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Greater Transparency, Accountability Key to Improving Effectiveness of Israel Police



FOR RELEASE

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An approach to policing known as “procedural justice,” emphasizing transparency and accountability, would help Israel's national police meet current and emerging challenges, according to a new RAND Corporation [report](#) released today.

Israel's Minister of Public Security, Yizchak Aharonowitz, and Israel Police Commissioner Yohanan Danino applauded the report. Aharonowitz said it pinpoints important issues to be addressed as the Israel Police seek continued improvement.

Danino, who closely followed the work of RAND's research team after assuming office in 2011, said the report is a significant tool in developing the Israel Police and that he has appointed a number of working groups charged with formulating implementation plans.

The report — funded by the government of Israel, the Y&S Nazarian Family Foundation and other U.S. philanthropists — details public perceptions of the police, benchmarks the organization against international comparisons, evaluates police performance in a variety of dimensions, and recommends ways to enhance deterrence and crime prevention.

“The effectiveness of the police depends not only on tangible outcomes, such as reducing crime rates, but also levels of public support, trust and satisfaction,” said [Steven Popper](#), a report co-author, senior RAND researcher and director of the Israel Initiative at RAND, a nonprofit research organization. “Only by addressing both of these elements in policy and practice can the police improve their effectiveness.”

A key finding is the need to enhance police professionalism and transparency. RAND recommends actions to strengthen uniformity among the various police units in a way that enhances Israeli citizens' sense that their security is being entrusted to a capable and professional police force. Such professionalism would be expressed by, for example, the way emergency calls are answered and by the demonstration of professionalism in the field.

The research team deployed small, wearable cameras with police to develop a deeper understanding of how police engage with the public. “The ability to manage individual police officers is critical to demonstrating transparency and accountability,” said [Jessica Saunders](#), a RAND criminologist and co-author who worked intensively with the police. The police currently do not emphasize tracking individual performance, even though the behavior of individuals contributes to the public perception of the police as a whole.

The report recommends other ways to increase procedural justice, including surveying the public about satisfaction with police encounters, surveying compliance with police codes of ethics, and using cameras or other methods to systematically review police-citizen interactions in the field.

Researchers also recommend providing the public with detailed crime and police performance data, and exploring options for civilian oversight.

“The Israel Police have fantastic data infrastructure and information-analysis capabilities,” said [Jack Riley](#), a report co-author and RAND vice president. “Giving the public access to the data will help the police create programs that are responsive to public needs. That, in turn, will increase confidence in the police.”

Brigadier General Jacob Mevorach, deputy head of the Police Planning Department, who was in charge of the research within the police force, said that following the RAND recommendations, the police commissioner established two working groups — one addressing issues of professionalism and the second dealing with transparency. “The working groups are formulating their recommendations, which are to be presented to the police commissioner in the near future,” Mevorach said.

The report recommends a variety of workforce modernization efforts to help increase policy quality and professionalism. These include ensuring that the police and support staff are trained to interact with the public, enhancing training and management of the large force of police volunteers, and applying a strategic perspective to police personnel requirements.

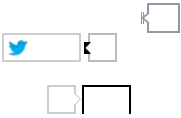
The report also looks at concrete measures for deterrence of violent crime and crime prevention. In recognition of the great strides made by the police in developing analytical capacity, the report recommends a shift from a posture of general deterrence to a more data-driven and community-oriented strategy of focused deterrence.

“The RAND report provides a roadmap for the further development and professionalization of the Israel Police,” said Danny Krivava, deputy director general and head of budgets and planning at the Ministry of Public Safety, a co-sponsor of the project. “The Israel Police are facing various challenges partly corresponding to challenges faced by other police forces. There is no reason we should not adopt and implement recommendations that have proven beneficial in other places.”

The report, “[Effective Police for 21st-Century Israel](#),” is available at www.rand.org. Other authors of the report are [Andrew Morral](#), Robert Davis, Claude Berrebi, Kristen Leuschner and Boaz Segalovitz.

The report was funded in equal parts by the State of Israel and U.S. philanthropists. Besides the Y&S Nazarian Family Foundation, those included the Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Foundation, the Glazer Family Foundation and Stanley Gold.

The research was conducted as part of the [RAND Israel Initiative](#) in the [Safety and Justice Program](#) within [RAND Justice, Infrastructure, and Environment](#).



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