# IBAC – Corruption Prevention and Integrity Conference

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Session 4, Concurrent  Session C - 'Research insights – perceptions of corruption and integrity'

## Police Corruption: What – if anything - can we learn from other jurisdictions?

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# Why police corruption matters

- Police corruption – the most common form of corruption by state officials globally (*Global Corruption Barometer*)

- At least 7 reasons
  - Armed
  - Much work is secretive – less accountable
  - More opportunities to come into contact with OC
  - Supposed to be the most trustworthy – 'final port of call'
  - Crime rates if police not trusted
  - Human rights
  - System delegitimation

# Research methodology

- 4 states – 2 stable and affluent (Germany; Singapore), 2 post-communist (Bulgaria; Russia)
- Desktop
  - 2-ary literature
  - Newspapers 1990-2012
  - Official documents
- Surveys
  - General public
  - Business community
  - Police officers (only Bulgaria and Russia)
- Main research questions for this paper
  - What leads police officers to engage in corruption?
  - What leads police officers to engage in 'noble cause'?

# Perceived causes of police corruption

- Top 5 out of 15/16
- Greed seen as a major factor
- Police themselves ranked inadequate pay as the primary factor
- Personality factor seen as important by almost all constituencies
- Peer pressure not a major factor – though pressure from above seen as significant explicator in Russia
- Lenient punishments (of police) not generally seen as a major factor
- Popular perception in both Singapore and Russia that an expensive habit is a major factor
- A real surprise – German business sector rated 'threats from OC' as #1 cause

# Perceived reasons for 'noble cause'

- Top 3 out of 6/7
- Bulgarian and Russian police officers agree personality and inadequate support from state are major explicators
- Frustration with the courts not seen as significant by Russian police officers or business community – though general public in all four states and business community in three did rate it highly
- Most surprising result – whereas general public in all four states and business community in all but Russia saw 'sense of duty to society' as one of top three factors, neither Bulgarian nor Russian police did

# Policy proposals (1)

- Singapore as a role model?

- Strict penalties
  - Often handled by the courts, as legal/criminal matter – not internally as administrative misdemeanour

- Salaries and conditions

- Psychological testing (ongoing)

- Unambiguous legislation
  - e.g. re. moonlighting; freebies

# Policy proposals (2)

- Single, independent anti-corruption agency

- Shaming

- Praising

- Strict supervision

- Role modelling – 'a fish rots from the head'

# Policy proposals (3)

- Abolishing targets (for fines, arrests, case clearance)

- Enhancing public respect for the police
  - More dialogue between police and public
  - More positive reporting by media

- Institutionalise dialogue between police and judiciary

- More dialogue between ACAs and public
  - ICAC in HK

# Policy proposals (4)

- Other possibilities

- Risk assessments – traffic police and drug squads

- Rotation

- Gender

- Technology
  - CCTV and bodycams
  - Software standardisation and compatibility

# A fly in the ointment?

- Democracy and the rule of law (WGI 2016)

|  | Government Effectiveness | Rule of Law | Voice & Accountability |
|---|---|---|---|
| Singapore | 100 | 96 | 37 |
| Australia | 92 | 95 | 94 |

- Democracy Index 2016 (standardised)

|  | Functioning of Government | Political Participation |
|---|---|---|
| Singapore | 79 | 61 |
| Australia | 89 | 78 |

# The ultimate factor . . .

- Political will
  - . . . But whose?

- AND political capacity