

‘Part-time and Part-committed’?: The Cultural Challenges of Part-time Work in Policing

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Abstract

In police services, both in Australia and internationally, attention has been focused on increasing the representation of women. The availability of part-time work has been identified as a key mechanism to retain women who have been recruited. To date however the take-up of part-time work remains low. It is also concentrated in administrative work and non-operational policing work. In this paper, we draw on research in Victoria Police around the experiences of, and attitudes towards, part-time work. The research suggests that there are a number of policy constraints to the take up of part-time work, particularly by police officers. There are also significant cultural barriers to both increasing and integrating part-time work, which influence attitudes to part-time work at all levels of the organisation. However, these barriers are reinforced by institutional structures and processes that position part-time work as ‘other’ and a dominant and gendered conception of police work. In increasing access to part-time work, the challenge for police services such as Victoria Police is to address both institutional and cultural barriers to the integration of part-time and full-time work.

INTRODUCTION

In April 2003, Australia’s only female Police Commissioner, Christine Nixon, announced that Victoria Police would seek an exemption from Victorian anti-discrimination legislation to ensure that at least 50 percent of police recruits are women. The aim was for women to

comprise a quarter of all police officers by 2007, rather than the less than 18 percent as they do currently.¹ While this explicit commitment to recruiting women police caused some controversy and criticism,² it is reflective of moves, both in Australia and internationally, to increase the number of women in police services. Better representation is seen as critical for a number of reasons. Apart from the broader issue of compliance with anti-discrimination and equal employment opportunity (EEO) provisions, gender balance within police organisations is generally accepted to be desirable to ensure that police services are responsive to, and representative of, the communities they serve (Eveline and Harwood 2002) and because women bring specific skills seen as vital to police work more generally (Manders 2000). Police Royal Commissions in both Queensland and New South Wales have also identified women as a target group whose recruitment would assist in eliminating the negative aspects of a 'cop culture' (Fleming and Lafferty 2003, 47).

Despite the increasing promotion of policing as a career for women, women constitute just 21 percent of the Australian police workforce (AIC 2003). While women continue to be recruited in slowly increasing numbers, there is evidence that the rate of retention is much lower for women than for men, with 'family/domestic' reasons a major factor in resignations (Prenzler and Hayes 2000, 28).

One of the significant barriers to retaining women both in sworn and unsworn positions in police work is the limited provision and uptake of part-time work (Rose 2002). To date some emphasis has been placed on ensuring that part-time work is available to police on their return from maternity leave. This is seen as a crucial retention mechanism. However available evidence suggests part-time work in policing remains limited and associated with disadvantage. For example, while there has been a part-time employment policy in place in

Victoria Police since 1996, today just over three percent of police officers work in part-time positions as do nine percent of Victoria Police public service employees (Victoria Police 2004b). This is much lower than for the total Australian workforce where 29 percent of all employees are employed on a part-time basis (ABS 2005).

However it is not just the scarcity of part-time police positions that presents an issue. Part-time work in police services is concentrated in the lower ranks for police officers (sworn members) and in lower level public service positions (unsworn staff). Women account for the overwhelming proportion of part-time employees in general and in police services in particular, with most of the available part-time jobs in police services being held by women and located at the bottom of the police hierarchy in non-operational positions. Typically such positions have poor career prospects and enjoy ambivalent management and peer support (BAWP 2002; Leane and Durand 2002). These factors suggest that this part-time work is marginalised and of poorer 'quality' than full-time work. The central problem is not so much the inherent work value of these jobs, but rather the poorer conditions and the disadvantages that are associated with them relative to full-time work. The limited uptake of part-time work, even where it is apparently available, may well be influenced by perceptions of its marginal status within police work. To recruit and retain women, the challenge for police services such as Victoria Police is not only to increase the quantity of part-time work available but also the 'quality' of that work. In short, this means ensuring that part-time work is an integrated rather than marginalised form of employment. (Fagan 1999, 58). Broad indicators of quality part-time work include: effective access to part-time work at all occupational and seniority levels for both men and women; the same protections as full-time work in respect to job protection, predictability of hours, working beyond contracted hours and discrimination; pro-rata wages

and access to benefits; equal access to training and career progression; and being able to transfer from full-time to part-time work and visa versa (Charlesworth et al 2002, 87).

