

New Zealand Police: training for ethnic responsiveness (A)

*“E tū ki te kei o te waka, kia pakia koe e ngā ngaru o te wā”
 (“Stand at the stern of the canoe and feel the spray of the future biting at your face”)*

In September 2006, Superintendent Pieri Munro was appointed District Commander of New Zealand Police's Wellington District. It was an opportunity for him to look back on a 30-year career that had focused on building bridges between police and Māori communities, using training to improve the skills and cultural awareness of officers.

Pieri Munro joined the police service at a point when New Zealand Police's relationship with the country's non-European peoples was about to hit rock bottom.

In 1975, as Munro went through Police College, police officers conducted dawn raids on Pacific Island households in Auckland to search for illegal overstayers. Three years later, the largest police force ever mobilised in New Zealand was sent to forcibly evict hundreds of Māori who had occupied a site on Auckland harbour for 17 months to protest at the last of their ancestral lands being sold by the Crown. The dawn raids and the breaking up of the Bastion Point land protest were to become notorious episodes in New Zealand's history.

In the coming decades, police attitudes towards race relations changed significantly. In 2004, 20,000 marchers converged on Parliament to protest against proposed legislation that they believed would strip Māori of their customary land rights. This time, the priority for police officers was to ensure the

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safety and freedom of protesters as they marched the length of the North Island. There was no violence, no arrests and no complaints were made against police.

For Munro, the peacefulness of the protest was a milestone in a career path that had involved many initiatives to improve understanding between New Zealand police and the country's first inhabitants.

New Zealand: a nation of immigrants

New Zealand has a shorter human history than any other country, but has seen many diverse waves of migration.

Māori are thought to have arrived in New Zealand from East Polynesia in the 1300s, followed by the first Europeans 300 years later. By 1839, there were about 2,000 Europeans living in New Zealand: by 1852, there were 28,000.

The sudden growth in European settlement was largely the result of the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi between Queen Victoria's representatives and Māori chiefs in 1840. The Treaty – considered the founding document of New Zealand - gave British immigrants legal rights as citizens, ensuring that most migrants over the next 130 years would be British.

While the English version of the Treaty said Māori had ceded sovereignty to the Queen, the Māori version said the Treaty guaranteed chieftainship of New Zealand to Māori. The change in wording sparked a bitter controversy that continues today.

Land wars between Māori and Pākehā (New Zealanders of European descent) broke out after the signing of the Treaty, and Māori eventually lost millions of hectares of land. An armed branch of the constabulary was established in 1846, and was used partly to impose land confiscation decisions and to suppress dissent.

A “white New Zealand” policy of assisted migrant schemes and entry permits was in force till 1974, when immigration policies began to base right of residence on skills and qualifications rather than ethnicity. The first influx of newcomers came from the Pacific Islands in the 1970s, followed by waves in the 1980s and 1990s from China, Hong Kong, Korea, Japan, India and Sri Lanka. Refugees and migrants from Iran, Iraq and Somalia began arriving in the 1990s.

By 2001, almost one in five New Zealand residents was born overseas. About 6.5 percent of the population were Pacific peoples, and a further 6.5 percent were Asian. The Chinese made up the largest Asian group, followed by Indians.¹

In 2001, about one in seven New Zealanders – a total of 526,281 of New Zealand's population of almost four million – identified themselves as Māori. The “browning” of New Zealand was expected to increase because Māori and Pacific families were having more children than European or Asian families: in 2001, 40 percent of newborn babies were Māori or Pacific peoples.²

¹ Statistics collected in the 2001 Census and recorded by Statistics New Zealand.

² In the 2006 Census, the number of New Zealanders identifying themselves in the Asian ethnic group increased by 50 percent, in the Pacific peoples ethnic group by 14.7 percent, and in the

Auckland was the centre of the new, young, multicultural New Zealand. Two-thirds of New Zealand's Asians lived in the Auckland region. Fourteen percent of its 1.3 million people were Asian, and the figure was expected to reach 25 percent by 2016. A further 14 percent of the population were Pacific peoples, and 12 percent were Māori. One in three Aucklanders were born overseas.

