



Evidence and  
Implementation  
Summit 2023  
9–11 October

Melbourne, Australia & Online



Behavioural and Implementation  
Science Interventions  
Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine



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## **#103 - The 5 T's of Evidence Based Policing – Targeting, Testing Tracking... and the Trials and Tribulations of leading EBP in an operational environment**

### **Presenting Author**

Superintendent David Cowan

### **Affiliation**

Organised Crime, Victoria Police

### **Objectives/aims**

Being evidence based on the surface, seems to be a 'no brainer'. But the reality is that evidence, research and in particular scientific rigour, challenges the status quo and conventional approaches in policing. The fact that 'we have always done it that way', won't cut it in the future. Nor will a reliance on policing craft, convention or intuitive based strategies or be sufficient. How can police prevent crime rather than just react to it when it occurs? How do we use precious police resources in the most effective ways? How can we enhance the legitimacy of police in the eyes of the public and improve our response to victims? How do we know if our strategies actually work?

Evidence-Based Policing (EBP) is based on the straightforward but powerful idea that policing responses and strategies should be based on what works best in community safety as determined by the best available scientific evidence. Although many agree with the principle, the challenge is how to operationalise EBP and make it relevant to the frontline.

The presenter will draw practical insights from leading operational evidence-based trials within Victoria Police. This includes a trial using focussed deterrence to reduce serious public violence, a hot spots trial using geo spatial analysis to target crime and calls for assistance, a trial to increase community confidence in policing during COVID and a trial to reduce unnecessary warrants of arrest through behavioural science.

The presenter will share insights from a global investigation into EBP from a recent Churchill Fellowship where he interviewed over 80 senior police and academics. He examines the emergence of various international societies of EBP, agency led EBP

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centres and academic institutions supporting collaboration. This Fellowship casts light how EBP can influence the broader direction of policing in the future.

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