

**Tailoring Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying (DHB) Policies for Organisations to
Improve the Equity and Effectiveness of DHB Policy Outcomes**

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Abstract

While research supports the need for tailored organisational-level discrimination, harassment, and bullying (DHB) policies, effective and structured policy development processes to assist organisations in achieving tailored policies remain scarce. To address this gap, the study investigated how organisations can tailor DHB policies to enhance equity and effectiveness in workplace outcomes. A qualitative mixed-methods design, grounded in a pragmatist paradigm, was employed using an embedded case study of a complex organisation to provide a contextual framework for the study. A rapid literature review was used to identify elements of an effective DHB policy. Key findings were developed through a codebook thematic analysis, organised under the themes of context and content. Semi-structured interviews were conducted concurrently with the rapid literature review to explore additional factors for consideration when tailoring DHB policies to individual organisations. Interviews were conducted across two sample groups from the case study organisation. These groups were (1) DHB targets and witnesses who had attempted to resolve incidents through the existing policy, and (2) managers with experience implementing that policy. Reflexive thematic analyses were completed before triangulating the interview data. Thematic outcomes from all three data sources were integrated through methodological triangulation. The integrated research findings identified two key relationships. The first, a link between the organisation's contextual understanding and its capacity to identify, remove, or mitigate inequities affecting employees' access to policy protections and resolution processes. The second, the importance of consistently applied accountability mechanisms to support policy effectiveness. Building on these findings, the study proposed a tailored DHB policy development process supported by evaluation and socioecological models. To encourage organisational investment in tailored DHB policy development, the study recommends that workplace health and safety regulators raise minimum compliance standards and develop tools to evaluate the effectiveness of the policy.

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Table of Contents

Abstract	i
Acknowledgements	ii
Table of Contents	iii
List of Figures	ix
List of Tables	x
List of Abbreviations	xii
Glossary of Te Reo Māori Terms	xiii
Attestation of Authorship.....	xvi
Ethics Approval.....	xvii
Chapter 1: Introduction.....	1
Research Background	1
Research Gap	2
Research Aim	3
Importance of this Research Topic.....	4
Research Design	4
Contributions from this Research	5
My Positionality.....	5
Thesis Outline	8
Chapter 2: Research Context – The New Zealand Defence Force.....	11
Introduction.....	11
Military Culture	11
<i>What is Military Culture?</i>	13
<i>The Military as a Gendered Institution</i>	15
<i>Impact of Military Culture on its People</i>	17
NZDF and Te Tiriti o Waitangi (The Treaty of Waitangi)	17
Insider Threats and the Link to DHB for NZDF.....	22
<i>Unintended Insider Threats</i>	23
Legislative Employment Protections in New Zealand.....	26
<i>NZDF Duty of Care</i>	28
Current DHB Policies and Data in NZDF	29
<i>DHB Data in NZDF</i>	30
<i>Exit Survey: DHB Patterns and Prevalence in NZDF</i>	31
Chapter 3: Literature Review - Reviewing Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying (DHB) Within Organisational Contexts.....	36
Introduction.....	36

Workplace Violence.....	37
Discrimination.....	40
<i>Discrimination Types</i>	43
<i>Discrimination Legislation in New Zealand</i>	45
Harassment and Bullying – The Same but Different.....	45
<i>Baseball and Cricket Balls</i>	46
Bullying.....	50
<i>The Importance of Organisational Context</i>	51
<i>The Impact of Bullying on Military and Civil Staff</i>	52
Harassment.....	55
Hazing.....	57
Summary	59
Chapter 4: Literature Review - Placing Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying (DHB) Policies Within Organisational Contexts	60
Introduction.....	60
The Requirement for Integrated DHB Interventions.....	60
Ecological Frameworks for DHB Interventions	63
<i>New Zealand's Cultural Context</i>	65
<i>An NZDF Ecological Model</i>	65
An Organisationally Appropriate DHB Policy.....	66
<i>Specific Policies</i>	67
<i>General Policies</i>	68
<i>Policy Options for NZDF</i>	69
Measuring DHB Policy Success.....	70
Summary	73
Chapter 5: Theoretical Framework.....	74
Introduction.....	74
The Pragmatic Perspective	75
<i>Pragmatism as a Paradigm</i>	75
<i>The Pragmatist Philosophical Paradigm</i>	77
The Pragmatist Research Paradigm.....	77
<i>Pragmatism and the Current Research</i>	78
Pragmatist Axioms Within the Current Research.....	79
<i>Ontology</i>	80
<i>Epistemology</i>	82
<i>Methodology</i>	83
<i>Axiology</i>	84

Intersectionality and the NZDF	85
Summary	88
Chapter 6: Research Methodology and Method.....	89
Research Methodology	89
<i>Research Objectives</i>	89
<i>Research Approach</i>	89
Research Method	92
<i>Ethical Considerations</i>	92
Rapid Literature Review	97
<i>Protocol and Registration</i>	97
<i>Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria</i>	97
<i>Search Strategy</i>	98
<i>Selection and Screening of Search Records</i>	99
<i>Deviations from Registered Protocol</i>	100
<i>Search Results</i>	101
<i>Selection and Screening of Search Records</i>	102
<i>Data Extraction</i>	102
<i>Data Analysis</i>	104
Semi-Structured Interviews	106
<i>Participant Pool</i>	106
<i>Sampling Strategy</i>	107
<i>Sample Size</i>	109
<i>Participant Recruitment</i>	110
<i>Semi-Structured Interview Data Collection</i>	111
<i>Data Analysis</i>	113
Data Integration and Synthesis	116
<i>Triangulation</i>	116
Explanation Building	120
Research Trustworthiness	120
<i>Credibility</i>	121
<i>Transferability</i>	121
<i>Dependability</i>	121
<i>Confirmability</i>	122
Summary	122
Chapter 7: Rapid Literature Review Findings – Elements of an Effective Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying (DHB) Policy	123

Introduction.....	123
Theme 1 – Context	125
<i>Organisational Context and Culture</i>	126
<i>Organisational or Individual DHB Antecedents</i>	131
<i>Type of Policy</i>	131
Theme 2 – Content.....	135
<i>Policy Development</i>	136
<i>Policy Introduction</i>	140
<i>DHB Prevention</i>	145
<i>DHB Reporting Processes</i>	148
<i>Investigation Process</i>	156
<i>Resolution Phase</i>	160
<i>Implications for Organisations – Content-based</i>	165
Summary	167
Chapter 8: Semi-Structured Interview Findings – Considerations for Tailoring Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying (DHB) Policies	168
Introduction.....	168
Theme 1: Equality Under the Policy Leads to Inequity	170
<i>Demographic Differences in the Findings</i>	171
<i>Employment Status</i>	173
<i>Reporting Options and Processes</i>	174
<i>Pragmatic Implications for Organisations – Equality Can Support Inequity</i>	178
Theme 2: Inconsistent Application of DHB Policies Reduces Equity and Effectiveness	180
<i>Individual Inconsistencies</i>	180
<i>Policy and Organisational Inconsistencies</i>	184
<i>Pragmatic Implications for Organisations – Inconsistency</i>	189
Theme 3: Lack of Detail and Clarity Within the Policy Lead to Both Inequity and Ineffectiveness	190
<i>Policy Clarity</i>	191
<i>Reporting, Evaluation, and Feedback</i>	192
<i>Support Requirements</i>	193
<i>Training Requirements</i>	195
<i>Pragmatic Implications for Organisations – Policy Clarity</i>	196
<i>Training Implications</i>	197
Summary	200
Chapter 9: Explanation Building – Integrating Themes.....	201
Introduction.....	201

Linking Contextual Understanding to Policy Elements	201
<i>Understanding Context</i>	203
<i>Understanding Content</i>	204
<i>Building Explanations on the Links Between Context and Content</i>	205
Understanding the Differing Experiences of DHB Targets and Managers	210
<i>Inequity Theme</i>	211
<i>Inconsistency Theme</i>	212
<i>Lack of Clarity Theme</i>	212
The Evolution to Social Equity	213
<i>Understanding that Equality under the Policy Leads to Inequity</i>	214
<i>Inconsistency - Understanding that a Lack of Policy Enforcement and Consistent Application</i> <i>Reduces Equity and Effectiveness</i>	215
<i>Understanding How a Lack of Clarity and Limited Policy Detail Impacts DHB Policy Equity and</i> <i>Effectiveness</i>	217
<i>The Evolution of Inequity and Inconsistency into Social Equity</i>	218
Building an Amalgamated Thematic Explanation	220
<i>Amalgamating Themes</i>	220
<i>Explaining Explanations Linking the Amalgamated Themes</i>	222
Summary	225
Chapter 10: Discussion and Research Contributions	228
Introduction	228
How the Findings Strengthen the Importance of this Research Area	228
Appropriateness of Current Research Design	230
Theoretical Contributions to Collective Knowledge	232
<i>Contribution 1. An Original Methodology for Undertaking Workplace DHB Research</i>	233
<i>Contribution 2. The Application of Socioecological Frameworks to Support Contextual</i> <i>Understanding</i>	233
<i>Contribution 3. Current Regulatory Requirements Limit DHB Policy Effectiveness</i>	237
Practical Contributions to Collective Knowledge	241
<i>Contribution 4. An Eight-Area Action DHB Framework</i>	241
<i>Contribution 5. Policy Development Process for Tailored DHB Policies</i>	242
<i>Contribution 6. DHB Policy Evaluation Framework</i>	252
Limitations of Current Research	253
Future Research	256
Conclusion	258
References	260

Appendix A.....	304
Appendix B.....	304
Appendix C.....	306
Appendix D.....	309
Appendix E.....	310
Appendix F.....	311
Appendix G.....	312
Appendix H.....	313
Appendix I.....	320
Appendix J.....	326
Appendix K.....	328
Appendix L.....	336
Appendix M.....	338
Appendix N.....	339
Appendix O.....	344
Appendix P.....	345
Appendix Q.....	349
Appendix R.....	355
Appendix T.....	365
Appendix U.....	369
Appendix V.....	371
Appendix W.....	372

List of Figures

Figure 1. Simplified DHB Explanations.

Figure 2. Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory.

Figure 3. Initial Research Design Plan.

Figure 4. PRISMA Flow Diagram for Rapid Review Search and Screening Results.

Figure 5. Amended Research Design Plan.

Figure 6. Template Codebook Thematic Analysis Findings for the Rapid Literature Review.

Figure 7. Reflexive Thematic Analysis Outcomes for Semi-Structured Interviews.

Figure 8. Amalgamated Themes.

Figure 9. A Socioecological Model of NZDF's Contextual Layers and Their Relationship to DHB Policy Content.

Figure 10. Explanations of Influence between Rapid Literature Review Themes: Context and Content.

Figure 11. Explanatory Relationships Between Semi-Structured Interview Themes and Social Equity.

Figure 12. Policy Elements to Support an Equitable and Effective DHB Policy.

Figure 13. A Socioecological Model of DHB in NZDF.

Figure 14. Framework for Developing a Tailored DHB Policy.

List of Tables

Table 1. Database Search Strategy.

Table 2. Detailed Rapid Literature Review Search Results.

Table 3. Additional Documents Included Within Rapid Review.

Table 4. Rapid Review Record Data Extraction Table.

Table 5. Quota Criteria and Attainment for Semi-Structured Interview Samples.

Table 6. Semi-Structured Interview Sampling Strategy.

Table 7. Demographic Data Across Semi-Structured Interview Participants.

Table 8. Semi-Structured Interview Data Triangulation Codes.

Table 9. Policy Factors Raised Only by the Target and Witness Group (TWG).

Table 10. Policy Factors Raised Only by the Commander and Manager Group (CMG).

Table 11. Amalgamated Findings: Prominence and Meaning Convergence.

Table 12. Rapid Literature Review Themes.

Table 13. Industry, Structure and Employment Factors Influencing DHB.

Table 14. Minority Group Risk Factors For DHB.

Table 15. Organisational Versus Individual DHB Antecedents and their Influences.

Table 16. DHB Policy Implementation Options Identified in Rapid Review.

Table 17. DHB Policy Components Identified in Rapid Literature Review.

Table 18. Considerations to Enhance Enforcement and Consistency of DHB Policies.

Table 19. Principles and Considerations for Good Reporting Processes.

Table 20. Types of DHB Reports.

Table 21. Barriers to Reporting DHB.

Table 22. Principles and Considerations for Good Investigation Processes.

Table 23. Barriers to Good Investigation Processes.

Table 24. Principles and Considerations for Good Resolution Processes.

Table 25. Factors Influencing Selection of Resolution Options.

Table 26. Semi-Structured Interview Themes.

Table 27. Eight-Area Action DHB Framework.

Table 28. Proposed Evaluation Framework for DHB Policies.

List of Abbreviations

AHA	Anti-harassment advisor.
AUT	Auckland University of Technology.
CDF	Chief of Defence Force.
CMG	Commander and manager interview group.
DHB	Discrimination, harassment and bullying (including hazing).
ILO	International Labour Organisation.
JB	Joanna Briggs Institute.
MBIE	Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment.
NZ	New Zealand.
NZDF	New Zealand Defence Force.
OAG	Office of the Auditor General.
RM	Risk management.
SCEE	Standing Committee on Education and Employment.
TWG	Target and witness interview group.

Glossary of Te Reo Māori Terms

Aotearoa. Māori name for New Zealand, commonly translated as “land of the long white cloud.”

Arohanui. Expression meaning “much love” or deep affection.

He Whakaputanga o te Rangatiratanga o Nu Tirenī. The 1835 Declaration of Independence affirming the sovereignty of Māori rangatira.

Iwi. Tribe; the largest social and political grouping in traditional Māori society, based on shared ancestry.

Kapa Haka. Māori cultural performance group involving haka, waiata, and action songs.

Karakia. Prayer.

Kaitiakitanga. Guardianship and stewardship of the environment, grounded in spiritual and genealogical relationships.

Kaupapa. A principle, policy, or guiding idea.

Kaupapa Māori. A Māori-centred framework grounded in Māori values, knowledge, and worldviews.

Kaha. Strength, courage, or resilience.

Kia ora. Greeting meaning “be well,” used as hello, thanks, or acknowledgement.

Kia ora koutou. Greeting to a group (three or more people).

Kotahitanga. Unity, togetherness, or collective solidarity.

Koutou – Second-person plural pronoun (“you all”); **Kia ora koutou** – Hello to you all.

Mana. Authority, prestige, power, and spiritual force derived from whakapapa and personal qualities.

Manaakitanga. Value of hospitality, generosity, and care for others.

Mātauranga. Knowledge, wisdom, and understanding, including traditional Māori knowledge systems.

Māori. Indigenous people of Aotearoa New Zealand; also refers to their language and culture.

Marae. Central communal and cultural gathering place for iwi and hapū.

Ngā mihi mahana. Warm greetings or thanks.

Ngāti Tumatauenga – Name symbolically representing the New Zealand Army, referencing the atua (god) of war.

Ōritetanga. Equity and fairness; equality of outcomes.

Pākehā. New Zealander of European descent.

Pasifika. Peoples of Pacific Island heritage.

Rangatira. Chief, leader, or person of authority.

Rangatiratanga. Self-determination, sovereignty, and chieftainship authority.

Tapu. Sacred or restricted; governed by spiritual prohibitions.

Te Ao Māori. Māori worldview encompassing values, knowledge, and cultural systems.

Te Ope Kātua. Māori name for the New Zealand Defence Force.

Te Tiriti. The Māori-language text of the Treaty of Waitangi. (*Waitangi Tribunal, 2019*)

Te Tiriti o Waitangi. The Treaty of Waitangi, the foundational agreement between Māori and the Crown (1840), particularly referring to the Māori text. Also known as “Te Tiriti.”

Te Whare Tapa Whā. Holistic Māori health model incorporating physical, mental, spiritual, and family wellbeing.

Tikanga. Correct procedures, customs, and values guiding behaviour.

Tino rangatiratanga. Full authority, sovereignty, and self-determination, particularly referring to Māori control over their lands, resources, and affairs. It reflects the highest expression of rangatira authority as guaranteed under Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Tū Kaha. Courage or strength (NZDF value).

Tū Māia. Integrity and confidence (NZDF value).

Tū Tika. Commitment to doing what is right (NZDF value).

Tū Tira. Comradeship and unity (NZDF value).

Tūrangawaewae. A place where one has the right to stand; place of belonging.

Wairuatanga. Spirituality and spiritual wellbeing.

Whakapapa. Genealogy and relational connections linking people, land, and ancestors.

Whānau. Extended family group.

Whanaungatanga. Relationships, kinship, and sense of connection and belonging.

Attestation of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

Full Name: Michling Werder

Signature:

Date: 06 September 2026

Ethics Approval

At the time the interviews were conducted, the research participants were members of the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF). Therefore, ethics approval was required from both NZDF and Auckland University of Technology (AUT).

AUT

The AUT Ethics Committee granted ethics approval (AUTEC 23/85) on 19 June 2023 under the original title of 'Discrimination, Harassment, Bullying and Hazing (DHBH) policies within the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF)'.

NZDF

The NZDF Research Ethics Committee granted ethics approval (NZDF 5000/PB/5/3) on 21 June 22 under the original title of 'Discrimination, Harassment, Bullying and Hazing (DHBH) policies within the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF)'.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Research Background

Globally, workplace discrimination, harassment, and bullying (DHB) have been the subject of considerable investigation for several decades. So much so, that the common occurrence and significant and ongoing physical and psychosocial harm generated because of DHB and other workplace violence and aggression is no longer challenged. A recent survey in New Zealand found 30% and 39% of workers had experienced racial or sexual harassment, respectively, within the last 5 years; with 40% having been bullied at some point in their working life. Another 44% of workers were aware of bullying occurring to others in their workplace in the previous 5 years (Gardner, O'Driscoll, et al., 2013; Human Rights Commission, 2022). This figure did not include those who had witnessed or were aware of other forms of DHB occurring, so it is likely to be significantly higher. Further, these statistics reflect a significant proportion of an organisation's workforce directly impacted by the immediate and long-term harm caused by DHB, which can involve mental, physical and career-based harm (Francis, 2019; Giga et al., 2008; Hoel et al., 2001). Reports on workplace bullying suggest this behaviour is more prominent in New Zealand than in comparative countries (Ministry of Business, Innovation, and Employment (MBIE), 2020). There is no evidence to suggest that the prevalence of other DHB behaviours would be different. Organisations themselves shoulder additional costs resulting from this behaviour, including absenteeism, reduced productivity, increased staff turnover, and reputational damage (MBIE, 2020).

This harmful workplace behaviour has been regulated and legislated against at both international and national levels for decades. One intervention that has regularly been found to assist organisations in reducing the prevalence of DHB and the harm it causes is the development and implementation of policies to directly address the behaviour (Ferris et al., 2021).

International research has identified that DHB policies play a significant role in reducing the prevalence of DHB and in achieving timely and effective resolutions (Ferris et al., 2021; Rayner & Lewis, 2010). While often not stipulated within DHB-related legislation or national-level regulations, research has repeatedly found that the implementation of "an effective behavioural policy with clear standards, processes and expectations seems foundational to the prevention and management of workplace bullying

[and DHB]” (Catley, 2022, p. 201). This has been further supported by Cooper-Thomas et al. (2013), who found employees rated workplace DHB policies as the most effective way to address the behaviour. Section 30(1)(a) of New Zealand’s Health and Safety at Work Act (2015) requires businesses to “eliminate risks to health and safety, so far as is reasonably practicable”; if risks such as DHB cannot be eliminated, Section 30(1)(b) requires organisations must “minimise those risks so far as is reasonably practicable”. In this context, reasonably practicable is defined as “that which is, or was, at a particular time, reasonably able to be done in relation to ensuring health and safety” (Health and Safety at Work Act, 2015, s 22). Nevertheless, the legislation stops short of requiring organisations to have DHB policies, and New Zealand’s workplace health and regulatory body, WorkSafe NZ (2014), only recommends DHB policies “should be included” (WorkSafe NZ, 2014, p. 31) within workplaces. Going further, business and legal practitioners regularly state the importance of these policies as a standard business practice (Employment NZ, 2024; Hello Monday, 2022; Miao, 2025; Stanley, 2025).

Research has regularly found that to be effective DHB policies must be tailored to their specific environmental context (Escartín, 2016; Salin, 2008) and routinely evaluated (Leka, Aditya, et al., 2008; Magee et al., 2014; Zapf & Vartia, 2020) to support organisations in reducing the risk of DHB and the harm it causes. New Zealand legislation supports the research, requiring organisations to do all that is reasonably practicable to achieve workplaces that are safe from DHB (Health and Safety at Work Act, 2015, s 30). However, processes to support organisations developing such policies are harder to find. Many of the readily available DHB policy options are standardised and templated, such as the anti-bullying policy offered by WorkSafe NZ (WorkSafe NZ, 2017), even though another of their guides on managing workplace psychosocial hazards states, “interventions need to be tailored to suit a given industrial sector, occupation or workplace size” (WorkSafe NZ, 2019, p. 46).

Research Gap

Supporting the widely offered DHB policy templates, much research has been undertaken on what such policies should contain (Brinkley, 2019; Magee et al., 2014; Rayner & Lewis, 2010; Richards & Daley, 2003). Yet, despite the available knowledge organisations can draw on when developing policy-based interventions for workplace DHB, a gap remains between what has been identified as best practice for

workplace DHB policies and how policy-makers and practitioners can translate this into effective practice (Leka, Vartia, et al., 2008). While the requirement to have processes in place to address workplace DHB is both regulated and laudable, little research or regulatory support is available to enable organisations to develop tailored policies that are measurably evaluated as equitable and effective. This leaves organisations, commercial businesses, government agencies, and non-profit organisations alike in an untenable position. On one hand, it is strongly recommended that DHB policies are a reasonably practicable action to reduce the harm of DHB; that these policies should be tailored to the specific organisational context; and should include detailed procedures, including evaluation processes. On the other hand, policy development methods and frameworks to enable organisations to design tailored DHB policies are not only largely unavailable, but the example policies widely offered are standardised and templated. DHB policies that do not effectively, equitably or consistently address DHB behaviour can create situations where it can not only continue, but increase, compounding the harm done to individuals and the wider organisation.

Existing research has examined workplace DHB policies from either the perspective of targets who attempt to use the policy (e.g., Hutchinson et al., 2006a; 2006b, 2009, 2010) or the perspective of managers and organisational actors responsible for implementing it such as Crimp (2017). A small number of studies have gathered multi-role accounts within the same organisation (e.g., Catley et al., 2017), but none have systematically evaluated these experiences against evidence-based criteria for effective policy design. This study is therefore original in its triangulation of three distinct data sources: a rapid review identifying best practice policy elements, interviews with targets who used the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) DHB policy, and interviews with managers tasked with applying that same policy. This design enables a unique assessment of how closely real world policy experiences align with best practice standards and where improvements are required to enhance equity and effectiveness.

Research Aim

My research aimed to identify effective policy elements for equitable and effective DHB policies that can be readily tailored to individual organisational contexts. This would translate current best practice knowledge on workplace DHB policies into pragmatic processes to guide the development of tailored

organisational-level DHB policies. Such a process would then support organisations to develop DHB policies tailored to their specific contextual environment that effectively address reported DHB and, by doing so, work toward preventing its occurrence.

Importance of this Research Topic

Building on a foundation of accepted knowledge and best practice linked to workplace DHB policies, the current research sought to identify pragmatic options to assist organisations in the development of DHB policies that are tailored to their environmental context. The adverse impact DHB has on individuals, workplaces, and whole organisations has received considerable research attention, as has potential interventions and actions to address and resolve this behaviour and its effects (Giga et al., 2008; Jones et al., 2017; Pelletier, 2016; Porath & Pearson, 2013). DHB policies underpin many of these interventions, and are accepted as a vital element of an organisation's DHB prevention and resolution programme (Ferris et al., 2021; Rayner & Lewis, 2010).

The importance of having organisational DHB policies is highlighted by many regulatory bodies, including those within New Zealand (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 1999; Magee et al., 2014; WorkSafe NZ, 2014). Yet, there seems to be a disconnect between the acceptance of workplace DHB policies as a key element to prevent and resolve DHB, and readily available processes to assist organisations in the development of tailored and appropriate policies. This gap is further reinforced by a seeming lack in ability and capability for regulatory bodies to assess the level of DHB policy effectiveness if indeed such a policy exists. These two deficiencies create a situation whereby organisations can readily meet regulatory compliance requirements by applying a standardised DHB policy with no follow-up to ensure such a policy works effectively, supports the desired outcomes, and does not reinforce existing inequities between staff members within the organisation.

Research Design

Supporting the research aim, the primary question for this research was: *How can organisations tailor their DHB policies to improve the equity and effectiveness of workplace DHB outcomes?* To answer this question, I applied a qualitative mixed-methods research approach within a classical pragmatist research paradigm. The primary research question required two separate components to be addressed: (1) what policy

elements supported equitable and effective DHB policies, and (2) what considerations were required when tailoring a DHB policy to a specific organisation. The research methods I applied to answer these supplementary questions were a rapid literature review and semi-structured interviews. Both methods were applied within the context of an embedded case study—the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF)—to provide the contextual environment of a highly complex organisation. Applying an abductive reasoning approach, I analysed the findings from the rapid review using a codebook thematic analysis, with a reflexive thematic analysis applied to the interview findings. The resulting themes were compared and triangulated, and the final themes discussed within the context of pragmatist solutions to the primary research question.

Contributions from this Research

The research outcomes offer four key contributions to the collective knowledge relating to the development of organisational DHB policies. Three of these outcomes directly impact the development of DHB policies, while the fourth highlights the impact regulatory standards have on the effectiveness of DHB policies. The first contribution is the application of socioecological frameworks to support organisational contextual understanding for DHB policy development, supported by a worked example to illustrate the process. The second is the identification of a DHB policy development framework to enable organisations to mitigate contextual issues that could otherwise undermine the equity and effectiveness a policy could achieve. Next, the research highlighted the vital importance that accountability processes have in maintaining the equitable and effective application of DHB policies, supported by an example DHB policy evaluation framework. The last contribution was the identification of the direct relationship between current regulatory requirements within New Zealand and the limitations of DHB policy effectiveness, and how elevating these regulations would lead to improved policy effectiveness over mere compliance.

My Positionality

Both the topic for investigation and the research design were impacted by my previous experience and perspectives. Individual characteristics, alongside social and cultural contexts, influence how researchers interact with their participants, assumptions, and where they place themselves within their chosen field of research (Patton, 2015; Savin-Baden & Howell Major, 2013). The background to this research came about

from a task I was given while still serving with the NZDF. I was asked to review the existing policy for DHB and make recommendations to update it in line with legislative changes that had occurred since that policy had been implemented, and improve its effectiveness. I recognised the need to have objective research to support any recommendations, and so my research journey began. This research commenced at a Master's of Philosophy (MPhil) level to identify what elements were required to develop an effective DHB policy specifically for NZDF.

Two events occurred that combined to alter the trajectory of this research. First, before I could complete this work, my contract with NZDF ended after 26 years. Second, it became increasingly clear to me that the knowledge gap preventing NZDF from developing a DHB policy was grounded in a strong understanding of how their environment impacted the requirements for all organisations wanting an equitable and effective DHB policy. These events led to the expansion of my initial research topic, identifying DHB policy elements for NZDF, to also identifying processes and components that would allow any organisation to tailor a DHB policy to their environment, increasing the likelihood of implementing a successful and effective DHB policy. The expansion in research topic, alongside the complexity of the supporting research design resulted in the evolution of the initial Master of Philosophy research proposal into the final doctoral-level research.

The background to commencing the research and my pragmatist perspective meant I could not separate my values, knowledge, and experience from the research. By clarifying my influences, I was able to be aware of the impact they may have potentially had and ensure potential biases supported, rather than undermined, the research (Maarouf, 2019). Within the current research, four key areas of my experience had a direct influence on my worldview as it pertains to DHB within the NZDF. These areas were my military experience, experience as a member of a minority group within the NZDF, personal experience of being a target of bullying within the NZDF, and my previous study in violence and trauma within militaries, particularly the NZDF.

Milligan (2014) argued that researchers are neither insiders nor outsiders, but that they adjust their stance according to the situation. Thomson and Gunter (2011) labelled this fluid positionality 'liquid identity', describing how it is both context-dependent and moves across a continuum. Similarly, I was an

insider by virtue of having been a serving military officer; simultaneously, I was an outsider through my role as a researcher looking into the NZDF. Further, I was somewhere in the middle through the understanding of a civilian perspective that my history provided. Each of these roles and perspectives brought advantages and disadvantages to my role as a researcher; however, Villalón and da Silva (2022) argued that it requires multiple perspectives, skills, and a broad experience base to make sense of complex environments. My multiple perspectives and experiences with and within NZDF align with the epistemological and ontological axioms of a pragmatist research approach, and offer the multifaceted positionality that Villalón and da Silva identify as being able to offer “a much more accurate picture of the whole” (p. 343).

By the time I undertook my officer cadet training in 1998, graduating in December of that year as a Lieutenant in the New Zealand Army, I had worked full-time for 9 years. I completed a bachelor’s degree in psychology and criminology which provided me with a unique ability to compare NZDF culture and worldview to that of a non-military environment. It enabled me to question many elements of the military that without my non-military experience tended to accept without challenge. This dual vision stayed with me throughout my 26 years of service as I completed the usual range of postings, training courses, and operational deployments. It allowed me to see the positives and negatives of military culture and the impact it has at individual and organisational levels.

As a female within the New Zealand Army, I was a member of a minority group. As my rank progressed, my cohort of females became smaller. My personal experiences of differing standards, having to ‘suck it up’, of never feeling quite enough, and needing to work harder to achieve less were constant and consistent themes shared with female peers at all rank levels. As intersectionality demonstrates, not all members of minority groups share the same experiences (Derks et al., 2011; Ellemers et al., 2012), as highlighted by my examination of the ‘Queen Bee’ concept within NZDF (Werder, 2016). It explained what I had seen and felt when senior female personnel distanced themselves from more junior women, inadvertently reinforcing gender biases and making it more difficult for women to succeed in their presence. Experiencing those gender-related issues very much added another lens to my military experience.

I experienced DHB and targeted behaviour multiple times throughout my career. I had a complaint laid against me that was not upheld, and found myself in a position where I felt I had no option but to make a complaint. If that experience taught me anything, it was never to do that (lay a complaint) again. I have and continue to assist others in navigating these processes. I have witnessed and experienced the impact these behaviours have on an individual's mental and physical well-being, as well as on the effectiveness and operational readiness of elements within the NZDF. I am passionate about the success of DHB policies that this research can inform so that others can have an equitable and effective process to address DHB behaviours, and those managing these situations have clear and defined processes to assist in resolving them.

I have directed my postgraduate study in violence and trauma, as well as international security, towards addressing issues within the military broadly, and the NZDF specifically, with particular attention to how these environments affect and influence women. This gave me a third academic perspective through which to view the NZDF, its culture, and the impact that it has, in addition to that of an NZDF service person and a civilian world view. The combination of these three perspectives aligns with the pragmatist concept of multiple realities.

Thesis Outline

This thesis consists of 11 chapters covering the contextual placement of the research, the underpinning theoretical framework, the design and conduct of the research, its findings and contribution to collective knowledge, and concluding comments.

Chapter 1 introduces the research topic, providing background to the issue of workplace DHB, with an overview of the research design and the knowledge contributions this research offers. It then detailed my researcher positionality and thesis outline.

Chapter 2 provides a contextual understanding of DHB within NZDF, the case study for this research. With its relative isolation from wider society and organisational complexity, NZDF offers multiple factors for consideration in a DHB policy that may not be present in traditional civil or commercial organisations. However, without an in-depth understanding of what differentiates NZDF from other organisations, the insight into contextual factors that can impact DHB may be lost. This chapter discusses the impact of

military organisational culture, Te Tiriti o Waitangi (The Treaty of Waitangi), how DHB increases the risk of insider threats, and current DHB prevalence and policies within NZDF.

Chapter 3 is the first of two literature review chapters and reviews DHB within organisational contexts. It reviews workplace violence to provide an overview of specific DHB behaviours within workplaces, situating them in international and national legislation. It is followed by detailed reviews of discrimination, the similarities and differences between harassment and bullying, and hazing.

Chapter 4, the second of the two literature review chapters, situates DHB policies and their varying requirements within organisational contexts, using the NZDF as a case study to provide an example. It addresses the need for DHB policies to be integrated across related interventions for them to fit the ecologies of the organisation in which they sit, and what an appropriate policy style may be. Finally, the chapter addresses the need for planning for policy evaluation to measure policy success.

Chapter 5 outlines the pragmatist perspective that underpins the research and explains how the pragmatist research paradigm informs the study design to address the identified research questions. Pragmatist axioms are reviewed for their applicability to the current research and NZDF, serving as the embedded case study. Intersectionality is then reviewed as an additional theory to be incorporated into the research, providing a deeper understanding of the research context.

Chapter 6 explains the research methodology and methods applied in the research, including the application of a qualitative mixed-method approach with an embedded case study. The steps taken to gather data from the rapid literature review and semi-structured interviews are outlined, along with the data analysis processes applied to each. The chapter concludes by explaining the applied data integration and trustworthiness processes.

Chapter 7 presents the findings from the rapid literature review. Forty-five documents were included in the review and analysed thematically using a codebook. The analysis resulted in two themes: policy context and policy content.

Chapter 8 presents the findings from the semi-structured interviews. Two groups who had experience with the current NZDF DHB policy were interviewed: (1) targets and witnesses of DHB who had attempted to resolve their situation using the policy, and (2) commanders and managers who had

experience of applying the current policy. Applying reflexive thematic analysis to the interview data developed three themes: equality under the policy leads to inequity, inconsistent DHB policy application reduces equity and effectiveness, and a lack of policy detail and clarity results in inequitable and ineffective outcomes.

Chapter 9 integrates findings from the rapid literature review and semi-structured interviews to explain how DHB policy context, content, and implementation interact to shape equity and effectiveness. It presents the outcomes of triangulation and explanation-building analyses, showing how the five themes relate to one another and collectively address the primary research question.

Chapter 10 examines the integrated research findings and applies them to the primary research question, offering both actionable guidance and broader theoretical contributions to DHB policy development. It continues by outlining the study's practical implications, limitations, and avenues for future research, closing with a final conclusion.

Chapter 2: Research Context – The New Zealand Defence Force

Introduction

As the case study for this research, an in-depth understanding of the context within which the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) operates and is shaped is required, alongside an understanding of its culture and how that culture impacts the prevalence and management of discrimination, harassment, and bullying (DHB). This will be achieved by investigating the development of organisational cultures and how they change, before examining the differences between military cultures and civil organisations. A description of military organisations as gendered institutions and the influence military cultures have on military personnel is provided, followed by an examination of how DHB provides an additional and significant threat to NZDF and the successful achievement of its mandated outcomes through the phenomenon of insider threats, both intended and unintended. The impact of DHB on individuals will be investigated, and how it relates to human factors and increases the risk of unintended insider threats. Within the context of New Zealand legislation, NZDF military personnel have very different legal protections from DHB than civil staff, with many of the civilian protections being unavailable to military personnel through their exclusion from the Employment Relations Act (ERA) and elements of the Health and Safety in the Workplace Act. The impacts these exclusions have on military personnel in the NZDF will also be discussed, alongside considerations required of any NZDF policy to provide military personnel with equitable protections against DHB behaviours are discussed.

The chapter concludes with an examination of DHB within NZDF, commencing with a review of current policies within NZDF that relate to these behaviours and behavioural expectations. The reported prevalence and patterns of DHB within NZDF are discussed using survey data collected as individuals exit the organisation and other New Zealand and international data. This comparison allows some conclusions to be made about the actual patterns and prevalence of DHB within NZDF, assisting in identifying specific areas any DHB policy for NZDF must address to make a measurable difference.

Military Culture

Removing military culture as an entity from discussions on how to bring about change or implement a new policy or intervention runs a high risk that any resulting action will have a poor ecological fit, thereby risking

failure. Due to the significant influence military culture has throughout the ecological framework of any military organisation, and the worldview of service personnel, omitting it from any review would result in an incomplete and inaccurate organisational analysis (Hobfoll et al., 2008). A poor understanding of the culture, organisational environment, or how members see themselves fitting into that environment risks not just the failure of any intervention, action, or policy, but that it may cause further harm (Hobfoll et al., 2008). Research indicates that interventions to address violence, such as DHB behaviour, that are tailored to specific cultures and environments are more effective than standardised approaches (Whitaker & Niolon, 2009). Therefore, to use NZDF as a case study for identifying the crucial elements of an effective DHB policy, general military cultures and the specific environment of the NZDF must be considered in addition to investigating the behaviours themselves.

Along with the costs both individuals and organisations face regarding ongoing DHB prevalence, patterns, and potential consequences of not effectively addressing this behaviour, military organisations, such as the NZDF, have additional considerations specific to the cultural, demographic and legislative context it operates within. These considerations, which influence DHB within the NZDF and the development of any tailored DHB policy, include the particular organisational culture generally found within military organisations that can contribute to DHB behaviours including hazing; the risks and obligations insider threats pose for military organisations when considering DHB; the differing legal protections NZDF service personnel and civil staff have under New Zealand legislation and the associated duty of care for these service personnel; and the demographic make-up of NZDF itself.

Organisational Culture and Culture Change

Organisational cultures are highly influential—positively and negatively—on both the performance and behaviours of its members and organisational success. However, strong cultures only support success if they are appropriate to the organisation's environment (McShane & Travaglione, 2007). Appropriate cultures provide frameworks of shared assumptions, values, and beliefs, allowing members to adjust their behaviour to organisational goals while providing social control functions to influence members' decisions and behaviours, bonding them together. Organisational cultures are rarely mutually exclusive. An organisation's members are influenced by multiple overlapping cultures prior to and while they belong to

any organisation, including ethnic, national, religious, occupational, or other cultures, all of which influence an individual's worldview (Corey et al., 2014).

As societal values and expectations evolve, organisations are required to keep pace with these changes to stay relevant and successful. To do so, an organisation's culture must be adaptive to internal and external change (McShane & Travaglione, 2007) rather than focusing on sustaining the status quo through increased efficiencies (Hill & Gerrass, 2016). Changing any culture is difficult (Capstick, 2003), and can only occur once individuals within an organisation change their actions, the benefits of the change are readily seen, and individuals have linked the cultural changes to improved organisational outcomes (Terriff, 2006).

Schein's (2016) theory of organisational culture explains the reluctance to change. Schein (2016) described organisational culture as having three layers: (1) artifacts which are visible and observable behaviours, structures, and processes; (2) beliefs and values that include ideals, ideologies, and rationalisations that may or may not be congruent with other artifacts; and (3) underlying, implicit assumptions which are unconscious, taken-for-granted values that guide behaviour and define how group members perceive, think, and feel about things. Generally underlying assumptions cannot be confronted or debated, making them exceedingly difficult to change. They also operate as an organisational defence mechanism, distorting and rationalising away any potential change to reduce anxiety and challenges faced by the organisation and its members when challenged (Schein, 2016). While managing one suite of underlying assumptions to bring about any organisational change is difficult, the NZDF has two distinct membership groups: service personnel and civil staff, each bringing their own set of underlying assumptions. Any policy to address DHB behaviour within NZDF must account for both the similarities and differences between these groups.

What is Military Culture?

Military cultures are distinct from the broader society they serve (Hall, 2011; Terriff, 2006), as "their primary mission entails a readiness to take life and destroy property" (Wilson, 2008, p. 22). NZDF is no different in this regard. Its purpose is to secure New Zealand against external threats and protect its sovereign interests, and its organisational culture and structure has developed over time to assist in

achieving this outcome (State Services Commission et al., 2015). Different cultures, whether organisational or otherwise, can only be partially understood by non-members through their own interpretation of that culture's visible artifact layer as described by Schein (2016). This non-membership often leads to words, actions, and behaviours having different meanings in different cultures, leaving language and ideas that may seem explicit to members of one culture appearing strange or unfathomable to non-members (Kuehn, 2013). Within NZDF, this could lead to potential conflict or confusion, with behaviours defined or accepted as bullying or otherwise inappropriate in a civilian setting being considered acceptable within a military context (Kalamdien & Lawrence, 2017; Stuart & Szeszeran, 2021). This potential confusion would likely lead to any DHB policy within NZDF being inconsistently applied unless it is clearly and definitively addressed within the policy itself.

The idea that military cultures and associated traditions are linked to why bullying-type behaviours and the adverse outcomes of this behaviour continue to be pervasive within military environments is often referred to within the literature (Stuart & Szeszeran, 2021). With any culture needing to include “a language, a code of manners, norms of behaviour, belief systems, dress, and rituals, it is clear that the [Armed Forces] represents a unique cultural group” (Reger et al., 2008, p. 22). Military cultures are generally conservative, rooted in history and tradition, oriented toward obedience to superiors, and based on group loyalty and conformity (Egnell, 2016; Silva, 2008). While militaries are accustomed to rapid changes in technologies, easily adjusting to changes in warfare and threats, organisationally they tend to be highly resistant to social changes that challenge existing traditions, customs, and culture (Zellman, 1996). They also hold very masculine ideologies and expectations, supported by patriarchal structures (Kuehn, 2013; Silva, 2008), with emphasis on often-authoritarian hierarchies to achieve their assigned mission (Soeters et al., 2006). These hierarchies result in formal, regimented workplaces and organisational structures to ensure operational requirements are achieved in arduous situations. Authoritarian leadership styles are commonplace for maintaining order and discipline among those who fail to meet set requirements and behaviours. With this overt reliance on rank and regulation, and both formalised and informal traditions and rituals, the adherence to organisational hierarchy is much stronger within the military than in public sector organisations (Stuart & Szeszeran, 2021).

The Military as a Gendered Institution

Military organisations have traditionally had male-gendered cultures (Fox & Pease, 2012) and military roles are still seen as predominantly masculine occupations with male traditions and practices that exaggerate this masculinity (Boyce & Herd, 2003). Patriarchal institutional structures and masculine ideologies have been essential throughout history to enable militaries to accomplish their missions and objectives in the pursuit of directed political aims and the defence of their nations (Egnell, 2016; Silva, 2008). Despite global shifts leading to increased participation of women in Western armed forces and the changing nature of warfare, militaries remain some of the most ideologically masculinised of all organisations, with their fundamental gender regimes, cultures, and identities remaining largely unaltered (Sasson-Levy, 2011). The same resistance to cultural change has not been found in occupations where women have traditionally been the majority group, such as teaching and nursing, even as men have increased their participation over time (Britton, 2003). This indicates that the retention of a strongly masculine-oriented culture within the military is due to more than a simple gender majority. The gender regime of most militaries is so firmly entrenched that even legal or social pressures for change have had little effect, leading to militaries being identified as gendered institutions with an underlying culture of hegemonic masculinity (Acker, 1992; Hinojosa, 2010). The military's hegemonic identity symbolising the uniqueness of the military and its distinctive character is the combat soldier, who embodies the epitome of hypermasculinity (Sasson-Levy, 2011). This image of the hegemonic man is defined by risk-taking, self-discipline, physical toughness, emotional control, authority, heterosexism, and the willingness to use aggression and physical violence (Hinojosa, 2010).

Acker (1992) defined gendered institutions as having gender present in the processes, practices, images, ideologies, and distributions of power of that institution. It refers to the pervasive ordering of human activities, practices, and social structures based on socially perceived differences between women and men; a process rather than an individual trait. Gendered institutions are generally developed by men, currently dominated by men, and symbolically interpreted from the point of view of men in leadership roles, both historically and present, with development occurring in the absence of women (Acker, 1992).

Gendered institutions can legitimise and maintain a culture of hegemonic masculinity over time, reinforcing men's power at the cultural and collective levels while continuing to perpetuate inequitable

gendered practices through mechanisms and processes embedded into the fabric of the organisation (Acker, 1992; Shelley et al., 2011). Acker (1992) identified four gendered processes that maintain the masculine cultures of male-dominated professions in the face of societal change. The highest-level process contains the regulations, practices, and decisions that control, exclude, and segregate all but those who fit the hegemonic masculine identity. This process is supported by images, symbols, and ideologies that legitimise the institutional regulations and practices. The final two processes contain the social interactions where members learn to replicate gender as practised by the institution, and the internal processes of individuals where they construct their own institutional 'persona'. Britton (2003) refined Acker's four process model of gendered organisations into three inter-related factors: (1) structure, referring to formal and informal organisational practices and policies that reinforce inequality and organisational gender norms; (2) culture, defined as Acker's process of constructing images and ideologies to legitimise the organisation; and (3) agency, which encompasses the social interaction and internal processes of Acker's model. Both these theories closely align with Schein's (2016) model of organisational culture (Schein, 2016) and reinforce that only addressing the visible elements of an organisation, particularly in a hegemonic gendered organisation, will do little to effect any desired cultural change.

Resistance to change is not the only concern for gendered organisations wanting to address and reduce the occurrence of behaviours such as DHB and hazing. The organisationally supported adherence to hegemonic masculinity brings with it an embedded sense of superiority over those perceived to not meet the ideals, regardless of whether those individuals are service members or civilians (Hinojosa, 2010). This masculine culture, buoyed with an inflated sense of superiority, can allow and even encourage aggressive and chauvinistic behaviour not acceptable in civilian society (Sasson-Levy, 2011). Such behaviour, alongside DHB, can entrench gender inequality, with evidence indicating women in non-traditional roles experience more of these forms of abuse than women in traditional roles (Britton, 2003).

While militaries are by no means the only gendered organisations within society (business, academic, and political institutions have also been defined as such; (Acker, 1992), the combination of a rigid gendered structure with a strongly masculine culture results in militaries being extremely gendered in all aspects of both Acker's (1992) and Britton's (2003) models (Britton, 2003; Sasson-Levy, 2011). It is this extreme and

institutional level of gendering that differentiates armed forces from most civilian organisations. In the context of the current research, it also reinforces the requirement that any policy aiming to reduce DHB behaviours within NZDF and improve outcomes for targets must address organisational-level practices and procedures that allow this behaviour to continue, alongside the cultural elements that support them, if any positive outcomes are to be achieved.

Impact of Military Culture on its People

The military is a unique workplace. Service personnel generally spend significantly more time together both in and outside of work than civilians, frequently physically and socially isolated from other community groups (Pershing, 2006). This full immersion into the military way of life means military service can “contribute as much to [service members’] worldview as such other cultural factors as gender, ethnicity, or social class” (Carrola & Corbin-Burdick, 2015, p. 5). The way the military culture permeates all aspects of a service person’s life, both inside and outside ‘work’ environments, and the high levels of control the military has over the personal lives of service members (Soeters et al., 2006), results in their service being more aligned to that of a vocation than a job. Military service not only impacts the professional lives of service personnel through training, experience, travel, challenges, education, and operational service, but it also influences every part of their lives. Service personnel also face multiple separations and disruptions to family life, dangerous work environments, multiple relocations, uncertain future postings, physical injury, and mental health issues caused both by specific topics and the cumulative effect of all these factors (Gierisch et al., 2013; Klostermann et al., 2012; Rentz et al., 2006). The ultimate paradox for military personnel then is that “the self-appointed front-line guardians of our cherished ... democratic values, do not live in democracy themselves” (Wertsch, 2006 cited in Hall, 2011, p. 8).

NZDF and Te Tiriti o Waitangi (The Treaty of Waitangi)

Despite many similarities, every military has its own cultural identity as each is influenced and shaped by the characteristics, values, and history of its nation’s civil society. The NZDF, therefore, as part of the apparatus of the New Zealand government and an instrument of New Zealand’s national power (NZDF, 2015), must be integrated with and reflective of the civil society it stems from for it to be accepted and

effective (Rosen, 1995). A significant element for the NZDF as a branch of government is Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi was signed on February 6, 1840, by Māori rangatira (chiefs) and representatives of the British Crown to pave the way for settlement in Aotearoa New Zealand (Cram et al., 2006). The signing of Te Tiriti was preceded by the signing of He Whakaputanga o te Rangatiratanga o Nu Tireni (the Declaration of Independence) in 1835, an international proclamation of Māori sovereign independence that Britain gazetted at the time (O’Sullivan et al., 2021). Thus, rangatira came to sign Te Tiriti with the understanding that their sovereignty was intact and not at risk. As Sadler (2014) explained, the rangatira did not agree to the British “to possess their sovereignty, their mana. ... They allowed the Governor to come, but in that agreement, it was not to govern them, but a Governor for his own people [Pakeha] that were already arriving” (Sadler, 2014, p. 167).

From its signing, the agreement itself and actions that came from it, surrounding the issues of government and sovereignty, have been contested, largely due to fundamental differences between the two versions of Te Tiriti that were signed at Waitangi, (O’Sullivan et al., 2021). The English language version was drafted by the British Lieutenant-Governor of New South Wales, William Hobson; while the te reo Māori (Māori language) version was largely drafted by Anglican missionaries, resulting in two fundamentally different versions. The text of the te reo Māori version was debated at Waitangi and elsewhere by rangatira and, as it was signed, affirmed Māori sovereignty and authority would remain with Māori, in the language of a solemn and enduring promise from the British Crown to Māori. In direct contrast, in the English language version (O’Sullivan et al., 2021) Māori ceded their sovereignty to the Queen, while the Māori text was worded as kawanatanga (the right to govern), with Māori retaining tino rangatiratanga (sovereignty) (Cram et al., 2006). Given these significant differences between the English and te reo Māori versions, current usage of terms has the title ‘The Treaty of Waitangi’ referring to the English language version, and ‘Te Tiriti o Waitangi (or Te Tiriti)’ meaning the te reo Māori version. Within this research, the labelling of the treaty versions adheres to this convention.

The English version of Te Tiriti has three articles, with a fourth included in the te reo Māori version, that set out the relationship between Māori and the Crown. In order, the articles refer to kawanatanga as

the right to govern; the right of tino rangatiratanga (sovereignty and self-determination) where in the te reo Māori version the Crown agreed that Māori would retain authority over resources and taonga; and the right to Ōritetanga (equity) with all New Zealand citizens (Cram et al., 2006; Hudson & Russell, 2008; Wilson et al., 2021). The fourth article, which only appears in the te reo Māori version, guaranteed Māori wairuatanga (spiritual well-being) (Wilson et al., 2021). Under the English language version, the Crown acquired sovereignty over Māori and New Zealand in exchange for guaranteeing that the property rights Māori had at the time would be protected and Māori individuals would be fairly treated when compared to other New Zealand citizens (Durie, 2004a).

The establishment of the Waitangi Tribunal in 1975 by the Waitangi Tribunal Act 1975, reinstated the legal authority of Te Tiriti and sanctioned the Tribunal's ability to review principles it would use to apply its findings. Governments since then have been increasingly conscious of the Crown's obligations under Te Tiriti and the principles that underpin it (Durie, 2004b; Hudson & Russell, 2008). Additionally, all state institutions and organisations are obligated to recognise Māori aspirations for self-determination, protect Māori interests, and embed Te Tiriti principles into their spheres of activity (Hudson & Russell, 2008).

These principles are not static. Since the Royal Commission on Social Policy (1988) popularised the principles of participation, partnership and protection (also known as the Three P's) based on the specific articles within Te Tiriti, the principles have been reviewed and reinterpreted by the courts and the Waitangi Tribunal for close to 3 decades (Waitangi Tribunal, 2019). Most recently, the Waitangi Tribunal (2019) report into claims that the Government-funded primary health care framework failed to provide Māori health equity "found that the Crown's 'three Ps' articulation of Treaty principles is outdated and needs to be reformed" (Waitangi Tribunal, 2019, p. 163). The report went on to recommend five principles that extend beyond the limits of the 'Three P's' and offer a robust and contemporary framework for applying Te Tiriti. These principles are: recognition and protection of tino rangatiratanga, equity, active protection, partnership and the provision of options (Waitangi Tribunal, 2019). While these principles were initially recommended for New Zealand's primary health care framework, they are relevant to all sectors and have since been embedded within by a number of government agencies beyond the health sector (Ministry of Business, Innovation, and Employment (MBIE), n.d.).

The NZDF (2021a) has long been committed to improving outcomes for Māori and meeting its partnership obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and has taken significant steps over the last 3 decades to weave both tikanga Māori and Māori knowledge into operational and training processes. In addition to these conscious actions, Māori culture and knowledge have played a significant role in the development of NZDF and its people. These factors have resulted in significant differences between NZDF and other Western militaries, and a large proportion of New Zealand's other government agencies and organisations.

The NZDF is a voluntary, professional, values-based military organisation. Its culture is based on a warrior ethos underpinned by the tenets of Tū Kaha (courage), Tū Tika (commitment), Tū Tira (comradeship), and Tū Māia (integrity) (NZDF, 2019). The official Māori name for NZDF is Te Ope Kātua O Aotearoa, meaning 'the personnel of the main defensive stockade of New Zealand' (NZDF, n.d.-a). The NZDF is a unique blend of the two cultures—Māori and British—that have dominated New Zealand warfare, each bringing elements that, when combined, have resulted in a Defence Force that is uniquely New Zealand. The British troops that arrived in New Zealand during the 19th century were disciplined, with extremely structured tactics; soldiers generally fought as formed units rather than individuals. They faced a Māori warrior culture where warfare was a matter of personal mana between individual warriors who were extremely adept at tactical agility and innovation. Māori warriors' tactical adaptability, skill, and mana (personal and collective strength, pride, status, and spiritual power; Te Aka Māori Dictionary, n.d.) made them formidable opponents to the British, who were not as tactically innovative but tended to have a stronger sense of overall strategic goals. The NZDF, then, is the result of the melding of these two cultures and backgrounds, combining aspects of a rigidly structured British military culture approach with the innovation, controlled aggression, and mana of the Māori warrior, creating a uniquely New Zealand defence force (New Zealand Army, 2020).

Recognition of the value and importance of Te Ao Māori within NZDF can be seen through the establishment of the service marae. New Zealand Army's multicultural marae, Ronogomaraeroa o ngā hau e whā, was established in 1995, with the iwi (tribal) name 'Ngāti Tumatauenga', the Tribe of the War God, being afforded to the New Zealand Army by Sir Charles Bennett, DSO, the last Commanding Officer of the 28 Māori Battalion. In 2000, the New Zealand Navy marae, Te Taua Moana Marae, was established

and, more recently, the opening of the Royal New Zealand Air Force marae, Te Tūrangawaewae o Te Tauaarangi o Aotearoa (which does not hold marae status), in Ohakea in 2016. These marae and tūrangawaewae are focal points for NZDF soldiers, sailors, and aviators throughout their careers. Based on the fusion of European military traditions and the Māori warrior culture (Hohaia, 2015), they are at the centre of Māori ceremonies, cultural training, and other learning within NZDF (Scoppio, 2018).

NZDF has embraced the principles of Te Tiriti which has been recognised beyond New Zealand. Dr Grazia Scoppio from the Royal Military College of Canada (2010, 2018) has spent significant time analysing Indigenous cultures within military organisations; in particular, detailing the “approaches and practices that have enabled a positive partnership with Māori and the successful inclusion of Māori culture in New Zealand’s military” (Scoppio, 2018, p. 5). Alongside the establishment of the service marae and tūrangawaewae, the NZDF has implemented a variety of initiatives that recognise the importance of Māori culture and knowledge to the NZDF and make these critical and embedded elements of NZDF operations. These initiatives include bi-cultural policies and policies that respect and honour Māori language customs and items of cultural significance within NZDF; the development of Māori Cultural Advisor positions within each service and NZDF headquarters; creation and support of Māori Cultural Groups (Kapa Haka) alongside service and NZDF haka; provision of Māori language and cultural training; harmonising Māori and military ceremonies; demonstrating leadership support for Māori culture; and creating partnerships with Māori communities (Scoppio, 2010, 2018).

The acceptance of tikanga Māori has also led to the application of the Māori health and well-being framework, Te Whare Tapa Whā, within NZDF to provide information to service members and families on reintegration after deployments (Joint Forces New Zealand, 2014). Te Whare Tapa Whā is a widely applied, holistic well-being construct that identifies the requirement to balance spirituality, mental health, physical health and whānau to achieve well-being within the individual, their whānau, and the wider environment (Durie, 1985). While Te Whare Tapa Whā has been criticised as being too generic, rather than being a Māori-specific model (McNeill, 2009), within the NZDF, this is a strength, as it provides adaptability for all ethnic and religious cultures, as well as the military organisational culture, all of which are imbued with traditional Māori knowledge.

The combination of these actions has resulted in fundamental changes within the NZDF learning and training environments, with Māori Indigenous knowledge respected and formally included in training and courses. The deliberate inclusion of Māori Indigenous knowledge, tikanga Māori, into day-to-day NZDF operations has supported the organisation's goal to reinforce a commitment to service, and increase esprit de corps and morale amongst members (Hohaia, 2015). More broadly, however, is the distinct cultural identity created by the binding together in mutual respect of tikanga Māori and European military custom, making NZDF unique among other militaries around the world, and amongst many New Zealand organisations.

Insider Threats and the Link to DHB for NZDF

Insider threats are a significant security risk, as insiders with authorised access can compromise information confidentiality and generally act in ways that could negatively affect the organisation, regardless of the action (or inaction) being accidental or malicious (Colwill, 2009). Considerable attention has been paid to the threat insiders can pose to an organisation's information systems and networks (Hershkowitz, 2007; Schultz, 2002). Frequently, however, the unacceptable damage an insider's action or inaction can cause to facilities, equipment, employees, and the surrounding environment is not considered when looking to minimise an overall insider threat profile (Hershkowitz, 2007). To accommodate this gap, recent definitions of an insider threat have been expanded to incorporate malicious and unwitting behaviour that causes harm to an "organization's resources or assets, including information, information systems, or financial systems" (CERT Insider Threat Center, 2014, p. ix). Insider threats occur when individuals deviate from established policies and procedures, have a generalised disregard for security policies, or an unintended error (Greitzer et al., 2010). Regardless of the potential damage or harm done by these actions or inactions, they fall into two broad categories; those done unintentionally and those done maliciously. While a malicious insider threat is a person who deliberately uses their access to disrupt, damage or undermine organisational operations (Sambhe & Prasad, 2025), an unintended insider threat (UIT) results from human error through action or inaction but without malicious intent (CERT Insider Threat Center, 2013).