The rate of social change in the past 30 years has been rapid. Almost before New Zealanders had properly acknowledged that they lived in a bicultural society, New Zealand had become multicultural.

Māori: people of the land

As the original inhabitants of New Zealand, Māori are tangata whenua (the people of the land) and are considered to hold a special position in New Zealand society.

Māori society is based around iwi (tribes), hapū (sub-tribes) and whānau (families). Māori lived largely in rural areas until the 1950s; by 2001, they were as likely as the rest of the population to live in towns and cities. Some Māori living in urban areas have lost touch with their physical roots in the countryside, but most strongly relate to their tribal affiliations and place great value on Māoritanga – the Māori way of doing things.³

Māori language and culture has been through a renaissance since the 1970s, and there are now Māori schools and universities, businesses, radio stations, a TV station and a political party. The Waitangi Tribunal was set up to examine claims regarding the loss of tribal estates during the years of land confiscation, and some sizeable assets have been returned to tribes. However, Māori have substantially lower life expectancy rates, lower rates of education and higher unemployment rates than Pākehā, and are much more likely to live in poverty.⁴

They are also over-represented in most crime statistics, both as perpetrators and as victims, and in the prison population. A 1999 report found that Māori accounted for 44 percent of cases resulting in conviction.⁵

Pākehā once prided themselves on having the best race relations in the world, but this perception that was badly shaken by urban Māori protest movements in the late 1960s. Now, although Māori are an important force in all aspects of New Zealand society, government commitment to honouring the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi has been controversial and many Māori believe their people are still substantially disadvantaged by the legacy of colonialism.

Maori ethnic group by 7.4 percent (people were able to identify with more than one ethnic group, so the percentage total did not add up to 100).

³ Eighty percent of the people of Māori descent counted in the 2001 Census reported one or more iwi affiliations. Ngāpuhi was the largest iwi, with 102,981 members, followed by Ngāti Porou, with 61,701 members. Ngai Tahu/Kai Tahu, the fourth largest iwi overall, was the largest South Island iwi, with 39,180 members. In the 1996 Census, 74 percent of people of Māori descent reported affiliations to at least one iwi.

⁴ John Wilson. 'Society', Te Ara – the Encyclopaedia of New Zealand, updated 26 September 2006.

⁵ Ministry of Justice publication, Responses to Crime: Annual Review 1999.

New Zealand Police

New Zealand Police is the lead agency responsible for reducing crime and enhancing community safety. In July 2006, it had 7,700 police officers and 2500 non-sworn (civilian) staff, who provided a wide range of support services. The service is organised into 12 districts and a number of service centres, which are administered from national headquarters in Wellington.

The chief executive of New Zealand Police is the Commissioner, who is appointed by New Zealand's Governor General and is accountable to the Minister of Police.⁶ The agency has two Deputy Commissioners, who are also appointed by the Governor General. Its Executive is made up of 25 senior police managers (which include the Commissioner, the Deputy Commissioners and the service's 12 District Commanders).

Māori, as “Native Constables,” were part of the armed constabularies that existed before the Police Force Act 1886 formally established the service, and have continued to be an integral part of the police force.

Pieri Munro went through the Police College in Trentham (now The Royal New Zealand Police College in Porirua, near Wellington) in 1975. He recalls that five of the 78 members of his trainee cadet wing identified as Māori. There were three Māori police instructors, who appeared to have very high - although unstated - expectations of the Māori cadets.

Trainees were given one course in race relations. The course was basic, and did not suggest there would be any value in officers attempting to form relationships with Māori communities. When the land rights protest movement gathered pace, police officers were on one side of the barricades and Māori were on the other.

As Munro commented:

“At the time of Bastion Point, the police relationship with Māori was already abysmal. Bastion Point was a cultural collision forced upon the police by the Government of the time, and it damaged everyone.”

