

AUTHORS

Janine Rauch has degrees in criminology from the University of Cape Town and Cambridge University in England. She has published extensively on police reform and crime prevention in South Africa. In the early 1990s she worked at the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSV) in Johannesburg, facilitating dialogues between the police and communities and researching police training methods. After the first democratic election in 1994, she became an advisor to the Minister of Safety and Security. In 1996 Janine was appointed Chief Director of Policy in the Department for Safety and Security where one of her tasks was to co-ordinate the development of the country's National Crime Prevention Strategy. Janine left the public service in 1997 to work as a senior consultant at the CSV and later as an independent consultant, advising government and donor agencies on crime reduction strategies.

Bill Dixon is a lecturer in the Department of Criminology at Keele University in the United Kingdom. In the early 1990s, he did research on the introduction of sector policing in north London. Since then he has worked on a similar project looking at the use of problem-solving techniques to reduce the demand for police services from 'hotspot' locations. Between 1999 and 2001 he was a researcher and lecturer at the Institute of Criminology and the Department of Criminal Justice at the University of Cape Town and had published on a variety of subjects from sentencing reform to police accountability. He is also the joint editor of *Justice Gained?*, a collection of essays on crime and crime control in South Africa to be published by Juta & Co in early 2004.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A National Instruction on sector policing will shortly be issued by South African Police Service National Commissioner, Jackie Selebi. This monograph examines the new sector policing policy for South Africa and reflects on the experience of sector policing in London. The Final Draft of the South African Police Service's National Instruction on Sector Policing (2003) makes the connection between sector policing and the philosophy of community policing very clear—sector policing is described as a “practical manifestation” of community policing. Key elements of sector policing are its local geographic focus, problem-solving methodologies and community consultation.

The idea of sector policing was imported to South Africa from abroad, probably at about the time the democratic transition took place, and undoubtedly as a result of a South African police officer taking a donor-funded trip abroad. The 1998 White Paper on Safety and Security contains the first reference in an official policy document to the concept of sector policing, defining it as a style of policing which:

entails the division of areas into smaller managerial sectors and the assignment of police officers to these areas on a full time basis. These police officers regularly patrol their own sector and are able to identify problems and seek appropriate solutions. Sector policing encourages constant contact with members of local communities.

In its gestation phase in South Africa, between 1998 and 2003, the notion of ‘sector policing’ was interpreted and used to suit a variety of different policy purposes, much as the term ‘community policing’ had been during the preceding decade. The concept of sector policing survived the internal dynamic between community-based, social crime prevention and the highly visible search-and-seizure type policing characterised by Operation Crackdown. In the process, however, sector policing lost much of its meaning. It has become associated with a diverse set of policing goals, from increased community involvement to reduced response time to emergency calls. Sector policing is also often referred to in relation to improved service delivery and to mod-

ernisation and acceptance of the South African Police Service (SAPS) in the globalising world.

Implementation of the sector policing instruction will see each SAPS station dividing its geographic area into smaller sectors, and dedicating staff to work intensively in those sectors. The “sector managers” will be required to build sector-based community consultation groups and to regularly conduct community profiling exercises in their sectors. In South Africa, because of personnel constraints in the SAPS, sector policing will rely heavily on Police Reservists (members of the public who do voluntary duty to assist the police), who may be specifically dedicated to sector policing duties, in both rural and urban areas. This is a reflection of the fact that in its design, the sector policing policy also had to take into account some specifically rural challenges.

Sector policing was implemented in London in the early 1990s, and the monograph uses a case study of sector policing in Holloway (an area of North London) conducted between 1991 and 1993 to identify useful lessons for South Africa. The United Kingdom (UK) research found that sector policing had ceased to exist in London within a decade of its implementation. The death knell was the introduction of another policing model—borough policing—in 1999, but many problems with sector policing had already been evident prior to that time. Key lessons for South Africa include:

- difficulties in establishing sectors, defining communities, and ensuring representivity in community consultations;
- sector policing was unpopular inside the police organisation because it challenged some of the core beliefs, values and practices in the ‘occupational culture’ of operational police officials;
- insufficient resources and inadequate communication from the top of the police organisation made it unlikely that sector policing would succeed;
- government’s target-setting approaches (both before and after the new Labour government came to power in 1997) attempted to generate better arrest figures and rapid response data. Police resources became increasingly focused on dealing with the traditional priorities of crime fighting and incident response, rather than on the key aspects of community policing or sector policing, which were seen as ‘soft’ and difficult to measure.

Research into the impact of sector policing elsewhere in Britain (outside London) also found that there was no consistent evidence of changes in police practice as a result of sector-based problem-oriented policing; and that the introduction of the new style of policing did not have a marked impact on public perceptions of the police. The London experience raises a number of questions for sector policing in South Africa:

- How can sector boundaries be drawn in a way that balances the requirements of organisational and administrative efficiency, representivity and the need to foster closer links between the police, other key roleplayers and the public at local level?
- Under what conditions will sector crime forums be able to act both as a broadly representative forum for the expression of public concerns about crime and a mechanism for co-ordinating the response to those concerns across a range of agencies?
- How can the police provide information about local crime and safety problems to sector crime forums in a comprehensive yet comprehensible and useable form? How can agreement be reached on the priority crime and safety problems in a given area, instead of relying on the police's definition of the 'real' problems?
- What can be done to influence the internal organisational culture of the SAPS positively towards sector policing? How can SAPS reward structures and performance measures be adjusted to reflect the goals of sector policing, and to valuing collaborative problem-solving work at least as highly as more traditional short term and arrest-focused approaches to policing?
- How can supervision, discipline and accountability be maintained when police officials are delegated to work more independently at sector level? How can control be maintained when the sector policing model rests on such a high degree of reservist (volunteer) participation?

How these questions and others like them are answered in practice will determine whether sector policing will work under South African conditions.

GLOSSARY

CAMPS	Consultation, Adaptation, Mobilisation, Problem-solving
CODESA	Convention for a Democratic South Africa
CPF	Community Police Forum
DIIU	Divisional Information and Intelligence Unit (Metropolitan police, London)
HSCP	Highbury Sector Crime Panel
NCPS	National Crime Prevention Strategy
NP	Neighbourhood policing
PCCG	Police-community consultative groups
POP	Problem-oriented policing
SAPS	South African Police Service
SARA	Scanning, analysis, response and assessment
SCF	Sector Crime Forum
SP	Sector policing
SWG	Sector working group
TGP	Total geographic policing
TP	Team policing
UBP	Unit Beat Policing

CHAPTER 1

THE ORIGINS OF SECTOR POLICING

A National Instruction on sector policing will shortly be issued by SAPS National Commissioner Jackie Selebi. This monograph will examine the new sector policing policy for South Africa and reflect on the experience of sector policing in London (UK). In doing so, consideration will be given to some issues related to ‘policy transfer’¹—the process in which knowledge about policies, administrative arrangements, institutions, etc, in one time and/or place is used in the development of policies, administrative arrangements and institutions in another time and/or place²—as there is explicit acknowledgement that the concept of sector policing being used in South Africa was drawn from those used in the United Kingdom and elsewhere in the developed world.

The Final Draft of the South African Police Service (SAPS) National Instruction on Sector Policing (2003) makes the connection between sector policing and the philosophy of community policing very clear—sector policing is described as a “practical manifestation” of community policing.³ By contrast, the authors of the London Metropolitan Police guidance note on sector policing avoided linking it with community policing quite as explicitly as the SAPS have, although the then-Commissioner, Sir Peter Imbert, did go so far as to describe it as a community-based style of policing.⁴ The aim of this section is to trace the origins of sector policing back from its adoption in London in the early 1990s, by looking at where its key elements—geographical responsibility, community consultation, problem-solving and the more efficient use of resources—came from. But first, we need to explore—albeit briefly—this connection between sector and community policing.

As the books, articles, and manuals about it pile up, and the number of police organisations who claim to do it grows, precisely what ‘community policing’ is becomes both less clear and more controversial. One British critic memorably described it as a “brand name” that, like *SPAR*, “gives a common identity to a diverse range of independent concerns”.⁵ Writing at about the same time, the American editors of a volume of essays on the subject make the same point, observing that it “means many things to many

people”.⁶ To some, the lack of any “suffocating orthodoxy” is a welcome stimulus to innovation and creativity.⁷ To others, the lack of theorising about community policing is both a puzzle and a challenge.⁸ Opinions have also diverged about whether it represents a new philosophy and/or an organisational strategy for contemporary police.⁹ Even more confusing—and politically convenient—is its ability to be used by ‘spin doctors’ to appeal to both liberals and conservatives alike, allowing everything from aggressive order maintenance tactics, to their polar opposite to be presented as forms of community policing.¹⁰

Arriving at a meaningful and relatively uncontentious definition of community policing, or specification of the policing practices it entails, is no simple matter. One popular device is to contrast community policing with whatever it is intended to replace.¹¹ Another is to state the philosophy of community policing in the form of a series of declarations or principles.¹² But for our purposes, perhaps the most useful approach is to look at the programmes, projects and tactics advocated or undertaken in its name. The most ambitious of the many researchers to have attempted to do this is David Bayley, who uses data collected in five countries to identify four essential elements.¹³ Tagged with the acronym CAMPS, these distinctive features of community policing around the world are:

- *consultation* with communities about their security needs and the police assistance required to meet them;
- *adaptation* of organisational structures to allow local operational commanders greater decision-making powers;
- *mobilisation* of public and private non-police agencies and individuals;
- *problem-solving* to ameliorate conditions generating crime and insecurity.

Critics—including Bayley himself—have questioned whether the Anglo-American model of community policing captured in the CAMPS formula either has been, can, or should be, exported to countries with very different histories, legal cultures and policing traditions.¹⁴ Yet these four elements are as central to the models of sector policing adopted by London’s Metropolitan Police in the early 1990s, and the SAPS ten years later, as they were to the community policing programmes studied by Bayley in the 1980s. Whatever the framers of the respective policies may choose to say, or leave unsaid,

sector policing stands squarely within the broad tradition of community policing and it is to this tradition that we must turn in search of its origins.

Community policing in Britain

In Britain at least, the words ‘community policing’ are widely associated with the career and writings of a now long-retired chief police officer named John Alderson. Alderson’s conception of what he called “democratic communal policing” was extremely ambitious.¹⁵ He argued that police officials should assume the moral leadership of their communities, influencing behaviour from illegality towards legality. He called for greater co-operation between the police and other public sector agencies, for less reliance on the use of criminal justice as a solution to problems of crime and insecurity, and for the creation of “villages in the city” policed by trusted and familiar local officials.

When many British cities were affected by rioting in the early 1980s, an inquiry into the disorders in the Brixton area of south London in April 1981 led by Lord Scarman took up many of Alderson’s ideas as the way forward for policing “with the active consent and support of the community”.¹⁶ Stressing the need to avoid an oppressive presence of large numbers of police unknown to the community, in socially deprived areas such as Brixton, Scarman advocated a style of policing “based on small beats regularly patrolled by officers normally operating on foot”.¹⁷

Influential though John Alderson’s evidence to the Scarman inquiry undoubtedly was, his ideas did not go unchallenged and ‘community policing’ (usually complete with inverted commas) was condemned as everything from a ‘romantic delusion’ to a thinly veiled attempt to legitimise the coercive power of a racist and increasingly authoritarian state.¹⁸ Early reviews of community policing programmes in operation were not favourable either. After studying patrol initiatives in five police forces, one researcher concluded that the more rigorously schemes were evaluated, the less evidence of successful implementation there appeared to be.¹⁹ However, none of this prevented a broad community-oriented approach to policing, derived from the ideas of John Alderson, from becoming the dominant philosophy of the highest ranks of the police service in England and Wales within less than a decade of the publication of Lord Scarman’s report.²⁰ For London’s Metropolitan Police to introduce a community-based style of policing such as sector policing in the early 1990s was therefore entirely consistent with the spirit of the times.

Community policing, crime prevention and sector policing in South Africa

It is worth remembering that the first concept document on sector policing for the SAPS was developed in early 1998, and that the current National Instruction has been five years in the making. The current document is remarkably similar to its original incarnation, which may be one of the reasons for the unusual emphasis on 'crime prevention' in the South African sector policing policy document. In 1996, the government adopted a National Crime Prevention Strategy (NCPS) as one part of its response to increasing public concern over crime. The NCPS motivated a shift in emphasis from crime control to crime prevention; that is, a shift towards understanding crime as a social issue requiring a wide array of preventive measures instead of the traditional criminal justice responses. Importantly for the SAPS, it emphasised that crime prevention could not be the sole responsibility of the police, and laid out a framework for interdepartmental collaboration within government, as well as crime prevention partnerships with non-government actors and local communities.

Although subsequently hampered by inadequate resources, a reputation for being 'soft', and by only partial implementation, the NCPS has had a significant effect on policy thinking within the SAPS over the past five years.²¹ However, in late 1997 and early 1998, during the period in which the sector policing concept document was being developed, there was still some early optimism about longer term, multi-agency problem-solving approaches to crime prevention.

Following the NCPS, the 1998 White Paper on Safety and Security advocated targeted, multi-agency crime prevention strategies which would focus on offenders, victims and the environments in which they live, as well as a focus on the root causes of specific types of crimes. This approach was characterized as 'social' crime prevention. Long term, socio-economic and preventive approaches took something of a beating around the time of the second democratic election in 1999, and the police's 'Crackdown' approach dominated government thinking about crime after the new Cabinet was appointed. As will be seen in Chapter 3, sector policing has been associated with both the 'tough' and 'soft' approaches to crime reduction in South Africa. This is perhaps one of the reasons why it has survived five years of debate and is finally being adopted as official policy in the SAPS.

