



# The Importance of Moral Courage in Policing

Barbara Etter APM, CEO, Integrity Commission  
ACWAP Conference, Hobart, August 2011

# OBJECTIVES OF WORKSHOP

- To do a presentation on the topic
- To then pose a few questions and scenarios to you
- Summarise the key points coming out of the workshop

# OBJECTIVES OF PRESENTATION

Discuss the concept & dimensions of moral courage (as opposed to physical courage)

Consider the specific challenges of displaying moral courage in policing

Consider moral courage in the context of challenging unethical behaviour or “blowing the whistle”

Discuss how you best place yourself to exhibit moral courage

# QUESTIONS

So what is your take on moral courage and why do you think it is important?

Why is it specifically important to policing and for women in policing and the community?

Can you think of some real workplace examples of moral courage?

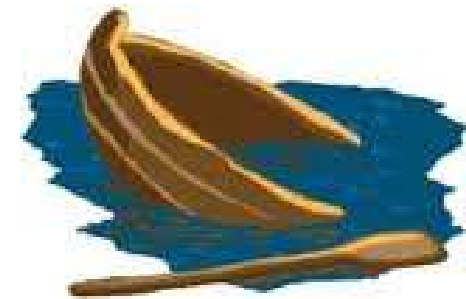
# NON-POLICING SCENARIOS

There are 4 of you in a sinking row boat in a rough sea, miles from help. It is clear that if you don't throw someone overboard that you will all die. On board is a Professor who is about to find the cure for cancer. What do you do?

How do you make a decision?

How do you determine who might go?

What action would you take to display moral courage?



# NON-POLICING SCENARIOS

Euthanasia scenario – how would you deal with a situation where your long term partner was dying a slow and painful death from cancer and he/she begs you to help end it all?

(Displaying moral courage may not always be the right way to go!)

# POLICING SCENARIOS

You are called before an integrity agency formal inquiry as a witness about a serious assault in the watch-house. Do you simply answer the questions put to you or do you volunteer extra and highly relevant information which the Commission would find very useful but is unaware of?

Does it make a difference if it is a public or closed hearing? Why or why not?

# POLICING SCENARIOS

What do you do when you have a conflict between your personal values and organisational values/oath of office? Eg. Asian swine flu or similar where all police are recalled to duty but your family is either infected or may be seriously exposed to the illness (particularly if you go to work in the field).

Which set of values prevails and why?

# SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

What were the key points coming out of the workshop for participants?

What useful points could also have been covered?

Any other comments or questions?

THANK YOU

# FINAL THOUGHT

“ You gain strength, courage, and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face. You are able to say, “I lived through this horror. I can take the next thing that comes along” ... You must do the thing you think you cannot do”.

Eleanor Roosevelt