Munro graduated as a temporary constable posted to Porirua in August 1976. He realised early on in his career that it would not be wise to broadcast his Māori sense of identity in an organisation that reflected the entrenched racism of wider New Zealand society. In his early days on patrol, he remembers that it was acceptable – even for officers who were themselves Māori - to tell discriminatory jokes about Māori. As soon as they put on their uniform, said Munro, Māori officers were “one of us”.

Munro’s parents were fluent Māori speakers. His mother, who was born at Parihaka Pa⁷ in Taranaki, preferred to speak in her native tongue and at times

⁶ Appointing a Commissioner for the New Zealand Police on the advice of ministers is one of the Governor General's constitutional duties as the Queen's representative in New Zealand. The Commissioner maintains independence and is recognised as occupying a distinct constitutional position in the state sector (as outlined in section 44 of the State Sector Act).

⁷ Parihaka Pā was ransacked in November 1881 by colonial forces to liberate vast tracks of land from Māori. The prophets Te Whiti o Rongomai and Tohu Kakahi, along with many of their followers, were imprisoned and held without trial at Wellington. They were later transferred to Te

expressed deep suspicion of Pākehā, which Munro attributes to the intense *mamae* (hurt) that she carried for the atrocities committed by early settlers and colonial forces against her ancestors. Munro was strongly influenced by his teacher father, who was born in Whakaki, a small settlement south of Mahia Peninsula. Munro's father always injected a Māori flavour into an otherwise non-Māori education curriculum.

In 1988, Munro began carrying out ad hoc training for the police college around issues such as race relations, the Treaty of Waitangi and Māori language and protocol. In 1990, he was appointed to the newly-created position of Cultural Training Officer, working at New Zealand Police's new Equal Employment Opportunities Unit based at the police college.

In every course conducted by the police college – for officers in management positions as well as new recruits - Munro provided input into the curriculum on such issues as the Treaty of Waitangi, Māori language and protocols, and accessibility. In 1993, Munro left to take up an operational role as Senior Sergeant Field Supervisor in Gisborne, on the east coast of the North Island, and the cultural training lapsed:

“There was a lot of ignorance out there. It was really hard to be an advocate for change based around the Treaty of Waitangi – you were putting your head above the parapet. I'm not thick-skinned – I'm quite a sensitive person – and sometimes it has been very difficult. I think I went to Gisborne because I needed to recharge my batteries.”

The “leap of faith”

In 1995, under the guidance of Commissioner-Designate Peter Doone, New Zealand Police launched *Policing 2000*, a major project to address its overall effectiveness and efficiency. Part of the project was a renewed focus on responsiveness to Māori.

That same year, revitalised by his time away, Munro returned from Gisborne to take up a new role as National Cultural Advisor. Doone agreed he should not work out of the Equal Employment Opportunities Unit (now based at New Zealand Police's national headquarters): instead, Doone made the role part of *Policing 2000*'s strategic development team, based at the police college. Munro saw the decision as an important strategic move.

Doone - a long-serving police officer with Masters degrees in law from Victoria University and public administration from Harvard University - was appointed Commissioner of Police in 1996. Munro credits Peter Doone with making the “leap of faith” required to attempt to improve the relationship with Māori, and said change would not have been possible without the commitment of Doone and his successor, Rob Robinson.

In 1996, following a 1994 review by Te Puni Kōkiri (the Government's Ministry of Māori Development) that criticised police for having little if any responsiveness to Māori, Munro called a hui (meeting) of 38 Māori community representatives. The hui recommended that police do more to understand the

Kaika in Dunedin, where they carried out hard labour (building roads for local settlement).

Treaty of Waitangi and its significance to Police, build a relationship with Māori and involve Māori in decision-making. In October 1996, the New Zealand Police Executive Committee chaired by Doone accepted all the recommendations.

Pieri Munro began developing the building blocks to what would eventually become the *New Zealand Police Responsiveness to Māori Strategy Haere Whakamua: Moving Forward 2001 – 2010*.

