

# Measuring Confidence in Policing: Announcing M-E-L Research's 'feeling the difference' survey standards

Public confidence in policing has become the **single external measure of the effectiveness of your services**. The Green Paper and the Flanagan Report also flag up the need for better local data to assess the impact of neighbourhood policing.

Police Forces and Authorities are getting used to having their performance tested through social survey data, with the Home Office now looking to set rigorous performance standards for how this should happen. These performance standards are likely to raise questions about:

- ◆ Whether social research techniques are reliable
- ◆ If it is possible to have absolute confidence in the quality assurance standards that research agencies use
- ◆ What the right sampling strategies are to ensure respondents are representative at the level required
- ◆ What the respective merits are of face-to-face surveys, phone surveys, and postal surveys
- ◆ What statistically reliable methods exist for tracking significant trends over time?

Finally of course, from a performance management angle, it is not enough to know how you score on the *'how well there is agreement or disagreement that the police and local council are dealing with the anti social behaviour and crime issues that matter in the area'* top down single target for measuring public confidence in policing. The big questions are:

- ◆ What really affects the way people answer this question?
- ◆ Which demographic groups have most concerns, and why?
- ◆ What actions do we need to take to help improve confidence ratings, and where should this effort be targeted?

***Few tasks are more pressing than getting the right answers to these questions!***

M-E-L Research is the UK's centre of excellence in measuring public attitudes to policing. With experience gained from almost 25 years track record in public services research and consultancy, we have an unrivalled track record in this field.

Our **'Policing Confidence' Expert Practice Centre** has pioneered the UK's biggest and longest-running local 'feeling the difference' survey, for West Midlands Police, involving 21,000 face-to-face interviews annually since 2005. This now extends to other clients such as Staffordshire Constabulary and Wiltshire Police Authority.



## Our 'Policing Confidence' Expert Practice Centre

M-E-L stands for 'measurement, evaluation, learning'. This is a very special service, not just the off-the-shelf type of survey you get from conventional market research firms:

**'Measurement'**: Running precision-grade surveys to generate robust research evidence

**'Evaluation'**: Interpreting and understanding the findings - what the data means for you

**'Learning'**: Practical ideas on using the evidence to help improve your performance.

Our wide-ranging research on policing confidence and public perceptions, and the factors most likely to improve public confidence, involves a number of key services:

### ◆ Policing Confidence and 'Feeling the Difference' Surveys

Consultation with local residents to give you evidence on measuring public confidence in policing, perceptions of crime and ASB, fear of crime, perceptions of local quality of life, views on standards of policing, stop-and-search / stop-and-account, and awareness of publicity.

### ◆ Evaluating local neighbourhood policing

Consultation with residents and key stakeholders on their awareness of neighbourhood policing, awareness of PCSO roles, uptake of Policing Pledge items such as local contact numbers and meetings, and impacts on confidence. Our evaluations identify lessons for best practice in improving neighbourhood policing.

We have worked hard to establish absolute confidence in the rigour and reliability of the research and statistical techniques used in this sort of work. Client confidence is essential. We can give you confidence because our highly specialised approach is:

- ◆ **Consistent** – we use dedicated specialist interviewers on our FTD work to ensure consistency of approach. All our interviewers are CRB-checked and have been on our books for a number of years;
- ◆ **Statistically reliable and accurate** – you will be judged on the data, and we ensure you get a statistically representative and valid picture of how you are doing;
- ◆ **Value for money** – as a public sector organisation, you need to show that you are spending your money wisely. Our services are designed to offer the 'most economically advantageous tender' for your procurement appraisal;
- ◆ **Adaptable** – no two police forces have the same resident profile or crime problems. We help tailor the research to your requirements, unlike mass market research companies with a vested interest in offering the same product to all their clients.

To view **examples of our work** with clients such as West Midlands Police or Wiltshire Police Authority, visit [www.m-e-l.co.uk/dm/policingperformance.html](http://www.m-e-l.co.uk/dm/policingperformance.html)

Or come and **visit our stand** in the refreshment area at today's event!

**M-E-L Research's 'Policing Confidence' Expert Practice Centre – add us to your tender list!**

**For immediate technical advice on work you may be commissioning, phone Anne Forshaw on 0121 604 4664 or email [anne.forshaw@m-e-l.co.uk](mailto:anne.forshaw@m-e-l.co.uk)**