With the NZDF's purpose being to secure New Zealand against external threats and protect sovereign interests (State Services Commission et al., 2015), any incident that compromises its security or the

integrity of its capabilities could have national or international consequences. With human error identified as a major contributor to UIT incidents (CERT Insider Threat Center, 2013), factors that lead to increased error rates, such as workplace stress and poor management (CERT Insider Threat Center, 2014; Greitzer, Strozer, Cohen, Moore, et al., 2014)—both prevalent in DHB situations—must be addressed to maintain operational effectiveness within NZDF.

Unintended Insider Threats

A large portion of research on insider threats has focussed on intentional or malicious threats. Despite a lack of malice, UITs can cause the same or higher levels of security risks and capability degradation as malicious actions (Kont et al., 2018). Greitzer (2019) further identified five categories of insider actions: sabotage, data theft, fraud, workplace violence, and UIT. The last two categories link the occurrence of DHB within NZDF or any other organisation to an increased risk of insider threats. Workplace violence, defined by Chappell and Di Martino (2006) as “a range of aggressive acts inflicted on workers by diverse perpetrators ... [to] include homicide, assault, threats, mobbing and bullying on the job” (Chappell & Di Martino, 2006, p. 3) directly identifies perpetrators of DHB being insider threats themselves. This stems from personality traits common to both DHB perpetrators and malicious insiders, such as confrontational behaviour and anger management issues (Greitzer et al., 2010), as well as the negative impact on targets and witnesses. The identification of perpetrators of workplace violence as insider threats requires that organisations, such as NZDF, take action to reduce and mitigate the potential impact of this threat. Further, while UIT shares many contributing factors with malicious threats to organisational processes or management practices, for UIT, human error is frequently identified as a major contributing factor in incidents involving substantial damage (Waters, 2016). Contributing factors to human error include fatigue, stress, anxiety, and ill health (CERT Insider Threat Center, 2013, 2014), all of which have been consistently linked to bullying and other workplace violence (Cooper-Thomas et al., 2014). The ways in which DHB is associated with an increased risk of UIT are far reaching and require closer investigation to identify all the avenues an organisation must address to actively minimise and mitigate the impact this behaviour can have on accidental threat actions from employees.

Three broad factors have been identified as contributors to UIT: demographic and psychosocial, organisational, and human factors (CERT Insider Threat Center, 2014; Greitzer, Strozer, Cohen, Bergey, et al., 2014; Greitzer, Strozer, Cohen, Moore, et al., 2014), all of which influence and are influenced by the occurrence of DHB. Although demographic and psychosocial factors do not directly lead to UIT, factors such as age, gender, cultural background, and traits like poor anger management, disregard for authority, or introversion, can influence the likelihood someone becomes a victim or perpetrator of DHB, both of which can affect human error rates and lead to UIT occurrences (Greitzer, Strozer, Cohen, Bergey, et al., 2014). More than demographic and psychosocial factors, organisational and human factors have been more directly linked to UIT, with both influencing the occurrence of DHB within an organisation. As such human error remains a significant contributor to UIT incidents.

Organisational Factors in UIT. Organisational factors can increase UIT through inadvertently supporting work environments or planning and control systems that reduce employee satisfaction or cause stress, associated with increased human errors, performance deficiencies, judgment lapses, and, subsequently, UIT (CERT Insider Threat Center, 2014; Greitzer, Strozer, Cohen, Moore, et al., 2014). These factors include management practices, policies and policy enforcement, work environments, workload, and communication processes and have been broadly grouped into work setting, work planning and control, employee readiness elements (Greitzer, 2019; Greitzer, Strozer, Cohen, Bergey, et al., 2014).

Work setting refers to aspects such as inadequate management or poor management systems, insufficient resources, and task assignment. These conditions can negatively affect job performance and morale, which is linked with increased job stress while decreased cognitive processes, and is associated with increased human error. Work planning and control processes include work and time pressures, task planning and management practices, and inadequate or ineffective policies. These factors tend to be difficult to identify as contributors to UIT as they reside in broader organisational aspects which make the immediate human error easier to identify and blame (CERT Insider Threat Center, 2014). The last organisational factor is that of employee readiness, which links workplace and environmental conditions to employee stress, fatigue, illness, injury, and cognitive function (Greitzer, Strozer, Cohen, Bergey, et al., 2014). Time pressures and heavy workloads have consistently been identified as major sources of stress and

fatigue, with workplace stressors adversely impacting job performance and error rates (CERT Insider Threat Center, 2014). All these factors inadvertently create environments where DHB can occur and remain unaddressed, unintentionally sheltering perpetrators. Equally, these same factors can be readily manipulated by perpetrators of DHB to directly and negatively impact the target. Addressing workplace violence, including DHB at the organisational level, becomes a pivotal contributing element to reducing human error and, therefore, UIT.

Human Factors in UIT. Despite the intention of organisations to apply the best policies, practices, and environment possible to maximise effectiveness and efficiency and minimise errors, organisational practices can impact employees in unexpected and negative ways (Greitzer, Strozer, Cohen, Bergey, et al., 2014). Physical impairment such as fatigue, illness and injury, stress and anxiety, and reduced cognitive function including attention span, situational awareness, reasoning and judgment, are all human factors linked to workplace conditions (CERT Insider Threat Center, 2014) and contributing factors in human error leading to UIT incidents (CERT Insider Threat Center, 2013; Greitzer, Strozer, Cohen, Moore, et al., 2014). While often ill-defined in academic literature due to errors occurring in both cognition and behaviour, Reason (1990, cited in Homoliak et al., 2020) defined human error as “the failure to achieve the intended outcome in a planned sequence of mental or physical activities when failure is not due to chance” (p. 7). Where human error is evident, it frequently is the visible sign of deeper organisational issues (CERT Insider Threat Center, 2013). DHB, one such organisational issue, has been well documented worldwide, with the International Labour Organisation estimating that at least 10 percent of workers are subjected to bullying (Hoel et al., 2001). Within New Zealand, it is estimated that as many as 20 per cent of workers are affected by DHB each year, a higher rate than in comparable countries (MBIE, 2020). With New Zealand, the impact of DHB has been identified as reduced performance and mental well-being, health issues, anxiety, stress, and depression (MBIE, 2020). The documented effects of DHB on individuals replicate the human factors that lead to human error and UIT. When considered alongside the prevalence of DHB within New Zealand, NZDF faces a potential situation where a significant proportion of its staff, both military and civilian, have the potential to make unintended errors leading to a significant security risk that could directly undermine the security of New Zealand as a whole.

Legislative Employment Protections in New Zealand

Several pieces of New Zealand legislation overlap when addressing DHB. Starting with discrimination, the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act protects all New Zealanders from unlawful discrimination on any of the grounds detailed in the Human Rights Act 1993. These protective grounds include, but are not limited to, discrimination based on sex, religious belief, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or family status. Employees have additional protections within the ERA, which prohibits employers from either directly or indirectly discriminating against employees on the same grounds as detailed in the Human Rights Act 1993, with union membership being added to that list. This could include failing to provide an employee the same conditions or opportunities available to other employees with the same or similar qualifications, experience, or skills.

Similarly, harassment is addressed in multiple pieces of legislation. The Harassment Act 1997 defines harassment as a pattern of intimidating, threatening, or degrading behaviour directed against a person or group that causes that person or group to fear for their safety. It is usually repeated behaviour but may be a serious single incident. While the Harassment Act 1997 does not make a distinction between different types of harassment, such as sexual or racial, the ERA does. The ERA requires that an employer must take action to address and prevent repetition of any sexual or racial harassment reported by an employee, regardless of whether the alleged harasser is another employee, or a customer or client of the employer. With the negative impact and harm caused by harassment clearly stated and accepted by the New Zealand Government through the (MBIE, 2020), and with WorkSafe NZ stating on their website that harassment is a “serious and common work risk” (WorkSafe NZ, 2020, September 21), harassment in the workplace is also covered by the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015. This Act requires employers, including NZDF, to protect employees from “harm to their health, safety, and welfare by eliminating or minimising risks arising from work” (Health and Safety at Work Act, 2015, s 3(1)(a)), with harassment being a known harm and risk. The combination of these three pieces of legislation provides a layered protection mechanism from harassment in the workplace.

While bullying is not specifically mentioned in any legislation, the Health and Safety at Work Act defines a person’s behaviour as a hazard where it “has the potential to cause death, injury, or illness to a

person” (2015, s 16), thus behaviour that causes harm is the hazard, with bullying being such behaviour. Despite not being specified in legislation, as with harassment, bullying has been clearly accepted as a workplace hazard that causes significant harm by both (MBIE, 2020) and WorkSafe NZ (WorkSafe NZ, 2020). WorkSafe NZ (2017b) has defined bullying as “repeated and unreasonable behaviour directed towards a worker or a group of workers that can lead to physical or psychological harm” (WorkSafe NZ, 2017, p. 8). As bullying is classified as a workplace hazard under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015, all employers are required to take all practicable steps to eliminate, where possible, or minimise the harm caused by this behaviour.

Hazing is another form of abuse not specifically mentioned in legislation; and, unlike DHB, there is no accepted definition within New Zealand policies. However, the harm hazing causes is undisputed and does occur within military environments (Bourke, 2016; Finkel, 2002; Hernandez, 2015). As a result, it can clearly be identified as a potential workplace hazard, meaning NZDF is required under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 to take all practicable steps to eliminate this risk.

Civil staff working for NZDF are classified as employees under New Zealand legislation and, therefore, retain all employment protections offered by the ERA and the Health and Safety at Work Act. This protection is further confirmed under the Defence Act Section 69 which explicitly states that the ERA continues to apply to civil staff. The situation for NZDF military personnel is very different. The same Defence Act that confirms civil staff’s protections under the ERA precludes military personnel from the same protection. Section 45(5) of the Defence Act specifically excludes NZDF military personnel from all the protections provided by the ERA, leaving their service conditions entirely dependent on the Chief of Defence Force (CDF). NZDF military personnel are also excluded from the protections within the Health and Safety at Work Act, including legal protections from harassment and bullying, when involved in operational activities. These activities include overseas operational deployments, any training in preparation for these deployments conducted domestically or overseas, as well as any activity undertaken within New Zealand or overseas that the CDF declares as an operational activity.

The exclusion of military personnel from legislated employee protections is not specific to New Zealand; similar situations apply to Australian Defence Force, United States, and United Kingdom military

personnel. These legal stipulations mean that, without a moral duty of care, there is little legal protection for military personnel against DHB (Brosnan, 2015). As harassment is mentioned explicitly within the ERA, and protection from bullying and hazing is provided by the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015, without a comprehensive policy to cover all DHB behaviour, in all environments, for all NZDF personnel—military and civilian—NZDF military personnel have less recourse to protection from DHB than their civilian counterparts.

NZDF Duty of Care

The core purpose of the NZDF is to prepare for combat to enable it to “secure New Zealand against external threat, to protect our sovereign interests, including within the Exclusive Economic Zone, and to be able to take action to meet likely contingencies in our strategic area of interest” (State Services Commission et al., 2015, p. 7). To achieve this purpose, the CDF has the authority and power to knowingly direct NZDF military personnel into harm’s way in defence and protection of New Zealand’s interests. The Defence Act 1990 provides the CDF the legal authority, and it is under this Act that NZDF military personnel serve, making them ineligible for the protections New Zealand employment legislation, such as the ERA, provides to non-military personnel. The duty of care NZDF holds contains the moral and legal obligation to ensure the safety and well-being of its service personnel. Military personnel are not considered employees under the State Sector Act as they serve under the Defence Act and, as such, are excluded from the protections of New Zealand employment legislation (NZDF & Ministry of Defence, 2017). This unwritten covenant obligates NZDF to consider the interests of military personnel separate from civilian staff, who are additionally protected by New Zealand employment legislation, potentially complicating any policy relating to the well-being of members. This creates the requirement for a fundamentally different obligation from NZDF than is expected from other government agencies or commercial enterprises. Although written explicitly regarding the United Kingdom Armed Forces, the following statement by General Sir Michael Rose, a former Adjutant General, clearly describes the moral underpinning for this duty of care:

[Service personnel] are not merely civilians in uniform: they form the distinctive group within our society that need a different set of moral values in order to succeed in circumstances which greatly differ from those prevailing in civilian life. For no other group in society is required either to kill other human beings, or expressly sacrifice their lives for the nation. (House of Commons Defence Committee, 2005, p. 28)

While the NZDF is a capital-intensive organisation, its capability is built on people, with its “greatest asset [being] the disciplined and professional men and women who serve in uniform, and the support they receive from our civilian workforce” (NZDF & Ministry of Defence, 2017, p. 42). If people are NZDF's greatest asset, people are also NZDF's most significant risk, with anything undermining the capacity and competence of its people directly linked to a loss or degradation of its military capability—its core purpose. NZDF's duty of care for its personnel, especially military personnel who lose much of their legal employment protection on enlistment into the NZDF, means a moral and ethical obligation to prioritise their psychological well-being which is critical for combat readiness as it underpins the NZDF's ability to meet its legal requirements to respond to unpredictable events and various contingencies at the government's discretion (State Services Commission et al., 2015). This is the direct link between the effects of DHB on individuals and the subsequent impact it has on organisational outcomes, as reduced individual capability due to DHB, leads to reduced organisational capability as reductions in individual capability associated with DHB are further associated with diminished organisational capability.

Current DHB Policies and Data in NZDF

NZDF has high expectations of personal and professional behaviour based on individual and collective discipline, which are generally higher than those expected in wider New Zealand society. There are three primary reasons for this: (1) the New Zealand public has equally high expectations of both professional and personal conduct from NZDF personnel; (2) many military activities require disciplined teamwork, self-discipline, and sound judgement to ensure safety such as required when handling weapons and complex equipment; and (3) officers and non-commissioned officers have a higher degree of authority, and requirement to exercise authority with integrity over their subordinates, than in wider New Zealand society (Ministry of Defence, 2005). While relating specifically to military personnel, the behaviour of civil staff also directly impacts the reputation and performance of the NZDF. When these behavioural expectations are breached by military or civil staff, there are several mechanisms within the NZDF to address this behaviour, over and above the legislation discussed previously.

The demanding discipline required of NZDF military personnel to support operational success is embodied within the Armed Forces Discipline Act 1971. This Act establishes several offences not found in

civil law that to which only NZDF military personnel are subject. These offences include, but are by no means limited to, violence towards a superior officer (s.35), insubordinate behaviour (s.36), ill-treatment of a person of lower rank (s.41), conduct that could undermine service discipline or bring discredit on the NZDF (s.73), and any offences against New Zealand civil law (s.74). While the terms discrimination, harassment, bullying, or hazing are not mentioned within this legislation, there is nothing that would preclude the use of this Act to address these behaviours. One of the key difficulties with DHB behaviours is that they are often subtle and occur without witnesses, making it difficult to successfully meet the evidential requirements for charges to be laid against alleged perpetrators using this Act. Constraints within military culture that limit individuals' ability to identify these behaviours for the abuse they are, and their willingness to make complaints even if they do, combined with NZDF civil employees not being subject to this Act, further reduce its effectiveness to address DHB within NZDF.

While NZDF military and civil staff are subject to very different legislation, all NZDF staff are subject to any internal policy that would cover DHB and hazing. While this creates a situation where there is seemingly one policy for the entire NZDF, the differing legislation that has led to gaps for military personnel, alongside the often-competing cultural understandings of each group, has potential for very different policy interpretations and applications across the NZDF. Additionally, there is lack of consensus across services about what behaviours constitute DHB (Teale & MacDonald, 2020). To be effective, any reviewed policy must take these differences into account, specifically address them, and establish a consensus as to both what behaviours constitute DHB and how it will be addressed within NZDF.

DHB Data in NZDF

Before any policy to effectively address DHB within NZDF can be developed, a clear understanding of the prevalence and patterns of these behaviours must be developed. This is extremely difficult to achieve as currently there is no centralised, coordinated data collection on bullying or other abusive and adverse behaviours within NZDF, leaving data about DHB incomplete (Teale & MacDonald, 2020; Thompson, 2019). What data there are, are located across multiple databases and standalone reports, with much of it classified as official information due to privacy issues and held in additional locations (Thompson, 2019). Many serious DHB incidents are not monitored by NZDF, with some investigations conducted by the New

Zealand Police (Ministry of Defence, 2014). NZDF personnel have multiple formal and informal avenues to raise DHB issues through, from their immediate command chain or HR advisor, to professional services such as medical officers, psychologists, and chaplains (Ministry of Defence, 2005). Due to complicating factors such as confidentiality, these incidents are often not officially recorded, meaning that even if assistance is sought to address the situation, it may never be included in officially collected data.

In addition to the ineffective reporting processes for DHB within the NZDF, there is ongoing and significant underreporting of these incidents. The reasons why targets of these behaviours choose not to report are many and varied, and have been the subject of much research (Chadwick & Travaglia, 2017; Namie, 2007; Stuart & Szeszeran, 2021). The NZDF is not immune from these issues, and recent research has identified that it is “overwhelmingly clear that discrimination, harassment and, in particular bullying is more widespread than the survey data indicates ... the issue is substantially under reported” (Teale & MacDonald, 2020, p. 48). One reason is that NZDF personnel are generally expected to approach their immediate superior in the first instance when DHB incidents occur. In reality, this can be a barrier to reporting as that person may be the alleged abuser, the issue is sensitive for the target and they may not want to involve the command chain, or they do not wish to instigate a formal investigation or disciplinary process (Ministry of Defence, 2005). Regardless of the reason, underreporting remains, with many NZDF personnel still very cautious about laying a formal complaint (Ministry of Defence, 2014); to the point that the current reporting levels for DHB and violence are “only the tip of the iceberg” (Teale & MacDonald, 2020, p. 29).

Exit Survey: DHB Patterns and Prevalence in NZDF

Despite the limited accuracy and completeness of DHB data within NZDF, the data that are available allow patterns to be identified, even if the number of incidents is not known. Since October 2016, all NZDF personnel voluntarily leaving the organisation have been provided the opportunity to complete an exit survey, comprising qualitative and quantitative questions to identify reasons people choose to leave and rate the importance of those reasons. This is a voluntary survey and responses are kept anonymous. The annual results from this survey have reported DHB to be a contributing factor in the decision to leave the NZDF for an average of 26% of survey respondents over the years of the survey (Defence Organisational

Development Group, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021).¹ It has also identified that bullying by supervisors, leaders, or commanders is more prevalent than bullying by co-workers or colleagues; that military personnel report more harassment based on physical or mental health than based on gender, with these results reversed for civilian staff. Sexual harassment was identified as a contributing reason for leaving by 1-4% of respondents across NZDF, with close to 10% of survey respondents reporting the way their complaint was managed contributed to their decision to leave (Defence Organisational Development Group, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021).

Since its inception, overall participation in the exit survey has increased from 30% of those eligible to complete it in 2016 to 52% in 2021. However, participation by military personnel has steadily declined from 77% in 2016 to 50% over the same period (Defence Organisational Development Group, 2021). The reason for this decline is unclear; however, Teale and MacDonald (2020) identified that individuals who had lost trust in NZDF tended to leave without completing the exit survey. Expanding on this finding, the reduction in military participants in the survey may indicate an increasing sense of dissatisfaction in military personnel. The proportion of survey participants broken down by service, including the NZDF civilian workforce as a service, approximates the makeup of the NZDF as a whole (Defence Organisational Development Group, 2021; New Zealand Defence Force, 2021). This survey participation indicates a general level of representativeness across the NZDF, supporting the use of these data to provide a general overview of the prevalence and patterns in DHB within NZDF.

Representativeness is not as straightforward when attempting to generalise gender-based survey responses. Over the 2020 and 2021 exit survey reports (Defence Organisational Development Group, 2020, 2021), almost a third of survey participants were female, significantly different from the 25% of females within the NZDF over those years (NZDF, 2020, 2021). While this may appear to be over-representative of female NZDF members, the Ministry of Defence (2014) has found that at least twice as many women as men experience DHB within the NZDF. When considering this finding alongside the exit survey results, what initially appears to be an over-representation of reports of DHB by women actually indicates a significant

¹ The internal NZDF data sources referenced in this chapter are provided solely to illustrate the pattern and prevalence of DHB within NZDF. None of this data has been included in any way as part of the data analysed within this research.

portion of DHB towards women in the NZDF remains unreported, even as they exit the organisation. This higher level of DHB is common for women within masculine hegemonic environments (Nelson, 2019). The minority status women have in NZDF places them at further increased risk of DHB simply by being a minority (Archer, 1999). Currently, there is a 1:4 ratio of women to men in the NZDF, dropping to 1:5 for uniformed military personnel (NZDF, 2021). Amongst the multiple risk factors for DHB, such as power imbalances and organisational culture, the gendered and minority status of women in NZDF, as with other military and para-military organisations, validates the increased representation of women in the exit survey results. Research, including that focusing directly on NZDF, identifies that the DHB reported in exit survey responses is still likely to only be a small portion of what is actually occurring.

While there are no data within the exit survey relating to rank equivalence for civilian members leaving NZDF, the data on ranks of military respondents is consistent over the yearly results and approximates the rank breakdown across NZDF. The survey categorises military ranks into four broad groupings, comprising junior and senior categories for both non-commissioned and commissioned ranks. When compared to the September 2022 NZDF rank breakdown, survey responses from junior personnel from non-commissioned and commissioned ranks were much higher than responses from the two senior groups (DHR Insights, NZDF, personal communication, October 10, 2022). The survey data do not explain the consistently higher survey response rate for junior personnel. However, research on the prevalence and patterns of bullying and other workplace violence has consistently found that managers or supervisors make up the majority of DHB perpetrators, with this proportion ranging up to 80% (Namie, 2017; Zapf et al., 2003). Abusive supervision or leadership is a key indicator of employee decisions to leave an organisation directly leading to decreased productivity and increased HR and training costs (Haar et al., 2016). This finding is supported by the exit survey data, which consistently reported the behaviour being more prevalent among supervisors, leaders, or commanders than co-workers (Defence Organisational Development Group, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021).

The nature of military training, particularly initial training, can exacerbate this situation by isolating recruits from wider society and focusing on physical toughness to build functional teams. This can leave recruits and junior personnel feeling powerless while creating environments susceptible to DHB behaviours

(Ministry of Defence, 2014; Wither, 2004). Unlike members of civilian organisations, military personnel are unable to easily or immediately leave the situation if they experience mistreatment by regulations, including the Armed Forces Discipline Act 1993.

This phenomenon is not limited to military personnel during their initial training, nor is it limited to one form of workplace violence or injustice. Farmer (2016) found junior enlisted personnel (those who are not commissioned officers) are the most likely to be targeted for hazing, are more than three times more likely to perceive bullying in their units than any other rank group, and bullying rates for junior enlisted service members were up to 12 times higher than for senior officers (Farmer, 2016). Stuart and Szeszeran (2021) also identified junior ranks and younger personnel as high-risk groups for bullying within military and paramilitary organisations. This pattern is replicated within NZDF, where the lowest ranks have been found to suffer the highest rates of harassment (Ministry of Defence, 2014).

The exit survey is silent on data relating to the ethnicity of survey participants. Despite NZDF representing the whole of New Zealand society, it is not representative of it. As the gender ratios in NZDF are significantly different from the 1:1 ratio across the entire New Zealand population (Stats NZ, 2021), NZDF ethnic diversity ratios also differ from wider society, creating a different context for DHB behaviours. While the proportion of NZDF members who identify as Māori or of European descent approximates the national population, Pacific, Asian, and MELAA (Middle Eastern/Latin American/African) are significantly underrepresented (NZDF, 2021; Stats NZ, 2021). Levels of ethnic diversity are also inconsistent across the NZDF, further complicating the impact minority ethnic group membership can have on workplace DHB. For example, the New Zealand Navy and Army are proportionally more ethnically diverse than the remainder of NZDF, with a higher proportion of Māori (22.1% and 20.5% respectively) (Directorate of Diversity and Inclusion, 2022) than the 17.8% reported by Stats NZ (2024) from the 2023 census. While there are no data to indicate the prevalence or pattern of DHB faced by NZDF members who identify with an ethnic minority group, assessments can be made based on NZDF's demographics. Research in other militaries demonstrates that members of any ethnic or racial minority group report higher perceptions of bullying than racial majorities (Farmer, 2016). It is unlikely NZDF would be an exception to this finding. Additionally, regardless of the identity (e.g., ethnicity, religion, gender), members of any minority group face increased

risk, occurrence, and negative impacts of DHB (Gardner, Bentley, et al., 2013; Stuart & Szeszeran, 2021).

Given this is a known harm faced by NZDF members, there is a legal requirement under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 for NZDF to do all it can practicably do to eliminate or minimise the risk and harm caused by DHB.

Despite the limitations of the exit survey data, when combined with the known patterns of under-reporting, the results provide an insight into both the prevalence and patterns of DHB within NZDF. They show that DHB prevalence and patterns within NZDF remain largely consistent over time, across both military and civilian personnel, providing a somewhat known and stable baseline of behaviour against which to measure the effectiveness of any future policy amendments or interventions. As the responses are not dissimilar from what has been evidenced in the recent New Zealand Human Rights Commission (2022) report on workplace bullying and harassment, there is potential to interpret this to mean that these behaviours are not of specific concern for the NZDF. The risk of taking this approach is that research clearly demonstrates military organisations face a significant under-reporting of DHB, with numerous additional or exacerbated risk factors leading to an increased occurrence of these behaviours and a decrease in action taken to address them. Military culture itself; the hierarchical, rank-based structure, enhancing the power imbalances inherent in DHB; the masculine hegemonic environment; and the higher risks faced by minority groups, create a situation where DHB within NZDF is likely to be significantly under-reported and unidentified, allowing the harm to continue unabated. Beyond legislative requirements for NZDF to provide a safe workplace environment, these behaviours do not align with NZDF's fundamental values of Tū Kaha (courage), Tū Tika (commitment), Tū Tira (comradeship), and Tū Māia (integrity) (Defence Strategy Management, 2019).

Chapter 3: Literature Review - Reviewing Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying (DHB) Within Organisational Contexts

Introduction

Policies cannot be developed to effectively address DHB or the associated behaviour of hazing until they are understood as separate groups of behaviours and how they relate and interact with each other. Such understanding is crucial for effective policy intervention across military and non-military organisational contexts. Considering the influence organisational contexts have on perpetrators, witnesses, and targets is also essential to mitigate unintended consequences. Within the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF), the situation is further complicated by the requirement to understand all these behaviours from both a uniformed and civil staff perspective.

This chapter explores the concept of workplace violence as a term linking all DHB behaviours to be targeted by new policy. The discussion identifies key commonalities and themes across these behaviours and provides an underlying foundation from which to delve further into each behaviour within the context of New Zealand and the NZDF. The examination of discrimination will define it and identify its impact before investigating why it remains so resistant to change, despite significant changes to legislation and social norms over time. This examination concludes with a review of the legal framework surrounding discrimination in New Zealand.

Understanding harassment and bullying as distinct types of workplace violence requires comparing the two and identifying where they overlap and differ. Comparison includes why these two behaviours are often grouped together and the legal differences. Next, the requirements of an effective definition for bullying in general, and more specifically for NZDF are detailed. The impact of organisational context on the prevalence, understanding, and identification of bullying is then examined from the perspective of both military and civil staff within the NZDF. Harassment is then analysed using the same framework.

Hazing is the final phenomenon to be addressed by policy. It is defined as a separate behaviour from bullying and harassment, and the discussion identifies how behaviours that start as hazing can develop into bullying or harassment. The prevalence of hazing within the military is discussed, identifying why NZDF, as a military organisation, is at a higher risk of this behaviour than many non-military organisations. A simplified

explanation hazing and each DHB behaviour is detailed in Figure 1 and expanded upon under each subsequent section.

The chapter concludes with an examination of policy options available to NZDF to address the combination of the identified behaviours, identifying the most appropriate option for the NZDF context.

Workplace Violence

As part of the Treaty of Versailles, recognising the importance of social justice and economic considerations in securing peace, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) was created in 1919. A tripartite organisation where representatives of governments, employers, and employees have an equal voice to promote work standards and opportunities for all workers, the ILO believes that lasting peace requires economic stability and social justice for everyone. New Zealand joined the ILO in 1919 as a founding member and continues membership and involvement to the current day.

In June 2019, the Centenary Conference of the ILO adopted the Violence and Harassment Convention (No. 190) and its accompanying Violence and Harassment Recommendation (No. 206) which recognised the rights of all workers and employees to work in environments free of violence and harassment, and called for all member nations to prohibit, prevent, and address this behaviour through legislation and policies (ILO, 2020). The 2019 Conference defined workplace violence as “a range of unacceptable behaviours, practices or threats thereof, whether a single occurrence or repeated, that aim at, result in, or are likely to result in physical, psychological, sexual or economic harm” (ILO, 2019b, 1(1)(a)) that occur in workplaces. The term ‘workplace’ covers all places and areas where workers need to be or go due to their work, that are under direct or indirect control of their employer (ILO, 1981).

Definitions for workplace violence however are not uniform. Workplace aggression has been used to refer to actions that cause psychological and emotional harm, with workplace violence specifying threats or acts of physical harm (Hershcovis & Barling, 2007). Similarly, other authors have reiterated that bullying is a separate concept to that of violence, often due to its persistence (Notelaers et al., 2018). Despite this, there is a growing body of work that commonly uses the term workplace violence to encompass harmful workplace behaviours including bullying, harassment, discrimination, verbal abuse, threats, and physical assault (Bentley et al., 2009; Chappell & Di Martino, 2006; Di Martino, 2002; Mento et al., 2020). The ILO

definition aligns with these more holistic approaches to defining workplace violence. As the focus of this research is to generate policies to equitably and effectively manage all workplace DHB behaviours, in this context the phrase ‘workplace violence’ will adhere to the ILO definition from the 2019 Conference.

Figure 1.

Simplified DHB Explanations.

Workplace violence. “...a range of unacceptable behaviours, practices or threats thereof, whether a single occurrence or repeated, that aim at, result in, or are likely to result in physical, psychological, sexual or economic harm” (ILO, 2019b, 1(1)(a)).

Discrimination. The unequal, unfair or less favourable treatment of people when compared to others with the same or similar circumstances that is based on personal attributes such as race, ethnicity, gender, or any of the 13 prohibited grounds of discrimination specified in the Human Rights Act (1993).

Bullying. Bullying behaviours are unwanted, persistent, and repeated with the intention of causing harm, often within relationships with unequal formal or social power (Bentley et al., 2012; Einarsen et al., 2011; Stuart & Szeszeran, 2021). While repetitive incidents of bullying behaviour are often required before reports can be made, given the significant negative impact of some single incidents such as cyberbullying (Volk et al., 2014), isolated incidents that meet all other bullying criteria should also be defined as bullying and managed as such.

Harassment. Harassment is legally defined in New Zealand in the Harassment Act (1997), and is linked to prohibited grounds of discrimination. Unlike discrimination, which is unequal treatment based on prohibited grounds of discrimination, harassment is behaviour that is hostile, threatening, intimidating, or offensive actions directed towards an individual or group that causes fear, harm distress or interferes with an individual’s normal pattern of life (Gilani et al., 2012)

Hazing. Hazing behaviours aim to include an individual(s) into a closed group once certain conditions or tests are met (Hernandez, 2015; Matthews, 2015). The tests generally involve intentional or thoughtless abuse, humiliation, and potentially dangerous behaviours, both physical and psychological, to initiate new members, with or without their consent, administered by more senior group members (Cimino, 2011; Kowalski et al., 2021; Matthews, 2015).

Workplace violence is ubiquitous and insidious within organisations, having detrimental effects with even its mildest forms (Herscovis & Barling, 2007). It includes psychological violence such as threats of, as well as actual, physical or sexual violence or abuse, abuse of power, verbal abuse, and bullying and harassment (ILO, 2016). While discrimination is not detailed in the workplace violence definition, as it involves unequal treatment rather than abuse or violence (Rospenda et al., 2009), it is linked through the concept of workplace injustice and its negative impact on targets. Workplace injustice encompasses discrimination, harassment, abuse, and bullying, reflecting power imbalances both internal and external to

an organisation that can result in the mistreatment of workers through unjust practices (Okechukwu et al., 2014). Despite differing terms used, “they all seem to refer to the same phenomenon, namely the systematic mistreatment of a subordinate, a colleague, or a superior, which, if continued, may cause severe social, psychological and psychosomatic problems in the victim” (Ståle Einarsen et al., 2003, p. 3). Whatever these behaviours are labelled as, the negative impacts on individuals and their organisations are the same. Targets of workplace violence and injustice often become socially isolated and ostracised (Lutgen-Sandvik et al., 2007; Zapf et al., 1996), and are more likely than non-targets to experience physical and mental health issues such as physical illness, depression, anxiety, substance abuse, and, in extreme cases, suicide (Dillon, 2012). Reduced job outcomes, including reduced productivity, satisfaction, and performance, alongside counterproductive work behaviours, are also common (Hershcovis & Barling, 2010; Okechukwu et al., 2014).

Unequal power distribution across individuals in organisations affects the prevalence of workplace violence and impacts adverse outcomes on targets. With the formal positional power supervisors hold to task employees, evaluate performance, and allocate rewards, their behaviour indicates the level of support employees are likely to receive from their organisation. Employees with less power are usually more vulnerable to threats and punishment (Hershcovis & Barling, 2010). Consequently, when supervisors display aggressive or violent behaviour, it adversely impacts the attitudes and behaviours of subordinates toward the organisation, leaving them feeling less supported (Chang & Lyons, 2012). Hershcovis and Barling (2010) found that workplace violence and aggression from supervisors led to higher levels of stress and psychological distress than aggression from co-workers. While both impacted a target’s sense of belonging, supervisors’ behaviour also indicated to targets that they mattered less and their employment may be at risk due to the power imbalances involved (Hershcovis & Barling, 2010).

As workplace violence is somewhat of a catch-all term that includes a range of harmful actions that occur within workplaces (Einarsen et al., 2011), it is both pragmatic and practical to address all aspects in one organisational policy. This simplifies the process for anyone involved in a workplace violence situation, be they target, witness, supervisor, or perpetrator, ensuring there is one location where all relevant information is held regarding what is and is not categorised as these behaviours, and what are the

processes for addressing it. It also reduces the likelihood of conflicting information and regulations within an organisation. Despite similarities between many workplace violence behaviours, there are also clear and often legislated differences (Gardner, O'Driscoll, et al., 2013) which must be defined and considered when addressing DHB and hazing behaviours. Doing so, this becomes even more important when considering these behaviours within a military context, such as the NZDF.

Discrimination

Equality before the law and freedom from unlawful discrimination are fundamental principles of democratic societies (Ministry of Social Development, 2016). Discrimination, the unequal treatment of people based on personal attributes such as race, ethnicity, or gender, along with contributing to workplace injustice, is illegal in New Zealand. Being embedded in legislation provides discrimination with very defined characteristics and measures. The Human Rights Act (1993) states that discrimination occurs when a person or group of people are treated unfairly or less favourably when compared to another person in the same or similar circumstances. For this differing treatment to be considered discrimination, it must be related to any one or more of 13 prohibited grounds of discrimination, ranging from race, gender, and sexual orientation to family status and political or religious beliefs (Human Rights Act, 1993, s21). Within workplaces, it could include, but is by no means limited to, denial of equal opportunities in recruitment, development, training and promotion opportunities, and even retention (Matthews et al., 2021).

The impact of discrimination on both individuals and organisations has received much attention. Targets of discrimination report lower job satisfaction, lower organisational commitment, higher intention to leave and more anti-social behaviours among employees (Matthews et al., 2021). Reductions in physical and mental health and well-being (Walker et al., 2021), and increased workplace stress and perceptions of workplace injustice, are also reported (Dhanani et al., 2018). Organisationally, the cost of discrimination can be literal through legal costs, fines, and financial settlements (Walker et al., 2021). Indirect costs, but just as far-reaching, encompass reduced employee productivity, increased absenteeism, and elevated staff turnover, requiring increased expenditure on recruitment and training (Triana et al., 2015). Organisations also face reputational damage, both tangible (e.g., loss of clients, reduced investment) and intangible (e.g., diminished brand image, loss of public trust). For military organisations, including NZDF, the negative

impacts of discrimination can detract from combat readiness and mission accomplishment (Matthews et al., 2021), risking damage to international relationships and the safety of military personnel and civilians alike. The cumulative effect of these individual and organisational costs underscores the critical need for proactive measures to mitigate discrimination and foster inclusive work environments.

Despite the repeal of laws that overtly supported discrimination, and the introduction of laws to legislate against discrimination on prescribed grounds, it is still very much present in work environments, as seen through the gender pay gap and reduced career opportunities for many minority groups (Rosette et al., 2016). That discrimination continues despite clear legal sanctions indicates a deeper level of beliefs and assumptions influencing this behaviour. The interaction between cognitive stereotypes and affective prejudice can occur both consciously and unconsciously, resulting in both blatant and more subtle discriminatory behaviour. People tend to categorise others using primary categories such as race, gender, and age, as these categories are generally the first pieces of information people notice about others. These snap judgments can lead to stereotypical assumptions. While social group categories are often arbitrary and change over time with changing social roles, expectations, and norms (Rosette et al., 2016), their power as socially defined categories that lead to stereotypes does not diminish (Kite & Whitley, 2016). Additionally, individuals hold multiple group memberships linked to factors such as gender, age, religion, occupation, family situation, and so forth. The junction of these group memberships is known as intersectionality, and it influences the different stereotypes that can develop. Where people sit in the intersection of groups affects their lived experiences, further complicating stereotypes, prejudice, and potential discrimination (Kite & Whitley, 2016).

Stereotypes are beliefs and opinions about the characteristics, attributes, and behaviours of members of various social groups. Stereotypes can be applied at the individual level as “people’s experiences and perspectives colour the landscape of their beliefs, for better or worse, and it is this portrait that people use to navigate their social world” (Kite & Whitley, 2016, p. 13), and at social and organisational levels. Cultural norms and values significantly influence the formation and expression of stereotypes and prejudice. Shared cultural beliefs regarding acceptable behaviours, values, and opinions unconsciously influence individual perceptions and actions, even when individuals are unaware of the impact these

underlying cultural influences have (Kite & Whitley, 2016). Stereotypes are then socially developed and shared, constructed through the layered influences of societal and cultural mores, alongside individual experiences, and shared through institutions, media, and social interactions. They also arise from conflict, cultural or social roles, power imbalances, or as a way to justify social hierarchies or practices (Rosette et al., 2016).

Stereotypes are cognitive tools that simplify and shortcut information processing by using previously stored information to evaluate an event or interaction rather than processing each situation as a new and distinct experience (Dipboye & Halverson, 2004). This cognitive process risks individualised perceptions and categorisations becoming distorted or exaggerated and generalised to all group members, creating inaccurate evaluations of both individuals and entire groups. When these initial judgments are not consciously set aside, prejudice and discrimination based solely on group membership can follow (Kite & Whitley, 2016). Prejudice is the biased evaluation and subsequent response to individuals or social groups based on actual or perceived characteristics or stereotypes (Dipboye & Halverson, 2004; Rosette et al., 2016). These evaluations can stem from purely emotional reactions to an individual or a whole social group. The emotional reactions originate from sources such as fear, anxiety, or hostility, particularly if there is a perception of threat, opposing goals, disgust, or mistrust of particular groups based simply on group membership (Kite & Whitley, 2016).

Discrimination is the verbal and nonverbal behavioural component of personally and culturally held stereotypes and the associated emotive prejudice. It may be conscious and controlled or unconscious and uncontrolled, occurring without thought (Dipboye & Halverson, 2004). Discrimination can occur at individual through to cultural levels. The boundaries between discrimination types can be blurred as distinctions occur along a continuum (Kite & Whitley, 2016).

The relationship between stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination is complex and non-linear, as stereotypes and prejudices can be implicit and explicit, controlled or uncontrolled, and may or may not result in discrimination (Dipboye & Halverson, 2004). Loosely, and with significant caveats, social categorisations can lead to the formation of stereotypes, with affective and emotive reactions resulting in prejudices toward certain social groups, which can consciously or unconsciously lead to direct, indirect, or

subtle discrimination. Knowledge of a stereotypical belief does not directly result in prejudice, as that knowledge does not mean the stereotype is endorsed or applied. Even when prejudice is perceived, and individuals consciously aim to behave in non-prejudiced ways, adverse outcomes may result from unconsciously biased actions (Rosette et al., 2016). When cognitive (stereotype), affective (prejudice), and behavioural (discrimination) factors all support biases against a targeted group, the outcome is likely to be blatant and direct discrimination (Dipboye & Halverson, 2004).

Discrimination Types

While discrimination has changed over time from blatant and explicit behaviours to the more subtle and implicit behaviours experienced in today's work environments (Dipboye & Halverson, 2004; Jones et al., 2017; Marchiondo et al., 2018; Rosette et al., 2016), a variety of approaches to defining and labelling discrimination remain (Altman, 2020). Discrimination typologies tend to cluster together dependent on characteristics such as how overt the behaviour is and its underlying intent (Jones et al., 2017), whether behaviours target individuals or organisations (Pincus, 1996), and the effect the behaviours have on those discriminated against (Tobler, 2008). Adding to this complexity, similarly defined forms of discrimination can be labelled with more than one name. One example is structural and indirect discrimination. Pincus (1996) defined structural discrimination as policies and behaviours that are neutral in intent but nonetheless produce disparate or detrimental outcomes for minority or marginalised groups. Indirect discrimination is when a seemingly neutral policy, criterion or practice would disadvantage people with a particular protected characteristic when compared with those without that characteristic (Howard, 2015). A simpler example would be discriminatory rules, policies or actions that explicitly single out individuals for unfavourable treatment based on personal traits or characteristics, such as a job advertisement inviting applications from men only would be labelled disparate treatment in the United States, but direct discrimination in the United Kingdom (Moreau, 2010). Adding to this complexity is that workplace discrimination has changed significantly over time, where previously it has been largely overt and easily identified, discrimination is now likely to be "subtle, covert, and committed non-consciously" (Marchiondo et al., 2018, p. 217).

For the purposes of this research, to align with New Zealand legislation and provide clarity, discriminatory actions will be categorised as direct or indirect, with the addition of subtle discrimination. Direct discrimination involves blatant, unambiguous actions where a person or group is treated less favourably than another in a comparable situation, based on their social group membership, where that social group is a prohibited ground for discrimination (Campbell & Smith, 2022; Howard, 2015; Van Laer & Janssens, 2011). Indirect discrimination focuses on the impact of the action rather than the action itself. This is because indirect discrimination occurs when seemingly neutral policies, criteria or practices that treat everyone equally result in people with a particular protected characteristic being disadvantaged or impacted differently (Howard, 2015). The impact of indirect discrimination is no less than direct actions, as both result in the rights and opportunities of individuals and groups being affected, leading to adverse effects on social and economic status alongside physical and psychological wellbeing (Tobler, 2008).

While subtle discrimination is not specifically referred to in New Zealand legislation, the definition of discrimination within the Bill of Rights is broad enough to include the less overt discriminatory behaviours of subtle discrimination. The shift over time away from overt and formal discriminatory actions to more subtle, covert and often unconscious actions (Cheung et al., 2016), largely as a result of anti-discrimination laws and social norms making this unacceptable, mean there is now a requirement to address these actions. Subtle discrimination is at the opposing end of a continuum of discriminatory behaviour than direct or overt discrimination. It has been defined as “negative or ambivalent demeanour or treatment enacted toward social minorities on the basis of their minority status membership that is not necessarily conscious and likely conveys ambiguous intent” (Jones et al., 2016, p. 1591). It is more nuanced and obscured than either direct or indirect discrimination, being “characterized by subtle, low-intensity behaviours that isolate or handicap others” (Marchiondo et al., 2018, p. 218). Subtle discrimination usually occurs at the interpersonal level and is arguably the most prevalent form of discrimination in workplaces today (Rosette et al., 2016). Subtle discrimination may appear innocuous on the surface, but research has found it can undermine employee and organisational functioning more than direct discrimination (Walker et al., 2021). In isolation, incidents of subtle discrimination may appear trivial, but regular and ongoing occurrence

erodes the resilience of targets, with the impact accruing over time, leading to negative occupational, psychological and physical outcomes (Marchiondo et al., 2018).

Discrimination Legislation in New Zealand

Within New Zealand there are multiple pieces of legislation that define discrimination, with New Zealand's thirteen prohibited grounds of discrimination detailed in the Human Rights Act 1993. It bears stating that New Zealand's discrimination legislation far exceeds many international standards in this area, including those detailed by the ILO (ILO, 1958), by including marital, family and employment status; sexual orientation; disability; and age as prohibited grounds for discrimination. The Bill of Rights Act 1990 prohibits government agencies and public bodies from discriminatory behaviour on all prohibited grounds and makes no distinction between discrimination types. By not attempting to define discrimination as intentional or structural, for example, all discriminatory actions, regardless of where they may sit on a continuum of discriminatory behaviours, remain covered under New Zealand law.

The Human Rights Act 1993 protects from discrimination by private bodies and individuals in specified and generally public areas of life, such as employment, education, healthcare and access to goods and services. While not attempting to categorise types of discrimination, this Act does specify that indirect discrimination is also unlawful. It defines indirect discrimination as any conduct, practice, requirement, or condition that appears neutral but treats individuals or groups differently based on any of the prohibited grounds of discrimination, unless they meet the legal requirements for an exemption (Human Rights Act, 1993, s 65). The ERA provides additional protections from workplace discrimination. However, due to the employment status of military members of the NZDF, these protections do not apply to them, leaving them with less specific legal protection from discrimination in the workplace than their civilian counterparts (Defence Act, 1990, s 45(5)).

Harassment and Bullying – The Same but Different

A survey of 2,512 New Zealand workers in paid employment was conducted in 2022 to identify factors related to workplace bullying and sexual or racial harassment (Human Rights Commission, 2022). The results identified 20% of workers experienced one or more bullying behaviours repeatedly over the previous year, rising to 40% when measured across their working life. Experiencing one or more sexual

harassment incidents in the previous five years was reported by 30% of workers, with 38% of women and 23% of men reporting this behaviour. Nearly two out of five workers reported being racially harassed in the last five years. Pacifica and Asian peoples reported the highest level of workplace racial harassment at 62%, followed by 52% of Māori workers. These statistics are supported by previous research in this area within New Zealand (2012; Ministry of Business, Innovation, and Employment (MBIE), 2020; O'Driscoll et al., 2011). The survey also identified that bullying and harassment behaviour was disproportionately experienced by workers in minority groups aligned with ethnic, disability or sexual orientation differences, and by workers under thirty years of age (Human Rights Commission, 2022).

The New Zealand Human Rights Commission survey (2022) established that perpetrators of harassment or bullying were 20% more likely to be male than female. Of this behaviour 83% came from those holding power over their target, with 53% being managers or supervisors, and 30% being more senior co-workers. More than 86% of those reporting being harassed or bullied were negatively impacted by the experience, with 29% suffering an enormous or extremely negative impact. These negative impacts included physical and/or mental health issues and having their career or work adversely affected. Of these individuals, almost two-thirds (63%) reported experiencing long-term negative impacts, which spread to their personal relationships and home lives for 12% of those affected. Despite the significant impact of these behaviours, only 17% of targets submitted a formal complaint or personal grievance. Of those who did not report the behaviours, almost half (45%) feared the consequences of making a report, over a third (35%) felt the behaviour was normalised within their company and would not change, and over a quarter (28%) did not believe their complaint would be addressed appropriately. This survey demonstrates that bullying and harassment remain significant employment issues for New Zealand, with current reporting processes doing little to support or inform interventions to rectify this situation (Human Rights Commission, 2022).

Baseball and Cricket Balls

The terms “bullying and harassment are like baseballs and cricket balls—much alike but also significantly different” (Van Fleet et al., 2018, p. 132), with the lack of precise definitions making it challenging to distinguish between them. Adding further complexity are concepts such as mobbing, harassment, bullying,

and incivility being used to refer to similar behaviour, with bullying often used as an umbrella term encompassing all these behaviours (Einarsen et al., 2011; Gilmour & Hamlin, 2003; McMahon, 2000). Without clear definitions, it is challenging to distinguish harassment and bullying from everyday social tensions that can occur within workplaces (Fevre et al., 2010). The inability to identify what behaviour is inappropriate or illegal, reduces opportunities to address the behaviour, allowing it to continue and likely worsen (Branch, 2008). For example, the characteristics of bullying behaviour, and therefore its occurrence, are often not recognised, and the behaviour is passed off as a personality conflict that is left to be managed and endured by the target (McMahon, 2000). With the definitions and commonplace understanding of bullying and harassment being so blurred, an effective way to differentiate them is to compare the similarities and differences between them (Branch, 2008), creating a more precise position from which to develop policies to address each effectively.

Only by understanding the similarities between bullying and harassment can the differences be highlighted. Bullying and harassing behaviours can look very similar. Both involve a power imbalance where targets cannot defend themselves, and both can cause significantly adverse impacts on targets with effects worsening the longer they continue (Lewis et al., 2016; McMahon, 2000). The level of intent behind the bullying and harassing behaviour is also similar. Bullying is generally accepted as requiring a level of intention on the part of the perpetrator (Olweus, 1993; Volk et al., 2014), with the potentially devastating impact on targets remaining regardless of the intention behind the behaviour (Gardner, O'Driscoll, et al., 2013; Townend, 2008). Definitions of bullying tend to lend weight to the perceptions of the target rather than the intentions of the perpetrator (Branch, 2008). Likewise, for harassment, the intent behind the harassing behaviour does not factor into whether the behaviour can be identified as harassment (Barthelemy, 2020; Crawshaw, 2009). Ignorance of the effect or impact of bullying or harassment does not defend or excuse such behaviour, nor does it minimise the impact.

Despite the similarities, there are specific differences between bullying and harassment that allow the behaviours to be differentiated. These differences are the legal frameworks surrounding both behaviours, the level of intimidation involved and the repetition of the behaviour. Harassment is illegal in most countries, whereas bullying is not, highlighting the importance of differentiating between them.

Within New Zealand, workplace bullying is not specifically legislated against; however, any behaviours that cause death, injury, or illness fall within an employer's obligation to ensure a safe workplace (Health and Safety at Work Act, 2015). That bullying behaviour causes harm is not in contention (Einarsen et al., 2011; Hoel et al., 2001). The requirement to differentiate between harassment and bullying remains, though, as the legal pathways and redress frameworks differ depending on how the behaviour in question is defined as (Gardner, O'Driscoll, et al., 2013).

The legal definition and framework for harassment extends into the following two differences. Firstly, for behaviour to be classified as harassment, it requires a clear bias towards the target based on a prohibited ground (Kalamdien & Lawrence, 2017). Within New Zealand, these grounds are detailed in the Human Rights Act. Unlike harassment, bullying is more general and does not require the behaviour to be focused on any attribute or identifiable characteristic of the target (Branch, 2008). Harassment is generally oriented towards targets' intrinsic attributes or personal characteristics such as gender, race, or sexual orientation (McMahon, 2000). While both harassment and discrimination relate to differential treatment based on attributes such as age, religion, ethnicity or gender, and harassment is a form of discrimination, they also differ. Workplace harassment involves negative actions and behaviour toward a person due to their personal attributes that then leads to a hostile work environment, while discrimination relates to the unequal treatment or limiting of opportunities due to these attributes (Rospenda et al., 2009).

The second of these legal differences is that while bullying behaviours can escalate to include violence, overt threats and hostile acts, harassment specifically encompasses behaviours that frighten and intimidate the target (Branch, 2008; Einarsen, 2000; Gardner, O'Driscoll, et al., 2013). Brodsky (1976) defined harassment as behaviour that persistently provoked, frightened or intimidated another person. This is replicated in New Zealand's Harassment Act, which defines harassing behaviour as that which causes humiliation, offence or intimidation, and results in a person fearing for their safety. This does not mean that the impact of harassment is more severe than that of bullying, as, regardless of the form bullying takes, it "is always devastating" (Townend, 2008, p. 270).

Bullying is commonly defined as being persistent and repeated (Cowan, 2012; Lewis et al., 2016; Monks et al., 2009; Olweus, 1993). The repetition of behaviours increases the harmful effects on the target

(Lewis et al., 2016; Olweus, 1993), often by eroding a target's resilience and coping mechanisms over time (Bentley et al., 2012). The requirement that behaviours must be repeated over time to be labelled bullying derives from Olweus's seminal definition of bullying (Olweus, 1993). However, he also accepted that a single serious incident could be assessed as bullying (Volk et al., 2014). The seriousness of a single event can be linked to the persistence of bullying behaviours required in most bullying definitions when seen in terms of the ongoing threat a target may feel after a single but serious bullying incident (Branch, 2008; Monks et al., 2009). The ongoing threat felt by a target in this situation creates an environment where the behaviour itself does not need to be repeated to be defined as bullying, as the threat of the behaviour recurring causes the same effect. Volk et al. (2014) reinforced the interpretation that the persistence of bullying relates to the ongoing threat as well as the behaviours themselves. Building on Olweus's intention that bullying could be a single, serious event, Volk et al. (2014) proposed that the harmfulness of bullying was not directly linked to its frequency; rather, it was a product of both frequency and the perceived intensity or severity of an act. Simply put, as either the frequency or severity of bullying behaviour increases, so does the harm targets face (Volk et al., 2014).

This concept would enable isolated incidents of bullying to be addressed, as these single actions constitute a significant portion of all bullying behaviour. New Zealand's Independent Police Conduct Authority (2021) review into bullying in the New Zealand Police Identified that 26% of those reporting bullying experienced an isolated incident of abuse, bullying or harassment, with 24% of those defining that event as serious or very serious. Unlike bullying, it is more accepted that harassment can be a single event, a series of events, or a continuation of one event over time (Ståle Einarsen et al., 2003; Gilani et al., 2012; Kalamdien & Lawrence, 2017). The acceptance that harassment can be a single event allows targets of harassment to both identify the behaviour and likely have their concerns heard sooner than targets of bullying, who can be required to endure sustained bullying over time before their concerns may be heard and acted upon. Having addressed the factors that link and differentiate bullying and harassment, a more focused review of both is required to place each within the context of the NZDF.

Bullying

Despite a general acceptance of elements that define bullying behaviour (Bentley et al., 2012; Einarsen et al., 2011), a universal definition remains elusive (Bentley et al., 2012; Monks et al., 2009; Yahn, 2012). These core elements largely align with Olweus' (1993) school bullying definition that someone "is being bullied or victimized when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other students" (Olweus, 1993, p. 8). The commonalities across most bullying definitions are that behaviours are unwanted, persistent, and repeated with an intention to cause harm, and occur within a real or perceived power imbalance between bullies and their targets (Bentley et al., 2012; Einarsen et al., 2011; Monks et al., 2009; O'Driscoll et al., 2011; Østvik & Rudmin, 2001; Stuart & Szeszeran, 2021). Apart from the ongoing debate regarding the necessity of repetitive behaviour in defining bullying, given the demonstrable impact of single incidents—such as isolated instances of cyberbullying—on victims (Volk et al., 2014), the remaining elements are consistent. These themes are replicated in WorkSafe New Zealand's (2014) workplace bullying definition, which states it is "repeated and unreasonable behaviour directed towards a worker or a group of workers that can lead to physical or psychological harm" (WorkSafe NZ, 2014, p. 8).

Despite the commonality across the critical elements of bullying behaviour and its accepted definitions, bullying is not a "unitary construct but rather embraces a multi-faceted phenomenon" (D'Cruz & Noronha, 2021, p. 3). It is also important to note that bullying behaviour is not random, it is directed at specific targets and generally has no clear objectives other than to cause harm. This means that, unlike with hazing, there is no final objective to be met that would lead to the bullying ceasing (Østvik & Rudmin, 2001). Thus, if bullying is not stopped by interventions external to the bully, that account for the variety of bullying behaviours possible, it is unlikely to cease, making effective policies and procedures to address this behaviour all the more important. Both these factors have implications for prevention interventions and policy development.

While not specified in WorkSafe New Zealand's definition, a defining factor in identifying bullying is the power imbalance, either formal or informal (Branch et al., 2013; Einarsen, 2000; Stuart & Szeszeran, 2021), explicit or implicit (Volk et al., 2014; Yahn, 2012) between the bully and their target. Behaviours can

look like bullying, but where those involved have approximately equal power this would unlikely be labelled as workplace bullying (Einarsen et al., 2011; Hoel & Cooper, 2001). It is the abuse of power that distinguishes bullying from other forms of generalised aggression (Hymel & Swearer, 2015; Olweus, 1993). The heightened risk associated with implicit power imbalances is that this power often aligns with those conforming to dominant cultural norms, risking the normalisation of bullying behaviours targeting those who deviate from these norms. The normalisation of these behaviours then makes them virtually invisible and undetected (Yahn, 2012). These power structures—formal, informal, explicit, implicit—are fluid and change over time. Some elements, such as an individual’s physical size or strength, are generally stable; whereas situational, social, or environmental factors tend to vary. These variables can change power dynamics, with a decreasing power imbalance moving bullying-type behaviours away from being defined as bullying toward more general aggressive actions (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006).