He also advocated one of the most significant developments to come out of the 1996 hui: a role for an entirely new type of “community cop” – an Iwi Liaison Officer (ILO).

Iwi Liaison Officers

ILOs were police officers who specialised in building ties with Māori communities at a grassroots level. They were recruited both within the police and externally: some were trained police officers, others were civilians.

Their work included everything from traffic issues to family violence to sudden death. They were provided with crime statistics each week, and used them to identify patterns of offending – looking at the families that produce recidivist burglars, for example, and then working with other agencies and with iwi to reduce crime levels. In some ways, their jobs reflected the roles taken on by Native Constables a century earlier.

The police college ran two week-long courses for ILOs every year. The first was an introductory course, also attended by other police officers working in areas with a sizeable Māori population. Programme content included Māori language and protocols, and understanding of the Treaty of Waitangi and its significance to policing. Munro said some officers were still coming to grips with what it meant to be Māori, and the course helped them to find their roots.

The second was an advanced course held in November, which most ILOs attended every year. It aimed to improve their skills and knowledge, looking at areas such as leadership, strategic development, problem-solving and community engagement. Participants were expected to share ideas and discuss specific initiatives that had been successful in their communities.

By 2006, a decade after the programme started, there were 31 full-time and five part-time ILOs around the country. Most were Māori, or had Māori affiliations, and four were women.

Munro believed ILOs had made a substantial contribution to improving the police’s relationship with iwi, and had played a crucial role in the successful policing of the 2004 land protest march.

Changing attitudes

In 1997, Munro’s job was resized as a superintendent's position. At the outset, he was outranked by other candidates for the advertised position. As the successful candidate, Munro jumped straight from Senior Sergeant to Superintendent, a promotion that he believed showed that Doone and the Executive placed an

increasingly high priority on race relations.

That year, while Munro was still working on writing the police responsiveness to Māori strategy, he decided a more evidence-based approach was needed:

“We felt we had to get to the real issues and find out how, if at all, we engaged with Māori. We needed to know what Māori were really thinking about the police. Did it seem like it could have been a career-stopping decision? Yes. I think it was brave of the Executive to go through with it.”

The decision made, New Zealand Police and Te Puni Kōkiri commissioned research from Victoria Link, the commercial arm of Victoria University in Wellington. The reports were *Police Perception of Māori*, by Gabrielle Maxwell and Catherine Smith, and *Māori Perceptions of the Police*, by Pania Te Whaiti and Dr Michael Roguski. In 1999, a third report was released: *Responses to Offending by Māori and Pacific Peoples*.

Police Perceptions of Māori

Almost one in four officers had negative attitudes to Māori, and a similar proportion had negative attitudes to Pacific Islanders and Asians.

At least two-thirds had heard colleagues using racist language about suspects or offenders, mainly in private. Half of those who had witnessed racist language said it was not reprimanded by supervisors.

The relationship between Māori and non-Māori police officers was seen as very good by 80 percent of officers, although officers of Māori descent were less likely to agree. Officers of Māori descent were more likely to say police had negative attitudes to Māori, and to report discriminatory behaviour such as stopping cars, using abusive language and treating suspects roughly.

Comments included:

“Due to a predominantly white male workforce, the police is a breeding ground for racism, sexism and chauvinistic attitudes. I wish you luck in your study and hope it will achieve change in police culture.”

“It is time to give up with this crap about how Māoris should be any different from anyone else in this country. And stop picking on the majority. It is not our fault that we were born white.”

“Asians will try to say they don't understand English. Māori, more often than not, will just lie to you.”

“I recently attended a three-day ‘cultural awareness course’ presented by Māori. It was of a very high standard and very informative. It was somewhat of a ‘jolt’ in opening my eyes – not that I have ever felt ‘racist’ but have not really considered the Māori point of view as presented on the course. All police should attend such a course.”