To better understand the nature of these challenges we draw on two research studies in Victoria Police. The first study, the Part-time Employment Review, was funded by the Victorian government under its Partners at Work scheme.³ Undertaken in 2003-2004 in consultation with both the Police Association of Victoria (PAV) and the Community and Public Sector Union (CPSU), the study was an internal review of part-time work in both police officer (sworn) and public service (unsworn) positions and the part-time work policy in Victoria Police. The main aim of the Part-time Employment Review was to ascertain the extent to which part-time work contributed to the flexible work practices identified as a priority under the Victoria Police strategic plan (Victoria Police 2002). Oversighted by an internal reference group with representatives of both the PAV and the CPSU, the wide ranging and comprehensive study included documentary analysis, interviews, focus groups written submissions and two surveys; one distributed to personnel currently working part-time in Victoria Police and one distributed to a random sample of full-time personnel who manage, supervise, work or have some contact with part-time employees in Victoria Police (Victoria Police 2004a).

The second study on which this paper draws is currently being conducted by the Centre for Applied Social Research at RMIT University in partnership with Victoria Police.⁴ The Policing and Quality Part-time Work project builds on the findings of the Part-time Employment Review. It aims to identify and evaluate the current constraints on, and options for, quality part-time work in Victoria Police and to develop a framework for the implementation and evaluation of quality part-time work in policing. Oversighted by a

reference group, which includes a cross section of police representatives, the researchers and representatives of the PAV and the CPSU, the project incorporates an action research methodology in which Victoria Police employees are taking an active role in identifying the need for, and the implementation of, changes in organisational processes and practices as they relate to improving both access to, and the quality of, part-time work.

The second section of this paper sets out current policy regarding part-time work and the structure of part-time employment in Victoria Police. The third section describes the main policy barriers to part-time employment identified in the Part-time Employment Review. The fourth and most substantive section then examines the cultural issues identified both in the Part-time Police Employment Review and, to date, in the Policing and Quality Part-time Work project. We argue that such cultural issues cannot be sheered off from organisational practices and institutional barriers such as the organisation and scheduling of police work, opportunities for training, the promotions process and the staffing of residual positions. After a brief overview of both police officer (sworn) employment and police public service (unsworn) employment, we focus in this paper on the particular experiences of part-time work in sworn employment.

PART-TIME WORK IN VICTORIA POLICE

In 1992, a part-time pilot program was introduced at Victoria Police, consisting of 10 positions identified as suitable for part-time work. The pilot program was deemed a success and in 1996 a formal part-time employment policy was introduced. Updated in 1998, the policy applies only to sworn members. Non-sworn public service members are covered by the Victorian Public Service Enterprise Agreement (Australian Industrial Relations Commission 2004).

The current part-time employment policy has specific eligibility criteria, which must be satisfied in order for an employee to work part-time. Prospective part-time workers must meet one of three criteria for eligibility: combining work and family responsibilities; undertaking a course of study; or meeting specific ongoing needs related to a medical condition or disability. Probationary constables are specifically exempted from the part-time employment policy. Under the terms of the current policy, part-time work is of a limited 4 year timeframe and is subject to annual review. Staff are also required to prepare a business case in support of any application for part-time work, outlining how the proposed arrangements could be accommodated in their work area. In order to obtain part-time work employees can either apply to convert their existing full-time position to a part-time position or apply for an existing part-time vacancy. Survey data from the Part-time Employment Review indicates that 56 percent of part-time respondents had applied to convert their full-time position to part-time with 28 percent applying for an advertised part-time vacancy and a further 16 percent being able to access a part-time role for which they did not apply (Victoria Police 2004a).