Reaching a consensus on all bullying behaviours is unlikely due to the impact culture, context, and intensity, alongside the subjectivity of a target’s perception, have on any bullying to which they may be subjected (Branch et al., 2013). Bullying actions can cause psychological, physical, or social health harm in targets (Kalamdien & Lawrence, 2017), and can include just about any behaviour from physical harm, verbal taunts and threats, exclusion and social isolation, humiliation, and online activity (Gardner, Bentley, et al., 2013; Stuart & Szeszeran, 2021). It encompasses overt threats or hostile acts to more subtle behaviours, with verbal and social bullying more difficult to identify (Hymel & Swearer, 2015; Rayner et al., 2001). While exhaustive lists of potential bullying actions cannot be developed, WorkSafe New Zealand (2017a) developed a comprehensive list of personal and task-related actions to assist targets in identifying behaviours they are subjected to as bullying. The range of behaviours and the scale of intensity that can accompany them can make it difficult for targets to identify what is occurring, reinforcing the need for explicit descriptions of potential behaviours and their impacts in any organisational bullying policy.

The Importance of Organisational Context

While bullying definitions have common themes, in isolation they fail to consider the social or cultural context where bullying occurs, as “bullying is not a static, finite set of behaviours; it is an adaptive response to social influences and ecologies” (Yahn, 2012, p. 6). An organisation’s culture and where it sits

within wider society strongly influences how people within that organisation behave, and the group norms that develop in that organisation (Ballantyne, 2012). This creates tension between the need for a standardised and universally understood bullying definition and the need to include characteristics specific to an organisation's cultural context. These differences apply both between organisations, and within organisations as different groups of employees can apply the term bullying in "very different ways and with a range of meanings" (Fevre et al., 2010, p. 75).

The tension between generalised and culturally specific concepts of bullying behaviour is particularly relevant for NZDF. There are noticeable organisational differences between wider civilian society and the behavioural expectations arising from the preparation for conflict (Stuart & Szeszeran, 2021), which also exist within NZDF. As with militaries worldwide, NZDF comprises both service personnel and civilian employees, leading to divergent behavioural expectations and subcultures throughout the organisation (Ballantyne, 2012). Military training and socialisation into a military lifestyle are demanding, complex, and harsh to intentionally develop toughness beyond that expected or acceptable in non-military environments, with service personnel subjected to psychological stressors, civil employees are generally not. Therefore, what may be deemed acceptable standards of behaviour within military environments and appropriate behaviour in civilian settings can be very different (Ballantyne, 2012; Kalamdien & Lawrence, 2017). Defining bullying within NZDF or similar organisations becomes a challenge to ensure it meets accepted key elements to describe bullying while aligning with the organisational context and being equally understood by military and civil staff members alike.

The Impact of Bullying on Military and Civil Staff

The difficulty in distinguishing bullying from generalised aggression is exacerbated within military environments, posing significant challenges to accurate identification and definition of bullying behaviours. Military culture and traditions worsen bullying and its adverse outcomes, and have been used to explain why these behaviours can be pervasive in these environments (Stuart & Szeszeran, 2021). Military bullying occurs within environments that have extreme and uncompromising hierarchical structures, supported by clearly defined roles, ranks, and rules of conduct, unlike the generally more flexible and less defined conditions for civilians. This results in some behaviours considered appropriate in the military that are

deemed inappropriate within civilian settings, as well as military targets being more likely to accept such behaviour as normal and expected (Kalamdien & Lawrence, 2017). Military bullies have often justified their actions by claiming the need to be firm, organisational demands, or blaming targets for being deficient in some way, and may be unaware that their behaviours are bullying or affecting others (Owoyemi, 2011). This has the dual effect of allowing military perpetrators to believe their actions are normal and warranted, with military targets being socialised to accept such behaviour as usual. The normalising of bullying behaviour does not reduce the harm done to either individuals or organisations.

The inherent power within military rank is an element of every interaction within a military organisation, and is not possible to ignore (Sadler et al., 2018). While workplace bullying occurs omnidirectionally, downwards with subordinates targeted by supervisors, horizontally between individuals with power imbalances, and upwards where the informal power of the subordinate supersedes a supervisor's formal power, downwards is most common (Branch et al., 2013). This is reinforced in militaries where embedded power structures further enable the behaviour, with senior-ranked and more powerful personnel, either formal or informal power, consistently more likely to behave in a bullying manner (Stuart & Szeszeran, 2021). NZDF is not exempt from this situation (Teale & MacDonald, 2020). Surveys completed when NZDF personnel leave the organisation consistently report bullying from superiors as more prevalent than bullying between peers across both military and non-military staff (Defence Organisational Development Group, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021). This behaviour pattern is not isolated to militaries. Hoel et al. (2001; Hoel, Cooper, et al., 2010) investigated bullying in 70 public, private and voluntary organisations sectors in the United Kingdom and confirming that almost three-quarters of targets reported being bullied by a superior.

Bullying research has identified that significant amounts of bullying behaviours remain unreported in military (Crowell-Williamson et al., 2019; Østvik & Rudmin, 2001) and civilian environments (LaGuardia & Oelke, 2021; Mistry & Latoo, 2009); estimated to range from 60% (Meidav, February 17, 2020) to as high as 90% (Kelly, 2007). Workplace bullying cannot be resolved if it is hidden, making under-reporting a threat to effectively addressing bullying and reducing its harmful impacts (Worth & Squelch, 2015). Targets of bullying choose not to report the abuse for both organisational and personal concerns. Organisationally,

concerns include the belief that nothing would change or be done, the position or seniority of the person bullying them, a lack of knowledge or distrust of reporting procedures, and a demonstrated tolerance or acceptance of the behaviour at an organisational level. Personal factors reducing reporting include a fear of retaliation, worsening the situation, or that they would be perceived as a trouble-maker; and a feeling of embarrassment or failure (Carter et al., 2013; Chadwick & Travaglia, 2017; Faucher et al., 2015; Kelly, 2007; Mistry & Latoo, 2009; Qutishat, 2019; Standing Committee on Education and Employment, 2012; Stuart & Szeszeran, 2021). These fears are real for targets of bullying, with reports of bullying commonly resulting in behaviour that causes more harm (Namie, 2007).

It has been suggested that under-reporting of bullying in militaries is even higher than in civilian organisations, supported by data from militaries across the United States, Austria, Australia, Canada, United Kingdom, and Norway (Stuart & Szeszeran, 2021). Under-reporting is also prevalent in NZDF, with Teale and MacDonald (2020) finding “discrimination, harassment and, in particular bullying is more widespread than the [NZDF] survey data indicates” (Teale & MacDonald, 2020, p. 48). While military personnel face similar challenges to reporting bullying as their civilian counterparts, aspects of the military environment can make it more challenging to report bullying and other adverse workplace behaviours.

The military's need for teamwork and group cohesion supports the achievement of arduous tasks, where team members must trust each other and work together seamlessly to stay safe and effective. The importance placed on this cohesion can prevent the reporting of bullying or other misconduct for fear of retribution, retaliation, or isolation from the group (Stuart & Szeszeran, 2021). Simply acknowledging or discussing harassment or bullying incidents can risk being targeted for further adverse behaviours (Nelson, 2019). This places targets in a position where they must choose between their own and the team's well-being, within an environment where they have been socialised to sacrifice themselves for the betterment of the group. The ‘code of silence’ that helps to maintain group cohesion means that many personnel targeted for bullying behaviours are unwilling to report misconduct, fearing repercussions, and having a lack of trust in complaint processes (Teale & MacDonald, 2020). Targets fear being labelled a “‘snitch’ or ‘nark’ for breaking the ‘code of silence’” (Stuart & Szeszeran, 2021, p. 259), translating into pressure to keep quiet (Pershing, 2006).

As stated, there are many reasons targets of bullying can struggle to identify the behaviours they are subjected to as bullying, with military personnel finding it even more difficult (Stuart & Szeszeran, 2021). Military personnel undergo physically and mentally challenging training, in harsh and arduous conditions, which can blur the line between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour (Kamarck, 2019), normalising actions that may be considered bullying elsewhere (Owoyemi, 2011; Wither, 2004). The emphasis that militaries tend to place on physical and emotional toughness (Stuart & Szeszeran, 2021) also impacts the ability of military personnel to identify bullying behaviour. Accepting that bullying behaviour is being directed at them and that it is causing harm, directly undermines the perception many military personnel have of their own ability to endure challenges and austerity, and by doing so, their very identity as a soldier, sailor, or aviator. The additional barriers military personnel face when reporting bullying ultimately exacerbate the negative impact and consequences on the individual. This negative impact is often reinforced by a lack of support, either due to a general unavailability, inaccessibility, or lack of knowledge about where support can be found, leading to more bullying remaining unreported (Stuart & Szeszeran, 2021). Many of the concepts that directly impact military personnel are psychological and intangible. However, the final characteristic that differentiates military targets of bullying from non-military targets is not only very definable but is set in law.

Harassment

Harassment is legally defined in most countries, including New Zealand ("Harassment Act," 1997), and specifies "conduct which, deliberately or otherwise, is hostile, threatening, intimidating, demeaning, and/or offensive to the recipient or others, that causes fear, apprehension, and emotional distress, and that unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance, social interactions, or peace of mind" (Gilani et al., 2012, p. 1). It is linked to any prohibited grounds of discrimination (Okechukwu et al., 2014; Rospenda et al., 2009). Workplace harassment involves negative actions and behaviour toward a person due to their personal attributes, while discrimination relates to unequal treatment or limiting opportunities due to these attributes (Rospenda et al., 2009). A target of harassment is not required to belong to a social group to be harassed on that ground; for example, a person may be harassed for being a member of the Rainbow community despite identifying as heterosexual. It is not the membership of a group that

constitutes harassment, it is the hostile or antagonistic behaviour based on that attribute whether or not it applies to the person being harassed.

Many organisational features have been identified as risk factors contributing to harassment. Several features identified within the New Zealand parliamentary workplace that create risk factors for harassment (Francis, 2019) also apply to NZDF. Key amongst these features are the high-intensity culture and peculiar pressures the unique environment causes; a lack of workforce diversity, particularly gender; multiple barriers leading to significant under-reporting; lack of support; and then that unacceptable conduct is normalised. An additional risk factor NZDF faces is the hegemonic masculine environment common within most militaries. Within organisational cultures strongly influenced by masculine hierarchical features, women experience higher levels of gender-based harassment (Nelson, 2019). These themes also apply to organisational contexts that influence bullying behaviour, putting NZDF at increased risk of adverse and damaging behaviours.

While harassment encompasses a range of behaviours often dependent on the attribute being harassed, such as gender or ethnicity, it is largely recognised as having two forms, *quid pro quo* or a hostile environment (Benavides & Cunningham, 2010). *Quid pro quo* harassment was initially introduced to specifically refer to sexual discrimination and harassment (MacKinnon, 1979), but it applies equally to any form of harassment. It occurs when a tangible benefit is offered, like a promotion, attendance on a course, or avoidance of unwanted tasks, dependent on the target doing certain actions related to any of the prohibited grounds of discrimination (Lunenburg, 2010; Scalia, 1998). Such offers or coercion can be explicit or implied, with targets not required to accept or complete the behaviour for harassment to occur; making the offer with the authority to fulfil the threat is *quid pro quo* harassment. With *quid pro quo* behaviour, an isolated incident is generally sufficient to be defined as harassment (Fitzgerald et al., 1995).

Hostile environment harassment is more subtle and requires a pattern of unwelcome or offensive behaviour that interferes with a target's work performance or creates an intimidating or offensive work environment (Fitzgerald et al., 1995; Lunenburg, 2010). Unwelcome behaviour includes disparaging comments, inappropriate jokes or conversations, undermining or sabotaging a target's work, unnecessary touching, or comments on physical attributes. It is the ongoing and unwelcome conduct that creates an

intimidating, offensive or hostile workplace (Scalia, 1998). While most employees have been found to be able to accurately identify more blatant harassment and behaviours linked to quid pro quo harassment, many fail to identify the subtle behaviours relating to hostile environment harassment (Icenogle et al., 2002). Often, the invisibility of harassment leading to hostile or offensive workplaces is reinforced by the legal view that considers quid pro quo harassment to be the more serious of the two (Benavides & Cunningham, 2010). However, when considered from a target's perspective, the harm done to them, witnesses and organisations as a whole, this is a simplistic and dubious claim (Fitzgerald et al., 1995). As with bullying, any harassment causes harm, impacting past the workplace into families and the wider community, often going unreported, allowing the impact and damage to continue.

Hazing

The terms hazing, bullying, and harassment are incorrectly used interchangeably, encompassing overlapping behaviours from seemingly innocuous 'horseplay' to severe physical assault (Bourke, 2016; Kowalski et al., 2021), along with an underlying power imbalance (Kowalski et al., 2021). Hazing, however, has a distinct purpose that differentiates it from bullying and harassment which tend to aim to exclude or remove targets from a group. Conversely, hazing seeks to include someone in a group once certain conditions or tests are met (Hernandez, 2015; Keller, 2015; Matthews, 2015). Hazing is the abuse of new or prospective group members by those more senior. It involves intentional or reckless abuse, humiliation, and potentially dangerous behaviours, both physical and psychological, to initiate new members, with or without their consent (Cimino, 2011; Kowalski et al., 2021; Matthews, 2015). Unlike bullying, which tends to be perpetrated against isolated individuals, hazing is conducted publicly by a cohort of senior individuals against a more junior cohort. Hazing is generally ritualistic, with traditions passed down from previous inductees; while bullying is not limited in its methods. Finally, hazing ends when newcomers are accepted as full members of the group, whereas bullying can continue indefinitely (Cimino, 2011; Hernandez, 2015; Keller, 2015).

Hazing is not a new phenomenon, having been practised in ancient and medieval schools (Finkel, 2002) and is common across different countries, cultures, and societies (Keller, 2015). Hazing has been documented more recently in numerous military organisations (Evans, 2013; Keller, 2015; Østvik & Rudmin,

2001; Pershing, 2006; Winslow, 1999), along with civilian organisations including sports teams, university fraternities and sororities (Kamarck, 2019), and gangs (Nuwer, 2001). To understand hazing, it is essential to recognise what hazing is not. Many groups and institutions, including militaries, require physically and psychologically demanding training to ensure individuals have the skills and abilities to perform their roles within the group competently (Keller, 2015). This potentially unpleasant training is not hazing. Tasks and activities with clear training objectives that are relevant to the group's role and function, no matter how unpleasant, such as military basic training, are unlikely to be considered hazing (Cimino, 2011). Conversely, hazing activities are unrelated to the specific skills or abilities required of the group, and have no legitimate or identifiable operational purpose (Keller, 2015; Matthews, 2015).

Despite apparent differences between hazing and bullying, hazing can develop into bullying. This can occur for three reasons, singularly or in combination. Firstly, when subtle hazing is left uncontrolled, it can expand into bullying behaviour that deviates from the initiation of new group members (Pečjak & Pirc, 2018). Secondly, when actions that started as hazing morph into behaviours designed to make newcomers quit, rather than initiating them into the group (Kowalski et al., 2021). Finally, when newly initiated members are unpopular or unaccepted by senior group members, the hazing can continue as bullying (Svec, 2013). This situation is concerning for militaries, as unlike members of civilian organisations, service personnel cannot easily remove themselves from their training or work environments if they are being hazed or bullied (Pershing, 2006). This is worse for recruits and junior service personnel who tend to live within military establishments, often with those who are targeting them.

The harm hazing causes individuals has been clearly documented and can result in physical and psychological injury up to and including accidental death and suicide (Bourke, 2016; Finkel, 2002; Hernandez, 2015). Proponents of hazing argue it benefits groups and organisations with a more profound commitment to and dependency on the group, improved unity and bonding, and the maintenance of group structures and standards (Bourke, 2016; Cimino, 2011; Hernandez, 2015; Keller, 2015). These benefits are not supported by research. Despite mixed research outcomes, research within militaries does not support that hazing contributes to improved group affinity or enhanced perceptions of group cohesion (Matthews, 2015). Research on hazing also demonstrated that hazing threatens the trust, cohesion, and safety of

military personnel (Kamarck, 2019), and can jeopardise military operational readiness (United States Government Accountability Office, 2021). Despite these adverse outcomes and the anti-hazing policies that have been implemented within many militaries, hazing remains resistant to change in military organisations (Evans, 2013).

It is hazing's persistence and resilience, particularly in military organisations, that is concerning for the NZDF, as any policy seeking to address bullying and harassment behaviour must also address hazing and the environmental conditions that support its longevity. Bourke (2016) argued that the longevity of military hazing is due to how it reinforces the institution itself as much as it is about individual or group dynamics. This sees hazing as institutionally meaningful violence, where it is not the individual warrior being reproduced by hazing, but a far wider "warrior institution" (Bourke, 2016, p. 6). Addressing hazing within military organisations necessitates interventions at the organisational level to target the systemic factors that perpetuate such behaviour, in addition to addressing individual perpetrators (Keller, 2015).

Summary

Before a policy can be developed to effectively address any form of adverse behaviour, that behaviour must be understood in detail along with the context within which it occurs. The behaviours, in this case discrimination, harassment, bullying, and hazing, cannot be separated from either the individuals involved or their organisation. These factors interact with each other to create a specific set of conditions that influence the form the behaviours take, their prevalence, who are likely to be perpetrators or targets, and the likelihood for equitable and effective resolution. It is only by identifying and understanding the interplay between these factors that policy makers can begin to develop targeted DHB policies that can be applied within their own organisation to target these behaviours in a manner that is fair equitable and effective.

Chapter 4: Literature Review - Placing Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying (DHB) Policies Within Organisational Contexts

Introduction

This literature review identifies considerations for DHB policies prior to commencing policy development. These considerations influence how organisations choose to address DHB, how successful a policy may be, and how that success can be measured. The review of DHB and hazing within this chapter identifies glaring differences in the intent and motivation behind each, despite the similar specific behaviours and outcomes for individual targets and organisations alike. While being grouped under the umbrella headings of workplace violence and workplace injustice, these behaviours are part of a larger complex phenomenon described as a “constellation of harmful actions taken and those not taken” (Saltzberg, 2011, p. 229) in the workplace. Questions arise, such as how a DHB policy can fit into this ‘constellation’; whether these behaviours should be addressed together in one policy or in separate, more specific ones; and how a policy can be assessed as being effective or not. This chapter investigates these considerations for any organisation considering a new DHB policy, and how these considerations could apply to the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF). The chapter reviews the requirement for DHB policies to be integrated across related interventions and to be tailored to fit the ecological context of the organisation in which they sit. It also discusses appropriate policy styles before addressing the need for planned policy evaluation to measure policy success.

The Requirement for Integrated DHB Interventions

Organisations need to employ a range of comprehensive interventions to address DHB, as narrowly focused interventions are likely to miss areas of an organisation or issues specific to sectors within an organisation (Cowie et al., 2002; Escartín, 2016). The complexity of these adverse workplace behaviours requires a multi-level, ecological approach to intervention and prevention, starting with a sound policy foundation from which to develop wider approaches (Gillen et al., 2017). These levels have been described as primary, secondary, and tertiary-level intervention frameworks (Escartín, 2016; Ferris et al., 2021; Gillen et al., 2017). For adverse workplace behaviours, primary-level interventions focus on preventing their occurrence and generally involve processes such as policies, education, and training. Secondary interventions aim to

reduce the extent and duration of any DHB incident and provide employees with the ability and processes to address DHB should it occur. Tertiary level interventions concentrate on reducing the harmful and negative consequences after a DHB incident through supporting targets and witnesses, or offering remedial assistance to perpetrators (Escartín, 2016; Ferris et al., 2021). Primary prevention is the most-applied response within organisations, but focus must also be placed on impact, harm reduction, and incident resolution (Escartín, 2016).

While the majority of research into workplace DHB has focused on tailored primary prevention interventions, the inability of organisations to effectively resolve such behaviour after it has occurred also causes targets of DHB significant stress and frustration (Hodgins et al., 2014). The inability to address this behaviour is often unrelated to the existence of an appropriate organisational policy, as the existence of such a policy does not ensure its effective application (Einarsen et al., 2017). In addition to DHB programmes including elements across primary, secondary, and tertiary levels, formal interventions, such as policies, must also be supported by an organisation's informal systems and internal climate if they are to be successful. Tenbrunsel et al. (2003) offered the term 'ethical infrastructure' to describe the elements used to communicate an organisation's ethical principles, which are underpinned by a pervasive organisational climate. They argued that to develop and implement successful programmes to improve ethical behaviour within organisations, it is necessary to understand the elements within an organisation that contribute to ethical effectiveness, the linkages between these elements, and how these influence ethical or unethical behaviour. With workplace DHB considered unethical behaviour (Einarsen et al., 2017), how that is seen and responded to within different organisations can be directly linked to their underlying ethical infrastructure.

Any ethical infrastructure has formal systems at its core; is documented, standardised, and visible to anyone inside or outside the organisation; and fully embedded within the informal system (Tenbrunsel et al., 2003). Informal systems are those indirect messages and ethical expectations that cannot generally be verified through formal documents or understood by anyone external to the organisation. This informal system is fully encapsulated within the organisational climate and culture. The strength of each layer is dependent on the strength of the layer in which it is embedded, with each system capable of

independently and collectively influencing ethical behaviour (Einarsen et al., 2017). An organisational climate is defined as the “organisational members’ shared perceptions regarding a particular aspect of an organisation” (Tenbrunsel et al., 2003, p. 294). In this instance, what is considered ethical and unethical behaviour? As such, an ethically-based infrastructure can convey the organisation’s ethical principles to its organisational members and enforce them if they are breached, creating predictable ethical expectations (Tenbrunsel et al., 2003).

Among the multiple systems that shape behaviour within organisations, an individual’s informal experiences of the organisation and its climate hold the greatest influence in reducing how formal systems become (Einarsen et al., 2017). It follows then that formal systems, including codes of conduct or policies, are likely to have limited effectiveness if implemented poorly or not acknowledged and endorsed by key influencers throughout the informal system and organisational climate (Tenbrunsel et al., 2003). Without support across the ethical infrastructure, formal systems can be seen as window dressing, artificial, or merely ‘ticking the box’, resulting in little to no impact on behaviour (Trevino, 1990). Thus, policy development alone—an action within the formal system—is insufficient to bring about positive change without ensuring actions across the informal system and climate of an organisation support it. Failing to identify the interplay of influence between all elements of an ethical infrastructure when developing any policy is likely to result in an ineffective policy at best or a potentially disastrous one at worst (Einarsen et al., 2017; Tenbrunsel et al., 2003). Kaptein and Schwartz (2008) argued that to optimise ethical behaviours, particularly to address and reduce DHB effectively, single measures should never be implemented. Alternatively, interventions should be complemented across formal and informal systems with several interrelated measures to achieve the most significant impact, underpinned by a cultural change campaign to influence organisational climate.

Given the consistent research stating that policies, particularly those related to DHB and ethical behaviour, are significantly less effective when developed and implemented in isolation, it is essential to identify what other development is occurring within NZDF to address DHB and other harmful behaviours. In 2016, NZDF launched Operation Respect, a new system for responding to inappropriate sexual behaviour based primarily on the Canadian Armed Forces’ approach to this issue (Teale & MacDonald, 2020).

Operation Respect's mandate was expanded in 2018 to include DHB in addition to sexual harm behaviours (NZDF, 2018, Nov 8). The implementation and effectiveness of Operation Respect were independently reviewed in 2020 (Teale & MacDonald, 2020), and the Office of the Auditor General (OAG; 2023a, b) continues to conduct regular assessments. Alongside the review of their DHB policy, under review within NZDF at the time of writing, is the formal complaints process that incorporates all complaints, not just those related to DHB. While these policy reviews remain incomplete, NZDF is still operating under the previous policy versions which predate the Health and Safety at Work Act (D. Gibson, personal communication, May 19, 2025). As an integrated intervention, any DHB policy within NZDF will need to have a clear transition process to the revised formal complaints policy, accurately reflect the mandate of Operation Respect, and incorporate recommendations made by the OAG. Without organisation-wide integration, there will likely be gaps in any DHB process held within that policy and potentially conflicting policy information, all of which would undermine the equity and effectiveness of any DHB policy for NZDF.

Ecological Frameworks for DHB Interventions

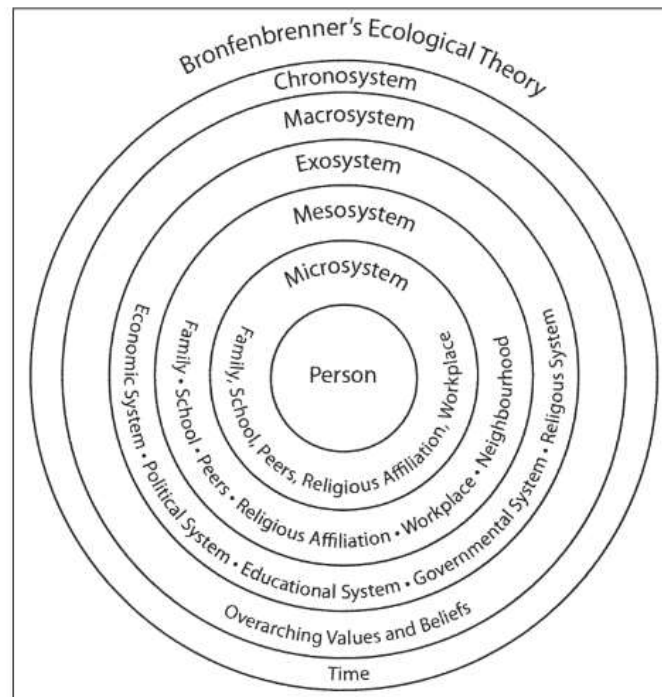
Developing an effective suite of integrated policies and supporting interventions to address DHB in any organisation requires a framework to understand the formal and informal systems and structures within the organisation's individual culture and context. Achieving this level of effective understanding is difficult without a framework that can illustrate the impact different interventions are likely to have across the organisation, and where potential gaps are likely to occur. Understanding an organisation's social structure and how its members interact with, and are influenced by, its environmental layers can provide a framework to identify areas within the organisation to target with tailored interventions. The socioecological model is the accepted standard for harm prevention, and supports the understanding that violence of any form, including DHB, results from "the complex interplay of individual, relationship, social, cultural and environmental factors" (Krug et al., 2002, p. 12). While this research explicitly targets policy requirements, an understanding of where any new DHB policy would need to sit within the organisation, and the implementation actions required for it to be successful, requires a broader comprehension of the social structure of the NZDF.

Ecological models provide a framework to integrate individuals into their social environments (Reilly & Gravdal, 2012). The socioecological model (Figure 2) depicts nested layers of influence radiating out from the individual to a microsystem/relationship layer that incorporates factors and characteristics including intimate relationships and family dynamics (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). This is encapsulated in a mesosystem that Bronfenbrenner (1979) described as “a system of microsystems” (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 25), where individual microsystems interconnect and influence one another. The mesosystem exists within an exosystem or community layer that represents influential social structures such as friendships, work, church, or other social groups, with all previous layers nested within a macro/societal layer concerned with societal and cultural values and belief systems (Moorhead, 2020). The final layer, the chronosystem, refers to time and influences that change over time, and how these changes impact an individual. The chronosystem includes sociohistorical condition changes like a shift between war and peacetime, or life events and experiences such as promotions or a new family member (Walker, 2016). Bronfenbrenner (1979) described this layer as an “ecological transition” (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 26).

With the nature of social and environmental constructs influencing individuals’ behaviour, it becomes important to understand the specific ecological details of an individual’s situation. These details need to be factored into any model to support organisational understanding before using that as a framework to develop appropriate interventions, including related policies. An example was how the US Department of Defence (2014) adapted an ecological framework to understand sexual assault “risk and protective factors, their influences, and their relationship to one another” (p. 43) before developing their organisation-wide strategy to prevent sexual harm. Similarly, any ecological model to assist with both the understanding of DHB within NZDF and the development of an effective suite of interventions must integrate the New Zealand cultural context, an ecological model of DHB, and a military ecological model. While a model that incorporates these three elements was not found, ecological frameworks were identified that addressed these contexts separately and offered insights into what an NZDF model may include.

Figure 2.

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory.



Note. This model was produced by Stanger in 2011, illustrating Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory and adapted from Berger (2007). From "Moving "eco" back into socio-ecological models: A proposal to reorient ecological literacy into human developmental models and school systems," by N. R. Stranger (2011), *Human Ecology Review*, 18(2), p. 169. Copyright 2011 by Human Ecology Review. Reprinted with permission (Appendix W).

New Zealand's Cultural Context

An adaptation of Bronfenbrenner's model to reflect family violence prevention within the context of New Zealand (Auckland City Council et al., 2016) made two key amendments. The first reframed Bronfenbrenner's mesosystem as an individual's community; the second redefined the chronosystem level to focus on historical trauma, intergenerational abuse, and the impact of colonisation within New Zealand. These two alterations provide a way to place any subsequent ecological model within a broader New Zealand context.

An NZDF Ecological Model

As no NZDF specific ecological model related to DHB currently exists, a combination of ecological models could facilitate the development of a model tailored specifically to DHB within NZDF. Such a model could provide a framework for understanding the impact of any new DHB policy and what additional interventions may be required to support an effective and equitable policy, its implementation, and

application. Any model to reflect the context of DHB within the NZDF would need to reference and include an ecological understanding of wider New Zealand society (Auckland City Council et al., 2016); holding the DHB incident central to the ecological model (Johnson, 2011); the influence of leadership on military personnel at all levels (Department of Defense, 2014); the impact the wider military community has on all layers of an ecological model (Walker, 2016); and an understanding that boundaries between military and civilian experiences and influences are not discrete but overlap, leading to increased potential for misunderstandings and lack of standard social control mechanisms (Moorhead, 2020).

An Organisationally Appropriate DHB Policy

While policies do not provide a single solution to the issue of workplace DHB, they have a vital role as the employer's statement of intent and organisational commitment to creating and maintaining a healthy workplace. They should also offer detailed processes to follow when these behaviours are identified within their organisation (Ferris et al., 2021; Rayner & Lewis, 2010). An effective policy defines the issue at hand, clarifying intervention processes, and sets out how an organisation intends to reduce and prevent these behaviours (Rayner & Lewis, 2010). To achieve any reduction in the prevalence of behaviours, research has identified that it is vital to ensure the content and delivery of any policy or programme are relevant to the organisation and tailored to its specific context and environment (Escartín, 2016). Salin (2008) determined that many organisations 'cut and paste' large portions of their DHB policies, resulting in less effective results, reinforcing the importance of tailoring policies to an organisation's needs and context. To increase the likelihood of success, DHB policies must align with other organisational interventions to "be comprehensive, integrated, and responsive to local conditions" (Escartín, 2016, p. 165).

A positive workplace culture, where individuals are treated with respect and conflict is effectively addressed when it arises, is a vital for preventing workplace aggression and violence, and effective intervention (International Labour Organisation (ILO), 2020). A detailed review of the processes identified to develop and maintain a positive workplace culture is beyond the scope of this research; however, it is important to understand that the development of a positive culture requires a dedicated systemic approach across an organisation, including the development of policies and procedures. These policies must be effectively communicated, trained, and enforced, with ongoing evaluation to improve workplace

environments actively (Chang & Lyons, 2012; ILO, 2020). Effective workplace violence and aggression policies foster a respectful work environment (Baillien et al., 2008), clearly defining the organisation's commitment to employee well-being, outlining individual and organisational responsibilities, and establishing expectations for employee conduct within its culture (Richards & Daley, 2003).

As well-planned policies are the foundation of any prevention and intervention programme to address workplace violence and aggression (Berlingieri, 2015), the form this policy takes is crucial. There is debate in both academic and practitioner circles as to whether a DHB and hazing policy should have stand-alone elements for each behaviour type or be included together in a broader policy (Ferris et al., 2021). These policy types have been identified as either specific or general policies, each with advantages and disadvantages to be considered against the organisation for which the policy is being developed.

Specific Policies

The argument for specific policies addressing different types of workplace aggression and inappropriate behaviour relates to the differences in origin, intent, and manifestations of these different behaviours (Rowe, 1996). It requires separate policies for sexual or racial harassment, or separating general harassment from bullying. Researchers, such as Cowan (2011) and Lutgen-Sandvik et al. (2009) have advocated for stand-alone policies to communicate the seriousness of the issue and organisational leadership's commitment to addressing it (Ferris et al., 2021). Specific policies can also convey a focus and reduced tolerance for a particular kind of behaviour, with narrower definitions that may be easier to understand and, therefore, apply (Rowe, 1996). Conversely, lack of a specific policy (e.g., anti-bullying), could unintentionally send the message that a particular behaviour is not seen as an important issue by leadership, and that there are no avenues to provide support if it is being experienced (Cowan, 2011). Specific policies can lead to narrow definitions of the identified behaviour. Narrow definitions can risk specific policies overlooking or disregarding instances of DHB (Hutchinson, 2012; Lutgen-Sandvik, 2005). Policies or definitions that intentionally or unintentionally omit some DHB occurrences or other inappropriate behaviours can lead to this behaviour continuing, with targets marginalised and excluded from potential policy protections, quickly undermining DHB policies (Thompson & Catley, 2021).

General Policies

Rather than creating separate policies for each type of workplace violence and aggression, many organisations group behaviours together (Hoel et al., 2002), allowing for more integrated and coordinated policies alongside supporting practices (Berlingieri, 2015). While general policies have been challenged for being too vague (Ferris et al., 2021), an issue easily rectified with more detailed definitions and additional clarification around processes, research has identified a number of benefits (Ferris et al., 2021; Joubert et al., 2011; Rowe, 1996). One significant benefit of general policies is that they offer protection for all members of an organisation against all adverse behaviours, not just identified groups or specific behaviours, as in the case of specific sexual or racial harassment policies. Rowe (1996) expanded this point by identifying that the inclusivity of this policy type can also reduce backlash by sub-groups within an organisation, leading to a potential reduction in resistance to the development of a more positive workplace culture. Closely linked to this idea, general policies are more widely understood across an organisation and subsequently used by more targets, often due to the wider options and remedial actions available in broader policies. General policies also allow attention and resources to be focused on the behaviour in question and potential resolutions, rather than disagreements and debates over the labelling of a particular behaviour. Lastly, the inclusivity of general policies provides a significant level of flexibility as previously undefined minority groups or new adverse behaviours become known.

A single policy encompasses all iterations of DHB and hazing behaviour, and provides an opportunity to support organisational change by general policies being “interrelated and mutually constitutive; viewing individuals, organisations and society as interrelated” (Berlingieri, 2015, p. 1) in a way that policies focusing on individual actors and specific behaviours cannot. Workplace violence policy frameworks have tended to individualise this behaviour, overlooking the underlying significant and complex power imbalance issues shaped by social factors such as gender and race, but reinforced by organisational context and culture (Hutchinson, 2012). When workplace violence is seen and addressed as an individual issue, the role of the organisation is hidden, allowing related processes, practices, and cultural elements that either overtly or covertly endorse workplace violence to remain unchanged (Berlingieri, 2015). However, workplace bullying,

violence, and injustice do not merely arise from conflict between individuals; they also originate from organisation-level issues and, as such, require an organisational response (Gardner, Bentley, et al., 2013).

Policy Options for NZDF

Developing an organisational-level policy approach to DHB does not limit an organisation's ability to address organisational, social, and individual elements of DHB. The necessary shift in focus from dyadic relationships to a policy perspective that views workplace violence in all its forms as a product of individual differences combined with organisational processes, practices, and behavioural norms, requires an expanded understanding of DHB that includes its social dimensions (Berlingieri, 2015). The move away from traditional models of workplace violence that emphasised individual employee attributes rather than holding employers responsible for creating healthy and safe work environments (Hutchinson, 2012) is reinforced in law within New Zealand by the Health and Safety at Work Act. This legislation requires employers to take all reasonably practicable actions to protect employees from harm to their health, safety, and welfare, including the impact of DHB and hazing (Health and Safety at Work Act, 2015, s 3). Reinforcing this shift in policy focus away from individual acts and behaviours to organisational-level responsibility is simpler to achieve and more easily understood at all levels of an organisation when there is one policy to understand and implement.

For NZDF, the benefits provided by a single policy to cover all DHB and hazing behaviours, with the caveat that definitions and processes are clear and detailed, far outweigh those offered by specific policies. Within military doctrine, simplicity is a key principle of war that supports the achievement of the allocated mission (Lillbacka, 2017). With the mission to reduce workplace violence and the negative impact it has on individuals and organisational outputs, the simplicity of a single, well-crafted policy outweighs the potential benefits of multiple policies attempting to cover all iterations of violence within the workplace. It simplifies the identification and management of workplace violence and aggression, ensuring consistent application of behavioural standards and interventions, a level of consistency that multiple policies cannot achieve.

Measuring DHB Policy Success

A policy's value must be in the effect it has in addressing the issue it seeks to resolve, and this can only be ascertained by measuring the change it brings about. How change can be measured, and what value is applied to that change, varies (Andrews, 2022). It can be interpreted on a continuum from a scientific perspective associated with rationalist policy evaluation based on visible facts, through to a constructivist tradition emphasising interpretation and meaning (McConnell, 2010). McConnell (2010) amalgamated both perspectives into a more pragmatist view, contending "a policy is successful if it achieves the goals that proponents set out to achieve and attracts no criticism of any significance and/or support is virtually universal" (p. 351). This definition acknowledges that it is unlikely every individual potentially impacted by a policy will approve of it or see it as successful, while balancing both objective and subjective dimensions of success. Regardless of the definition applied, to be assessed as effective and successful a policy and its outcomes must be able to be measured and evaluated against the goals identified for the policy.

The literature on policy evaluation is plentiful (Andrews, 2022; Joslin & Müller, 2015; Marsh & McConnell, 2010; McConnell, 2010), and while it generally refers to government-level policy evaluation, the concepts and options can be applied to organisational-level policy, making it appropriate for the current research. After analysing 45 policies, project and development evaluation success studies, Andrews (2022) identified six key success categories for public policy evaluation, supported by 30 specific success criteria. The success categories were programme, impact and endurance, capability, political, stakeholder and process. Earlier work by Marsh and McConnell (Marsh & McConnell, 2010) proposed a more simplified framework for evaluating policy success based on the work of Bovens et al. (Bovens et al., 2001) by refining programmatic and political success and adding a process category for the evaluation of policy success.

Marsh and McConnell's (2010) indicators for a successful policy process are threefold: (1) legitimacy in the policy development process through deliberation, consultation, and due-process; (2) political and management sustainability through a coalition of support for the policy; and (3) that the policy was based on new ideas or measures. Records, executive meeting minutes, and the absence of significant challenges or criticisms can serve as evidence of legitimacy. Political sustainability can be demonstrated by visible and consistent support from stakeholders. Innovation within the policy process can be identified through

contributing factors, including the consideration of wide-ranging reports, academic work, and multidisciplinary engagement (Marsh & McConnell, 2010).

Research indicates that despite policies being well written, poor implementation will result in ineffective outcomes, and inconsistent policy application will further reduce any positive effect (Ferris et al., 2021). Programmatic and policy success levels can only be assessed after implementation. Policy implementation directly impacts its level of programmatic success across three criteria: effectiveness, efficiency, and resilience (Marsh & McConnell, 2010). Programmatic success assesses whether the policy was implemented as planned and achieved the intended outcomes with efficient use of resources, without unintentionally favouring or disadvantaging any organisational group. Failure at the implementation or programmatic stage is commonly due to derailment by managers who lack confidence or the ability to consistently apply the policy (Ferris et al., 2021). An equal contributor to policy failure at this stage is HR professionals who feel torn between organisational and individual protections, impacting their ability to implement a policy (Ferris et al., 2021).

The political success of any DHB policy is contingent upon the response of senior management, as their actions and comments will guide those charged with applying the policy. Strong and highly visible policy support from organisational leadership, alongside having leadership hold all personnel to account against policy standards, are critical elements of policy success (Ferris et al., 2021). Political policy success relates to the way policies and organisational leadership supporting them are represented and evaluated in the political or public arena, as a result of the policy itself (Bovens et al., 2001). The efficacy of DHB policies is directly correlated with the level of political support they receive. Empirical research demonstrates a significant relationship between perceived organisational responsiveness to DHB and the well-being of affected individuals. Specifically, individuals who lack confidence in their organisation's or leadership's commitment to addressing DHB report experiencing increased harm and diminished well-being (Ferris et al., 2021; Hurley et al., 2016). This clearly demonstrates the importance of both having a policy and ensuring it is effectively implemented, complaints are appropriately addressed, and leadership is seen to actively support and endorse the policy (Ferris et al., 2021).

Regardless of the evaluation framework, detailed measures of success will always be policy and context-dependent, and may have contradictory criteria across the process, programme, and political levels (Marsh & McConnell, 2010). Different criteria can also lead to different conclusions surrounding success (McConnell, 2010). Additionally, policies do not have to be assessed as successful or unsuccessful across all measures to be deemed a success or failure. Policies may be unsuccessful across programmatic measures while being touted as a political success, or be a programmatic success but seen as a process failure due to a lack of consultation (Bovens et al., 2001; McConnell, 2010). With Marsh and McConnell's (2010) framework, policy process success can be assessed before its implementation, with programmatic and political success relying on post-implementation assessment. This stepped evaluation option makes the framework suitable for many organisations, as it allows for an initial evaluation of the policy process, providing an opportunity to make amendments prior to the policy being implemented; thereby enhancing the likelihood of achieving policy success in post-implementation assessments. Despite being able to provide initial policy assessment, any policy development must include a longer-term evaluation plan to include assessments for programme and political success.

Along with applying a framework for measuring policy success, specific measures within each of the process, programme, and political levels must be identified. The most common measurement standard for DHB-related policies tends to be the number of self-identified and reported DHB incidents (Einarsen et al., 2009; Ferris et al., 2021). The usual assumption is that lower reported DHB incidents equate to lower prevalence rates, indicating policy success (Pate & Beaumont, 2010). This measure may be a standard indicator of DHB policy success simply because the data are relatively easy to capture and assess. However, this measure fails to account for unreported incidents or secondary victims such as witnesses. By failing to account for these unrecorded DHB incidents, organisations can continue to underestimate the full extent of DHB (Pate & Beaumont, 2010), along with gathering inaccurate data on where these incidents are occurring. This can also lead to organisations directing resources to address DHB in areas of the organisation based on erroneous data, reducing the impact and effectiveness of those interventions. Additionally, an increase in reported numbers may indicate policy success with more targets feeling safe to

report DHB that was previously left unreported, meaning a decline in reported DHB may indicate policy failure.

Pate and Beaumont (2010) proposed that an alternative and arguably more accurate measure of DHB policy success was whether individuals felt affected by bullying, either directly or indirectly. They suggested measures such as ongoing organisational attitude surveys which provide anonymity to survey participants, thereby reducing the fear of potential consequences or repercussions. This method also provides a more accurate measure of patterns of DHB across the organisation (Pate & Beaumont, 2010), leading to greater targeted and effective interventions being developed and implemented. This measure also removes the requirement for DHB to have been formally reported to be measured, providing a broader perspective of the impact DHB has. Limiting the measure of DHB impact to targets only does not give an accurate measure of its impact, as the harm done by workplace DHB goes well beyond targets alone.

Summary

This chapter reviewed DHB policy considerations that can influence the effectiveness of such a policy prior to policy content being drafted. These considerations are not separate from policy content but can directly influence that content and, as such, the long-term level of success of any DHB policy. Organisational DHB policies must be well integrated with related policies to ensure there are neither contradictions nor omissions that could undermine policy effectiveness. Policies must also align with the specific organisation the policy resides within at the societal, cultural, and the individual levels. This ecological framework will influence whether organisations opt for general or specific policies to address DHB. Lastly, organisations must decide what policy success will look like for them and develop an evaluation process that collects data to measure and track that success. When actively considered, these factors contribute to the development of an equitable and effective DHB policy by ensuring it is appropriate to the specific issues and foibles of the organisation prior to the policy being drafted.

Chapter 5: Theoretical Framework

Introduction

Philosophically, this research is grounded in a pragmatic paradigm with elements of intersectionality. A pragmatic research approach focuses on social issues. It aims to inform decisions on the implementation and evaluation of context-specific interventions to address the issue under investigation (Glasgow, 2013). Pragmatism's context-specific approach targets specific issues and closely aligns with the research questions. The pragmatic paradigm enables application of research approaches, models, and theories that achieve the best outcome for the issue and context being investigated, rather than specific approaches being aligned to pragmatist research (Kaushik & Walsh, 2019). An in-depth understanding of the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) and discrimination, harassment, and bullying (DHB) is required for the current research to support the identification of a process to tailor organisational DHB policies. Interventions, including policies, that are not specifically tailored to the context where they will be applied are more likely to be ineffective, or in the worst case, cause harm (Hobfoll et al., 2008; Whitaker & Nolon, 2009).

The enhanced understanding intersectionality offers supports the pragmatist paradigm by providing additional insight into the context of DHB within NZDF through analysing the convergence of multiple axes of social inequality, power, and social categorisation (Collins, 2012; Sasson-Levy, 2017). It highlights that the unique experience of individuals and groups at the convergence of these social systems cannot be understood by analysing the influences independently (Crenshaw, 1991). Rather, discrete forms of oppression, privilege, and inequality "shape, and are shaped by, one another, and a failure to recognise this results in both simplistic analyses and ill-conceived policy interventions" (Squires, 2008, p. 55).

This chapter examines the pragmatist perspective as a philosophical and research paradigm, and how it relates to and supports the current research. It considers how supplementing the pragmatist perspective with elements of intersectionality enhances the analysis of DHB within the NZDF context as the case study within this research. This exploration leads to a refined and context-specific process to develop DHB policies.

The Pragmatic Perspective

Thomas Kuhn (1970) introduced the concept of paradigms as an “accepted model or pattern” that can evolve with “further articulation and specification under new or more stringent conditions” (p. 23). A paradigm is a perspective or set of beliefs and assumptions that define the researcher’s worldview, influencing the phenomena investigated and the research methods used (Levers, 2013). Paradigms are “the lens through which a researcher looks at the world” (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017, p. 26) and develop over time as new knowledge is added or old knowledge replaced.

A paradigm must have both a philosophical system and a practical application for research (Morgan, 2014). Philosophically, a paradigm assists in explaining how and why phenomena occur and their implications (Adom et al., 2016); it represents “a distillation of what we *think* about the world (but cannot prove)” (*italics in original*) (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 15). A research paradigm “determines the types of questions that are legitimate, how they will be answered, and in what context they will be interpreted” (Gliner & Morgan, 2000, p. 17). A clearly understood paradigm is vital for conducting robust research, as consciously or unconsciously, these major philosophical assumptions define the orientation of the researcher (Gannon et al., 2022; Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). Paradigmatic beliefs influence how phenomena are studied and the interpretation of subsequent results, and what is studied and why (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017; Matta, 2022; Turyahikayo, 2021). By understanding their underpinning philosophical paradigm, researchers can identify the research paradigm that aligns with their beliefs about the nature of truth and reality (Mills et al., 2006). Research paradigm is not a methodology per se, but an approach to how the research can be accomplished, influencing the research process toward a particular direction (Gliner & Morgan, 2000; Žukauskas et al., 2018).

Pragmatism as a Paradigm

The essence of pragmatism as a paradigm is actions and change, with actions the conduit through which change occurs (Goldkuhl, 2017). In pragmatism as a philosophical perspective, as opposed to what is pragmatic, human action cannot be separated from previous experiences or the values and beliefs that arise from them. Pragmatism is a philosophy where the meaning of actions and beliefs is grounded in their consequences (Morgan, 2014a).

Pragmatism is primarily concerned with using knowledge to make purposeful and meaningful differences to social issues (Goldkuhl, 2017). The value of knowledge is in its ability to achieve positive change (Biesenthal, 2014; Kelly & Cordeiro, 2020). With knowledge and its value directly linked to practical outcomes it can influence, understanding a situation's context is central to analysing the possible consequences to avoid unintentional harm. To achieve the most in-depth and appropriate understanding of a particular context, pragmatism combines multiple concepts, beliefs, and theories (Biesenthal, 2014). While pragmatism does not explicitly define concepts such as social inequality, injustice, power, or politics, they are implicit within it (Collins, 2012). This is because it is not possible to fully understand a situational context without considering the impact and influence such concepts have on the context and any potential intervention. As a philosophy, "pragmatism ... [is] rooted in common sense and dedicated to the transformation of culture, to the resolution of the conflicts that divide us" (Sleeper, 2001, pp. 8-9).

Regardless of the iteration of pragmatism, common themes remain (Morgan, 2014a). Firstly, actions cannot be separated from the situation or context in which they occur. This means there can be no objective, universal truth because for any action, the outcome is dependent on the context that surrounds it. Secondly, the consequences of actions are changeable as situations, experience, and contexts change. Pragmatists believe it is not possible to experience the same exact situation twice, so beliefs and previous experience can only inform what the likely consequences of an action may be. As consequences of a specific act can change over time, so too can the meaning of that act, resulting in beliefs continually evolving alongside changing experiences (Morgan, 2014a). This creates a cyclical process of actions, resulting experiences, and amended beliefs that inform future actions. Lastly, an individual's actions depend on worldviews that are "both individually unique at the most detailed level and socially shared at broader levels" (Morgan, 2014a, p. 28). Despite individual experiences shaping individual worldviews, pragmatism also views beliefs as interconnected. While no two people have identical worldviews, shared experiences between people lead to varying levels of shared beliefs. These shared beliefs make it likely for individuals to act in similar ways and assign similar meanings to the outcomes of those actions (Biesenthal, 2014; Kaushik & Walsh, 2019; Morgan, 2014a). Together, these pragmatist elements establish a unique philosophical worldview that emphasises the nature of experiences, rather than the nature of reality, and

focuses on the outcomes of action over the nature of truth. As a philosophical stance, pragmatism is very different from many other philosophical systems more concerned with metaphysical arguments, and is fundamentally different from the simplistic view of pragmatic behaviour being merely ‘what works.’

The Pragmatist Philosophical Paradigm

As a philosophical paradigm, pragmatism rejects “traditional assumptions about the nature of reality, knowledge, and inquiry” (Kaushik & Walsh, 2019, p. 3), challenging the view that social science inquiry can define reality using a single scientific method. Pragmatism focuses on the nature of experience where other philosophies focus on the nature of reality or knowledge (Morgan, 2014a). Pragmatism does not ignore these metaphysical arguments but accepts that many of them are unsolvable as their meaning is inseparable from human experience, which is always context-driven.

The philosophical emphasis of pragmatism on practical consequences over philosophical theory-generation links thoughts to action, with human actions intrinsically linked to prior experiences and the beliefs that arise from them (Kaushik & Walsh, 2019; Kelly & Cordeiro, 2020). The meaning attributed to these actions and beliefs is grounded in their consequences, allowing people to shape their experiences through actions and intelligence without external forces determining them. Thus, pragmatist reality is fluid and changes as actions and events occur, with the world similarly fluid and “in a constant state of becoming” (Kaushik & Walsh, 2019, p. 3). Knowledge is not reality within a pragmatist philosophy. Instead, it is experience-based and constructed by individuals to better manage their existence and interactions in the world. Much of this individual knowledge is socially shared, leading to shared experiences and social knowledge (Kaushik & Walsh, 2019). As a philosophy, pragmatism “goes beyond any given methodology or any problem-solving activity” (Denzin, 2012, p. 82), surpassing practical applications to provide philosophical tools of value for addressing problems (Biesta, 2010).

The Pragmatist Research Paradigm

As a research paradigm, Dewey (1938) argued that scientific inquiry should come from social issues; that research problems are only legitimate if socially situated; and that inquiries are natural, contextual, and grounded in the identified problems (Kaushik & Walsh, 2019). As all “attempts to understand and act in the world are inherently contextual, emotional, and social” (Morgan, 2014, p. 1050), pragmatism emphasises

that all research elements require decisions regarding the most appropriate methods in the specific context being investigated. Pragmatism also requires scientific inquiry to develop from a desire to deliver valuable and actionable knowledge, supporting a purposeful and meaningful difference in practice, rather than debating concepts like truth and reality (Goldkuhl, 2017; Kaushik & Walsh, 2019; Kelly & Cordeiro, 2020). As a research paradigm, pragmatism rejects the general either-or choice between positivism and constructionism in methods and epistemology. Thus, place and the selection of philosophical and methodological approach should depend solely on the research question and context being investigated (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998; Žukauskas et al., 2018). By not assuming a single, true theory or method to generate knowledge, pragmatism embraces a plurality of theories and models (Kaushik & Walsh, 2019), considering them tools to understand the world better and create positive change (Koenig et al., 2019). Not being limited to specific research methods, pluralism supports interdisciplinary research on social issues and injustices, expanding and extending the positive outcomes that can be achieved by applying a pragmatic research paradigm (Kaushik & Walsh, 2019).

Pragmatism and the Current Research

The tenets of pragmatism that provide particular relevance for this research are that knowledge is key to developing effective policies and interventions that benefit the entire organisation (Turyahikayo, 2021), and this knowledge is inseparable from the context of the issue under review (Glasgow, 2013; Morgan, 2014). This research is underpinned by classical pragmatism, aligned with the work of John Dewey. Dewey, along with other early pragmatists, such as Mead, believed that inquiry should be a social endeavour, the meaning of knowledge gained from inquiry was context dependent, and the value of that knowledge aligned with its ability to create positive change (Kaushik & Walsh, 2019; MacMullan, 2022; Morgan, 2014a). This value is derived from the ‘social good’ research outcomes that can be achieved, with what is deemed ‘good’ being socially determined and reviewed as new information becomes available (Biddle & Schafft, 2014). Dewey (1938) believed inquiry should be based on genuine issues within social situations, stating “any problem of scientific inquiry that does not grow out of actual (or ‘practical’) social conditions is factitious; it is arbitrarily set by the inquirer instead of being objectively produced and controlled” (p. 499). Supporting this stance, Dewey saw inquiry “as a conscious response to situations where it is not clear what

actions should be taken, asking what difference it would make to act one way not another?” (Morgan, 2014a, p. 29). This difference does not relate to the researcher but to the practical difference an action could make to a context-driven, social endeavour (Biddle & Schafft, 2014). The fundamental question posed by Dewey can only be effectively answered if the consequences of all possible actions are considered to identify which is most likely to resolve the issue being investigated (Morgan, 2014a). Pragmatism places the value and meaning of data and research outcomes on their practical consequences, providing an epistemological stance that supports pluralistic understandings of multiple truths (Dewey, 1938).

Dewey also saw knowledge in everyday life as well as in research situations as being fluid (Biddle & Schafft, 2014), resulting from a cyclical experiential process rather than abstract issues (Morgan, 2014). This process involves all actions stemming from a level of problem assessment, bringing together beliefs and the consequences of previous actions to generate actions in the current situation. The results of any new actions are then interpreted to reinforce or amend extant beliefs, or create new ones, prior to further action being taken (Kelly & Cordeiro, 2020; Maarouf, 2019). These experiences, and therefore the meanings that come from them, are dependent on the specific context within which they occurred, with that context directly influencing the belief—action cycle. Dewey’s pragmatism, emphasising the links between experience, meaning, beliefs and actions, changed the argument surrounding the nature of the external world versus the world of one’s own conception from being diametrically opposed to being different perspectives of the same world (Morgan, 2014). With multiple perspectives of the same world clear within NZDF resulting from both individual backgrounds and the differences between military and non-military staff, as well as those between the different armed services within the NZDF, Dewey’s pragmatism fits particularly well. The alignment increases when considering the belief—action cycle, the breadth of influence military cultures have, and impact NZDF’s culture has on its members.

Pragmatist Axioms Within the Current Research

Given the primacy of contextual understanding in social situations for pragmatism as both a philosophical and research paradigm, the application of pragmatism to the DHB situation within NZDF and its influence on this research must be examined. Borrowing from the philosophy of knowledge, Lincoln and Guba (1985) identified an axiom framework to assist with understanding the specific context of DHB within NZDF and

clarify how that contextual understanding influenced the design and conduct of this research. These pragmatist axioms provide a unified set of assumptions on the nature of reality (ontology), knowledge of that reality (epistemology), how to produce that knowledge (methodology), underpinned by the value applied to that knowledge (axiology) (Biddle & Schafft, 2014; Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017; Lincoln et al., 2011; Matta, 2022; Morgan, 2014a).

Ontology

Ontology is the nature of reality (Gannon et al., 2022) and what might exist (Guarino et al., 2009; Henry & Foley, 2018). Studer et al. (1998) defined ontology as “a formal, explicit specification of a shared conceptualization” (p. 186). For researchers, ontology refers to their beliefs about reality and existence (Henry & Foley, 2018). The relationship between ontology and epistemology is the relationship between what reality exists and one’s knowledge or experience of that reality (van Dijk, 2020). This relationship is often viewed as intertwined with an individual’s ontological stance on reality, influencing their epistemological assumptions about the nature of knowledge (Gannon et al., 2022). While still intertwined, the perspective of many science-based philosophies sees ontology as independent of an individual’s knowledge and experience of reality, assuming ontology occurs prior to epistemology and is a complete concept in and of itself (van Dijk, 2020). This separate and complete ontological stance is relative, influencing research epistemology and subsequent research method choices (Gannon et al., 2022).

In pragmatism, reality focuses on actions and change, with individuals acting within a world that is constantly developing (Goldkuhl, 2017); despite pragmatism placing more emphasis on epistemological implications and methodology than on the ontological view that accompanies and supports them (van Dijk, 2020). Dewey presented a pragmatist ontological perspective, challenging the traditional view of ontology as being complete and occurring before any epistemological analysis. He argued that by treating ontology as complete, many uncertain and indeterminate aspects of everyday life and philosophic or scientific inquiry are excluded (van Dijk, 2020) which risks limiting or distorting the development of new knowledge and experience of an ever-changing reality. Pragmatist ontology works together with epistemology, rather than preceding it (Pratt, 2016), with the features of both co-determining each other over time. Ontology

within a pragmatist paradigm is temporary, not complete, as it is a process of continual development informing an equally changeable epistemology (van Dijk, 2020).