The continuity of the discourses of 'democratic policing', 'community policing' and 'crime prevention' evident in the sector policing policy document may be a

result of the continuity of SAPS personnel involved in all these policy efforts in the decade since community policing was first introduced in South Africa. The senior personnel involved in promoting sector policing at national level (SAPS head office) were all previously involved in community policing initiatives—some as far back as the early 1990s in the former South African Police. While their commitment is admirable, this monograph will later question whether their well-meant policy initiative will survive and succeed.

CHAPTER 2

ELEMENTS OF SECTOR POLICING

If the community orientation of sector policing in Britain reflected the dominant philosophy of policing current at the time, its key elements were based on a decade and more of innovation in policing both in Britain and across the Atlantic in North America. The origins of four of these elements will be considered, beginning with the most immediately distinctive feature of sector policing—the idea that identified teams of officials should be responsible for relatively small, clearly demarcated, geographical areas.

Geographical responsibility

The often-idealised image of the police officer patrolling a patch of ground which he or she knows well (and where he or she is well known to local people) encapsulated in the mystical figure of the ‘bobby on the beat’ dates back far into the history of policing in Britain. But it was not until the 1960s, and the introduction of ‘unit beat policing’ (UBP), that it was first acknowledged as desirable that small teams of officers should take responsibility for meeting as many of the needs of a particular area as possible. Research found that, in practice, the multi-functional teams of detectives, patrol and beat officers seldom worked effectively as teams, and UBPs reliance on motorised patrolling was later blamed for distancing the police from the public and encouraging elitist attitudes and behaviour.²²

Another policing initiative based on geographical responsibility took place in the United States after riots affected several cities in the 1960s. Known as team policing (TP), the initiative was intended to achieve “geographic stability” in patrol coverage by assigning teams of officers to small neighbourhoods on a permanent basis.²³ It was also designed to promote communication between team members and the people they served in order to promote co-operative peacekeeping and the identification of local problems. As with UBP, the team policing experiment was not entirely successful. Middle managers resented losing control of team members to more junior officers, patrol styles proved difficult to change, and positive relationships with the public hard to

build and maintain across areas that remained too large for officers to develop the necessary local knowledge. In several cities, team policing was scarcely implemented at all.

Further patrol experiments in Britain in the early 1980s also yielded mixed results.²⁴ The most influential and thoroughly evaluated of these was the programme of neighbourhood policing (NP) implemented in parts of London and the nearby county of Surrey.²⁵ The programme elements of neighbourhood policing are remarkably similar to those of sector policing and included the assignment of geographical responsibility to teams of officers, the alignment of duty rosters with the demand for police services, community consultation and improved operational information systems.

But yet again, both internal and external evaluations of NP made disappointing reading. Geographical responsibility was implemented only in certain places and did not lead to improved levels of interaction with the public beyond the membership of a small minority of well organised community groups already favourably disposed towards the police. ‘Shop-floor’ feeling was that many more officers were needed than were currently available if neighbourhood-based teams were to be sufficiently robust to deal with all the needs of their areas without compromising their own safety. Changing rosters to ensure that more officers were on duty at peak times such as weekend evenings was unpopular and fiercely resisted.

Discouraging though these findings were, both the police forces involved in the neighbourhood policing experiment—London’s Metropolitan Police and the Surrey Constabulary—remained confident that some form of geographically responsible policing was the way ahead. Having successfully established neighbourhood-based police teams in two areas of the county, Surrey Constabulary extended what became known as total geographic policing or TGP across the force in September 1989. In London, between 1987 when neighbourhood policing was wound down, and 1991 when sector policing was introduced, the use of small teams to take responsibility for specific areas was limited to large public housing schemes where crime rates tended to be high and relations between police and public poor. In 1988, only 200 officers (less than 1% of the force’s total strength) were deployed on these ‘estates policing’ (EP) teams.²⁶ However, three years later, the Commissioner reported that they had achieved both significant reductions in crime and notable improvements in residents’ quality of life. The principles of estates policing would therefore form a vital ingredient in a new style of sector policing.

While these more ambitious experiments in geographically responsible policing were taking place, a rather different breed of neighbourhood officer, much closer to the ideal of the ‘bobby on the beat’, was also hard at work in forces across the country. Known generically as ‘community constables’ (but also as home, permanent, resident or area beat officers), and charged with getting to know their beats and building close relationships with local people, their areas of responsibility tended to be smaller than those allocated to teams of officers. But even with this degree of geographical responsibility, research studies found that many community constables lacked a sense of purpose in their work, limited their contacts to ‘respectable’, police-friendly people and had little sense of local values, problems or priorities.²⁷

To sum up, the research available prior to the introduction of sector policing in London in the early 1990s suggested that although the assignment of some form of geographical responsibility might be a *necessary* condition for increased interaction between police and public, it was not necessarily *sufficient* to ensure that more (and better) contacts actually took place. Even when one or two police officers were permanently deployed on quite small geographical areas, they tended neither to spend enough time on those areas, nor devote sufficient attention to interacting with all sections of the local population, to absorb complex communal values and become attuned to (perhaps conflicting) local priorities.

Problem-solving

Geographic responsibility is closely linked to another element of sector policing—the early identification and solution of local problems. The discussion above shows how geographical responsibility alone may not ensure that the police can identify local problems clearly. But where does the vision of police work as problem-solving come from?

This question is refreshingly easy to answer since problem-solving or, to be more accurate, ‘problem-oriented policing’, is so closely identified with the work of one man, the American police scholar, Herman Goldstein.²⁸ Goldstein argues that instead of seeing ‘crimefighting’ or ‘order maintenance’ as the goal of policing, and law enforcement as the means of achieving them, the main units of police business consist of a wider range of substantive community problems that manifest themselves in clusters of “similar, related or recurring incidents”. According to Goldstein, the job of the police is to identify and analyse these problems with a view to developing and evaluating “tailor-made” solutions.²⁹

As Goldstein conceived it, problem-oriented policing (widely known by the acronym POP) represents a radical departure from conventional thinking about what policing is all about, how police departments are organised, and how they work. For Goldstein, POP is not simply a goal or technique of community policing. Strictly interpreted, community policing sets out to address a general problem of poor police-community relations; and although the community and the police must tackle substantive problems, problem-solving itself is no more than a means of bringing police and public closer together. With POP however, the position is reversed: resolving local problems is the overall objective and working with the community only one way of achieving it.

Experience of POP before the introduction of sector policing in London had been distinctly limited. Probably the most famous trial of Goldstein's ideas took place in Newport News, Virginia, in the United States and gave rise to the four stage SARA (scanning, analysis, response and assessment) approach to the process of problem-solving.³⁰ On fairly limited evidence, the Newport News initiative was judged a success and several other police departments across the US took up the idea of POP with enthusiasm.

Early attempts to implement POP in Britain produced ambiguous results with one study of an attempt to make community constables more 'problem-focused' in their work coming to the gloomy conclusion that "time and again...the existing structure [of the police organisation] dictated the response to the problem, not what was known (or knowable) about the problem".³¹ Rather than "looking to the community to define the problems that should be of concern to the police" as Goldstein urged, "scanning" for problems has generally been done by police officers using their own knowledge and experience, or by studying management information on reported crime and/or calls for service:³²

In the absence of citizen input, police identification of 'problems' leans to police crime-fighter preferences, traditionally targeting out-of-favour groups. Even when citizen participation occurs, the problem identification process is biased towards the organized, articulate segments of the community.³³

Community consultation

The origins of the third key element in sector policing—community consultation—are also fairly easy to trace. They lie in a patchwork of informal community-police liaison committees that existed across London in the 1970s. The most

famous of these covered the Brixton area of south London, and Lord Scarman lamented its collapse in his report on the riots that took place in the area in 1981. His response was to recommend that the existing voluntary arrangements should be replaced by formal consultative machinery backed with the force of statute law. This recommendation was accepted by the Thatcher government, and Section 106(1) of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act of 1984 eventually required that arrangements should be made in every police area for “obtaining the views of people in that area about matters concerning the policing of the area and for obtaining their co-operation with the police in preventing crime”.³⁴

In London, the duty to make these arrangements was imposed on the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, and each of the 32 boroughs into which the city was divided was expected to establish a police-community consultative group. Establishing these groups proved both difficult and politically controversial at a time when several local authorities across London controlled by the opposition Labour Party were locked in a bitter dispute with Mrs Thatcher’s Conservative government about the accountability of the Metropolitan Police.³⁵

By the early 1990s however, formal arrangements for police consultation with communities were in place across more or less the whole of England and Wales. A South African Police Board delegation³⁶ visited London in late 1993 as guests of the British government to study, *inter alia*, the British model for police-community consultation. The London model was subsequently used as a template for establishing community police forums in South Africa. A senior Metropolitan Police officer on secondment to South Africa (as part of donor assistance to the National Peace Accord) passed on documents concerning police-community consultative groups (PCCGs) in London to the negotiators on police reform at CODESA. As a direct result of this input, Community Police Forums were included in South Africa’s Interim Constitution which came into effect in April 1994.

However, by the early 1990s a substantial amount of research had been undertaken on the new bodies (mainly, it has to be said, outside London) suggesting that their influence on police policy and practice had been at most, minimal, and at worst, non-existent.³⁷

Government guidance had indicated that they ought to be “as representative as possible of the community”.³⁸ Yet an internal review later found that most consultative groups were dominated by “people well used to committees: professional and middle-class white people, most of whom are in the 40-plus age

range”.³⁹ A study undertaken for the police staff associations found that any correspondence between the views of consultative group members and the people they were supposed to represent was purely coincidental. The leading researcher in the field concluded that they operated in the administrative “stratosphere” far removed from the very localised problems that concern most ordinary citizens.⁴⁰ And this in turn was reflected in what the same researcher has graphically described as the “dog shit syndrome”.⁴¹ Restricted by members’ very limited knowledge and experience of crime, most consultative groups were absorbed with routine complaints about quality-of-life issues such as litter, parking, and dog-fouled pavements that the better-informed police officers involved in consultation found difficult to take seriously.⁴²

In short, the model of community consultation adopted in the guidance for sector policing in London (and in the design of South Africa’s community police forums) had, by 1992, already proved less than successful as a means of identifying local problems and mobilising public support for police efforts to resolve them. What remained to be seen was whether similar mechanisms operating closer to the ground at ‘sector’ level would be any more effective.

Managerialism and consumerism

The fourth and last of the core elements of sector policing was both a theme informing its implementation, and a distinctive way of managing the police. It had two aspects:

- The first aspect was a series of managerial reforms or (to use the terms of the CAMPS formula mentioned earlier) adaptations of the organisation of policing. These included the devolution of authority for operational decision making down to sector level wherever possible, and making the most efficient use of resources by matching the availability of police personnel to periods of peak demand for police services such as weekend evenings.
- The second and less immediately obvious aspect of the changes, was the promotion of the idea that citizens ought to be seen as consumers of policing to whom a suitably high quality service should be provided.

The roots of this ‘new managerialism’ in public services can be found—at least in Britain—in recurring public expenditure crises, the free market ideology of successive Conservative governments in the 1980s and—in the case of the

police—in growing evidence that increased spending did not necessarily lead to lower levels of recorded crime.⁴³ The need for much stricter financial discipline was first impressed on the police in a landmark circular from the government department responsible for the service in 1983.⁴⁴ This circular ushered in a period punctuated by ‘value for money’ initiatives, to which the police responded with increasing reluctance.

When John Major succeeded Margaret Thatcher as Prime Minister, he sought to put a more positive political gloss on his predecessor’s concerns by stressing the need for ‘consumers’ to be provided with high quality public services. By the time this second wave of consumer-friendly managerialism was launched with the publication of a *Citizen’s Charter*, the police were already moving to ensure that, as one influential senior officer put it, “Consumerism, public expectation, and ultimately public satisfaction, rather than the cost effectiveness of the 80s, will be the watchwords of the 90s.”⁴⁵ With its emphasis on identifying and satisfying the needs of the consumer, as well as adopting a more rational and efficient approach to meeting the demand for police services, sector policing was very much in tune with current thinking, both in the police and across the public services more generally.

Indeed, the inspiration for a new style of policing that could be at once “consistent” across London yet “flexible enough to take account of local needs”⁴⁶ seems to have sprung directly from a distinctly managerial source—a report prepared for the Metropolitan Police by a firm of corporate identity consultants, Wolff Olins.⁴⁷ In response to this report, the then Commissioner, Sir Peter Imbert, established a change programme known as PLUS and committed his organisation to “an accepted...style of policing which can be adjusted to local conditions, making the best use of the people and time available”.⁴⁸ The task of translating this commitment into a new style of policing became component four of the PLUS programme and a team entrusted with re-examining the deployment of front line police officers eventually reported towards the end of 1990.

The principles of the new policing style that was to become sector policing were approved by senior managers in November of that year. Although work continued on the details for some time thereafter, the Commissioner clearly signalled that the traditional pattern of deployment was about to end. Instead of similar numbers of operational officers policing a whole command unit (or division) over three eight hour shifts irrespective of predictable fluctuations in workload, dedicated teams of officers would be given round-the-clock responsibility for smaller areas (or sectors). Managers would be freed to match the availability of staff more closely with the demand for their services.⁴⁹

CHAPTER 3

SECTOR POLICING POLICY IN SOUTH AFRICA

The origins of sector policing in South Africa

When one of the authors did some preliminary research on sector policing in South Africa in 2000, he was unable to establish how the SAPS first came across the British model, as none of the police officials he interviewed were familiar with the guidance notes issued by the London Metropolitan Police. One version of the origin of the sector policing concept in South Africa is that it was picked up by a senior SAP officer who attended a conference of US police agencies in 1993 or 1994 (possibly even prior to the creation of the SAPS). Another version has it that a senior SAP officer was attending a training course in Britain in 1994 where he had the opportunity to examine sector policing practices (and documents) in London.