Since the introduction of the formal part-time employment policy in 1996, part-time employment has grown steadily from approximately 100 employees, both sworn and unsworn (Victoria Police 2004a). In June 2003, Victoria Police had a total of 563 part-time employees, 4.4 percent of its total employees.⁵ Victoria Police ranks fifth of the eight Australian policing agencies in terms of its proportion of part-time employees. Tasmania had the largest proportion of part-time employees at 7.7 percent and Northern Territory Police the lowest proportion at 1.0 percent (Victoria Police 2004a). In Victoria Police, as in other Australian police services, part-time employment is concentrated amongst unsworn members with only 3.4 percent of sworn employees working on a part-time basis compared to 9 percent of unsworn employees in 2003 (Victoria Police 2004a). Part-time work is overwhelmingly taken

up by women, who comprised 87 percent of all part-time employees at Victoria Police (Victoria Police 2004a).

Insert Table 1 about here

We focus here on police officers or sworn members of Victoria Police. As set out in Table 1, the latest data available indicates that part-time employment continues to grow, increasing from 361 sworn members in 2003 to 420 in 2004. The majority of these police employees (83 percent) are women. While the current policy does not specifically exclude any classification apart from probationary constables, *all* part-time work in Victoria Police remains at the Sergeant classification or below. As discussed further below, the absence of part-time work in higher classifications appears to reflect the influence of cultural and institutional barriers to part-time work within Victoria Police.

POLICY BARRIERS TO PART-TIME WORK

The Part-time Employment Review identified a number of policy obstacles both to increasing the availability of part-time employment across Victoria Police and to integrating that employment where it is negotiated. In terms of access the main barriers identified include the exclusion of probationary constables, the eligibility criteria and the time limitations. The policy exclusion of probationary constables from access to part-time work relates directly to the time limits imposed on the confirmation process for constables.⁶ The training of recruits is conducted on a full-time basis, which contributes to the conception of ‘normal’ police employment as full-time.

Criteria for conversion of a full-time position to a part-time position listed above exclude those who wish to work part-time for lifestyle reasons or to phase their retirement. The

requirement to provide a reason for working part-time was also seen to contribute to the perception that working full-time is the norm and that any departure from full-time work is 'abnormal'. The limited time frame of part-time work to four years also positions part-time as 'other' to the perceived/implicit full-time organisational norm. Part-time work is seen as something temporary that arises due to an employee's temporary need. This view of part-time work as temporary may have implications for the quality of part-time work as it is a barrier to part-time career progression. The implied full-time norm reflects a perception of work that is structured around the unencumbered 'ideal worker' who is available to work full-time and overtime and whose family and domestic needs are provided for by someone else (Williams 2000; Bailyn and Fletcher 2003).

In addition to such barriers in the formal part-time employment policy, the Review also found the policy implementation process presented a number of difficulties for those who wished to work part-time and for those who managed them. Such difficulties included the approval process, the management of left over or residual hours from part-time conversions and practical difficulties associated with returning to full-time work. Requirement for sign off at a number of levels up the chain of command in the approval process led to time delays for those who wanted to convert to part-time work and some frustration for their managers who felt as if they had little power to negotiate and/or decline applications. The Review identified some confusion about the residual hours left over when a full-time position is converted into part-time employment. While there is some opportunity to combine residual hours from more than one part-time conversion to form another part-time or full-time position, some managers were unaware of such possibilities while others reported that there were practical difficulties in doing so, particularly when the residual time fraction was small.

Many of those who were part-time at the time of the survey intended to keep working on a part-time basis, however, almost one in four of the respondents to the part-time staff survey indicated that they planned to return to a full-time position in Victoria Police. Some part-time focus group participants were concerned both about their entitlement to return to full-time work and the practical difficulties of doing so particularly when another staff member had filled the residual hours. Such concerns were also echoed by a number of managers who attended focus groups, who indicated that while they had mostly been able to accommodate the relatively infrequent requests to move back to full-time work, where there was low staff turnover or where staffing levels were at their maximum, some staff had to move to different work units when they returned to full-time work.

As a result of the Part-time Employment Review, Victoria Police is currently developing a new part-time employment policy. While policy changes relating to part-time employment are an important development, policy initiatives on their own are unlikely to have a substantial impact in the area of part-time employment (Eveline and Harwood 2002). Not surprisingly then - and consistent with other research findings focusing on Victoria Police (Short 2004) and on other police jurisdictions (Dick 2004; Edwards and Robinson 1999; Eveline and Harwood 2003) - the Part-time Employment Review identified a need for widespread cultural change across the organisation in respect to part-time work.