Key to pragmatism's action-focused ontology is the role of emotions. In pragmatism, an individual's impression of a current situation translates into conception through emotion, with emotion being a response to new situations where previous habitual responses are incompatible or inappropriate (Pratt, 2016). Research has demonstrated that it is emotional forces, often unconsciously, that are primarily responsible for social behaviour, not cognitions, as cognitions occur subsequently to initial actions. Emotions in pragmatism directly influence an individual's perspective of reality alongside contextual and social influences and, therefore, how they act in and react to the world around them (Morgan, 2014).

The linking of emotion with individual realities is particularly relevant for military personnel and, to a lesser extent, civilian staff, when considering the extent to which military service influences their worldview (Carrola & Corbin-Burdick, 2015) and subsequent realities for members of NZDF. The combination of emotion, context, and social influences, alongside the cultural values and protocols that surround military service, uniformed or civilian, shapes what it means to be a member of NZDF. Of relevance to this research is the value NZDF places on relationships, particularly those related to comradeship. It extends to the value that individuals within NZDF and other militaries place on their section, unit, and service identities, often superseding their previous civilian identities (Kerr et al., 2023; Kleykamp et al., 2021). Within a pragmatist context, this directly influences the realities of NZDF members, reinforcing the multiple realities any new DHB policy must support.

Ontology within a pragmatist paradigm sees reality centred on actions and change. Individuals operate in a world that constantly evolves (Goldkuhl, 2017), meaning reality, too, is fluid and changeable (Kaushik & Walsh, 2019). Pragmatists, like Dewey, saw reality as separate from human experience; therefore, the only way to understand it was through that same human experience. Simply put, this supports the pragmatist view that reality and knowledge are socially constructed (Morgan, 2014a) and socially influenced, reinforcing the need to ensure policies and interventions are carefully aligned with the realities of those who will be impacted to avoid unintended negative consequences. The pragmatist

acceptance of multiple realities, influenced by emotions, context and experience, offers a framework to better understand the multiple worldviews, and thus realities, of both military and civilian NZDF members.

Epistemology

Epistemology, what can be known about the world, is intertwined with ontology, as one's ontological stance shapes epistemological assumptions and subsequent research design (Gannon et al., 2022).

Epistemology implies an ethical-moral perception of the world, while ontology questions the nature of reality and that of human beings within the world (Lincoln et al., 2011). Epistemologically, pragmatism places priority on understanding practical, real world issues, where the value of research is its ability to create positive change rather than metaphysical debates on the nature of truth or reality (Kelly & Cordeiro, 2020). It argues that all knowledge is based on experience and, combined with the belief that the world is both real and socially constructed, all knowledge is then social knowledge. Pragmatists see that every individual's knowledge is unique, based on their individual experience, and this knowledge is shared through social experiences (Morgan, 2014a), such as military service.

The pragmatist concept of double-faced knowledge (Maarouf, 2019) posits that all knowledge can be both observable and unobservable, dependent on a researcher's ontological position of either accepting one reality per context or multiple perceptions of reality. This allows researchers to move between objective and subjective viewpoints, as the epistemological concept of double-faced knowledge accepts both perspectives. All knowledge is then received, with the research method selected based on what is most appropriate to the researcher's ontological position, and the context of the knowledge and research.

Pragmatist epistemology is not only cognitive; it also relies on the context of any cognition and cognitive development. This context incorporates both social and cultural components, influenced by situational, relational, and historical constructs. Ignoring the cultural context of epistemology creates limitations in any research by failing to acknowledge or consider cultural and individual differences (Reybold, 2002). Epistemology's concern about whether and how reality is known links to what is considered to be that knowledge, including references to truth. Epistemology then, can be seen as the researcher's set of beliefs about what counts as knowledge (Henry & Foley, 2018). This pragmatist axiom is particularly relevant to my positionality. Not only have I developed a cognitive understanding and

appreciation of the complexities of DHB within organisations, I gained a significant portion of that within the NZDF context, immersed in its cultural, historical, and social constructs.

Methodology

Decisions made regarding the methodology for an inquiry are embedded within a researcher's axiological, ontological, and epistemological stance. A pragmatist stance does not assume one single, true theory or method to generate knowledge; instead, it uses multiple theories and models (Koenig et al., 2019). The pragmatist research paradigm embraces a "plurality of method and multiple methods" (Maxcy, 2003, p. 52), supporting the use of whichever research method will result in credible, well-founded, reliable and relevant data to make a positive change in the social issue and context being investigated (Kaushik & Walsh, 2019; Maarouf, 2019; Saunders et al., 2012). Pragmatism considers theories, models, and methods as tools to understand the world better (Koenig et al., 2019); thus, supporting the ability to create the positive change that underpins pragmatic research, assisting the integration of research with practice and policy (Glasgow, 2013).

The pragmatist approach contends that research is neither inductive nor deductive, objective nor subjective. Rather, all research projects fall along an inductive-deductive spectrum at different points in the research process, abduction provides a practical alternative. The goal of the abductive approach is to explore data, identify patterns, and develop plausible hypotheses through robust analysis. It is commonly used when integrating qualitative and quantitative methods (Gannon et al., 2022). The pragmatist perspective supports an inter-subjective approach to research, enabling knowledge to be generated through the combination of actions linked to a variety of methodological approaches (Morgan, 2007). The focus of pragmatist methodologies has been on generating positive change within the identified context, rather than adhering to a specified methodology, which provides a congruent foundation for the current research. It offers the opportunity to identify research methods to generate the data required to answer the research queries, while ensuring the selected methods align with and are sensitive to the cultural considerations of NZDF. These considerations apply at the organisational level and value individual realities and experiences.

Axiology

Axiology as an aspect of the philosophy of knowledge, focussing on understanding ethical stances and what is valued, is often overlooked. However, it has a fundamental role in all inquiry as it influences the very selection of specific issues over others and the formation of research questions (Biddle & Schafft, 2014). The level to which axiological issues are acknowledged and their influence on research varies across researchers and underlying philosophical stances. For example, positivist and realist research approaches advocate minimal axiological engagement to reduce potential researcher influence and maintain objectivity in research outcomes (Pretorius, 2024). Other approaches require researchers to state their axiological position to mitigate potential conflicts of interest or biases that could compromise research validity, while allowing the researcher's values and experiences to be woven into the inquiry process (Biddle & Schafft, 2014). One pragmatist researcher has labelled the process of identifying potential biases and their impact as the necessary bias principle (Maarouf, 2019). This principle acknowledges that researchers cannot be free from their own values, knowledge, and experiences, nor can they avoid the bias inherent in their prior knowledge of the research topic. Therefore, pragmatic researchers must ensure any potential biases reinforce rather than detract from the research, using only the bias necessary, avoiding biases that could negatively impact research results and interpretation.

Despite the fundamental link between ethics and epistemology for early pragmatists, the role ethics and values have played in research practices diminished over time. Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) argued that, despite the role values played in pragmatist inquiry, most researchers saw “no reason to be particularly concerned about it” (p. 90). This perspective advocates a simplified pragmatist philosophy of ‘what works’ over axiological questions of ‘what works for whom?’ and ‘to what end?’ (Biddle & Schafft, 2014). The pragmatism underpinning the current research aligns with earlier perspectives, where these value-laden questions are of primary concern. A return to the primacy of axiology has been advocated in the literature (Lincoln et al., 2011). Reviewing their initial construct (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), Lincoln et al. (2011) highlighted the influence axiology has on research processes as “part of the basic foundational philosophical dimensions of paradigm proposal” (p. 116). This elevated position requires ethics and values to be embedded within research paradigms, not held external (Lincoln et al., 2011). Reconnection with

axiology realigns pragmatic research to its central tenet that value is not linked to knowledge itself, but to the attempt to develop knowledge to resolve specific, context-bound social issues. This reinforces the pivotal role ethical issues have as the direct link to the other elements of the pragmatic paradigm (Morgan, 2007).

The importance of embedded ethics and values to pragmatism (Lincoln et al., 2011) is mirrored within NZDF. NZDF's foundational values are Tū Kaha (courage), Tū Tika (commitment), Tū Māia (integrity), and Tū Tira (comradeship) (Defence Strategy Management, 2019). Individual members' behaviour, and that of the organisation as a whole, are expected to align with these core values (Ministry of Defence, 2014). DHB behaviours are unacceptable, unreflective of NZDF values, and below the behavioural standards NZDF expects (Teale & MacDonald, 2020). Despite these behavioural expectations, DHB behaviours continue to occur. NZDF has continuously attempted to address DHB and other behaviours that do not align with organisational values, such as Operations Stand (New Zealand Defence Force, n.d.-b) and Respect (Teale & MacDonald, 2020), to address substance abuse and inappropriate sexual behaviours respectively. These action-based NZDF programmes reflect the pragmatist view that the value of knowledge is not in knowledge itself, but in actions taken to develop knowledge into specific and measurable outcomes.

The current research is being conducted to inform the development process for DHB policies to align with the context in which they will be applied. A desire to investigate the broadest possible options as policy-based solutions to DHB aligns with Dewey's (1938) contention that inquiry should be socially based (DHB), socially situated (DHB in workplaces), contextual (organisational differences will mean non-standard DHB policies), and grounded in the identified problems (the requirement to identify specific workplace DHB issues in organisations). Understanding the NZDF context as the case study organisation for this research is pivotal. NZDF's situation lends itself to positive change within the area, aligning with pragmatism's stance that the value of knowledge is in its ability to bring about social good and positive change.

Intersectionality and the NZDF

The pragmatist research paradigm advocates for the inclusion of multiple theories and models to foster a deeper understanding of the research context. Much of the analysis of NZDF within this study has focused on the differences between military and non-military members of the organisation, and how this group

membership impacts the worldview of each group. However, an individual's worldview is not constructed by a single social identity, such as being a soldier, sailor, or aviator. Instead, identities encompass multiple social identity structures, ranging from ethnicity and gender to income and sexual orientation (Gopaldas, 2013). Each person has a unique set of social statuses that combine to create their social identity, as well as their own experiences of privilege and oppression based on their membership in multiple social groups (Ender et al., 2015; Gopaldas, 2013). Accordingly, it becomes vital to recognise and understand the differences that occur within social groups, not simply between groups. Assuming each social group of which an individual is a member (e.g., 'woman' or 'soldier') has a universal, homogeneous experience fails to consider the cumulative and interdependent impact each has (Smooth, 2013). This consideration requires an understanding of the relationships between social structures, specifically where these structures combine, generating social categories with their own unique experiences and forms of oppression (Weldon, 2008).

Intersectionality, born from black feminism in the United States during the 1960s and 1970s, sought to analyse and challenge the intersection of social inequality, power, and politics surrounding race and gender (Collins, 2012; Sasson-Levy, 2017). This concept recognised the unique experience of individuals and groups who resided at the convergence of these systems, understanding that their whole experience could not be captured by looking at those influences independently (Crenshaw, 1991). The initial emphasis on race, class, and gender expanded over time to include all social identity categorisations that could impact on unique social advantages and disadvantages (Gopaldas, 2013), with an additional focus on systems or processes that interact to produce various inequalities (Smooth, 2013). Ignoring the intersection of these systems and social identity categorisations risks the systemic neglect of the experiences faced by many marginalised groups (Weldon, 2008). Simply put, rather than focusing on a single dimension, the concept of intersectionality requires analysis of multiple axes of power and the complex manner in which they interact to generate multiple forms of social inequality (Kachtan, 2016; Smooth, 2013). When extended into organisational policies, including intersectionality as a tool to enhance policy development can reduce the risk that policies unintentionally reinforce inequity while actively fostering greater inclusion and access to benefits, support, and opportunities (Smooth, 2013).

Intersectionality aligns with and enhances the pragmatist paradigm, contributing to a “more comprehensive understanding of social inequality, power, and politics” (Collins, 2012, p. 455). The theoretical alignment between intersectionality and pragmatism covers multiple common themes, particularly the treatment of multiple realities and knowledge. As with pragmatism’s concept of multiple realities (Kaushik & Walsh, 2019), intersectionality recognises that there is no singular reality. It sees individual and group identities influenced by the multiple constructs (Collins, 2012) and contexts individuals find themselves in that “intersect to create a matchless person” (Ender et al., 2015, p. 243). By interpreting knowledge as inseparable from the changeable power relations that shape it, intersectionality aligns epistemologically with pragmatism’s view that there is no ultimate knowledge or truth as these change with new situations and outcomes (Morgan, 2014a). With this underlying theoretical alignment, intersectionality enhances pragmatism’s analyses of social contexts by highlighting the roles that social inequalities, power, and politics can play, which may otherwise be overlooked (Moradi & Grzanka, 2017).

Within the context of the NZDF, intersectionality supports the argument that individual members are simultaneously influenced by multiple axes of power, resulting in individualised systems of inequality (Collins 1990). This offers a more detailed understanding and deeper acceptance that any military is staffed by individuals who experience their service differently (Sasson-Levy, 2017). Military service is not uniform amongst seemingly homogenous groups, be that based on gender, ethnicity, service affiliation, or any other categorisation; nor can those experiences be generalised across other military groups (Sasson-Levy, 2016). This reinforces the importance of both organisational context and individual realities in the development of any DHB policy. It is especially relevant for the NZDF as Sasson-Levy’s (2017) intersectional analysis of gender and ethnicity in militaries identified that the intersection of gender, ethnicity, and race operates differently within a military context than outside the military environment (Sasson-Levy, 2017). Despite the knowledge intersectionality offers, it would be impossible to specifically address every potential intersection of social identity categories present in the NZDF within any policy, DHB or otherwise. However, it is possible to highlight key intersections across major social groupings and take action to ensure that the application of any new DHB policy does not inadvertently disadvantage or isolate any NZDF members.

Summary

Examining the pragmatist perspective as both a philosophical and research paradigm provides a theoretical framework for the current research project. The pragmatist perspective influenced the research topic and supporting research questions, as well as how the research was designed to answer those questions. The review of pragmatist axioms within the context of NZDF as the current case study further refined the application of a pragmatist perspective to this research. To supplement the pragmatist research paradigm, elements of intersectionality were discussed to support the multiple realities across members of the NZDF who participated in this research.

Chapter 6: Research Methodology and Method

Research Methodology

Research Objectives

This research aims to identify effective policy elements for an equitable and effective discrimination, harassment, and bullying (DHB) policy. The research outcomes will enable organisations to tailor DHB policies to their own context. In this research, effectiveness refers to the equitable and consistent application of policy across an organisation. It includes promoting the reporting of DHB behaviours and ensuring their effective resolution to support overall prevention. The primary research question for this research is: How can organisations tailor their DHB policies to improve the equity and effectiveness of workplace DHB outcomes?

To answer the primary research question, two separate components need to be addressed: (1) the policy elements needed to support the development of an equitable and effective DHB policy (2) the factors to be considered to tailor a DHB policy to a specific organisation? I identified these components as the core and supplementary questions respectively due to the requirement to identify DHB policy elements (core) before they could be further tailored to a specific organisation (supplementary). Answering the primary research question was achieved by investigating the following core and supplementary questions:

1. **Core question:** What policy components contribute to an appropriate, effective and consistent organisational policy for workplace DHB?
2. **Supplementary question:** What organisational factors need to be considered to support organisations to tailor workplace DHB policies to their own context?

The independent results of the core and supplementary questions were synthesised to provide detailed recommendations as a response to the primary research question.

Research Approach

A pragmatist paradigm. I based this research on the classical pragmatist research paradigm, seeking a measurable outcome to the social issue of workplace DHB. This paradigm advocates answering the questions ‘what works for whom?’ and ‘to what end?’ (Teddle & Tashakkori, 2009), within a clearly defined

social context where research value is based on the positive change it can bring about (Kaushik & Walsh, 2019; MacMullan, 2022; Morgan, 2014a).

Mixed-methods methodology. I applied a qualitative mixed-methods research approach. This approach allowed for a more nuanced understanding of workplace DHB (Creswell et al., 2006), gave voice to participants free from managerial or peer influence (Hesse-Biber, 2010), and offered deeper insights into the factors shaping DHB policies (O'Reilly et al., 2021). The mixed-methods approach allowed me to gather multiple data sets, as my research question could not be answered with a single data set. By integrating differing data sets, I was able to use results from one method to expand on the results from the other, providing an increased breadth, range, and depth of inquiry (Hanson et al., 2005).

As both core and supplementary components of this research question had the same abductive reasoning approach, and were both qualitative in nature, I applied an intra-paradigm mixed methods research approach (Morse, 2010). This allowed me to create a greater understanding of the DHB issue being investigated (Hesse-Biber, 2010), while removing the technical difficulties involved in combining textual and numerical data for analysis and interpretation (Morse, 2010; O'Reilly et al., 2021).

Research originality. In their review of workplace harassment research, Neall & Tuckey (2014) identified the significant majority - more than 85% - of this research used a single data source, that being the target of this behaviour. Since then, few studies have expanded data collection to examine workplace DHB policies from both the target's perspective when attempting to seek DHB policy action and the manager's perspective when they apply that policy within the same organisation. Close examples include Hutchinson et al.'s (2006a, 2006b, 2009, 2010) research in Australian healthcare and Catley et al.'s (2017) review of the New Zealand public health sector, both of which include multi-role accounts. However, these studies do not integrate the perspectives of multiple groups impacted by DHB with a structured literature review of what constitutes an effective DHB policy. Similarly, Crimp (2017) integrated organisational DHB policies with human resource and union practitioners but not the experiences of DHB targets.

This study's design is therefore methodologically original in its triangulation of three distinct data sources: a rapid literature review identifying best practice policy elements, interviews with targets who attempted to use the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) DHB policy, and interviews with managers

responsible for implementing that same policy. Bringing these datasets together enables a unique evaluation of how closely real world policy experiences align with best practice standards, and provides a novel basis for determining how organisations can tailor DHB policies to improve both equity and effectiveness of outcomes.

Embedded case study. I applied a case study method to illustrate the uniqueness of the NZDF DHB environment within the broader research topic of workplace DHB (Scholz & Tietje, 2002). It offered the opportunity to gain a deep understanding of the real-life DHB issue, alongside an in-depth contextual understanding of the NZDF environment (Crowe et al., 2011; Yin, 2009). With context a priority for case study methods, where the issue under examination cannot be clearly separated from the environment it is occurring (Kanga et al., 2015), and pragmatist research paradigms, this method aligned closely with my research (Scholz & Tietje, 2002). The embedded case study design was particularly useful for investigating DHB within NZDF, as the behaviour could not be separated from the organisational context.

The specific methods I deemed most appropriate for answering the research questions were a rapid literature review to address the core question, supported by semi-structured interviews to address the supplementary question. By integrating the datasets from these inquiries, I was able to identify key elements and considerations that support recommendations for an equitable and effective DHB policy, as well as how organisations can apply the insights generated from them to tailor their own policies.

My decision to conduct a rapid, rather than systematic, literature review was predicated on the constrained time frame available for the research and supported by the underlying pragmatist paradigm. While literature reviews are generally considered mixed research studies (Onwuegbuzie & Frels, 2016), a brief overview of the relevant literature indicated this rapid review would likely yield a higher proportion of qualitative than quantitative sources, leading me to treat it as a qualitative method. The review provided a comprehensive analysis of considerations and elements recognised as supportive of equitable and effective DHB policies, providing a primary data set further enhanced by the data resulting from the semi-structured interviews. The semi-structured interviews focused on the experiences of commanders and managers, alongside targets of DHB who had experience with the current NZDF DHB policy. These interviews provided

data specific to the NZDF to support the identification of factors organisations need to consider during the tailoring of any DHB policy context. A depiction of the research design plan is shown in Figure 3.

Time horizon. As the current research aimed to inform policy development, and access to interview participants was limited, data collection was restricted to a limited timeframe. Time constraints therefore influenced my decision to undertake a rapid review rather than a full systematic literature review, and to use cross-sectional, semi-structured interviews. To further support the time limitations, the research design consisted of a single phase in which I collected the data for each research question concurrently and independently.

Causality caveat. While the triangulated design will identify consistent patterns across the three data types of targets, managers, and policy criteria, the qualitative nature of the data does not permit causal inference. The findings should be interpreted as associations and perceived mechanisms rather than evidence of cause and effect relationships.

Research Method

Ethical Considerations

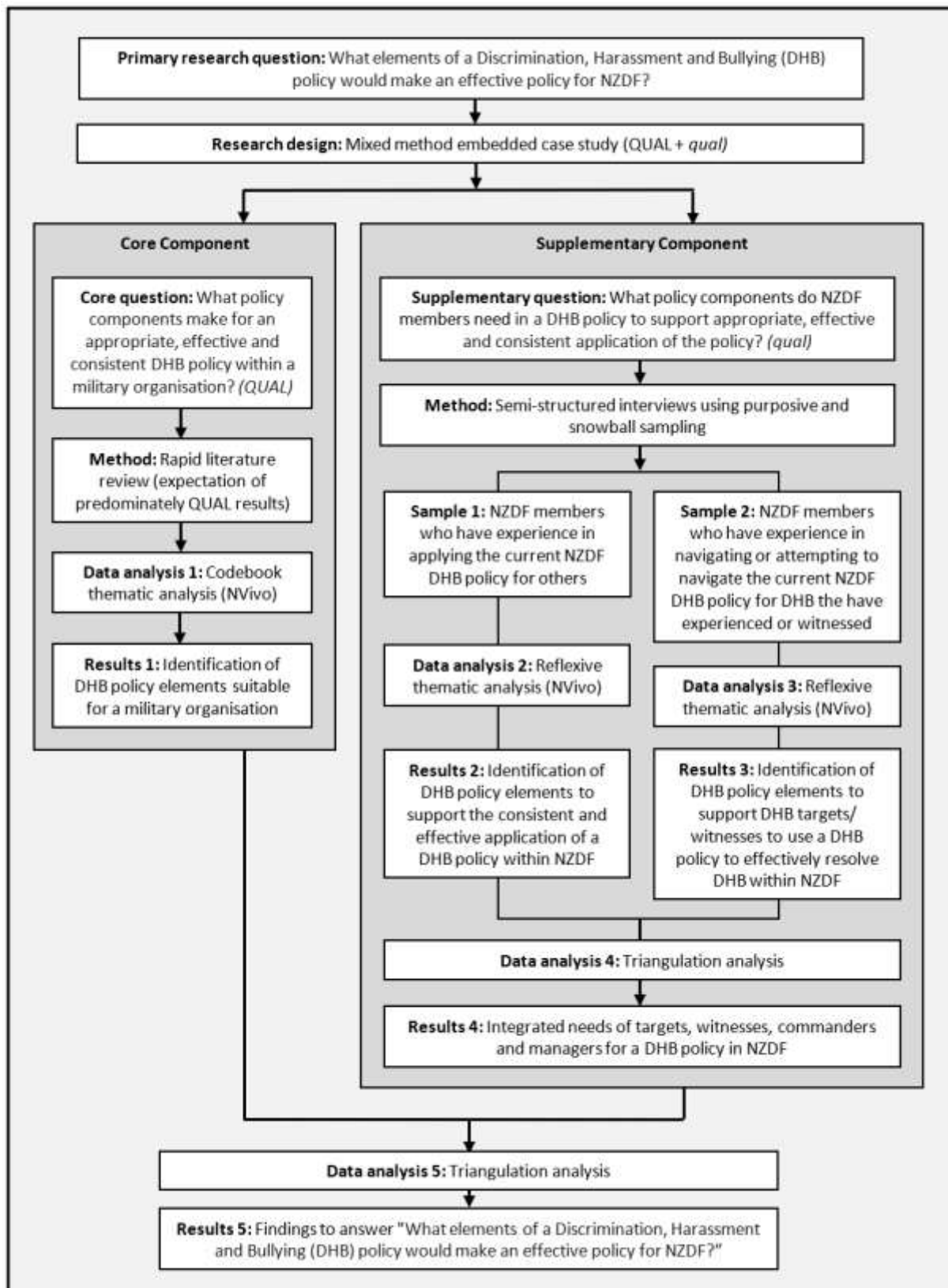
To protect the interests of research participants and minimise and mitigate any potential risk of harm, ethics approval was sought and granted for the research by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTC 23/85 approved 19 June 2023) (see Appendix A). Additionally, as all interview participants were members of the NZDF, meaning added security requirements attached to any data relating to military personnel, I sought and was granted ethics approval by the NZDF (NZDF 5000/PB/5/3 approved 21 June 2022) (see Appendix B).

Ethical considerations for qualitative semi-structured interviews. I designed the semi-structured interviews to gather narrative data on participants' experiences with the NZDF DHB policy, not the details of the incidents themselves. However, as the interviews had potential to raise unpleasant memories and trigger trauma responses, I identified and addressed several ethical considerations. These considerations included informed consent, confidentiality, potential harm, and the management of power imbalances.

Informed consent. I provided all potential interview participants with an information sheet (Appendix C) outlining the research aims and interview processes. Any questions participants had were answered by

Figure 3

Initial Research Design Plan



me either before or at commencement of the interview. Comprehensive consent forms, either oral (Appendix D) or written (Appendix E), depending on the means used to conduct the interview, were completed by participants prior to commencing the interview.

Confidentiality and privacy. To ensure the confidentiality of all those who participated in the semi-structured interviews, I adhered to the following steps:

1. Conducted interviews in locations (either physically or virtually) where there was no likelihood of being overheard.
2. Audio-recorded the interviews using Otter.ai.
3. Initial transcriptions provided by Otter.ai were quality checked by me, and the recordings were destroyed once the transcriptions were complete.
4. All handwritten interview notes and transcriptions were identified by an alphanumeric code that had no direct link to participants.
5. I stored the document linking individual codes to interview participants in a separate, password-controlled folder, from all other interview documentation, within my personal laptop. The folder was destroyed once the research was complete.

Potential harm caused by the interview. To mitigate potential discomfort, the participant information sheet outlined that interviews could be paused, rescheduled, or discontinued at any time. Contact details for both the NZDF and the Auckland University of Technology's (AUT) support services were included in the information sheet. Participants were also advised, via the information sheet and either verbally or by email, that they could bring a support person. Any support person was required to complete a confidentiality agreement, either oral (Appendix F) or written (Appendix G), depending on the means of interview and prior to the interview commencing, to safeguard the privacy of the interview participant further. Two target and witness group (TWG) participants elected to have a support person with them during the interview. No commander and management group (CMG) participants did so.

Managing potential power imbalance between interviewer and interviewee. To minimise any potential power imbalance due to military rank differences between myself and interview participants, I adhered to the following:

1. I did not wear a uniform, and military interview participants were given the option to do the same.
2. While participants were aware of my military rank due to email interaction prior to the interview, only first names (rather than rank) were used in all communication.
3. Interview times and locations were at the discretion of the participants to ensure they were comfortable and at ease.
4. I reiterated to participants multiple times during the consent process that my role was that of a researcher, not a military officer.
5. I reminded participants multiple times that no feedback would be provided to their command chain or manager.

Data management. All documents were stored on my personal laptop in a password-protected folder until the research was complete. At the completion of the research all documents were then transferred to an AUT data storage facility in line with the Data Management Plan for this research (Appendix H), with additional cybersecurity measures due to the data meeting the AUT requirements for ‘very sensitive’ data.

The interview transcripts stored within Otter.ai were protected by the data security procedures used by Otter.ai based on the ISO 27001/2 framework (International Organisation for Standardization, 2022). These procedures included AWS S3 storage and AWS SSE (Server-Side Encryption) on data (S3 buckets), as well as for machine data volumes. This encrypted the key itself with a regularly rotated root key and a 256-bit Advanced Encryption Standard (AES-256) used for server-side encryption (Otter.ai, n.d.). To provide additional anonymity for participants, I labelled all interviews and transcripts with participant alpha-numeric codes only, and no documents stored in Otter.ai could link these codes to participant names. This process ensured documents stored on Otter.ai or in any way transmitted via the internet could not be linked to participant names. The only document that linked participant alpha-numeric codes with names was created, stored, and deleted from my personal laptop. It was never transmitted to any other device either via cabled data transfer or via the internet.

After using Otter.ai to record and provide initial transcriptions, the potential for future data leaks was identified for cloud-based services like Otter.ai. My decision to use Otter.ai was informed by the best available information at the time, which supported its use and assured data security. My use of alpha-numeric codes only as file names and the deletion of files once transcriptions were complete further reduced the risk of any future leaks of research files being attributed to individual participants.

Māori Data Governance. Data governance, the treatment of data itself as a valuable entity (Khatri & Brown, 2010), has been key throughout the development of the data management plan for this research. Due to the inclusion of Māori participants in both interview groups, considerations for Māori data sovereignty within overall data governance were required to be met. How alignment with the Māori data sovereignty principles of whakapapa (relationships), whanungatanga (obligations or duty), kotahitanga (collective benefit), manaakitanga (reciprocity), and kaitiakitanga (guardianship) was achieved are detailed within Appendix H.

Ethical considerations for rapid literature review. While rapid literature reviews do not collect data directly from participants, using publicly available research and documents instead, the influence they can have on policy and practice increases the ethical responsibility of researchers using this method (Suri, 2020; Vergnes et al., 2010). To prevent the inclusion of data from sources that may not have demonstrated ethical research practices, I added the following ethically based exclusion criteria to the criteria previously specified in the protocol for the rapid literature review:

1. Any experimental studies that included the manipulation of environments or interventions to observe the effect of DHB-type behaviour on participants, based on the ethical principle of beneficence, specifically the requirement to do no harm (National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, 1979).
2. Any study that had insufficient ethical reporting to determine if ethical standards were met (Vergnes et al., 2010).
3. Any study that demonstrated a disregard of one or more fundamental ethical principles such as informed consent, protection from harm, privacy and confidentiality, or concerns with payment for participation (Powell et al., 2012).

Rapid Literature Review

Protocol and Registration

I prepared the rapid review protocol in accordance with the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis Protocols (PRISMA-P) (Moher et al., 2009; Page et al., 2021) and registered it on the International Prospective Register of Systematic Reviews (PROSPERO) (<https://www.crd.york.ac.uk/prospero/>) on 16 December 2022 (registration number 384481) (see Appendix I). This protocol provided a detailed plan for the execution of the rapid review, supporting decision consistency throughout the conduct of the review, accountability, integrity, and transparency of results (King et al., 2022; Page et al., 2021). It also provided a documented process enabling discrepancies between the protocol and completed review to be identified, and for replication of the review if desired (Shamseer et al., 2015).

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Types of studies. I included all relevant English language non-randomised controlled trials (RCTs), narrative reviews, systematic reviews, cross-sectional and observational studies without restriction on publication type. Papers, books, and reports were included if they met the search criteria, including dates of 2005 or later, unless deemed to be seminal work related to the research question and literature review objectives, to reduce search results in line with rapid review procedures. Grey literature searches were restricted to materials specifically addressing the NZDF, its military partners, or New Zealand government agencies.

Types of participants. Studies with adults of all genders (over 18 years old), employed (paid or unpaid) in both military and non-military organisations, of any ethnic background and nationality were included.

Exclusion criteria. The large number of search results relating to non-work or employment DHB, such as discrimination or harassment in health care or social service environments, and DHB related to non-adults, necessitated me adding the non-employment and non-adult exclusion criteria. Similarly, the large body of work addressing the impact, consequences, and prevalence of DHB within workplaces required the

exclusion of results that did not directly address DHB policy or policy implications. The final exclusion criteria were:

- a. Studies dated prior to 2005, unless deemed seminal pieces of work related to the research question and literature review objectives to ensure a focus on contemporary literature within the constraints of the rapid review;
- b. Non-English language studies;
- c. Studies involving school-aged students, non-military training establishments, trade training institutes, universities or any other tertiary training or education establishments;
- d. Children and young people under the age of 18 (deviation from protocol);
- e. Non-employment related DHB (deviation from protocol);
- f. Any studies not meeting ethical requirements;
- g. any experimental studies that included the manipulation of environments or interventions to observe the effect of DHB-type behaviour on participants. This aligned with the ethical principle of beneficence, specifically the requirement to do no harm (National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, 1979), and
- h. Studies not related to DHB policy or policy implications (deviation from protocol).

Search Strategy

My electronic search strategy was designed to search the following databases: PsycINFO, Scopus, Emerald Insight, SpringerLink, Taylor & Francis Online, JSTOR, Business Source Complete, Wiley Online Library, EBSCO, Google Scholar, and Sage Journals. I supplemented this search by separate information requests through military agencies and other New Zealand government agencies for relevant research and policies; however, no responses were received. I focused on peer-reviewed, published data, with the following modifications for a rapid review: a narrow research question, English language articles only, a reduced search timeframe, limiting grey literature to that specifically addressing the NZDF and military partners, and the use of one reviewer for study selection and data extraction. My search strategy is presented in Table 1.

The search strategy included two nested and two proximity searches across each database. All identified citations were entered into a bibliographic management software program (EndNote), and

duplicate entries removed. I then conducted title, abstract, and full-text screening against the inclusion criteria. Included studies at that stage were screened for additional relevant studies. Grey literature, such as military journals and New Zealand theses databases that may not have been included in the search criteria, was searched, particularly for NZDF or New Zealand-specific studies and research.

Key terms. I employed a broad search strategy to ensure the identification of a wide range of studies covering all forms of DHB across military and non-military organisations. Key search terms were identified through preliminary searches and in consultation with literature search experts. Key terms were then grouped within the overarching review components of the military, DHB, and policy terms.

Table 1.

Database Search Strategy.

Search Component		Keywords
A		Armed force* or armed service* or military or militaries or para military or para militaries or defence force* or army or armies or navy or navies or air force*
B		Bully or bullying or hazing* or harass* or discriminat*
C		Policy or policies or strateg* or program* or procedur* or guideline*
Nested Searches		Keywords
1	'A' AND 'B' [proximity] 'C'	(Armed force* OR armed service* OR military OR militaries OR para military OR para militaries OR defence force* OR army OR armies OR navy OR navies OR air force*) AND (Bully OR bullying OR hazing* OR harass* OR discriminat*) N5 (Policy OR policies OR strateg* OR program* OR procedur* OR guideline*)
2	'A' AND 'B' AND 'C'	(Armed force* OR armed service* OR military OR militaries OR para military OR para militaries OR defence force* OR army OR armies OR navy OR navies OR air force*) AND (Bully OR bullying OR hazing* OR harass* OR discriminat*) AND (Policy OR policies OR strateg* OR program* OR procedur* OR guideline*)
Proximity Searches		Keywords
3	'A' [proximity] 'B'	(Armed force* OR armed service* OR military OR militaries OR para military OR para militaries OR defence force* OR army OR armies OR navy OR navies OR air force*) N5 (Bully OR bullying OR hazing* OR harass* OR discriminat*)
4	'B' [proximity] 'C'	(Bully or bullying or hazing* or harass* or discriminat*) N5 (Policy or policies or strateg* or program* or procedur* or guideline*)

Selection and Screening of Search Records

I selected studies based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria, removing duplicates. My initial screening consisted of a title and abstract review, with records assessed as outside the specified parameters being

removed. The remaining records underwent a further review process based on the full-text documents involving a more detailed analysis of each record against the inclusion and exclusion criteria.

Deviations from Registered Protocol

When I applied the search strategy detailed in the registered protocol (registration number 384481; Appendix I), I identified several amendments to the protocol that needed to be made during the conduct of the search. Deviations to the registered protocol are identified in Appendix J and detailed here.

Databases searched. I removed Emerald Insight, SpringerLink, Taylor and Francis Online, JSTOR, and Sage Journals from the search strategy. As these are publisher databases, including them would have negated much of the time-saving benefit of a rapid review. The databases I included in the final literature searches were PsycINFO, Scopus, Business Source Complete, EBSCO – CINAHL, EBSCO – MEDline, and Google Scholar. Additional articles were identified by applying the search criteria to my own electronic library. Separate, targeted searches specifically addressing NZDF, military partners, and other New Zealand government agencies were conducted, and relevant documents or reports that met all search criteria were included under results from my own library.

Search strategy. Due to differences in search engines, parameters, and limitations across the identified databases, the detailed search criteria varied. While adhering to the search criteria and keywords specified in Table 1 as closely as possible, I individualised each search criterion for each database, with the specific searches used detailed in Appendix K.

Criteria. Additional exclusion criteria were identified and applied to produce more targeted search results. These additional criteria were any documents:

- a. Related to non-adults;
- b. Related to non-employment-related DHB; and
- c. Unrelated to DHB policy or policy implications.

Risk of Bias (RoB) assessment. The registered protocol identified the Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI) tools as the primary source for RoB methodological assessment tools due to their range of methodological assessment options (Ma et al., 2020; Zeng et al., 2015). I did identify the requirement to extend beyond JBI due to gaps in the JBI suite of assessment tools. I included the Center for Evidence-Based Management

Search Results

Table 2.

Source ⁽¹⁾	Search Results ⁽²⁾					
	1 ⁽²⁾	2 ⁽³⁾	3 ⁽⁴⁾	4 ⁽⁵⁾	5 ⁽⁶⁾	n
EBSCO - CINAHL	144	65	79	345		633
EBSCO - MEDline	15	99	45	276		435
PsycINFO	69	17	89	122 ⁽²⁾		297
Business Source Complete	79	46	34	87		246
Scopus	129	106	28	75		338
Google scholar	⁽⁷⁾	35 ⁽⁸⁾	17 ⁽⁹⁾	49 ⁽⁹⁾		101
Other sources ⁽¹⁰⁾					135	135
n	436	370	295	958	153	2185

Notes

⁽¹⁾ Initial Search Protocol included Emerald Insight, Taylor and Francis Online, Wiley Online and Sage Journals. These were omitted due to limitations for searching for individual articles.

⁽²⁾ Detailed search criteria for all searches are included in Appendix K.

Subsequently included records. As the research progressed, several additional records were included in the rapid review totals for a range of reasons. The number of documents and the rationale for inclusion are shown in Table 3.

Table 3.

Additional Documents Included Within Rapid Review.

Rationale for inclusion	n
Published after rapid review completed	3
Identified from records previously included in rapid review	3
Identified to expand developed thematic codes	2
Total additional records included	8

Selection and Screening of Search Records

Once the searches were complete, I removed 477 duplicates, leaving 1,707 records. Initial screening and exclusion of records outside the specified parameters removed a further 1,425 records. Figure 4 specifies the detailed exclusion reasons. The remaining 282 records underwent a full-text review involving a more detailed analysis of each record against the stated inclusion and exclusion criteria. This second review excluded a further 238 records, leaving 44 records to progress through a RoB assessment. This assessment excluded seven records. With the remaining 37 records and the additional 8 records included subsequently, a total of 45 records were included in the data extraction process.

Data Extraction

I created a data extraction table (Table 4) to identify the following data from each record left after the screening process: research design, year, country, whether it had a military or non-military focus, and DHB type. I extracted the data as the sole researcher, with no peer review. Once data extraction was complete (post completion and recording of the RoB appraisal outcome), the data were imported into NVivo-20 as file classifications.

Figure 4.

PRISMA Flow Diagram for Rapid Review Search and Screening Results.

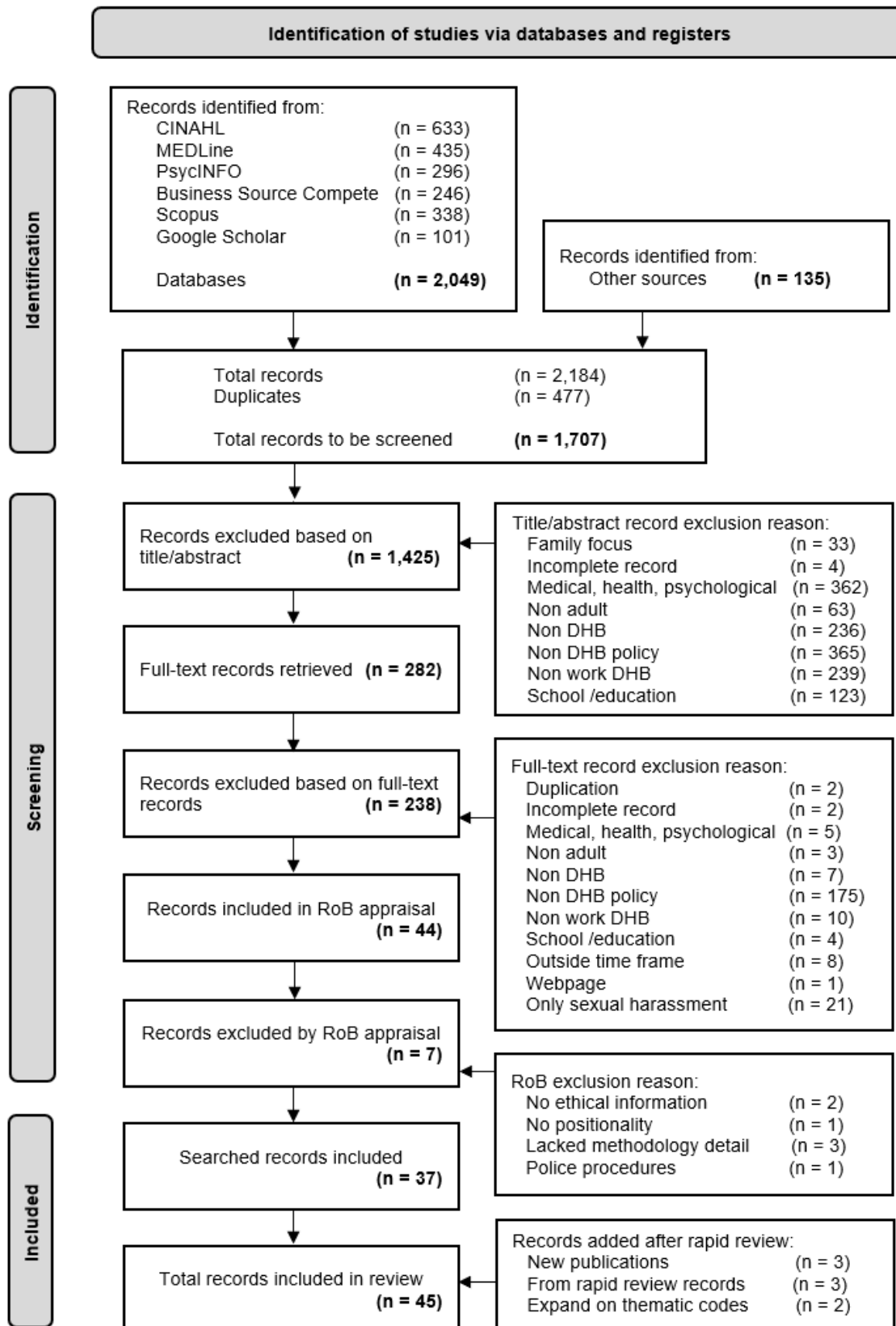


Table 4.*Rapid Review Record Data Extraction Table.*

Data description		n
Research design		
	Lit review	11
	Prevalence study	2
	Cross sectional	2
	Case study	4
	Qualitative	6
	Analytical cross sectional	1
	Text and expert opinion	8
	Non-Research - Practice guide	4
	Non-Research - Consensus or position statement	5
	Parliamentary inquiry	1
Year		
	2000-2005	1
	2006-2010	4
	2011-2015	11
	2016-2020	23
	2021-2025	6
Location		
	United Kingdom	
	North America	15
	Middle east	1
	Europe	5
	Australasia	12
	Not specified	9
Population		
	Military	9
	Non-Military	36
DHB Type ⁽¹⁾		
	Discrimination	8
	Harassment	13
	Bullying	37
	Sexual harassment or discrimination	2
	Hazing	1
Note		
⁽¹⁾ Many records addressed multiple types of DHB, as such the sum of these totals is higher than the total number of records.		

Data Analysis

I analysed the data derived from the rapid literature review using thematic analysis to answer the core research question. This analytical approach is useful for applied qualitative research seeking to support policy or practice development (Braun & Clarke, 2014). I selected thematic analysis for the rapid literature review as it is well suited to applied qualitative research to inform policy and practice (Braun & Clarke, 2014). Unlike content analysis, which emphasises rule-based coding and replicable inferences (Krippendorff, 2018), or discourse analysis, which examines how language constructs power and meaning

(Fairclough, 1992; Potter & Wetherell, 1987), thematic analysis interprets meaning within the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). It offers rich, contextual insights into experiences, perceptions, and their underlying mechanisms (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2014, 2019), generating actionable findings for policy development. Thematic analysis also aligns with pragmatism through its focus on practical, experience-based insights for addressing real world problems (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Morgan, 2014), whereas content and discourse analysis are less oriented toward pragmatic action.

I applied a template codebook thematic analysis approach as detailed by King and Brooks (2018) to the interview data. This approach was more suitable to analysing literature review data and a generic thematic analysis due to its structured, consistent coding framework by supporting transparent and comparable synthesis across multiple studies. Conversely, reflexive thematic analysis is more suitable for the interpretive analysis of primary qualitative data such as the semi-structured interview data (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2019, 2021; Byrne, 2022). I started with familiarising myself with the rapid review data through the detailed screening and selection process I applied. Familiarity with the data, along with my understanding of the broader DHB research topic, enabled me to develop the initial rapid literature codebook, detailed in Appendix L. This templated codebook aligns with the process for a DHB complaint, from identifying the behaviour to follow-up after the final resolution, ensuring policy options are identified throughout the process and reducing the risk of procedural gaps.

I applied the following three phases, coding, developing, and reviewing themes, in a non-linear manner. At regular intervals throughout the coding process, I paused to conduct a detailed review of the extracts I had coded and the codes I had assigned to them. This resulted in several extracts already coded being deleted while others were recoded. I then reviewed the grouping of codes, reworking them to better represent the data being extracted. This process resulted in significant amendments to the codebook, with each review refining potential themes. The next portion of the rapid review records was then coded against the revised codebook. This process was conducted four times, with the final review involving the completion of definitions and naming of the developed themes.

Semi-Structured Interviews

Participant Pool

With the current research involving the NZDF military and civilian personnel, potential participants exceeded 15,000 full and part-time military and civilian staff (NZDF, 2021). The sub-populations most relevant to answer the supplementary research question were NZDF military commanders and civilian managers with experience of applying the current NZDF DHB policy, and military or civilian members who had suffered DHB and navigated the same policy. The identified sub-populations exhibited a high level of “life history homogeneity” (Robinson, 2013, p. 26), characterised by shared experiences of applying or navigating the current DHB policy, as well as working within the same organisation with a common workplace culture and values. While homogenous populations may limit generalisability, they can also enable more focused enquiries, reducing the likelihood of collecting unrelated data (Bornstein et al., 2013), which aligns with a pragmatic research philosophy.

As minority groups in workplaces consistently report being subjected to higher levels of DHB than majority groups (Bentley et al., 2012; Human Rights Commission, 2022; Ministry of Business, Innovation, and Employment (MBIE), 2020; O'Driscoll et al., 2011), it was critical to ensure interview participants were representative of minority groups within NZDF. To ensure that the experiences of minority groups were not overshadowed, I introduced sample quotas to capture more diverse data. My initial purposive sampling strategy supported the selection of a range of minority group experiences within each sample group.

After reviewing the initial research design, I identified that a single sample group representing commanders' and managers' experiences left DHB targets and witnesses voiceless in this research. To balance the understanding of how the DHB policy is applied and experienced, a second sample group of DHB targets and witnesses who had experienced the current policy was added.

The final sample groups for the semi-structured interviews were defined as follows:

1. **Sample 1: CMG.** Military commanders and civilian managers across all rank brackets in NZDF who have had previous experience applying the current NZDF DHB policy.

2. **Sample 2: TWG.** NZDF military and civilian personnel across all rank brackets who have previously been targeted for or witnessed DHB, with experience in navigating or attempting to navigate the current NZDF DHB policy.

Sampling Strategy

After considering multiple factors, including the research questions and objectives, population size and variance, the underpinning research paradigm, as well as financial and time constraints (Sharma, 2017), I selected purposive and snowball sampling to identify participants.

Purposive sampling. The non-random, non-probability selection of ‘information-rich cases’ (Patton, 2015) ensures appropriate representation in the final sample (Robinson, 2013), and better aligns to qualitative research approaches than probability sampling (Gill, 2020; Vasileiou et al., 2018). It provided me the ability to identify individuals or groups within the population who were likely to have relevant, unique, or essential perspectives (Etikan, 2016), and those with “direct and personal knowledge” (Sandelowski, 1995, p. 180) of the research issue.

Snowball sampling. Supported my purposive sampling strategy by extending the invitation to participate in the research beyond the planned recruitment activities. This is a well-used approach in qualitative research and relies on networks and referrals from purposively selected participants to access potential additional participants (Moser & Korstjens, 2018; Parker et al., 2019). It is particularly useful when seeking to access participants who may feel stigmatised or require a level of trust before willingly sharing their stories (Parker et al., 2019). I assessed this last factor to be particularly applicable for potential participants of the TWG.

Sampling limitations. Despite the level of ‘life history homogeneity’ (Robinson, 2013), to ensure minority groups were represented in the research, I adopted a quota selection strategy, utilising common NZDF membership to identify potential participants. Although purposive and snowball sampling are advantageous for selecting information-rich participants in a timely and cost-effective manner, it can be challenging to locate sufficient suitable participants to meet quota and data saturation requirements (Gill, 2020). Additionally, without carefully considered quota criteria, researcher bias can adversely impact sample representativeness and study outcomes (Sharma, 2017).

Quota sampling. Incorporating a quota strategy into my purposive and snowball sampling meant I ensured the inclusion of specific minority groups in the final samples (Robinson, 2013; Sharma, 2017). Purposive quota sampling allowed me to nominate a minimum number of individuals from specific groups to be included in the research samples (Campbell et al., 2020). It also supported intersectionality, with participants able to meet multiple criteria. As DHB research has consistently recognised that minority groups are at greater risk of DHB, it was vital to ensure representation of minority groups within the NZDF in the samples for this study (Human Rights Commission, 2022).

The criteria and minimum requirements I identified for the quota sampling were informed in part by NZDF (2022, 2023) Annual Reports, which detailed the gender, service, and ethnicity make-up of NZDF. NZDFs Annual Report consistently identified a service ratio of approximately two army personnel for every navy, air force, and civilian NZDF member. This ratio was consistent across the regular force (full-time military members) and the total NZDF personnel numbers. The gender ratio among regular force NZDF members was less than one female for every four males. Conversely, the gender ratio was almost even for the civilian NZDF workforce. Lastly, while the proportion of NZDF members who identified as Māori ranged from 8% in the civilian workforce to over 22% in the navy, the overall proportion across NZDF was 16% (NZDF, 2022).

Quota criteria. While it was not feasible to select sample groups that exactly replicated NZDF demographics, the use of minimum quota purposive sampling enabled me to identify key minority groups and proportionally feature service membership across the two sample groups. The quotas allowed for one participant to meet multiple quota criteria. The quota criteria and minimum numbers applied, and data from each finalised sample group to demonstrate achievement of the quota are detailed in Table 5.

Despite repeated recruitment efforts, I was unable to meet all quotas, with three criteria remaining unmet. Averaging the totals achieved for each quota across both sample groups left only one quota unmet, being a minimum of two Air Force personnel per sample. Due to research time constraints, I assessed that by meeting all remaining quotas, there would be sufficient diversity among the sample groups to achieve valid research outcomes.

Table 5.*Quota Criteria and Attainment for Semi-Structured Interview Samples.*

Quota criteria	Quota	Sample 1 ⁽¹⁾ Commander/ Manager/ Support	Met quota	Sample 2 ⁽¹⁾ Target/Witness	Met quota
Army personnel	4	5	Yes	6	Yes
Air force personnel	2	0	No	2	Yes
Navy personnel	2	2	Yes	4	Yes
Civilian personnel	2	3	Yes	1	No
Participants identifying as female	3	7	Yes	6	Yes
Participants identifying as Māori	3	3	Yes	3	Yes
Officer ranks	4	3	No	6	Yes
Other ranks ⁽²⁾	4	4	Yes	6	Yes
Notes					
⁽¹⁾ Sample participants often met multiple criteria so totals do not equate with sample size.					
⁽²⁾ All non-officer military ranks.					

Sample Size

A sample size must be sufficient to collect adequate data to draw appropriate conclusions surrounding the research topic (Sebele-Mpofu, 2020). Within qualitative research, there are a few recognised guidelines to determine *a priori* sample size (Ames et al., 2019; Braun & Clarke, 2022; Hennink et al., 2019; Sim et al., 2018), despite the frequent requirement to do so (Braun & Clarke, 2021; Saunders et al., 2018; Sim et al., 2018).

Despite the questions raised around the identification of *a priori* sample size in qualitative research, an indicative sample size is generally required for pragmatic, if not research-based, reasons such as saturation. Sim et al. (2018) proposed four approaches for determining sample size, with each approach suiting differing research designs. These approaches were (1) rule of thumb, (2) conceptual models, (3) numerical guidelines, and (4) statistical formulae. I developed the initial sample sizes for the semi-structured interviews using a combination of the rule of thumb and information power conceptual model.

Rule of thumb. This approach is based on methodological considerations and past experience with similar qualitative research (Sim et al., 2018). With the narrow scope of this study and clearly defined research topic and homogeneity among participants (Morse, 1994, 2000; Robinson, 2013), literature supported sample sizes of between six (Kuzel, 1992) and 12 (Guest et al., 2006) participants. Braun and Clarke's (2013) publication indicated that increasing sample sizes increases the overall credibility of

research and subsequent outcomes. I assessed a sample size of between 8 and 10 participants for each sample group was valid using the rule of thumb approach given the contextual and pragmatic considerations within this study.

Regardless of the approach used, Braun and Clarke (2021; Braun & Clarke, 2022) recommend identifying a sample size range rather than a specific value. Despite prior planning, the final sample size must be shaped by the data collection process (Braun & Clarke, 2022; Malterud et al., 2016) as “there are no magic formulas for determining sample size in thematic analysis research!” (Braun et al., 2019, p. 851).

Information power. Malterud et al.’s (2016) concept of information power proposes the more information power a sample holds, the smaller the sample can be; and conversely, the less information power, the greater a sample must be. Power is determined by assessing the study’s aim, sample specificity, use of established theory, quality of collected dialogue, and the study’s analysis strategy. Applying Malterud et al.’s model strongly suggested a smaller sample size due to a high level of information power. Appendix M details the considerations specific to this study and the resulting level of information power and sample size indication.

Initial sample size. Combining the rule of thumb and information power concepts offered a level of credibility as the assessments from both supported an initial sample size of 8 to 10 participants per sample group. The final sample size numbers matched or exceeded the high end of this range (see Table 6). The final size for the TWG was 11 participants, exceeding the initial upper range. I extended this to 14 participants by adding the personal DHB experiences of three of the participants from the CMG, with their consent.

Participant Recruitment

I initiated the purposeful selection of potential interview participants through several means, with the actual invitations included at Appendix N. The means of issuing invitations to participate used were:

- a. An article included in the NZDF Directorate of Safety newsletter to reach health and safety practitioners over two consecutive monthly newsletters explaining the research and extending an invitation to participate and/or pass this information along to others.
- b. A targeted email invitation sent to anti-harassment advisors within NZDF.

- c. A separate email invitation to selected military and civil staff I knew who fit within the broad participation selection criteria.

Table 6.

Semi-Structured Interview Sampling Strategy.

Sampling strategy	Sample 1 ⁽¹⁾ Commander/Manager/Support	Sample 2 ⁽²⁾ Target/Witness
Purposive	7	4
Snowball	3	7
Interviews conducted	10	11
Total participants (n)	10	14 ⁽³⁾
Notes		
⁽¹⁾ Sample 1 - Military commanders, civilian managers, and support personnel (e.g., anti-harassment advisors) who have had previous experience of applying the current NZDF DHB policy.		
⁽²⁾ Sample 2 - Military and civilian personnel across all rank brackets in NZDF who have had previous experience in navigating or attempting to navigate the current NZDF DHB policy.		
⁽³⁾ Three participants in sample 1 also shared personal experiences of being targets of DHB and having to navigate the current policy and wished to have these experiences included in this research. The relevant interview details were extracted and included in the analysis for sample 2, increasing the total participants of this group without increasing the interviews conducted.		

Potential participants were invited to contact me through an email account established for this purpose within the NZDF email server. I was the only person with access to this email account. The information sheet was made available to potential participants. Through either email or phone engagement (dependent potential participant wish), I gathered demographic data (Appendix O) to ensure alignment with the quota sampling criteria. The demographic breakdown of the final interview participants is detailed in Table 7.

Snowball sampling was initiated by inviting readers of the newsletters and recipients of the emails to share the information with others they may know who fit either interview group, rather than providing me with their names. This gave potential snowball-selected participants the choice to contact me. The breakdown of purposive and snowball sampling within each semi-structured interview sample group is shown in Table 6.

Semi-Structured Interview Data Collection

I developed the interview guide to follow the chronological pattern of a DHB incident from occurrence through to resolution and follow-up. I conducted a pilot test with two participants, one from each sample

group. Following this pilot test, I added the opportunity for participants to start and finish with karakia (prayer). This option was taken up only twice.

