Aims

- To respond to some themes raised by Jack Greene and Alistair Henry & Nick Fyfe in their contributions to the special issue of the *Cahiers of Police Studies*.
- To comment on and explore the sea metaphor deployed by Jack Greene.
- To evaluate critically the tides of policing reform in the UK outlined by Henry and Fyfe.
- To highlight one particular fault-line in the tectonic plates that structure the policing landscape and that informs seismic (underwater) activity producing surface level tsunamis:
  - relations between the police and non-state (commercial and hybrid) forms of policing.
Sea Metaphor

Importantly, it:
• Highlights fluidity and movement across time and place. Change as well as continuity – *tides*.
• Identifies counter-currents and ambiguities in longer-term movements, shifts trends – *eddies, whirlpools and riptides*.
• Highlights differences between deep currents and surface currents as well as movements between depths and surface – *upwelling and downwelling*.

Problematically, it:
• Attributes agency to the sea/policing as a system, downplaying the role of human agency and political choices.
• Policing is seen as having precise boundaries – shorelines (albeit these may experience erosion over time).
• Ignores the role of the public – *demand* and *legitimacy*.
• Uncertain about the relations between policing and the police.

Tides of Police Reform in UK

• Tension between continuity and change.
• Clearly there are different (political) adaptations to similar conditions and policing challenges both within the UK and across Europe:
  – Importance of (local) political cultures.
  – Different forms of police governance.
  – Styles of policing.
• Undue emphasis upon *the nation as the unit of analysis*. Much policy innovation emanates from local/regional levels and may or may not filter ‘upwards’.
• Existence of cross-national *city-to-city* and *region-to-region* connections, travels and lesson-learning.
• National policies are differently implemented, interpreted and translated, influenced by local cultures and traditions.
1. Conflate ‘policing’ with the activities of ‘the police’.
   ✓ We see policing through a (state-centric) organisational lens of the police rather than seeing it as a constellation of actors, agencies and processes.

2. Perpetuate the ‘myth’ of state sovereign monopoly.

3. Ignore or marginalise developments in civil society, the market and private sector.

4. Over-interpret government decisions and political rhetoric.
   ✓ Much ‘talk’ is froth or ephemeral or symbolic change – lacking deeper level significance (Whirlpools!).

**Tendencies**

**Implications**

1. In recognition of this, some commentators prefer the concept of ‘security’ (Johnston & Shearing 2003; Loader & Walker 2007), to avoid what Shearing (2006) describes as the ‘refusal to acknowledge’ non-state (private) policing.

2. In the larger schema of history, it may be the last 150-200 years - in which the modern state has claimed monopoly over policing - that come to be seen as the aberration in need of explanation rather than the norm.
Defining policing

“For our purposes ‘policing’ is defined as intentional action involving the conscious exercise of power or authority (by an individual or organisation) that is directed towards rule enforcement, the promotion of order or assurances of safety.” (Crawford et al. 2005: 4)

Need to:

- Recognise the plurality of policing providers/personnel.
- Acknowledge the existence of a mixed economy.
- Avoid the ‘myth’ of the public monopoly over police and the police monopoly over crime.
- Understand the role and place of police within policing.

Tsunamis

- Shifts on the fault-lines of tectonic plates or stress on the boundary causes the edges of the plates to flex and deform.
- The flexing of the plates displaces the entire column of water vertically.

- Deep water activity produces a wave that shortens and increases in height as it approaches the shoreline.
- The crust shifting is the primary effect, the powerful (potentially destructive) wave is the secondary effect.

Retrenchment from 2009/10

By the time of the Comprehensive Spending Review 2010:

- Britain had a more mature, self-confident and assertive private security industry – post-SIA.
- Declining police budgets.
- The political shibboleth of officer numbers abandoned by Coalition Government - police numbers will be allowed to fall.
- The spectre of ‘external’ democratic control – the advent of Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs).
- Shift in the attitude of police managers: private sector no longer a ‘threat’ to, but rather a saviour!
Public/Private Partnerships

- Joint West Midland Police, Surrey Police and Home Office initiative ‘Business Partnering for Police’ (BPP).
- Home Office provided financial, strategic and ideological backing – affording “significant protection from some of the reputational risks” (West Midland Police Authority 2011).
- A West Midlands police authority spokesman said:
  "Combining with the business sector is aimed at totally transforming the way the force currently does business – improving the service provided to the public”.
- Undertaken on behalf of all police forces in England & Wales.
- The scale and breadth left few in doubt that it represented a fundamental departure in the organisation and delivery of British policing.

