned in his contribution. Like barbed wire changed society radically in the 19th century, we now have to look for new 'hot products' that are being developed by the business community.

In the end the academics recommended four concrete issues for the police executives to focus upon:

- The changing concept of identity; no privacy versus no certainty
- Professionalism; a new generation of the work force
- The focus on hot key products
- Alignment; operations, knowledge and politics

Pearls in Policing

The *Pearls in Policing* conference comprised three days of intensive discussion and exchange of views, most in small sized focus groups. Informed by the contributions of the IALG Scenarios, and the Academic conference deliberations, the participants considered a number of issues raised in the discussion paper 'Policing the Future or Future Policing'. Are you prepared? was the challenging question that was addressed to the participants when starting the meeting. To know the unknown (environment and context) can help to bring the organisation to the future by taking better decisions today. Most of the discussion then focused on:

- the dynamic of what the construct of the police could be
- the proofing of police professionalism
- further exploring opportunity thinking.

Feedback was provided by the Commissioner of the Hong Kong Police Force, Tang King-Shing who focused on the new customer of the police, the 'netizen' instead of citizen. 'Netizens', the citizens on the Net, are less traceable than in the real world and have a challenging ability to inform each other, organise and develop societal power. The Belgian Chief Constable Dirk van Nuffel from Knokke-Heist gave his insights on the new and complex security architecture and the possibilities for public-private cooperation and asked the question whether the police was able to keep on 'policing by consent' in a constantly changing, fluid society. The Deputy Commissioner of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, William Sweeney, emphasised the need for improvisation within our strategic planning regime and focused on the need to find common strategies in a world with increasing tensions and gaps in moral values. Dominique Lapprand, Secretary General of the strategic research centre (CPGN) of the French Gendarmerie pointed at the challenge the police is facing in finding a balance between national security-orientated policing and local policing.

The participants also heard from three working groups established after the 2007 *Pearls in Policing* conference.

Commissioner Evelyn Letoane of the Lesotho Mounted Police presented the conclusions of her research into international norms and values as they have been laid down in regional and international policing. She listed many topics, including accountability, social responsibility and integrity as items that must be understood as 'the coat of moral values' police officers have to

wear. The importance of continuing focus and attention on establishing norms and values for global policing was later also emphasised by the Royal Patron of *Pearls in Policing* Professor dr. Pieter van Vollenhoven during his presentation in his home surroundings of Palace 't Loo.

Director Melvin Yong, on behalf of Commissioner Khoo of the Singapore Police Force, reminded the participants of the importance of foresight, agility and resilience in police leadership in his report back to the group on his working groups deliberations. People are our most valued asset, he stated. Besides the hardware, the police need 'heartware'. The participants then further explored the notions of police leadership and global values in the context of the 2020 scenarios.

Professor Cyrille Fijnaut presented an extensive research document on the trade in small arms and light weapons and officially handed the report over to Prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo of the International Criminal Court. The conclusion was drawn that it is shocking to realise how marginal the role of the police is in combating this so far reaching phenomenon.

Participants considered the question of how we prepare for the future and heard from Frontex Executive Director Ilkka Laitinen, FBI Assistant Director John Miller and Sheriff Lee Baca of the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department on how each of their agencies are adapting to the changes likely to be confronted in the future. Public trust in policing was the key issue and moving from what is generally known as a closed system to an inclusive and open system is therefore necessary. What we need for the future is value driven policing.

The theme of the conference was underscored when Professor Bruggeman (Benelux University Centre) presented his findings of the 'mirror exercise' where he contrasted the strategic plans of a number of international agencies with the future environments presented in the Pearl Fishers scenarios. Professor Bruggeman concluded that while police agencies do not change much, policing is evolving. The gaps identified between the vision of the future and current police planning, described as a typically Dutch cheese with almost more holes in it than cheese, was taken on board by participants as a critical thread running through the conference.

In addition, Professor Vander Beken (Ghent University, Belgium) and Professor Ramirez (Oxford University, United Kingdom) made the group realise how useful and relevant the use of scenario thinking is as a strategic tool for preparing for the future. Professor Ramirez provided the participants with practical ways to convert scenario thinking from "product to process as enablers of strategic intelligence and early warning".

The way forward

The conference produced a number of outcomes that will shape the next 12 months of the *Pearls in Policing* initiative, as well as define the theme of the 2009 Conference. The Hong Kong Police Force will lead a working group to consider the impacts of Identity, focussing on crime, privacy and philosophy. The working group will consider the gap between your identity and who you are. The co-drivers are Australia, Belgium and the Netherlands.

The Bundeskriminalamt (BKA) in Germany will lead a group on International Cooperation looking at the gap between international offer and operational demand. The group will map the existence of all international law enforcement agencies, both government and non government, and contrast their roles, expertise and international outreach. The co-drivers are Australia, Spain and the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department.

A final working group will be led by the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department in the USA and will explore the Rebranding of Police, the gap in the relationship between values and leadership at the one hand, and demand for police services and perception on the other hand. The co-drivers are the FBI, DEA (USA) and The Netherlands.

In addition to the three working groups, the participants agreed to support the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, Luis Moreno-Ocampo to take forward a proposal to improve the relationship between the ICC and international law enforcement agencies. A small group of law enforcement experts will report back to the *Pearls in Policing* conference, under the leadership of the ICC in 2009 on:

- a. an investigation plan to their agency and the ICC relating to the present investigations of the ICC and in relation to arms dealing in particular, and
- b. identify other ways in which the national law enforcement agencies and the ICC could contribute to each others strategic objectives

Finally, the working groups, and the additional efforts of the ICC, will combine with another group of Pearl Fishers to set the direction and pose questions for the 2009 *Pearls in Policing* conference, under the theme of 'Bridging the Gap'.

Pearl Fishers from around the world will, starting in November 2009 in Canada, once again form an International Action Learning Group to consider a challenging theme through, amongst others, the lens of scenario thinking. The assignment for the new Pearl Fishers defined during the conference is to explore the landscape of future public policing, taking into consideration the 2020 scenarios presented by the previous Pearl Fishers. They are advised to take into consideration: public or private policing, police leadership, values, generational change, future police workforces, impact of 'wildcard' events and police planning processes. The following countries and organisations agreed to consider sending candidates for the next IALG: Belgium, Bundeskriminalamt (Germany), Drug Enforcement Administration (USA), France, Ireland, the Netherlands, New Zealand, the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department (USA), Singapore and Spain.

In the end it was realised that whilst a powerful strategic tool, scenarios are only one option available to police leaders in order to prepare their agencies for the future. The challenge as presented by Professor Ramirez was how to ensure that we were 'futurising the police' not simply 'future proofing'. The gap identified between where police agencies are now, and where we need to be, will provide the momentum for the coming twelve months.

The years to come

Between 14 and 17 June 2009, the third *Pearls in Policing* conference will once again be held in The Hague, the Netherlands. The theme of 'Bridging the Gap' will help participants to ask themselves the question of how prepared their agency is, both nationally and internationally, for the future. What must they do together on a global scale in order to be prepared?

Finally, the offer by the Australian Federal Police (AFP) to host the *Pearls in Policing 2010* conference for the first time outside The Hague was warmly received and very much welcomed.

More information

Secretariat 'Pearls in Policing'
Nassauplein 33
2585 ED Den Haag
The Netherlands
Tel. + 31 (0)70 311 8663
Fax + 31 (0)70 311 8687
E-mail: pearls.in.policing@politieacademie.nl
Website : www.spl.politieacademie.nl