Table 7

Demographic Data Across Semi-Structured Interview Participants

Quota criteria		Sample 1 Participants Commander/Manager/Support n=10	Sample 2 Participants ⁽⁶⁾ Target/Witness n=14
Service	Navy	2	5
	Air Force	0	2
	Army	5	6
	Civilian	3	1
Other rank ⁽¹⁾	Private – Corporal (E) ⁽³⁾	0	3
	Sergeant – Warrant Officer (E)	4	3
	Lieutenant – Captain (E)	0	2
Officer rank ⁽²⁾	Major upwards (E)	3	5
	Non-manager ⁽⁵⁾	3	0
Civil role ⁽⁴⁾	Manager	0	1
	Female	7	7
Gender	Male	3	7
	Other	0	0
Ethnicity	Māori	3	3
	Pākehā	5	9
	Pasifika	0	0
	Asian	1	0
	Other	1	2
Notes			
⁽¹⁾ Criteria only applicable to military personnel.			
⁽²⁾ Other ranks are non-commissioned ranks, including non-commissioned officers.			
⁽³⁾ The three services have different names for the same equivalent (E) rank, and the standard is to use army rank names. For example, “Major (E)” means Major (Army), Squadron Leader (Air Force), or Lieutenant Commander (Navy).			
⁽⁴⁾ Criteria only applicable to civil staff.			
⁽⁵⁾ Any civil staff member that is not a manager role.			
⁽⁶⁾ Includes demographic details from the three Sample 1 participants who contributed to data analysed as part of Sample 2 as this increased the demographic diversity within Sample 2.			

I conducted the semi-structured interviews either in person or over internet-based video call platforms. Interviews generally lasted between 50 and 75 minutes and followed the interview guide for the relevant sample group (see Appendix P for interview guides). I used Otter.ai to record the interview audio digitally (<https://otter.ai>). No image recording was conducted. I also took hand-written notes during the interviews, which were labelled with the relevant participant code.

The interview recordings were saved on the cloud-based Otter.ai platform within my personal password-protected Otter.ai account. No other person had permissions on this account. Otter.ai’s data

security procedures are detailed under ‘Data Management’ earlier in this chapter. Otter.ai provided an initial, automated interview transcript based on AI technology without human involvement (Otter.ai., n.d.). I then reviewed and amended the transcripts against the voice recordings to an ‘intelligent verbatim’ transcription standard. The transcribed, anonymised interviews with the relevant participant and sample group alpha-numeric codes were then deleted from the Otter.ai platform and stored on my personal laptop for the duration of the research. Once the research was completed, the transcripts were stored as per the data management protocol detailed in Appendix H. My handwritten notes were transferred to the bottom of the relevant interview, clearly annotated as ‘interviewer’s comments’, and then destroyed. Interview participants were provided with a copy of their interview transcriptions (excluding the interviewer’s notes) if they had indicated they wished to receive it on their consent form.

Data Analysis

I conducted a reflexive thematic analysis across the semi-structured interview data. This analytical approach is not dependent on consensus across multiple coders, but reliant on the depth of engagement a single researcher has with the data (Braun & Clarke, 2021; Byrne, 2022).

Member checks. While reflexive thematic analysis is reliant on a single researcher’s interpretations of data, it was important to me to ensure my interpretations aligned with what participants intended. Despite a contentious history as to the degree to which member checks can enhance research findings or credibility (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Motulsky, 2021), I elected to apply a truncated member check process. As the sole researcher, the purpose of conducting member checks was to verify my interpretation of the interview data as this would directly influence the research outcomes.

Using a “purposeful social invitation” (Cho & Trent, 2006, p. 336) to achieve a level of transformational validity, I selected one participant from each sample group. I contacted the selected participants and explained the request. Only one participant responded. This person was sent a copy of their own interview transcript with my initial interpretations annotated within for them to comment on. This was then returned to me. Additionally, to provide an objective review of my interview data interpretation, I had a respected academic and researcher who was not associated with the current study review the interpretations of two anonymised interview transcripts.

The returned checks showed a very close alignment between the interview meaning from the perspective of the member and non-member check when compared to the meaning I had applied the interviews. The interview member made no challenges to the interpretations I had made, with additional clarification they supplied resulting in two additional codes being applied. The non-member checks highlighted six key themes across the two interviews. Variations on all six of these themes were included in the coding that resulted from my data interpretation of the interview data. The outcomes from the member checks allowed me to be as confident that my interview data interpretation was accurate, and as such, would not erroneously influence the research outcomes.

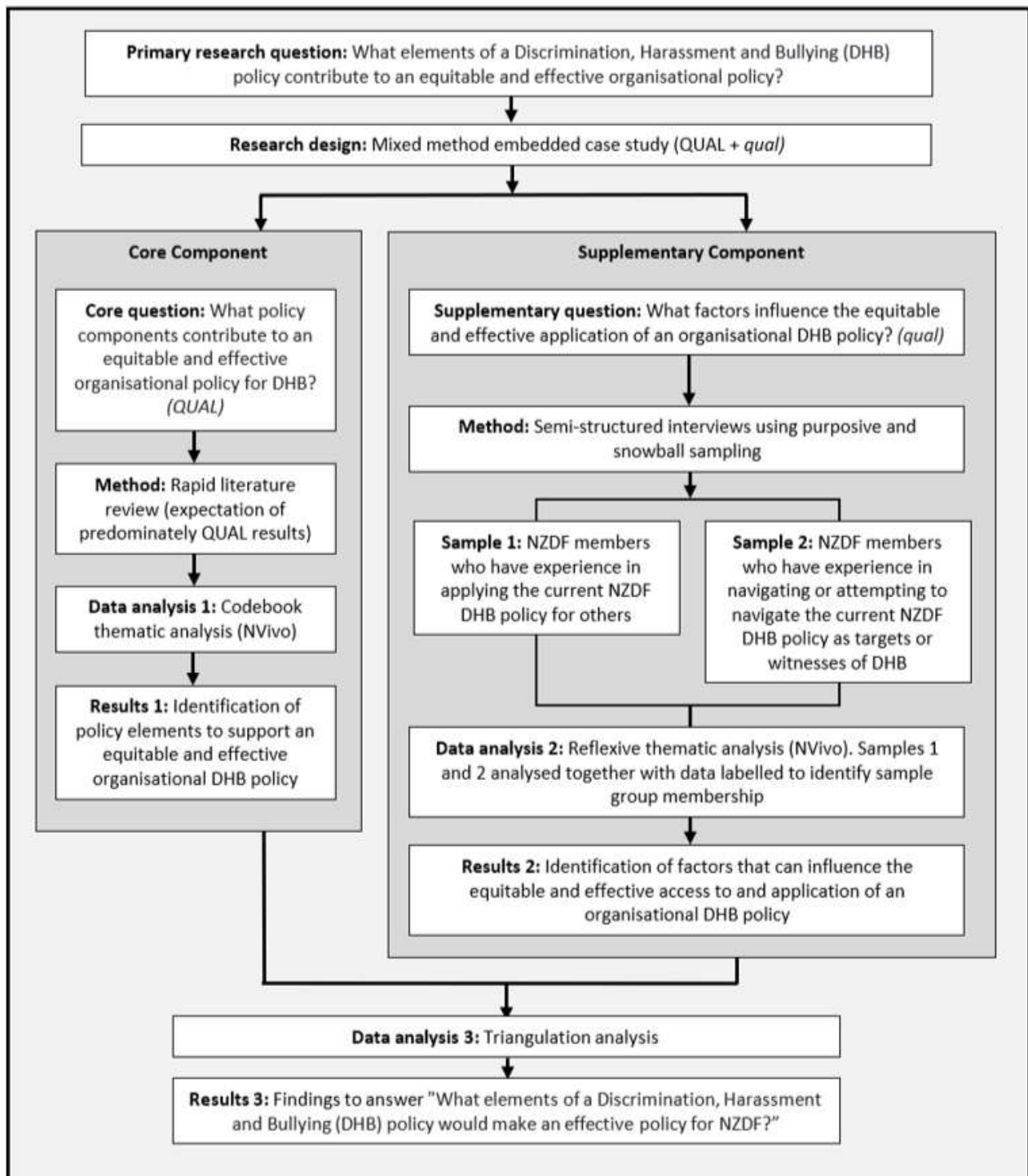
Reflexive thematic analysis. I analysed the semi-structured interview data using Braun and Clarke's reflexive thematic analysis process (Braun et al., 2022). My initial research design identified separate analyses for each sample (see Figure 3). However, once I commenced analysis, it became apparent that conducting separate analyses risked missing potential relationships and gaps between the sample groups. To ensure relationships, similarities, and differences were not lost, I coded each sample group separately using the same developing reflexive codebook. This required an amendment to the research design plan, with the amended plan being detailed in Figure 5.

Following Braun et al.'s (2022) six-phase reflexive thematic analysis process, the first phase was to familiarise myself with the data. I achieved this familiarisation through several processes that commenced before analysis started. As I had conducted all interviews, completed all transcriptions, and reread the transcripts of each sample group prior to commencing coding, I had a thorough understanding of the data. With no codebook, this reflexive process began with me tagging any data of interest from two interviews with a code label detailing why it was of interest. I then grouped related code labels and repeated this process with two further interviews, integrating those code labels into the first group of codes.

Coding, theme development, and subsequent reviews became an iterative and cyclical process. After coding two to three interviews, I reviewed the codes, their groupings, and potential themes, with additions, deletions, and amalgamations of codes occurring at each step. At each of these identified points, I reviewed the previously coded data within the context of the developing codebook and recoded data as

Figure 5.

Amended Research Design Plan.



appropriate. Once coding the first sample was complete, draft themes were further defined. It was against this reflexive codebook that I commenced coding the second sample group. I annotated each code with an identifier to indicate which sample group the data within that code belonged to. These sample group identifiers enabled comparisons between sample groups while preserving the integrity of each data set. As I

continued coding the second sample, it became apparent that some codes from the first sample did not apply to the second sample and vice versa. Coding both samples against one codebook allowed any differences to be highlighted.

I developed the codebook themes using Saldaña's (2013) 'touch test' approach to elevate themes from descriptive to a conceptual level. While at no point were themes manipulated to force consistency across the samples, it became apparent that while there were differences at the lower coding levels, the overarching themes were consistent across both sample groups. As I coded both sample groups against a single codebook, I conducted data triangulation using the protocol presented by Farmer et al. (2006) to highlight and maintain the similarities and differences between the two interview groups. This allowed the meaning and importance of each interview group to be attributed to the factors that comprised the three themes, which were analysed both independently and collectively.

Data Integration and Synthesis

Triangulation

To integrate the results across my three data sets —the rapid literature review and the two semi-structured interview sample groups —I conducted a data triangulation to compare the responses from the two semi-structured interview groups, and a methodological triangulation across all three data sets. These triangulation analyses enabled me to amalgamate the different research methods and data sets used, and reduce potential biases due to having a single researcher (Farmer et al., 2006; Noble & Heale, 2019). It also provided for the development of a more complete understanding of the data (Farmer et al., 2006). The triangulation process I applied was the protocol presented by Farmer et al. (2006) to both the data and methodological triangulation analyses I completed.

Data Triangulation. This analysis identified where data from the interview groups within each code converged, where one group was silent on an issue, and where the meanings each group applied to a particular finding diverged. The results identified a consistently high level of agreement or partial agreement across both groups, particularly in the themes and codes related to equity and inconsistency. The details from triangulating the interview data within the final codes from the reflexive thematic analyses

are in Appendix Q, with the overall results depicted in Table 8. Combined agreement reached 78% and 79% respectively. Agreement dropped significantly to only 56 %for the third theme

Table 8.

Semi-Structured Interview Data Triangulation Codes.

	Equity		Inconsistency		Clarity		Overall Totals	
	No. of Codes	%	No. of Codes	%	No. of Codes	%	No. of Codes	%
Agreement ⁽¹⁾	8	45	14	43	7	39	29	43
Partial agreement ⁽²⁾	6	33	12	36	3	17	21	30
Silence ⁽³⁾	4	22	6	18	6	33	16	23
Dissonance ⁽⁴⁾	0	0	1	3	2	11	3	4
Total Findings	18		33		18		69	

Notes

⁽¹⁾ Full agreement across both data sets on meaning and prominence

⁽²⁾ Agreement on one of meaning or prominence

⁽³⁾ One of the two data sets are silent on the finding

⁽⁴⁾ Full disagreement across both data sets on meaning and prominence

theme that described the impact a lack of clarity and detail within the policy document can have.

Dissonance, the disagreement across both meaning and prominence within a thematic element (Farmer et al., 2006), was identified in the three findings: the limited or lack of resolution for DHB, the utility of self-help options, and the effectiveness of available DHB support.

The data triangulation identified that one interview group was silent in the remaining findings (see Table 8). The TWG raised 10 findings that the CMG was silent on. Detailed in Table 9, these silent factors ranged from limitations TWG members had experienced with the current policy, the impact organisation context had on their DHB situation, and the personal and professional toll they faced as a consequence of reporting DHB. CMG members identified seven findings where the TWG made no comments. The CMGs silent findings reflected organisational, cultural, and policy factors and are described in Table 10.

Methodological Triangulation. The methodological triangulation conducted across all data groups followed Farmer et al.'s protocol (2006). As each dataset was initially analysed independently, the resulting codebooks did not fully align across themes and codes. To generate comparable themes, it was necessary to amalgamate certain closely related and overlapping findings. This ensured findings with equivalent or closely related meanings were assessed effectively while removing opportunities for duplication. With two

data sets using the same codebook, I focused on amalgamating the rapid literature review codebook into that of the semi-structured interviews. Where findings did not align, I inserted new categories until all

Table 9.

Policy Factors Raised Only by the Target and Witness Group (TWG).

Theme component	Factors raised only by TWG ⁽¹⁾	
	Factor	Meaning
Theme 1: Equality in the policy leads to inequity		
Barriers to reporting	Hostile work environment	There is no protection against hostile work environments within the current policy.
	DHB reports not actioned	The need to report DHB multiple times, through multiple channels before any action was taken.
Theme 2: Inconsistent policy application		
Leadership		
Organisational context	Organisational context and structure work against targets	The NZDF context and military culture made it harder to address DHB through multiple ways.
	Organisational cultural competence	Limited awareness of military culture led to poorer outcomes for military DHB targets.
Policy gaps	Limited options for military	Limited options for military targets to effectively address DHB.
Policy impact	Career impact	Consistent negative impacts on careers and professional reputations for DHB targets.
	Personal impact	Impacts included isolation, psychological harm, loss of trust and self-confidence.
Theme 3: Lack of policy clarity		
Policy clarity	Hostile work environment	Lack of detail on hostile work environments worsened harm and hindered reporting.
Support requirements	Access to external support	Access to ongoing external psychological support and advocates was hugely beneficial.
Training requirements	Investigator training	Significant training and knowledge gaps with investigators lead to poor outcomes.
Notes		
⁽¹⁾ Target and witness group		

codes across the three data sets were included. Each finding was assessed according to the concurrence or dissonance between the data sets using the convergence measures detailed by Farmer et al. (2006).

With three separate datasets, many of the results differed across the three sets. To tailor Framer et al.'s (2006) convergence measures to this research I recorded a result of 'silence' where either both interview data sets or the rapid literature review data was silence on a finding. Where there was agreement between one of the interview data sets and the rapid literature review data, I recorded a secondary convergence code assessing the outlying data set to the initial convergence result for that finding. This only occurred once, where the CMG and rapid literature review data fully agreed on a finding, but the TWG was

Table 10.

Policy Factors Raised Only by the Commander and Manager Group (CMG).

Theme component	Factors raised only by CMG ⁽¹⁾	
	Factor	Meaning
Theme 1: Equality in the policy leads to inequity		
Barriers to reporting	Rationalising DHB behaviours	Many targets doubt themselves and rationalise DHB behaviour away.
	Mandatory reporting	Belief that mandatory reporting can create an additional barrier to seeking assistance.
Theme 2: Inconsistent policy application		
Leadership	Modelling positive behaviours	Reinforcing appropriate behaviours requires that leader's consistency model these behaviours.
Organisational context	Operational needs	Operational factors like a lack of resources often made it difficult to address DHB appropriately.
Resolutions and outcomes	Informal options	Clearer, enforceable guidelines and proper resourcing are needed for informal DHB resolution.
Theme 3: Lack of policy clarity		
Policy clarity		
Support requirements	Support for managers and supporters	There is a lack of DHB specialists to advise managers, and AHAs ⁽²⁾ lack support and training.
Training requirements	Commander and manager training	Insufficient manager training leads to poorly applied policies and poor resolution outcomes.
Notes		
⁽¹⁾ Commander and Manager Group		
⁽²⁾ Anti-Harassment Advisors		

silent. This was convergence result was recoded as 'Agreement / Silence'. The convergence measures of agreement, partial agreement and dissonance remained unchanged. During the triangulation process I included a description of the convergence assessment for each finding, rather than sample quotes. No findings met the criteria for full disagreement across all data sets on both meaning and prominence. The full breakdown of the convergence findings from the methodological triangulation are shown in Table 11.

After reviewing where there was silence from one or more of the data sets regarding a finding, I identified that gaps in the reviewed literature related to findings that were explicitly linked to individual experiences within their organisation. Where there was silence on a finding from one or both of the interview sample groups, I determined it related to more generalised topics, such as best practices for policy development. These gaps aligned with the expectations regarding how each data set would contribute to the research questions and did not necessitate any additional data collection.

Table 11.

Amalgamated Findings: Prominence and Meaning Convergence.

Convergence Findings	Totals	Percentage
Agreement ⁽¹⁾	6	31.5
Agreement/Silence ⁽²⁾	1	5.5
Partial agreement ⁽³⁾	6	31.5
Silence ⁽⁴⁾	6	31.5
Dissonance ⁽⁵⁾	0	0
Total Findings	19	100%
Notes		
⁽¹⁾ Agreement – full agreement across data sets on both meaning and prominence.		
⁽²⁾ Agreement/Silence – full agreement across two data sets, one interview and the rapid review data, while one interview data set remained silent.		
⁽³⁾ Partial agreement – agreement on meaning or prominence, not both.		
⁽⁴⁾ Silence – where either interview data or rapid literature data was silent on a finding.		
⁽⁵⁾ Dissonance – full disagreement across data sets on both meaning and prominence.		

Explanation Building

To generate greater understanding of the outcomes from the individual data sets and the triangulation results, a process of explanation building was applied. This analysis required identification of any links or connections between two or more research phenomena (Ritchie et al., 2013), in this case themes. Ohlsson (2014) described the connections between themes as generative relations which are developed into a schema that represents the integrated influences of all elements. These connections may be implicit or explicit and draw on patterns within the data that may indicate coexistence, gaps, or the juxtaposition of apparently unconnected concepts (Ritchie et al., 2013). Initially I examined any potential connections between the themes within each data group in isolation. This provided an understanding of how the themes derived from the rapid literature and the semi-structured interviews related to each other. Once completed, I analysed how the schema generated from each of the data types integrated with and influenced each other. The schema developed from the combination of the identified generative relations offered explanations for how the themes derived from the rapid literature and semi-structured interviews interacted and influenced each other to affect the equity and effectiveness of any DHB policy.

Research Trustworthiness

To demonstrate trustworthiness within this research, I applied Lincoln and Guba's (1985) criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability, further refined by Nowell et al. (2017).

Credibility

Multiple techniques and measures have been identified to validate credibility within qualitative research (Guba & Lincoln, 1982; Nowell et al., 2017; Shenton, 2004). The actions I took within this research to ensure a high level of credibility are as follows:

1. I clearly defined all data collection and analysis methods employed, reinforced with the application of a specified approach for all data analyses and integration processes.
2. I applied my deep understanding of the subject culture (NZDF) that had been developed through both my stated positionality and the thick descriptions and analyses of the NZDF culture and phenomenon of DHB being investigated.
3. Use of data and methodological triangulations to compare and contrast all data sets.
4. The detailed actions I took during the participant selection and interview processes to create and maintain a safe environment where participants were comfortable sharing their experiences openly.
5. Member and non-member checking of my interpretation of interview data.
6. Regular supervision sessions with my doctoral supervisors.

Transferability

To achieve transferability, I provided thick descriptions of DHB, NZDF culture, and how different aspects of that culture impact the prevalence, patterns, reporting, and management of DHB within NZDF to enable research consumers the ability to assess applicability to their context (Shenton, 2004). I followed these thick descriptions with a similarly thick description of the research results and how they were developed into processes for organisations to create tailored DHB policy solutions.

Dependability

In contrast to quantitative research, where reliability hinges on replicability, Guba and Lincoln's (1982) concept of dependability emphasises the stability of research designs, even as they accommodate emergent changes during the research process. Achieving dependability requires that researchers apply a logical, traceable research process that can be repeated (Nowell et al., 2017) or audited (Koch, 1994). I took

care to clearly document the stages of this research throughout the research design, data collection, and analysis processes. To support this process, I developed and kept the following documents:

1. A reflexive journal
2. Iterative codebook versions
3. Interview transcripts and notes
4. Detailed literature search criteria
5. Supervision records

Confirmability

To ensure my findings were developed from the data and the experiences of the research participants, not my own interpretations (Nowell et al., 2017), I took the following steps to support confirmability within my research:

1. A methodological triangulation analysis as part of the data integration process.
2. Provided a clear description and acknowledgement of my own experiences and positionality that underpinned research design and interpretation decisions.
3. Provided detailed descriptions of the methods applied within this research and the underpinning methodological framework.

Summary

This chapter detailed the research objectives and approach before discussing the ethical considerations and mitigations for both the rapid literature review and the semi-structured interviews. The research design and process for each research component were then specified, along with evidence to support the research decisions made and digressions from the initial research design. Integrating the data sets from each research component was achieved by applying a methodological triangulation process to ascertain where the data aligned and where it differed. This process also demonstrated that no additional data were required to answer the research questions. The chapter closed with the conduct of a trustworthiness process to determine the credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of the current research.

Chapter 7: Rapid Literature Review Findings – Elements of an Effective Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying (DHB) Policy

Introduction

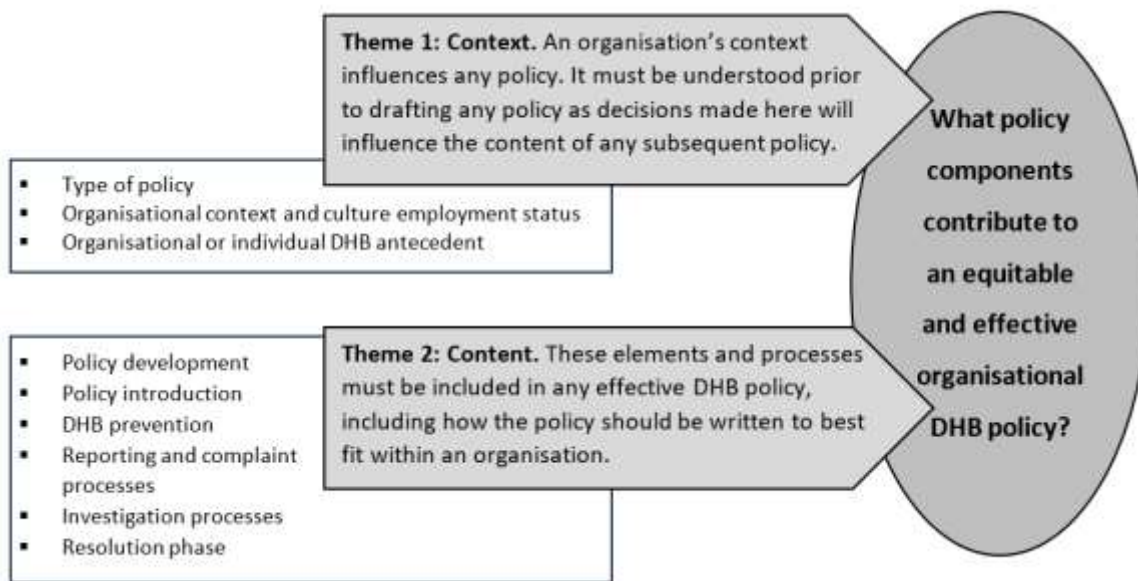
The aim of the rapid literature review was to answer the core research question, “What policy components contribute to an equitable and effective organisational policy for DHB?” The review identified specific elements research has identified as crucial within an effective DHB policy, as well as the underpinning concepts that need to be considered. Although much of the literature reviewed specifically focused on workplace bullying, the organisational factors identified also underpinned other forms of workplace violence and incivility. Consequently, studies addressing specific behaviours such as bullying or harassment are referred to under the umbrella term ‘DHB’ throughout this review. This ensures that all factors related to workplace violence, of any form, are included, thereby developing a more comprehensive understanding of the components that may contribute to an equitable and effective DHB policy.

I developed two themes from the analysis (Figure 6), (1) organisational context, and (2) DHB policy content. Context refers to the depth of organisational understanding required before any policy development process can be commenced. This theme provides the foundation for the second theme, content, which encompasses elements and processes to be included within an effective DHB policy. An overview of the themes is detailed in Table 12. The codebook themes, including all sub-themes and allocation data, is contained in Appendix R. The relationship between the codebook themes is largely linear, with the development of a contextual organisational understanding required before the policy content development; however, policy content must be continuously reviewed and tested against the organisational context to mitigate contextual biases and inequities.

For clarity, none of the data analysed as part of the rapid literature review included any of the internal New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) DHB data sources referred to in Chapter 2: Research context – The New Zealand Defence Force. The data analysed to generate the themes of organisational context and DHB policy content came solely from the literature search conducted as specified in Chapter 6: Research methodology and method.

Figure 6.

Template Codebook Thematic Analysis Findings for the Rapid Literature Review.

**Table 12.**

Rapid Literature Review Themes.

Themes	Description
1. Theme One – Context. Provides the policy framework and fundamental policy elements. Contextual understanding must be established before policy development commences, as decisions at this stage influence policy content.	
a. Organisational context and culture	Understanding organisational context, culture, and DHB prevalence is crucial to identify what aspects prevent or risk DHB.
b. DHB antecedents	What organisations view as DHB antecedents, such as individual or organisational issues, lead to differing policy approaches.
c. Type of policy	Understanding the various types of policy options available and the impacts each can have on organisations.
2. Theme Two – Content. The elements and processes that must be included in a tailored DHB policy to be effective.	
a. Policy development	Elements and requirements that relate to how a policy should be framed and developed.
b. Policy introduction	Sets policy conditions such as its purpose, responsibilities and definitions.
c. DHB prevention	Elements required to support DHB prevention.
d. Report processes	Options and recommendations to support the reporting of DHB incidents.
e. Investigation process	Potential DHB investigation options are appropriate.
f. Resolution phase	DHB resolution options and the impacts on all parties, including the organisation.

Theme 1 – Context

“It is much more important to know what sort of a patient has a disease than what sort of disease a patient has”. Sir William Osler (1849–1919).

Workplace DHB research identified organisational context as critical to understanding DHB prevalence and patterns within organisations (Hutchinson, 2012; Magee et al., 2014; Rayner & Lewis, 2010; Salin, 2008; Vartia & Leka, 2011), noting DHB “reflects the values, culture, leadership, and structures of an organisation” (Magee et al., 2014, p. 31). The nature of work, including job demands (Magee et al., 2014), employment arrangements (Hutchinson, 2012), work organisation, and job design (Bentley et al., 2012), also contribute to workplace DHB. Contextual factors extend beyond what the organisation can influence into wider social climates (Salin, 2008), including the political and economic environments in which organisations exist and operate (Ironsides & Seifert, 2002).

The contextual theme investigated the need to understand internal and external organisational contexts before the commencement of policy development, including links between organisational context, culture, and DHB prevalence. Internal and external influences can create biases, resulting in reduced equity under DHB policies for some organisation members. Research recommended organisations “identify and target the cultural and organisational factors that enable the occurrence of workplace [DHB]” (Magee et al., 2014, p. 8), ensuring DHB policies address those risks. Organisations must identify internal and external factors impacting DHB and be “willing to acknowledge that workplace [DHB] is a problem, and then develop policies that directly attack the issue” (Brinkley, 2019, p. 94). In the absence of thorough organisational assessments, DHB policies and interventions cannot be effectively tailored to meet specific organisational needs (Vartia & Leka, 2011).

The relationship between organisational context and DHB is reinforced in the literature. However, the processes supporting organisations in identifying influencing factors and their impact on DHB are less clear. From a pragmatist perspective, the literature did not provide organisations with guidelines or procedures on the conduct of a contextual analysis to support DHB policy development. To bridge this gap and offer organisations a contextual analysis framework, three elements were identified to support a contextual understanding from a DHB perspective. These elements were (1) the underpinning organisational context and culture, (2) how an organisation interprets potential DHB antecedents and applies them to their

organisation, and (3) the type of DHB policy an organisation chooses to develop. Defining organisational context through these elements enables the development of a framework that offers a pragmatic pathway for tailoring DHB interventions. The following sections detail the identified elements to support organisations in developing a comprehensive contextual understanding of their organisation related to DHB. Each element consists of specific components, supported by literature.

Organisational Context and Culture

Overwhelmingly, the documents that referred to organisational context and culture attributed workplace DHB to “poor organisational culture, poor leadership or management styles, and an unhealthy work environment” (Magee et al., 2014, p. 8). Understanding the impact these factors have on DHB requires identifying preventive and risk elements, allowing preventive factors to be enhanced while mitigating risk elements. The literature supported six areas that when combined provide a structured understanding of organisational context and its impact on DHB. The areas were (1) industry, structure, and employment conditions; (2) legislation and international conventions; (3) minority related factors; (4) organisational cultural aspects; (5) power imbalances; and (6) tailoring DHB policies to organisational contexts.

Industry, structure, and employment conditions. The industry an organisation operates within, its structure, employment conditions, and environments, alongside any existing DHB policies, influence DHB preventative and risk factors. To mitigate risks and enhance protective factors, organisations must understand how these elements impact the occurrence, reporting, and management of DHB. The four key influences identified in this area were the industry an organisation is part of, its structure and hierarchy, the presence of any DHB policy, and the employment conditions within the organisation. The risk factors for each of the element are detailed in Table 13.

Legislation and international conventions. Legislation and international conventions directly impact organisations, as breaches risk reputational damage and court or regulatory action. A founding member of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) (n.d.), New Zealand is committed to upholding its conventions and recommendations. The ILO (2020) acknowledges “violence and harassment is a major threat to the safety and health of workers” (p. 6) and employers are duty-bound to protect workers from harm caused by DHB. The Health and Safety at Work Act legislated this concept, with employers having a “duty to

manage all risks to health and safety, including the risks of psychosocial harm” (Ministry of Business, Innovation, and Employment (MBIE), 2020, p.32). Psychosocial harm included harm from workplace bullying and harassment. Despite the NZDF’s Health and Safety at Work Act exemption of uniformed personnel from its protections while on mandated operations (s 7), it is an international and national expectation that employers protect staff from workplace DHB. Understanding these legislative gaps identifies additional policy elements that may be required to ensure all employees have equitable protections.

Table 13.

Industry, Structure and Employment Factors Influencing DHB.

Industry, structure and employment factors	Examples	
	Risk factor	Literature review reference
Industry	Industry differences influence DHB	Berlingieri, 2015
	Para-military or protective services are linked to higher rates of DHB.	Archer, 1999
Organisational Structure and Hierarchy	Organisational structures impact DHB	Salin, 2003
	Structures with power and decision-making held at the top, enable DHB	Brinkley, 2019; Ikeda et al., 2010; Independent Police Conduct Authority, 2012; Soeters et al., 2006
	Flatter organisations offer more protection against DHB	Keashly & Nowell, 2011
Absence of any DHB policy	DHB increases in the absence of any workplace DHB policy	Brinkley, 2019; Magee et al., 2014; Salin, 2003
Employment conditions and environments	Work environments and conditions directly influence workplace DHB	Liefooghe & Mackenzie Davey, 2001; Standing Committee on Education and Employment (SCEE), 2012; Thompson & Catley, 2021; Zapf & Vartia, 2020
	Complex, unclear and unpredictable employment arrangements enable DHB	Francis, 2019; Magee et al., 2014
	High-pressure, low-control environments with high competition increase DHB	Francis, 2019; Bentley et al., 2012; Magee et al., 2014
	Poor leadership, communication, and tedious tasks are strongly linked to DHB	Bentley et al., 2012; Francis, 2019

New Zealand, like many countries, has legal definitions for discrimination and harassment (Bill of Rights Act, 1990; Harassment Act, 1997; Human Rights Act, 1993) with employees explicitly protected from these behaviours under the ERA Act 2000. Bullying, however, is not defined in New Zealand legislation (Gardner, Bentley, et al., 2013). Regardless, the New Zealand Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 charges

employers with “protecting workers and other persons against harm to their health, safety, and welfare” (s3(1)(a)), where “health means physical and mental health” (s16). Accordingly, a strength of this legislation is the implicit mechanism for addressing workplace bullying, which requires organisations to implement management and prevention measures despite its absence from legal statute (Mollison, 2016).

Minority group factors. Minority group membership directly influences workers’ experiences of DHB (ILO, 2020; Office of the Auditor General (OAG), 2023b; Plimmer et al., 2023; Thompson & Catley, 2021), as “the risk of experiencing harmful behaviour varies by gender, rank, and sexual orientation” (OAG, 2023, p.9). Ethnic, sexual, and gender minorities, along with junior staff, are at higher risk of DHB (Plimmer et al., 2023). Understanding organisational DHB, from its occurrence to potential resolutions, requires understanding the risk factors employees face by belonging to one or more minority groups. Ensuring equitable access to DHB protections for minority groups should be of paramount concern, particularly as membership of multiple minority groups further increases DHB risk factors. Three of the commonly identified minority groupings in the review were gender, ethnicity, and age. These groupings and their associated risk factors are detailed in Table 14. Each of the identified minority groupings, and any intersectional overlap, have particular factors that influence the prevalence and patterns of DHB within organisations, depending on the demographics of an organisation.

Table 14.

Minority Group Risk Factors for DHB.

Minority group factors	Examples	
	Risk factor	Literature review reference
Gender	Gender differences in experience of DHB	Berlingieri, 2015; ILO, 2020; MBIE, 2020; OAG, 2023b
	Societal-based unequal gender relations	ILO, 2020
	Women in male-dominated industries	Hayman, 2015; ILO, 2020; Magee et al., 2014; Salin, 2021; Salin et al., 2013
Ethnicity	Nationality and ethnicity impact DHB	ILO, 2020; Plimmer et al., 2023
	In New Zealand, Māori, Pasifika, and Asian report higher rates of DHB than Caucasians	MBIE, 2020; Plimmer et al., 2023
	Nationality and ethnicity impact DHB	MBIE, 2020
Age and/or seniority	Age intersecting with other minority group membership	MBIE, 2020
	Young and junior employees	ILO, 2020; Plimmer et al., 2023

Organisational cultural aspects. Organisational culture is “the major organizational element that allows bullying to continue” (Rayner et al., 2001, p. 85), with employers responsible for maintaining positive workplaces as protection against harm from DHB (ILO, 2020). Positive work cultures help mitigate the effects of DHB, while workplaces lacking empathy, fostering competitiveness and hostility can increase the harm caused by DHB (Gardner, O’Driscoll, et al., 2013). Culture can prevent DHB by setting expectations of acceptable and unacceptable behaviours (Magee et al., 2014). Leadership is key (Zapf & Vartia, 2020), with destructive leadership impacting organisational culture and contributing to and enabling DHB (Brinkley, 2019; Gardner, O’Driscoll, et al., 2013). Senior leadership has the most significant influence on organisational culture and how DHB is perceived and managed, as DHB “cannot exist in the workplace without tacit approval from executives and owners” (Brinkley, 2019, p. 54). Given that poor organisational culture, misaligned values, and competitive or hostile work environments significantly contribute to DHB (Bentley et al., 2012; Gardner, O’Driscoll, et al., 2013; Magee et al., 2014; Office of the Auditor-General, 2023b; Thompson & Catley, 2021) organisations must actively address the cultural and structural conditions that enable such behaviours to develop and continue (Magee et al., 2014). Senior leadership must build a culture where unacceptable behaviour is taken seriously and addressed fairly and promptly (OAG, 2023b). Cultures or leaders who enable DHB must be addressed as part of any DHB policy implementation, as a negative culture will outweigh any benefits a policy may otherwise bring about.

Power imbalance. A consistently identified factor in DHB is its intrinsic power imbalance (Brinkley, 2019; Magee et al., 2014; Osler, 2021; Plimmer et al., 2023; SCEE, 2012). DHB occurs when power is abused, leaving targets unable to avoid or stop the behaviour (Ahmad & Sheehan, 2017; Brinkley, 2019; Gardner, O’Driscoll, et al., 2013; Osler, 2021; Standing Committee on Education and Employment, 2012). With up to 83% of DHB perpetrators in New Zealand holding formal power over their target (New Zealand Human Rights Commission, 2022), discussions on power to refer to the functional and hierarchical power conferred on abusers within their roles and responsibilities (Hutchinson, 2012). However, power imbalances extend beyond formal hierarchies (SCEE, 2012). Social power encompasses social influence, friendships with management, high performance, or instilling fear in others, which can also lead to DHB (Osler, 2021). This power arises from individual, situational, or society-based features, including access to

knowledge and expertise, support from influential persons, or minority group stereotypes (Gardner, O'Driscoll, et al., 2013; Salin, 2008). Understanding how broader power definitions influence DHB requires “more fluid and dynamic concepts of power ... that allow for many contextual and individual elements” (Hutchinson, 2012, p. 640). With the influence that military organisations have over the personal and family lives of service personnel, there is vast opportunity for different power relationships to be abused within militaries.

Power dynamics also influence the severity of harm caused by DHB and the effectiveness of related policies, with greater imbalances exacerbating the harm (Gardner, O'Driscoll, et al., 2013). Lutgen-Sandvik et al. (2007) found “bullying from supervisors is more hurtful than from co-worker aggression” (p. 856) with Roehling (2020) confirming DHB has a greater negative impact when perpetrated by a manager. As DHB perpetrators often hold positional power over targets, it can be difficult for them to report this behaviour (Richards & Daley, 2003), regardless of the power imbalance being actual or perceived (Nielsen & Einarsen, 2018). This creates additional barriers to reporting harmful behaviour in hierarchical organisations, such as militaries, where targets can find it challenging to report DHB and have their report taken seriously (OAG, 2023a).

DHB policies are often criticised for failing to address the role of power in workplace DHB (Hutchinson, 2012). Failing to address power imbalances commonly inherent within DHB can exacerbate the harm targets face when attempting to make a report (Thompson & Catley, 2021). An equitable and effective DHB policy must mitigate the barriers power imbalances create so “harmful behaviour can be identified, raised, and addressed” (OAG, 2023b, p. 14).

Tailored DHB policies. A DHB policy itself is insufficient as a protective factor against DHB unless it is respected by staff, consistently enforced, and aligned to the organisation (Rayner & Lewis, 2010). The literature reviewed supported avoiding standardised DHB policies over policies tailored to address specific issues and risk factors within organisations (Magee et al., 2014; Ritzman, 2016; Salin et al., 2020; SCEE, 2012; Vartia & Leka, 2011; Zapf & Vartia, 2020). Magee et al. (2014) found this to be particularly relevant for “male versus female dominated industries” (p. 84), such as the NZDF. Without cultural and contextual knowledge being applied to violence interventions, such as DHB policies, they can target the wrong

behaviours, use strategies that are potentially ineffective in their organisation or, at worst, cause additional harm (Whitaker & Nolon, 2009). Salin (2008) also found DHB policies are more likely to be ineffective if not tailored to an organisation's context. Three methods were identified to assist organisations in tailoring their DHB policies: (1) risk assessments or situational analysis (Vartia & Leka, 2011), (2) the use of research-based insights to guide policy decisions (Magee et al., 2014), and (3) consultation (Berlingieri, 2015), including "meaningful consultation with staff" (Caponecchia & Wyatt, 2011, p. 84). The adoption of standardised, non-tailored DHB policies significantly reduces their effectiveness (Berlingieri, 2015; Magee et al., 2014).

Organisational or Individual DHB Antecedents

Perspectives regarding DHB antecedents directly impact how DHB policies are developed and managed as DHB is "a complex issue with antecedents at the individual, departmental, and organizational level" (Johnson, 2015b, p. 2384). Senior leaders and policy makers must understand how they influence their organisation. Rayner and Lewis (2010) explained the 'competing approaches' dilemma by identifying that while a health and safety perspective requires any risk, such as DHB, to be addressed immediately, an interpersonal approach requires targets to submit written complaints before any action is taken. Despite DHB being labelled a workplace risk, most organisations adopt interpersonal approaches, immediately creating tension within any subsequent DHB policy. Lack of clarity regarding the policy's underlying perspective risks the development of incoherent approaches that fail to influence, prevent, or manage DHB effectively. Resolving this issue requires organisations to clarify what they acknowledge as DHB antecedents: an individual or a health and safety approach, or a combination of both.

Both the individual and health and safety approaches impact potential DHB policies in differing ways. This requires organisations to clearly identify where they stand on the competing approaches, how they will manage the risk of DHB, and where the responsibility for maintaining and enforcing any DHB will reside in the organisation. Table 15 explores the influence each perspective has on DHB policy development and management.

Type of Policy

DHB policy development requires several decisions to be made prior to developing policy content including how it will be integrated across existing interventions (Cowie et al., 2002; Escartín, 2016) and

whether to develop a specific or general DHB policy (Ferris et al., 2021). The current research expanded on current policy decision requirements by identifying two further factors for consideration: (1) the degree to which local legislation influences organisational DHB policies, and (2) whether a zero-tolerance approach should be embedded within the policy.

Table 15.

Organisational Versus Individual DHB Antecedents and their Influences.

Organisational versus individual antecedents	Examples	
	Risk factor	Literature review reference
Individualised approach	Individual DHB approaches focus on behaviour and failings at dyadic levels	Hutchinson, 2012; Magee et al., 2014
	A dyadic focus leads to adversarial approaches where organisations can avoid responsibility or accountability	Berlingieri, 2015
	These approaches do not prevent DHB or generate systemic change	Berlingieri, 2015
	Staff and organisational accountability for DHB must be shared	Hutchinson, 2012; Thompson & Catley, 2021
Organisational/health and safety approach	DHB has individual elements, but is also a systemic and work environment issue	Gardner, O'Driscoll, et al., 2013; Gutek & Done, 2001; SCEE, 2012; Vartia & Leka, 2011
	Only organisational-level action can prevent and manage DHB	Bentley et al., 2012
	As a psychosocial hazard, DHB is regulated by health and safety legislation and systems	Ferris et al., 2018; ILO, 2020; MBIE, 2020; SCEE, 2012
	This requires employers to take all reasonably practicable steps to prevent or minimise DHB	Mollison, 2016; SCEE, 2012
	HR complaints processes cannot provide management of health and safety issues	SCEE, 2012
Risk management	Supports DHB prevention by providing tools tailored to an organisation's context	King, 2019; Magee et al., 2014
	Aims to reduce the risk, harm, and rates of DHB with mitigation processes	Carden & Boyd, 2013; Magee et al., 2014
	Requires active leadership support and monitoring mechanisms	Carden & Boyd, 2013; Magee et al., 2014
DHB policy responsibility	Policy responsibility should be early as this influences the policy	Brinkley, 209; Rayner & Lewis, 2010
	Multiple options exist, with New Zealand, among others, supporting DHB policies being held within health and safety systems	Rayner & Lewis, 2010; Ritzman, 2016; Robert, 2018; SCEE, 2012; WorkSafe NZ, 2014

Legal framework of DHB policies. Understanding the legislative context in which an organisation operates is critical, as any lack of detail or gaps in legislation need to be addressed within organisational policies to ensure equity across all employees and all forms of DHB. One gap is subtle or low-level DHB, bullying in particular, that may not reach health and safety legislation definitions but still harms productivity and employee well-being (Mollison, 2016). Another gap impacting NZDF is the assumption that employment and workplace health and safety legislation apply equally to all employees. The NZDF's military staff are excluded from the ERA 2000 (Defence Act, 1990, s45(5)) protections and Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 (s7) protections when deployed operationally. Without organisational-level policies to address the identified gaps, groups of employees can have reduced protections against DHB. Organisations need to develop policies to bridge identified gaps and comply with the intent of legislation to protect all workers from "harm to their health, safety, and welfare" (Health and Safety at Work Act, 2015, s3(1)(a)), even when legislation omits certain behaviours, such as bullying, or excludes certain employee groups.

Zero-tolerance policies. Zero-tolerance policies are both advocated and criticized (Roehling, 2020). Advocates labelling them the only way to eliminate DHB (Akel, 2018; Smedley & Rayment, 2018); while critics find them misleading, ineffective, and counterproductive (Roehling, 2020). Organisations must fully understand potential implications before considering zero-tolerance DHB policies. One challenge is the absence of a standard definition for zero-tolerance policies, with both literal and figurative meanings applied to such policies. Literal zero-tolerance policies imply that all substantiated policy breaches will result in termination. Figurative policies communicate a generalised stance that DHB will not be tolerated without committing to impose sanctions on employees established as having breached standards, often only stating that disciplinary action 'can' occur (Roehling, 2020). Despite the differences, literal and figurative zero tolerance policies are more similar than not. Hence, unless stated, the current review will apply to both.

That consistent application of zero-tolerance policies can deter DHB (King, 2019) and increase DHB reporting, ultimately reducing harm (Roehling, 2020). Yet Sheely (2019) advised these policies "should be approached with great caution and can create more trouble than they prevent" (p. 57). The literature identified four specific challenges with zero-tolerance policies:

1. Unclear definitions and policy procedures are common in zero-tolerance policies, and without

defined and enforced consequences the policy's credibility and effectiveness can be undermined (Johnson, 2015a; Magee et al., 2014; Roehling, 2020).

2. The often-insufficient consideration of the impact a loss of credibility and trust will have if zero-tolerance policies are not enforced (Brinkley, 2019; Roehling, 2020; Thompson & Catley, 2021).
3. Overly punitive can create further injustices (Brinkley, 2019; Ferris et al., 2021; Roehling, 2020) and remove rehabilitation options (Thompson & Catley, 2021).
4. The efficacy of zero-tolerance policies lacks supporting empirical evidence (Ferris et al., 2021; Stockdale et al., 2004).
5. These policies can enable organisations to avoid any responsibility for DHB by blaming the individual (Ballard & Easteal, 2018; Thompson & Catley, 2021).

With the challenges of zero-tolerance policies, the literature consensus is that they are seldom the best approach for DHB (Thompson & Catley, 2021). Effective zero-tolerance policies seek to balance strong anti-DHB messages with equitable and transparent treatment, clearly stating all factors determining policy violations (Roehling, 2020). Organisations should carefully assess the legislative context and potential drawbacks before adopting these policies. Zero tolerance should “not necessarily mean termination of the perpetrator ... [but] mean that every incidence must be taken seriously” (Ferris et al., 2021, p. 5).

Implications for Organisations – Context-based

Through the generation of the organisational contextual theme a number of outcomes led to the development of specific implications for organisations. Including and addressing these implications as part of any DHB policy development and implementation process can assist organisations in the generation of contextually appropriate, equitable and effective DHB policy process. These context-based implications are:

1. Prior to developing or revising DHB policies, organisations should undertake a structured contextual assessment to identify all factors that shape or influence DHB risks, reporting patterns, and policy effectiveness within their organisational and industry-based environment. This assessment should examine organisational characteristics (such as industry, structure, employment arrangements, and existing policies), relevant legislative obligations and gaps,

workforce demographics, organisational culture, leadership practices, and formal and informal power dynamics. To ensure equitable outcomes, organisations should also identify groups within their workforce that may face elevated DHB risks and assess whether existing processes provide them with equal access to prevention, reporting, and resolution mechanisms.

2. Organisations should treat and manage DHB as both an individual behaviour issue and a systemic organisational risk. This requires integrating DHB management into broader health, safety, people, and risk-management systems. These systems must be supported by leadership accountability, regular monitoring, and proactive risk mitigation. The alternative, relying solely on complaints-based processes, identify and manage DHB solely as an individual behaviour issue and allow organisations to abdicate any responsibility for systemic and contextual issues that contribute to DHB and its inequitable management.
3. Policy development should be informed by organisational research, workforce consultation, and context-specific risk assessments rather than generic or templated approaches. Policies should explicitly address organisational risk factors, cultural issues, power imbalances, and any protections not fully covered by legislation to ensure all workers receive equitable protection.
4. Finally, organisations should carefully consider the type of DHB policy they adopt. Clear expectations, consistent enforcement, transparent procedures, and fair decision-making are more important than symbolic "zero-tolerance" statements. Policies are most effective when they communicate that all allegations will be taken seriously, investigated appropriately, and addressed in ways that promote accountability, safety, learning, and organisational improvement.

Theme 2 – Content

After assessing an organisations contextual environment, the content theme investigated policy processes from its initial development to DHB resolution and other factors identified as important for equitable and effective DHB policies. The underpinning link between identifying contextual elements of an organisation that impact DHB and the content of any subsequent policy is that policy elements and processes must “target the cultural and organisational factors” (Magee et al., 2014, p. 8) that were previously identified.

This theme then provides organisations a framework for considering how policy elements can be constructed to specifically address and mitigate contextual factors within their organisation that contribute to the occurrence of DHB and potentially reduce equitable policy application. It is the relationship between identifying contextual factors and addressing them within a DHB policy that enables organisations to tailor DHB policies to their own situation.

The content theme encompasses six sub-themes reflecting a range of actions, processes, and considerations relevant to tailoring DHB policy content to organisational needs. The sub-themes were (1) policy development, (2) policy introduction, (3) DHB prevention, (4) reporting and complaint process, (5) investigation processes, and (6) the resolution phase. While being discrete phases or portions of any potential policy, each influences the other, so they need to be developed in an integrated process to avoid gaps or inconsistencies with the final policy. By identifying potential inclusions within each policy area organisations can consider each within the context of their organisation, creating a framework to develop organisationally tailored DHB policies, which research has identified as an effective way of addressing DHB.

Policy Development

Actions requiring consideration prior to policy drafting commences were coded as contributing to policy development as they influence what is included in the policy, how it is articulated and implemented. Failure to consider policy development elements contributes to reduced equity and effectiveness.

Clarity of language. Unclear DHB policies increase the risk of DHB (Magee et al., 2014). Clarity and detail in DHB policies are essential elements for success. Several language requirements were identified to support successful DHB policies.

1. Incomplete or unclear policies lead to inconsistency and differing policy interpretations that reduce equity, credibility, and effectiveness (Becton et al., 2017; Cowan, 2011; Johnson, 2015; Magee et al., 2014; Rayner & Lewis, 2010; Roehling, 2020; SCEE, 2012; Wall et al., 2018).
2. Language and terminology impact the use and application of DHB policies; for example, 'report' rather than 'complaint' can reduce the adversarial nature of DHB processes (Cowan, 2011; Magee et al., 2014; Rayner & Lewis, 2010; Thompson & Catley, 2021).
3. DHB policies must have clearly stated standards and criteria for decision makers to limit biases

(Cowan, 2011; Roehling, 2020).

Evaluation and recording. Research identified that monitoring and evaluation processes are critical for successful DHB policies (Leka, Aditya, et al., 2008; Magee et al., 2014; Rayner & Lewis, 2010; Vartia & Leka, 2011; Zapf & Vartia, 2020) but tend to lack clear processes (Richards & Daley, 2003). This makes it difficult to assess the effectiveness of DHB policies (Brinkley, 2019; Ferris et al., 2021; Magee et al., 2014; WorkSafe NZ, 2017), processes (Thompson & Catley, 2021; Vartia & Leka, 2011), or associated interventions (Ritzman, 2016). Regular and visible evaluation shows organisational commitment to addressing DHB (Richards & Daley, 2003) supports DHB risk identification (ILO, 2020; Matthews & Farris, 2022) and enables policies to be updated as the environment changes (ILO, 2020; Leka, Aditya, et al., 2008). Recording all DHB cases is critical to achieving this evaluation (ILO, 2020) as “data is essential” (OAG, 2023b, p. 61) to understanding DHB prevalence and trends. As complete DHB data are a precursor to effective evaluation, insufficient or inaccurate data limit the ability to objectively measure policy effectiveness (Salin, 2008). Effectively recording DHB incidents and evaluating policy application can increase DHB reporting as targets can feel safer to do so. Richards and Daley (2003) confirmed this notion, stating that exposing a hidden problem always leads to increased reporting as a sign of success, not failure. This highlights the importance of evaluation practices in identifying the real prevalence of organisational DHB.

DHB policy evaluation methods vary across timeframes and depend on the policy, organisation, and available resources (Osler, 2021; Vartia & Leka, 2011). Methods can be direct or indirect, with direct methods collecting explicit DHB data such as complaints or other DHB reports, workplace surveys, or exit interviews (Bastick, 2014; ILO, 2020; Osler, 2021; Rayner & Lewis, 2010; Richards & Daley, 2003; Ritzman, 2016; WorkSafe NZ, 2017). Indirect metrics offer broader perspectives, indicating new or ongoing areas of concern by investigating areas linked to DHB like psychological well-being, absenteeism, or staff turnover (Illing et al., 2016; Richards & Daley, 2003; Ritzman, 2016; WorkSafe NZ, 2017). Regardless of the method applied, evaluation should occur regularly (Francis, 2019; ILO, 2020; Magee et al., 2014), and be written into the policy if long-term change is to be achieved (Richards & Daley, 2003). It provides a level of legitimacy and resourcing that may not be achieved otherwise.

Implementation and dissemination. Policy implementation is directly linked to effectiveness (Magee et al., 2014; Rayner & Lewis, 2010), and is at least as important as policy content (Salin, 2008). Many DHB policies fail through poor implementation, not poor development (Zapf & Vartia, 2020). Caponecchia and Wyatt (2011) argued that if procedures mentioned in a policy are not implemented, the policy “does not exist. It is simply a document” (Caponecchia & Wyatt, 2011, p. 110). Poorly implemented policies may still meet compliance obligations but unintentionally support DHB by generating no change in DHB management or prevalence (Bingham & Scherer, 2001; Magee et al., 2014; Salin, 2008). Effective DHB policies must include clearly outlined implementation plans alongside details of where responsibility for each step lies (Vartia & Leka, 2011; Zapf & Vartia, 2020). Implementation is a “difficult and long-term task” (SCEE, 2012, p. 74) that includes policy promotion beyond initial implementation processes (Rayner & Lewis, 2010). Depending on the size and resources of an organisation, the literature identified multiple implementation methods; however, how to develop effective implementation plans received less attention. Details of the implementation methods are presented in Table 16. Just as DHB policies should be tailored to specific organisational needs (Zapf & Vartia, 2020), it follows that accompanying implementation plans should also be bespoke. Regardless of method, successful implementation plans contain three pivotal elements:

- a. Ongoing training for all staff (Becton et al., 2017; Cowan, 2011; Ferris et al., 2018; ILO, 2020; King, 2019; Magee et al., 2014; Rayner & Lewis, 2010; SCEE, 2012; Vartia & Leka, 2011; WorkSafe NZ, 2017; Zapf & Vartia, 2020).
- b. Easily accessible policy and procedure documents (Becton et al., 2017; Ferris et al., 2018; ILO, 2020; Magee et al., 2014; Rayner & Lewis, 2010; Richards & Daley, 2003; SCEE, 2012).
- c. Active and visible support from management and senior leaders (Cowan, 2011; Ferris et al., 2018; King, 2019; Magee et al., 2014; Rayner & Lewis, 2010; SCEE, 2012; Vartia & Leka, 2011; WorkSafe NZ, 2017; Zapf & Vartia, 2020).

Table 16.*DHB Policy Implementation Options Identified in Rapid Review.*

Implementation Options	Becton, Gilstrap & Forsyth (2017)	Cowan (2011)	Ferris, Deakin & Mathieson (2018)	International Labour Organisation (2020)	King (2019)	Magee et al (2014)	Rayner & Lewis (2010)	Richards & Daly (2003)	Standing Committee (2012)	Vartia & Leka (2011)	Worksafe NZ (2017)	Zapf and Vartia (2020)
Initial training on new policy										✓	✓	✓
Ongoing training	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Induction of new employees	✓		✓				✓				✓	✓
Easily accessible - Online, websites, intranets	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			
Easily accessible - Hardcopy, notice boards	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓				
Culture initiatives		✓			✓				✓			
Commitment, support, and active participation of management and senior leaders		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Regular redistribution of policy to employees	✓		✓			✓		✓				✓
Align performance review processes with DHB policy	✓											
Using topical or situational opportunities that arise to discuss the policy			✓	✓								
Resources are in place to apply the policy such as time for managers to address issues, or new procedures in place						✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Notes.												
1. Research articles included were those coded to the implementation and dissemination sub-code as part of the Content theme.												

General policy content. While the literature revealed differing DHB policy frameworks, most had common themes (Richards & Daley, 2003). Assessing the proposed policy frameworks, the most common elements were:

- a. A clear statement detailing organisational commitment to prevent and address DHB
- b. Detailed DHB definitions supported by examples
- c. Clear and accessible reporting and complaint processes
- d. Clear sanctions and consequences for policy breaches
- e. Clear investigation procedures
- f. Roles and responsibilities for all employees and those involved with applying the policy
- g. Protections for targets and respondents to reported DHB
- h. Multiple corrective or disciplinary options for DHB resolution

The review supported tailoring DHB policies to specific organisations and identified additional components that could be applied to achieve this process (Magee et al., 2014). All identified potential policy elements are detailed in Table 17.