CULTURAL AND INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS TO PART-TIME WORK

There is a vast array of knowledge that is acquired and retained by individuals who are part of particular organisations. Organisations, like any community, are made up of individuals who may have diverse attitudes and beliefs. In a large organisation such as Victoria Police, in addition to individual variation, there is locality and departmental knowledge that is specific to particular contexts. Different aspects of the organisation share their own particular culture,

or sub-culture. What we may understand as 'police culture' may be a compilation of different sub-cultures within policing organisations and includes ambiguous and contradictory aspects. Nevertheless, there is frequently a dominant or overriding set of values accompanied by supporting attitudes, beliefs and a stock of 'common knowledge' held by members of an organisation. Beliefs and perceptions arising from such dominant values are transmitted within an organisation and may influence the organisation member's worldview and come to be accepted as taken-for-granted 'knowledge' (Whittenbury 2003). Gendered conceptions of police work (Eveline and Harwood 2002) may be an example of such taken-for-granted 'knowledge'. Such conceptions then give rise to the way policing is organised, with women being concentrated in areas deemed 'suitable' or 'appropriate' while the 'real' police work of fighting crime is largely left to men (Dick and Cassell 2004).

Institutional and organisational processes may be influenced by cultural considerations. The part-time policy and its implementation effectively construct part-time work as temporary and a deviation from 'real' policing work. Such a construction is influenced by a belief that the women who want to work part-time are committed primarily to their families rather than to their work, a belief which also serves to justify the concentration of part-time employment at the lower levels of the police hierarchy. In a similar vein, cultural beliefs may be influenced by institutional, or structural, processes. One such belief is the view that part-time workers lack career ambition. This view is evidenced by few part-time employees applying for promotion. However, the promotion process for part-time employees is fraught with obstacles and there is a dearth of part-time positions advertised for which current part-time staff might apply. Cultural and institutional, or structural, processes are intertwined, while there may be attempts to unravel such processes for analytical purposes, they are intertwined in practice (Whittenbury 2003).

The Part-time Employment Review identified several cultural issues and culture related perceptions that are relevant in this context: commitment of part-time employees; interpretations of the concept of 'choice'; development and promotion; generational and gender diversity; hierarchical organisation; and Victoria Police's distinctiveness from other organisations. The Review highlighted perceptions of both managers and employees about commitment to the organisation, which have been aptly described in the context of UK Policing services as a "part-time, part able, part committed" discourse (Jenkins 2000, 23). For some people in Victoria Police, work commitment is measured by time spent at work; a culture of long hours that is not unique to Victoria Police. This perception can have negative repercussions for part-time workers who may be perceived as less committed than full-time workers.

See I think one of the problems for women, women who, probably even more so for men, who go part time is that there's this attitude out there that you're not really committed to the job if you want to work part time... I've taken lunch twice since I've come back to work... I focus a lot on my work and I think most part-timers compact a lot more into a short period of time and are very committed to the organisation and I think there's often unfair criticism levelled at ... some women or some men who are out in the operational areas that there's a lack of commitment because you don't want to work full-time. (Female, senior position, works part-time. Source: 'Policing and Quality Part-time Work: Constraints and Options' project).

While the perception that part-time workers are less committed than those working full-time is typical of workplaces more generally (see Junor 1998; Charlesworth 1999) the particular construction of police work works to define commitment as putting up with danger, unsociable shifts and long working hours (Dick and Cassell 2004, 66) and by extension those who do not or are perceived not to 'measure up' are viewed as somehow uncommitted. In particular, the Part-time Employment Review found that measuring commitment in terms of the amount of time spent at work was quite common; well over a third of survey respondents who manage, supervise work with or have contact with part-time employees believed they were less committed than full-time employees. Certain positions within policing are

considered suitable for women such as, sexual assault and child abuse units, community policing and school liaison. However, the dominant occupational identity of police work is a masculine one, akin to a vocation and those who take on that identity are unlikely to work or support those who work part-time. This is reflected quite vividly in perceptions identified in the Review that particular roles, work areas and levels of work, including specialist areas of policing such as the Special Operations Group and areas where work is organised in teams, such as criminal investigation, are unsuitable for part-time work.