Comments from Māori officers included:

“There have been numerous times when I have been extremely angered by racist

comments about Māori from my colleagues which have been made in my presence. I can tell you that I and any policeman of Māori blood can accept racist comments from members of the public and believe me I have encountered many such comments. However, it is difficult to tolerate such comments from one's own colleagues. The police organisation needs to acknowledge this. Failure to do so will result in difficulty in attracting and retaining Māori staff and the already delicate relationship we share with the Māori community will be further eroded."

"Knowledge of cultural issues, especially knowing Māori protocol about death, is important. This is especially so in working with Māori victims and witnesses. It also makes for good communication in getting information that leads to solving offences."

The report's authors concluded there was evidence of racism in New Zealand Police, but only in a minority of officers. A significant minority disagreed with proposals to recruit and promote Māori, to emphasise police commitment to the Treaty of Waitangi and to provide Māori translation on request.

Māori Perceptions of the Police

This report found:

"Participants were unanimous in their perception that the police institution is a racist institution that perpetuates strong anti-Māori attitudes."

Experiences mentioned by participants included frequent stopping of Māori on the pretext of criminal suspicion where no crime had been committed, racist verbal abuse, disrespect of Māori customs and traditions, minimising racist attacks on Māori and harassing Māori.

One participant remarked:

"I think it's the trust thing. I mean, kids don't trust the police. Police are pigs. Police are nothing....Society perceives, well the society that I come from perceives, that police are bad."

Participants saw the police institution as a self-validating, insular culture that new recruits were socialised to accept. They believed the relationship between police and Māori was disintegrating even further.

The report's authors urged the police to develop a training package that would, among other things, "educate all officers to be open-minded and flexible in their attitude towards people who were different from themselves" and "educate all officers not to blame the victims of historical and social processes for their current plight".

Responses to Offending by Māori and Pacific Peoples

This study⁸ found both Māori and Pacific Islanders were over-represented as both offenders and victims of violent offences. Overall, Māori accounted for 44 percent of cases resulting in conviction and reported higher rates of victimisation for assaults, threats, indecent assault and sexual violation.

⁸ Ministry of Justice publication, Responses to Crime: Annual Review 1999

Pacific peoples accounted for eight percent of cases resulting in conviction. They were over-represented in violent offending statistics, and were at higher risk of being the victims of violence than any other ethnic group, including Māori.

Responses to surveys

In 1998, Māori Advisory Boards were set up in many of the 12 police districts to give advice to District Commanders. The following year, Doone convened a forum of Māori leaders, to promote projects to reduce Māori offending and victimisation and to improve police relationships. He turned to the forum for advice when the results of the research were made public.

Munro commented:

“It was obvious that some people were going to look at the results of the reports and conclude that all police were racist. The forum said that, as Commissioner, he either tolerated racism or he didn't, and that his was the first and most important voice to speak out. The Commissioner agreed, and released a statement saying the police would not tolerate racism and that where it occurred it would be dealt with.”

Munro said the reports showed there were attitudes and behaviours within the police that would take a long time to change:

“We'd already begun looking at training at that point, and it was clear to me that training was the best way to initiate long-term attitudinal changes. But the Commissioner's statement was also very important because it gave a sharp and important message that we wouldn't tolerate any recurrence of that kind of behaviour. We had to have a short-term as well as a long-term approach.”

Munro used the research to continue developing *New Zealand Police Responsiveness to Māori Strategy Haere Whakamua*, which was released in 2000. It aimed to consolidate and extend work that had been carried out since 1996 to reduce the number of Māori who committed crimes, were the victims of crime or were in road accidents. It also confirmed that police “must properly consider the application of Treaty of Waitangi principles to the business of policing and, alongside that, Māori beliefs and values”.

One of *Haere Whakamua's* responsiveness strategies was to give all police staff “the opportunity to meaningfully learn and appreciate the culture and values of their local Māori communities”.

Police college training

From 1996, each district had been required to provide responsiveness to Māori training as part of its regular programme of staff training. Most of the training was delivered by ILOs.