In either version, there is explicit acknowledgement that the idea of sector policing was imported from abroad, probably at about the time the democratic transition took place; and undoubtedly as a result of a donor-funded trip abroad. This would explain how there came to be a passing reference to sector policing in the government's 1996 National Crime Prevention Strategy. In the NCPS, sector policing was cited as a possible tactic for reducing the then-prevalent problem of inter-group conflict—mainly the political violence in KwaZulu-Natal.

The 1998 White Paper on Safety and Security contains the first reference in an official policy document to the concept of sector policing:

Sector policing entails the division of areas into smaller managerial sectors and the assignment of police officers to these areas on a full time basis. These police officers regularly patrol their own sector and are able to identify problems and seek appropriate solutions. Sector policing encourages constant contact with members of local communities. Sector policing should be:

- pro-actively, vigorously and fairly conducted;

- based on clear instructions from police commanders to patrol officers;
- planned on the basis of crime analysis;
- focused on specific problems within any area;
- implemented on the basis of specific time frames;
- developed in collaboration with municipal police services and other relevant roleplayers.⁵⁰

The drafting of this document was co-ordinated by a policy team in the Secretariat for Safety and Security. Extensive interactions took place between the team and international experts and police agencies in key donor countries such as the UK and USA throughout 1997 and early 1998 as the White Paper took shape. It is likely that this collaborative drafting process provided further opportunity for policy transfer of the sector policing concept to South Africa.

The first official guidelines on implementing sector policing appear to have been issued in 1998 as part of the effort to develop sector policing in certain parts of Johannesburg under the auspices of the SAPS' 'Project Johannesburg'. This original SAPS version of sector policing policy emphasised the crime preventive and community partnership aspects of the approach. The 1998 guideline document referred to three sources of ideas on sector policing: British, American, and the 1998 South African White Paper on Safety and Security, and defined sector policing as:

...a method of policing in smaller manageable geographical areas within a police precinct, which involves all roleplayers in identifying particular policing needs in each sector and in addressing the root causes of crime, as well as enabling and contributing factors, in order to ensure effective crime prevention.⁵¹

In its gestation phase in South Africa, between 1998 and 2003, the notion of sector policing was interpreted and used to suit a variety of different policy purposes, much as the term 'community policing' had been during the preceding decade.

In Johannesburg, the first phase required drafting a working document on the concept of sector policing—the first version of the guidelines. These original guidelines emphasised the following features of sector policing:

- [Sector policing's] main aim is the rendering of police services as close as possible to the community.

- It should result in closer and more regular contact between sector police personnel and the community in the sector.
- It should result in pro-active or pre-emptive problem-solving and crime prevention.
- It should ensure effective crime prevention.⁵²

The beginnings of sector policing as part of Programme Johannesburg involved a number of workshops with police managers from the Johannesburg area during March and April 1998. Thereafter, each police station in the area was required to divide their jurisdiction into sectors, and to 'activate' one sector as a pilot project for the station. The intention was that once sector policing in the activated sector had reached a certain standard, other sectors would be activated. However, Programme Johannesburg was terminated and the implementation of the sector policing project did not proceed according to plan. The Secretariat's 1999 evaluation of Programme Johannesburg found that:

- The various internal workshops held in the SAPS in Johannesburg had failed to generate a sense of ownership of the notion of sector policing among the police leadership in the city.
- In some areas, sector policing was seen as synonymous with crime prevention, and particularly with special crime prevention 'operations' (of the cordon and search and roadblock variety). This was in part due to a lack of resources for sector policing, and the reliance on sector policing staff on the local crime prevention divisions for resources and support (especially transport).
- The links between sector policing and community policing (and the CPFs in particular) were unclear in the minds of staff at many of the implementing police stations.
- There was contestation over roles and responsibilities of the SAPS officials involved in sector policing, especially the Sector Managers. Sector Managers were envisaged as full time staff who would be dedicated to 'organisation and mobilisation' envisaged in sector policing, rather than 'physical policing'; but, in reality, played dual or triple roles and, of course, worked shift hours.
- Failure to allocate (promised) dedicated resources was a major stumbling block to the effective implementation of sector policing.⁵³

By mid-2000, the sector policing project in Johannesburg was running at only 21 police stations. There were indications that sector policing had been more readily adopted in (traditionally white) middle-class suburban areas in the north of the city.⁵⁴ However, despite the problems in Johannesburg, the idea of sector policing began to be tried elsewhere in the country. In June 2001, the new Minister of Safety and Security, Charles Nqakula, announced his vision for the future of sector policing:

I want to get quickly to the point where we must introduce effective policing in clearly demarcated sectors. The police who will be displayed in the new crime sectors will be highly visible, highly mobile and pro-active. Those who will be deployed in this manner will be carefully chosen and appropriately resourced. Sector policing, which will pick up on the successes of Operation Crackdown, is also intended to establish close partnerships between the police and communities in order to address crime through a series of multi-disciplinary initiatives.⁵⁵

A few months later, the SAPS announced a plan to implement sector policing in over 100 police station areas. The National Commissioner claimed in his report for the 2001/2 period, that “one of the aims of sector policing is to improve our response time when crimes are in progress”.⁵⁶ Later in the same report, he described “the establishment of partnerships between appointed sector managers and sector communities to strengthen community police forum (CPF) structures” as a “key objective” of the sector policing methodology.⁵⁷

However, despite repeated public statements about the introduction of sector policing, the SAPS policy documents on the approach were taking a long time to finalise. This was perhaps because of internal debate and contestation over the meanings ascribed to sector policing: as will be discussed below, the concept was cited in a variety of different ways by politicians and police leaders throughout its five-year development phase.

By late 2002, plans for implementing sector policing had again been amended, and implementation was being targeted at 50 priority stations (high-crime areas) and 14 presidential stations (areas identified in the government’s rural development and urban renewal strategies, which are the poorest and least-developed areas of the country). This re-selection of sites was in line with the SAPS’ 2002-2005 Strategic Plan, which saw a new emphasis on prioritisation of the high-crime areas and of certain crime problems (such as violent crime and firearm crime).

The five-year plan was broken down into phases: an initial two-year period which would focus on containing the most serious crimes and the worst hit areas (the 2000-2003 'stabilisation phase'), followed by a normalisation approach once the high levels of crime had been somewhat stabilised, and also in areas where the problem of crime was not as severe (the 2003-2005 'normalisation phase'). However, implementation of sector policing continues in some of the other station areas where it had already taken root prior to the 2002 strategic approach.

By late 2003, the Sector Policing Guidelines had been rewritten a couple of times and emerged in final draft form as a 'Draft National Instruction', to be issued by the National Commissioner in terms of the SAPS Act.

The Final Draft National Instruction

The final draft of the 2003 National Instruction on Sector Policing is a 20 page document,⁵⁸ and an integrated and abbreviated version of earlier draft National Instructions and the various guideline documents. The current SAPS documents lay out a step-by-step approach to implementing sector policing:

- Demarcate the geographic sectors within the local police station area in discussion with the local SAPS management, the CPF chairperson and the Head of Reservists. The main criterion for deciding on sector size and boundaries should be manageability of the sectors for the envisaged sector managers.
- Appoint a sector manager and at least one assistant manager (Deputy) for each sector, and recruit reservists to engage in sector policing tasks for which the local SAPS does not have capacity. The managers are envisaged to be SAPS members with excellent community work skills, and the assistant managers would be reservists or members of the local CPF.
- Compile a 'sector profile' to include details of prominent people and important groups in the sector area, population and other demographics, and crime trends in the sector area. This will assist the manager and assistant/s to familiarise themselves with the sector area, and with planning and prioritisation.
- Establish and sustain a 'Sector Crime Forum' (SCF), which can link to the CPF.

- The ongoing management of the sector would require the sector manager to participate in daily meetings of the station concerned with crime combating, and to liaise regularly with other components of the SAPS, as well as to share information and build partnerships with a wide variety of stakeholders and to initiate crime prevention/safety-promotion projects.⁵⁹

The internal educational material on sector policing which is being distributed to members of the SAPS emphasises its links to community policing, crime prevention, partnerships, and the ongoing modernisation and transformation of police work in South Africa.⁶⁰ The aim of these linkages may be to avoid confusing police members on the ground who are ultimately responsible for implementing new policies. The references in the Final Draft National Instruction to community policing, democratisation and the post-1994 policy documents perhaps also aim to generate—among police officials—a reassuring sense of progress and continuity. Internally in the SAPS at least, the sector policing policy (as contained in the Final Draft National Instruction) is strongly aligned with:

- Crime prevention: “sector policing is a method of policing used...to bring about effective crime prevention.”⁶¹
- Community involvement: “sector policing provides an ideal opportunity for community involvement in their local safety and security”⁶² and “provides a mechanism for more and better community participation”.⁶³
- Community policing: sector policing is a “practical manifestation of community policing”.⁶⁴
- Improved service delivery: sector policing “allows for [police] service delivery to take place even closer to communities”.⁶⁵
- Modernisation and acceptance in the globalising world: “sector policing is a step towards the development of a modern, democratic policing style for the present century”.⁶⁶

This is an interesting contrast with how sector policing has been presented to the South African public at various points earlier in the policy development process (see previous section). It reflects the fundamental dynamic in the police policy environment: an uncomfortable coexistence of a ‘social’ approach to crime prevention alongside a tougher ‘war on crime’.⁶⁷

Specific features of sector policing in South Africa

Two aspects of the South African sector policing policy are distinctive. First, it has recently been linked far more closely with the new SAPS policy on reservists. The SA Reserve Police Service is now governed by regulations issued in terms of the SAPS Act and a National Instruction issued by the National Commissioner of the SAPS.⁶⁸ The National Instruction makes special provision for a new category of police reservist (basically a member of the public who does voluntary duty to assist the police) known as ‘Category D Reservists’ who work in sector policing, both rural and urban. These reservists:

- “shall perform functions in operational facets of policing related to sector policing at station level”—as opposed to other reservists who perform administrative, non-operational or specialised duties,⁶⁹
- “may only perform duties in areas specified by the commander”—ie. the sector area;⁷⁰
- “must be utilised for sector policing.”⁷¹

One of the imperatives for the revision of the reservist policy is that former military volunteer units (known as Commandos) are being dismantled and commando members are expected to join the SAPS reservist system instead. The commando system has been dogged by controversy and the tightness of the SAPS regulations and instructions concerning reservists is intended to ensure that similar difficulties do not arise for the Reserve Police Service. According to the new policy, reservists will, inter alia, be accommodated in:

- the SAPS’ National Intervention and Crime Combating Units—which have the responsibility to support provinces with the security of big events, disaster management and to stabilise high crime and violent situations;
- the SAPS’ Area Crime Combating Units—which will engage in rural protection activities, act as a rapid response capacity for serious crime, and participate in crime combating operations such as cordon and search and saturation policing;
- the sector policing teams at each police station.⁷²

If significant numbers of former commando members are absorbed into sector policing work, there may be some interesting and unforeseen impacts on the development of the new policing methodology.

Another important feature of sector policing policy in South Africa is the need for the policy to cater for a variety of diverse areas. In particular, the implementation of sector policing in some parts of rural South Africa is likely to generate interesting challenges and results. Rural safety has been a police priority in recent years, with escalating levels of violent crimes being recorded in some areas. One of the reasons given for the lengthy delay in finalising the sector policing policy document is that it had to be amended to take into account key lessons learned through piloting earlier versions of the policy in rural areas.⁷³

CHAPTER 4

THE LONDON EXPERIENCE OF SECTOR POLICING

As has been argued in Chapter 1, the origins of sector policing as introduced by London's Metropolitan Police in the early 1990s lie squarely within the broad tradition of what is widely—if somewhat confusingly—known as community policing. This chapter begins with a brief description of the framework for sector policing used in London in 1991, and then considers its implementation in one area of north London.

Guidelines on sector policing were issued in 1991 within months of the Metropolitan Police's senior managers approving the shift to a new, geographical style of policing. Issued in the name of the Assistant Commissioner responsible for the delivery of front line policing services across London, the guidance was contained in three slim 40 page booklets.⁷⁴ The implementation strategy was studiously low key and contained "as little prescriptive instruction as possible in order to provide the most flexible framework for divisions to work within".⁷⁵ Sector policing was to be implemented throughout the Metropolitan Police area by the end of March 1993. Yet, a year before that, when activity across the organisation was at or nearing its peak, the headquarters branch responsible for monitoring its introduction had a skeleton staff of no more than four, relatively junior, officers.

The main principles of sector policing are set out in the guidance document and can be summarised as being to:

- make the most effective use of resources;
- work in close co-operation with the local community;
- "own" and "get ahead" of local problems by identifying and helping to tackle their underlying causes;
- encourage visible and accessible patrolling by known local officers;
- deliver a "better quality service" provided by officers "enjoying the support and approval of local people—policing by consent".⁷⁶

As this summary indicates, the key features of community policing captured in the CAMPS formula discussed in Chapter 1 were present in the London model of sector policing: *consultation* and co-operation with the community; the *adaptation* of organisational structures to give greater autonomy to sector managers; and the *mobilisation* of civil society and other governmental agencies in identifying and *solving* local *problems*. Also apparent in the framework were the elements of geographical responsibility, problem-solving, community consultation and consumer-friendly managerialism from which the origins of sector policing were earlier traced.

Holloway, North London: a case study

To see how these principles were put into practice, a study of the implementation of sector policing undertaken by one of the authors in the Holloway area of north London between October 1991 and February 1993 will be considered.⁷⁷

Back in the early 1990s, what was then the Holloway Division (a division was roughly equivalent to a SAPS police station area) covered a fairly typical slice of inner-city London. Figures from the 1991 census indicate that it had a total population of 86,352 living in just over 38,000 separate households. More than a fifth of the population (22%) came from minority ethnic groups, mainly of Caribbean, South Asian and African origin. A similar proportion of residents (20%) was under the age of 16. Unemployment—at 20% of the economically active resident population in January 1993—was significantly higher than the greater London average of 12%. Housing in the area was dominated by the public and social sectors with more than half (53%) of households living in accommodation rented either from the local authority or a voluntary housing association.

