

something and what they have to say should be considered. Perhaps the problem of police reform is not simply one of implementation, but one of vision and understanding that requires change at the top. Perhaps it is time to abandon the vision that views 'bandit catching' as the central objective of policing and to replace it with a determination to guarantee safety and security.

If this change were to take place, not only would policing change drastically, but so would the role of the police within it. If this were to happen the police would, I suggest, cease to 'own' policing. They would see themselves less as people who provide policing and more as people who enable policing to take place through assisting in the co-ordination of resources that can be used to accomplish safe, secure environments.

It is this vision that I see emerging within police departments in arenas as diverse as community and public order policing and it is the absence of a clear articulation of, and concrete support for, this vision by senior management that is, I suggest, the major obstacle to significant police reform at present.

Let me illustrate what I have been saying with a story taken from corporate policing.

I once interviewed a Director of Security of a very large clothing retail chain that had outlets across Canada over a decade ago. One of my early questions dealt with the size of his budget. He answered that it was well into the seven digit range. My next question was about the size of his department.

My expectation, drawn from my research with public police departments where some 80 per cent of the budget is spent on employees, was that he would reveal that he had a relatively large staff.

To my surprise his answer was. "One, and you are looking at him." "You must earn a lot," I responded facetiously. He patiently explained that his budget was to support the security responsibilities of all the company's employees; his job was to ensure that these responsibilities were properly executed.

Policing within his company was not based on the use and capacities of specialised security guards, but on the co-ordinated capacities of all the company's staff.

National co-operation on crime prevention

ARRANGEMENTS were agreed on 15 July in Melbourne at the Australasian Police Ministers' Council for an approach to crime prevention which cuts across political and jurisdictional boundaries to tackle a nation-wide community problem. The Federal Minister for Justice, Senator Michael Tate, who chaired the APMC meeting, described the decision as a crucial initiative in identifying and tackling community concerns about safety and crime prevention issues.

"The aim is a better understanding of criminal and anti-social behaviour to develop a strategy which brings together those involved in government and community planning and development to deal jointly with the conditions that generate crime," the Minister said.

As part of the strategy it is planned to conduct national annual Crime Prevention Awards, to encourage and highlight particular achievements in improving community safety and combating crime.

Under the national crime prevention approach, Police Ministers will comprise the new Australian Community Safety Council.

Senator Tate said that already all police forces were involved in crime prevention, working to varying degrees with their communities.

The Ministers will meet in Melbourne later this year with colleagues from other policy areas and with co-opted experts on criminal justice and social justice issues, crime prevention, youth, the aged and cultural minorities.

The power tool factory

(or lateral thinking applied to crime prevention)

A large power tool manufacturer in Canada was suffering ongoing pilfering by employees of hand-held power tools costing in excess of \$500,000 a year. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) asked his Head of Security to consider the matter and provide advice on how to deal with the pilfering.

After a week of consideration, the Head of Security (a former police investigator) recommended that undercover security officers be placed in high risk areas, that offenders be caught red-handed and made examples of by prosecuting them to the maximum letter of the law.

The CEO was appalled at the suggestion. He asked his Head of Security if he had learned nothing about the business since his employment with the firm? The CEO said "I am in the business of making money, what you are suggesting will cost me more than I am losing on pilfering." He detailed

the down side of the proposal showing he would lose valuable resources in experienced, well trained tradespeople whose replacements would have to be re-trained at great cost to the company. Production would be affected and the prosecution cycle would cost money and tie up personnel in the security area with much time wasted at court. Besides, the CEO believed new personnel would probably do the same, with pilfering not easing.

The CEO told the Head of Security he had a week to resolve the problem with a positive, instead of negative, approach. If he was not able to come up with an acceptable proposal, he would no longer be required.

The Head of Security came up with an acceptable option very quickly once he shifted his perspective from 'crook catching' to 'crime or security management'.

His solution was simple — set up a tool library.