However, the police college had always been focus of race relations training within the police, and Munro believed this should continue. Every year, 3000 police officers visited the college for training: Munro believed college-based training could help change police culture at all levels of the organisation.

In 2001, a full-time Responsiveness to Māori Co-ordinator was employed at the college. Shortly afterwards, recruits began receiving about 22 hours of Māori responsiveness training during their 19-week course.

Issues covered included the Treaty, pronunciation of Māori words, cultural protocols and practices. Recruits were encouraged to understand how to network with Māori groups in the community and with partner agencies. Each intake of new recruits was greeted with a pōwhiri (welcome) and learned the college's own haka (dance) to perform at their graduation ceremony.

Almost all other courses also had some Māori input, often on intelligence-based issues such as using national data to identify patterns of offending and victimisation and any correlation with Māori.

The police college used a variety of training methods, depending on the course. A typical example was a five-day advanced crime and crash reduction course for ILOs in October 2005, which featured presentations, workshops, brainstorming sessions and practical exercises. Groups also formed syndicates to discuss a set subject, exchange opinions and agree on a set of conclusions.

It was not a pass/fail course, but there were two tasks: a formal written assessment; and a self assessment, for which participants were required to show evidence of their increased cultural competency by preparing a brief demonstration or a reflective statement. Participants were also expected to prepare a professional development plan covering their work over the next year.

Engaging middle management

While steps had been taken to engage the bottom end and the top end of the workforce, Munro believed more needed to be done to win the support of middle management.

The solution was *Ngakia Kia Puawai*, an annual conference for officers at middle management level. Held over several days, the conference was hosted by a different police district each year. Speakers included Māori leaders, judges and senior police managers. The conference was first held in 2001, and each conference since has attracted more than 100 staff from all over New Zealand.

In 2002, Munro wrote a business case proposing a unit to oversee strategies to prepare police for working in an increasingly multicultural New Zealand. When the Māori Pacific Ethnic Services Unit was approved, Munro's job disappeared again but he successfully applied for the position of General Manager of the new unit. It was an executive position, reporting directly to the Commissioner.

When the new unit opened in 2003, Munro appointed three Strategic Advisers. In 2006, Inspector Wallace Haumaha was Strategic Adviser for Māori, Inspector Leilua Lou Alofa for Pacific peoples, and Mr Kefeng Chu for other ethnic communities.

An early initiative, developed by Haumaha, was to include Māori offenders' tribal and family affiliations on charge sheets. Previously, offenders were identified only as Māori. The change recognised the strong tribal ties of Māori,

and enabled police – especially ILOs – to take a more tactical approach to offending. In rural areas, officers were able to approach tribal authorities to identify why a particular tribal member was reoffending. In urban areas, officers were often able to liaise with the pan-tribal groups that had offices in larger cities.

Shortly before the Māori Pacific Services Unit opened, a surprise court decision paved the way for a protest that was to test the success of Munro's attempts to build stronger relationships between police and Māori.

The hikoi

In June 2003, the Court of Appeal ruled that eight iwi (tribes) could ask the Māori Land Court to grant freehold title to the foreshore and seabed in the Marlborough Sounds. The ruling challenged the assumption that the land could only be owned by the Crown.

In April 2004, the Government proposed a bill reasserting its ownership and preventing the Māori Land Court granting freehold title to iwi claiming customary ownership. Many Māori saw the move as another form of land confiscation, especially as so many prime beaches were being sold to wealthy foreigners.

Two weeks after the Government proposed the bill, Far North Māori activist Hone Harawira and others organised a hikoi (march) in protest. Marchers intended to arrive in Wellington as Parliament was about to vote for the first time on the bill.

Two streams of protesters made their way south to Wellington from different parts of the North Island in late April and early May of 2004. Four ILOs, under the command of then Acting Inspector Wallace Haumaha, were assigned to travel with them. Hundreds more officers were involved in policing the hikoi as it travelled through police districts to Wellington.