Activities outlined included:
investigating crimes, detaining suspects, developing cases, responding to and investigating incidents, supporting victims and witnesses, managing high-risk individuals, patrolling neighbourhoods, managing intelligence, managing engagement with the public...

In light of the ensuing public debate, both police authorities agreed in April 2012 to a short pause in the contracting process.

‘Critical to the overall success of a potential partnership is the ability to maintain bidder confidence’
(West Midlands Police Authority 2012)
In June 2012, David Taylor-Smith, head of G4S for the UK and Africa, predicted that private companies would be running large parts of the British police service within five years driven by a combination of ‘budgetary pressure and political will’.

He added:

‘We have been long-term optimistic about the police and short-to-medium-term pessimistic about the police for many years. Our view was, look, we would never try to take away core policing functions from the police but for a number of years it has been absolutely clear as day to us – and to others – that the configuration of the police in the UK is just simply not as effective and as efficient as it could be... I have always found it somewhere between patronising and insulting the notion that the public sector has an exclusive franchise on some ethos, spirit, morality – it is just nonsense ... we employ 675,000 people and they are primarily motivated by pretty much the same as would motivate someone in the public sector.’

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On the eve of the Olympics, G4S announced its inability to meet the terms of its £284m contract with the Government to provide 10,400 security staff for the Olympic Games in London.

Requiring some 3,500 members of the armed forces to stand in.
Police and Crime Commissioners – 41 elected, 15 Nov 2012

- PCCs have a legal responsibility for:
  - appointing (suspension or removing) the Chief Constable;
  - holding him/her to account for the ‘totality’ of policing;
  - setting 5 year Plan;
  - deciding the local council tax precept/annual force budget; and
  - commissioning services to anyone within their force area, including voluntary and private sectors.


- Limited only by:
  1. Strategic Policing Requirement (cross border responsibilities for ‘total policing’); and
PCC Elections

- A total of 192 candidates.
- Conservative and Labour put up candidates in all 41 areas.
- Other candidates included:
  - 54 Independents; 24 Liberal Democrats; 24 UKIP; 5 English Democrats and one each for the Green Party, the Justice and Anti-Corruption Party and the British Freedom Party.
- Over half (99 or 52%) had previous electoral experience (as a councillor, MP, MEP, or Welsh Assembly Member).
- 39 (20%) had served on a police authority.
- 32 (16.6%) were known to have been employed by or served within the police service (predominantly former officers but also some Special Constables).
- 35 (18%) of candidates were women.

APCC Wordle
Electoral Statements

Views on Privatisation in PCC Candidates’ Election Statements

PCCs Electoral Statements

Elected PCCs Statements on Privatisation
The first act that the successful West Midlands PCC initiated on taking up the role on 22 November 2012 was to announce his intention to halt the privatisation of core police services.

Bob Jones announced:

‘It is also significant that what I am about to announce is my first decision since taking up office. This attests to the importance I attach to giving clarity to the public and, equally as importantly, to the officers and staff of the Force on the future of the Programme. My decision is that the Business Partnering Programme will cease’.
Police and Crime Commissioners

• Shortly after the elections, it was reported that security firms had launched a major lobbying campaign targeting the newly elected commissioners in recognition of the evident pressures they are under to cut millions of pounds from police budgets.

• In an interview with the *Independent*, the Steria UK chief executive John Torrie, said of the approach taken by security, technology and outsourcing companies:

> ‘Some of the people in there at the present moment are new into this market and they see it as a potentially huge market. They've recruited big forces of people and they will be all over the police market like a rash.’ (cited in Peachey 2012)

Concluding comments

• We stand on the brink of a new dawn for relations between private security and public police in Britain... *and beyond*?

• The confluence of ‘electoral accountability’ and ‘fiscal accountability’ may be a volatile mix given the insatiable public expectations and demands for public policing.

• The conceptual parameters for thinking about the public goals and interests served by private providers of policing and the private/parochial nature of public policing may be on the table!

• Fundamentally, these issues will engage police managers and local citizens in essential questions about the function and purpose of police (and policing) in a modern society.
For your interest...

http://www.bss.leeds.ac.uk/blog/

Conference:
‘The Democratic Governance of Policing: The Role and Implications of Elected Police and Crime Commissioners’ 17 January 2013 | 9.30am to 4.30pm |

Sponsored by the British Society of Criminology, Policing Network and the Security and Justice Group of the ‘Building Sustainable Societies’ Initiative of the University of Leeds
http://www.law.leeds.ac.uk/research/events/the-new-democratic-governance-of-