Stakeholder engagement. Effective DHB policies “must reasonably meet both the needs of the firm and the needs of its employees” (Meglich-Sespico et al., 2007, p. 39). Policies developed in isolation from users “can have no impact at all” (Rayner & Lewis, 2010, p. 338), and will “disempower staff and can lead to discord and a negative culture” (Magee et al., 2014, p. 121). A consultative policy design process demonstrates from the outset employer commitment to DHB and develops a sense of policy ownership across the organisation. It works to ensure any policy “is practical and logical for the specific workplace” (Rayner & Lewis, 2010; Richards & Daley, 2003; Roehling, 2020; SCEE, 2012; Vartia & Leka, 2011; WorkSafe NZ, 2017). With consultation being as important as content (Ferris et al., 2021; Richards & Daley, 2003), stakeholder membership requires careful consideration and must include representatives of those who will apply the policy, those most affected by it, and senior leadership (Rayner & Lewis, 2010). Those needing to apply the policy could be human resources, health and safety, complaints managers, health and well-being staff, alongside managers, and union representatives supporting employees (Ferris et al., 2021; Johnson, 2015a; Rayner & Lewis, 2010; Richards & Daley, 2003; Vartia & Leka, 2011; WorkSafe NZ, 2017). External experts can provide advice, assisting stakeholders and policy makers to reach a common understanding of DHB (Rayner & Lewis, 2010; Richards & Daley, 2003; Vartia & Leka, 2011). However, they should be carefully selected to ensure their suitability to the organisation’s context (Richards & Daley, 2003) and that they do not develop any policy in isolation from stakeholders (Berlingieri, 2015). The “composition of the [stakeholder] group needs to be representative and have a status which shows the importance attached to the problem” (Richards & Daley, 2003, p. 248). Obtaining buy-in from stakeholders is vital when developing DHB policies (Berlingieri, 2015) and should be addressed as early as possible in the policy development process.

Policy Introduction

Organisations must consider the context any DHB policy will fit within and how it will enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the organisation (Johnson, 2015a). Policies must deliver a clear statement

Specific DHB policy component	Bastick (2014)	Becton, Gilstrap & Forsyth (2017)	Bentley et al (2012)	Brinkley (2019)	Cowan (2011)	Ferris, Deakin & Mathieson (2018)	Johnson (2015)	King (2019)	Magee et al (2014)	Meglich-Sespico, Faley & Knapp (2007)	Rayner & Lewis (2010)	Richards & Daly (2003)	Ritzman (2016)	Salin (2008)	Sheely (2019)	Standing Committee (2012)	Vartia & Leka (2011)	Wall, Smith & Nodoushani (2018)	Worksafe NZ (2017)
Clear introduction, intent, commitment statement			✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	
Clear definitions and examples using specific terms	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Policy consistent with OHS approach									✓						✓				✓
Clear informal and formal reporting procedures	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mandated reporting of DHB				✓															
Processes for addressing evidenced vexatious reports									✓							✓			
Clear and fair complaint procedures including escalation processes	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓
Clearly detailed roles, responsibilities and accountabilities			✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Actions if managers fail to comply with or enforce DHB policy																			✓
Protections and rights for all parties to a complaint	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓			✓				✓		✓
How will privacy and confidentiality be applied		✓						✓		✓	✓				✓				
Support options and contact details						✓			✓		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓
Detailed investigation process	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓			✓
Separate team to manage and investigate DHB reports											✓				✓				✓
Clear policy sanctions and consequences for policy breaches			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			
Multiple corrective or disciplinary options to resolve complaint		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓					✓
Appeals process				✓				✓	✓										
Details of training, awareness and prevention programs		✓						✓	✓	✓	✓				✓		✓		✓
Recording, evaluation and amendment processes				✓				✓		✓	✓						✓		✓
Notes																			

1. Research articles included were those coded to the general policy content sub-code as part of the Content theme.

addressing all elements of DHB interventions and prevention (Rayner & Lewis, 2010). Policy introductions should provide the principles upon which the policy rests, alongside a clear framework to identify, manage, and resolve DHB. Key introduction components identified within the literature included a clear policy purpose, definitions with examples of unacceptable behaviour, and the roles and responsibilities of staff and managers.

Policy purpose. DHB policies are “clear statements of the standards of behaviour that is expected by the organisation” (SCEE, 2012, p. 70), with organisations committing to address DHB (Berlingieri, 2015; Richards & Daley, 2003) and detailing all processes implemented to achieve this action (Rayner & Lewis, 2010; Richards & Daley, 2003). Policy aims should be clearly stated within the policy introduction, shaped to specific organisational contexts. Specific introduction components and potential aims identified within the research included:

1. A clear statement referencing organisational core values (Ferris et al., 2021), that DHB will not be tolerated (Berlingieri, 2015; Hoel & Einarsen, 2020; Rayner & Lewis, 2010; Richards & Daley, 2003), differentiating DHB from normal workplace “conflict, debate and difference of opinions” (Ferris et al., 2021, p. 4).
2. The expectation all staff will be treated with respect and dignity (Bastick, 2014; Hoel & Einarsen, 2020; Richards & Daley, 2003), enabling them to execute their duties “free from any form of discrimination, harassment, bullying or abuse” (Bastick, 2014, p. 30).
3. Reference to related legislation and other organisational policies (Berlingieri, 2015; Hoel & Einarsen, 2020; Richards & Daley, 2003).
4. Explicit definitions of DHB, unacceptable behaviour and related terms with examples (Berlingieri, 2015; Hoel & Einarsen, 2020; Mollison, 2016; Richards & Daley, 2003).
5. A statement that any retaliation, by any person, against any party to DHB will not be tolerated (Bastick, 2014; Hoel & Einarsen, 2020).
6. That all staff must comply with the policy and stated consequences for those who fail to do so (Hoel & Einarsen, 2020; Mollison, 2016; Richards & Daley, 2003).

7. The organisation's role in preventing DHB and minimising harmful effects (Hoel & Einarsen, 2020; Mollison, 2016; Rayner & Lewis, 2010), including managers responsibilities to "actively prevent discrimination, harassment, bullying and abuse in units under their command, and to investigate all complaints expeditiously, impartially and sensitively" (Bastick, 2014, p. 30).

All elements must be explicitly defined to remove ambiguity allowing individuals to apply their own policy interpretations that may not align with stated policy aims and intentions. For example, policies often state that DHB should be resolved at the lowest possible level to avoid undue escalation. By not detailing that escalation is necessary when there is serious or repeated DHB, or when a significant power imbalance is present, informal processes are repeatedly applied, which are unlikely to succeed and potentially cause additional harm (Ballard & Easteal, 2018).

Definitions. Clear definitions of DHB elements and processes are crucial to enable staff to understand behavioural expectations (Richards & Daley, 2003). While broad DHB definitions can prevent policies from becoming quickly outdated, they can hinder employees' ability to distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable conduct (Rayner & Lewis, 2010). This insufficient detail can complicate implementation and lead to inconsistent policy application (Ferris et al., 2021). Narrow DHB definitions can also hinder policy effectiveness by discounting behaviour based on frequency, duration, intent, or power imbalances (Hutchinson, 2012; Lutgen-Sandvik, 2005). Definitions that exclude behaviours require careful consideration, particularly when regulatory bodies expect all such behaviour to be addressed as it can quickly escalate, even when it does not reach DHB levels (WorkSafe NZ, 2017). Excluding such behaviours can marginalise targets of abuse that do not fit narrow definitions, undermining policy intent and enabling harm to continue (Thompson & Catley, 2021). This could also increase the risk of organisations breaching legislative or regulatory requirements.

Supporting a common understanding of DHB through clear definitions is critical in reducing behaviours by enabling "people to notice harmful behaviour, raise concerns, and have those concerns taken seriously" (OAG, 2023a, p. 7). Definitions in policy introductions should include, but are not limited to:

- a. Discrimination (Dipboye & Halverson, 2004; Human Rights Act, 1993; ILO, 2020)

- b. Harassment (Johnson, 2015a; MBIE, 2020; Roehling, 2020)
- c. Bullying (Einarsen et al., 2017; Ferris et al., 2021; Magee et al., 2014; WorkSafe NZ, 2017)
- d. Hazing (Bourke, 2016; Hernandez, 2015; Kowalski et al., 2021)
- e. Mobbing (ILO, 2020; Osler, 2021)
- f. Cyber bullying (Symons et al., 2021; Volk et al., 2014)
- g. Hostile workplaces (Rospenda et al., 2009; WorkSafe NZ, 2014)
- h. Legitimate actions (Ferris et al., 2021; Magee et al., 2014; Osler, 2021)
- i. Reprisals or retribution (ILO, 2020; Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, 2018)

Policy procedures must also be clearly defined and “explicitly identify the factors that will be used in determining the discipline that will be imposed for violations” (Roehling, 2020, p. 93). This should include the severity of the behaviour, previous policy breaches, the level of power imbalance involved, and the harm done. If structured decision processes are included (Arvai et al., 2011; Lyons et al., 2010), the steps, decision considerations, criteria, and standards must be explicitly defined (Roehling, 2020) to ensure “decision makers not be allowed to determine on an ad hoc basis the factors that they apply when deciding the discipline that will be imposed” (Roehling, 2020, p. 94).

The literature strongly supported the importance of carefully constructed DHB definitions and policy processes, alongside the implications of failing to include sufficient detail. This requires organisations identify where the line between too much and not enough detail lies, but with no process to determine it. The detailed organisational and contextual understanding under the contextual theme provides leaders and policymakers with a framework to assess the potential implications and how they could apply to their organisation.

Roles and responsibilities. Responsibilities of the organisation, employees, managers, human resources and health and safety offices, targets and witnesses as they pertain to DHB, must be clearly defined within the policy (Johnson, 2015a; Richards & Daley, 2003). Organisational responsibilities must minimise the potential for DHB occurring within the workplace and have effective processes to address it when it does occur (WorkSafe NZ, 2017). Having processes alone are insufficient, and the requirement to

act must be specified. The New Zealand Employment Court has stated that once employers are aware of potential DHB, including when they *should* have been aware of it, they are required by legislation to address it (Beck, 2018). Decision makers within a DHB process should be able to refer to the policy and identify precisely what they are required to do, including consequences for not adhering to the policy (Richards & Daley, 2003). Responsibilities for targets must be carefully considered as power imbalances in many DHB situations mean they, and many witnesses, “don’t have the leverage needed to get the perpetrator to end the behaviours” (Johnson, 2015a, p. 43). While the New Zealand Employment Court places responsibility on employees to report DHB to their employer, processes requiring DHB targets to confront their abusers are not advisable (Johnson, 2015a).

Roles and responsibilities for reporting and managing DHB will vary across organisations. Organisations must carefully consider how their DHB processes will be implemented, and ensure responsibilities are appropriately allocated to support the consistent application and enforcement of their policy.

DHB Prevention

Preventing DHB requires organisation-wide strategies, not isolated policies (Magee et al., 2014), with individual policies offering legitimacy and context to organisational prevention interventions. Three prevention components were identified as foundational elements of any effective DHB prevention and management strategy: (1) consistent policy enforcement, (2) a comprehensive and integrated suite of DHB interventions, and (3) that leadership across the organisation is recognised as a key DHB risk or preventative factor.

Enforcement and consistency. DHB can only “exist within a culture that permits or even rewards such kinds of behaviour” (Einarsen, 1999, p. 23). When organisations fail to challenge DHB, they signal that such behaviour is acceptable (Carter et al., 2013), thereby perpetuating its occurrence (Brinkley, 2019). DHB policies must be consistently enforced with comparable consequences for all breaches of policy, regardless of an individual’s position, if any organisational benefits are to be realised (Brinkley, 2019; Gardner, O’Driscoll, et al., 2013; OAG, 2023b; Roehling, 2020). Inconsistency in policy enforcement and application erodes trust in the organisation and its leaders (OAG, 2023a). When policies are enforced

consistently, employees know their reports will be taken seriously (Berlingieri, 2015), which works to reduce the impact and occurrence of DHB (Ferris, 2004).

Within the reviewed literature four factors were identified that undermine consistent enforcement and application of DHB policies. The first factor was when DHB reports are seen to be selectively actioned, regardless of the reason behind this selectivity (MBIE, 2020). Second, the literature identified that transparent DHB processes supported consistency in policy application, with the converse being equally true (Becton et al., 2017; Magee et al., 2014). Achieving consistent policy application also requires that opportunities for decision-makers to apply ad-hoc criteria to DHB reports and resolution actions must be removed (Fox & Cowan, 2014; Roehling, 2020). Lastly, inconsistent policy application can be significantly reduced with clearly defined policies that contain sufficient detail to guide decision making (Blackwood et al., 2015; Roehling, 2020; Wall et al., 2018). These enforcement and consistency factors are presented in further detail in Table 18.

Integrated DHB interventions. Clearly defined DHB policies alone are insufficient to effectively address workplace DHB (Ferris et al., 2021; Magee et al., 2014). They do, however, support broader DHB strategies and “are a critical component of a broad, multilevel approach to address [DHB]” (Magee et al., 2014, p. 34). Managing DHB across an organisation requires “multi-faceted” (Gardner, O’Driscoll, et al., 2013, p. 225), “comprehensive” (Becton et al., 2017, p. 103), “integrated and coordinated practices” (Berlingieri, 2015, p. 36) to support complementary interventions (Magee et al., 2014). Lists of potential components are readily available (see Magee et al, 2014, pp. 26-27, 84). Strategies to develop integrated DHB workplace interventions vary, with distinctions made “between primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention ... and organizational, job- or task-level, and individual-oriented interventions” (Vartia & Leka, 2011, p. 360). Primary interventions are proactive and prevention-focused; secondary level actions support harm reduction, while tertiary options are rehabilitative, working to restore the well-being of those involved and rebuild healthy work environments (Bentley et al., 2012; Ferris et al., 2021; Magee et al., 2014; Vartia & Leka, 2011). Individual approaches focus on how employees engage with their jobs, influencing their perceptions and interaction styles. Job level actions influence work environments through

physical workplaces and how units function; while organisational strategies use policies, procedures, and leadership to influence culture and DHB attitudes (Magee et al., 2014; Vartia & Leka, 2011).

Table 18.

Considerations to Enhance Enforcement and Consistency of DHB Policies.

Enforcement and consistency	Examples	
	Risk factor	Literature review reference
Action all reports	All reports must be actioned, regardless of who makes the report	MBIE, 2020; SCEE, 2012; WorkSafe NZ, 2017
Transparent processes support consistent enforcement	DHB requires the same transparent reporting as physical workplace hazards	SCEE, 2012
	Despite the difficulties involved, transparency is a vital step for any effective DHB policy	MBIE, 2020; OAG, 2023a, 2023b; Rayner & Lewis, 2010; SCEE, 2012; Thompson & Catley, 2021
	Transparency must occur at individual and organisational levels	Becton et al., 2017; Magee et al. 2014
	Organisationally, publishing anonymised DHB statistics and consequences enhances transparency and trust	Ballard & Easteal, 2018; Bastick, 2014; MBIE, 2020; Rayner & Lewis, 2010; Thompson & Catley, 2021; Zapf & Vartia, 2020
Reduce unsanctioned criteria applied to DHB	Decision-makers often applying unsanctioned criteria including:	
	1. Applying ad hoc factors when selecting disciplinary actions	Roehling, 2020
	2. Requiring written complaints when verbal reports are sanctioned	Francis, 2019
	3. Applying additional criteria to DHB reports beyond policy definitions	Fox & Cowan, 2014
Poorly defined policies lead to inconsistent enforcement	Broad procedures with insufficient detail support inconsistent policy application, undermining policy aims	Blackwood et al., 2015; Roehling, 2020; Wall et al., 2018
	Oversight mechanisms to enforce policies can increase consistency and transparency	OAG, 2023a; Roehling, 2020

Effective DHB programmes involve primary, secondary, and tertiary interventions directed at individual, job and organisational levels, seeking to change individual behaviours alongside organisational cultures and workplace environments (Brinkley, 2019; Gardner, O'Driscoll, et al., 2013; Magee et al., 2014; Meglich-Sespico et al., 2007; Richards & Daley, 2003; Vartia & Leka, 2011; Zapf & Vartia, 2020). Leka et al. (2008) offered a comprehensive and pragmatic framework that encompasses primary/secondary/tertiary interventions alongside individual/job/organisational approaches to address work-related stress and workplace violence that could be readily adapted to DHB. This could assist in the development of an integrated programme to address DHB.

Leadership. Minimising DHB “starts and ends at the top” (Brinkley, 2019, p. 66). Leaders influence organisational behaviour through their explicit communication and implicit actions (OAG, 2023b), implicating them in shaping workplace environments (Carter et al., 2013), with their abusive behaviour making a key factor in an employee’s decision to resign (Haar et al., 2016). Leadership can enable or prevent DHB (Bentley et al., 2012; Gardner, O’Driscoll, et al., 2013; Magee et al., 2014; Matthews & Farris, 2022; OAG, 2023b; Osler, 2021; Plimmer et al., 2023) through the active and visible commitment by all leaders, or its absence (Brinkley, 2019; Cowan, 2012; Gardner, O’Driscoll, et al., 2013; Meglich-Sespico et al., 2007; OAG, 2023b; Pate & Beaumont, 2010; Vartia & Leka, 2011; Zapf & Vartia, 2020). Positive leadership “provides practical and emotional support, and deals directly with problems” (Gardner, O’Driscoll, et al., 2013) while supporting organisational outputs. By addressing DHB early, participative, authentic, and transformational leaders reduce escalation and the risk of harmful behaviours occurring (Gardner, O’Driscoll, et al., 2013; Matthews & Farris, 2022; Zapf & Vartia, 2020). Conversely, authoritative, laissez-faire, or free-reign leadership, and arbitrary punishment (Hoel et al., 2010) are strong predictors of DHB (Bentley et al., 2012; Brinkley, 2019), and can be “a source of bullying in itself” (Hoel et al., 2010, p. 456). Unpredictable or inconsistent leaders are also linked to higher levels of DHB (Hoel et al., 2010).

Holding leaders accountable is crucial for minimising the harm caused by DHB (Namie & Namie, 2011; Osler, 2021; Pearson & Porath, 2005). Accountability practices must “begin at the top” (Osler, 2021, p. 84), ensuring leaders role-model appropriate behaviour (Francis, 2019; OAG, 2023b), consistently respond when DHB has occurred (Bastick, 2014; OAG, 2023a; Pearson & Porath, 2005), and maintain safe and respectful workplaces (Matthews & Farris, 2022; OAG, 2023b). Merely stating that decision-makers are accountable does not provide transparent processes to achieve this outcome. Whatever method is used, the expectations and responsibilities placed on leaders, managers, and decision makers when applying any DHB policy must be clearly stated, with measures and consequences for failing to adhere.

DHB Reporting Processes

Terminology. Terms like complaint, report, allegation, or grievance are often used interchangeably when discussing responses to DHB. While all relate to an employee raising a DHB issue, they have differing connotations that influence subsequent actions. The terms ‘complaint’ or ‘grievance’ are more suited to

interpersonal or disciplinary processes, while ‘report’ aligns with health and safety concerns (Thompson & Catley, 2021). I will be using the term ‘report’ for when a target or witness initially informs their organisation of potential DHB, regardless of the pathway used to achieve this action. My use of the word ‘complaint’ will be linked to subsequent formal processes, such as investigations.

Importance of detailed/accessible reporting processes. Effective reporting and resolution processes are required for organisations to identify and address DHB, ensuring those involved can access necessary support and resolution options (OAG, 2023b). Policies must start with effective, safe, and accessible reporting options as without initial reports subsequent processes, regardless of effectiveness, are redundant. The variety of DHB situations requires access to multiple reporting options, as a one-size-fits-all reporting approach will not work for all cases or individuals (MBIE, 2020; Mollison, 2016). With the nature of DHB and its associated harm, existing reporting or complaint processes for non-DHB issues may be inappropriate without adjustment or flexibility within the process (Osler, 2021). Without reporting processes that encourage and support individuals to report DHB, the effectiveness of any DHB policy will be undermined and, at best, limited.

Even with DHB policies in place, many targets and witnesses remain silent “in the face of horrendous conduct” (Ballard & Easteal, 2018, p. 35). Literature consistently identified significant under-reporting of DHB (Chappell & Di Martino, 2006; Francis, 2019; ILO, 2020; OAG, 2023a; Osler, 2021; Plimmer et al., 2023; Thompson & Catley, 2021) with reporting data far lower than rates obtained through anonymous surveys (Ballard & Easteal, 2018; Illing et al., 2016). While under-reporting varies across studies, in 2022, the New Zealand Human Rights Commission determined that 76% of workers who experienced workplace harassment or bullying did not report it (Human Rights Commission, 2022). Under-reporting of DHB has two impacts: (1) leaving significant levels of workplace harm unresolved to continue and potentially worsen, and (2) allowing organisations to perpetuate a narrative that DHB is not a serious concern in their workplace (Thompson & Catley, 2021). As DHB under-reporting is widely recognised (Thompson & Catley, 2021), the onus is on organisations to reduce barriers faced by employees when considering reporting DHB, and provide safe, accessible reporting options.

Principles and considerations for good reporting processes. The literature identified multiple concepts and principles to guide the development of equitable and safe reporting options for those impacted by DHB. While some principles and considerations have been raised in previous sections, they bear repeating as this highlights that resolving any factors can enhance the equity and effectiveness of DHB policies in multiple ways. This significantly increases the return on investment for any costs that may be incurred to address these considerations.

Seven key principles and considerations were identified as making a significant contribution to developing equitable and effective reporting processes: (1) early reporting options, (2) treating all reports seriously, (3) clear processes, (4) ensuring staff can identify DHB, (5) protection from retaliation, (6) easily accessible options, and (7) the provision of multiple reporting options. Each consideration and their contributing factors are detailed in Table 19. By addressing each consideration during policy development processes, potential barriers can be avoided or mitigated before becoming an issue.

What good reporting processes should contain. While recommendations by research and regulatory bodies regarding reporting processes lacked definition and varied across documents, several overlapping considerations were identified. These elements should be detailed sufficiently to support operational implementation and are detailed next.

Self-help options. Self-help options offered by the literature suggested that targets adjust their perspective of DHB and ignore it (Osler, 2021), or speak to their abuser requesting they cease the behaviour (Richards & Daley, 2003; Salin, 2008; SCEE, 2012). Self-help options seemed to assume offending parties were unaware of the impact their behaviour had, that raising the issue was sufficient to change behaviour, and that it empowered targets (Brinkley, 2019; Richards & Daley, 2003; SCEE, 2012). While potentially effective for non-DHB forms of workplace conflict, self-help measures are unlikely to resolve DHB (Johnson, 2015a; Zapf & Vartia, 2020). DHB has been likened to “being battered by a partner” (Field, 2006, cited in Osler, 2021, p.74), with targets not having the power or ability to end the abuse (Johnson, 2015a). Despite almost 70% of targets attempting to resolve the situation themselves (Namie, 2013), few were successful (Ballard & Easteal, 2018). Namie (2013) demonstrated that less than 7% of bullying ceased after a target confronted their bully, and worsened in almost one in four cases. Being largely ineffective in

Table 19.*Principles and Considerations for Good Reporting Processes.*

Principles and considerations	Examples	
	Risk factor	Literature review reference
Early reporting	Resolving DHB early reduces escalation and harm	Caponecchia & Wyatt, 2011; MBIE, 2020; SCEE, 2012
	Organisation support of early reporting must be genuine and visible	Ballard & Easteal, 2018; Caponecchia & Wyatt, 2011
Treat all reports seriously	All reports should be treated with dignity and respect	Neall et al., 2021
	All DHB reports should be treated seriously, even if known but not reported	Hoel & Einarsen, 2020; SCEE, 2012; WorkSafe NZ, 2017b
	Organisations must demonstrate a lack of tolerance or acceptance of DHB	Hoel & Einarsen, 2020; Neall et al., 2021
Clear processes	DHB policies must provide clear, member-aligned reporting and resolution options	King, 2019; SCEE, 2012; WorkSafe NZ, 2017b
Identifying DHB	Individuals must be able to identify DHB when it occurs	Ballard & Easteal, 2018; Meglich-Sespico et al., 2007
	Training enables employees to understand DHB, identify it, and use policy effectively	Ballard & Easteal, 2018; Becton et al., 2017; Ferris et al., 2018; Richards & Daley, 2003; Salin, 2009
Safe reporting pathways and protection from retaliation.	Retaliation is adverse action toward DHB reporters or investigation participants	Cortina & Magley, 2003; Meglich-Sespico et al., 2007
	Real or perceived fear of retaliation is directly linked to under-reporting of DHB	Berman & Swanson, 2013, cited in Becton et al., 2017; Thompson & Catley, 2021;
	Retaliation can be work or socially based, or a combination of both	Cortina & Magley, 2003
Easily accessible options	Policy statements protecting targets and witnesses against reprisals are ineffective without processes to address it	Bastick, 2014; Becton et al., 2017; Harvey et al., 2006; ILO, 2018; Ritzman, 2016; Thompson & Catley, 2021
	Reporting processes should be easily accessible for all staff	Magee et al., 2014; WorkSafe NZ, 2017b
Multiple reporting options	Managers should be a reporting option, not mandatory - reporters may be embarrassed, want independent advice or their manager is involved in the DHB	Osler, 2021; Richards & Daley, 2003; Wall et al., 2018
	Lack of alternative reporting options can silence DHB reporting	Bastick, 2014; Becton et al., 2017; Cowan, 2011; King, 2019; Richards & Daley, 2003; Thompson & Catley, 2021
	Informal and formal options should be available	Carden & Boyd, 2013; MBIE, 2020
	Options include advisor roles, online reporting, and ombudsman-type schemes	Bastick, 2014; Francis, 2019; Harding, 2009

resolving DHB, organisations should avoid requiring targets to confront their abuser before accepting their report (Francis, 2019; Johnson, 2015a). This can be encouraged, but not mandated (Ferris et al., 2021).

Requiring targets do this makes them responsible for the behaviour of their abusers (Johnson, 2015a; MBIE,

2020; Osler, 2021) and abdicates organisational responsibility for creating or maintaining cultures that enable DHB.

Support options. Often, inadequate support is available for targets and witnesses (OAG, 2023a), increasing their sense of vulnerability and helplessness (Catley et al., 2017). Multiple mechanisms are available to assist targets, including adequate information on the process alongside support for the ongoing impacts of DHB (Office of the Auditor-General, 2023a), leadership support (WorkSafe NZ, 2017), and time off for investigation or counselling appointments (OAG, 2023a). The literature also recommended support options target primary (Carden & Boyd, 2013), secondary (Ferris et al., 2021), and tertiary levels (WorkSafe NZ, 2017), with flexibility to tailor them to individual needs (OAG, 2023a). Each gap in an organisation's support package reduces the likelihood of reporting DHB and navigating resolution processes without suffering further harm.

Those accused of DHB also require support with many DHB complaint respondents reporting similar experiences of intimidation and labelling as targets (Ballard & Easteal, 2018), particularly those targeted by upward bullying, unjustly accused (Magee et al., 2014). These support mechanisms may be similar to those for targets or witnesses, but gaps in available support for the accused are common (OAG, 2023a), despite being a vital element in managing and resolving DHB (King, 2019).

While balancing multiple support needs, the benefits of an effective support system will only be realised if accessed and used. Organisations face challenges in ensuring support options are visible and accessible across their organisation, and barriers such as embarrassment or stigmatisation are mitigated.

Information for those accused of DHB. While an organisation's duty of care includes whomever DHB reports are made against, information about their rights, and processes they may face (Bentley et al., 2012; King, 2019; WorkSafe NZ, 2017), it is frequently absent (Salin, 2008; Zapf et al., 2003). The literature offered little information aside from acknowledging it as an information gap. Those accused of DHB are likely to need similar details on processes and potential actions as those targeted, but additional information may be required. To ensure equitable processes, organisations must provide detailed pathways and options for those accused to access information specific to them.

Actions once DHB is reported or identified. DHB policies should specify actions once DHB is reported, including immediate safety assessments and the application of appropriate protective mechanisms. Safety considerations should include psychosocial and physical safety, and protection from reprisals (WorkSafe NZ, 2017). Guidance within the literature generally involved removing DHB targets from their workplace, leaving the accused in place, which is likely to increase reluctance to report DHB. The report should concurrently be reviewed to identify appropriate resolution options (Brinkley, 2019; Johnson, 2015a; MBIE, 2020; Richards & Daley, 2003; Thompson & Catley, 2021). Required actions once DHB is reported should be clearly detailed in the policy and consistently applied.

Types of DHB reports. Organisations that see DHB as an interpersonal issue, relying on Human Resource involvement, generally require targets to submit written complaints before any action will be taken. Removing this step and other reporting barriers requires multiple pathways to report DHB alongside multiple report types, with appropriate processes to support and respond to them. In addition to reports by targets themselves, the literature identified three additional types of reports that should be included in any DHB policy. They were reports from witnesses or bystanders, multi-target or multi-abuser reports, as well as verbal reports. The literature also identified that a DHB policy should detail what actions would occur if any DHB report was confirmed as being false or vexatious. Each reporting types, except for false or vexatious reports, provides the opportunity for more DHB situations to be reported, and subsequently addressed and resolved. With DHB notoriously under-reported (Berlingieri, 2015; SCEE, 2012), any opportunity to increase the likelihood DHB can be reported should be embraced. Table 20 details specific risk factors for differing types of reports to support the incorporation of them into any DHB policy.

Barriers to reporting DHB. DHB under-reporting is well-documented, with multiple barriers contributing to this phenomenon (Berlingieri, 2015; SCEE, 2012). Those contemplating reporting DHB must believe that doing so will improve their situation, with the abuse stopping (Meglich-Sespico et al., 2007) while being protected from additional DHB or retaliation (Ballard & Easteal, 2018). Effective reporting processes must remove as many barriers as possible to increase the likelihood that reports will be made. Failing to achieve this will directly impact the effectiveness of any DHB prevention or intervention

strategies (Becton et al., 2017; Thompson & Catley, 2021). Multiple reporting barriers were identified within the research, falling into two categories: organisational or individual.

Table 20.

Types of DHB Reports.

Types of DHB reports	Examples	
	Risk factor	Literature review reference
Witness or bystander reports	Other employees often witness DHB and are best placed to report it	Baez-Leon et al., 2016; Coyne et al., 2019; Lutgen-Sandvik, 2006
	Witnesses require the same protections as targets	Ballard & Easteal, 2018; Coyne et al., 2019
	DHB harms witnesses as well as targets, so they should be supported to report DHB	SCEE, 2012
Communal (Multiple Target or Abuser) Reports.	Most reporting processes only support single target and abuser reports	Thompson & Catley, 2021
	Almost half of New Zealand DHB is perpetrated by more than one person	Human Rights Commission, 2022
	Single target-abuser reports hide almost half of all DHB	Ballard & Easteal, 2018; Osler, 2021
	Single target-abuser reporting hides hostile environments	Ballard & Easteal, 2018; Lutgen-Sandvik, 2006; Osler, 2021; Thompson & Catley, 2021
Verbal reports	Written reports can intimidate targets if they feel unsafe or struggle with literacy	OAG, 2023b; Thompson & Catley, 2021
	Targets often must submit written reports even when verbal reports are in policy	Francis, 2019; Plimmer et al., 2023; Rayner & Lewis, 2010
	A written reports are always preferable, but multiple technical work-arounds exist	Francis, 2019
False or vexatious reports	A DHB report made in good faith but not upheld is not a false or vexatious report	Hoel & Einarsen, 2020
	These reports are fabricated, made for personal gain, or raised inappropriately	Hoel & Einarsen, 2020; Thompson & Catley, 2021
	Conflicting advice is offered to protect against vexatious or malicious reports:	
	1. State false or vexatious DHB reports will face consequences, and	Hoel & Einarsen, 2020; Magee et al., 2014; Richards & Daley, 2003
	2. That doing so can discourage valid reports being made	Becton et al., 2017

Organisational barriers were linked to action or inaction by the organisation, such as poorly accessible reporting options, while individual barriers were integral to the person, including embarrassment or shame. Both organisational and individual barriers are shown in Table 21. The most common barriers

were fear of employment related consequences or reprisals (Baez-Leon et al., 2016; Ballard & Easteal, 2018; Berlingieri, 2015; Francis, 2019; Hutchinson, 2012; ILO, 2020; Magee et al., 2014; Meglich-Sespico et al., 2007; OAG, 2023a, 2023a; Osler, 2021), and a lack of confidence the organisation would effectively address the report, or act at all (Berlingieri, 2015; Brinkley, 2019; Francis, 2019; Hutchinson, 2012; ILO, 2020; Meglich-Sespico et al, 2007; OAG, 2023a, 2023b; Osler, 2021; Plimmer et al, 2023; SCEE, 2012; Thompson & Catley, 2021). These concerns were primarily based on what potential reporters of DHB had experienced or witnessed themselves (Ballard & Easteal, 2018; Brinkley, 2019; Ferris, 2004; Ferris et al., 2021; Francis, 2019; Meglich-Sespico et al., 2007; OAG, 2023a, 2023a; Plimmer et al., 2023; Ritzman, 2016; Thompson & Catley, 2021), not perceived or assumed expectations. With barriers repeatedly reinforced by individual experience, removing them requires organisations to consistently replace the negative experiences that maintain them with positive and constructive reporting experiences. While more individual barriers were identified than organisational ones, each can be directly linked to an organisational-level barrier, meaning that addressing those barriers will have a direct impact on reducing individual barriers.

Investigation Process

Fair and consistent handling of DHB complaints and investigations provides organisations the opportunity to establish that staff are treated fairly and DHB is being taken seriously (Neall et al., 2021). Failing to provide fair and supportive processes increases frustration, resentment and harm for targets, undermining wellbeing and commitment to the organisation (Hoel & Einarsen, 2020; Neall et al., 2021).

Consequently, DHB investigations should produce accurate and factual findings to support future actions such as disciplinary or administrative sanctions for offenders (Ballard & Easteal, 2018). My literature review revealed several factors affecting fairness and equity in DHB investigations that related to investigation processes and obstacles to achieving equitable outcomes. If organisations fail to address these issues, they will struggle to achieve consistent and fair investigations into DHB. The identified issues are, (1) the importance of detailed investigation processes, (2) the impact of poor investigation processes, (3) principles and considerations for good investigation processes, (4) what good DHB investigations look like, and (5) barriers to good investigation processes.

Importance of detailed investigation processes. With the impact poor DHB investigations have at individual and organisational levels, employers can support and enhance safe and equitable workplaces by ensuring DHB complaints are investigated fairly, promptly, and professionally. Processes must reflect legislation, employment contracts, accepted best practices, and relevant organisational policies; and, crucially, that investigations are predictable, consistent, and transparent (Ballard & Easteal, 2018; Duffy, 2009; Hoel & Einarsen, 2020). This builds trust in the process and offers security for targets (Hoel & Einarsen, 2020), mitigating organisational politics (Salin, 2008) and biased investigation processes (Magee et al., 2014). Hoel and Einarsen (2020) posited these outcomes are best achieved by embedding detailed DHB investigation processes within organisational policies, including required actions and supported decision processes.

Impact of poor investigation processes. Investigations should align with principles of justice (Neall et al., 2021) and procedural fairness, but are often “severely flawed” (Ballard & Easteal, 2018; p. 178). The flaws included “a lack of fairness, neutrality and timeliness, ... inclusion of erroneous information, investigator and decision maker bias, denial of natural justice, and other poor practices” (Ballard & Easteal, 2018, pp. 177-178). Flaws in DHB investigations reduce the perception of justice, increasing mistrust of the process and further reducing DHB reporting (Neall et al., 2021). Poorly detailed investigation procedures, or sound procedures not followed, result in poor outcomes for targets (Ahmad & Sheehan, 2017; OAG, 2023a; Thompson & Catley, 2021), additional harm (Ballard & Easteal, 2018; Bergman et al., 2002; OAG, 2023a; Thompson & Catley, 2021), reduced reporting, and the silencing of DHB targets (Ballard & Easteal, 2018). Investigation practices lacking procedural fairness or natural justice also carry significant organisational risk (Ballard & Easteal, 2018; Jenkins et al., 2011). Investigations that only ‘skim the surface’ (Magee et al., 2014) allowing DHB to continue, potentially further hidden, while showing employees that DHB concerns and safety are of little real concern to their employer.

Principles and considerations for good investigation processes. A number of common investigation principles were developed from the review literature. When combined, these principles offer policy makers and organisational leader’s guidance on what good DHB investigation processes should include, and what

must be included in DHB policies to support effective investigation processes. The considerations and specific risk factors that require addressing for each are detailed in Table 22.

Table 22.

Principles and Considerations for Good Investigation Processes.

Principles and considerations for good investigation processes	Examples	
	Risk factor	Literature review reference
Clarity	Investigation procedures should be clear, easily followed	Hoel & Einarsen, 2020; Plimmer et al., 2023
	All relevant legal standards, the burden of proof to be applied, and the rights of all parties must be clearly stated	Ballard & Easteal, 2018
Support	All parties should be offered independent third-party support	Bastick, 2014; WorkSafe NZ, 2017
	Supportive and 'no blame' environments are more effective than adversarial environments	Branch et al., 2012
Timeliness	Complete investigations as soon as possible, meeting policy time frames	Bastick, 2014; Hoel & Einarsen, 2020; SCEE, 2012
Monitoring and oversight	Investigation principles to include fairness, transparency, and thoroughness	Bastick, 2014
	Investigations required monitoring systems and outcome recording processes	Hoel & Einarsen, 2020; SCEE, 2012
Respect, confidentiality, and safety	All parties should be treated respectfully, with dignity and natural justice	Bastick, 2014; SCEE, 2012
	Safety assessments should be conducted to ensure all parties are safe from further DHB or retribution	Blackwood et al., 2015, Wall et al., 2018
Impartiality	Impartiality and neutrality are critical for investigations to be fair and seen to be fair	SCEE, 2012
	Investigators must be independent, objective, and suitably trained	Becton et al., 2017; Magee et al., 2014; SCEE, 2012; WorkSafe NZ, 2017
Communication	Clear communication with all parties is imperative	Bastick, 2014; Ferris et al., 2018
	It should commence immediately, advise processes, time frames, reasons for action taken and the outcome	Richards & Daley, 2003; SCEE, 2012; WorkSafe NZ, 2017

What good DHB investigations look like. Multiple investigation processes were offered within the reviewed literature (see Hoel & Einarsen, 2020; Jenkins, 2013; Neall et al., 2021; Thompson & Catley, 2021; Trotter & Zacur, 2012; WorkSafe NZ, 2017). Despite variations, the need for fair, thorough, and systematic processes focused on establishing facts (Ballard & Easteal, 2018) was consistently emphasised. The variety of options presented can make it confusing to tailor specific procedures to fit an organisation's contextual,

legislative, and policy environments. Dividing investigations into phases can simplify this process. Hoel and Einarsen (2020) proposed a structured and pragmatic framework that groups investigative actions together involving: (1) preparation and planning, (2) evidence gathering, (3) drawing a conclusion, and (4) reporting the investigation process and outcomes. Within this framework, organisations can apply specific investigative steps in each phase to align with organisational context, alongside tailoring monitoring tools to fit. I assessed the addition of a defined decision phase where employers assess the investigation against the initial mandate and decide whether any actions to be taken would add value to this framework. The investigative framework, including the added decision phase, involve:

1. **Phase 1: Preparation and planning.** Investigation mandates should be drafted to specify its scope and provide investigators sufficient authority to conduct the investigation. An investigation plan including specialist advice must be developed to meet the mandate and support requirements (Hoel & Einarsen, 2020; Richards & Daley, 2003; WorkSafe NZ, 2017).
2. **Phase 2: Gathering evidence.** Sufficient evidence must be impartially gathered to support an informed assessment (Hoel & Einarsen, 2020), including evidence from all parties to the complaint and potential witnesses (Hoel & Einarsen, 2020; Richards & Daley, 2003; Trotter & Zacur, 2012; WorkSafe NZ, 2017). This can extend to other evidence, such as specialist or documentary evidence to corroborate events (Hoel & Einarsen, 2020).
3. **Phase 3: Drawing a conclusion.** DHB evidence assessment should be on a balance of probability burden of proof, not the criminal requirement of beyond a reasonable doubt (Hoel & Einarsen, 2020; Magee et al., 2014; WorkSafe NZ, 2017). Investigators must be trained to weigh evidence and conclude on a balance of probability whether the complaint is upheld or dismissed (Hoel & Einarsen, 2020). Investigators must be confident in determining when the threshold of probability has been met to enable decision makers to take appropriate action (Magee et al., 2014).
4. **Phase 4: Investigation report.** The report is critical as it informs any action taken. It should document the investigation process, any deviations from the initiating mandate, the evidence collected, the assessment process, and a clear, unambiguous outcome based on a balance of

probabilities (Hoel & Einarsen, 2020). Hoel and Einarsen (2020) offered a suggested format for an investigation report.

5. **Phase 5: Decision.** Hoel and Einarsen (2020) did not specify a decision phase, but stated employers must decide what action will result from the investigation report. Given the importance of this step, the impact sanctions can have, and the opportunity to provide supported decision processes to enhance equity and consistency, organisations should consider establishing a separate, specific stage to support decision-making at the conclusion of an investigation.

Barriers to good investigation processes. Barriers to fair and equitable DHB investigations can remain despite detailed investigation processes. Identifying and mitigating these barriers can be difficult as they were not directly addressed in the current literature and can apply to organisations differently dependent on their environment and context. By considering them within individual organisational contexts, leaders and policy makers can address them from the outset (Bergman et al., 2002), developing mitigation plans to reduce their adverse impacts if they cannot be removed entirely. Addressing barriers to good investigation processes is central to reducing further harm caused by DHB investigations. Effectively addressing the identified barriers is a daunting task for any organisation; however, minimising any of them can make a significant impact to the equity and effectiveness of DHB investigations. Moreover, addressing many of the factors is likely to positively impact other areas of any organisation. Barriers and their identified risk factors are detailed in Table 23.

Resolution Phase

Importance of detailed resolution processes. Resolution processes are often seen as the last step before closing a DHB complaint. However, this should be considered as a step in a circular process that either reduces or increases barriers to reporting and resolving future DHB. Whether the outcome changes unacceptable behaviour and how those involved perceive their treatment will determine which action occurs. Accordingly, the implementation and management of resolution actions are critical as they provide opportunities to resolve the current situation and potentially prevent or minimise future by building

Table 23.*Barriers to Good Investigation Processes.*

Barriers to good investigations	Examples	
	Risk factor	Literature review reference
Adversarial investigations	Investigations are adversarial and usually based on HR grievance processes Revictimises targets, damages workplaces, and creates more barriers to reporting DHB	Ballard & Easteal, 2018, Hodgins et al., 2020; Thompson & Catley, 2021 Thompson & Catley, 2021
Lack of evidence	Needing to prove DHB often invalidates reports, enabling perpetrators and DHB Often witnesses are unwilling to speak, leaving power disparities unchallenged Targets often lack access to organisational documentation to support their report Investigator and decision maker biases can influence the evidence gathered	Hoel, 2009; Magee et al., 2014; Matthews & Farris, 2022 Blackwood et al., 2015; Hoel, 2009 Ballard & Easteal, 2018 Blackwood et al., 2015
Balance of probabilities	Without evidence DHB often remains unaddressed, discouraging reporting DHB investigations are civil matters requiring a balance of probability burden of proof Balance of probabilities supports judgements when definitive evidence is lacking A reasonable doubt standard means many DHB cases are not upheld even when valid	Magee et al., 2014; MBIE, 2020 Magee et al., 2014; MBIE, 2020; Warne, 2010; WorkSafe NZ, 2017 Boardman, 2024; Warne, 2010 Magee et al., 2014
Lack of outcome	Not applying a balance of probabilities means DHB complaints are often wrongly dismissed DHB investigators must know more than DHB legislation and regulations Restorative actions may be needed regardless of investigation outcome	Boardman, 2024; Magee et al., 2014; WorkSafe NZ, 2017 Bastick, 2014; Magee et al., 2014; Osler, 2021 Namie, 2007; SCEE, 2012; Zapf & Vartia, 2020
Poorly understood confidentiality	Maintaining privacy in investigations requires the appropriate application of confidentiality Investigators must be trained to apply confidentiality correctly	Hoel & Einarsen, 2020; Richards & Daley, 2003; WorkSafe NZ, 2017 Duffy, 2009; Hoel & Einarsen, 2020; Magee et al., 2014
Poorly applied natural justice	Natural justice applies universally Natural justice is often absent from DHB investigations despite being a critical element Trained investigators must protect confidentiality, respect anonymity, and share necessary information.	Bill of Rights Act, 1990, s 27 Ballard & Easteal, 2018; Hoel & Einarsen, 2020; Jenkins et al., 2011 Becton et al., 2017; Hodgins et al., 2020; Hoel & Einarsen, 2020
Investigator knowledge gaps	Internal investigators often lack DHB knowledge and investigative skills Lack of knowledge and skills results in poor investigations and outcomes Fair and defensible DHB investigations require investigators to be suitably trained Those overseeing DHB investigations or deciding outcomes should be similarly trained Understanding physical hazards does not extend to DHB; specialised training is required	Magee et al., 2014 Magee et al., 2014 Hoel & Einarsen, 2020; Magee et al., 2014 Plimmer et al., 2023; Magee et al., 2014 Bastick, 2014; MBIE, 2020; Osler, 2021; Rayner & Lewis, 2010; SCEE, 2012

Timeliness	Timeliness is accepted as meaning a reasonable, specified, short period of time	Ferris et al., 2018; Hoel & Einarsen, 2020; Magee et al., 2014
	Effective DHB investigations should be timely, decisive, and thorough	Brinkley, 2019; Magee et al., 2014; Plimmer et al., 2023; Richards & Daley, 2003; Ritzman, 2016; WorkSafe, 2017
	Excessive delays portray the message that DHB the behaviour is acceptable	Ballard & Easteal, 2018; Salin et al., 2020
	Investigation delays discourage future DHB reports, risking additional harm	Ballard & Easteal, 2018; MBIE, 2020; Thompson & Catley, 2021
	An initial process should start immediately to determine if further investigation is needed	Ballard & Easteal, 2018; Becton et al., 2017
	Unavoidable delays and mitigations should be communicated immediately	Hoel & Einarsen, 2020
Lack of oversight	NZDF has limited independent oversight of DHB investigations and resolutions	OAG, 2023a
	DHB is often trivialised, called interpersonal issues, with unwritten rules used over policy	Hodgins et al., 2020; Smith, 2021
	Fixing this requires mechanisms to enforce impartiality and investigation standards	Hoel & Einarsen, 2020
	Collaborative case management can help to deliver consistent and impartial oversight	Commission for Case Manager Certification, n.d.; Francis, 2019

confidence in DHB processes. Clearly detailed resolution options and protocols to support organisations achieving this should include:

- a. Flexible resolution options dependent on the DHB situation (MBIE, 2020; Mollison, 2016)
- b. Allowing targets to have agency over steps taken (OAG, 2023a)
- c. Detailed expectations regarding consequences for differing DHB situations (OAG, 2023a)
- d. Follow-up and escalation protocols, including if initial actions cannot resolve the reported situation (Johnson, 2015a; SCEE, 2012)

Impact of poor resolution processes and outcomes. The ultimate effect of poor resolution processes is no behavioural change to confirmed DHB. While limited, research indicates that targets see positive change in less than one in four DHB reports that progress to a resolution stage (Namie, 2017). Those impacted need to see behavioural change as anything less undermines trust and confidence in reporting and subsequent DHB processes (OAG, 2023b). Lack of transparency in complaint outcomes further reduces trust (MBIE, 2020; OAG, 2023b; WorkSafe NZ, 2017; Zapf & Vartia, 2020). Combining dissatisfaction in DHB processes (Ballard & Easteal, 2018; Human Rights Commission, 2022; OAG, 2023a) with distrust of processes that fail to change behaviour, creates situations where employees become

increasingly reluctant to report DHB. Simply put, poor resolution outcomes increase the under-reporting of DHB, increasing harm to individuals and the wider organisation.

Principles and considerations for good resolution processes. These considerations and their specific elements are presented in Table 24. Several key principles were identified that influence resolution processes. Many of the identified considerations have featured previously in this review, reinforcing the critical roles they play in equitable and effective DHB resolution options. The considerations are consistency, transparency versus confidentiality, follow-up, holistic workplace resolutions, and the requirement for multiple resolution options. While each of these principles and considerations can make a significant impact on the quality and effectiveness of resolution process, integrating them will do much to negate or mitigate the impact of poor resolution processes.

Factors influencing selection of resolution options. Assessing the appropriateness of resolution options requires a comprehensive understanding of the context surrounding the complaint and the parties involved (Ferris et al., 2021; Thompson & Catley, 2021). Caponecchia and Wyatt (2011) referred to this initial stage as ‘triage’, where the seriousness and impact of the situation guide management and resolution options, reinforcing individual treatment of each case (Magee et al., 2014). Triage factors can vary, but the literature identified three factors considered crucial for assessing appropriate resolution options: (1) the seriousness of the reported behaviour, (2) the power dynamics involved, and (3) any previous DHB behaviour (Roehling, 2020; SCEE, 2012). In selecting appropriate resolution options, the more serious the reported behaviour and the greater the power imbalance present, the need to apply more serious options. Likewise, any previous DHB behaviour should indicate the same. These factors and their impacts are detailed in Table 25.

Inappropriate application of resolution options. There is abundant information available on resolution options for DHB, often accompanied by considerations for the situations each would be suitable for, as not all are appropriate for all scenarios (Ballard & Easteal, 2018). Despite this information, there is a disconnect between best practice recommendations and what is applied within organisations. For example, best practice identifies that when the accused has power over their target, which occurs in four out of five cases (Human Rights Commission, 2022), informal responses are ineffective and risk further harm to the

Table 24.*Principles and Considerations for Good Resolution Processes.*

Principles and considerations for good resolution processes	Examples	
	Risk factor	Literature review reference
Consistency	Consistent policy application enhances trust that DHB will be addressed	Roehling, 2020
Transparency Versus Confidentiality	Transparent and confidential DHB processes support natural justice	Magee et al., 2014; SCEE, 2012; WorkSafe NZ, 2017b
	Targets should be informed of decisions made and actions taken	Becton et al., 2017; WorkSafe NZ, 2017
	Managing DHB transparently across all processes and consequences builds trust	MBIE, 2020; SCEE, 2012; Zapf & Vartia, 2020
	Responding to physical workplace hazards balances confidentiality and transparency, the same must apply for DHB	MBIE, 2020; Richards & Daley, 2003; SCEE, 2012; Zapf & Vartia, 2020
	Publishing anonymised DHB data and outcomes regularly supports transparency, including within militaries	Bastick, 2014; OAG, 2023a, 2023b; Rayner & Lewis, 2010; Thompson & Catley, 2021; Zapf & Vartia, 2020
Follow-up	Non-disclosure agreements undermine transparency	Ballard & Easteal, 2018; Rayner & Lewis, 2010
	Investigations and sanctions should always be followed	Becton et al., 2017; Blackwood et al., 2015; Johnson, 2015a; SCEE, 2012
	Less than half DHB reports were followed up, leaving behaviour unchanged	OAG, 2023b
	Lack of follow-up reduces any need for abusers to change their behaviour	OAG, 2023a, 2023b
	Follow-up must have firm timeframes and performance measures to enforce change	Cowan, 2011; Johnson, 2015a; Ritzman, 2016
Holistic Workplace Resolutions	If behaviour doesn't change, DHB processes should restart at a higher level	Cowan, 2011; Johnson, 2015a
	Holistic resolutions, address workplace impacts after DHB has ceased	Namie, 2007, SCEE, 2012; Zapf & Vartia, 2020
	If the circumstances that enabled DHB remain unaddressed, rebuilding effective work relationships will be difficult	Osler, 2021; SCEE, 2012
Multiple resolution options	Restorative actions should be considered for all DHB complaints	SCEE, 2012; WorkSafe NZ, 2017
	Providing formal and informal DHB options can encourage reporting.	Ferris et al., 2018; OAG, 2023a; Osler, 2021; Plimmer et al., 2023; WorkSafe, 2017
	DHB should be addressed differently to non-DHB workplace conflict	MBIE, 2020
	Options must fit the needs of different situations and individuals	Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 1999; Ferris, 2004

Table 25.*Factors Influencing Selection of Resolution Options.*

Factors influencing resolution options	Examples	
	Risk factor	Literature review reference
Seriousness of reported behaviour	The more serious the reported DHB, the more serious repercussions should be	Roehling, 2020
	The formality of responses should increase alongside increased severity	SCEE, 2012
Power imbalance	Not considering power imbalances can damage resolution processes	Roehling, 2020; Salin, 2009
	Greater power imbalances require more severe resolution processes	Roehling, 2020; Salin, 2009
Patterns of previous DHB	Prior disciplinary records should factor into the determining appropriate actions	Roehling, 2020; SCEE, 2012
	Previous related issues may indicate the need to elevate initially identified actions	Salin, 2009

target (Hutchinson, 2012; ILO, 2020; Roehling, 2020; Salin, 2009; SCEE, 2012). However, Salin (2009) established that informal conversations with DHB parties were the chosen course of action in 78.5% of reported harassment and bullying cases. This suggests that informal approaches are still commonly employed in DHB cases with defined power imbalances, contrary to established best practices. The disconnect between DHB case details and the resolution options applied likely contributes to the over 55% (Human Rights Commission, 2022; OAG, 2023a) dissatisfaction rate among targets who file complaints and the failure to achieve positive changes in 77% (Namie, 2007) of complaints. Implementing and enforcing clear protocols regarding the specific DHB conditions to which particular resolution options can be applied, presents organisations with an opportunity to quickly improve complaint satisfaction rates and make positive changes in the workplace.

Implications for Organisations – Content-based

Developing the content-based theme a number of findings led to specific implications for organisations that could improve the equity and effectiveness of their DHB policies. These content-based implications are:

1. Organisations should translate their understanding of workplace DHB risks into clear, detailed, and tailored policy content. Policies should use unambiguous language, clearly define

unacceptable behaviours and key terms, specify roles and responsibilities, and provide structured decision-making criteria to promote consistency, fairness, and confidence in policy application. Policies should also include accountability processes, alongside formal review and evaluation mechanisms supported by comprehensive data collection, to monitor effectiveness and drive continuous improvement.

2. Policy development should be undertaken through meaningful consultation with stakeholders, including employees, managers, support functions, unions, and subject-matter experts. Organisations should accompany policy publication with a structured implementation plan that includes ongoing training, accessible guidance material, and visible leadership support, recognising that implementation quality is as important as policy content itself.
3. DHB prevention should be approached as an organisation-wide responsibility rather than a stand-alone policy function. Organisations should consistently enforce behavioural standards, hold leaders accountable for workplace culture, and integrate policy, training, leadership, risk management, support services, and workplace interventions into a coordinated prevention framework. Consistent enforcement, accountability, transparency, and leadership role-modelling are critical for building trust and reducing harmful behaviour and its impact.
4. Reporting processes should be safe, accessible, and flexible. Organisations should provide multiple reporting pathways, accept different forms of reporting, protect participants from retaliation, and ensure staff can recognise DHB and understand how to seek help. Processes should encourage early reporting, treat all concerns seriously, and avoid requiring targets to confront alleged perpetrators before organisational action can occur. Appropriate support should be available to targets, witnesses, and respondents throughout the process.
5. Investigation procedures should be clearly documented, timely, impartial, and supported by trained investigators and decision-makers. Organisations should establish consistent standards for evidence gathering, decision-making, communication, oversight, confidentiality, and natural justice. Investigation processes should be structured, transparent, and designed to

minimise further harm while maintaining fairness for all parties with investigators specifically trained in the complexities of investigating DHB.

6. Finally, organisations should adopt resolution processes that focus on behavioural change, workplace restoration, and long-term prevention. Resolution options should be matched to the seriousness of the conduct, relevant power imbalances, and any pattern of previous behaviour. Follow-up mechanisms, transparent communication, and restorative actions should be built into the process to ensure outcomes remain effective and to strengthen employee confidence in future reporting and resolution pathways.

Summary

The findings of the rapid literature review supported two pragmatist themes that can help organisations develop equitable and effective DHB policies. Firstly, the development of DHB policies cannot be separated from the contextual environment within which the DHB occurs. This requires organisations to generate in-depth knowledge of the elements that influence their environment and to identify areas where inequities could occur. Such knowledge is essential before a DHB policy can be tailored to its unique situation, thereby increasing its likelihood of success. The DHB policy itself must then be drafted in a manner that removes opportunities for inconsistent application and mitigates any factors identified during the contextual analysis that could result in equitable access to policy protections or satisfactory outcomes.

The policy elements identified within the literature review provide multiple options for organisations to develop a DHB policy framework that both fits their environment and integrates across other workplace policies and procedures. By considering the six identified functional areas of DHB policy content, organisations can ensure they set the conditions for acceptance of the policy at the policy development stage. The remaining policy functional areas, including introduction, DHB prevention, alongside the reporting, investigation, and resolution phases, provide a framework for organisations to develop processes and procedures that support the equitable reporting, management, and resolution of DHB. Whichever measurement and evaluation method is applied, these outcomes will support an effective and successful DHB policy.

Chapter 8: Semi-Structured Interview Findings – Considerations for Tailoring Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying (DHB) Policies

Introduction

The semi-structured interviews involved two groups of the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) personnel regarding their interactions and experience with the current NZDF DHB policy to identify factors that influenced the equitable and effective application of that policy. One group consisted of targets and witnesses— the target and witness group (TWG); the second group was made up of both military and civilian supervisors and was labelled the commander and management group (CMG). Each group contained both military and civilian members, individuals in senior and more junior positions, with ethnic and gender diversity to best replicate the population of the NZDF. Demographic information for each interview group is detailed in Chapter 6, Research Methodology and Method, Table 5.

Drawing from a reflexive thematic analysis of the responses, I developed three themes to address the supplementary research question. Figure 7 depicts how the themes relate to the supplementary research question, with further details of each theme and sub-theme defined in Table 7 and Table 26 provides an overview of each theme. The first theme examined how equal treatment under a DHB policy can lead to

Figure 7.

Reflexive Thematic Analysis Outcomes for Semi-Structured Interviews.

