Community Policing Alternatives

Alex Applebee & L. N. Combe

2026

The System Provides Wanted Attention for Unwanted Results: Community Policing Alternatives and the Case for Functional Replacement

Authors: Alex Applebee and L. N. Combe

OMXUS Research Series — Paper 5: Public Safety

Date: March 2026

Author's Note

This paper serves OMXUS Goals 5 and 6:

> Goal 5: Community response for non-criminal calls. Send crisis workers, not armed officers, to mental-health and welfare calls. CAHOOTS model: 35 years running.
>
> Goal 6: Redeploy staff into new roles. Nobody loses a livelihood. The skills transfer. The roles change.

We need to be clear about what this paper is not. It is not an argument for lawlessness. It is not an argument for the absence of public safety. It is an argument — backed by 35 years of operational data, cross-national comparisons, and the lived experience of communities who have already done this — that the institution we call "policing" is a 197-year-old experiment that failed.

The model that replaced it has been running since 1989 in Eugene, Oregon. It is called CAHOOTS. Two people in a van. A medic and a crisis worker. No weapons. No law enforcement authority. Twenty-four thousand calls a year. Zero people killed. Not in the first year. Not in any year. In thirty-five years.

The question is not whether community-based response works. The question is why, in the face of this evidence, we continue to send armed officers to mental health calls and then act surprised when people die.

The answer is structural. The policing system provides wanted attention for unwanted results. It gives officers combat training and sends them to welfare checks. It gives departments military

equipment and tells them to de-escalate. It rewards arrests and punishes resolution. The incentive structure produces exactly the outcomes we observe. This is not a bug. It is the architecture.

Goals 5 and 6 are inseparable. Changing who answers a call does not mean discarding a workforce. A police officer trained in rapid response, physical fitness, communication under pressure, and situational awareness has skills the community needs. Retrained and redeployed in community emergency response, mental health first response, fire services, paramedic teams, or the $29 ring network, the same person becomes someone who shows up when you call, unarmed, for the calls that need care, while sworn police deal with crime.

Nobody loses a livelihood. The institution changes. The people keep working. Fewer calls end in harm.

— *A.A. & L.N.C., March 2026*

Abstract

Modern policing rests on an assumption that has never been tested against the data: that every public safety call requires an armed law enforcement response. Analysis of police call data across jurisdictions consistently shows that 70–90% of calls involve non-criminal situations — mental health crises, homelessness, substance use, welfare checks, noise complaints, neighbour disputes. The Crisis Assistance Helping Out On The Streets (CAHOOTS) program in Eugene, Oregon, has operated since 1989, deploying unarmed two-person crisis teams to these calls. In 35 years of operation, handling approximately 24,000 calls per year, CAHOOTS has killed zero people and requested police backup fewer than 150 times annually — less than 1% of calls. The program operates at roughly 2% of the police budget while handling 20% of all calls.

This paper examines the evidence for community-based alternatives to armed policing. We review CAHOOTS in depth, alongside the STAR program (Denver), B-HEARD (New York), MACRO (Oakland), Crisis Intervention Teams, Australian Indigenous community policing models, and the Rojava Asayish system. We present cross-national comparisons of police use-of-force data, cost analyses, historical context on the origins of modern policing, and the psychological mechanisms by which community response systems outperform armed response. We integrate evidence from direct personal alert systems (PulsePoint, GoodSAM, AMBER Alerts) demonstrating that personalised accountability overrides bystander diffusion of responsibility.

The evidence converges on a single conclusion: armed policing is not a public safety model. It is a control model. The public safety model already exists. It has been running for 35 years. It works better, costs less, and kills no one.

Keywords: community policing, CAHOOTS, crisis response, police reform, restorative justice, community safety, use of force, mental health crisis, bystander effect, direct democracy

---

Table of Contents

1. Introduction: The Assumption
2. What Police Actually Respond To
3. CAHOOTS: The 35-Year Proof

4. STAR, B-HEARD, MACRO, and the Replication Pattern
5. Crisis Intervention Teams: The Reform That Proved the Point
6. Use of Force: The International Comparison
7. The Historical Accident
8. Australian Indigenous Community Policing
9. Rojava: The Asayish Model
10. Restorative Justice Circles
11. The Psychology: Why Community Response Works
12. The Cost Argument Is Backwards
13. The Incentive Inversion: Wanted Attention for Unwanted Results
14. Goal 6: Re-Employment, Not Unemployment
15. The $29 Ring: Community Emergency Response at Scale
16. Conclusion: The Model Exists

- References
- Appendix A: Source Verification Status
- Appendix B: Cross-References to OMXUS Research Series

---

1. Introduction: The Assumption

Every public safety system in the Western world rests on the same assumption: when something goes wrong, send an armed officer.

A woman is having a mental health crisis in a car park. Send an armed officer. A homeless man is sleeping in a doorway. Send an armed officer. Neighbours are arguing about a fence. Send an armed officer. A teenager is sitting alone on a bridge at 2am. Send an armed officer.

The assumption is that the presence of someone with a gun, handcuffs, legal authority to detain, and 21 weeks of training — the majority of it in the use of force — is the appropriate response to a person in distress. This assumption has never been tested. Not because we lack the means to test it, but because the institution that would be tested is the same institution that controls the testing. Police departments collect their own data, define their own metrics, and resist external audits with the vigour of any bureaucracy protecting its budget.

But we do not need to test the assumption any more. Someone already did. In 1989, a community health clinic in Eugene, Oregon, decided to answer the question directly. What happens when you stop sending armed officers to calls that don't involve crime?

The answer, after 35 years and approximately 840,000 calls: nothing bad. In fact, everything gets better. Faster resolution. Lower cost. Less trauma. Less violence. And zero people killed.

This paper presents the evidence. Not as an abstract policy proposal, but as a description of what already exists and already works. The question is not whether community-based response is viable. That question was answered in 1989. The question is why the model has not been adopted everywhere, and what it would take to make that happen.

The resistance is not intellectual. Every counterargument has been answered by evidence. "It won't work in big cities" — New York's B-HEARD program handles thousands of calls in a city of 8.3 million. "It won't work for serious situations" — CAHOOTS handles active psychotic episodes,

overdoses, and suicidal crises. "It's too expensive" — it costs 2% of the police budget. "It's dangerous for responders" — zero CAHOOTS workers have been killed in 35 years.

The resistance is structural. A $130 billion policing industry, police unions, equipment manufacturers, private prison operators, bail bond companies, and the entire legal-industrial complex that processes the cases policing generates — all of these depend on the current model. The evidence does not matter to them. The evidence threatens their revenue.

This paper is written for the people the system claims to serve — the public. The evidence belongs to you. The decision belongs to you. The model exists. Here it is.

---

2. What Police Actually Respond To

The assumption underlying modern policing — that every call requires an armed response — collapses the moment you look at what those calls actually involve.

2.1 The Call Data

Studies of police call data across jurisdictions produce a remarkably consistent picture. The New York City Civilian Complaint Review Board's analysis of NYPD calls found that approximately 70% involved non-criminal situations. A study of 911 call data in Camden, New Jersey, found that 78% of calls were for non-emergency, non-criminal situations. The Vera Institute of Justice, analysing multiple departments, reported that the vast majority of police time is spent on non-enforcement activities: responding to noise complaints, conducting welfare checks, managing traffic, mediating disputes, and — most critically — responding to mental health crises (Vera Institute of Justice, 2020).

The range across jurisdictions is 70–90% non-criminal. The precise figure varies by city, by methodology, by how you define "criminal." But the pattern does not vary. The majority of what police do is not policing. It is social work, performed by people trained for combat.

2.2 The Training Mismatch

Police Academy curricula in the United States allocate the majority of training hours to firearms, defensive tactics, use of force, and tactical operations. The Bureau of Justice Statistics reports that the average academy provides approximately 840 hours of training, of which roughly 168 hours (20%) are devoted to firearms and defensive tactics, while de-escalation receives approximately 8 hours, and mental health crisis intervention receives approximately 10 hours (Reaves, 2016).

Consider the mathematics. An officer will spend 70–90% of their career responding to non-criminal calls — welfare checks, mental health crises, homelessness, disputes. They receive less than 2% of their training in de-escalation and mental health response. They receive 20% of their training in the use of force. They are then handed a firearm, a taser, handcuffs, body armour, and in many jurisdictions, access to armoured vehicles and military-grade equipment.

The system trains people for combat and sends them to welfare checks. Then we express surprise when the outcome is combat.

2.3 The Warrior Problem

Sue Rahr, former Executive Director of the Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission and former King County Sheriff, articulated the problem as a paradigm choice: warrior versus guardian. The warrior model, dominant in American policing, treats every encounter as a potential combat situation. The guardian model treats officers as protectors of community wellbeing (Rahr & Rice, 2015).

Rahr's analysis is accurate but insufficient. The problem is not merely attitudinal — it is structural. You cannot train someone as a warrior, arm them as a warrior, deploy them to warrior-appropriate situations 10–30% of the time and social work situations 70–90% of the time, and then blame the individual officer when they respond to a mental health call with warrior behaviour. The system is designed to produce this outcome.

2.4 The Militarisation Feedback Loop

Since the 1033 Program was established in 1997 (National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1997, Section 1033), the US Department of Defense has transferred over $7.4 billion in surplus military equipment to local law enforcement agencies. This includes armoured vehicles, grenade launchers, military aircraft, bayonets, and combat-grade body armour. Over 8,000 law enforcement agencies have received military equipment through the program (DLA, 2023).

The militarisation of policing creates a feedback loop. Departments that receive military equipment train to use military equipment. Training creates deployment incentives — a department that has an armoured vehicle needs situations that justify an armoured vehicle. The ACLU's 2014 report *War Comes Home* documented that 79% of SWAT deployments were for drug search warrants on private homes — not hostage situations, not active shooters, not the "extreme circumstances" that were used to justify the equipment acquisition.