A total of 49,682 calls for service were logged on the computer-aided despatch (CAD) system at Holloway in 1992, and the Division also recorded 13,498 notifiable criminal offences.⁷⁸ To meet this demand, Holloway had 173 uniformed police constables in post as of 22 December 1992, almost a fifth (19%) of whom were probationers in their first two years of service. Above them in supervisory and managerial positions, the Division had 38 uniformed sergeants, eight inspectors, two chief inspectors, a superintendent and a chief superintendent.

Restructuring the police organisation

In putting the changes demanded by sector policing into effect, Holloway Division adapted the sector policing guidelines to suit local conditions. Having undertaken the suggested workload analysis, the Division decided to create three sectors—Highbury, Tollington and Archway—each with its own local base. Responsibility for policing each of these areas was then entrusted to six teams of about half a dozen uniformed officers (making 18 teams in all) supervised by one or two ‘team sergeants’. Contrary to advice in the official guidance note that responsibility for local policing should be invested in a clearly identifiable individual, each sector was put under the command of two ‘sector inspectors’.

A new shift system was devised that preserved the three traditional ‘turns’ known as ‘earlies’ (6h00 to 14h00) ‘lates’ (14h00 to 20h00) and ‘nights’ (20h00 to 6h00) but added new ‘day’ (8h00 or 10h00 to 16h00 or 18h00) and ‘evening’ or ‘late/late’ (18h00 to 2h00) shifts. The creation of these shifts was intended to align the availability of personnel more closely with the demand for police services on weekend evenings, and by giving officers more time in which to solve problems rather than respond to calls for service on day shifts throughout the rest of the week.⁷⁹ To put some flesh on these bare organisational bones—and gain more insight into the impact of sector policing on police and public in practice—we return to the four themes of geographical responsibility, community consultation, problem-solving and consumer-friendly management identified earlier.

Sectors and the allocation of geographical responsibility

The idea of teams of police officers taking responsibility for meeting the policing needs of a small area, getting to know and be known by its resident and working populations, and recognising locals’ problems as their own, lay at the heart of sector policing.

Scale

Putting these ideals into practice on the ground in Holloway proved harder than the framers of sector policing anticipated. The first problem was simply one of scale. Although the Division had been split into three sectors, the officers on the six dedicated teams in each sector were still responsible for areas

with average resident populations of only slightly fewer than 30,000 people (or 13,000 households). This meant that they were simply not close enough to the ground to forge the kind of relationships with locals that home beat officers (as London's community constables were called) working patches less than a quarter of the size, were able to maintain. As one long serving home beat officer observed, he and his colleagues were 'on our beats for good'—there was no escaping from local people and their problems. Whereas sector officers—though more geographically constrained than before—could still work a whole sector, using this relative freedom to do more or less what they wanted, and to avoid getting bogged down in community problem-solving.

Even where one might have expected the effects of decentralisation to have been most keenly felt, the 'footprint' of more regular patrol by sector officers seemed to be highly localised. So, for example, the establishment of a new sector office on the site of a local hospital seemed to have little effect on how the area as a whole was policed:

People have said to me—just generally in the street and at meetings—that they have not noticed any extra foot patrols, and extra contact as such with police on a day to day basis, other than calling them to something specific. So...I haven't really found that much difference [between sector and traditional relief policing]. (Home beat officer, 10 December 1992)

Sector integrity

Apart from the size of the area for which they were responsible, another critical factor in determining the extent to which officers were able to identify with a sector and own its people's problems became known as 'sector integrity'. At Holloway, this was taken to be a function of the proportion of calls for service on a sector to which a response was provided by an officer from that sector. However, a study of a sample of 370 calls undertaken for an internal police evaluation suggests that no more than 60% of calls were likely to receive a 'sector' response, which means that there would have been no more than a 36% chance of any (let alone the same) sector officer being called to two separate incidents at the same location.

Thus, in practical terms, sector policing provided officers with only a very limited incentive to identify, own and 'get ahead' of problems underlying repeat calls for service in the manner suggested in the official guidelines. Another

indication of how difficult it proved to persuade officers to see their job in terms of responsibility for geographical areas rather than slices of time, was the gradual development of a sense of solidarity between officers on teams working the same shift patterns across sector boundaries. Instead of seeing themselves as joint owners of local problems with sector colleagues they rarely met, officers tended to identify with team members from other sectors who worked the same hours, and with whom they came into regular contact in canteens, on training days and at major incidents.

Ownership

The combined effect of the size of the areas they were expected to police, the difficulty of maintaining 'sector integrity' at levels where officers might be encouraged to solve underlying problems rather than simply respond to incidents, and the persistence of peer group solidarity based on shared responsibility for a block of time rather than a piece of ground, left the ideal of sector ownership largely unrealised at Holloway.

The authors of the only other contemporary study of sector policing reported remarkably similar findings.⁸⁰ Activity surveys of police officers in the areas they studied found no consistent evidence of changes in police practice consistent with sector-based problem-oriented policing. Nor did the introduction of a new style of policing at their research sites have a marked impact on public perceptions of the police. Only a quarter of residents surveyed noticed any change in the way their areas were policed, of whom most had noticed an increase in the number of officers patrolling in vehicles and on foot. Although residents in one area thought that the police were making a greater effort to consult them, the overall assessment of the police by members of the public at both sites was less favourable after the experiments had been completed than it had been before they began.

Sector working groups and community consultation

Under the London model of sector policing, responsibility for consultation with the community about local problems and police priorities was given to sector inspectors. The main mechanism for consultation was to be sector working groups (SWGs). Modelled on the consultative groups set up in the 1980s, these groups were to act as a "police service users group through which the public could raise concerns of an essentially local nature".⁸¹ But this

was not all, for they were also to provide a “forum for the police to meet with other interested agencies to discuss and implement agreed and co-ordinated solutions to identified local problems”.

Thus SWGs were seen both as a source of community input into the process of problem identification, and a setting for mobilising and managing the response of the police and other agencies to those problems. The guidance also advised sector inspectors to ensure that, wherever possible, issues that are best dealt with by other agencies were passed on to them openly and in public so that people become more fully aware of the different roles and responsibilities of local service providers. As for membership of SWGs, the guidance suggested that it should be drawn from three main groups: residents, businesses and representatives of other agencies working in the area.⁸²

The existence of a network of neighbourhood forums set up by the local authority to monitor the delivery of other local services such as housing, planning and transport, allowed Holloway Division to delay the establishment of separate SWGs along the lines recommended in the guidance. On two of the Division’s three sectors, the police simply tapped into these forums and policing became another regular agenda item for discussion by the elected street representatives and delegates. Only on the third sector did the two inspectors set up a separate consultative body drawn from the area’s neighbourhood forums and known as the Highbury Sector Crime Panel (HSCP).⁸³

Creating communities

The first problem to emerge from the creation of the HSCP had to do with the way in which ‘the community’ was first created by, and then represented to, the police on the Highbury sector. The official guidance recommended that sectors should be demarcated on the basis of a ‘profile’ containing information on geographical features and existing administrative and political boundaries, together with a thorough analysis of police workload. Enough sectors would have to be created to reflect the ‘individuality’ of local communities, but not so many as to create insoluble internal problems of administration and co-ordination.

As it turned out in Holloway, the administrative convenience of having policing areas that fitted with existing political boundaries and the smaller areas covered by neighbourhood forums, prevailed. Unfortunately, as one participant in the HSCP commented, a genuine ‘community’ of people with

common interests could not be conjured up by drawing lines on a map.⁸⁴ To describe a sector as a community was “baloney”. He and members of the residents’ association he represented might share some concerns with people elsewhere on the sector but their most immediate problems were typical of their area—consisting in his mind of no more than one or two streets.

However much the police tried to persuade themselves that either the HSCP or the neighbourhood forums represented people with a common view of what the most important local problems were, and a shared interest in resolving them, the reality of conflict and disagreement was impossible to escape. When members of the HSCP complained about problems of drug-taking and burglary in two blocks of flats, discussion of what do about them ground to a halt when it emerged that the drug users and housebreakers came from the immediate area. In so far as ‘community’ was defined by location or territory, problems tended to come not from outside that community but from within it. Sectors had been carved out of larger police areas but ‘communities’ had not been created where none existed before.

Representing communities

Whether they could be described as ‘communities’ or not, the way in which people living and working on the sector were represented on HSCP was equally problematic. Although Holloway was an area of considerable ethnic diversity, the membership of HSCP was exclusively white, overwhelmingly middle-aged and already active in existing local organisations. Even to the police, neither HSCP nor the neighbourhood forums were properly representative of local people. To blunt-speaking rank and file officers, their members were not legitimate community representatives but interfering ‘busy-bodies’ whose meetings consisted of “one or two lunatics going on about dog crap and parking”.⁸⁵

Having put themselves forward or been nominated to represent the sector’s five neighbourhood forums, members reflected the views of a segment of self-consciously respectable public opinion with robust views on crime and what should be done about it. Turning a blind eye to petty crime and disorder was the ‘thin end of the wedge’ and they demanded that the police ‘stop the rot’ by taking firm action against everyone from small-time shoplifters to people cycling on pavements and the owners of incontinent dogs.⁸⁶ Just how wide a gulf there was between these essentially ‘pro-police’ figures and at least some of the people they were supposed to represent is captured in these two

reactions to the regular presence of uniformed police in two areas of public housing on Highbury sector:

Our community policemen...I see them walking up and down and they're all we've got between us and anarchy and I'd like to thank them.

I'm going to get a petition up about police coming on this estate. I don't want any police on my estate.⁸⁷

The first quotation is from a middle-aged white woman speaking at a meeting of her local neighbourhood forum while the second conveys the feelings of a young African Caribbean woman speaking to a sector officer out on patrol only a few days later.

Identifying problems

The broadly supportive attitudes of the members of HSCP and the neighbourhood forums from which they came, made them congenial company for the police. But the friendliness of the participants was not enough for meetings of these bodies to be judged a success, for the principal purpose of consultation with the public at sector level was to assist the police in identifying local problems.

The difficulty was that, despite its status as a *crime* panel, analysis of the 35 identifiable problems raised over the course of its first five meetings showed that two thirds (23) were related to traffic, parking and the anti-social use of roads and pavements. Another six involved behaviour—drug-taking, public urination, prostitution, intimidation and young people causing trouble in a block of flats—that may well have been criminal but fell some way short of what police officers themselves saw as 'real police work'. Thus, only five of the problems raised at HSCP meetings fitted with police views of the kind of 'real crime'—burglary, street robbery and criminal damage to property—officers believed they should prioritise.

The HSCP came up with so few crime problems and so many quality of life issues, not because (as some police officers liked to think) its members rated cycling on pavements as more serious problem than housebreaking, but because—even in a relatively high crime area of London—such incivilities were part of their daily experience of life in a way that 'real crime' was not:

I've never seen a mugging in my life...but I walk out of my front door and see people [illegally] double-parking every day.⁸⁸

Research has shown that people (at least in Britain) react to different kinds of troublesome behaviour in different ways.⁸⁹ What they see as 'real crime' is more likely to be reported to the police more or less as it happens than less serious, though still concerning, incidents.⁹⁰ The result is that the police tend to have a much more complete picture of 'real crime' problems than even the best-informed member of the public in the highest crime area. This asymmetry in access to information about the most serious local problems can only be corrected if the police provide the people they are talking to with comprehensive, and comprehensible, information about crime. A genuine dialogue between police and community representatives about how those problems should be prioritised and resolved demands that the police go beyond the kind of grudging disclosure of raw crime data that eventually happened at meetings of the HSCP.

Forums for inter-agency co-operation

If HSCP largely failed to represent either a cross-section of local people or reflect their concerns in a way that was credible to police officers, it also fell short of the mark in its role as an inter-agency forum for discussing how those concerns should be addressed. Representatives from other service providers were notable only by their absence at meetings. As a consequence, problems that required action from non-police agencies such as speeding, the removal of abandoned vehicles and illegal street trading had to be referred on to the relevant agency or local government department on an *ad hoc* basis either by the police or panel members. In the event, little or nothing ever came of any of HSCP's problem solving efforts. Almost a third of the issues had been raised when HSCP first met in July 1992. Nevertheless, it was impossible to conclude that, of the 35 problems identified at that and four subsequent meetings, a single one had been resolved when fieldwork for the research ended in March 1993.

Tasking and problem-solving

As discussed above, the preoccupation of community representatives on the HSCP with traffic and other quality of life problems failed to impress the sector-based officers tasked to resolve them. From the earliest days of its

implementation at Holloway, it became axiomatic that sector policing would, as one senior manager put it, “live or die” on the Division’s ability to identify problems and allocate them to sector officers as clearly defined and credible policing tasks.⁹⁴ Six months after sector policing began, the internal evaluation duly declared the problem identification and tasking system a success though very little was said about the *analysis* of problems so critical to Herman Goldstein’s original vision of problem-oriented policing).⁹²

A total of 102 tasks had been undertaken across the three sectors, of which 85% had been community-generated, usually as a result of “formal contact through Sector Working Parties or Neighbourhood Forum meetings”. The evaluation conceded that some sector officers had been disappointed about the range of actions they had been asked to take but attributed this to a lack of public understanding about the role of the police and to “a degree of satisfaction with current police performance”. Tasks ranging from crime problems at a particular location (like drug-dealing or handling stolen goods) to “short term community problem[s] associated with parking or anti-social behaviour” had been identified and notable successes had been achieved in the shape of multi-agency law enforcement action against “[car] window washers and [unlicensed] street traders”.