Haumaha said the ILOs had already developed good relationships with Māori communities. Northland District Senior Constable Paddy Whiu, for instance, was “the face of policing in the north – everyone knows him and trusts him”.

Before the march, Haumaha went to see Hone Harawira, leader of the Northern leg:

“When I introduced myself to Hone, he said, ‘Oh, they've sent me an inspector’. In the past, as we both knew, the police wouldn't have sent someone at that level.”

At that first meeting, both sides made their positions clear. The police wanted to protect Harawira's people and those the protesters encountered en route, and to prevent traffic obstructions. The ground rules included no drugs, no alcohol and no gang motifs. There were further meetings to discuss logistics, such as where the protesters would camp each day.

At that stage, said Haumaha, he and his team were seen as representatives of the Crown. Some people didn't trust them, and there were objections when they were invited to join the protesters at shared lunches. But by the time the hikoi arrived in Auckland, tensions had eased. Protesters had realised police could make their

journey easier by, for example, stopping traffic on busy roads while the hikoi crossed.

At Auckland, police gave protesters permission to march across Auckland Harbour Bridge. North Shore Mayor (and former police officer) George Wood was among those upset at the police decision to allow a group of people “hellbent on making a political statement” to march over the bridge, and pointed out that it was “very unusual for a group of Māori protesters to be afforded this kind of privilege”.⁹

The number of protesters swelled greatly when the hikoi reached Auckland, and on the morning of 27 April 5000 people were waiting to cross Auckland harbour bridge. Haumaha said the decision to allow them to walk across the bridge was controversial within the police, as well as externally.

“We had people in the lower orders of the police who didn't think they should be allowed across. We told those people to shut up and do their job.”

The protesters took two hours to cross the bridge. One protester attempted to jump up on the rails of the bridge: he returned to the group after an ILO reprimanded him in Māori. After the crossing, which many marchers found an intensely emotional experience, the protesters walked to Bastion Point, scene of the police evictions in 1978, before continuing on to Wellington.

An estimated 20,000 protesters converged on Parliament grounds on 5 May, bringing traffic in central Wellington almost to a standstill. The hikoi ended with no violence, no arrests and no complaints made against the police.

Pieri Munro said the peacefulness of the hikoi showed how much police and Māori attitudes had changed since the Bastion Point land occupation.

“The success of the hikoi is a watershed event, unprecedented in the history of New Zealand Police. It is the benchmark that will be held up to acknowledge the importance of excellent networking and a whole different attitude to police delivery. It's not just about reducing offending – it's about being proactive, lessening the heat and reflecting the cultural values of all New Zealanders.”

Building relationships with Pacific peoples

By 2000, Munro felt the Māori strategy was well advanced and it was time for a strategy specifically for Pacific peoples. The need was especially obvious in Auckland, which had become the Polynesian capital of the world.

Many of the issues were the same. Pacific peoples – people from Samoa (50 percent), the Cook Islands (22.5 percent), Tonga (15.5 percent), Niue (9 percent), Fiji (2 percent) and Tokelau (1 percent) – were, like Māori, over-represented in crime and victimisation statistics, particularly for violent offending.

Economically, Pacific peoples also shared many of the same issues as Māori. A 1999 Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs report, *The Social and Economic Status of*

⁹ *The New Zealand Herald*, 26 April, 2004.

Pacific People in New Zealand, revealed low salaries and unemployment rates that were up to double the national average.

Munro knew relationship-building with Pacific peoples would have to be conducted differently. Samoans, for example, valued fa'asamoa – a series of principles based around family, the church and the matai (titled chief) system. This meant police would need to form networks with different partnering agencies, such as the churches that had become focal points for Pacific communities.

The Pacific Peoples Responsiveness Strategy, approved in 2002, focused – like the Māori strategy – on offending, victimisation and road trauma. Its strategic priorities included building organisational capability to respond to Pacific people and to develop partnerships with them. Key activities included offering staff training in working with Pacific communities on crime prevention initiatives, and giving staff opportunities to attend language and culture courses.