Consider this from the perspective of a person in mental health crisis. You called for help. What arrives is a vehicle designed for urban warfare, carrying people dressed in military gear, pointing weapons designed to kill combatants in Iraq. This is not de-escalation. This is the opposite of de-escalation. This is the system producing the escalation that justifies its own existence.

The Program 1033 equipment comes free to police departments — they pay only for shipping. The maintenance, training, and deployment costs, however, are substantial, and they are paid by local taxpayers. A community that cannot afford to staff its mental health services is maintaining a Mine-Resistant Ambush Protected vehicle in a police depot. The vehicle has never been used in a mine. It has been used to serve drug warrants in residential neighbourhoods at 5am.

2.5 The Body Camera Mirage

Body-worn cameras were proposed as a reform that would increase accountability and reduce use of force. The evidence is mixed at best and damning at worst.

The largest randomised controlled trial of body cameras — conducted across 2,224 officers in the Metropolitan Police Department of Washington, DC — found no statistically significant effect on police use of force or civilian complaints (Yokum et al., 2019). Officers wearing cameras used force at the same rates as officers without cameras. The result was consistent with a 2019 meta-analysis of 70 empirical studies that found "no consistent or significant effects" of body cameras on police use of force, citizen complaints, or officer proactivity (Lum et al., 2019).

Body cameras do not change behaviour because they do not change the system. An officer trained for combat, armed for combat, deployed to a mental health call, and incentivised to make arrests will behave the same way whether or not a camera is recording. The camera documents the violence. It does not prevent it. In some jurisdictions, body camera footage has been used more often to prosecute civilians than to hold officers accountable — the camera becomes an additional tool of the system, not a check on it.

This is the reform trap. Each reform — body cameras, implicit bias training, civilian oversight boards, consent decrees — operates within the assumption that the fundamental model is correct and merely needs adjustment. The evidence says the fundamental model is wrong. You do not reform a system designed for combat into a system designed for care. You build the care system and use it.

---

3. CAHOOTS: The 35-Year Proof

3.1 Origins

The Crisis Assistance Helping Out On The Streets (CAHOOTS) program was established in 1989 by the White Bird Clinic, a community health organisation in Eugene, Oregon. It was not born from theory. It was born from the recognition that the people showing up to Eugene's 911 calls were trained for the wrong job.

White Bird Clinic had been providing community mental health services since 1970. Their staff knew the population that police were encountering on calls — because they were the same people who walked into the clinic during business hours. The difference was that when someone in crisis walked into White Bird, they were met by a counsellor. When the same person was encountered by police at 2am, they were met by an armed officer. Same person. Same crisis. Radically different outcomes.

CAHOOTS was the formalisation of an obvious insight: send the right people to the right calls.

3.2 The Model

Each CAHOOTS team consists of two people: a medic (EMT or nurse) and a crisis worker (with training in mental health, de-escalation, and social services). They operate in a clearly marked van. They carry no weapons. They have no law enforcement authority — they cannot arrest, detain, or use force.

The teams are dispatched through the 911 system. When a call comes in that involves a mental health crisis, substance use, homelessness, welfare check, or non-violent dispute, the dispatcher routes it to CAHOOTS instead of police. If at any point a CAHOOTS team assesses that a situation involves violence or criminal activity, they call for police backup.

This is the entire model. Two people. A van. No guns. Training in the thing they are actually responding to.

3.3 The Numbers

In 2019 — the most recent year with comprehensive data before the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted call patterns — CAHOOTS handled approximately 24,000 calls. Of those 24,000 calls, they requested police backup fewer than 150 times. That is less than 1%.

To state this differently: 99% of the time, an unarmed two-person crisis team resolved the situation without any police involvement. The calls were not trivial. They included active psychotic episodes, overdoses, suicidal ideation, aggressive individuals, and volatile domestic situations. The teams resolved them through de-escalation, medical intervention, connection to services, and — fundamentally — the simple act of showing up without a weapon.

In 35 years of operation, zero people have been killed during a CAHOOTS response.

This number requires emphasis. Zero. Not a low number. Not a reduced number. Zero. Thirty-five years of responding to 20,000–24,000 crisis calls per year, and not a single person has died.

During the same period, US police killed approximately 38,500 people (based on the Mapping Police Violence annual figure of approximately 1,100 per year). Many of those killings occurred during the exact types of calls — mental health crises, welfare checks, "person acting erratically" — that CAHOOTS handles without weapons.

3.4 Source Verification

The CAHOOTS figures come from White Bird Clinic's organisational data and public reporting. They have not been independently audited by an external research body. We flag this transparently.

However, the 35-year safety record is not a statistical claim that requires precise auditing. It is a binary. Has anyone been killed during a CAHOOTS response? If yes, it would be a matter of public record — a death during an emergency response generates police reports, coroner's reports, media coverage, and potential litigation. No such records exist. The zero is real.

The call volume and backup request figures are more appropriately treated as approximations. Whether CAHOOTS handled 22,000 or 26,000 calls in a given year does not change the structural argument. Whether they requested backup 130 times or 170 times does not change the fact that it was less than 1%.

3.5 The Human Factor: What CAHOOTS Teams Actually Do

To understand why CAHOOTS works, it is necessary to understand what a CAHOOTS call actually looks like. The following composite is based on published accounts from White Bird Clinic staff and media reporting.

A 911 call comes in. A woman is sitting in a car park behind a supermarket, crying. She appears disoriented. Maybe intoxicated. Maybe in crisis. Under the standard model, an armed officer arrives. The officer assesses the situation for threat — this is what they are trained to do. The woman is told to identify herself. She may be unable to respond coherently. The officer's training now triggers a decision tree: is this person a threat? Are they concealing a weapon? Can they be detained for their own safety? Every branch of the tree is oriented toward control.

Under CAHOOTS, the same call is routed differently. A van arrives with a medic and a crisis worker. They sit with the woman. They ask if she needs water. They ask if she is in pain. They check her vitals. They learn her name. They learn that her child died three weeks ago and she

has nowhere to go tonight. They call a shelter. They drive her there. The call is resolved in 45 minutes. No arrest. No report. No booking. No court date. No mugshot. No criminal record. No night in a cell.

The difference is not skill. Both the officer and the crisis worker are skilled. The difference is design. The officer is designed to identify threat and neutralise it. The crisis worker is designed to identify need and meet it. Same situation. Same person in distress. Radically different architecture of response.

3.6 What CAHOOTS Doesn't Do

CAHOOTS does not respond to violent crime. They do not respond to active shooters, armed robberies, assaults in progress, or situations where a weapon is present. Those calls go to police.

This is not a limitation of the model. It is the design. The argument is not that armed response should never exist. The argument is that it should exist for the 10–30% of calls that actually involve violence or crime — not for the 70–90% that involve a human being in distress who needs help, not handcuffs.

3.7 CAHOOTS and Repeat Calls

One of the most significant but least-discussed features of the CAHOOTS model is its effect on repeat calls. In standard policing, the same individuals cycle through the system repeatedly — arrested, released, re-arrested, released. The arrest resolves nothing. It removes the person from public space temporarily and returns them, often in worse condition, to the same situation.

CAHOOTS breaks this cycle by connecting individuals to services: mental health treatment, substance use programs, housing, benefits assistance, medical care. White Bird Clinic reports that a significant proportion of CAHOOTS contacts result in service connections that reduce or eliminate future crises. The call is not just resolved — the underlying condition is addressed.

This is upstream work. It does not appear in police statistics because police statistics do not measure calls that didn't happen. But a person who is connected to stable housing does not generate future "person sleeping in doorway" calls. A person connected to mental health treatment does not generate future "person acting erratically" calls. A person connected to substance use treatment does not generate future overdose calls. Each CAHOOTS intervention that connects someone to services is a reduction in future call volume for both CAHOOTS and police.

No police department has a budget line item for "calls we prevented." CAHOOTS prevents calls by design.

---

4. STAR, B-HEARD, MACRO, and the Replication Pattern

4.1 STAR (Denver, Colorado)

The Support Team Assisted Response program launched in June 2020, modelled explicitly on CAHOOTS. Denver's program deploys a mental health clinician and a paramedic in a van to calls involving mental health crises, substance use, poverty-related issues, and non-violent welfare checks.

In its first six months of operation: 748 calls responded to, zero arrests, zero requests for police backup. The program expanded from one van to four within its first year, and subsequently to six. By the end of 2022, STAR had responded to over 7,500 calls.

A study by the Stanford Computational Policy Lab and the Denver Department of Public Safety (Dee & Pyne, 2022) found that the introduction of STAR was associated with a 34% reduction in reports of minor criminal offences in the areas it served. The researchers attributed this to the displacement effect: when crisis response replaces enforcement, situations that would have been escalated into arrests (and therefore recorded as crimes) are instead resolved as health interventions. The "crime" does not disappear. It was never crime. It was distress, recategorised.

4.2 B-HEARD (New York City)

New York's Behavioral Health Emergency Assistance Response Division launched in 2021 in select precincts. Teams consist of an EMT, a paramedic, and a social worker from NYC Health + Hospitals. They respond to 911 mental health calls in participating areas.

In its first year, B-HEARD responded to over 6,000 calls. Of those calls, teams transported individuals to emergency departments only 15% of the time — compared to approximately 80% for police responses to similar calls. The remaining 85% were resolved in the field: de-escalation, connection to outpatient services, wellness checks, and referrals. Hospitalisation is not resolution. It is displacement. B-HEARD actually resolves.

The significance of the New York data is scale. Eugene is a city of 175,000. Denver is a city of 700,000. New York is a city of 8.3 million. If the model works in New York — and the early data says it does — the "it only works in small cities" objection is dead.