An incredible success story?

Despite the successes noted above, there was—on closer inspection—little substantial evidence to support such an optimistic conclusion about early experiences of problem-solving policing in Holloway. Asked by the research team for more detailed information about these problem-solving efforts, the Division was unable to come up either with a comprehensive list of the 102 problems referred to in the evaluation, or with an explanation of what exactly had been done in response to them. Nor could it explain how the problem-solving work had been assessed (another key element in Goldstein’s account of problem-oriented policing). It was also hard to believe that carrying out what, on the report’s own admission, were often fairly minor tasks, can have taken up many, never mind all, of the 4,992 officer hours worked on problem-solving ‘day’ shifts in the six months from April to October 1992 covered by the internal evaluation.⁹³ From the point of view of the researcher observing HSCP and neighbourhood forum meetings and talking to police officers in the course of their work, the reality of the problem-solving/tasking process was altogether less satisfactory than the authors of the internal evaluation felt able to admit.

Problem-solving, real police work and doing your own thing

One major obstacle that the already unpopular quality of life problems identified by community representatives had to face before they were adopted as operational tasks, was competition from a steady stream of traditional, and highly credible, 'real crime' tasks generated internally by the Division's Information and Intelligence Unit (DIU). Sector officers continued to be briefed, and brief themselves, on the basis of crime statistics churned out by the DIU. And they continued to respond to the familiar crimes of street robbery, burglary, and vehicle crime reflected in those figures—not by analysing the underlying problems and devising creative 'tailor-made' solutions to them—but by resorting to the traditional police tactics of patrol and selective enforcement.

But even highly credible police-generated crime data did little to inform most routine patrol work. Infinitely preferable to any form of directed activity was the ability to 'do your own thing'. Day shift officers who should have been using 'free' time to work on community problems, found a whole range of alternative attractions hard to resist. Many simply ignored injunctions to avoid taking calls unless absolutely necessary, and hitched rides with motorised colleagues doing response work. Others sought out 'real police work'—or as close an approximation of it as they could find—to keep themselves occupied. Opportunities to undertake plain clothes observations, stop and search suspects on the street or execute warrants for the arrest of people who had not bought a television licence were taken up with enthusiasm. Still others used the time to pursue a personal interest in a particular aspect of police work such as traffic enforcement. Wild tales also circulated about officers 'disappearing' to get a haircut, go shopping, or take a swim at a nearby pool.

Moreover, such careless attitudes towards these problem-solving shifts were scarcely discouraged by managers' eagerness to give officers leave when they were working 'days' and to use them as a pool of 'spare' resources to be drawn on whenever personnel were needed to meet regular commitments to deliver extra police strength elsewhere in London.

Problem-solving since sector policing

Since sector policing was introduced in London in the early 1990s, problem-oriented policing (POP) has become an increasingly popular solution to rising demand for police services in Britain.⁹⁴ It also sits comfortably with research evidence that crime and other incidents requiring police attention are far from

randomly distributed, and an emerging consensus that crime and related forms of troublesome behaviour can best be dealt with by the police working in partnership with other agencies. But this enthusiasm has not translated into universally successful attempts at implementation.

On the contrary, a large-scale study of problem solving undertaken by the Inspector of Constabulary for England and Wales found that, of 335 initiatives submitted by forces for consideration by the inspection team, only 17 (or one in 20) were described as successful by the forces themselves *and* could be judged to have “fully followed a problem-solving approach”.⁹⁵ More detailed studies have tended to confirm these findings, revealing higher but still disappointing rates of successful problem identification, analysis and resolution (29% in one carefully monitored area), persistent difficulties in mobilising communities to take part in the problem-solving process, and serious weaknesses in attempts to graft POP on to existing styles of policing, particularly in the face of resistance to its introduction by the most experienced officers.⁹⁶

Managing sector policing

Overcoming resistance to the introduction of sector policing—particularly among the longest serving officers most committed to traditional ways of working under the traditional time-based ‘relief’ system—was one of the most significant challenges faced by managers at Holloway.⁹⁷ When researchers arrived at Holloway five months before sector policing began, they were left in no doubt about its unpopularity. “It’s shit”, “it stinks”, “it’s a load of crap” were among the views expressed by officers in the course of one shift observed early in the research.⁹⁸ But why was sector policing so unpopular among so many of the more experienced officers?

Human resources

The most obvious source of discontent was that, however good an idea sector policing might be in theory (and many officers were prepared to concede that it might be), there simply were not enough people at Holloway to make it work. The accuracy of this claim was hard to establish. Statistics presented in the internal evaluation indicated that, during the first 6 months of sector policing, Holloway operated with less than the agreed minimum number of officers required to police the Division for just over 10% of the time.⁹⁹ No comparative statistics were given for the preceding 6 months but the evaluation described

this performance as no better than 'mixed'. Observational data collected by the researchers suggested that there were times when any question of investigating, let alone solving, the underlying causes of the incidents officers were being called to attend was out of the question. They were too busy to do anything more than 'fire brigade' policing, rushing from one call to the next with no time to engage either callers or other members of the public in any kind of dialogue. But this was not true of the majority of shifts observed, and the researchers concluded that sector policing was not manifestly unworkable within the prevailing resource constraints.

What was undeniable were the very real concerns that many officers had for their own safety and that of their colleagues on those occasions—however rare—when the Division was significantly under strength, particularly late at night and in the early hours of the morning. Such fears crystallised around particular incidents on nearby divisions including the murder of a police officer. Accustomed to the reassuring presence of as many as 40 people to call on at any time of the day or night, officers feared for what might happen when the number on duty at, say, 3.00 am might be less than half that under sector policing arrangements. Where, they wanted to know, would the back up needed to deal with a major incident, or to aid a colleague in (perhaps mortal) danger come from? A few dissenting voices argued that 'turning up mob-handed' could be a recipe for disaster in some situations, while others thought that the potential lack of fast back up might encourage a less confrontational approach to dealing with the public. But to the majority, sector policing represented a real threat to their safety in an already dangerous job.

Communicating the vision

Without a massive—and highly improbable—injection of new resources, there was very little either local managers at Holloway or senior management of the Metropolitan Police itself could do to counter fears that sector policing was being introduced 'on the cheap'. But in two other respects the unpopularity of sector policing was attributable to problems more susceptible to managerial control. The first of these was an apparent failure by those responsible for implementing sector policing at Holloway and across London to explain to their staff either why it was being introduced or what the principles underlying it were. Even when the nuts and bolts of sector policing—the new shift system, the demarcation of sectors and the allocation of geographical responsibility—had been grasped, few officers understood the philosophy behind it. Nor did they appreciate or share the vision of an efficient, accessible,

accountable, community-based service it was supposed to realise. In their understandable eagerness to make sector policing work, managers seemed to have neglected the equally important task of convincing their staff why it had to work. As has already been noted, similar communication problems arose when sector policing was initially introduced in Johannesburg.

Setting priorities

Communication was not the only factor behind the unpopularity of sector policing. According to the Metropolitan Police's five year corporate strategy for the mid 1990s, 1992/3 was to be "the focus year of maximum organisation activity" for the introduction of sector policing. Yet its apparent strategic priority did not give sector policing precedence over other policies. So, for example, a new strategy for the management of police buildings, and procedures for the investigation of crime, ran counter to the thrust of sector policing by encouraging the concentration of resources at a single divisional headquarters building and justifying a continued centralisation of detective functions. The result was both confusion and a severe case of innovation fatigue.

Another distraction came from the organisational tier above the Division known as 'Area' and took the form of continual requests for Holloway officers to provide 'aid' to other parts of London at precisely the time—in April 1992—when sector policing was in its early infancy. Worse still, the efforts of sector teams to respond to public demands for action on the quality of life problems identified at neighbourhood forum meetings and the HSCP, had to struggle for priority against competing crime objectives set centrally by the police organisation itself. Thus Holloway had to take part in a high profile, London-wide anti-burglary initiative and 'Area' insisted that a special squad be set up to respond to worsening statistics on vehicle crime.

Frustrated though they were by demands from above, divisional managers were themselves guilty of at least attempting to infringe the principle of decentralisation whereby sector inspectors were expected to set their own priorities in consultation with local people. Demands for greater downward pressure to be exerted on figures for reported burglary prompted one frustrated sector sergeant to observe that "We've got to respond to their [the public's] needs not [the divisional commander's]".¹⁰⁰ Caught between the two groups—managers and consumers—to whom the precepts of the new managerialism would have them account, front line sector staff regularly found themselves being pulled in opposite directions.

Managing performance

The apparent conflict between the priorities of managers within the police and consumers leads on to another difficulty with the management of sector policing. In theory any assessment of the performance of sector inspectors and the operational officers under their command should have taken as its starting point their success in identifying and resolving substantive community problems. To do this, two major obstacles had to be overcome. Firstly the Division had to expand the information on which judgements about performance were based from traditional crime and process records relating to the number of offences reported and arrests made by an individual or unit. And secondly it had to ensure that it was not simply output that was being measured but outcomes.

In neither case were Holloway's efforts entirely successful. The regular publication of crime and arrest statistics by the Divisional Information and Intelligence Unit was halted following the intervention of a senior manager. However, unofficial figures continued to circulate, leading sector teams committed to working in schools or calling back on victims of crime to doubt that their performance against the stated objectives of a community-based style of policing would ever be properly acknowledged. As it happened 'traditional workload' crime, arrest and (call) response time figures were published in Holloway's internal evaluation, but only for the purposes of comparing the whole Division's performance for the first six months of sector policing with the preceding period of relief policing.¹⁰¹ The same document also contained impressive sounding output measures of public contact in the form of visits to local schools, additional support for crime victims, meetings with community groups and calls to give crime prevention advice. Sadly lacking however were baseline data for the old system of relief policing and any qualitative assessment of the outcome of these interactions between police and public.

Autonomy and resistance

Even if avoidable mistakes were made in managing the implementation of sector policing, the root cause of the unpopularity was that it challenged some core beliefs, values and practices in the occupational culture of operational police officers. Much has been written about police culture and the elementary mistake should not be made of pretending that it is either monolithic or unchanging.¹⁰² But it is widely accepted that the ability to exert some measure of control over their working lives is of critical importance to most

uniformed patrol officers. Since they work under uncertain and often dangerous conditions where the support of trusted colleagues may be needed at any moment, police officers tend to be suspicious of new-fangled theories and reluctant to accept changes based on them.

The way in which sector policing—a new style of deployment rooted in the still slightly obscure philosophy of community-based policing—clashed with rank and file attitudes towards their operational autonomy was best summed up in a chance comment made by a junior manager right at the beginning of the research in Holloway: “They like night duties because there are no gov’ners [senior managers] and no public and they can get on with some real police work”.¹⁰³

Sector policing sought to redirect patrol officers’ attention away from the varied, and at least potentially exciting, work of taking calls, responding to incidents and ‘fighting crime’. Rather, they were to deal with a diverse set of ‘unreal’ problems identified by people—‘the community’—perceived to be ill-qualified to know what was good for them. By breaking shifts consisting of about 30 constables loosely supervised by half a dozen sergeants down into smaller teams, and giving the latter much clearer line responsibility for managing the former, it threatened to increase the organisational visibility of patrol operations. Worse still, sector policing would put limits of both time and place on opportunities for ‘real police work’ and ‘doing your own thing’. In short, officers did not relish the prospect of working additional days on public priorities under the gaze of senior managers, at the expense of night shifts when they could follow their own operational instincts, safe in the knowledge that both managers and the public were safely in bed. Nor did they like the thought of having to stay on their sectors, quiet as they might be, instead of roaming a whole Division looking for action.

The challenges of managing change

Three loosely connected but important points emerge from all this. The first is that the capacity of police managers to control their own organisation and the actions of the people who actually ‘do’ policing is not nearly as extensive as either they, or people who rely on them to change police practice in government of civil society, tend to believe. The second is that, inasmuch as sector policing challenged the operational autonomy of the rank and file by exposing their activities to more effective bureaucratic control and more extensive community influence, change was either resisted or subverted. As a

result—and this is the third and final point—patrol officers on Holloway seemed no more accountable to their managers and through them either internally up the organisational hierarchy or externally to ‘consumers’ and the ‘community’ after nine months of sector policing than they had been before.

What became of sector policing in London?

When the research team left Holloway in early 1993, sector policing had been in place for almost a year. Ambitious plans were already being laid to extend geographical responsibility, for example by decentralising crime investigation to sectors.¹⁰⁴ Yet, almost ten years later, sector policing as a distinctive style of policing, and a framework for the community-oriented delivery of front line police services to the people of London, has *ceased to exist*. Possible reasons for this are considered in the concluding section of this case study, along with how, despite its demise, some of the principles, practices and language of sector policing (including the word ‘sector’ itself) have survived into the new millennium.¹⁰⁵

Territorial policing in London: 1992–2002

The official guidance on sector policing in London was intended to provide a flexible framework for the delivery of non-specialist territorial policing to the people of London. This flexibility was intended to allow the 70 and more divisional commanders and management teams responsible for implementing the new style to adapt the framework to suit local conditions. It also allowed them to implement sector policing at different speeds and with varying degrees of enthusiasm. The divisional commander at Holloway—described as a “purist” by one of our interviewees—was totally committed to the principles of geographical responsibility, managerial reform, community consultation and problem-solving that informed sector policing. Some of his peers were more sceptical and Holloway went further than most in pushing these principles to their logical conclusion.