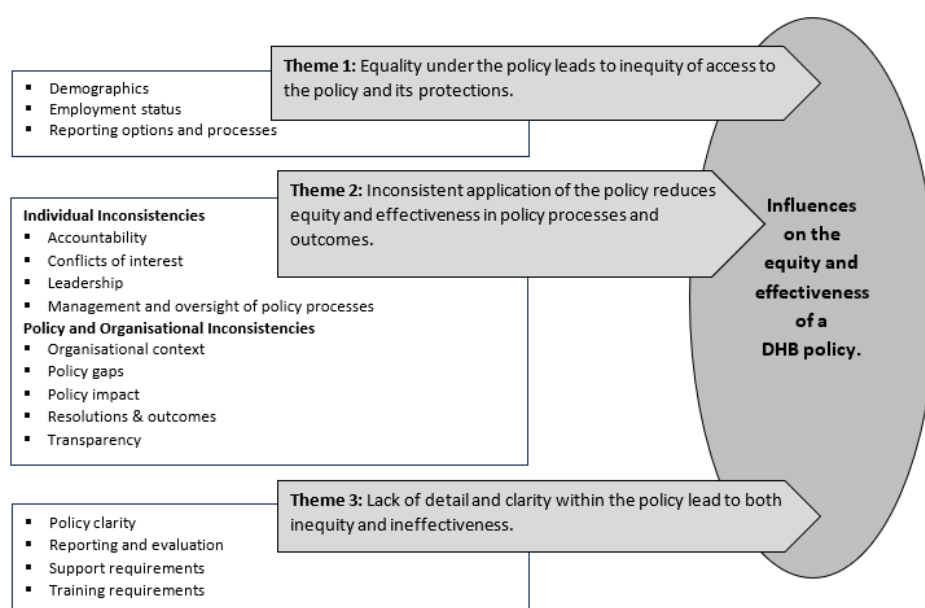


Table 26.*Semi-Structured Interview Themes.*

Themes and codes	Description
1. Theme One – Equality under the policy leads to inequity. DHB policies aiming for equality generally result in inequitable access to policy protections for employees, dependent on demographic and employment statuses.	
a. Demographics	Demographic differences impact an individual's ability to access DHB policy protections.
b. Employment status	Differing employment status can influence how a policy applies to individuals, and the protections it can offer.
c. Reporting options and processes	Reporting processes that overlook staff differences and inequities can create barriers to reporting DHB.
2. Theme Two – Inconsistent application of the policy. Inconsistent policy application undermines policy effectiveness and creates additional inequities and barriers.	
a. Accountability	A lack of accountability at individual or organisational levels undermines effectiveness of DHB policies.
b. Conflicts of interest	Conflicts of interest can compromise both the equity and effectiveness of any DHB policy.
c. Leadership	Leadership actions can have both negative or positive impacts on DHB prevalence and management.
d. Policy management and oversight	Policy interpretation and application by management and directly influences policy effectiveness and equity for DHB targets.
e. Organisational context	Organisational elements and factors influence the effective and equitable application of a DHB policies.
f. Policy gaps	Gaps in policy options can result in inequitable policy application leaving some targets less protected.
g. Policy impact	The unintended and inequitable effect DHB policies can have on DHB targets.
h. Resolution phase	Effective resolution actions are vital for resolving current issues and building confidence to prevent future DHB.
i. Transparency	Greater transparency enhances DHB management and delivers better outcomes for targets and the organisation.
3. Theme Three – Lack of detail and clarity within the policy. A lack of clarity and detail in DHB policies and associated procedures can lead to inconsistent or ineffective policy application of that.	
a. Policy clarity	DHB policies must be clear and easily understood to remove opportunities for inconsistent and inequitable application of processes.
b. Reporting, evaluation and feedback	Structured and consistent DHB recording is required to support consistency of policy application and to measure policy effectiveness.
c. Support requirements	Support options need to be flexible, varied, easily accessed and sufficiently resourced to be effective.
d. Training requirements	Effective policy application requires consistent and ongoing training plans across the organisation.

inequitable access to policy protections, while the second identified factors that lead to inconsistent policy application. The third theme highlighted how insufficient detail and clarity within the policy can reduce equity and effectiveness. The relationship between the themes is interdependent, with each influencing the others in a non-linear and dynamic manner. This interdependence is critical when translating findings

into action, as improvements in one thematic area can produce cascading effects across the others, akin to the ripple effects described in ecological frameworks. The complete codebook, including all sub-themes and associated coding data, is provided in Appendix S.

Data triangulation to compare areas of convergence and divergence between the interviews confirmed that over 70% of findings had either agreement or partial agreement across both interview groups (Appendix Q). The remaining divergent perspectives between the groups were expected, reflecting their distinct lived experiences regarding DHB, with each group silent on several findings highlighted by the other group. Disagreement between the interview groups only occurred in three of the 66 findings and related to the limited resolution outcomes of many DHB reports and investigations, use or importance of self-help options, and effectiveness of available DHB support. While the general agreement across the findings illustrated a strong convergence between the two interview groups, the differences indicate that care must be taken when developing DHB policies to ensure that the needs of all are met.

The experiences presented in this chapter reflect participants' perceptions of how events unfolded and how organisational actions or omissions impacted them. These narratives can describe sequences that appear causal; however, they narrate participants' interpretations and perspectives, not empirical evidence of cause and effect relationships. The findings should therefore be understood as experiential patterns, not as evidence of causal mechanisms. Additionally, for clarity, only data collected from interview participants across both semi-structured interview groups were included in the thematic analyses conducted to develop the three themes detailed in Figure 7. No NZDF data from any other source was included in these analyses.

Theme 1: Equality Under the Policy Leads to Inequity

Analysis of the interview responses revealed a key assumption of the current NZDF policy: because rights and protections are formally extended to all organisational members, it is assumed that all individuals can access them equally to achieve satisfactory outcomes for DHB situations. Both groups described how the DHB policy's 'one size fits all' approach, while intended to ensure equality, led to unequal access to protections and unsatisfactory outcomes. Interview participants identified several individual differences that impacted their ability to engage with NZDF's current DHB policy equally. The identified differences

influenced their ability to report DHB, have effective action taken, and achieve a satisfactory outcome. For many participants, the intersectionality of their individual differences further limited their access to fair treatment, reinforcing how a policy based on equality can produce inequitable outcomes. The key influencing factors related to demographic characteristics, employment status, and how their specific DHB situation may or may not be reported using the current options.

Demographic Differences in the Findings

Interview participants identified several demographic factors that affected their ability to access DHB policy processes, protections, and the resolution they were able to achieve. Specifically mentioned were age and seniority differences, ethnicity, and gender. The impact the individual demographic differences had was highlighted by both interview groups, with the understanding attributed to ethnicity and gender differences being comparable. The impact age and seniority factors had on a person's ability to equally engage with the current DHB policy was substantially different between groups.

Ethnic, cultural, and nationality differences. Both groups identified differing treatment based on ethnicity, culture, or nationality. Treatment overtly excluded some groups from what should be merit-based opportunities and demonstrated a broad lack of understanding of cultural differences and an unwillingness to learn. One ex-British Army TWG participant described how the commander at their first New Zealand Army unit told them not to expect any promotions due to their nationality. A CMG participant described discrimination stemming from ignorance of cultural norms when sharing their experience as staff during a selection event:

I asked him [the senior officer], 'did you not realize he is PI [Pacific Islander]?' He said, 'Yeah, he wouldn't look me in the eye, so you can't trust him'. 'Hang on', I said, 'that's because in their cultural upbringing it's rude and disrespectful to look seniors in the eye. He was being respectful'. And he's like, 'What?' So obviously there's a lot of learning needed.

The discrimination that was shared, often at senior leadership levels, created barriers to reporting behaviours, particularly when the people engaging in this behaviour were the very people to whom targets are often advised to report DHB. The lack of cultural understanding that left minority groups more vulnerable to DHB also left many Māori and Pacific Island members less able to report it. A female Māori CMG member described many NZDF members of Māori and Pacific Islander descent as:

They're usually subtly quieter and more respectful, so when you ... tell me to do something I don't want to do, I'm probably still going to do it because that's my heritage. That is how I've been brought up, to respect my elders, to respect position or authority ... whereas potentially non-Māori or non-Islanders would not allow it to happen, they would challenge it.

The intersection of culture and gender was also identified as a risk factor leading to many women finding themselves in vulnerable situations during military activities. The pressures to meet performance standards frequently made it difficult for women to manage their menstrual cycles in austere and challenging physical environments, opening them to embarrassment and ridicule.

Gender differences. Despite differing experiences, both interview groups described situations where gender influenced a target's ability to report and resolve DHB issues. Females from both groups described facing additional difficulties when confronting DHB, from initial targeting through to having their reports taken seriously. Female participants felt they could not rely on NZDF or its DHB policy to keep them safe and that being female increased their targeting for DHB behaviour. One TWG member shared, *"had I been male, it wouldn't have happened in the first place, I wouldn't have been bullied. I was targeted because I was seen as weaker"*. A target's gender also influenced their credibility, with female targets regularly made to feel they were over-reacting. Describing how she had to restate her complaint against her male subordinate multiple times, one female TWG participant stated, *"I do not align with this man-covering bulls**t. We don't have to look after each other like that, don't be a spineless prick. I didn't make this up. Where there's smoke, there is fire"*. These experiences demonstrate the additional challenges that NZDF women face when attempting to report and resolve DHB issues. An equality-based DHB policy cannot mitigate the inequitable and additional challenges, making it more difficult for women to report DHB, resulting in the harm caused by DHB continuing and worsening.

Age and seniority differences. The interview groups differed in their experience of how age and seniority impacted engagement with the DHB policy. In recent years the CMG identified that junior staff were less likely to accept poor behaviours than previously. One CMG member shared that in their experience as a unit commander, young soldiers were *"less likely to take rubbish ... less likely to respect authority, they are less likely to be hushed up"*. Conversely, the TWG consistently stated that it was more difficult for junior staff to raise DHB issues, and similar to when DHB issues were raised by females, junior staff were less likely

to be believed and more likely to have their reports minimised and undermined. This was such a widely held belief, reinforced by experience, that even as individuals gained more seniority, this factor still impacted decisions to report DHB. Junior staff being less likely to be believed also influenced more senior members to report their own DHB, one military officer from the TWG explained that:

One of the reasons I wanted to do this, is when that person [their bully] became a CO, and if a private went to say something, they would be believed. I felt that anyone below my rank wouldn't be believed or wouldn't feel empowered to say something.

Employment Status

Both groups discussed how an individual's employment status impacted how people were treated, both as targets and perpetrators of DHB. Experiences consistently highlighted discriminatory practices in managing this behaviour. Both groups had experienced or witnessed the differing legal status between military and civilian staff work to protect civilian DHB perpetrators. A senior military CMG member shared that they had witnessed senior civilian staff avoid consequences for their DHB behaviour *"because people are worried about the fact that they are subject to different legislation, different avenues under the Employment Relations Act that bring with it more risk or no, different risks"*. One female military TWG, whose bullying complaint against a civilian male colleague had been upheld by an independent investigation, clearly illustrated this when they explained:

[He] was looked after and protected with no change made to his work location, which I later discovered was a civilian HR best practice to avoid civilian staff members submitting a personal grievance. Military staff are treated as expendable as they can be posted, whereas civilian staff are accommodated wherever possible, even when a bullying allegation has been substantiated by an employment lawyer. They were more concerned about protecting the organisation and protecting the respondent because he's subject to different employment conditions, he's got better legislation.

A further difference embedded in legislation and NZDF policies is that civilian personnel can report DHB through both NZDF processes or the Employment Relations Authority. This decision could be influenced by their personal preference or where a civilian DHB target believes they may receive the better treatment. In contrast to this, and with a significant limitation on reporting options open to military personnel, they have no legal access to employment relations authority processes. For military TWG members this meant that, *"I used the formal complaints process, being that I'm military, and that was about the only avenue open to me"* and *"you can't complain through HR processes*

because you're in uniform". For all military targets or witnesses of DHB, it removes any option of having their DHB situation addressed by an independent body.

Rank, position, and power were identified by both groups as factors that worked in multiple ways to protect senior staff from the consequences of DHB. These protections included minimising the potential impact on alleged perpetrators, increasing barriers for reporting against senior staff, and increased difficulties in having reports upheld. The patterns of protection reflect an embedded cronyism when DHB is addressed within NZDF, with rank, position, and power shielding senior staff and their associates from being held accountable for their DHB behaviour. This cronyism was discussed by both groups as a known fact rather than a suspicion, with one CMG member simply stating, *"there's less willingness to hold senior people accountable for bad behaviour"*.

The acknowledged application of cronyism to DHB management directly impacted DHB reporting processes. Discussions with TWG members highlighted the impact rank imbalances had on both decisions to report DHB and the willingness of witnesses to support reports of DHB that had already been made. One member decided not to report a second situation of DHB from their previous commander because, *"if there wasn't any rank involved sure, but because there's rank involved, I know what the rank can do"*. The influence and fear of repercussions due to rank and position was strongly felt by witnesses. One female military officer learned that her one witness had been spoke to by her alleged bully, and as a result he was no longer willing to provide a statement:

He was like, I'm not gonna say anything. I said, I need you, I'm not being believed, I'm just one person ... I need someone else, an army person to confirm. But he wasn't willing to do it. He was like, there was absolutely no way.

The employment-based differences between NZDF military and civilian personnel, and the embedded cronyism across NZDF DHB processes, can mean that any attempt to treat all NZDF members equally can lead to inequitable treatment in the management and resolution of DHB.

Reporting Options and Processes

The current NZDF complaints process requires complainants to identify their desired redress, immediately establishing an adversarial environment that places the organisation in a defensive stance without understanding the 'why' behind the report. Seeking to understand this situation, I asked participants what

they hoped to achieve by reporting their DHB. The responses to this enquiry fell into one (or more) of three areas. Of particular interest was that no areas related to retribution for the harm DHB had caused, desired compensation, personal gain, or any other adversarial reason. What participants did hope to achieve was firstly simply to be heard, treated fairly, and the DHB to cease.

The second two areas were closely related and were about making a stand against DHB while protecting others from future potential harm. Comments supporting the first area were simple and clear and included statements such as, *“I didn’t seek redress, I just wanted to be treated fairly”* and wanting to *“feel safe in the workplace without feeling manipulated”*. The strength of responses from participants about improving the wider DHB situation across NZDF clearly identified their determination to do what they could to ensure the harm they experienced did not continue to others. There was a very clear sense that they needed *“a line to be drawn in the sand and [to] take a stand”* that *“this is the third situation, so come hell or high water I was going to do something about it”* and *“my goal was for this to not happen to other people”*. None of the reasons provided support the adversarial nature of the current NZDF DHB and related complaints processes.

Whatever the reason behind an individual DHB report, multiple barriers must be navigated before this behaviour can be reported. While almost every participant experienced reporting barriers differently, analysing the barriers that were described generated three categories of reporting barrier: (1) structural barriers, (2) policy-based barriers, and (3) experiential and perception barriers.

Structural barriers. Structural barriers are complexities or anomalies within workplace structures or hierarchies that inadvertently limit DHB reporting options. While these often appeared linked to the military nature of the NZDF, they were likely to be experienced by most organisations at some point in time. Many DHB policies, including NZDF’s, have escalation clauses whereby a person can elevate a report to a higher manager if they feel unable to report DHB to their immediate supervisor. This assumes an individual has access to that high manager, and that that Manager has the capacity to manage that DHB report. Several TWG members identified this was not always the case, and as a result they faced limited reporting options. One TWG member described how escalation was not feasible for them as their next higher manager was the Vice Chief of Defence Force (VCDF), *“the VCDF was so way up in the organisation,*

given where my unit sat, I don't think that would have been something he would have had time to deal with". Another shared the difficulty they faced with rapidly changing managers,

We had three different commanders. So, people are making complaints, trying to get this understanding going again. Then you're at the mercy of whether the commanders will even want to do anything about it anyway.

Policy-based barriers. Policy-based barriers were limitations or restrictions within the policy that resulted in targets experiencing planned or unintended barriers to reporting DHB. As these are policy-based barriers, removing them could simply require amending the policy and providing appropriate resources. The three key policy-based barriers identified by both groups were (1) barriers created by DHB reporting lines, (2) limitations on the types of DHB that could be reported, and (3) the format DHB reports must be submitted in.

Reporting lines. Both groups identified the lack of alternative reporting channels as a significant reporting barrier, especially for military personnel. This was particularly relevant when the accused was within the target's line management or closely affiliated with them. CMG comments included stating this issue "*can be a big barrier*", and that when DHB occurs within targets' command chain "*a lot of them haven't gone forward with reporting because they're scared, they don't know where else or who else to go to*". Similarly, the TWG stated "*if there was a specific independent pathway (...) outside of the command chain that would have helped*". Another stated, "*reporting outside the command chain ... because my first encounter with the boss didn't work*" would have helped them report.

Reporting limitations. Reporting limitations reflected the lack of flexibility within the current DHB policy to address certain situations leading to the under-reporting, continuance, and worsening of DHB. Reporting limitations manifested in three clear areas. Third party reporting restricted bystander reporting despite the NZDF providing bystander training. Instead, the onus for reporting was on the person targeted, which led to concerns being raised by those observing occurrences of DHB, but no action taken. One CMG participant expressed frustration after witnessing DHB, saying, "*I actually reported it ... but because I wasn't the person affected by it, I couldn't put a complaint in. I couldn't actually do a damn thing about it*". Restrictions surrounding reports involving multiple abusers or targets were also woven into both DHB and complaints policies, despite the prevalence of these situations. This again limited the reporting of DHB,

allowing group abuse situations to continue unchecked. A clear example of this barrier was provided by a TWG member who explained, *“my situation involved several co-workers as well as my manager who were all part of the bullying and the process only allows for a complaint to be raised against one individual”*. The last barrier restricted the reporting of hostile work environments. It occurred through a combination of the previous restriction on DHB situations with multiple abusers or targets, and environments involving behaviours that in isolation do not reach the threshold of being serious enough to address. This restriction discounts and avoids the very real cumulative impact of low level DHB behaviour. One TWG participant described their workplace situation saying *“it was getting worse and worse, affecting more and more people and going into some of the strongest people who I thought were absolute rocks. They were breaking as well”*.

Report formats. Both interview groups identified that having to submit written reports created barriers to many targets. While the NZDF complaints policy supports verbal complaints, managers still required targets to follow up verbal reports with a written report before any action would be taken. Despite contravening policy this practice was experienced across NZDF and created a significant barrier to reporting DHB. One CMG member explained, *“policy says that if you make it known to your supervisor, then it can be a verbal complaint. But we’re buggers aren’t we because we say, right, we need you to write it down”*. This practice increased inequity for many targets who found it more difficult to express themselves in written format. One TWG member shared, *“to explain what it is that you’re feeling in written words. ... it’s hard going”*. Having to follow up verbal reports with written ones also meant targets regularly had to report their DHB multiple times before any action was taken, with multiple barriers needing to be overcome with each retelling, each risking the withdrawal of that report.

Experiential and perception barriers. Experiential and perception barriers result from previous experiences targets have faced or witnessed, alongside perceptions developed from engagement with others regarding how DHB reports have been addressed. They are internal and individually constructed barriers likely to require robust and ongoing intervention plans to reduce or mitigate. Four experiential and perception-based barriers were constructed from the data: (1) a lack of trust or confidence in the DHB

policy and supporting processes, (2) the impact of power imbalances, (3) the rationalising or minimising of DHB behaviours, and (4) a fear of retaliation or retribution.

Lack a confidence in the NZDF's ability to effectively and appropriately address and resolve DHB, alongside the impact power imbalances had on reporting, was expressed strongly across both interview groups. Inconsistent and inequitable policy application contributed to lack of trust and confidence which, in turn, directly translated into under reporting of DHB. This sentiment was clear with TWG comments including, *"the policy's not worth the effort"* and *"where do you go with a formal procedure which you've got zero faith in?"* Power was experienced as a protective barrier for those in senior positions or those who held informal power. It resulted in reports of DHB not being made or being delayed until the target felt they were safe from the direct influence of the people they were reporting against. One TWG member decided not to report their DHB as they felt, *"if you're part of the clique ... your chances of being subjected to punitive action when you f**k up are next to zero"*. Another described, *"I didn't actually go through the process of the complaint myself until I had been moved out of the unit"*.

The rationalising and minimisation of DHB behaviour by both managers and targets themselves reduced reporting DHB to managers who did not see the reported behaviour as an issue. One CMG member reported being asked, *"what do you do when your Commanding Officer ... just says it's a joke and says deal with it?"* Targets also minimised this behaviour to below a reporting threshold, and by doing so removed the option of reporting DHB. Fear of retaliation or retribution was identified by both groups as a very real threat that directly impacted whether DHB was reported. One CMG participant stated, *"retaliation is real and the fear of retaliation is very real. ... It's not a problem that having courage will overcome"*. The fear of retaliation, professional or social, direct or indirect, was identified as a barrier to reporting that was described as "overpowering".

Pragmatic Implications for Organisations – Equality Can Support Inequity

Understanding that equality-based DHB policies can support inequities in the management of DHB and its effective resolution raises the question of what organisations can do to improve equitable outcomes while policies are redeveloped. Analysis of this theme led to the development of a number of implications

organisations can consider to directly impact the equity that can be achieved through their DHB policy.

These implications are:

1. Organisations should recognise that providing the same DHB processes to all employees does not necessarily provide equitable access to protection, reporting, or resolution options. Policy design should move beyond a “one-size-fits-all” approach by identifying the barriers faced by different groups, including women, ethnic and cultural minorities, junior employees, and individuals who belong to multiple at-risk groups. Policies should then be adapted to remove those barriers and ensure that protections are accessible in practice, not just available in principle.
2. Organisations should regularly assess how power, seniority, employment status, and workplace relationships influence reporting and outcomes. Particular attention should be given to situations where decision-makers, managers, or influential individuals may have the ability to discourage reporting, influence witnesses, or avoid accountability. Independent oversight and escalation pathways can help mitigate these risks.
3. Reporting processes should be designed to support the needs and circumstances of those experiencing DHB rather than organisational convenience. This includes providing multiple reporting channels outside normal management lines, accepting verbal as well as written reports, enabling bystander and group reporting, and ensuring hostile work environments can be reported even when no single incident appears serious in isolation.
4. Organisations should also address the experiential barriers that discourage reporting, including fear of retaliation, lack of confidence in processes, perceptions of favouritism, and previous negative experiences. Consistent policy application, visible accountability for all employees regardless of status, meaningful protection from reprisals, and transparent communication of outcomes are critical to rebuilding trust in DHB systems.
5. Finally, organisations should evaluate DHB policies through an equity lens by investigating whether different groups can realistically and practically access the same protections, support, and outcomes. Where unequal outcomes are identified, policies and processes should be

adjusted to account for differing needs, vulnerabilities, and barriers rather than assuming identical treatment will produce fair results.

Theme 2: Inconsistent Application of DHB Policies Reduces Equity and Effectiveness

Participants from both interview groups identified that how the DHB policy was applied and the biases of decision makers significantly impacted the effectiveness and equity of the policy processes. Multiple factors were identified that undermined the consistency with which the NZDF DHB policy was applied, creating additional inequities that further alienated and marginalised DHB targets, and negatively impacted the reporting of DHB and ultimately the whole organisation. These factors were largely unrelated to the targets themselves and fell into two key categories: (1) inconsistencies arising from how individuals applied the policy, and (2) limitations or constraints within the policy or its organisational context that facilitated inconsistent application.

Individual Inconsistencies

The consistency of policy application hinges on how individual users interpret and apply it. Comments and experiences from interview participants identified four key areas that influenced how an individual commander or manager applied the current DHB policy. The four areas, along with their personal values, directly impacted the consistency, effectiveness, and equity that the policy could achieve. With significant agreement across both interview groups, the four factors were identified as influencing individual inconsistencies were (1) accountability, (2) conflicts of interest, (3) leadership, and (4) the management and oversight of policy processes.

Accountability. A lack of accountability for how the DHB policy was applied across the NZDF was identified by both interview groups as leading to DHB perpetrators being unlikely to face any consequences. This occurred in one of two ways. The first was where those responsible for managing DHB were not held accountable for poor policy application or for behaving inappropriately themselves. The second scenario was when known DHB perpetrators were not held accountable for their behaviour. One TWG member described how despite their DHB complaint being upheld by an external employment lawyer, NZDF HR advised they could ignore that outcome, *“they said it was an unwritten rule, ... I think they were*

just making stuff up to be honest". Another explained when they had shared their DHB experience with others they were told, *"oh yeah, that's classic him, he's always been like that"*.

Conflicts of interest. The conflicts of interest described by interview participants related to non-financial issues such as self-interest and cronyism. This was particularly apparent in situations where a person responsible for managing a DHB situation was either implicated in that same situation or was a known friend or associate of someone who was. One TWG member explained their manager *"was actually involved. ... that definitely had a big part to play in how I was being managed as a result of going down a formal process"*. Another believed their manager was *"just trying to sweep it under the carpet"*. The inappropriate use of prerogative was also linked to conflicts of interest that protected abusers by undermining or dismissing DHB reports.

Leadership. The impact leadership had on DHB management, and the ultimate effectiveness of any policy, was discussed by both interview groups. Through a range of comments, two key areas leaders had significant influence were highlighted. The first was the vital role leaders, particularly senior leaders, had to model positive behaviours, which was often not done. One military CMG member stressed, *"senior leadership needs to display those behaviours they want from the troops ... behaviours we allow or tolerate at a senior level are seen and observed and replicated by our subordinates"*. The second was the inability or unwillingness of many leaders or managers to take responsibility for DHB processes or exercise an appropriate duty of care for those impacted by DHB. A CMG participant observed, *"commanders need to be better educated on their duty of care, around providing all of their people they are responsible for, with a safe environment"*.

Management and oversight of DHB policy processes. The interpretation and application of the DHB policy by management and leaders impacted its effectiveness and ultimately equity for DHB targets. This applied from initial awareness of DHB to following up on resolution actions. Poor management and poor knowledge of DHB processes undermined the policy, increasing individual and organisational risk. Eight contributing factors were identified within the interview responses from both groups as influencing management and oversight of DHB processes with a high level of agreement between the groups. Many of contributing factors overlapped with previously recognised elements emphasising their importance. These

factors were (1) immediate and safety actions, (2) lack of management knowledge, (3) impartiality, (4) inconsistent policy application, (5) HR or legal involvement, (6) the burden of proof or evidence, (7) investigations, and (8) timeliness.

1. **Immediate and safety actions.** Despite differing perspectives from each group, the importance of applying immediate responses and safety actions as soon as a DHB report was made was highlighted. The CMG focused on what should be done to ensure targets were safe while TWG participants shared how their own safety concerns were ignored. Failing to apply any safety assessment processes left some targets having continue working with their alleged abuser which one TWG member described as, *“really hard ... I just had to be professional. I always definitely had anxiety”*.
2. **Lack of management knowledge.** A lack of DHB policy knowledge and minimal understanding of DHB itself contributed to the overall lack of management knowledge that led to inconsistent or poor policy application. As one TWG member described when individuals were allocated to investigate or manage DHB situations, *“they’re not experts in anything. They’re not experts in DHB, or workplace environments, or HR experts, so it’s very difficult for them to really understand”*. Lack of knowledge and understanding in turn leads to poor DHB related decisions being made.
3. **Impartiality.** Impartiality was identified by both groups as a critical factor when addressing DHB. A lack of impartiality can directly influence investigation outcomes and undermines the credibility of the DHB policy processes, contributing to DHB reporting barriers. Examples of when impartiality was ignored were common among the TWG, including one when a complaint *“was investigated by the person who was in command of the [accused]”*.
4. **Inconsistent policy application.** While discussed previously, in this context inconsistent policy application refers to conscious non-application or misapplication of a known policy rather than ignorance of it. A key element was the lack of action taken against individuals known to engage in DHB behaviour. It was commonly expressed by both groups that within NZDF, perpetrators

of DHB were commonly known to behave in this manner but were not made accountable.

Comments ranged from *“everyone’s too scared to say something”* through to this experience:

I also went to the [Training Warrant Officer] and said sir I have concerns that I’m being bullied and he said to me, I can’t help you. Then he walked out of his office and I was just left sitting on the couch in his office.

Processes were also ignored, requiring targets to fight both to be heard and have the DHB stop. One participant explained *“there’re enough checks and balances that prejudice or halo effect shouldn’t get a look in. ... But that requires that people follow those procedures, that they themselves are objective; and of course they’re not”*.

5. **HR or legal involvement.** A commonly expressed experience was that organisational HR and legal services are ill-placed to provide constructive or appropriate advice for managing DHB cases. With the primary role for HR and legal services being to advise and protect the organisation, conflict of interest often contradicted achieving fair and equitable DHB resolutions leading to minimisation of reported DHB and the manipulation of complaints by perpetrators working in HR roles. An ex-military CMG member supported this experience by explaining that HR’s role is to *“protect the organisation by whatever means fair or foul”*. The overall lack of trust in HR-led DHB processes was best summarised as, *“I think they were just making stuff up to be honest”*. The issues raised question the role HR and legal services should play in managing DHB situations and, more specifically, the oversight of advice provided and actions taken.
6. **Burden of proof or evidence.** The lack of understanding of evidence and burden of proof rules was evident, leading to inequitable outcomes and DHB situations remaining unresolved. Without appropriate knowledge of evidential rules, a beyond reasonable doubt burden of proof was commonly applied rather than the more appropriate balance of probabilities. Without this knowledge, a TWG member shared *“it’s a ‘she said/she said’ unless there are quotes and evidence. One person isn’t enough to be believed”*. The concerns raised in the rapid literature review regarding the application of evidence rules and a balance of probabilities approach to DHB investigations were clear within NZDF.

7. **Investigations.** Factors influencing the consistency of investigations were linked to who was being investigated, who was doing the investigation, a lack of oversight of the investigation process itself, and the lack of governance to enforce investigation outcomes.
8. **Timeliness.** Delayed processes, regardless of reason, are detrimental to resolving DHB. Timely management of DHB eased the process and prevented situations worsening. As one CMG member stated, *“the longer you put off dealing with it, the worse it’s going to get”*. Despite this, long delays were common and created additional barriers for DHB targets as highlighted by a TWG participant, *“the long delays in HR had an impact on me but also put into question the validity of my complaint. You know, it dilutes over time”*.

Policy and Organisational Inconsistencies

The second category of considerations that undermine the consistency with which the NZDF DHB policy was applied were policy and organisation based. The two interview groups had less commonality in their perception of policy and organisation inconsistencies. The views were not contradictory; rather, one group highlighted an area of concern the other did not due to their differing engagement with the same DHB policy. This finding illustrated the importance of gathering policy feedback from a range of stakeholders to ensure that all factors that can undermine consistent DHB policy application are addressed and mitigated. The limitations, constraints or gaps within the policy itself that enabled inconsistencies to occur included (1) how organisational context can impact policy application, (2) policy gaps, (3) impact of policy gaps, (4) options for DHB resolution, and (5) levels of transparency supported by policy.

Organisational context. This factor related to the inconsistencies that elements within an organisation’s environmental and cultural context can bring to the reporting, management, and resolution of DHB processes. Across both interview groups four key areas were identified (1) the adversarial nature of the current policy, (2) how organisational needs and structure influence policy application, (3) protection of certain offender groups, and (4) how a lack of military cultural competence disadvantaged military targets. While the experiences of both groups illustrated the first three factors, only the TWG raised the impact a lack of military cultural competence can have on DHB processes. Left unmitigated, each factor will undermine consistent, effective, and equitable DHB processes.

1. **Adversarial process.** The adversarial process embedded within NZDF DHB processes had a significant impact on consistent and appropriate policy application. This worsened as rank and power imbalances between targets and those accused of DHB grew, making it increasingly difficult for targets to report DHB and continue with their complaint process. Both groups echoed the sentiment of TWG members who stated, *“it victimises the victim and gives the perpetrator the upper hand”* and *“the complaints process in its current form is adversarial and damaging”*.
2. **Organisational needs and structure.** The need for any organisation to succeed will be reflected in its structure and processes which, depending on the organisation, can make it more difficult to identify and address DHB. The military nature of NZDF increased difficulties in addressing DHB, including the limited resources to address DHB during operational and overseas service. A CMG member stated there was not *“time, the resources, the inclination, and the international risk to deal with [DHB] while people are deployed”*. With the regular rotation of military personnel through different roles, waiting for an alleged abuser to be posted to a new position was a common strategy used by managers as an alternative to addressing the DHB. One TWG participant shared, *“I have been told to just ride the time out that they [DHB perpetrator] are here because they are posted soon”*. Neither of the options resolves DHB, it merely shifts it to another area in the organisation, enabling harm to continue.
3. **Protection of offenders.** The inconsistent application of the DHB policy, be that intended or otherwise, meant many DHB offenders avoided consequences for behaviour that breached expected standards. This was particularly the case for senior staff. Witnessing perpetrators of DHB avoid adverse consequences for their behaviour directly impacts the willingness of targets to report their experiences, allowing harm to continue. One CMG participant shared they had *“seen people in my level, a little bit below that, held very strongly to account for bad behaviours ... [but] there’s less willingness to hold senior people accountable for bad behaviour”*. The generalised acceptance of this occurrence was clear with comments such as, *“mates protect mates, right?”* being consistently made.

4. **Organisational cultural competence and understanding.** With the CMG silent, military TWG members identified that a lack of organisational cultural understanding on the part of those investigating or resolving DHB increased the likelihood of detrimental or ineffective outcomes. It required that those involved with addressing DHB have an understanding of NZDF culture and how it can influence DHB and DHB targets. The positive impact of this knowledge was clearly described by one TWG participant who had a military person involved in their DHB process, *“when there were things I was saying that weren’t getting across, [they were] able to ask more specific questions to try and get into things a little bit more. That was definitely a positive”*. Conversely, when knowledge is absent, the following situation was more common:

Things needed to be explained in a level of detail to make sure she could include that. But I can’t be sure she fully understood at the end of the explanation. ... I certainly don’t think she took into account some of the considerations around the military structure and my inability to do anything.

Understanding the organisational context surrounding NZDF does not mean that only military personnel can manage or investigate DHB. It accepts that a contextual understanding of the environment DHB occurs within is required to effectively and equitably manage, investigate, and resolve DHB. This could be said for any industry or organisation.

Policy gaps. Two gaps in the current policy were identified, both relating to issues that had previously been raised by interview participants. The first was the only prescriptive nature of the current policy. This meant that any DHB situation outside the one target-one abuser situation was discounted, meaning group behaviour and hostile workplace environments were effectively excluded. The second was the policy and employment conditions that created additional barriers for military DHB targets. The gaps described led to an inability for the current policy to address all DHB situations, and limited options for a significant portion of the NZDF workforce. One CMG member described this lack of flexibility saying:

The policy is quite black and white, but people start in the grey. The policy seems to take a view that DHB starts at A and B and then goes to C and it’s very linear. But it’s a very gradual development. reality is that sometimes it starts at D and goes back to A and then to C.

The impact of having limited options for military personnel to effectively address DHB had implications far wider than an inability to resolve the DHB itself. It undermined loyalty to the NZDF and its

objectives that military organisations rely on to achieve their mandate. As one TWG member explained, *“I certainly lost a great deal of respect for the organisation. It does not look after its people like it says it does”*.

Policy impact. The CMG was silent on policy impacts. This was unsurprising as only DHB targets can speak with authority on the impact the behaviour and the process of attempting to resolve it had on them. Policy impacts were felt in two areas, personal and professional, often simultaneously, and were wholly negative. The depth of experience ranged from, *“[I] avoid a certain part of the base”* to *“this time it’s mentally broken me to a stage where I want to leave the NZDF and just hide”*. The personal impact was far-reaching and highlighted the pervasive harm generated by DHB. It extended from the immediate workplace to how targets perceived changes in themselves through to the impact on family relationships. One TWG member explained, *“my start state used to be a level of trust, going up or down depending on the individual. Now it starts with zero trust whatsoever”*. Another shared, *“I had gone from a really outward, happy person, to becoming a little bit bitter and angry”*. A particularly powerful comment was, *“it sort of robbed me ... I felt like it robbed me of being a mum during a few of those months because I’d become a ... bitter about work”*. The impact on professional spheres was equally potent with TWG participants sharing experiences where previously confirmed roles changed, negative personnel reports were made, and professional support was withdrawn. One member stated, *“all I did was ruin my career trying to protect myself and other(s)”*. Others simply left either their unit or the NZDF.

Resolution options and outcomes. For lasting behavioural change and the restoration of workplace relationships to be effective, resolution options and outcomes must be appropriate and fit the individual DHB situation. Both groups identified factors that reduced the ability for effective change and undermined any DHB process: (1) the lack of effective follow-up, (2) inappropriate use of informal resolution options, and (3) a failure to actively rebuild workplace relationships.

1. **Lack of follow-up.** The absence of follow-up processes to ensure DHB behaviour ceased, check the well-being of those involved, or that directed actions had occurred were consistent themes raised by both groups. Not one TWG member was able to recall any follow-up actions, with one participant saying, *“there was definitely no follow-up or any confirmation of, well,*

anything". Similarly, even where resolution processes identified actions that were required, there was no formal procedure to ensure the actions occurred, leaving the situation that enabled the DHB unchanged. One TWG member shared, *"there were some clear findings, but it doesn't actually compel anyone to do anything with it"*. This situation was confirmed by a senior military CMG member who stated, *"there's no auditable trail to ensure that once a complaint investigation is concluded, elements have been upheld and recommendations come forward, that those recommendations are followed through"*. Consistent follow-up processes would hold perpetrators to account and ensure that if the DHB situation did not resolve, quick escalation to higher level resolution options could be achieved.

2. ***Inappropriate use of informal options, including mediation.*** Applying mediation as a standard option for reported DHB created situations that were intimidating and revictimising for targets. They were poorly facilitated and used inappropriately by ordering individuals to attend what should be a voluntary process. The potential of being required to participate in mediation with abusers who often held positions of power or rank over the target was a significant detractor for targets considering reporting DHB. One TWG members stated, *"I definitely don't want to be doing mediation. That's far too intimidating for me and just a cover up"*. The CMG echoed this view, supporting the inappropriateness of informal resolution options for many DHB situations saying, *"there needs to be more consideration on when it's appropriate to deal with complaints at the lowest possible level by mediated conversation"*.
3. ***Failure to rebuild workplace relationships.*** Failure to rebuild workplace relationships after a DHB process is completed risks both continuation and worsening of the environment that enabled the DHB to occur initially. Unless workplace relationships damaged by DHB or other inappropriate behaviour are actively and positively rebuilt, wherever they can be, the risk of the behaviour continuing will remain. This includes where a DHB complaint was not upheld, or where behaviour may not have met the DHB threshold but was still inappropriate, as described by one CMG member as behaviour that is *"not really DHB as per our definitions the way they stand, but it is behaviour that does create that negative, hostile environment"*. No workplace

rebuilding initiatives were identified by either interview group. When asked what actions were taken to restore a positive workplace environment one TWG participant relied *“it’s like, okay, we [management] don’t have to deal with that now, we don’t really want to talk about that anymore”*.

Transparency. The lack of transparency in DHB processes, decision-making, and corresponding outcomes was raised as a significant issue that created barriers to DHB reporting and undermined the legitimacy of DHB processes, even when competently and appropriately undertaken. Non-transparent processes lacked credibility, impacting the willingness of targets to report DHB. In the absence of any information to the contrary, targets were left feeling discounted and ignored, with one target sharing, *“[HR] were more concerned about the privacy of the respondent and them potentially raising a personal grievance. That outweighed their need to be transparent”*. It was felt increased transparency would improve DHB management and generate better outcomes for individuals and the wider organisation as *“if we did share it [information], we wouldn’t potentially repeat the mistake(s)”*.

Pragmatic Implications for Organisations – Inconsistency

This research identified that improving the consistency with which DHB policies are applied has a significant influence on the equity and effectiveness such a policy can achieve. By generating an organisational environment and DHB policy processes where this consistency is actively managed and strengthened, organisations can improve DHB resolution and by doing so, support the reduction and prevention of the harm this behaviour can cause. Specific implications for organisations include:

1. Organisations should recognise that DHB policy effectiveness depends as much on its consistent application as its content. To reduce inequitable outcomes, organisations should establish clear accountability mechanisms for everyone involved in DHB processes, including managers, investigators, decision-makers, and leaders. Responsibility for applying the policy correctly, managing conflicts of interest, and acting on substantiated findings should be explicitly defined and monitored.
2. Consistency can be strengthened by reducing individual discretion and increasing procedural oversight. Organisations should require immediate safety assessments following reports of

DHB, ensure investigations and decisions are undertaken by impartial and suitably trained individuals, apply appropriate evidential standards, and monitor timeframes to prevent delays that undermine confidence in the process. Independent escalation and review pathways should be available when conflicts of interest or perceived bias exist.

3. Organisations should also assess how their structure, culture, and operational requirements may unintentionally undermine policy application. Particular attention should be given to protecting against the preferential treatment of senior or influential staff, ensuring decision-makers understand the organisational context in which DHB occurs, and addressing policy gaps that prevent certain forms of DHB from being reported or managed effectively.
4. Resolution processes should be supported by mandatory follow-up, monitoring of agreed actions, and workplace restoration activities. Informal resolution methods should only be used where appropriate to the circumstances and power dynamics involved. Without active follow-up and behavioural change, resolution processes risk becoming administrative exercises that fail to address the underlying causes of the DHB situation being managed.
5. Finally, organisations should improve transparency across DHB systems by communicating processes, decisions, and organisational trends wherever privacy obligations allow. Greater transparency strengthens trust, improves organisational learning, and increases confidence that DHB concerns will be addressed fairly and consistently.

Theme 3: Lack of Detail and Clarity Within the Policy Lead to Both Inequity and Ineffectiveness

A lack of clarity and detail can lead to confusion and inconsistent or ineffective policy application. For DHB policies this can allow individuals, either consciously or due to unconscious biases, to apply their own value-based beliefs and interpret policies according to their own preferences rather than the stated policy intent. Reducing this risk requires unambiguous detail within the policy and how it is to be applied. Accepting that differing DHB situations require equitable not equal actions, the outcome for all should be an effective policy application that resolves the issue, follows up on actions, and records the process. Factors that detract from this process undermine the effectiveness of the policy and create additional inequities and barriers, further alienating DHB targets and negatively impacting the organisation. Discussions with

interview participants from both groups identified four key policy areas where a lack of clarity and detail can lead to ineffective or inequitable policy application: (1) clarity of the policy, (2) recording and evaluation processes, (3) support, and (4) training options and requirements.

Policy Clarity

Clear and easily understood processes and definitions within DHB policies enable targets to identify their situation and how their report will progress, and mean that those responsible for applying the policy can understand how to do so as intended. Despite minor differences across the interview groups, clarity within the policy, or lack thereof, was identified as a particular issue in two key areas: (1) DHB definitions which impacted the identification of DHB, and (2) clarity of processes and procedures to be applied to resolving DHB once identified.

Definitions and identifying DHB. Definitions within DHB policies must be clear and unambiguous, while remaining sufficiently flexible and holistic to support the identification of all DHB situations. While common to both groups, these concerns were more prevalent within the CMG group. Despite an acknowledged improvement in clarity around what is and is not DHB, subjectivity in understanding what the full range of DHB encompasses reinforces the need for clear definitions based on evidence and best practice. Hostile work environments were a particular form of DHB that was identified as requiring significantly better defining. The current lack of understanding and acceptance of hostile work environments as DHB further contributed to the harm it caused, while reducing the reporting and resolution of this behaviour. Discussing the overall need for clear and inclusive DHB definitions, one CMG member shared:

People get so ... tied up in definitions that they cannot make it fit a certain situation which it needs to fit, so people miss out. Our definitions need to be holistic, ... and that involves understanding that significant things don't have to be life threatening.

DHB process clarity. There is a need for clear procedures and supporting guidelines for targets and managers to reduce subjectivity and increase consistent policy application. Without clear and unambiguous processes those applying DHB policies can follow their own policy interpretation, leading to DHB being ignored, power imbalances and the severity of the behaviour being overlooked, inappropriate options

being applied, and processes being *“more subjective and discretionary than is ideal”*. Clear policy processes also removed barriers to making a complaint with a TWG member stating, *“so when you are thinking about making a complaint, it’s gotta be really digestible”*. Ensuring processes are clear and easily followed, including flexible options to better address the full range of DHB situations, increases the ability for processes to be applied in the manner the policy intended.

Reporting, Evaluation, and Feedback

Without structured and consistent recording of DHB reports and their subsequent outcomes it is not possible to measure the effectiveness of any policy. It is also not possible to identify DHB trends within an organisation or over time without an ongoing data collection programme. In addition to measuring policy effectiveness and identifying trends, tracking DHB data provides the opportunity to identify repeat offenders who may have previously avoided detection. Evidence-based evaluation and improvement of the policy is not possible without this detailed measurement.

DHB audits, evaluation and governance. Current NZDF DHB policy is unable to accurately record DHB reports, subsequent outcomes, or track known perpetrators of DHB. Both interview groups saw these as factors that significantly detracted from the overall effectiveness of the policy. The absence of effective data collection processes promotes the lack of policy enforcement and implementation of investigation outcomes, and the inability to identify changing DHB trends. As one CMG member confirmed, *“there’s no auditable trail to make sure that once a complaint investigation is concluded ... that those recommendations are followed through”*. The outcome of this was felt strongly by TWG participants, one of whom stated that *“the policy has no enforcement ability or any teeth behind the intent. ... there isn’t any process to catch that corrective behaviour”*. The ensuing inability to analyse DHB patterns or policy effectiveness also means there is no capacity to undertake effective DHB policy review or develop focused interventions against trending DHB behaviours as commanders and managers *“don’t know what areas to target within the units”*.

Additionally, despite its inclusion as a psychosocial workplace harm in the Health and Safety at Work Act, there is an inability, or unwillingness, to manage DHB as a physical health and safety issue. This contributes to lack of accurate DHB data collection and any ensuing evaluation or governance that could be developed from that data. The lack of accurate and complete DHB data collection also creates a situation

where it is not possible to formally record or track individuals who have participated in DHB behaviour, particularly repeat offenders. This raises the question of whether NZDF or other organisations who are unable to capture such data are fulfilling their responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work Act (2015) to do everything reasonably practicable to eliminate health and safety risks. Those who routinely participate in DHB behaviour must surely be considered a health and safety risk to other organisation members.

Support Requirements

With the wide range of support required to implement and manage an ongoing and effective DHB policy, options and avenues need to be clearly identified, easily accessed, and sufficiently resourced. Despite differences between the interview groups in the areas of support identified, the melding of both areas created a comprehensive list of support requirements. The differences between the groups was expected given the vastly different support needs targets and witnesses when compared to commanders and managers. The issues identified that require addressing within a DHB policy are (1) ensuring the available support options are valid and effective, (2) the role of self-help options, (3) support for managers, (4) targets and witnesses, and (5) those accused of DHB.

Effectiveness of available support options. Two key concerns were identified regarding the effectiveness of available support options within NZDF. Both groups expressed concerns about the inadequacies within the anti-harassment advisor (AHA) system, the primary support structure within NZDF for DHB situations. The training of advisors was identified as insufficient to effectively assist targets or managers in DHB situations. Being appointed as an AHA and being required to attend the training was also commonly used as remedial action for poor behaviour on an individual's part. In essence, this placed those who bullied in advisory and support positions for DHB targets. As a result, and simply not being offered any form of support, one TWG member succinctly summed up the situation, *"I've had great support from [some peers], but nothing in the system"*.

Self-help options. The groups had contradictory responses regarding the effectiveness of self-help options for resolving DHB. While the CMG acknowledged there were issues with self-help options, particularly when power imbalances were involved, there was an expectation that targets attempt this

prior to reporting DHB. TWG members, however, reported self-help options were extremely challenging due to the DHB dynamics they experienced and generally ineffective if they did attempt to use them. One TWG member who twice attempted raising the issues with their bully, also their manager, reported that the behaviour did not stop and they were portrayed as the problem saying, *“I sort of became like the bad person”*.

The one area of self-help that was identified as effective by the TWG was the ability to seek external support such as counselling. It must be stressed, however, that this element of self-help was used to provide the target with coping mechanisms to minimise the harm of the ongoing DHB situation rather than to steps to confront their abuser or otherwise end the behaviour. As one TWG member described their counselling journey, *“it was one of the best supports I had, it enabled me to go back to a hostile environment and survive it”*.

Support for managers. The lack of DHB, not HR, specialists to advise and provide decision support to commanders and managers directly influenced how DHB reports were addressed and managed. The insufficient training received by AHAs meant many AHA personnel were unable to provide an appropriate level of advice to commanders and managers. Essentially this left those responsible for managing DHB with insufficient knowledge to fully understand the DHB situation and the implications of certain investigation and resolution options.

Support for targets. The support options available for targets of DHB were identified by both interview groups as being insufficient and potentially undermining of effective and equitable DHB resolution. While peer support could be a valuable option, particularly when it enabled previously isolated targets to come together, both groups acknowledged there were caveats and much depended on individual connections which limited its effectiveness. AHAs were described as *“the ambulance at the bottom”*, reinforcing previously raised concerns regarding the effectiveness of AHAs. Effective support options were identified as needing to be sufficiently flexible to fit individual needs while also being able to assume an advocate-type role to assist in balancing any power imbalance within the DHB situation. Two TWG members advocated for the concept for support: *“I didn’t need to talk about my feelings, I did need to talk*

about how I manage” and “it would have been fantastic if there was some way some person who was assigned to just help you out through this process”.

Support for bystanders and respondents. Both interview groups agreed that support should be readily available for bystanders, witnesses, and respondents, particularly as those who witness DHB can suffer equal harm. Despite the bystander training NZDF delivers, one CMG member identified that *“we’re less good at talking about actually how difficult that is”*. Support for respondents to DHB complaints was also inadequate, with another CMG participant stating, *“for every complainant ... there’s a respondent, and the respondent has rights too”*. This statement was reinforced by a TWG participant who, as a respondent to a malicious complain, shared, *“the support aspect was very lacking. ... Well, who’s gonna support me?”*

Training Requirements

To support effective policy application all organisation members must be trained on its intent, processes, individual responsibilities within the policy, and implications of breaching the policy. Both groups identified current training across the NZDF on DHB and DHB policy processes as insufficient in content, having ineffective and inconsistent delivery methods. Three specific training gaps were highlighted as impacting the equitable and effective application of the DHB policy: (1) selection and training of supporters, particularly AHAs, (2) level of commander and manager training, and (3) investigator training.

Training and selection for supporters. The AHA mandate was insufficient as it was largely reactive, with significant gaps in training and selection processes. Training gaps meant most targets did not get the support they needed, and what support there was may have been provided by someone known to behave inappropriately. The AHA training currently available was described as providing *“a baseline, but it needs higher levels”* that *“didn’t cover what to do for someone in [serious] scenarios”*. The gaps in selection processes meant that many AHAs were directed to assume this role as a remedial activity for having behaved inappropriately themselves, particularly junior staff. As one CMG member, also an AHA, shared, *“the AHA training was great to start with, except certain people were invited on that training for remedial purposes”*. Another explained:

People walk around saying the only people who’ve done AHA [training] ... is because they’ve been bullies in their past. Which isn’t 100% true, but I have looked around at some of the people who are

AHAs and I've thought, you're probably one of the biggest bullies that I knew when I was coming through.

Commander and manager training. Lack of detailed and relevant DHB training currently available for commanders and managers was raised by half the CMG. It was discussed that this lack of training led to inappropriately applied policy elements and resolution options, among other issues. The training was identified as being needed at all levels, including junior leader levels. Several CMG group participants had encountered situations where improved outcomes could have been achieved through additional training and awareness. This included clearer guidance on specific policy processes, such as reporting or mediation, and on the appropriate application of resolution options, as well as better information on what DHB is and the wide impact it has. As one CMG member suggested, *"I sometimes feel like all managers should also attend AHA training, sometimes just for awareness"*.

Investigator training. The lack of investigation knowledge and skills alongside DHB specific training provided to investigators was raised as an issue by the TWG in particular. It directly and negatively impacted the quality of investigations and, in turn, the equity and effectiveness of outcomes. Knowledge gaps were experienced by targets in poor investigation planning, lack of interview skills, along with insufficient knowledge of evidence rules, burden of proof, and DHB itself. Many internally appointed DHB investigators within NZDF were not experienced in either general investigation skills or in DHB situations, in particular. As one TWG member explained, *"they're not experts in anything. They're not experts in DHB, or workplace environments, or HR experts, so it's very difficult for them to really experience that and they're in that very fixed military mindset"*. All these experience gaps can reduce the effectiveness and equity of investigations and their outcomes.

Pragmatic Implications for Organisations – Policy Clarity

While there is some overlap between this theme and the context theme generated from the rapid literature review, the organisational implications of this policy clarity theme both reinforce and expand on the implications developed for the content theme. Implications for organisations to improve the clarity and detail within their DHB policies include:

1. Organisations should ensure DHB policies contain clear, unambiguous definitions and practical guidance to enable employees to identify DHB and understand how concerns will be managed. Definitions should be sufficiently broad to address the full range of harmful behaviours but detailed enough to clarify what behaviours are and are not DHB, including hostile work environments. Procedures should provide clear decision rules and pathways that minimise subjective interpretation and inconsistent application.
2. To support effective governance, organisations should establish robust systems for recording, monitoring, and evaluating DHB reports, investigations, outcomes, and corrective actions. Reliable data enables organisations to identify trends, monitor repeat behaviours, evaluate policy effectiveness, and ensure agreed actions are implemented and followed through.
3. Support arrangements should be clearly defined, accessible, and appropriately resourced. Organisations should provide tailored support for targets, witnesses, managers, investigators, and respondents, ensuring support personnel are suitably selected, trained, and trusted. Reliance on self-help approaches should be limited, particularly where significant power imbalances exist, and individuals should have access to independent advocacy and specialist assistance where required.
4. Finally, organisations should invest in role-specific DHB training to promote consistent policy application. Managers, support personnel, investigators, and decision-makers require training that extends beyond policy awareness to include practical skills in recognising DHB, managing reports, addressing power imbalances, applying procedures consistently, and making fair, evidence-based decisions. Clear policies supported by capable and well-trained personnel are more likely to produce equitable outcomes and maintain confidence in organisational DHB systems.

Training Implications

The appropriate knowledge and training for key roles responsible for the equitable and effective management of DHB, particularly managers and DHB investigators, have been consistent threads wound through multiple themes from this research. As such, it is appropriate to weave this knowledge together to

provide organisations with training structures that incorporate the considerations identified across the theses from this research. While the options presented here offer a structured capability pathway specifically for managers and specialist DHB investigators, elements from these training options could readily be regrouped to develop outline training packages tailored for general employee training, bystander training, or other DHB awareness and prevention training. The syllabi presented here for manager and DHB investigators align with the themes of contextual understanding, policy content, equity, consistency of application, and clarity and are supported by more detailed learning objectives for each syllabus in Appendix T.

Manager Training Syllabus: Managing Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying (DHB). This training package would be suitable for all managers of staff who may be required to manage DHB situations.

Suggested learning objectives include:

1. **Learning Objective 1: Understand DHB and Organisational Responsibilities.** Define DHB and differentiate it from legitimate management actions; describe the impact of DHB; and explain organisational and managerial responsibilities for preventing and managing DHB.
2. **Learning Objective 2: Recognise DHB Risk Factors and Vulnerabilities.** Identify risk factors that increase DHB risk, including for hostile environments and emerging situations; and recognise the influence of power imbalances on DHB and how demographic and minority factors affect DHB.
3. **Learning Objective 3: Apply DHB Policies Consistently and Fairly.** Navigate DHB policies and processes effectively and consistently; identify conflicts of interest or biases that may undermine consistency; and apply equitable rather than equal responses.
4. **Learning Objective 4: Receive and Manage DHB Reports.** Appropriately respond to all DHB reports and undertake initial safety assessments; and identify when a DHB matter should be escalated.
5. **Learning Objective 5: Select Appropriate Resolution Options.** Identify and apply the appropriate resolution option for differing DHB situations; and implement follow-up processes.

6. **Learning Objective 6: Support Participants Throughout the Process.** Identify and provide appropriate support options for all parties to a DHB situation; provide trauma-informed responses; and effectively manage retaliation risks.
7. **Learning Objective 7: Demonstrate Leadership and Accountability.** Model appropriate behaviours; apply accountability measures; proactively work to improve workplace culture; and effectively report, monitor and evaluate DHB systems.

DHB Investigator Training Syllabus. Given the complexity of DHB situations and the differences between investigating other employment or complaint matters, specific DHB investigation training should be required for all those required to investigation reported DHB, regardless of previous investigative experience in other areas. Suggested learning objectives include:

1. **Learning Objective 1: Develop Specialist DHB Knowledge.** Define DHB and differentiate it from legitimate management actions; explain factors that contribute to DHB; recognise the influence of power imbalances on DHB; equity considerations affect investigations and outcomes.
2. **Learning Objective 2: Conduct Procedurally Fair Investigations.** Apply natural justice and procedural fairness principles; manage conflicts of interest; and balance transparency and privacy requirements appropriately.
3. **Learning Objective 3: Plan and Manage Investigations.** Develop and manage investigation mandates, plans, timeframes, and communication to all parties.
4. **Learning Objective 4: Gather and Assess Evidence.** Conduct effective and ethical interviews and evidence collection; and assess evidence credibility and reliability.
5. **Learning Objective 5: Apply Appropriate Evidential Standards.** Apply the balance of probabilities standard; assess evidence where corroboration is limited; and prepare defensible findings.
6. **Learning Objective 6: Minimise Harm During Investigations.** Apply trauma-informed considerations to investigation processes; manage retaliation; provide suitable guidance to all parties.

7. **Learning Objective 7: Produce High-Quality Investigation Outputs.** Produce evidence-based investigation reports to support decision makers; and identify organisational issues identified through investigations.
8. **Learning Objective 8: Contribute to Organisational Learning and Consistency.** Effectively and consistency record investigation outcomes to support DHB trend analysis; identify risk factors and procedural weaknesses; and support continuous improvement of DHB policies and procedures through evidence-based recommendations.