4.3 MACRO (Oakland, California)

Oakland's Mobile Assistance Community Responders of Oakland program launched in 2021. Teams respond to non-violent, non-criminal 911 calls. In its first two years, MACRO responded to over 14,000 calls. Zero use of force incidents. Police backup requested in approximately 2% of calls — slightly higher than CAHOOTS, attributed to Oakland's higher baseline rate of armed individuals in public spaces.

4.4 The Pattern

The replication pattern is now clear across programs spanning different cities, different sizes, different demographics, different crime rates:

Program	City	Population	Launched	Calls (annual)	Police Backup	Use of Force	Deaths
CAHOOTS	Eugene, OR	175,000	1989	~24,000	<1%	Zero	Zero
STAR	Denver, CO	715,000	2020	~3,750+	0% (first 6mo)	Zero	Zero
B-HEARD	New York, NY	8,300,000	2021	~6,000+	<3%	Zero	Zero

Program	City	Population	Launched	Calls (annual)	Police Backup	Use of Force	Deaths
MACRO	Oakland, CA	430,000	2021	~7,000+	~2%	Zero	Zero

Same design. Same inputs. Same outputs. Different cities. The model generalises.

---

5. Crisis Intervention Teams: The Reform That Proved the Point

5.1 The CIT Model

Crisis Intervention Teams (CIT) represent the reform position: do not replace police, but train them better. The Memphis Model, developed after the 1987 police shooting of Joseph Dewayne Robinson — a man in mental health crisis who was killed by officers — trains officers to recognise and de-escalate mental health crises.

CIT programs typically involve 40 hours of specialised training in mental health, de-escalation, trauma-informed response, and community resource connection. They have been adopted by over 2,700 police departments across the United States.

5.2 The Results

CIT-trained officers use force less often than non-CIT officers in mental health calls. Studies consistently show reduced arrest rates, increased diversion to mental health services, and officer self-reports of greater confidence in handling crisis calls (Watson et al., 2008; Compton et al., 2014).

But the critical finding is this: CIT works because it makes officers behave less like officers. Every successful outcome attributed to CIT training is an outcome that could have been achieved — and is achieved, by CAHOOTS and STAR — without police involvement at all.

CIT proves the CAHOOTS thesis by accident. It demonstrates that the skills required for effective crisis response are de-escalation, mental health knowledge, empathy, and service connection. It also demonstrates that these skills are not inherent to policing — they have to be bolted on through supplementary training. The 40-hour CIT course is an admission that the baseline police academy does not prepare officers for the majority of calls they will respond to.

5.3 The Ceiling

CIT has a ceiling, and that ceiling is the uniform. A CIT-trained officer is still an armed officer in a police uniform, arriving in a police vehicle. Research on mental health service engagement consistently shows that police presence — even well-intentioned police presence — deters help-seeking in populations that most need crisis services: people of colour, people with prior justice system contact, undocumented immigrants, people in active psychosis who perceive uniformed authority as threatening (Livingston et al., 2012).

The van matters. The absence of the uniform matters. The absence of the weapon matters. Not because crisis workers are better people than police officers, but because the symbolic architecture

of policing communicates threat, and people in crisis respond to threat with escalation. Remove the threat symbols, and the escalation decreases. This is not ideology. It is stimulus-response.

---

6. Use of Force: The International Comparison

6.1 The Numbers

US police kill approximately 1,100 people per year. This figure comes from the Mapping Police Violence database, which aggregates publicly available data from media reports, death records, and public records requests. It is not a disputed figure, though it is almost certainly an undercount — the United States has no mandatory national database of police killings. The FBI's Use of Force data collection, launched in 2019, remains voluntary and incomplete.

For comparison:

Country	Population	Annual Police Killings	Rate per 10 Million
United States	333 million	~1,100	~33.0
Australia	26 million	~7–12	~3.5
Germany	83 million	~8–12	~1.2
United Kingdom	67 million	~2–4	~0.45
Japan	125 million	~0–2	~0.08
Norway	5.5 million	~0–1	~0.9
New Zealand	5.1 million	~1–2	~2.9

Per capita, US police use lethal force at rates 30–80 times higher than comparable democracies. The gap is not explained by population size, crime rates, or the availability of firearms alone. Japan has a population of 125 million. Its police kill 0–2 people per year. The United Kingdom has widespread knife crime and a population of 67 million. Its police kill 2–4 people per year.

6.2 Mental Health and Lethal Force

People in mental health crisis are 16 times more likely to be killed during a police encounter than the general population (Treatment Advocacy Center, 2015). This figure comes from the Treatment Advocacy Center's report *Overlooked in the Undercounted*, which cross-referenced police killing data with publicly available indicators of mental health crisis.

We flag that the specific methodology of the 16x figure — the denominator, time period, and operational definition of "mental health crisis" — deserves scrutiny. However, even if the true figure is half the reported estimate (8x), or a quarter (4x), the implication is identical: the current system is disproportionately killing the people it claims to be helping.

Mental health crisis calls are among the most common calls police respond to. The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) estimates that people with mental illness are involved in at least 25% of all police shootings. They are also the calls most amenable to de-escalation and least likely to involve actual danger to the responding team. CAHOOTS handles these calls — the same calls — without lethal force. Not occasionally. Always. For 35 years.

6.3 The Denominator Problem

A persistent defence of US police use-of-force rates is the "denominator argument": the US has more guns, more violent crime, and more dangerous encounters, so higher rates of lethal force are expected. This argument deserves examination because it fails on its own terms.

The United States has approximately 393 million civilian-owned firearms — more guns than people. Officers in the US do face a higher probability of encountering an armed individual than officers in the UK, Japan, or Australia. This is real and should not be dismissed.

However, the denominator argument proves too much. If the risk environment justifies lethal force, then we should see lethal force concentrated in high-risk encounters — armed confrontations, violent crimes in progress, active shooters. Instead, the data shows that a significant proportion of police killings occur during traffic stops, mental health calls, wellness checks, and low-level warrant service. In 2022, Mapping Police Violence data showed that 27% of people killed by police were not armed with a gun. Fourteen per cent were not armed with any weapon at all.

The denominator argument also fails comparatively. Canada has a substantial firearms ownership rate (approximately 34 guns per 100 people) and a police killing rate roughly one-quarter of the US per-capita rate. Australia has significant rural gun ownership and a police killing rate one-tenth of the US rate. The gap is not explained by guns alone. It is explained by training, deployment, culture, oversight, and — most fundamentally — the system design.

6.4 Race and Lethal Force

The racial dimension cannot be omitted from any honest analysis of police use of force. Black Americans are killed by police at 2.5 times the rate of white Americans (Mapping Police Violence, 2024). Indigenous Americans are killed at the highest rate of any racial group. Latino Americans are killed at 1.3 times the rate of white Americans.

These disparities persist after controlling for crime rates, poverty, and population density. They persist in cities with Black police chiefs, majority-Black departments, and civilian oversight boards. They persist because the disparities are structural — embedded in deployment patterns, in the geography of patrol, in the definitions of "suspicious behaviour," and in the institutional DNA of an organisation whose American origins include slave patrols and strike-breaking forces.

Community-based response programs do not eliminate racism. But they eliminate the mechanism by which racist assumptions become lethal. An unarmed crisis worker with a racial bias may provide subtly worse service. An armed officer with the same bias may kill someone. The stakes are different. The institutional design should reflect that difference.

---

7. The Historical Accident

7.1 Policing Is New

Modern policing is recent. The first professional police force — Robert Peel's Metropolitan Police — was established in London in 1829. Before that, public safety was maintained through community watches, constables, thief-takers, and informal social systems. The institution is not ancient. It is not inevitable. It is 197 years old.

For the vast majority of human history — roughly 300,000 years of Homo sapiens existence — communities maintained order without professional police forces. They did so through social norms, kinship obligations, community accountability, restorative processes, and the simple mathematical reality that in groups small enough for everyone to know everyone, antisocial behaviour carries immediate social consequences.

This is not an argument for returning to pre-modern social structures. It is an observation that the claim "we need police" is a claim about a 197-year-old institution, not about human nature. Human nature managed without police for 299,803 years.

7.2 The American Origins

In the American South, the origins of organised policing trace directly to slave patrols. This is not a radical claim. It is documented by historians (Hadden, 2001; Mitrani, 2014; Turner et al., 2006; Potter, 2013). The first slave patrols were established in the Carolina colonies in 1704. Their function was to chase down escaped enslaved people, terrorise enslaved populations to deter revolt, and maintain the economic system of chattel slavery.

After emancipation, these patrols were reconstituted as police departments. Their function shifted from enforcing slavery to enforcing Black Codes, then Jim Crow laws, then — once de jure segregation ended — the War on Drugs, which Nixon's domestic policy advisor John Ehrlichman later admitted was designed to target Black communities (Baum, 2016).

The institutional DNA carries forward. Not because individual officers are consciously racist, but because the structures, deployment patterns, legal frameworks, and cultural norms of policing were designed to control specific populations. The system does what it was designed to do.

In the Northern United States, organised policing emerged in the mid-1800s primarily as a tool for industrialists to suppress labour organising and control immigrant populations. The Chicago police force, as documented by Mitrani (2014), was established to break strikes and protect capital. Boston's police force was created in response to anti-immigrant rioting — not to protect immigrants, but to manage the "problem" of their presence.

7.3 Australian Policing and Indigenous Communities

In Australia, the colonial police forces functioned as frontier violence organisations. The Native Police — a paramilitary force of Aboriginal troopers commanded by white officers — conducted massacres of Aboriginal communities throughout the 19th century. The Queensland Native Police Force (1848–1904) was directly responsible for the deaths of tens of thousands of Aboriginal people in what historian Jonathan Richards has documented as systematic frontier genocide (Richards, 2008).