The first point about the fate of sector policing is therefore that, from the outset, its implementation was extremely uneven. While Holloway pressed on with the decentralisation of detective functions, other divisions paid no more than lip service to the basics.¹⁰⁶ Thus, when one of our interviewees started work on a police division in south London in 1996, he found the old time-based relief system still in operation. Geographical responsibility was limited

to the notional allocation of each of these teams to a sector on which they were expected to do problem-solving work if and when the pressures of responding to calls for service permitted.

Apart from its uneven implementation across London, sector policing also seems to have suffered from a number of ultimately fatal weaknesses, most of which were evident from its introduction at Holloway. From its inception as an outcome of the centrally driven PLUS programme, sector policing was very much a top-down reform. Even those divisions that did least to implement it had to do something. But the changes in structure and working practices that sector policing demanded were never 'owned' by more than a minority of enthusiasts at divisional level. There was, as one of the officers we spoke to put it, no "sustainability plan" to guard it against shocks to the wider organisation. And unfortunately for sector policing, these were not long in coming.

In essence these shocks took two forms. First there was a steady and measurable decline in police numbers from 28,500 in 1991 to 25,400 ten years later—a fall of some 11%.¹⁰⁷ Whether this coincided with an increase in workload is hotly debated, but the academic authors of an authoritative report on the Metropolitan Police have recently concluded that it probably did not.¹⁰⁸ Be that as it may, the officers to whom we spoke were convinced that this process of 'slow rot' had a severe impact on the ability of the Metropolitan Police to resource its commitment to sector policing.

Such a reduction in resources alone might well have proved fatal, but it was combined with another threat from a slightly different direction. This took the form of a fresh wave of targets and performance standards imposed in the wake of the then Prime Minister, John Major's, Citizen's Charter initiative. These standards tended to emphasise performance against traditional 'hard' crime targets and were enforced with scarcely diminished rigour when the Labour Party came to power in 1997. While the long term problem-solving work of sector policing might eventually reduce demand for police services, statistical targets for the time taken to respond to emergency calls and the judicial disposal of criminal cases had to be met in the here and now. The inevitable result was that available resources became increasingly focused on dealing with the traditional priorities of crime fighting and incident response. And this, of course, was precisely the kind of work traditionalist opponents of sector policing had always hankered after. In the end their resistance to its introduction and continued subversion of its aims bore fruit, albeit in the context of a performance management regime that did little to enhance their operational autonomy.

Ward constables and sector working groups

This is not the place to attempt a chronology of the decline of sector policing in London in its fully developed form. But if one single development can be said to have marked its final slide into obscurity, it was the introduction of ‘borough policing’ in 1999. This reform was prompted by the need to align the boundaries of basic command units in the Metropolitan Police with those of the 32 borough councils¹⁰⁹ responsible for providing a range of public services from development planning to education, housing and personal social services such as child protection.

New legislation introduced by the incoming Labour government (the Crime and Disorder Act of 1998) required the police and local government to work together as strategic partners in drawing up and implementing local plans for reducing crime and disorder. Prior to 1999, boroughs outside central London had been policed by two—sometimes three—different police divisions. This had long created problems in co-ordinating both policing within borough boundaries, and partnerships working between the police and local government. The need to respond to the Crime and Disorder Act made an already awkward position untenable, and divisions were hurriedly amalgamated to form single borough command units.

The effect of this reorganisation was to shift responsibility for solving borough-wide problems up to the crime and disorder reduction partnerships established between the police, the local authorities and other agencies (such as the probation service) at that level. A similar realignment was also taking place at a much lower level. Responsibility for the wards (into which boroughs were divided for electoral purposes) was allocated to new community-based ‘ward constables’ responsible for identifying and resolving—again in partnership with local government and other agencies—problems of a more localised nature. Meanwhile, response policing—the daily grind of dealing with calls for service—was being, or already had been, recentralised from sectors to one or two police stations within each borough command unit.

The only obvious legacy of sector policing to survive the 1990s was a network of local consultative groups. That they did survive was remarkable for several reasons. Dominated by people well disposed towards the police but disillusioned with their local authority, they generally demonstrated what one of our interviewees described as an “inability to join up solutions to problems across agencies and the community”. Nor had they ever managed to convince either the police or anyone else that they were genuinely representative of local

residents. Thus, for the most part, the sector working groups had failed to fulfil the role set out for them in the official guidance on sector policing. Yet, despite all this, these ‘police-constructed’ bodies built up a momentum of their own over the years and were to prove the most durable of all the innovations put in place under sector policing.

From sector policing to borough policing in Holloway

Developments at Holloway over the last ten years have been similar to those elsewhere in London. When one of the officers we spoke to arrived on the Division in 1996 he found things very much as the researchers had left them three years earlier. The most significant change was that, although the investigation of crime remained largely a central, divisional function, small teams of two or three detectives had been attached to each sector under the Phase II proposals referred to earlier.

Coming in with a reputation, as he put it, as ‘Mr Community’ and a generally positive attitude towards sector policing, he was dismayed to find Holloway a rather unhappy place: the Division seemed to lack cohesion, was disjointed, “people were doing their own thing”, and there was a distinct lack of *esprit de corps*. Much of this unhappiness could be attributed to sector policing. Staff shrinkage, the loss of economies of scale occasioned by the radicalism of the Division’s decentralisation and a growing tension between the demands of reactive incident response and proactive problem-solving all contributed to low morale. From a manager’s point of view, the three sector system was frustrating because it was often impossible to find out which officers were on duty at any given time and—more importantly—who could be trusted with the most difficult and sensitive work.

Two years later, in 1998, a decision was taken to restructure the Division by reducing the number of sectors from three to two. The aim was to maintain a commitment to geographic policing at a time of (amongst other things) mounting pressure on human resources, changes in the policing strategy of the Metropolitan Police, and the need to meet the requirements of what was to become the Crime and Disorder Act. Other more local factors behind the decision to reshape sector policing, were the appointment of a less ‘purist’ divisional commander, persistent fears among officers for their own and their colleagues’ safety, and a general feeling that Holloway had “gone soft” and lost its ability “to react to big events”. What emerged from the 1998 restructuring was a hybrid style of policing. Responsibility for incident response was

centralised once again and entrusted to five teams of officers based at the main Holloway police station. Meanwhile problem-solving and proactive work was left with specialised staff based on the two remaining, and now much enlarged, sectors.

Not much more than a year later, this revised structure was dismantled following the introduction of borough policing and the amalgamation of Holloway Division with its immediate neighbour. At this point, the original meaning of the term ‘sector’ was lost, as what had been the old Holloway Division was redesignated the North Sector of the new Islington borough command. Twenty-four hour incident response capability was maintained at this sector level and responsibility for proactive work shared between eight geographically responsible ward constables or community contact officers. These constables were backed up by a similar number of officers allocated to a specialist centrally-based problem-solving team.

Problem-solving and community consultation

With the transformation of the old Holloway *Division* into the new North *Sector*, and the consolidation of both crime investigation and response policing at what amounted to divisional level, the framework of sector policing set out in the 1991 guidance had been destroyed. But all was not lost. The kind of crime tasks the new breed of police problem-solvers (intelligence gathering ward constables and specialist team members) would be asked to perform might seem very different to the quality of life concerns from which their sector-based predecessors had recoiled. However, a commitment to problem-solving remained.¹¹⁰ So too did sector-level community consultation in the form of the Highbury Sector Crime Panel. Faced with attempts by the police to amalgamate it with another working group to form a single North Sector Working Group, HSCP refused to disband and continued to function at the time (October 2002) interviews for this case study were conducted, more than a decade after it was first established.

However, the police have learned the hard lessons of the early 1990s and the inspector who attends HSCP meetings is now at pains to ensure that only crime problems likely to be susceptible to police action are passed on to ward constables and the sector problem-solving team. What interviewees described as “non-police matters” are passed on for other agencies to deal with—something which its members have grown to accept as they have become more realistic in their view of what the police can achieve.

Sector policing in London: Lessons for South Africa

Before discussing the lessons from the experience of sector policing in London for South Africa, some words of caution are necessary. London is the capital city of a rich country with a long history of stable democratic government—and a well-established system of policing to match. South Africa is a poor country that is relatively new both to democratic government and constitutional policing. In London, sector policing had to be flexible enough to work in the suburbs as well as inner-city areas like Holloway. In South Africa, it has to work not just in Sandton and Soweto, but also in the Karoo and on the banks of the Kei River. In this section, some of the key lessons from the London experience are distilled. These are followed up with implied questions for the South African experiment with sector policing covered in Chapter 5 below.

Lessons about structures and communities

- Setting up sectors: The first problem in Holloway was simply one of scale (30,000 people per sector). The sectors were simply not close enough to the ground to allow police officers to forge the kind of relationships with local people that were required.
- Defining sectors: A genuine ‘community’ of people with common interests could not be conjured up by drawing lines on a map. Most people considered ‘their area’ to consist of no more than one or two streets. The reality was of a great deal of conflict and disagreement at the sector level between people from different parts of the sector or from different groups within the sector.
- Representivity of community participants on the Sector Working Groups: Holloway was an area of considerable ethnic diversity. And yet the membership of the HSCP was exclusively white, overwhelmingly middle-aged and already active in existing local organisations. As a result, the HSCP was not properly representative of local people and lacked credibility with the police.
- Competing definitions of problems: Despite its advertised status as a *crime*-focused group, most problems identified by the HSCP were related to incivility, non-criminal behaviour, or the kind of petty crime that fell some way short of what police officers themselves saw as real police

work. Thus, few of the problems raised at HSCP meetings fitted with prevalent police views of what constitutes ‘real crime’.

- Failure of inter-agency problem-solving: HSCP also fell short of the mark in its role as an inter-agency forum. Representatives from other service providers were generally absent, and problems that required action from non-police agencies had to be referred to the relevant agency or local government department on an *ad hoc* basis either by the police or panel members. Little or nothing ever came of any of HSCP’s problem-solving efforts.

Lessons about police culture

- There was a gradual development of a sense of solidarity between officers working the same shift patterns across sector boundaries rather than between sector colleagues, because they rarely met. Officers tended to identify with team members from *other* sectors who worked the same hours, and with whom they came into regular contact in canteens, on training days and at major incidents.
- The root cause of the unpopularity of sector policing was that it challenged some of the core beliefs, values and practices in the occupational culture of operational police officers.
- The capacity of police managers to control their own organisation and the actions of the people who actually ‘do’ policing is not nearly as extensive as either they or people in government or civil society who rely on them to change police practice tend to believe.

Lessons about resources, focus and sustainability

- The most obvious source of discontent was that, however good an idea sector policing might be in theory (and many officers were prepared to concede that it might be), there simply were not enough people at Holloway to make it work.
- Without a massive—and highly improbable—injection of new resources, there was very little either local managers at Holloway or senior management of the Metropolitan Police itself could do to counter fears that sector policing was being introduced ‘on the cheap’.

- Inadequate top-down communication by those responsible for implementing sector policing at Holloway (and all across London) to explain to their staff why it was being introduced or its underlying principles, meant that few police members understood the philosophy behind sector policing.

Lessons about political change and policy sustainability

- Competition with other priorities: Problems identified at meetings of neighbourhood forums and the HSCP had to struggle for priority against competing crime objectives and policing targets set centrally.
- Government's target-setting approach: In order to generate better arrest figures and rapid response data, available resources became increasingly focused on dealing with the traditional priorities of crime fighting and incident response. And this, of course, was precisely the kind of police work that traditionalist opponents of sector policing inside the police organisation had always hankered after.
- After an election in 1997, a new UK government passed fresh legislation, which required partnerships between police and community to be constructed at borough level, rather than divisional or sector level.

In addition to the lessons learned from the Holloway experience, research evaluating the implementation of sector policing elsewhere in Britain¹¹¹ found that:

- there was no consistent evidence of changes in police practice as a result of sector-based problem-oriented policing;
- the introduction of a new style of policing (sector policing or similar) did not have a marked impact on public perceptions of the police.

Lessons about police accountability

One other important lesson from London's experience of sector policing concerns the perennially thorny issue of police accountability, which is central to the police-community relationship. So, in practical terms, what did the introduction of the London model of sector policing do to make policing more

accountable in a place like Holloway? And what might the implementation of the SAPS model do to make the police more accountable in South Africa, and to bridge the gap between police and people?

Sector policing did not set out to change the legal or political mechanisms by which the Metropolitan Police were held to account in London. Nor will the SAPS model do anything to affect the equivalent institutions and procedures established under the terms of the Constitution and the South African Police Services Act.¹¹² To find the mechanisms by which either the SAPS or London models of sector policing may lead (or did lead) to more accountable policing, we must look elsewhere.

Sector policing in London sought to improve police accountability (or “policing by consent” as the official guidance note put it) in two main ways. The first was by establishing sector working groups as a new mechanism for community consultation at sector level. The second was by encouraging geographically-responsible officers to know, and be known on, their sectors and to ‘own’ the problems of the people who lived and worked there. By these two routes, it was hoped that sector-based officers would come to familiarise themselves—and ultimately perhaps to share—the values and priorities of the people they served.

For a whole range of reasons noted earlier, we have seen how difficult it was to make either of these mechanisms work in practice. The Holloway case study showed how sectors were too large and diverse to ‘own’, and the temptation or pressure to do other kinds of work too great, for officers to familiarise themselves with, let alone address, popular concerns. Moreover, while they might have sympathised with the values of the police-friendly minority represented at meetings of neighbourhood forums and the HSCP, officers could not share their apparent obsession with dogs, traffic and other quality of life issues. As a means of making the police more accountable to all shades of local opinion, sector policing in Holloway was not a great success.

As has been discussed in Chapter 3, the SAPS model of sector policing loads the bulk of the responsibility for bridging the gap between police and public on to the shoulders of a sector manager (and an assistant) working with a sector crime forum. Apart from the police, crime forum members may include prominent business people, elected councillors and other community leaders.¹¹³ Insofar as sector policing adds a new mechanism for holding the police to account, that mechanism is the sector crime forum.