Munro's unit used the ILO model to create the new role of Pacific Liaison Officer (PLO). PLOs operated in the same way as ILOs, working within communities to gain trust and reduce offending and victimisation. By 2006, there were three full-time and one part-time PLO.

Every year, the police college held a week-long practical course to promote intelligence-gathering and give PLOs a change to share successful strategies.

By 2006, the unit was developing a training package for the police college on working with Pacific communities.

Engaging with other ethnic communities

While the Pacific strategy in many ways mirrored the Māori strategy, Munro knew a very different approach would have to be developed for other ethnic communities. They were under-represented in crime statistics, and had no dawn raids or Bastion Points in their histories. Instead, the challenge for police was to engage with each community, reduce its fear of crime and build a sense of trust.

Released in 2004, *Working Together With Ethnic Communities: Police Ethnic Strategy Towards 2010* focused on giving police the capability and capacity to engage with ethnic communities, and on developing culturally appropriate strategies to increase community safety and prevent and reduce crime, road trauma and victimisation. The executive summary remarked that:

“There is also an awareness that engaging with and understanding these communities now, while their numbers are relatively small, will utilise a narrow window of opportunity before engagement and co-operation can become a difficult process, as found in other parts of the world.”

Under Munro's leadership, New Zealand Police created the post of Ethnic Liaison Officer, which operated in the same way as Iwi Liaison Officers and Pacific Liaison Officers. By 2006, there were three full-time and two part-time Ethnic Liaison Officers. Like Pacific Liaison Officers, they met each year at the police college for a week-long practical course to share ideas.

In 2004, police began prioritising racist incidents, which had not been considered a priority before. Munro's unit also developed a resource for officers attempting to make prosecutions for hate crime. The resource included examples of successful cases, which could also be shown to communities to prove the police commitment to prosecute offenders.

In 2005, in response to requests from ethnic community representatives, the police website began offering basic information in 12 languages. Callers to the police could also use the Government's free Language Line phone service, which offered interpreters in 35 languages.

By September 2006, Munro's unit, in collaboration with the Police Training Service Centre, had almost completed a two-hour training session to be delivered to new recruits and serving officers at the police college. The issues it covered included community engagement, resources, language, religion, migration, international students and tourists. Training was also being developed to be delivered within police districts.

“There's so much goodwill out there now”

Between February 2004 and October 2005, Munro served as Acting District Commander of the Waikato District in the central North Island when the previous District Commander was suspended after being charged with rape. The officer was reinstated after his acquittal, and Munro returned to the Māori Pacific Ethnic Services Unit.

In August 2006, police faced a logistics exercise on a par with the hikoi when tens of thousands of mourners converged on the central North Island to attend the week-long tangi (funeral) of the Māori Queen, Te Arikinui Dame Te Ātairangikaahu. The policing plan went smoothly, which Munro attributed to good forward planning and harmonious relationships with many different iwi.

Munro, who had accompanied the Māori Queen to the United States as security and protocol officer in 2005, was asked by the family to be a pall-bearer.

A month after the funeral, Munro was appointed Wellington's new District Commander. Looking back on his years with the police, Munro said the service had changed greatly since he was a trainee cadet in 1975:

“The police used to be a very reactive, task-oriented organisation. Police wanted to just get on with the job, and didn't want to talk about attitudes or cultural difference. There were times when I was in a lecture room full of senior officers trying to talk to them about the Treaty and I was thinking, ‘I'm really cooking my goose here with the people who matter. This is career-stopping stuff’.

“And at the beginning, it was just me – there wasn't another cultural training officer trying to change the culture. It was lonely, and it was very hard. But since then, I've noticed change in the organisation at all levels. There's so much goodwill out there. Events like the hikoi make you realise how good things can be.”

The hikoi was a promising sign, but the question was whether the initiatives launched since 1996 would meet the complex challenges of policing a country that was becoming more multicultural by the day.