Modern Australian policing inherits this legacy. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are the most incarcerated population on earth. As of 2024, Indigenous Australians are incarcerated at approximately 14.7 times the rate of non-Indigenous Australians (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2024). They represent 3.8% of the population and approximately 33% of the prison population. Aboriginal people are more likely to die in custody, more likely to be arrested for minor offences, and more likely to have their children removed by police-adjacent child protection systems.

The system provides wanted attention for unwanted results. The attention is wanted — it justifies budgets, positions, equipment, overtime. The results are unwanted — death, incarceration, family

destruction, intergenerational trauma. But the results are only unwanted from the perspective of the people experiencing them. From the perspective of the institution, the results are the product.

---

8. Australian Indigenous Community Policing

8.1 Community Justice Groups

In response to the chronic failure of mainstream policing in Indigenous communities, a number of community-led alternatives have been developed across Australia.

Night Patrols operate in numerous Aboriginal communities across the Northern Territory, Western Australia, and Queensland. These are community-run patrols — typically staffed by local Aboriginal people, often Elders — that walk the streets at night, de-escalate disputes, transport people safely home, connect individuals to services, and intervene in situations that would otherwise generate a police call. The key features are: the patrollers are known to the community, they have cultural authority that police do not, they speak language, and they carry no weapons.

The Warlpiri communities in the Northern Territory have operated night patrols since the 1970s. Research by the Australian Institute of Criminology found that communities with active night patrols reported reductions in violence, alcohol-related harm, and police call-outs (Blagg, 2003). The patrols do not replace all policing functions, but they handle the same category of calls that CAHOOTS handles — welfare checks, intoxicated individuals, disputes, youth at risk — with greater effectiveness and legitimacy.

8.2 Community Justice Groups (Queensland)

Queensland's Community Justice Groups, established under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities (Justice, Land and Other Matters) Act 1984, provide Indigenous-led dispute resolution and court advice in discrete communities. Elders and respected community members sit as advisors, providing cultural context to magistrates and mediating disputes through culturally appropriate processes.

The model recognises what mainstream policing refuses to acknowledge: that justice is contextual, that the people best equipped to resolve community disputes are the people who understand the community, and that the presence of outside armed authority in an Indigenous community carries a historical weight that makes effective engagement impossible.

8.3 The Ju/'hoansi and Conflict Resolution Without Police

The Ju/'hoansi (also known as !Kung San) of the Kalahari provide a long-duration example of community conflict resolution without anything resembling police. Anthropological research by Richard Lee (1979) and others documented a sophisticated system of conflict management based on talking, cooling-off periods, community pressure, and physical separation. Serious disputes — including acts of violence — were resolved through extended community discussion, with the explicit goal of restoring social relationships rather than punishing individuals.

The Ju/'hoansi did not have zero conflict. They had substantial rates of interpersonal violence, including a homicide rate that, at points in their history, exceeded that of the United States. But their resolution mechanism was restorative rather than punitive. And the homicide rate declined

dramatically when the community was stable and connected — suggesting that the violence was a product of social conditions, not an inherent feature of the population.

8.4 The Deaths in Custody Crisis

No discussion of Australian policing and Indigenous communities can proceed without addressing deaths in custody. The Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (1991) investigated 99 deaths of Aboriginal people in police custody and prisons between 1980 and 1989. It made 339 recommendations. As of 2024 — 33 years later — the majority of recommendations remain unimplemented.

Since the Royal Commission, over 500 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have died in custody. The rate has not decreased. In some jurisdictions it has increased. The Closing the Gap report (2024) found no progress on reducing Indigenous incarceration rates — they continue to rise.

The deaths follow patterns the Royal Commission identified three decades ago. Failures to provide medical care. Failures to check on vulnerable individuals. Failures to recognise mental health crises. Failures to contact family. The recommendations to prevent these failures were made. They were accepted. They were not implemented. The pattern continues because the incentive to continue it is stronger than the incentive to change it.

Community-controlled alternatives to police custody — such as the Custody Notification Service, where Aboriginal Legal Services are notified whenever an Aboriginal person is taken into custody — have been shown to reduce deaths. The Custody Notification Service in New South Wales has been associated with zero deaths in police custody among notified cases (although the causal mechanism is debated). The service works by ensuring that Aboriginal people in custody are connected to their community — a structural intervention that addresses the isolation and invisibility that enables custodial deaths.

Night patrols, community justice groups, and diversionary programs all operate upstream of custody. Every person diverted from police contact is a person who cannot die in police custody. This is not a marginal improvement. It is a structural prevention.

8.5 The Pattern

Indigenous community policing models across Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and globally share common features:

1. **Local people respond to local problems.** Outsiders with no community connection and no cultural competence are structurally unable to provide effective crisis response.
2. **Authority is relational, not positional.** An Elder has authority because of their relationships, knowledge, and standing. A police officer has authority because of their badge. The former produces compliance through trust. The latter produces compliance through threat.
3. **The goal is restoration, not punishment.** The question is not "who broke the rule?" but "how do we repair the harm and prevent recurrence?"
4. **Weapons are absent.** Night patrols, Community Justice Groups, and traditional dispute resolution mechanisms do not involve weapons. The absence of weapons changes the nature of every encounter.

---

9. Rojava: The Asayish Model

9.1 The Autonomous Administration

The Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria (commonly known as Rojava) has, since 2012, operated a radically different model of public safety. The Asayish — the internal security forces of the autonomous region — function on principles that invert mainstream policing.

The Asayish operates within the ideological framework of Democratic Confederalism, as articulated by Abdullah Ocalan, which centres on direct democracy, gender liberation, and ecological sustainability. Security is understood not as the protection of state power but as a function of community self-organisation.

9.2 Structure

The Asayish is divided into three levels:

1. **Commune-level peace committees:** Neighbourhood-level dispute resolution. Volunteers from the community mediate disputes, handle complaints, and resolve conflicts through dialogue. No weapons. No formal authority. These committees handle the vast majority of interpersonal disputes — the equivalent of the 70–90% of non-criminal calls in Western policing.
2. **Asayish general security:** Trained security forces that handle situations beyond the capacity of commune committees. They carry light weapons but operate under rules of engagement that prioritise de-escalation. Officers rotate regularly to prevent the accumulation of personal power.
3. **HPC (Civil Defence Forces):** Community self-defence for existential threats — in Rojava's case, ISIS and Turkish military operations.

9.3 Gender Parity

The Asayish requires gender parity at all levels. Women's security forces (the Asayish Jin) operate alongside mixed-gender forces and have independent authority. This is not symbolic. In a region where much interpersonal violence is gendered — domestic violence, honour-related violence — having women-led security forces who respond to gendered calls changes the nature of the response fundamentally. Victims of domestic violence are met by women who have both training and lived understanding of the dynamics involved.

9.4 The Commune System

The most radical feature of the Rojava model is the commune system. Each neighbourhood (approximately 300 households) forms a commune that handles its own dispute resolution, resource allocation, and community safety. The commune meets regularly, decisions are made by consensus or direct vote, and security is understood as a collective responsibility rather than a delegated function.

This maps directly to the design principle underlying CAHOOTS, night patrols, and community justice groups: the people closest to the problem are the people best equipped to solve it. The Rojava model simply extends this principle to its logical conclusion — the community is the security system.

9.5 The Reconciliation Committees

Perhaps the most directly transferable element of the Rojava model is the reconciliation committee system. When a dispute arises that the commune-level peace committee cannot resolve, it is escalated to a reconciliation committee composed of trained mediators from the community. These committees handle cases including property disputes, family conflicts, assault, theft, and — in a significant departure from Western practice — cases of domestic violence and gender-based violence.

The reconciliation process requires the participation of the person who caused harm. Accountability is non-negotiable. But the form of accountability is restorative rather than punitive: the person acknowledges the harm, participates in a process to repair it, and commits to changed behaviour. The community — not a distant court — monitors compliance.

For cases that reconciliation committees cannot resolve, a formal justice process exists through the People's Courts. But the design intent is clear: the vast majority of disputes should be resolved at the community level, by people who know the parties involved, before they ever reach a formal system. This is the same design principle as CAHOOTS — handle the 70–90% at the community level and reserve the formal system for the remainder.

9.6 What Rojava Proves

Rojava proves that community-based security is not dependent on peace, stability, or wealth. If a community under active military siege, managing an ISIS insurgency, hosting millions of displaced refugees, and operating under international embargo can run a security system based on direct democracy and community accountability, then the argument that wealthy, stable Western democracies "aren't ready" for community policing alternatives is not an argument. It is an excuse.

The Rojava model also proves that gender parity in security is not an ideological luxury — it is a functional necessity. In any community where gendered violence is a significant proportion of security calls (and it is, everywhere), having women-led response teams for gendered violence calls produces better outcomes: higher reporting, lower re-traumatisation, and higher resolution rates.

9.7 Limitations and Context

Rojava operates in a war zone. Its security model exists alongside active military operations against ISIS and Turkish incursions. The transferability of a model developed under existential military threat to peacetime Western democracies is limited.

However, the commune-level peace committee system — the layer that handles interpersonal disputes, welfare checks, and community mediation — is directly applicable. It is, structurally, what CAHOOTS does, embedded in a governance framework of direct democracy rather than delegated to a nonprofit clinic.

The Rojava model should also be read alongside the Zapatista experience in Chiapas, Mexico. Since 1994, the Zapatista Autonomous Municipalities have operated community justice systems based on assembly decision-making, restorative principles, and rotating community service. Security is maintained by community members serving on rotation — not a professional force. The Zapatista "Good Government Councils" (Juntas de Buen Gobierno) resolve disputes through consensus and community accountability. Like Rojava, the Zapatista model demonstrates that communities can govern their own security when given the political space to do so.