Unfortunately neither the history of sector working groups in London nor South Africa's own experience of community consultation at police station level in Community Policing Forums is cause for optimism.¹¹⁴ Unless sector crime forums—unlike CPFs and sector working groups—are able to make themselves genuinely representative of the areas in which they function, are given access to high quality information by the police and take their responsibilities as laid down in the draft framework seriously, it is doubtful that they will make a significant contribution to bridging the gap between police and people.

CHAPTER 5

PROSPECTS AND CHALLENGES FOR SECTOR POLICING IN SOUTH AFRICA

It is evident from the SAPS' draft national instruction that sector policing in South Africa in the early 21st century will look very different to sector policing in London in the dying days of the 20th. The South African version aims to give effect to a similar philosophy of community policing and to bring police and people closer together. And it sets out to do this by dividing policing areas into smaller, more manageable, units and mobilising other institutions and individuals to join with the police in identifying and resolving local crime problems.

Although apparently similar to the London model, the SAPS framework is both more modest, and more ambitious in its aims than the London version. It is more modest in that it does not contemplate a wholesale restructuring of the police organisation: no more than one or two police personnel (either members or reservists) are to be redeployed on to sectors. This redeployment will affect the line management of crime prevention activity in the SAPS, but should have only an "occasional" impact on the work of the other specialised functions of the organisation.¹¹⁵ But the South African sector policing approach is also ambitious. Instead of trying to improve the quality and accountability of the service delivered to the public by making more effective use of existing police resources, it seeks to do so by engaging with and mobilising hitherto untapped resources *outside* the organisation—primarily through the mobilisation of police reservists (volunteers) and participants in the Sector Crime Forums.

Despite the significant differences between the South African model of sector policing and that tried in Holloway, there remain some useful pointers from the London experience, as demonstrated in Chapter 4. The following are just some of the more obvious questions for sector policing in South Africa that are prompted by reflecting on the Holloway case study:

- How can sector boundaries be drawn in a way that balances the requirements of organisational and administrative efficiency, representivity and the need to foster closer links between the police, other key roleplayers and the public at local level?

- Under what conditions will sector crime forums be able to act both as a broadly representative forum for the expression of public concerns about crime and a mechanism for co-ordinating the response to those concerns across a range of agencies?
- How can the police provide information about local crime and safety problems to sector crime forums in a comprehensive yet comprehensible and useable form? How can agreement be reached on the priority crime and safety problems in a given area instead of relying on the police's definition of the 'real' problems?
- What can be done to influence the internal organisational culture of the SAPS positively towards sector policing? How can SAPS reward structures and measures of performance be adjusted to reflect the goals of sector policing, and to valuing collaborative problem-solving work at least as highly as more traditional short term and arrest-focussed approaches to policing?
- How can supervision, discipline and accountability be maintained when police officials are delegated to work more independently at sector level? How can control be maintained when the sector policing model rests on such a high degree of reservist (volunteer) participation?

How these questions and others like them are answered in practice will determine whether sector policing will work under South African conditions. But nothing will be more critical to its success than the ability of sector managers to construct, maintain and develop mutual trust and practical working relationships between the police, other roleplayers and the public.

According to the draft national instruction, members or reservists selected to act as sector managers should possess a formidable range of skills: creativity, communication, presentation and marketing skills, problem-solving abilities, planning and facilitation skills, and the capacity to team manage in a multi-cultural environment.¹¹⁶ To find many people with such a wide array of skills in any organisation would be a tall order. To find hundreds of them in and around a relatively poorly-paid police organisation, which has high levels of functional illiteracy and was run until comparatively recently on military lines in a culture that valued obedience and compliance over initiative and innovation, may be wildly over-optimistic.

International evidence suggests that few police personnel at any level—even those from organisations without the *skop, skiet en donder* tradition of the

SAPS behind them—easily adjust to the demands of collaborative problem solving.¹¹⁷ The sector inspectors at Holloway certainly found the process of setting up and co-ordinating the HSCP a uniquely stressful one for which their police training and many years of experience had left them ill-prepared. Even if finding *enough* people to act as (and assist) sector managers may be relatively easy, finding the *right* people is likely to prove considerably more difficult, particularly given the important role to be played by reservists in the South African sector policing model.

Importing sector policing to South Africa

In addition to the challenges facing the SAPS in implementing sector policing, a number of important questions are also implied in this monograph about importing ideas from the UK and US to South Africa, and their subsequent indigenisation.

As discussed above, the concept of sector policing was imported from the UK and US to South Africa in the 1990s. This was justified as part of the ongoing modernisation and internationalisation of the SAPS, and its re-entry into the international market of police ideas, with references to ‘team policing’ as used in the US in the 1970’s, ‘unit beat’ systems from the US and UK, ‘problem-oriented policing’ (which had been quite thoroughly adopted in the SAPS approach to community policing) and even the Japanese ‘koban’, cited in SAPS documents which describe the origins of sector policing. However, team policing and unit beat systems were long dead, and even sector policing in London was in its last stages in the late 1990s, just when the SAPS was beginning to develop the concept for use in South Africa. The obvious question is why the SAPS and South African policymakers would choose to import an idea which had failed or fizzled out in its countries of origin?

The ‘policy transfer’ of the idea of sector policing appears to have been voluntary. In other words it was not imposed by a government agency or multilateral donor, and was not the result of advocacy from outside the police. Rather, it was the result of an individual police officer’s efforts to import and popularise the idea. There has clearly been some internal lobbying and debate within the SAPS about the sector policing policy—evidenced both by the lengthy delays in the finalisation of the policy, and in the many ways that sector policing has been cited and interpreted by politicians and police leaders.

The absence of civil society actors in formulating sector policing policy is relatively unusual in South Africa and may frustrate efforts to gain the support of non-government stakeholders once the policy starts to be fully implemented. Experience of introducing community policing in South Africa showed that the NGO sector and local branches of political parties played an enormous role in popularising and supporting the policy, even in the face of resistance from within the police.

The degree of policy transfer is high—the South African policy is virtually copied from the British (rather than, say, using the British policy merely as inspiration for the local version).

The relevant literature suggests a range of possible constraints on policy transfer: the complexity of the policy, previous policies, structural or institutional constraints, and constraints on feasibility.¹¹⁸ There are also possible ideological, cultural, technological, economic and language constraints. In the case of sector policing, one of the constraints likely to impact on the transfer of the policy would be the nature of the police institution in South Africa, and its previous policies. The fact that it is still in the process of transforming from its repressive, militarised past mitigates against de-centralised approaches to policing which rely on high levels of individual skill and integrity, as would be expected in the sectors. Equally, the sheer size and physical distribution of the SAPS makes the notion of a sector in the Northern Cape something dramatically different to that envisaged in London, for instance.

Another theme examined by scholars of policy transfer is how it can lead to failure. They suggest three possible routes to failure:

- un-informed transfer of policy;
- incomplete transfer;
- inappropriate transfer.¹¹⁹

In the case of sector policing in South Africa, it remains to be seen whether the policy will succeed or fail, and whether or not the fact that it was an imported concept is a contributory factor. Underlying that, of course, is the question of how to measure the success of policing.

One of the interesting differences between the SAPS sector policing policy and that used elsewhere is the extent to which it has been associated with 'tough policing' and seen as a possible extension of the kinds of high-density saturation policing operations associated with Operation Crackdown. This

association, though it might horrify the community policing purists, might—in the South African context—be a greater guarantor of the policy’s survival. However, the mere fact that a policy survives is no guarantee that it will be implemented or that it will have an impact. The particular objectives of the sector policing policy need to be clarified, and indicators developed to measure progress.

Adaptability of the sector policing concept: determinant of success or failure?

As discussed earlier, during the five-year process of policy development around sector policing in South Africa, the concept has been used in support of widely differing policy agendas, such as:

- crime prevention and problem-solving;
- community policing, improved police-community relations, and community partnerships;
- Operation Crackdown;
- improved intelligence gathering in the community;¹²⁰
- increased police visibility—saturation policing or targeted police patrols—in the hope that more visible policing will lead to reduced crime (a perennial pre-election favourite for politicians of all persuasions, particularly when the absence of reliable official crime data may generate feelings of insecurity, and of mistrust towards the police and government).

In addition to serving a wide variety of policy imperatives, sector policing is now also far more integrated with other policy initiatives in the SAPS, most notably the new Reserve Police policy and the approach to rural safety. This is an attempt to rationalise policies, ensure internal coherence within the SAPS and minimise confusion. It also facilitates resource allocation for sector policing efforts in future.

The vagueness of the sector policing concept—and the fact that it has been cited in support of both the ‘soft’ crime prevention agenda, and the ‘tough’ crackdown agenda within the SAPS—may be the reason why the concept has

survived and finally graduated into national police policy. However, the fact that sector policing has been cited in support of diverse policing tactics suggests that the concept may be less than clear. Perversely, a lack of clarity can be an advantage, because if a policy concept is 'all things to all people' it is likely to be adopted by a broader range of policymakers and supported more widely in society. However, the woolliness of the concept would make its implementation and impact hard to measure—leaving it open to claims of failure as well as success.

NOTES

1. 'Policy transfer' or 'lesson-drawing' is an area of recent interest in the fields of international relations and comparative politics. D Stone, *Learning Lessons and Transferring Policy across Time, Space and Disciplines*, *Politics* 19 (1), Feb 1999, p 51.
2. "The usually-cited definition of policy transfer in the UK is that 'it refers to a process in which knowledge about policies, administrative arrangements, institutions, etc, in one time and/or place is used in the development of policies, administrative arrangements and institutions in another time and/or place'." Dolowitz and Marsh cited in D Stone, *ibid*, p 52.
3. Final Draft National Instruction */2003 on Sector Policing, SAPS, paras 5 & 7.
4. Metropolitan Police, *Report of the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police 1991/2*, Metropolitan Police, London, 1992, p xiv.
5. D Smith, *Research, the Community and the Police*, in P Willmott (ed), *Policing and the Community*, Policy Studies Institute, London, 1999, p 54.
6. J Greene and S Mastrofski, *Community Policing: Rhetoric or Reality*, Praeger, New York, 1988, p xiii.
7. M Moore, *Problem-solving and community policing*, in M Tonry and N Morris (eds), *Modern Policing*, Crime and Justice 15, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1992.
8. N Fielding, *Theorizing community policing*, *British Journal of Criminology* 42, 2002, pp 147–163.
9. See R Trojanowicz and B Bucqueroux, *Community Policing: A Contemporary Perspective*, Anderson Publishing, Cincinnati, 1990, and G Kelling and M Moore, *From political to reform to community: the evolving strategy of police*, in J Greene and S Mastrofski (eds), *Community Policing: Rhetoric or Reality*, Praeger, New York, 1988, for this range of views. The influence of Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux on the development of community policing in South Africa dates back at least to the *Policy Framework and Guidelines* issued by the SAPS in 1997 and is evident even now in the Draft National Instruction's reference to the philosophy of community policing.
10. See J Crank, *Watchman and community: myth and institutionalization in policing*, *Law & Society Review* 28 (2), 1992, pp 325–351.

11. See Kelling and Moore *op cit* and N Fielding, *Community Policing*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, for American and British examples of this solution to the conundrum.
12. This is the approach taken by Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux, *op cit* in the US and in the UK by J Alderson, *Policing Freedom*, MacDonald and Evans, Plymouth, 1979.
13. D Bayley, *Police for the Future*, Oxford University Press, New York and D Smith, *op cit*.
14. See D Bayley, A foreign policy for democratic policing, *Policing and Society* 5, 1995, pp 79–93, and M Brogden, Community policing as cherry pie, in R Mawby (ed), *Policing across the World*, UCL Press, London, 1999.
15. Alderson, *op cit*.
16. Lord Scarman, *The Brixton Disorders 10-12 April 1981: Report of an Inquiry*, Cmnd 8427, HMSO, London, 1981, para 5.46.
17. *Ibid*, para 5.51.
18. See, for example, P Waddington, “Community policing”: a sceptical appraisal, in P Norton (ed), *Law and Order and British Politics*, Gower, Aldershot, 1984; and P Gordon, Community policing: towards the local police state?, in P Scruton (ed), *Law, Order and the Authoritarian State*, Open University Press, Milton Keynes, 1987.
19. M Weatheritt, *Innovations in Policing*, Croom Helm, London, 1986, p 26.
20. R Reiner, *Chief Constables*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1991.
21. See E Pelsler, J Schnetler and A Louw, *Not Everybody’s Business: Community Policing in the SAPS’ Priority Areas*, ISS Monograph No 71, Institute for Security Studies, Pretoria, 2002.
22. See Weatheritt, *op cit*.
23. L Sherman, C Milton and T Kelly, *Team Policing: Seven Case Studies*, Police Foundation, Washington DC, 1973.
24. Weatheritt, *op cit*.
25. B Irving, C Bird, M Hibberd and J Willmore, *Neighbourhood Policing: The Natural History of a Policing Experiment*, Police Foundation, London, 1989, provides a report on the external evaluation of neighbourhood policing carried out by an independent research organisation.
26. For the evolution of estates policing into sector policing see the *Reports of the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis* 1988, 1990 and 1991/2, Metropolitan Police, London.