Issues of work-life balance have tended to be viewed as women's issues. The heavy male dominance and dearth of women in senior management positions in operational policing may account for concentration of part-time positions at Senior Constable level and below in Victoria Police. Part-time employment and flexible work options generally, are perceived by many in Victoria Police as being for 'just' women with children. The Review suggests that this perception has two main consequences. Firstly, it feminises part-time work and, secondly, it works to inhibit men who want to work part-time, at least for work/family reasons.

Interestingly, working less than full-time for reasons other than family responsibilities may be seen by both managers and employees as somewhat more acceptable. In a complaint of sex discrimination pursued under the *Victorian Equal Opportunity Act 1995* by a detective whose application to work on a part-time basis for family reasons had been refused, evidence was produced suggesting that working part-time to study or taking time off to train for police sporting events was not seen to demonstrate the same 'lack of commitment' as working part-time for work/family reasons did (Hogan 1999; Robertson 2002).

Perceptions about the concept of 'choice' were raised by managers in some of the focus groups conducted as part of the Part-time Employment Review. When discussing the need for flexible work arrangements to accommodate women's family responsibilities, some of the

respondents suggested that it was a woman's 'choice' to have children. Some managers suggested that prior to women 'choosing' to have children they should consider whether they will be able to continue to meet the requirements of the job. This perception again highlights the dominance of the male breadwinner model given that men in Victoria Police are not expected to 'choose' between a career and having children. Preliminary investigations conducted under the Policing and Quality Part-time Project suggest that of the (very) few women who hold senior positions in the organisation, most have neither married nor raised children. This suggests that for women, family responsibilities have hampered progression to senior management positions and is indicative of a gendered culture that treats women with family responsibilities differently to men.

The quantum of time spent at work can have further implications as part-time staff may be overlooked for training and other opportunities if they are viewed as being less committed to their work. Simply not being in the workplace when decisions about training are being made might also affect part-time employees' participation in training and development programs. The structure of training and development may also adversely impact on the ability of part-time staff to participate in such programs. Many programs are modelled on full-time attendance, with some having residential components. It may be difficult for part-time staff to attend training programs held on days when they are not usually at work. The Part-time Employment Survey conducted as part of the Review found that 44 percent of part-time respondents had undertaken short courses but only 14 percent had undertaken any longer-term training courses.

Temporary upgrading to higher duties is a common way for Victoria Police employees to experience working at a higher level and is often a precursor for promotion. Part-time staff were significantly underrepresented in participating in upgrading with more than four-fifths of

respondents to the Part-time Employment Survey indicating that they had not had the opportunity to undertake upgrading/higher duties since becoming part-time. Many current part-time staff believe their opportunities for career progression are severely limited by working on a part-time rather than full-time basis. Very few part-time workers attending focus groups run as part of the Part-time Employment Review had obtained a promotion while working part-time with a common view expressed by several that “ I have basically resigned myself to the reality that by converting to part-time, my career is over” (Victoria Police 2004a p60).

The Quality Part-time Work project has also identified limitations to maintaining part-time employment status when applying for promotion. Unless a part-time position at the appropriate rank has been specifically advertised, a part-time employee seeking promotion must apply for a full-time advertised position and then make application to have the new full-time position converted to part-time. Respondents suggest that it is not advisable to openly state their intention to apply to convert the sought after position to part-time as this is likely to work against their obtaining the position.

You have to wait for a position (to be advertised) and then you apply and that’s what’s interesting because there’s never any part-time positions, you have to convert them all the time so if you go there from a part-time status the first thing that they say is it’s a full-time position (Female, Senior Constable, works part-time. Source: ‘Policing and Quality Part-time Work: Constraints and Options’ project).

(Question) So would you then apply for that full-time, get in there and then try and convert it?

Yep. (I) Wouldn’t flag that that was what I was going to try to do and any woman that always asks me that I say to them don’t flag it because you’ll never get it... Never flag it. No because there’s not a strong policy there, although one would argue they’re discriminating but it would be a long drawn out process [to complain] (Female, Senior Constable, works part-time. Source: ‘Policing and Quality Part-time Work: Constraints and Options’ project).