---

10. Restorative Justice Circles

10.0 Why This Section Is Here

A paper on policing alternatives cannot stop at crisis response. CAHOOTS handles the call. But the question that follows is: what happens after? If you do not send armed officers to the majority of calls, you also do not generate the majority of arrests, charges, prosecutions, and incarcerations that the current system produces. You need an alternative not only for the response but for the resolution.

Restorative justice is that alternative. It is not new. It is not untested. It is the oldest form of justice on earth, practiced by Indigenous communities on every inhabited continent for millennia before the punitive model was imposed through colonisation. Its modern reintroduction is not innovation — it is recovery.

10.1 The Concept

Restorative justice is not a specific program. It is a paradigm. Where punitive justice asks "What law was broken? Who broke it? What punishment do they deserve?", restorative justice asks "Who was harmed? What do they need? Whose obligation is it to meet that need?" (Zehr, 2002).

The practice takes many forms: victim-offender mediation, community conferencing, sentencing circles, peacemaking circles. All share a common structure: the people affected by a harm — the person harmed, the person who caused harm, and the community — sit together, facilitated by a trained practitioner, and work toward accountability, repair, and prevention.

10.2 The Evidence

Restorative justice is not aspirational. It is measured.

A meta-analysis of restorative justice programs by Sherman and Strang (2007), synthesising data from 36 direct comparisons between restorative justice and conventional criminal justice processing across the UK, US, and Australia, found:

- **Victim satisfaction:** Restorative justice processes produced significantly higher victim satisfaction than court processes across virtually every study examined.
- **Reoffending:** Restorative justice reduced reoffending in violent crime cases. The effect was strongest for the most serious offences — the opposite of what intuition might predict.
- **Post-traumatic stress:** Victims who participated in restorative justice conferences showed significantly reduced symptoms of post-traumatic stress compared to victims whose cases went through conventional courts.

The RISE (Reintegrative Shaming Experiments) in Canberra, Australia — one of the largest randomised controlled trials in criminal justice — found that face-to-face restorative justice conferences reduced reoffending by 38% for violent offences compared to court processing (Sherman et al., 2015).

A key finding: restorative justice works best for serious crime, not minor crime. The more serious the offence, the greater the reduction in reoffending. This inverts the common objection that restorative justice is "fine for shoplifting but not for real crime." The evidence says the opposite.

10.3 Indigenous Restorative Traditions

Restorative justice in its modern Western form was substantially influenced by Indigenous practices — particularly Maori tikanga (New Zealand), First Nations circle processes (Canada), and Aboriginal customary law (Australia).

New Zealand's Family Group Conferencing model, introduced through the Children, Young Persons, and Their Families Act 1989, was explicitly modelled on Maori whānau decision-making processes. It brings together the young person who offended, their family, the victim, and community representatives to develop a plan. New Zealand's youth justice system processes the majority of youth offences through family group conferences rather than courts.

The Hollow Water Community Holistic Circle Healing program in Manitoba, Canada — an Anishinaabe community program addressing sexual abuse — achieved outcomes that the mainstream justice system could not approach. Over a 10-year period, the program's recidivism rate for sexual offenders was under 2%, compared to national recidivism rates for sexual offences of approximately 15–20% (Bushie, 1999). The program required offenders to take full accountability for their actions in front of their community — a far more demanding form of accountability than sitting silently in a courtroom while lawyers speak on your behalf.

10.4 Circles and Community Safety

Peacemaking circles — used in Navajo justice (Hozhooji Naat'aanii), Canadian First Nations communities, and increasingly in US cities including Chicago, Oakland, and Minneapolis — address a gap that CAHOOTS-type programs do not fill. CAHOOTS handles crisis response. Circles handle the upstream work: repairing relationships, addressing the conditions that produce crises, and building the community infrastructure that prevents harm.

The two models are complementary. CAHOOTS handles the call. Circles handle the cause. Together, they represent a complete replacement for the functions currently performed — badly — by police and courts.

10.5 The Accountability Objection

The most common objection to restorative justice is that it is "soft on crime" — that it lets offenders off the hook. This objection reveals a misunderstanding of what accountability means.

In the conventional system, accountability means this: you sit in a courtroom. A lawyer speaks on your behalf. You are advised to say as little as possible. You plead guilty or not guilty — usually guilty, because 97% of federal cases and 94% of state cases in the United States are resolved through plea bargains (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2022). You are sentenced by a stranger. You serve time in a facility where you have no contact with the person you harmed.

At no point in this process are you required to understand the impact of your actions. At no point are you required to face the person you harmed and hear what you did to their life. At no point are you required to make amends. At no point is the person you harmed asked what they need. "Accountability" in the punitive system means: the state punishes you. The victim gets nothing.

In a restorative justice circle, accountability looks like this: you sit in a room with the person you harmed, their family, your family, and members of your community. You hear — directly, from the person you hurt — what you did to their life. You are required to acknowledge it. You are required to explain it. You are required to develop a plan, in front of your community, for how you will

repair the harm and ensure it does not happen again. Your community monitors your compliance. If you fail to follow through, the community knows. There is no anonymous non-compliance. There is no hiding in a prison cell. You are accountable to the people you hurt, not to a bureaucracy.

This is harder than prison. Ask anyone who has done both. Sitting in a cell is passive. Facing the person you hurt is the hardest thing a human being can do. Restorative justice is not soft. It is the most demanding form of accountability that exists.

10.6 Scale and Integration

The objection that restorative justice "can't scale" is contradicted by the evidence. New Zealand processes the majority of its youth justice cases through family group conferences — an entire nation's youth justice system runs on restorative principles. In Australia, every state and territory has restorative justice programs, with some jurisdictions (notably the ACT and South Australia) offering restorative conferencing for adult offences including violence. In Northern Ireland, the Youth Conference Service has processed over 15,000 cases since 2003.

The Gacaca courts in Rwanda — community-based justice forums used to process approximately 1.9 million cases related to the 1994 genocide — represent the largest-scale application of restorative-adjacent justice in modern history. The Gacaca system had significant limitations and deserves critical analysis, but its scale demonstrates that community-based justice can operate at population level. If it can process genocide cases, the argument that it cannot handle property crime in Melbourne is not credible.

Integration with CAHOOTS-type crisis response creates a complete alternative system:

1. **Crisis response (CAHOOTS/STAR/B-HEARD):** Handle the immediate call. De-escalate, provide medical care, connect to services.
2. **Follow-up services (housing, mental health, substance use):** Address the underlying conditions that generated the crisis.
3. **Restorative justice (circles, conferencing):** When harm has been done, bring together the parties to repair it.
4. **Community accountability (commune committees, night patrols):** Ongoing community-level monitoring and support.
5. **Armed response (retained, reduced):** For the 10–30% of calls involving actual violence.

This is not a gap-filled version of the current system. It is a different system. The current system is designed around control. This system is designed around care.

---

11. The Psychology: Why Community Response Works

11.1 The Bystander Effect and Direct Accountability

The bystander effect — the well-documented phenomenon in which the presence of others reduces the likelihood that any individual will intervene in an emergency — is the psychological mechanism that makes community disengagement from safety possible. If everyone assumes someone else will help, no one helps. This is diffusion of responsibility (Latané & Darley, 1970).

Modern policing exploits this effect. By professionalising the response to emergencies, the system communicates to the public: "This is not your problem. Professionals will handle it. Call 911 and

step back." The result is a population that has been trained out of its own capacity to respond.

But the bystander effect is not immutable. Research consistently shows that it can be reversed by a single intervention: making the call for help personal.

11.2 Direct Personal Alerts

In a 2011 study, van Bommel and colleagues demonstrated that accountability cues — specifically, highlighting a participant's username in an online group — eliminated and reversed the bystander effect. When participants felt personally identifiable, the presence of other bystanders *increased* their likelihood of helping rather than decreasing it (van Bommel et al., 2012).

The mechanism is straightforward: when you are personally identified as a potential responder, you cannot hide in the crowd. The diffusion of responsibility collapses. You are named. You are expected to act. And you do.

This is the psychological foundation of the $29 ring (Goal 13). But it also explains why CAHOOTS works. When a CAHOOTS team arrives, two named individuals are now responsible for the outcome. There is no crowd to hide in. There is no diffusion. There is a medic and a crisis worker, and they are there to help. The clarity of role eliminates the ambiguity that breeds inaction.

11.3 The PulsePoint and GoodSAM Evidence

Real-world deployments of direct personal alert systems confirm the laboratory findings:

PulsePoint (Alachua County, Florida): A 911-integrated smartphone app that notifies nearby CPR-trained volunteers of cardiac arrest events. Following implementation, bystander CPR rates rose from 43% to 57% — a 33% relative increase (Becker et al., 2023). The app does not teach CPR. It identifies people who already know CPR and tells them they are needed.

GoodSAM (London and East Midlands, UK): An alert platform that dispatches nearby certified first-aiders when a 911 call reports cardiac arrest. When a GoodSAM alert was sent and at least one volunteer accepted, the victim's chance of survival to hospital discharge doubled compared to cases with no alerted responders (NIHR, 2022).

AMBER Alerts: The system has been credited with recovering 1,292 children in the US, including 241 rescued specifically through wireless phone alerts to citizens (US DOJ, 2025). The alert transforms every phone owner from a passive bystander into an active searcher.

The pattern across all these systems is identical: make the call for help personal, name the responder, assign the responsibility — and the bystander effect disappears. This is not theory. It is field data.

11.4 The Trauma-Informed Response Gap

The psychological case for community response extends beyond the bystander effect. It includes the growing evidence base on trauma-informed care and its incompatibility with armed policing.

Trauma-informed care, as defined by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), is built on six principles: safety, trustworthiness, peer support, collaboration, empowerment, and cultural responsiveness. Every one of these principles is structurally undermined by armed police response.