27. D Brown and S Iles, *Community Constables: A Study of a Policing Initiative*, Research and Planning Unit Paper 30, Home Office, London, 1985; R Grimshaw and T Jefferson, *Interpreting Policework*, Unwin, London, 1987.
28. Goldstein's published work on problem-oriented policing dates back to the 1970s but the most complete statement of his ideas is contained in H Goldstein, *Problem Oriented Policing*, McGraw-Hill, New York, 1990.
29. Goldstein, *op cit*, p 7.
30. See J Eck and W Spelman, *Problem-Solving: Problem-Oriented Policing in Newport News*, Police Executive Research Forum/National Institute of Justice, Washington DC, 1987. Though the SARA process reflects his systematic approach to problem-solving, Goldstein himself has pointed out that the use of SARA does not in and of itself amount to an effective implementation of POP as he conceived it.
31. M Chatterton, Targeting community beat officers: organisational constraints and resistance, *Policing and Society* 3, 1993, p 202. The findings of subsequent research on POP in Britain are reviewed in the next chapter.
32. Goldstein, *op cit*, p 34; and see Eck and Spelman, *op cit*, and L Sherman, Attacking crime: police and crime control, in M Tonry and N Morris (eds), *Modern Policing*, Crime and Justice 15, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1992.
33. M Buerger, The challenge of reinventing police and community, in D Weisburd and C Uchida (eds), *Police Innovation and Control of the Police: Problems of Law, Order and Community*, Springer-Verlag, New York, 1993, p 103.
34. Subsequently consolidated in s. 96 Police Act 1996.
35. The essence of the dispute was the continuing accountability of the Metropolitan Police to a Cabinet minister in central government rather than to the locally elected representatives of the people of London.
36. The Police Board was an advisory structure created as part of the National Peace Accord. It was made up of senior police generals from the SAP, and an equal number of civilians nominated by the various political parties which were signatories to the Accord. The trip to London was funded by the British Overseas Development Administration as part of the British government's transitional aid package for South Africa.
37. See, for example R Morgan, Policing by consent; legitimating the doctrine, in R Morgan and D Smith (eds), *Coming to Terms with Policing*, Routledge, London, 1989.
38. Home Office, *Police/Community Consultative Arrangements Under Section 106 Criminal Evidence Act 1984: Report of an Internal Home Office Review*, London, Home Office, 1989.

39. Home Office, *Guidance on Arrangements for Local Consultation between the Community and the Police in the Metropolitan Police District*, Home Office, London, 1985.
40. Joint Consultative Committee, *The Operational Policing Review*, Police Federation, Surbiton, 1990; R Morgan, Talking about policing, in D Downes (ed), *Unravelling Criminal Justice*, Macmillan, London, 1992.
41. R Morgan, Police accountability: current developments and future prospects, in M Weatheritt (ed), *Police Research: Some Future Prospects*, Gower, Aldershot, 1989.
42. Morgan, 1989, *op cit*; Home Office, 1989, *op cit*.
43. E McLaughlin and K Murji, The end of public policing? Police reform and 'the new managerialism', in L Noaks, M Maguire and M Levi (eds), *Contemporary Issues in Criminology*, University of Wales Press, Cardiff, 1995. Another term for the same phenomenon is 'new public management' or NPM used in F Leishman, B Loveday and S Savage, *Core Issues in Policing*, Longman, London, 1996.
44. Home Office Circular 114/83, *Manpower, efficiency and effectiveness in the police service*, Home Office, London, 1983.
45. *The Citizen's Charter*, Cm. 1599, HMSO, London; M Hirst, What do we mean by quality?, *Policing* 7, 1991, pp 183–93.
46. Metropolitan Police (undated), *Sector Policing: What is it?* Metropolitan Police, London.
47. Wolff Olins, *A Force for Change: A Report on the Corporate Identity of the Metropolitan Police*, Wolff Olins Corporate Identity, London, 1998.
48. Metropolitan Police, *PLUS: Making it happen*, Metropolitan Police, London, 1990.
49. Metropolitan Police, *Report of the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police 1990*, Metropolitan Police, London, 1990.
50. Department of Safety and Security, *White Paper on Safety and Security*, Pretoria, 1998, p 18.
51. South African Police Service, *SAPS Draft Guideline on Sector Policing*, 1998, p 3.
52. *Ibid*, pp 2–3.
53. Secretariat for Safety & Security, *Evaluation of Programme Johannesburg*, Department for Safety & Security, Pretoria, 1999, pp 30–33.
54. B Dixon, Going Glocal: The Indigenisation of Sector Policing in the New South Africa, Paper presented at the British Society of Criminology Conference, University of Leicester, 6 July 2002, p 22.

55. Minister Charles Nqakula, Budget Vote 7 June 2001, cited in *SAPS Journal*, SAPS, Pretoria, Sept 2002 p 13.
56. Summary: *Annual Report of the National Commissioner of the SAPS*, 1 April 2001–31 March 2002, SAPS, Pretoria, 2002, p 1.
57. *Ibid*, p 13.
58. Currently (November 2003) available only its final draft form, awaiting signature by the National Commissioner. A National Instruction is the format used internally within the SAPS to issue instructions or policy directives.
59. Although five steps are laid down in the National Instruction, these are summarised into four steps in the pamphlet titled 'Sector Policing=Service Excellence' which is being used for education of SAPS members about sector policing.
60. This includes articles in the *SAPS Journal* (a magazine for police members), pamphlets, videos and a training curriculum.
61. SAPS Final Draft National Instruction, SAPS, Pretoria, 2003, para 4.1.
62. *Ibid*, para 5.1.
63. *Ibid*, para 5.3.
64. *Ibid*, para 1.
65. *Ibid*, para 5.4.
66. *Ibid*, para 1.
67. This dynamic is evident in many other societies, and is certainly not specific to South Africa or post-transition states.
68. SAPS Regulations for the South African Reserve Police Service, Regulation Gazette no 7308, Vol 441, Government Printer, Pretoria; and National Instruction N1/2002, The SA Reserve Police Service, issued by Consolidation Notice 4/2002.
69. National Instruction 1/2002, *op cit*, 2 (d) (i).
70. *Ibid*, cit 2 (d) (vi).
71. *Ibid*, 2 (d) (viii).
72. Charles Nqakula MP, Minister of Safety and Security, Budget Vote Debate, Vote 25 Safety and Security, Parliament, Cape Town, June 10 2003.
73. This was suggested in an interview with a senior SAPS officer involved in the sector policing initiative; however, the close similarity between current and original versions of the policy documents on sector policing tends to belie this claim.

74. Metropolitan Police, *Sector Policing: Guide for Divisional Management Teams; Sector Policing: The Sector Inspectors' Handbook; and Sector Policing: Guide for Divisional Working Parties*, Metropolitan Police, London, 1991. In the notes that follow, these booklets will be referred to as SPDMT, SPSIH and SPDWP respectively.
75. SPDMT, *op cit*, p 8.
76. Adapted from SPDMT, *op cit*, pp 2 and 5.
77. Detailed accounts of this research, led by Professor Betsy Stanko, are contained in B Dixon and E Stanko, *Serving the People: Sector Policing and Public Accountability*, Brunel University, Uxbridge, 1993; B Dixon and E Stanko, Sector policing and public accountability, *Policing and Society* 5, 1995, pp 171–83; and W Dixon, *Popular Policing? Sector Policing and the Reinvention of Police Accountability*, Unpublished PhD thesis, Department of Law, Brunel University, Uxbridge, 1999. Unless otherwise stated, the material for this chapter is drawn from this research including observational data collected by Bill Dixon and statistical information taken from an internal evaluation of the first six months of sector policing on Holloway Division (*Sector Policing Evaluation April–October 1992*, Holloway Division, Metropolitan Police, London). The original research project on sector policing in Holloway was specifically directed towards questions of accountability and the role of locally based officers in meeting policing needs. It was not intended to be an evaluation either of sector policing generally, or of its implementation on Holloway Division. We use the material here to illustrate some of the challenges and limitations likely to be faced by any police organisation seeking to implement a similar community-based, geographically responsible style of policing.
78. Notifiable offences include the more serious types of crime that have to be reported to central government for the purposes of compiling national crime statistics. Contemporary crime survey data suggested that Holloway was part of a relatively high crime area with 7% of households in the Borough of Islington of which it formed the northern half, reporting that they had been burgled or had property stolen over a 12 month period, compared to only 4% of households nationally.
79. 'Days' were worked Monday to Friday with two 'day' teams on duty on Thursdays. 'Evening' shifts were restricted to Fridays and Saturdays.
80. T Bennett and C Kemp, *An Evaluation of Sector-Based Problem-Oriented Policing in Thames Valley Police Force Area: Executive Summary*, Unpublished report submitted to the Home Office Research and Planning Unit, Home Office, London, 1994. The focus of Bennett and Kemp's research was a number of small-scale experiments with a form of 'time-based' sector policing in the Thames Valley Police area to the west and north of London. Time-based sector policing was considerably less radical than the 'area-based' style introduced in London and

involved the allocation of some limited responsibility for demarcated geographical areas or sectors to large teams of officers whose principal duty was to patrol and respond to calls for service over a much larger area for an eight or 10 hour slice of time.

81. SPSIH, *op cit*, pp 4–5.
82. *Ibid*, pp 7–8.
83. This body became the main focus for the research on which this case study is based.
84. Fieldnotes, 3 March 1993.
85. Fieldnotes, 7 and 19 November 1992.
86. Fieldnotes, 13 July 1992, 18 January 1993.
87. Fieldnotes, 15 and 21 June 1992.
88. Fieldnotes, 2 November 1992.
89. J Shapland and J Vagg, *Policing by the Public*, Routledge, London, 1998.
90. This is not to suggest that reporting rates even for ‘real crime’ approach 100% or deny that they differ between offence types.
91. Fieldnotes, 22 April 1992.
92. Holloway Division, *op cit.*, pp 16–7.
93. This figure is obtained by multiplying the number of officers on a sector team (assumed to be four to allow for leave and other abstractions) by the number of eight hour ‘day’ shifts worked over a six month period at six shifts a week ($4 \times 6 \times 8 \times 26 = 4,992$).
94. See A Leigh, T Read and N Tilley, *Brit Pop II: Problem-oriented policing in practice*, Police Research Series Paper 93, Home Office, London, 1998, p 1. These authors note that almost all respondents to a telephone survey of half of the UK’s police forces reported that they were either introducing or actively considering the introduction of some kind of POP in at least some parts of their force areas.
95. Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary, *Beating Crime*, HMIC Thematic Inspection Report, Home Office, London, 1998, p 5.
96. Leigh *et al*, *op cit*.
97. Under the pre-sector policing system, uniformed patrol officers were divided into four large teams or ‘reliefs’. Over a typical 24-hour period, three reliefs would cover the three eight hour shifts into which the day was divided, while the fourth had a rest day.

98. Fieldnotes, 7/8 November 1991.
99. Holloway Division, *op cit*, pp 23–5.
100. Fieldnotes, 19 November 1992.
101. Holloway Division, *op cit*, p 10–15.
102. For a summary of the international research literature and its relevance in the South African context, see R Reiner, *The Politics of the Police*, 3rd edition, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2000; and M Marks, Shifting gears or slamming the brakes? A review of police behavioural change in a post-apartheid police unit, *Policing and Society* 13 (3), 2003, pp 235–258.
103. Fieldnotes, 25 October 1992.
104. Holloway Division, *Sector Policing: Phase II*, Metropolitan Police, London, 1993.
105. The main source for the account of sector policing both in Holloway and across the rest of London that follows are interviews conducted by one of the authors (BD) with Chief Superintendent Paul Minton, Superintendent Andy Smith and Inspector Graham Burt on 11 October 2002. The authors would like to express their gratitude to all three officers for their invaluable contribution to this study. Both interviews (Messrs. Smith and Burt were interviewed together) were conducted face-to-face and recorded in the form of contemporaneous written notes.
106. The relative enthusiasm with which sector policing was introduced at Holloway was obvious to the research team there as early as 1992 when it became clear that neighbouring divisions—including the Islington Division with which Holloway was later to be amalgamated—were moving to implement it much more slowly, cautiously and reluctantly than the zealous management at Holloway thought appropriate.
107. M FitzGerald, M Hough, I Joseph and T Qureshi, *Policing for London*, Willan Publishing, Cullompton, 2002, p 109.
108. *Ibid*, p 105.
109. Similar realignment between SAPS boundaries and local municipal boundaries is required in the near future in South Africa.
110. Contemporary police managers would of course argue that closing down a ‘crack house’ contributes as much if not more to the quality of life of local residents as any action their officers might have been asked to take in the early days of sector policing against, say, illegal parking or people who allow their dogs to foul pavements.
111. T Bennett and C Kemp, *An Evaluation of Sector-Based Problem-Oriented Policing in Thames Valley Police Force Area: Executive Summary*, Unpublished report submitted to the Home Office Research and Planning Unit, Home Office, London, 1994.

112. Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996; and South African Police Service Act 68 of 1995. The mechanisms provided for here include institutions such as the Independent Complaints Directorate, that National and Provincial Secretariats for Safety and Security and the responsibility of the courts for holding the police to account under the ordinary law of the land. See B Dixon, *Accountable policing: a four dimensional analysis*, *South African Journal of Criminal Justice* 13, 2002, pp 69–83, for further discussion.
113. Draft National Instruction, *op cit*, para 10.4.1
114. The limitations of CPFs as an accountability mechanism are documented in E Pelser, J Schnetler and A Louw, *Not Everybody's Business: Community Policing in the SAPS' Priority Areas*, ISS Monograph No 71, Institute for Security Studies, Pretoria, 2002.
115. *SAPS Journal*, October 2002, p 13.
116. Final Draft National Instruction, *op cit*, para 10. 2. 3.
117. See, for example, Leigh *et al*, *op cit*; and B Irving and B Dixon, *Hotspotting: Turning Police Theory into Practice in Thames Valley and Northumbria*, Police Foundation, London, 2002.
118. A Policy Transfer Framework in D Dolowitz and D Marsh, *Who Learns From Whom: a Review of the Policy Transfer Literature*, *Political Studies* 44 (2), 1996.
119. *Ibid*.
120. See *Breaking down the barriers*, *Sunday Times*, 26 May 2002.