As mentioned above, implicit and taken-for-granted norms that reinforce the male breadwinner model of employment underpin the way police work is traditionally organised. Victoria Police remains an hierarchical organisation and, while this is changing somewhat, progression to higher level positions in the organisation is based on seniority. This coupled with Victoria Police being a male dominated organisation means that most senior management positions are held by men of what the Review refers to as ‘Veterans’ or ‘Baby Boomers’ generations. According to the Review people from these generations tend to have more traditional views of work and gender based on their own experiences and do not expect much workplace flexibility. This contrasts with younger workers from Generations ‘X’ and ‘Y’ who, according to the Review, expect workplace flexibility and subscribe to less traditional gender roles. It is however noteworthy that preliminary interviews and observations undertaken for the Review found a number of instances of younger men who appear to subscribe to the more traditional view of gender roles as evidenced by their descriptions of their own family circumstances. This does not support the notion that ‘traditional’ views concerning gender roles are the province of specific generations.

The Part-time Employment Review and investigations conducted under the Policing and Quality Part-time Project suggest that considerations such as ‘backfilling’ of residual hours, left over when a full-time position is converted to part-time, can effect experiences of and attitudes toward part-time work. Sometimes residual hours are unfilled, which leads to further staffing pressures in already tight work units⁷. In some instances, residual hours are advertised and filled as another part-time position and, in other instances, managers have pooled residual hours from two or more converted positions to create another full-time job. Although such reallocation or lack of resources is an organisational responsibility, part-time staff members may be held accountable by line managers and co-workers for work units being under resourced in terms of staff.

The Review uncovered an important perception about part-time work that did not appear to be grounded in the direct experience of any of the respondents. This perception has also been reinforced during interviews undertaken for the Policing and Quality Part-time project and, similarly, appears to be based on belief rather than any actual experience. The perception relates to set shifts. One of the main ‘problems’ associated with part-time work articulated by managers, and a recurring theme emanating from the Review, was the belief that part-time workers were able to negotiate set shifts and avoid the less desirable or anti-social hours, thus leading to inequity between those who perform shiftwork and those who do not. In close examination of the data relating to this, it appears in fact that an overwhelming majority of the part-time staff who participated in the Review and who hold positions where shift-work occurs, participate in all shifts. The data are not clear on whether this includes rotating shifts. The vast majority of part-time police members work day, afternoon, night and weekend shifts where applicable. These findings are in contrast to the perceptions expressed by managers and other full-time workers. While managers may respond favourably to part-time work in their own experience, they nevertheless tend to generalise about the ‘problem’ of set shifts in other work areas (see also Edwards and Robinson, 1999 p 11). This is a vivid example of the way certain beliefs and perceptions that may be culturally transmitted within an organisation which then become accepted as taken-for-granted ‘knowledge’. Interestingly while there are many full-time roles in policing that do not require shift work, this is not typically seen as a source of inequity (Dick 2004, p309).

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

Part-time employment has been available, albeit in a limited form, in Victoria Police since it was first piloted in the organisation in 1992. Scant consideration was given to the quality of part-time jobs as the (reduced) quantity of working hours was viewed as the most important

criteria of a part-time job. 'Job quality' is, in part, a subjective notion and in some cases has been equated with the concept of job satisfaction (see Green 2005). While subjective aspects are important, our approach to understanding job quality also includes more objective characteristics. Job quality incorporates a number of dimensions (see Campbell et al 2005 p7) of which job content and schedule of work hours are particularly relevant to experience in Victoria Police. When an employee converts from full-time to part-time,⁸ the content of the job may change. Part-time police employees may be given more routine clerical tasks and not assigned to the variety of activities experienced by full-time police because part-time staff are deemed to 'cause' a lack of 'continuity' in police work. Interestingly, this continuity criticism is only made in relation to part-time employment, despite the fact that even full-time work could be constructed as 'part-time' in a twenty-four hours, seven days a week operational environment. Further, other factors, such as changes to work hours due to shift rotation, court attendance, roster changes and staff redeployment are not viewed as disrupting the continuity of police work.