Safety: A person in mental health crisis does not feel safe when an armed stranger in body armour arrives. The Lancet Psychiatry published a systematic review in 2019 finding that police contact during mental health crises was associated with increased distress, re-traumatisation, and avoidance of future help-seeking (Livingston, 2016). The uniform itself is a trauma trigger for populations with histories of police violence — which, in the United States, means most communities of colour and most people with prior justice system contact.

Trustworthiness: Trust is built through relationships. Police officers are rotated across beats, transferred between precincts, and deployed based on staffing needs, not relationship continuity. CAHOOTS teams, by contrast, work within a community health organisation (White Bird Clinic) that has been in the same community for over 50 years. Their staff are known. Their van is known. Their approach is known. This is not an abstract organisational difference — it is the difference between a stranger with a gun and a familiar face with a first aid kit.

Peer support: Community crisis workers often share lived experience of mental health challenges, substance use, homelessness, and poverty. This is not an accident of hiring — it is a design feature. Programs like CAHOOTS, STAR, and B-HEARD actively recruit staff with lived experience because the evidence shows that peer support workers achieve better engagement, better therapeutic alliance, and better outcomes than professionals without lived experience (Davidson et al., 2012). Police officers are explicitly selected against these characteristics — candidates with criminal records, substance use histories, or significant mental health treatment are typically disqualified.

Empowerment: The policing model is inherently disempowering. The officer's authority comes from the state. The interaction is structured as an authority giving instructions to a subject. The person in crisis has no power in the encounter — they can comply or resist, and resistance may be met with force. The community response model inverts this: the crisis worker is there to serve the person, not to control them. The person retains agency throughout the encounter. They can refuse services. They can choose which services to accept. They are treated as a human being making decisions, not a problem to be managed.

The research on trauma-informed approaches is unambiguous: you cannot deliver trauma-informed care while carrying a weapon and the legal authority to deprive someone of their liberty. The two frameworks are structurally incompatible. Every attempt to bolt trauma-informed training onto policing — and there have been many — runs into this fundamental design contradiction. You are asking someone to simultaneously be a carer and a controller. The human brain cannot hold both roles simultaneously. In ambiguous situations, training defaults — and for police, the training default is control.

11.5 The Community Competence Argument

The deepest psychological argument for community response is not about efficiency or cost. It is about competence.

When a community outsources its safety to a professional police force, it loses its capacity to respond. Muscles that are never used atrophy. Communities that never practice mutual aid forget how. Neighbourhoods that rely exclusively on 911 lose the social infrastructure — the relationships, the local knowledge, the mutual obligation — that makes effective response possible.

CAHOOTS rebuilds that competence. Not by turning every citizen into an emergency responder, but by demonstrating that the emergency response itself does not require weapons, authority, or a

uniform. It requires two people who know what they are doing and care about the person in front of them.

---

12. The Cost Argument Is Backwards

12.1 Direct Costs

The cost comparison between community response and armed policing is not close.

CAHOOTS: Approximately $2.1 million per year for a program that handles 20% of all calls in Eugene.

Eugene Police Department: Approximately $90 million per year for a department that handles 100% of calls.

CAHOOTS handles 20% of calls at 2.3% of the cost. If you scaled CAHOOTS to handle the 70–90% of calls that are non-criminal, the cost would be approximately $7–9 million. The remaining 10–30% of calls — the ones that actually require armed response — would cost the police department approximately $9–27 million at current per-call rates.

Total system cost: $16–36 million, compared to the current $92 million. A saving of $56–76 million per year. In one city of 175,000 people.

12.2 Downstream Costs

The direct budget comparison understates the gap, because policing generates massive downstream costs that do not appear in police budgets:

Misconduct settlements: New York City pays approximately $300 million per year in police misconduct settlements. Los Angeles pays approximately $100 million. Chicago pays approximately $85 million. These are not police budget line items — they are paid from general funds, meaning every taxpayer subsidises police violence whether they know it or not (NYC Comptroller, 2023).

Incarceration costs: The average annual cost of incarcerating one person in the United States is approximately $35,000 (Bureau of Justice Statistics), ranging from $25,000 in low-cost states to over $60,000 in California and New York. There are approximately 1.9 million people incarcerated. Total cost: approximately $81 billion per year. Every arrest that could have been a diversion, every charge that could have been a referral, every conviction that could have been a restorative justice conference — these represent incarceration costs that are direct downstream consequences of the policing model.

Healthcare costs from use of force: Police use of force generates emergency department visits, hospitalisations, rehabilitation, and long-term disability. These costs are borne by the individuals, their families, health insurance systems, and public hospital budgets — not by police departments.

Lost productivity: Arrest, prosecution, conviction, and incarceration remove people from the workforce, from their families, from their communities. The economic cost of this removal is borne by the individual and the community, not by the policing system that initiated it.

Intergenerational trauma: The long-term costs of police violence — particularly in communities subjected to generations of over-policing — include adverse childhood experiences, mental health

conditions, substance use, family breakdown, and reduced educational attainment. These costs are real, measurable (through ACE score research and longitudinal health studies), and enormous. They do not appear on any police budget.

12.3 The Investment Reversal

The cost argument against community alternatives is always framed as: "Can we afford to fund these new programs?" The question is backwards. The question is: can we afford to continue funding a system that kills 1,100 people a year, generates $500+ million in misconduct settlements, drives $81 billion in incarceration costs, and produces worse outcomes on every measure than a program staffed by two people in a van?

---

13. The Incentive Inversion: Wanted Attention for Unwanted Results

13.1 The Core Insight

The system provides wanted attention for unwanted results. This is the sentence that explains everything.

Police departments are funded based on activity: calls responded to, arrests made, cases opened, officers deployed. A department that makes fewer arrests is a department that appears less necessary. A department that diverts calls to community workers is a department losing call volume. A department that resolves situations without force is a department that cannot justify its tactical equipment budget.

The incentive structure rewards escalation and punishes resolution. An officer who talks someone down from a bridge and connects them to a counsellor has done extraordinary work — but their department has no mechanism to count it, reward it, or use it to justify funding. An officer who arrests the same person generates paperwork, case numbers, arrest statistics, court appearances, and — if the person reoffends — repeat business.

This is not a conspiracy. It is incentive architecture. No one designed it to produce these outcomes. But no one has redesigned it because these outcomes serve the institution.

13.2 The Attention Economy of Policing

The "wanted attention" is not only financial. It is psychological. Policing offers its practitioners something that community crisis work does not: authority, identity, belonging, respect (or at least deference), and the adrenaline of high-stakes encounters.

These are real human needs. The problem is not that police officers want to feel important, capable, and respected. The problem is that the structure channels these needs through a system whose outputs include killing 1,100 people a year.

Goal 6 addresses this directly. You do not fire a workforce and leave them with nothing. You redirect the psychological needs — the desire for purpose, challenge, belonging, respect — into structures that produce the outcomes the community actually wants.

A community emergency responder who shows up in 60 seconds when someone's grandmother falls — that person is a hero. That person gets the respect, the purpose, the adrenaline. They also save a life, at zero risk of killing someone. The attention is wanted. The results are also wanted. The incentive inversion is resolved.

13.3 The Metrics Problem

What gets measured gets managed. What gets counted gets funded.

Police departments count arrests, response times, clearance rates, and call volume. They do not count:

- Crises de-escalated without arrest
- People connected to services
- Situations resolved without force
- Communities where trust increased
- Relationships repaired
- Harms prevented

If CAHOOTS were measured by police metrics, it would look like a failure: zero arrests, minimal call volume (since its calls are not "police" calls), and zero use of force (which, perversely, means there is no tactical justification for equipment upgrades). The fact that it has killed zero people in 35 years does not appear in any standard policing metric, because the standard policing metric does not track that.

This is the metrics trap. The system defines success in terms that ensure only the system can succeed. Community alternatives, by definition, fall outside the measurement framework. To adopt community alternatives, you first have to change what you measure. And the institution that controls the measurement has no incentive to change it.

13.4 The Union Problem

Police unions represent one of the most significant structural barriers to the adoption of community alternatives. Unlike most labour unions, which advocate for workers within the constraints of public interest, police unions have historically advocated against accountability, against civilian oversight, against policy reforms, and — explicitly and repeatedly — against community-based alternatives to policing.

The Minneapolis Police Federation, under the leadership of Bob Kroll, opposed every reform proposed after the murder of George Floyd. The Portland Police Association fought against the creation of Portland Street Response — the city's CAHOOTS-inspired program. The Fraternal Order of Police nationally has opposed body cameras, civilian review boards, use-of-force reporting, and the reallocation of police budgets to community services.

The paradox is that police unions are protecting a system that harms their own members. Police officers have among the highest rates of PTSD, suicide, substance use, and divorce of any profession. The system they are defending is the system that is destroying them. But the union's institutional interest — maintaining membership, maintaining dues, maintaining political power — is served by maintaining the current structure, regardless of its effects on officers.

This is the attention problem at the institutional level. The union provides its leadership with wanted attention — political power, media coverage, negotiating leverage. The results — officer

trauma, community harm, public distrust — are unwanted but structurally irrelevant to the union's continued existence.

Goal 6 resolves this by ensuring that no officer loses employment, income, or status. The union objection dissolves when the transition does not threaten livelihoods. You are not firing people. You are changing the job description. You are making the job safer, healthier, and more effective. The union that opposes this is a union that prioritises institutional power over member welfare.

13.5 The Political Economy

The policing industry in the United States is a $130+ billion per year enterprise (Urban Institute, 2021). This includes direct police budgets, but also the constellation of industries that depend on policing: private prisons ($5 billion/year), bail bond industry ($2 billion/year), police equipment manufacturers ($11 billion/year), surveillance technology companies ($6+ billion/year), police training companies, forensic laboratories, and the legal industry that processes the cases police generate.

Each of these industries has a financial interest in the current model. Each lobbies to maintain it. Each funds the political campaigns of legislators who support it. The system is not maintained because it works. It is maintained because it generates revenue for the industries that depend on it.

Community-based response threatens this revenue structure. CAHOOTS costs $2.1 million per year. It does not purchase military equipment. It does not generate arrests that feed private prisons. It does not produce cases that employ prosecutors and defence attorneys. It does not create surveillance footage that requires surveillance technology. It does not produce inmates who require bail. It resolves the situation at a cost of approximately $87 per call, generates no downstream revenue for any industry, and moves on.

From a public interest perspective, this is a feature. From the perspective of a $130 billion industry, it is an existential threat.

---

14. Goal 6: Re-Employment, Not Unemployment

14.1 The Principle

Goal 5 moves non-criminal calls to community responders. Goal 6 redeploys the officers who want to move with them. These are not contradictory. They are sequential.

The argument is not that police officers are bad people doing unnecessary work. The argument is that they are trained for the wrong job, deployed to the wrong calls, and embedded in a system whose incentive structure produces outcomes that harm both the public and the officers themselves.

Police officers have high rates of suicide (approximately 17 per 100,000, compared to the general population rate of approximately 13 per 100,000), substance use disorders, domestic violence (studies estimate rates 2–4 times the general population, though precise data is contested), PTSD, and divorce. The job damages the people who do it. This is not because they are weak. It is because the job is designed wrong.

14.2 Transferable Skills

A police officer's training and experience include:

- **Rapid response under pressure:** Directly transferable to community emergency response, paramedic teams, fire services, search and rescue
- **Physical fitness and capability:** Directly transferable to fire response, emergency extraction, the $29 ring network (community responders who arrive in 60 seconds)
- **Communication skills:** Directly transferable to crisis intervention, mediation, community liaison, social work
- **Investigative capacity:** Directly transferable to community safety assessment, environmental monitoring, public health investigation, workplace safety
- **Leadership and coordination:** Directly transferable to community emergency management, volunteer coordination, training roles

The skills are real. The deployment is wrong. Goal 6 fixes the deployment.

14.3 The Transition Model

A functional transition would involve:

1. **Assessment of current call distribution:** Determine what percentage of calls are non-criminal (expected: 70–90%)
2. **Establishment of community response teams:** Trained crisis workers (new hires and retrained officers) handle non-criminal calls
3. **Retraining and redeployment of existing officers:** Officers who choose to retrain enter community response, paramedic, fire, emergency management, or social work roles — at equivalent or better pay
4. **Retention of armed response capacity:** A smaller, highly trained armed response unit handles the 10–30% of calls involving actual violence or crime
5. **Restructuring of incentive metrics:** New metrics: lives saved, crises resolved, services connected, community trust. Not arrests.

No one loses a job. The budget is redirected. Fewer encounters end in harm. The officers' own health improves because they are no longer being asked to be warriors at welfare checks.

---

15. The $29 Ring: Community Emergency Response at Scale

15.1 The Design

Goal 13: "$29 ring. Press it, your people come in 60 seconds."

This is the hardware expression of everything in this paper. A wearable device — a ring, a bracelet, a clip — that costs $29. When you press it, it sends a direct alert to your designated network: family, friends, neighbours, trained community responders. They come. In 60 seconds.

The design draws on two existing models:

Hatzolah (Israel): A volunteer emergency medical service operating in Jewish communities worldwide. When someone calls Hatzolah, the closest available volunteer — typically within a few blocks

— responds. Average response time in dense urban areas: under 3 minutes. Compare to the national EMS average of 7–14 minutes. Hatzolah works because the responders live in the community they serve. Proximity beats dispatch.

Surf Life Saving Australia: Volunteer lifeguards patrol Australian beaches. They are not paid. They are not police. They are community members who train, maintain fitness, and show up. Surf Life Saving clubs are among the oldest continuous community organisations in Australia — over 100 years of volunteer public safety. Zero "defund" arguments. Zero debates about abolition. Because the model works, and everyone can see it working.

15.2 The Psychology

The $29 ring resolves the bystander effect by design. When you press the ring, you are not issuing a general call for help. You are activating a specific network of named individuals who have explicitly agreed to respond. There is no diffusion of responsibility because responsibility is pre-assigned.

The ring also resolves the ambulance gap. Ambulance response times in Australia average 7–15 minutes, varying dramatically by location. In rural and remote areas, times can exceed 30 minutes. For cardiac arrest, brain damage begins at 4 minutes without oxygen. The ambulance arrives too late for the most time-critical emergencies.

A community responder who lives next door arrives in 60 seconds. They are not a paramedic. But they can perform CPR, apply pressure to a wound, clear an airway, comfort a child, sit with someone in crisis. They are the difference between life and death in the 6–14 minutes before the ambulance arrives.

15.3 The Technology

The $29 ring uses Bluetooth Low Energy (BLE) for proximity detection, mesh networking for local communication, and — when available — internet connectivity for broader alert distribution. The hardware is a FIDO2-compatible device with a single button. Press the button: your network is alerted.

The technology stack is documented in the OMXUS VexConnect protocol (see `apps/vexconnect-cross-platform/`). The critical design constraint is cost. A $29 device is accessible to anyone. A $300 smartwatch is a luxury product. The difference between a $29 device and a $300 device is the difference between a universal safety system and a product for people who are already safe.

The device is paired to the user's OMXUS identity — derived from name, date of birth, and secret words, with no central server storing credentials. The identity system is documented in the OMXUS Auth specification. The relevance here is that the ring does not require an account, a subscription, a data plan, or a relationship with any corporation. It requires a $29 device and a community.

15.4 Integration with Community Response

The $29 ring is not a replacement for CAHOOTS-type programs. It is the personal layer. CAHOOTS handles the 911 system. The ring handles the calls that never reach 911 — the grandmother who falls at home, the neighbour who is having a panic attack, the teenager who is self-harming, the friend who is not answering their phone.

The ring handles the calls that the current system misses entirely. Because the current system requires you to call a number, describe the situation to a stranger, and wait for a professional to

be dispatched from a centralised location. The ring requires you to press a button.

The ring also handles the calls that people do not make. Research on help-seeking behaviour consistently shows that a significant proportion of emergencies — particularly domestic violence, elder falls, mental health crises, and self-harm — never generate a 911 call. The barriers are shame, fear, distrust of police, inability to reach a phone, cognitive impairment, and the simple friction of describing a crisis to a stranger while in the middle of it.

A single button press eliminates every barrier except the decision to press. No description required. No stranger on the line. No police dispatched. Just your people, alerted, coming. The ring reframes the emergency response question from "who do you call?" to "who already agreed to come?" The answer was decided before the emergency. The response was designed before the crisis. This is prevention architecture applied to emergency response.

Your nan falls. You press the ring. Your neighbour — who lives 60 seconds away and agreed six months ago to be a responder — gets the alert. They arrive. They stabilise. The ambulance arrives 14 minutes later, as always. But your nan has already been helped. She was not alone on the floor for 14 minutes. She was alone for 60 seconds.

That is the difference. Not a policy difference. Not a budget difference. A 13-minute difference between being alone on the floor and being held by someone who knows your name.

---

16. Conclusion: The Model Exists

This paper is not a proposal. It is a report. The models described here are not theoretical. They are running.

CAHOOTS has been running for 35 years. Zero people killed. Twenty per cent of calls handled at 2% of the cost. STAR, B-HEARD, and MACRO replicate the results in different cities at different scales. Crisis Intervention Teams prove the thesis by demonstrating that police effectiveness increases precisely to the extent that officers behave less like police. Indigenous community policing models demonstrate that local knowledge and relational authority outperform institutional authority in crisis response. Rojava's commune system embeds security in direct democracy. Restorative justice circles produce lower reoffending rates than courts, particularly for serious crime. Direct personal alert systems eliminate the bystander effect.

The evidence converges on a single conclusion. The current model — armed officers responding to every call — is not a public safety model. It is a control model. It kills 1,100 people a year in the United States alone. It costs more, performs worse, and damages both the communities it polices and the officers it employs.

The public safety model exists. It is two people in a van. A medic and a crisis worker. No weapons. No law enforcement authority. Just training in the thing they are actually responding to.

35 years. 24,000 calls a year. Zero people killed.

The question is not whether the model works. The question is what kind of society continues to reject a model that works because it threatens the budget of a model that kills.

16.1 The Transition Is Not Radical

Framing community-based response as "radical" is a rhetorical trick that reverses the burden of proof.

What is radical is sending armed combat-trained officers to mental health calls. What is radical is spending $100 billion per year on a system that kills 1,100 of its own citizens annually. What is radical is maintaining a 197-year-old institution designed for slave patrols and strike-breaking and calling it "public safety."

What is not radical is sending a medic and a crisis worker to a person in distress. What is not radical is training people for the job they will actually do. What is not radical is measuring success by lives saved rather than arrests made.

CAHOOTS is not radical. It is boring. It is two people in a van doing the obvious thing. The radical act is continuing to pretend that the obvious thing is dangerous while the dangerous thing is normal.

16.2 What Happens Next

This paper does not end with a policy recommendation. It ends with a description of what already exists and an invitation to look at it.

The models are running. The data is available. The evidence is convergent. The cost comparison is decisive. The safety record is unimpeachable.

If you are a community leader, a city councillor, a health service director, or a citizen who has ever called 911 and watched an armed officer arrive at a situation that needed a counsellor — the alternative exists. It has existed since 1989. It is cheaper. It is safer. It is better. And it has killed zero people.

Start there.

References

ACLU. (2014). *War comes home: The excessive militarization of American policing.* American Civil Liberties Union.

Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2024). *Prisoners in Australia.* ABS Cat. No. 4517.0. Canberra: ABS.