Part-time work is concentrated in the lowest three ranks in Victoria Police. The nine rank levels above Sergeant currently have no instances of part-time employees, even though there are no policy barriers to part-time employment at these ranks. The assumption that particular jobs in Victoria Police are not amenable to part-time work, coupled with a prevailing attitude that views part-time work as pertaining only to women with children, has implications for the quality of part-time work in terms of its location in the organisation and for the content of part-time jobs. For part-time and full-time employment to be fully integrated, part-time employment needs to span all ranks of the organisation at more than token levels, thereby normalising part-time work in the organisation.

The Part-time Employment Review made a substantial number of specific recommendations addressing both the policy and cultural issues highlighted in the review findings. These recommendations are yet to be formally ratified by the Reference Group that oversaw the review.⁹ Notwithstanding, Victoria Police is taking a proactive stance in terms of revising the Part-time Employment Policy and in addressing cultural issues that impact on quality part-time work in the organisation.

The challenge for Victoria Police, and indeed for the Policing and Quality Part-time Work Project, will be to move beyond an understanding that organisational cultural discourses and practices that underpin the restricted quantity and quality of part-time work can be simply dealt with by educating managers and full-time co-workers. In exploring the resistance of managers to part-time work in a UK police force, Dick (2004) found this resistance to be rooted in the institutional and historical context of policing, which influenced the attitudes of managers who attempted to negotiate between the conflicting demands of employees' desire to work part-time and organisational responses to operational demands. Unless there is recognition of organisational and institutional barriers to part-time work, attempts to change individuals' attitudes are likely to achieve only limited effects. Cultural change that would support the effective integration of part-time and full-time work therefore requires not only 'education' of people, particularly managers, but also needs to address the structural and institutional constraints and processes that reflect and reinforce perceptions of part-time policing employees as 'part-time and part-committed'.

NOTES

¹ Rafael Epstein 'More women needed in Victorian Police force' *Australian Broadcasting Commission (ABC) News* 29 April 2003.

² See for example Leela de Kretser 'Police Jobs for the Girls', *Herald Sun* 29 April 2003; Leila de Kretser and Mark Butler 'Men Just Won't Cop It: Police Quotas Queried' *Herald Sun*, 30 April 2003.

³ The Partners at Work Scheme is run through the Victorian Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development.

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⁵ While only 4.4 percent of the Victoria Police workforce is part-time, 16.2 percent of Victorian Public Service are employed part-time.

⁶ Probationary constables are confirmed once they have completed a Diploma of Public Safety. While the Diploma is competency based, regulations limit the time for completion of the Diploma to a maximum of three years.

⁷ This can result in cost reductions, which may be viewed favourably by some managers.

⁸ Often the two experiences are punctuated by a period of maternity leave.

⁹ As at April 2005.

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Table 1: Police (sworn) Employees by Classification and Sex as at 30-6-2004

Rank	Full-time				Part-time				Total (sworn) Employees			
	M	F	Total	% F	M	F	Total	% F	M	F	Total	% F
Chief Commissioner		1	1	100.0						1	1	100.0
Deputy Commissioner	2		2	0.0					2		2	0.0
Assistant Commissioner	8		8	0.0					8		8	0.0
Commander	13	1	14	7.1					13	1	14	7.1
Chief Superintendent	2		2	0.0					2		2	0.0
Superintendent	63	1	64	1.6					63	1	64	1.6
Chief Inspector	22		22	0.0					22		22	0.0
Inspector	244	11	255	4.3					244	11	255	4.3
Senior Sergeant	549	32	581	5.5					549	32	581	5.5
Sergeant	1605	120	1725	7.0	8	11	19	57.9	1613	131	1744	7.5
Senior Constable	4601	730	5331	13.7	56	327	383	85.4	4657	1057	5714	18.5
Constable	1420	665	2085	31.9	6	12	18	66.7	1426	677	2103	32.2
Total Police	8529	1561	10090	15.5	70	350	420	83.3	8599	1911	10510	18.2
Recruits in Training	112	80	192	41.7					112	80	192	41.7
Police and Recruits	8641	1641	10282	16.0	70	350	420	83.3	8711	1991	10702	18.6

Adapted from Victoria Police Annual Report (2004b)

Note: all employees are ongoing except for Chief Commissioner, Deputy Commissioners, Assistant Commissioners and Recruits, who are all fixed term employees