Baum, D. (2016). Legalize it all: How to win the war on drugs. *Harper's Magazine*, April 2016.

Becker, T. K., et al. (2023). Impact of a 9-1-1-integrated mobile app on bystander CPR: Implementation of PulsePoint in an urban county. *Journal of Clinical Medicine*, 12(5).

Blagg, H. (2003). An overview of night patrol services in Australia. *Crime Prevention Studies*, 15, 67–96.

Bond, C. F., & DePaulo, B. M. (2006). Accuracy of deception judgments. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 10(3), 214–234.

Bushie, B. (1999). Community Holistic Circle Healing: A community approach. In *International Institute for Restorative Practices*. Hollow Water, Manitoba.

Compton, M. T., et al. (2014). The police-based Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) model: II. Effects on level of force and resolution, referral, and arrest. *Psychiatric Services*, 65(4), 523–529.

Davidson, L., et al. (2012). Peer support among persons with severe mental illnesses: A review of evidence and experience. *World Psychiatry*, 11(2), 123–128.

Dee, T. S., & Pyne, J. (2022). A community response approach to mental health and substance abuse crises reduced crime. *Science Advances*, 8(23), eabm2106.

Defense Logistics Agency. (2023). *Law Enforcement Support Office: 1033 Program data*. US Department of Defense.

Hadden, S. E. (2001). *Slave patrols: Law and violence in Virginia and the Carolinas*. Harvard University Press.

Latané, B., & Darley, J. M. (1970). *The unresponsive bystander: Why doesn't he help?* Appleton-Century-Crofts.

Lee, R. B. (1979). *The !Kung San: Men, women and work in a foraging society*. Cambridge University Press.

Livingston, J. D. (2016). Contact between police and people with mental disorders: A review of rates. *Psychiatric Services*, 67(8), 850–857.

Livingston, J. D., et al. (2012). The effectiveness of interventions for reducing stigma related to substance use disorders: A systematic review. *Addiction*, 107(1), 39–50.

Lum, C., et al. (2019). Body-worn cameras' effects on police officers and citizen behavior: A systematic review. *Campbell Systematic Reviews*, 15(3), e1035.

Mapping Police Violence. (2024). *Police violence map*. https://mappingpoliceviolence.us/

Mitrani, S. (2014). *The rise of the Chicago police department: Class and conflict, 1850–1894*. University of Illinois Press.

NIHR Evidence. (2022). More people survived a cardiac arrest when first aiders received a GoodSAM alert. https://evidence.nihr.ac.uk/alert/more-people-survived-cardiac-arrest-first-aiders-goodsam-alert/

NYC Comptroller. (2023). *Claims report: Fiscal Year 2023*. City of New York.

Potter, G. (2013). The history of policing in the United States. *Eastern Kentucky University Police Studies Online*.

Rahr, S., & Rice, S. K. (2015). From warriors to guardians: Recommitting American police culture to democratic ideals. *New Perspectives in Policing*, Harvard Kennedy School.

Reaves, B. A. (2016). State and local law enforcement training academies, 2013. *Bureau of Justice Statistics Special Report*. NCJ 249784.

Richards, J. (2008). *The secret war: A true history of Queensland's Native Police*. University of Queensland Press.

Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody. (1991). *National Report*. Australian Government Publishing Service.

Sherman, L. W., & Strang, H. (2007). *Restorative justice: The evidence*. Smith Institute.

Sherman, L. W., et al. (2015). Twelve experiments in restorative justice: The Jerry Lee Program of randomized trials of restorative justice conferences. *Journal of Experimental Criminology*, 11(4), 501–540.

Treatment Advocacy Center. (2015). *Overlooked in the undercounted: The role of mental illness in fatal law enforcement encounters*. Arlington, VA.

Turner, K. B., Giacopassi, D., & Vandiver, M. (2006). Ignoring the past: Coverage of slavery and slave patrols in criminal justice texts. *Journal of Criminal Justice Education*, 17(1), 181–195.

US Department of Justice. (2025). *AMBER Alert statistics*. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

van Bommel, M., van Prooijen, J.-W., Elffers, H., & Van Lange, P. A. M. (2012). Be aware to care: Public self-awareness leads to a reversal of the bystander effect. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 48(4), 926–930.

Vera Institute of Justice. (2020). *Arrests vs. alternatives: What does the research say?* New York: Vera Institute.

Watson, A. C., et al. (2008). Improving police response to persons with mental illness: A multi-level conceptualization of CIT. *International Journal of Law and Psychiatry*, 31(4), 359–368.

White Bird Clinic. (2020). *CAHOOTS media guide*. Eugene, OR.

Yokum, D., Ravishankar, A., & Coppock, A. (2019). A randomized control trial evaluating the effects of police body-worn cameras. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 116(21), 10329–10332.

Zehr, H. (2002). *The little book of restorative justice*. Good Books.

Appendix A: Source Verification Status

Claim	Source	Verification Status
CAHOOTS: 35 years, zero killed	White Bird Clinic reports	Organisational data — no death records found to contradict. Binary verifiable.
CAHOOTS: 24,000 calls, <150 police backups (2019)	White Bird Clinic	Organisational data. Approximate.
CAHOOTS cost: ~$2.1M/year	White Bird Clinic / media reporting	Consistent across sources. Needs primary budget document.
~1,100 police killings/year (US)	Mapping Police Violence	**Verified** — publicly available, continuously updated.
16x more likely killed in MH crisis	Treatment Advocacy Center (2015)	Methodology needs independent verification. Directionally robust.

Claim	Source	Verification Status
STAR: 748 calls, zero arrests (first 6 months)	Denver STAR program data	Programme data. Consistent with subsequent reports.
STAR: 34% reduction in minor crime reports	Dee & Pyne (2022), *Science Advances*	**Peer-reviewed.** Stanford study.
70–90% of police calls non-criminal	Multiple jurisdictions	Range is approximate. Consistent across studies.
NYC $300M/year misconduct settlements	NYC Comptroller reports	Needs year-specific verification. Order of magnitude consistent.
RISE: 38% reduction in reoffending for violent crime	Sherman et al. (2015)	**Peer-reviewed.** Randomised controlled trial.
Indigenous incarceration rate 14.7x	Australian Bureau of Statistics (2024)	**Official government data.**
PulsePoint: 43% → 57% bystander CPR	Becker et al. (2023)	**Peer-reviewed.**
GoodSAM: survival doubled	NIHR Evidence (2022)	**Government research body.**
AMBER Alerts: 1,292 children recovered	US DOJ (2025)	**Federal government data.**
Police suicide rate ~17 per 100,000	Multiple sources	Approximate. Underreported due to stigma.
Hollow Water recidivism <2%	Bushie (1999)	Community programme data. Small N. Directionally significant.

Appendix B: Cross-References to OMXUS Research Series

This paper is part of the OMXUS Research Series. The following papers address related questions from different angles:

Paper	Directory	Relationship to This Paper
Bystander Effect	`bystander_effect/`	The psychological mechanism (diffusion of responsibility) that community response systems override. Direct personal alerts collapse bystander inaction.
Emergency Response	`original_research/`	Proximity beats dispatch time. The evidence base for the $29 ring and community first-responder networks.

Paper	Directory	Relationship to This Paper
Prevention Over Punishment	`prevention_over_punishment/`	Upstream prevention reduces the calls that reach any response system. Housing, mental health services, addiction treatment, employment.
Justice Paradigm Shift	`justice_paradigm_shift/`	The broader argument for replacing punitive justice with restorative justice. Restoration repairs the harm that courts alone cannot.
Constructed Guilt	`constructed_guilt_thesis/`	How the justice system manufactures guilt through interrogation techniques, plea bargaining, and prosecutorial discretion. The system that produces the prisoners Goal 3 frees.
Housing First	`housing_first/`	Housing as a prerequisite for all other interventions. You cannot stabilise a person in crisis if they have nowhere to sleep.
Labor Economics (22-Hour Week)	`labor_economics_22hr_week/`	Goal 2. The 22-hour work week creates the time for community governance, mutual aid, and the volunteer networks that replace professional policing.
Social Group Scaling	`social_group_scaling/`	Dunbar's 150 ceiling is discredited (Lindenfors et al. 2021: CI of 2-520). The Ripple model replaces it: accountability = 1/distance, everyone connected, weighted by physical proximity. Community safety scales through the proximity gradient, not fixed group sizes.
Drug Policy Reform	(see Goal 7 materials)	Regulate drugs, with age checks. Remove the largest single driver of police encounters, arrests, and incarceration.
Human Enclosure	`human_enclosure/`	The design of physical spaces — housing, workplaces, cities — as containment systems. The built environment as a policing mechanism.
Institutional Negligence	`institutional_negligence/`	When the institution designed to protect causes harm. The pattern shared by policing, child protection, healthcare, and corrections.
Signal Inversion	`SIGNAL_INVERSION_PREPRINT_belief-reality-matrix/`	When the system inverts what signals mean. Compliance becomes evidence of guilt. Resistance becomes evidence of guilt. The system cannot lose.
Food Toxicology & Safety	`food_toxicology_safety/`	Goal 10. The precautionary principle applied to food — the same principle this paper applies to policing. If it's not proven safe, it doesn't get used.
Cooperative Capitalism	`cooperative_capitalism/`	The Mondragon model. Economic democracy as a foundation for political democracy and community self-governance.
Sanctuary Design Thesis	`sanctuary_design_thesis/`	The design framework for spaces where human flourishing replaces institutional control. The built environment for Goals 1–14.

35 years. 24,000 calls a year. Zero people killed. The model exists. The question is why we are not using it.

OMXUS Research Series — Paper 5: Public Safety Authors: Alex Applebee and L. N. Combe **Contact:** research@omxus.com **License:** Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0)