Summary

The findings from the semi-structured interviews identified several areas within potential DHB policies that influence their equity and overall effectiveness. Identifying factors that influence the equitable access to policy protections for all organisation members, and subsequent investigation and resolution processes, enables organisations to develop DHB policies that will be effective throughout their organisation.

Understanding that inconsistent DHB policy application resulting from individual biases, a lack of knowledge, and the influence of organisational contexts allows organisations to take action to minimise these opportunities; it undermines the effectiveness and equity of the policy. By identifying factors that can influence inconsistent policy application, organisations can mitigate this detrimental impact through conscious policy development, risk mitigation, detailed implementation, and ongoing evaluation; and enhance both the equity and effectiveness of their policy. Ensuring that supporting elements are in place and adequate, such as those required to offer policy clarity and provide appropriate training, support, and evaluation processes, set the conditions for any policy to be implemented and applied effectively.

Chapter 9: Explanation Building – Integrating Themes

Introduction

This chapter integrates findings from the literature review and interviews to explain how discrimination, harassment, and bullying (DHB) policy components interact to influence equity and effectiveness. The previous two chapters identified the outcomes from thematic analyses conducted on the rapid literature review and semi-structured interviews. Two themes were derived from the rapid literature review. *Context* identified potential policy frameworks and fundamental policy elements while establishing the need for an in-depth contextual understanding of the organisation a DHB will operate within. *Content* examined the elements and processes that need to be included in a tailored DHB policy for it to be effective. Analysis of the semi-structured interviews led to the construction of three themes. *Inequity* identified that equality under a DHB policy results in inequity of policy access and outcomes. *Inconsistency* revealed the effects inconsistent policy application has on DHB policy outcomes. The negative impact of *Lack of Clarity* and detail in policy language and policy processes on overall policy equity and effectiveness was explored in the third theme. Understanding the relationships between the themes is essential for answering the primary research question. This chapter explains the outcomes of triangulation analysis and explanation building, and the relationship between the themes, as well as the integration and influence across themes (see Figure 8).

While the explanation building and theme integration discussed in this chapter draws connections between interview themes, policy elements, and organisational practices, these should not be interpreted as evidence of causation. The qualitative nature of this research design can and does allow for the identification of converging patterns across data sources but it cannot establish temporal or causal pathways, or definitive causal claims.

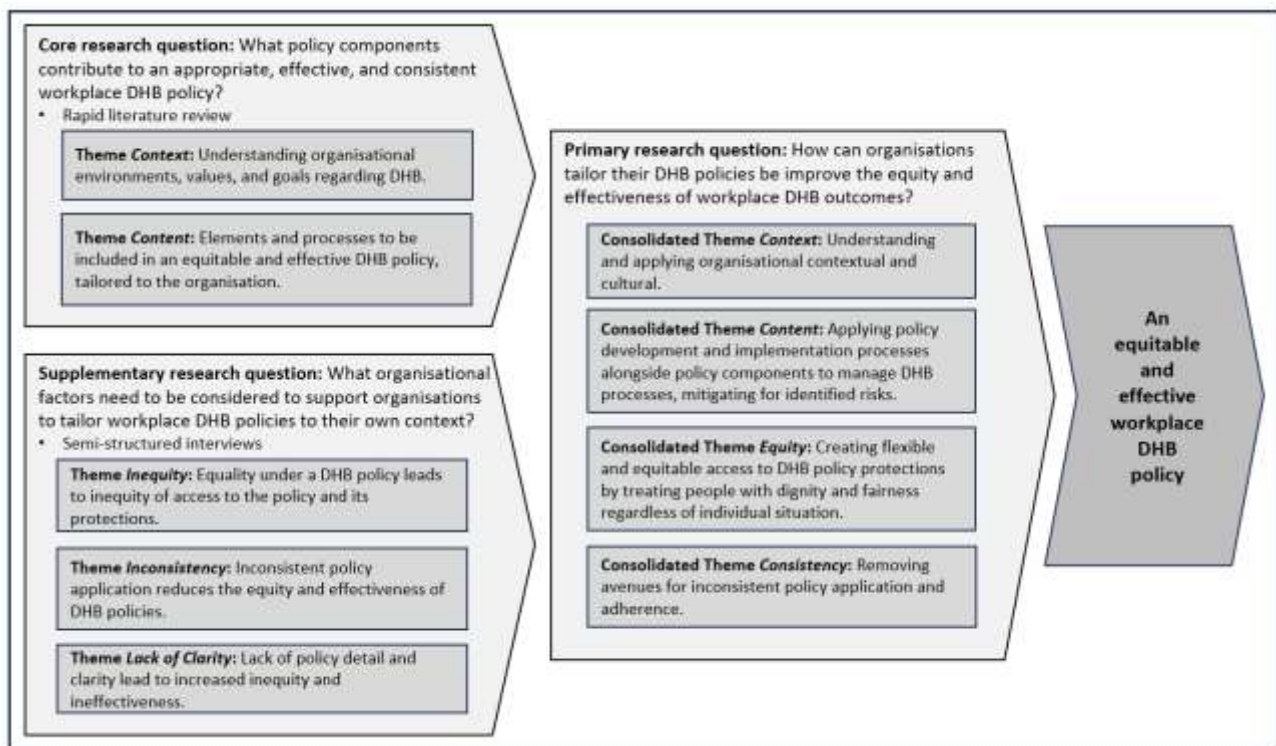
Linking Contextual Understanding to Policy Elements

This section expands on the thematic findings of the rapid literature review to answer the core research question regarding the policy elements to be considered for developing an equitable and effective DHB policy. It investigates how the findings influence the development of tailored DHB policies and how organisations can apply them to develop DHB policies that enhance equity and effectiveness. The *Context*

theme referred to internal and external influences on an organisation that affect the way it operates. Bess and Dee (2008, cited in Dee & Heineman, 2016) described organisational context as “the structural, cultural, and power configurations ... as well as the external environment in which that institution operates” (p. 10). External stakeholders associated with the organisation, the values and frameworks that influence decisions, and who makes those decisions also influence an organisation’s context (Shepherd & Rudd, 2013). The influence organisational context has on DHB within organisations is an accepted phenomenon (Hutchinson, 2012; Magee et al., 2014; Rayner & Lewis, 2010; Salin, 2008; Vartia & Leka, 2011). Identifying the internal and external factors that protect against or enable DHB is critical for developing DHB policies that enhance protections and mitigate risks (Brinkley, 2019; Magee et al., 2014). This contextual understanding must be specific to the organisation wanting to develop a tailored DHB policy and not a generic industry or nation-based assessment (Escartín, 2016).

Figure 8.

Amalgamated Themes.



Note. This diagram shows how themes from the rapid literature review and interviews informed the amalgamated themes used to answer the primary research question. It illustrates a framework that organisations can use to develop equitable and effective DHB policies. The amalgamated themes reflect the outcomes of the methodological triangulation and the focus change from identifying DHB policy deficiencies to how equitable and effective DHB policy development can be advanced.

Understanding Context

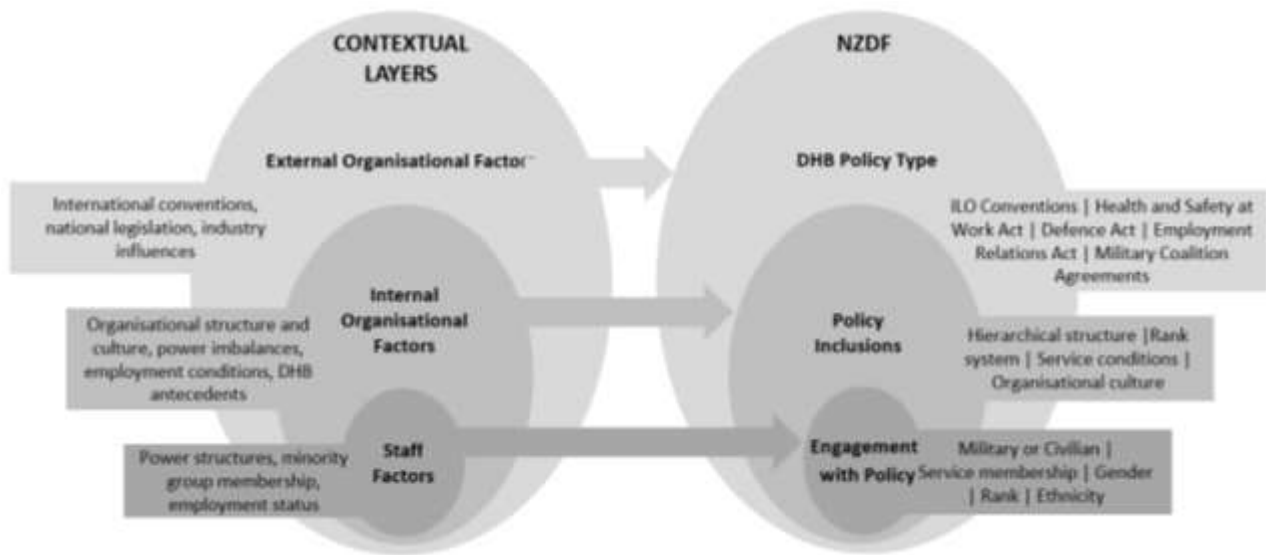
Exploring the contextual elements identified from the rapid literature review revealed differing levels of context from the influence of international conventions, political and legislative environments (Ironside & Seifert, 2002; Salin, 2008), employment arrangements and design (Bentley et al., 2012; Hutchinson, 2012; Magee et al., 2014), to the demographic make-up of an organisation's members (International Labour Organisation (ILO), 2020; Ministry of Business, Innovation, and Employment (MBIE), 2020; Office of the Auditor General (OAG), 2023a, 2023b). The layers nested within each other much like a socioecological framework. Organisational staff factors including minority group membership and employment status (ILO, 2020; OAG, 2023a; Plimmer et al., 2023; Thompson & Catley, 2021) sat within internal organisational factors including power and organisational structures and culture (Bentley et al., 2012; Gardner, O'Driscoll et al., 2013; Liefoghe & Mackenzie Davey, 2001; Osler, 2021; Rayner et al., 2001; Standing Committee on Education and Employment (SCEE), 2012; Zapf & Vartia, 2020) which, in turn, nested within external factors that included international conventions and the national legislation by which organisations were bound (Health and Safety at Work Act, 2025; ILO, 2020).

As with socioecological models (see Bronfenbrenner, 1977; Bronfenbrenner, 1979), the outer layers indicate broader societal structures relevant to organisations, with more individualised and specific influences held within central layers. Applying this layered contextual understanding to the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) provided a clear identification of the differing external, internal, and individual contextual influences NZDF operates within. This understanding enabled further identification of NZDF elements within each of the contextual layers that influence the patterns, prevalence and management of DHB within NZDF. The contextual layers and associated NZDF elements are detailed in Figure 9. These layers are comparable to the contextual influences of social environments alongside institutional and participant characteristics that Restall and Kaufert (2011) identified in their study on citizen involvement in policy. Restall and Kaufert also determined that organisational structure and culture impacted individual policy involvement opportunities which reflects the finding from the current research (see Figure 9) where internal organisational factors directly influence policy content and structure. Layering contextual influences enables specific factors to be examined in detail, as well as the identification of the most

influential factors and options and how they may bring about improvement in the issue under investigation (Restall & Kaufert, 2011), in this instance DHB.

Figure 9.

A Socioecological Model of NZDF's Contextual Layers and Their Relationship to DHB Policy Content.



Note. Based on Bronfenbrenner's (1977, 1979) socioecological framework, this diagram illustrates the contextual layers within the NZDF and how each layer informs and influences elements within an organisational DHB policy.

Understanding Content

The *Content* theme was more tangible than the *Context* theme. While many documents included in the rapid literature review specified items to be included within a DHB policy (See King, 2019; Magee et al., 2014; Meglich-Sespico et al., 2007; Rayner & Lewis, 2010; WorkSafe NZ, 2017), *Content* provides a more holistic perspective of the policy development process, identifying processes that contribute to a policy's success from a more integrated perspective. Further, it identified that a DHB policy's content extends beyond the policy document into supporting actions and processes.

Contributing actions include stakeholder engagement (Ferris et al., 2021; Richards & Daley, 2003), implementation plans (Vartia & Leka, 2011; Zapf & Vartia, 2020), DHB prevention actions (Brinkley, 2019; Carter et al., 2013; Ferris et al., 2021), DHB recording (ILO, 2020; OAG, 2023b), and policy evaluation (Francis, 2019; Richards & Daley, 2003). The absence of any of these elements, be it a section within the policy document or one of the supporting actions, can directly impact the policy's success and level of equity and effectiveness achieved. While this theme appeared more related to tangible policy outputs, it

could not be effectively achieved in isolation from an organisation's context. With analysis, engagement, integration, and planning identified as necessary components of each policy element and adjacent action, it became clear that the final development of a DHB policy document was the last frontier of a long and involved campaign.

Building Explanations on the Links Between Context and Content

In examining the meanings of the *Context* and *Content* themes, it became clear that the way any content-based factor could impact an organisation, or indeed which factors should apply to individual organisations, depended on its context. Without a deep contextual understanding, organisations cannot tailor DHB policies to address their specific DHB patterns, prevalence, or threats (Brinkley, 2019; Vartia & Leka, 2011), and risk applying policy content elements in an ad-hoc manner. This can lead to the development of DHB policies that do not align with organisational needs (Vartia & Leka, 2011) limiting, rather than enhancing, equity and effectiveness. Accepting the relationship between context and content is insufficient to understand the impact they have on the equity and effectiveness of a DBH policy.

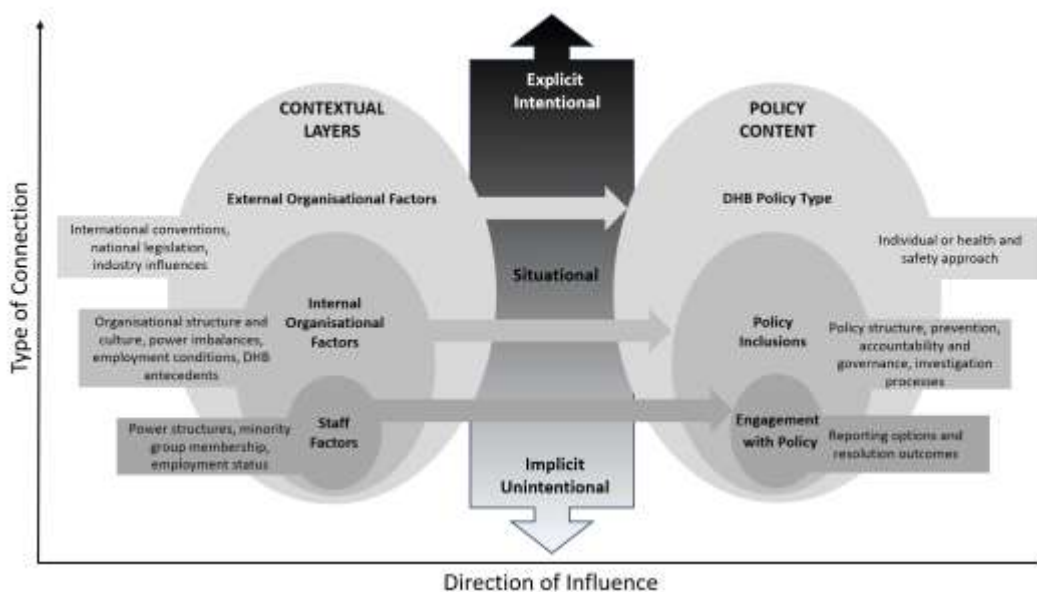
Analysing the relationship between context and content within DHB policies identified a multilayered, generative relationship with both explicit and implicit elements (Ritchie et al., 2013). A generative relationship describes a relationship between two factors where one produces or causes the second (Ohlsson, 2014). The contextual layers depicted within Figure 9 required the development of an equally multilayered explanation and enabled the exploration and influences of each level on DHB policy development and its subsequent content. Whether proximal and distal contextual components are seen as a nuisance factor to be controlled or integral design elements, they influence policy development (Edwards & Barker, 2014). As such, the more deeply this relationship can be understood the more likely protective factors can be enhanced while mitigating negative impacts.

NZDF's Contextual Layers. The complex array of explanatory relationships identified between *Context* and DHB policy *Content* is depicted in Figure 10 which figure illustrates the direction of influence that organisational layers exert on associated policy components, and the changing explanatory relationship depending on the layer of organisational context. While the specific relationships are explained in the context of the current research, similar relationships and frameworks exist elsewhere in the

literature. One such concept, implementation science, provides understanding of how policies and other interventions can be influenced by an organisation's contextual environment (Edwards & Barker, 2014). Implementation science research acknowledges that context plays a critical role in the development and success of interventions, and that how it is defined and applied is fluid and contingent on individual situations (Daivadanam et al., 2019; Nilsen & Bernhardsson, 2019). The contextual framework offered by Squires et al. (2023) conceptualises context as having three levels: the micro or individual layer; the meso layer containing organisational level influences including appetite for change, culture, social behaviour, structure, and internal processes; and the external layer or macro level (Squires et al., 2023). It is Squires et al.'s framework that most closely replicates the relationships identified in this research between organisational context and DHB policy content.

Figure 10.

Explanations of Influence Between Rapid Literature Review Themes: Context and Content.



Note. Building on Figure 9, this diagram highlights the direction of influence between an organisation's context and internal policies and how each contextual layer informs the linked policy content; these connections become more explicit and intentional the more external connections are.

External Organisational Factors. Examining the explanatory connections between the *Context* and *Content* relationships depicted in Figure 9 illustrated that each generative relationship differed both in terms of the degree to which they were implicit or explicit, and the intentionality of the relationships. The outer contextual layer depicts the influence external factors have on strategic decisions surrounding DHB,

such as international conventions, legislation, and wider industry sway. This relationship is explicit and intentional. Ritchie et al. (2013) labelled this level of intentionality as dispositional. For this explanation, I will use an intentional to unintentional continuum, with the changing level of intentionality across organisational contextual layers depicted in Figure 10. In the outer layer, contextual factors are influenced in highly direct and specific ways, with most influencing factors specifying requirements to be met either by enforceable regulations or by societal expectations. The expectation that DHB be addressed as a psychosocial workplace hazard in New Zealand is one such example (WorkSafe NZ, 2019). The explicit requirements listed place straightforward expectations on organisations to support clearly defined outcomes.

Internal Organisational Factors. The middle contextual layer, representing internal organisational factors, is less transparent in its influence on DHB policy inclusions such as components to address prevention, investigation processes, or resolution options. While some elements have explicit and intentional generative relationships, including the direct influence organisational structure has on how DHB policies may be framed and implemented, others are less direct. Rank and organisational position are explicit elements for achieving intentional, clearly defined outcomes. These directly influence DHB policies and procedures when specific roles, ranks, or positions are given functions within the policy, and can be seen as an overtly explicit and intentional relationship. However, individual differences, power imbalances, and employment status can unintentionally influence how roles are performed, enabling the emergence of unintentional influence. Organisational culture and its acceptance of DHB antecedents lie at the other end of the spectrum. This value system may lack an overt, measurable influence on DHB policies; however, the beliefs and expectations that underpin any organisational culture are likely to unintentionally permeate all aspects of DHB policy unless specific action is taken to reduce this influence.

Explaining the relationship between *Context* and *Content* at the internal organisational layer is situational (see Figure 10). External factors such as legislation and regulatory requirement can help narrow these interpretations, clarifying how internal structures influence policy design. Pollitt (2013) argued that “context needs to be defined on each occasion it is used ... and operationalized” (p. 416). Defining internal organisational factors in terms of ‘internal and external influences’ situates factors within a specific rather

than a generic organisation, assisting in determining how it can be operationalised. For example, that NZDF is a military organisation rather than a commercial enterprise directly influences its structure, distribution of power and authority, and its values and culture, including assumptions regarding DHB behaviour, and affects how the organisation applies them to achieve its goals. Consequently, it would be pointless to situate these elements outside the context of a military organisation. Explaining this relationship would state that the type of industry an organisation belongs to can have both implicit and explicit influence at a situational level.

Staff Factors. Individual and personnel factors are contained in the central layer of the contextual framework. Individualised factors include staff demographics, minority group membership, and the influence of intersectionality, differing employment statuses, and the informal power networks that weave the factors together. Examining the relationship between these elements and the associated layer within the policy content framework exposes a very different explanation from the previous two factors. While Figures 8 and 9 indicate that staff factors influence how individuals engage with a DHB policy, participants' responses suggest that, in practice, this is aspirational at best. Many of the reasons organisational members may be unwilling to report DHB, or face barriers when attempting to do so, are unlikely to be readily identifiable. The implicit nature of many of the individual and personnel factors effectively hide them from policymakers, allowing the unintended outcomes they generate to remain largely unmitigated. Resolving these issues requires policymakers to have the time and mandate to investigate policy implications at the individual level and to adjust policy components as necessary to ensure equitable access to policy protections for all organisation members.

Explicitness and Intention. In exploring the relationship links between *Context* and *Content*, an explanatory relationship was developed between the levels of explicitness attributed to each contextual layer. As the contextual layers moved further from external factors, explicitness and intention gave way to implicitness and unintended outcomes. While this may not be surprising, it has implications for organisations and policymakers. It is relatively straightforward to identify explicit external influences, such as legislation, and to develop appropriate policy responses. Requirements are clear, as are consequences for non-compliance. Generating the same level of understanding of the requirements and consequences of

barriers to reporting DHB, and of how to effectively manage and resolve them, is a more complex undertaking. It can require ongoing stakeholder engagement, staff surveys and DHB data analysis. Such processes are both time-consuming and resource intensive. The link then between policy development and the level of explicitness versus implicitness is the additional time and effort required to fully understand contextual factors and how they can influence a DHB policy the more implicit they become. This has clear implications for organisations wishing to implement a tailored DHB policy with haste.

Implications for Practice. Accepting the relationships between contextual understanding and DHB policy elements requires that decisions on the content of DHB policies should not be made without being informed by knowledge and understanding of the associated contextual layer. This means understanding that external organisational factors within New Zealand include legislation that states behaviour that causes harm is a workplace hazard (Health and Safety at Work Act, 2015) and supporting regulations that identify DHB as such behaviour (MBIE, 2020; WorkSafe NZ, 2017, 2019). Knowing that within New Zealand legislation DHB is considered a psychosocial workplace hazard (WorkSafe NZ, 2019), it should follow that organisations proceed with a health and safety, not an individual-based, approach to their DHB policies. Likewise, understanding the impact of internal organisational structures, cultures, and power differentials on DHBs targets' access to these policies should shape decisions about how a DHB policy is structured, implemented, and developed. Lastly, detailed knowledge of an organisation's members and their individual and group characteristics enables engagement with any DHB policy, from initial reporting through to resolution outcomes, to ensure that all members can access DHB policy protections.

Applying a socioecological framework to understanding organisational contexts, as informed by the outcomes of the literature review, provides organisations with a systematic means of investigating their own environments. Recognising how each contextual layer informs and influences components within a DHB policy enables organisations to develop policy procedures and processes that are truly tailored to their organisational context. It is the accurate tailoring of DHB policies to an organisation's internal and external environments that directly influences the equity and effectiveness it can achieve (Magee et al., 2014; Rayner & Lewis, 2010; Ritzman, 2016; Salin et al., 2020; SCEE, 2012; Vartia & Leka, 2011; Whitaker & Niolon, 2009; Zapf & Vartia, 2020).

Despite the importance of accurate contextual understanding for informing DHB policy development, this level of analysis is often conducted in isolation from the individuals who will ultimately be affected by such a policy. Conducting a contextual analysis and policy development processes in isolation can lead to policies that suit the organisation but not its staff (Meglich-Sespico et al., 2007), are ineffective (Rayner & Lewis, 2010), or undermine staff and generate negative or hostile organisational cultures (Magee et al., 2014). As identified in the policy development element within the rapid literature review's *Content* theme, no matter how thorough a contextual analysis is, consulting stakeholders is critical to ensuring any DHB policy is practical, is designed to deliver success, and effectively addresses the needs of all organisational members (Berlingieri, 2015; Magee et al., 2014; Rayner & Lewis, 2010; Richards & Daley, 2003; Roehling, 2020; SCEE, 2012; Vartia & Leka, 2011; WorkSafe NZ, 2017).

Understanding the Differing Experiences of DHB Targets and Managers

The input from affected stakeholders provides differing perspectives on policy processes, outcomes, and the contextual layers that support and enable them (Berlingieri, 2015). Stakeholders' perspectives can, in turn, identify additional areas of inequity and ineffectiveness that require mitigation within the policy and its processes. The nuanced and deeply personal understanding of the total impact the current NZDF DHB policy has (gained from the responses of the semi-structured interviews) on DHB targets and those required to apply and implement this policy were identified as (1) *Inequity* – the impact prioritising equality over equity has on DHB policy processes and outcomes, (2) *Inconsistency* – how inconsistency in policy application affects the equity and effectiveness a DHB policy can achieve, and (3) *Lack of Clarity* – the need for clear and direct policies to assist in mitigating the effect of both inequity and inconsistency.

The levels of agreement between the interview groups varied across the three interview themes of *Inequity*, *Inconsistency*, and *Lack of Clarity*. While a similar perspective on a particular finding across both interview groups can indicate a common understanding of an issue impacting the application of a DHB policy, divergent views can identify significant but previously hidden factors. Disagreement could be related to the meaning attributed to a finding or how prominent an issue was, with silence being when one data set identifies a particular issue while other data sets do not raise it at all (Farmer et al., 2006).

Disagreement or silence does not negate the importance of a finding; rather, it can indicate a new and

diverse perspective that requires understanding as any lack of agreement can contribute as much to explanation building as consensus can (Schweiger & Tomiak, 2023). Disagreement and silence between interview groups was able to deepen understanding of the findings.

Silence, in research, lacks a fixed definition, as it “can only have comparative, rather than absolute, meanings” and is shaped by context (Schweiger & Tomiak, 2023). Silences typically focus on the absence of interaction or information, particularly interviews, where one group has been deliberately or unintentionally excluded (Bao, 2023; Müller et al., 2024; Schweiger & Tomiak, 2023). Rather than indicating exclusion, within the current research when a group was silent on a finding it generally identified where one group had knowledge the other group lacked knowledge due to differing experiences related to NZDF DHB policy. The silences could be viewed as information gaps that illustrated the pragmatist perspective that realities are socially constructed and understood through individual experience (Morgan, 2014a). Therefore, each interview group’s contributions reflected distinct realities shaped by their interactions with DHB in the NZDF. The different realities underpin interpreting the silences and differences within the themes as significant insights that warrant analysis on their own terms. Put alongside the meaning agreement between the groups, adds to explaining the themes of *Inequity*, *Inconsistency*, and *Lack of Clarity*.

Inequity Theme

A high level of agreement across both groups for the *Inequity* theme, particularly related to reporting options, indicated a clear and obvious visibility of factors that undermined equitable access to DHB policy protections and outcomes. Even where the meanings attributed to findings differed, as they did when discussing the impact of seniority and/or age and employment status, both groups emphasised how these factors influenced inequity.

There was a pattern with the findings one or other of the groups was silent on. While the target and witness group (TWG) had no comment regarding either the application of a duty of care or a sense that targets can and do rationalise their abuse away, DHB reports not being actioned and the inability to report hostile work environments under the current NZDF DHB policy garnered no comments from the commander and management group (CMG). This pattern illustrated the different realities and perspectives

of each group with the CMG more focused on and conscious of organisational leaning factors. For example, the perspective of the CMG that targets may 'rationalise away' the DHB they suffer may simply be the actions of a target who understands they are unlikely to be able to get the behaviour to stop by reporting it under the current policy. More than that, they risk the DHB escalating and sustaining a detrimental impact on their professional career if they do make a report. This was certainly the experience shared by TWG participants. The differing perspectives of the same situation highlighted the requirement for wide engagement during policy development and implementation to ensure a well-intended process does not create further inequity.

Inconsistency Theme

The pattern of agreement, differences, and silence across the interview groups was similar to the *Inequity* theme. A key difference was the higher proportion of findings where there was agreement that a factor impacted consistent policy application but the reason attributed to this did not align. Shared agreement across interview groups that a finding was important, even when the reasons differed, was particularly notable when any form of conflict of interest was involved. As with the *Inequity* theme, where meanings differed, those offered by targets and witnesses tended to focus on how the finding impacted them and their journey with the NZDF DHB policy. Comments from commanders and managers, however, tended to focus more on general organisational and structural issues. While highlighting specific areas within a DHB policy where actions can be taken to mitigate inconsistent policy application, the strength of the *Inconsistency* theme is how often a single policy-related factor can mean different things to different groups. This finding advances the important role DHB policies have to mitigate inconsistent policy interpretation and inconsistent application.

Lack of Clarity Theme

This theme illustrated a very different perspective between the two interview groups. Despite agreement on the importance of having clear mechanisms to audit DHB outcomes and track those who fail to comply with a DHB policy, findings differed on the utility of self-help options and the effectiveness of available support. The lack of agreement within this theme appeared to result from each group having very different perspectives. The meanings attributed to findings by CMG participants appeared to stem from an almost

paternalistic, benevolent, or indulgent perspective that the organisation, and policymakers as its proxy, know what is best for DHB targets, and that whatever that may be must align with what supports the organisation. Based on TWG interview responses, very little effort would need to be expended to gain an alternative, reality-based perspective from those who have been impacted by unclear policy details and a lack of appropriate or available support. Similarly, research on the highlighted DHB policy components is readily available with data on the appropriateness and effectiveness on self-help options for DHB (A. Ballard & P. Easteal, 2018; Johnson, 2011; Zapf & Vartia, 2020) and the impact on targets (Johnson, 2015a; MBIE, 2020; Osler, 2021) readily accessible. Likewise, the potential support options organisations could offer are well covered within research (Carden & Boyd, 2013; Ferris et al., 2021; OAG, 2023a; WorkSafe NZ, 2017).

Implications for Practice. Analysing the patterns of agreement, differences, and silence across the themes of *Inequity*, *Inconsistency*, and *Lack of Clarity* indicated a consistent perspective from each group. While many findings from these themes overlapped, the differences and silences illustrated a clear individual focus from the TWG influenced by their personal, mostly negative, DHB experiences and engagement with the NZDF DHB policy. Unsurprisingly, by and large CMG members reflected a more organisational level focus, identifying factors that would require additional action to improve DHB policy outcomes, including enhanced resourcing for manager training, accountability and governance mechanisms, and more straightforward policy guidelines. With their internal and individual perspective, it was unsurprising that operational elements were not a priority for TWG members. This pattern of differing perspectives was consistent across all three themes. That each group demonstrated a different perspective does not reduce the value of either group's responses. Instead, the differences demonstrated the need for wide engagement with stakeholders during the policy development stage to ensure all needs of those who need to engage with the policy can be met.

The Evolution to Social Equity

The interviews aimed to address the supplementary research question: What organisational factors should be considered to enable organisations to tailor workplace DHB policies to their own context? The first two themes, *Inequity* and *Inconsistency*, related to the environment in which a DHB policy operated and the

impact on those who engaged with it. The third theme, *Lack of Clarity*, had a different focus. This theme identified the need for clarity and detail within the policy document itself. With these differences in mind, this section will review the three themes, providing explanations to examine the relationships among the three themes and the implications for how organisations can tailor DHB policies to their own contexts.

Understanding that Equality under the Policy Leads to Inequity

The distinction between equality and equity has been a consistent thread throughout the research. The *Inequity* theme directly affects the level of equitable policy engagement and the effectiveness of DHB resolutions that can be achieved. Equality-based policies apply the same rights and rules to everyone (Gooden, 2015). Minow (2021) argued that “approaches that call for uniformity or identical treatment, regardless of individual circumstances, can be disappointing or even perverse” (p. 180). The *Inequity* theme strongly aligns with Minow’s sentiment, as participant experiences identified demographics, position, formal and informal power, and employee status as affecting access to the NZDF DHB policy, along with actions taken and resolutions achieved. These factors rarely occurred in isolation, leaving managers and targets to navigate the impact of multiple factors. The identified intersectionality levels challenge NZDF’s current DHB policy focus on equality. By highlighting that organisation members have their own unique characteristics, which are often layered and multi-dimensional (Collins, 2012; Crenshaw, 1991; Sasson-Levy, 2017), applying a single solution to all DHB situations merely generates further inequity and harm (Kachtan, 2016; Smooth, 2013).

Three elements within this theme contributed to understanding that equality within NZDF’s DHB policy led to inequity. They were:

1. Demographic differences impacted the ability to access DHB policy protections and resolutions,
2. An individual’s employment status had a comparable impact as demographic differences on policy access and outcomes, and
3. Policy content and gaps can unintentionally lead to further inequities and reduced reporting.

While the importance of these elements was identified and expanded upon in the rapid literature review, the interview findings offered insights into the personal impact of them. TWG testimonies illustrated real-life differences in treating organisation members equally and treating individuals in a

manner that delivers equal benefit and outcome (Minow, 2021). The shared TWG experiences included DHB reports submitted through human resources channels by service members being ignored. Thus, civilian DHB perpetrators faced no consequences due to fear of raising a personal grievance, among other reasons.

Placing unequal burdens on people based on their circumstances, couched in a concept of equal treatment for all, was described by Anatole France (1894) in his novel *'The Red Lily'*; he wrote, "The law, in its majestic equality, forbids the rich as well as the poor to sleep under bridges, to beg in the streets, and to steal their bread" (France, 1894, as cited in Sepielli, 2013, p. 673).

Inconsistency - Understanding that a Lack of Policy Enforcement and Consistent Application Reduces Equity and Effectiveness

As with the previous theme, many elements within the *Inconsistency* theme also appeared in the rapid literature review findings. However, the literature has not captured the substantial harm individuals experience due to weak enforcement and inconsistency. Participants identified specific concerns—including conflicts of interest, adversarial processes, and limited transparency (see Appendix S)—that signal risks to the consistent application of policy. Identifying these issues enables organisations to design context-specific mitigations and advances the recognition of broader inconsistencies at individual, policy, or organisational levels that warrant systemic intervention. Just as effective DHB policies require alignment with related interventions (Becton et al., 2017; Berlingieri, 2015; Magee et al., 2014), individual policy components must be coordinated to create a holistic response. The factors identified here contribute to primary, secondary, and tertiary strategies across individual, job, and organisational levels, providing for the development of an integrated DHB policy consistent with Leka et al.'s (2008) framework.

Understanding the factors that reduce consistent policy application at individual and organisational levels enables the development of targeted mitigation strategies. Many of the factors that undermine policy consistency span individual, job, and organisational domains, as outlined by Leka, Vartia, et al. (2008). Rather than forcing the limiting factors into rigid categories, it is more helpful to determine whether they stem from individual behaviours or organisational conditions. Clarifying their origin reduces the risk of fundamental attribution error, which can lead to misplaced blame and undermine subsequent mitigation efforts.

Fundamental attribution error is “the tendency for attributers to underestimate the impact of situational factors and to overestimate the role of dispositional factors in controlling behaviour” (Ross, 1977, p. 183). This largely unconscious willingness to ignore overwhelming evidence that situational contexts influenced behaviour, while blaming an individual for negative events or outcomes, can have serious and damaging consequences (Berry & Frederickson, 2015; Holden, 2009; Hooper et al., 2015). While the link between an individual and their actions is generally visible, contributing events, context, and relevant cultural norms are equally influential, but often not visible (Paul, 2021). For factors influencing inconsistent DHB policy application, fundamental attribution error can lead to policy inconsistencies being attributed to individuals rather than to issues within the policy or the surrounding environment. Incorrectly attributing person-centred failings to policy or organisational-level flaws means person-centred mitigations are destined to fail by targeting the wrong causal factor (Gyekye, 2010; Holden, 2009). Misaligned interventions will not only be ineffective, but their failure is also likely to reinforce individual blame, allowing organisations to abdicate responsibility for their own failings while blaming DHB targets for the abuse they suffer. The link between attribution errors and workplace safety has been highlighted since the 1990s, reinforcing its relevance to the current study. DeJoy (1994) stated that attribution errors “are at the very heart of workplace safety management” (p. 3), with safety management often driven more by attributions than valid causes. These attributions frequently blame the individual (Dekker, 2001; Gyekye, 2010). The tendency to attribute personal and internal characteristics of subordinates as causal factors over systemic or organisational flaws (Gyekye, 2010) leads to workplace DHB being incorrectly individualised and labelled as dyadic conflict (Zedlacher & Snowden, 2013). The incorrect attribution of blame and responsibility for DHB onto individuals leads to interventions being focused at that level when system or organisational issues require solutions aimed at system or organisational levels (Holden, 2009).

Implications for Practice. The value of the *Inconsistency* interview theme is that it identifies factors that undermine consistent DHB policy application, including individual, policy, and organisational factors. This outcome circumvents many of the issues that the fundamental attribution error can cause. The *Inconsistency* theme clearly identified the factors that compromise the application of consistency policies, enabling appropriate mitigation actions to be developed and implemented. Targeting factors that

compromise consistency at the correct level enables consistent policy application, improving policy equity and effectiveness.

Understanding How a Lack of Clarity and Limited Policy Detail Impacts DHB Policy Equity and Effectiveness

This theme identified that *the lack of clarity* and detail in DHB policies sets the conditions for inequitable and inconsistent policy application. It extends beyond clarity within the policy document itself and into its supporting components and processes. For example, many organisations, including NZDF, have specific guidelines for conducting health and safety investigations, likely to be detailed beyond any DHB policy. However, research has consistently determined that an understanding of physical workplace hazards does not translate to understanding DHB situations (Bastick, 2014; MBIE, 2020; Osler, 2021). Additionally, the effective and equitable investigation of DHB situations requires investigators and anyone involved in the decision-making process to be suitably trained in conducting DHB-specific investigations (Hoel & Einarsen, 2020; Magee et al., 2014). If processes such as investigation requirements are not included in the DHB policy, they must still align with DHB best practice, or risk undermining the equity and effectiveness of the policy, regardless of how appropriate the policy may otherwise be. To avoid this issue, the *Lack of Clarity* theme requires that all DHB processes, including detailed training requirements, selection and training of individuals in support roles, and the development and implementation of structured, consistent DHB recording processes to enable evidence-based evaluation and the embedding of continuous improvement systems be clear and unambiguous.

Although agreement between the interview groups was significantly lower for the *Lack of Clarity* theme than for the *Inequity* and *Inconsistency* themes, it demonstrated the need for policies to be unambiguous within the policy areas highlighted in this theme and across all areas. Policy ambiguity arises when provisions allow multiple interpretations, leading to confusion and inconsistent outcomes (Fowler, 2023). Assumptions of universal compliance also create ambiguity, as policies may lack mechanisms to manage those who are not adhering to requirements (Chollete & Harrison, 2021). Even ostensibly clear policies may require additional context to ensure members understand and apply them as intended (Legler, 2023), with any misalignment between policy intent and organisational culture further exacerbating

ambiguity (Fowler, 2023). Because interpretation shapes implementation, policymakers should anticipate non-compliance and refine policies to minimise ambiguity. Doing so during development enhances both equity and effectiveness.

Both interview groups stressed the importance of robust support options, training, and consistent recording and evaluation, findings also reflected in the *Content* theme. The identification of appropriate support options, training requirements, and effective recording and policy evaluation across all data sources highlights their centrality to effective DHB policies. With resource allocation fundamental to successful policy implementation (Kotnik et al., 2020; Matland, 1995; Mthethwa, 2012; Shah, 2005), ensuring all elements are appropriately resourced is critical to a policy's success. Embedding training, support, recording, and evaluation requirements within a policy ensures they remain visible during implementation rather than being relegated to subsequent development or funding. Richards and Daley (2003) asserted that long-term change depends on writing evaluation processes into the policy, which equally applies to all other supporting functions.

The majority of findings within the *Lack of Clarity* theme duplicated the *Content* theme. Given the significant overlap between the two themes across both investigation methods, retaining *Lack of Clarity* as a separate theme did not provide additional explanatory benefit. Having already discussed the components of this theme that required additional explanation, this theme will be assimilated into the rapid literature review *Content* theme. Any further reference to this theme will relate to the amalgamated *Content* theme retained under the rapid literature review outcomes.

The Evolution of Inequity and Inconsistency into Social Equity

The pragmatist paradigm underpinning this research means it is insufficient to identify the need for equity and consistency in DHB policies. Pragmatism requires that knowledge generated through inquiry be used to drive meaningful social improvements (Goldkuhl, 2017). Accordingly, building an explanation for how the interview themes *Inequity* and *Inconsistency* are related must focus on a framework for action. The concept of social equity fulfils this requirement. Social equity is the process of ensuring equality of opportunity and outcome (Guy & McCandless, 2012; Norman-Major, 2023). It stems from a commitment to justice, fair treatment, and due process for all, regardless of position or resources (Gooden, 2015; McDonald III &

McCandless, 2025; Simms et al., 2020). While primarily investigated as a pillar of public administration alongside economy, efficiency, and effectiveness (Norman-Major, 2023; Svara & Brunet, 2005), the framework for advancing fair and equitable outcomes for all applies equally well to any organisation that champions social equity (Trudeau, 2018). In addition to equitable outcomes, social equity has evolved to include policy development processes and rulemaking (Guy & McCandless, 2012). Therefore, the use of a social equity foundation for organisations to develop DHB policies would provide a process with proven effectiveness for considering the findings from interview responses that reduce equity and effectiveness.

Social equity refers to the creation and maintenance of equality in both opportunity and outcomes (Guy & McCandless, 2012; Norman-Major, 2023). It operationalises commitments to justice, fair treatment, and due process. Social equity is achieved and assessed through four criteria: procedural fairness, distributional equity, process equity, and outcome disparities (Gooden, 2015; Norman-Major, 2023; Svara & Brunet, 2005). Procedural fairness evaluates the application of due process and eligibility criteria. Distributional equity examines differential access to services and how to ensure equal access. Process equity assesses the consistency of service quality across recipients. Lastly, outcome disparities address why unequal outcomes may persist despite procedural, distributional, and process equity requirements being met. More than the sum of these criteria, social equity must guide decision-making and policy development as it is “also a lens through which needs are identified and processes are grounded” (Guy & McCandless, 2012, p. S9).

Having identified social equity as an action framework to advance equity and consistency in DHB policies, its relationship with *Inequity* and *Inconsistency* still requires examination. Unlike the generative relationship between the *Context* and *Content* themes, the relationship between *Inequity* and *Inconsistency* is implicit and cyclical. The implicitness derives from analysing the elements incorporated within each of the themes and how they relate to and influence each other (Ritchie et al., 2013). For example, the rank, position, and power of DHB targets and perpetrators identified within the *Inequity* theme influence the extent of cronyism, which, in turn, contributes to inconsistent policy application. Cronyism, in turn, influences how DHB reports are managed, an equity-related factor. Building an explanation of this cyclical relationship requires an understanding that this influence operates at both macro and micro levels,

independently and collectively. While specific factors at the micro level may change with the context of the organisation involved, such as staff demographics, the mutually influential relationship at the thematic level will remain.

The cyclical relationship describes how inequities in DHB policies drive inconsistent policy application and how inconsistency results in further inequities. However, this insight alone does not fulfil the pragmatist requirement for action. Linking the *Inequity* and *Inconsistency* themes to social equity provides a mechanism for translating interview findings into action to develop more equitable and effective DHB policies. Social equity's four criteria offer this avenue (see Gooden, 2015; Norman-Major, 2023; Svava & Brunet, 2005). The *Inequity* theme aligns with and contributes to the social equity criteria of procedural fairness and process equity. Recognition that inconsistent application generates additional inequity and ineffectiveness relates to distributional equity and outcome disparities. These relationships are generative (Ohlsson, 2014), as each enhances the explanatory and practical value of the social equity criteria and embeds them within actionable policy development. The connections are presented in Figure 11.

Building an Amalgamated Thematic Explanation

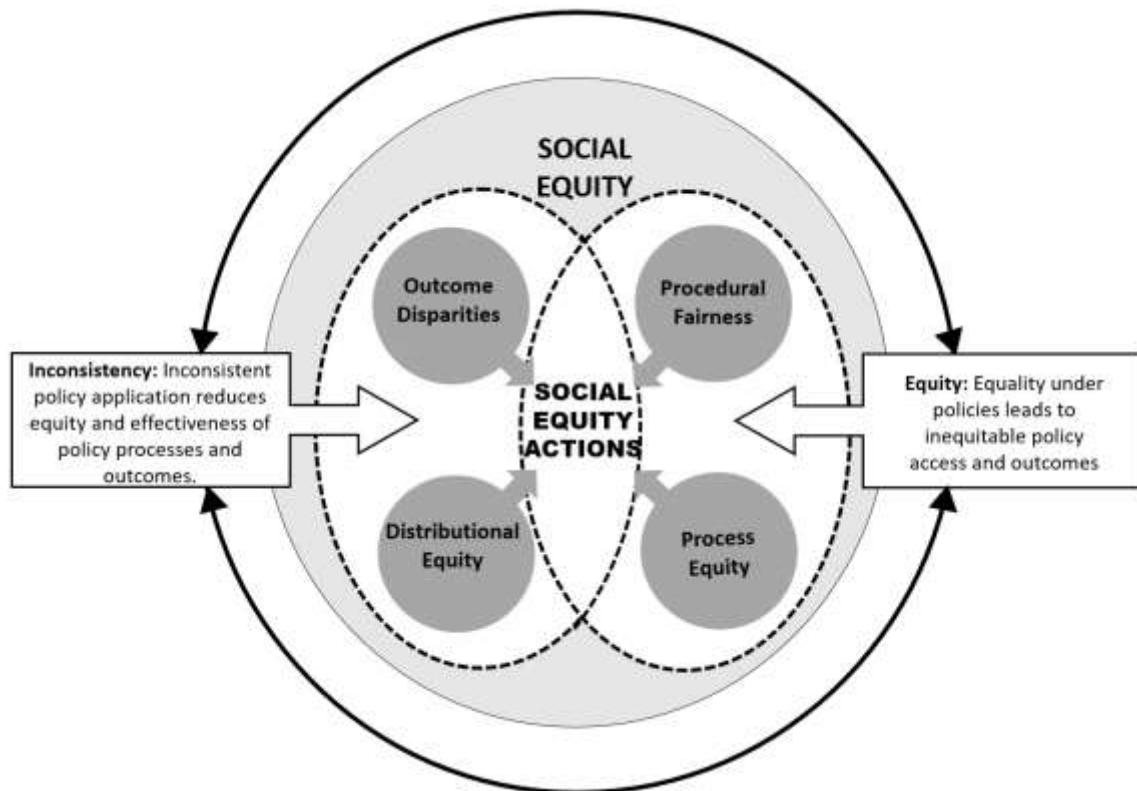
Building an amalgamated thematic explanation across all findings from the current research required two actions. The first was a methodological triangulation to ascertain the commonalities and divergences between the rapid literature review and semi-structured interview data. Second, was the requirement to build an explanation for how the themes from both data types related to each other to answer the primary research question, how can organisations tailor DHB policies to improve the equity and effectiveness of workplace DHB outcomes? The remainder of this section will discuss these two actions.

Amalgamating Themes

By combining the *Lack of Clarity* theme with that of *Content*, four distinct yet interrelated themes were generated to identify areas of difference and overlap. The themes were 1) *Context*, 2) *Inequity*, 3) *Inconsistency*, and 4) *Content*, which included findings pertaining to policy development processes. The meanings of the four themes and their findings remained consistent with those discussed previously in this chapter. The outcomes from the methodological triangulation, detailing agreement, dissonance, and

Figure 11.

Explanatory Relationships Between Semi-Structured Interview Themes and Social Equity.



Note. This diagram illustrates how the four elements of social equity fit within the current research themes of Inequity and Inconsistency, and how the two themes have a reciprocal influencing relationship.

silence across the data sets are described in Appendix U. How the amalgamated themes integrate to generate solutions to the primary research question of how organisations can tailor their DHB policies to improve the equity and effectiveness of workplace DHB outcomes is illustrated in Figure 7.

Where the Themes Agreed and Differed. Agreement or partial agreement was significant across the *Inequity*, *Inconsistency*, and *Content* themes. Similar agreement outcomes across the two triangulation processes indicated a consistent understanding of key issues related to DHB policies, as reflected in both independent research and interview participants' subjective experiences. This suggests that the findings from the semi-structured interviews and the rapid literature review were predominantly mutually reinforcing; that is, specific issues and considerations identified within DHB policy-related literature positively relate to and reflect the experiences of those who have engaged with NZDF's DHB policy. Concurrently, the experiences of targets, witnesses, and managers who have experienced the same policy

and its processes were validated and strengthened by the literature reviewed. The experiences shared by interview participants across both groups offer very real consequences for when organisations choose to disregard or minimise the guidance provided by DHB policy literature. The common structural and systemic issues identified across the *Inequity*, *Inconsistency*, and *Content* themes are not merely strategic or isolated considerations. The high level of agreement across the issues (highlighted in Appendix U) indicates that without mitigation these issues directly and adversely affect those affected by DHB and those who need DHB policy protections.

When one research data set is silent on a finding identified within another data set it can be considered problematic and a potential gap in the research data (Müller et al., 2024; Schweiger & Tomiak, 2023). Within the current analysis, findings where at least one data set was silent on a finding highlighted by another represented specialist of experience-based knowledge the other set or sets were not expected to possess. This made the silences explainable rather than highlighting a gap in data. The silences across all four themes of *Context*, *Content*, *Inequity*, and *Inconsistency* were explainable and unsurprising. The findings only identified from the rapid literature review pertained to external and industry influences on DHB and its management, and to specialist policy development and implementation processes. The lack of comment on these findings from interview participants was unsurprising and highlighted the need for specialist knowledge to be factored into DHB policy development processes. The silence from the literature on NZDF specific influences on equity and effectiveness highlights the importance of including organisation-specific analysis alongside policy-development expertise in the design of any DHB policy. These two distinct information sources cannot replace or replicate one another. They are each critical to the policy development process, but together can generate outcomes that surpass what each element could achieve independently.

Explaining Explanations Linking the Amalgamated Themes

Understanding how the four remaining themes—*Context*, *Content*, *Inequity*, and *Inconsistency*—relate to each other to advance the development of more equitable and effective DHB policies changed the focus of the themes from identifying deficiencies to rectifying them. This development of thematic understanding into the application of processes is the centre of what identifies this research as original and contributing to

current knowledge in this subject area. It was, therefore, appropriate to ensure the amalgamated theme names reflected this positive perspective. Thus, two of the themes were renamed. From this point on the amalgamated themes will be referred to as *Context*, *Content*, *Equity*, and *Consistency* unless specifically referring to them as separate themes before all four were amalgamated.

The four amalgamated themes—*Context*, *Content*, *Equity*, and *Consistency*—must be understood before building an explanation of their interrelationships essential to answering the primary research question. Identifying how organisations can tailor DHB policies to their specific environments requires more than listing components to include in the policy document itself. It requires that organisations understand their own context, how it influences DHB, and how policy components influence one another while also affecting the level of equity and effectiveness a policy can achieve. To build a tailored DHB policy that delivers equitable and effective outcomes requires an understanding of how the four themes relate to and influence one another.

Developing a relational explanation to integrate the four themes from this research, rather than merely identifying and describing them, was critical to understanding how they influenced the primary research question (Staller, 2015). Having previously expanded the descriptions of each theme to interpret how the themes of *Context* and *Content* relate and how *Equity* and *Consistency* influence each other (Staller, 2015), resulted in integrating all four themes. Achieving this integration required identifying the direct relationship between *Context* and *Content* in the cyclical relationship between *Equity* and *Inconsistency* within their social equity framework. The integration confirmed two core relationships: 1) the relationship between *Context* and *Content* is generative, while 2) *Inequity* and *Inconsistency* have a cyclical relationship. Together, they inform a social equity approach to DHB policy design. The core relationships contribute to understanding how the themes link by each representing a schema of an amalgamated explanation, as discussed by Ohlsson (2014). The missing element was the relationship between the two thematic groupings and how that relationship provides the foundation for the development of equitable and effective workplace DHB policies.

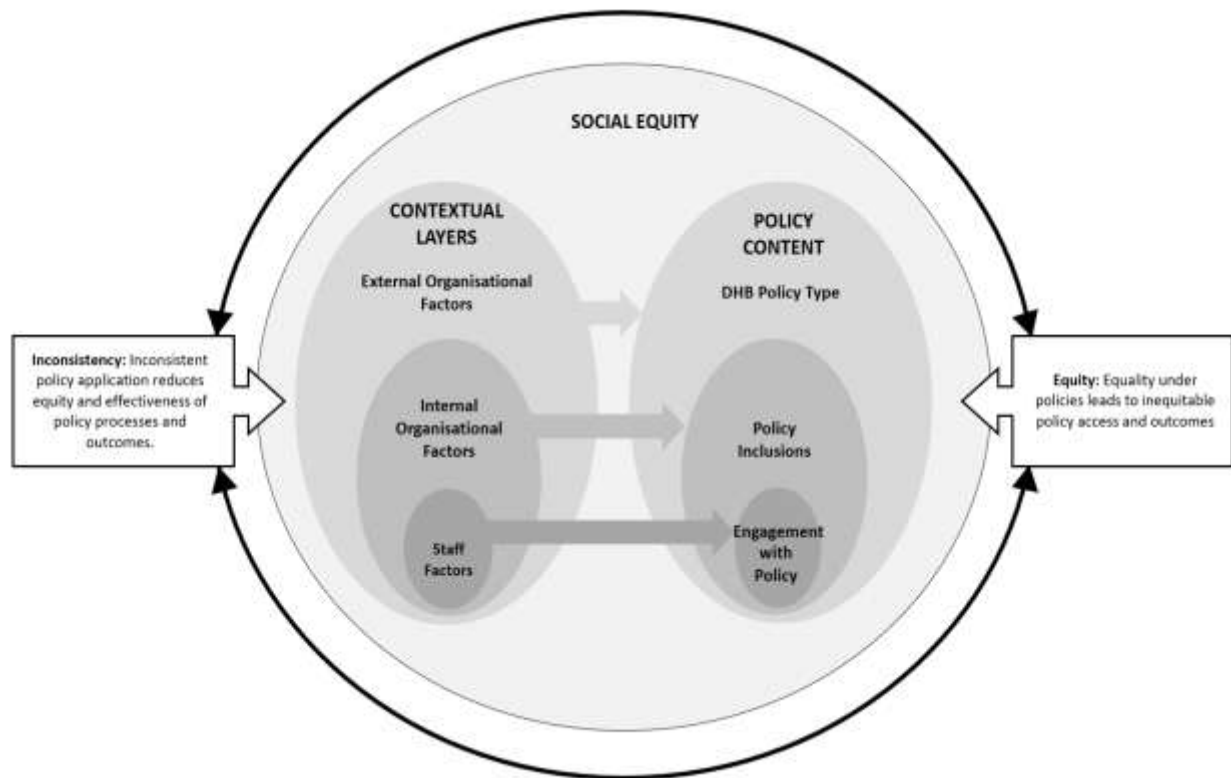
There is a substantial degree of interconnectedness between the two thematic groupings due to the common subject matter of DHB policies (Ritchie et al., 2013). This connectedness is further enhanced by

the overlap between findings previously identified in the *Equity* and *Consistency* themes and those in the *Context* and *Content* themes. However, identifying a particular finding in one dataset that is replicated in another does not explain or determine its presence. It only indicates that they co-exist (Ritchie et al., 2013). This coexistence explains how DHB policies can be developed without a contextual understanding of the organisation or while ignoring a social equity approach, even though both actions could be developed without such a contextual understanding and both support equitable and effective DHB policy outcomes. As such, applying a contextual understanding or a social equity approach to enhance equitable and effective DHB policies requires organisations to take additional deliberate steps to integrate these approaches into their standard policy development processes. Although the relationship between the thematic groupings is neither generative nor direct, it is synergistic with each thematic grouping advancing the development of the other. Together, they create a DHB policy approach in which the whole is far greater than the sum of its parts. The way each thematic element influences and enhances the others creates an emergent process for developing DHB policies that would be less equitable or effective if any one part were missing. The relationships are depicted in Figure 12.

While the largely generative relationship identified between *Context* and *Content* remains, the remaining relationships between *Equity* and *Consistency* embedded in social equity and *Context* and *Content* are those of influence, not cause. Undertaking an organisational contextual analysis through the lens of social equity can help identify elements that unintentionally discriminate against particular member groups. Similarly, taking a social equity approach to developing policy and supporting processes, rather than striving for equality, can highlight process elements that limit access to the policy and effective resolution for some members. While directly influencing contextual analysis and policy development, understanding where inequity resides within the organisation allows for the mitigation of policy gaps, insufficient detail, and the lack of embedded policy oversight processes that maintain inconsistent policy application. This mitigation further reduces policy-based inequities by removing opportunities for inconsistent, individual-value-based application of the policy by those responsible for managing DHB situations and resolution processes. Each of the stated policy development steps provides another avenue for organisations to identify policy elements and processes that could reduce equity in access and

Figure 12.

Policy Elements to Support an Equitable and Effective DHB Policy.



Note. Combining Figures 9 and 11, Figure 12 represents the interplay between the amalgamated themes of Context and Content with Equity and Consistency. It illustrates how the generative relationship between Context and Content remains but is now nested within a social equity framework focused on resolving equity and consistency issues within DHB policies.

outcomes, ultimately improving DHB policy effectiveness. It is these policy components that provide the answer to the research question of which policy elements should be considered when developing seeking to develop an equitable and effective DHB policy.

Summary

This chapter demonstrated how organisational context, policy content, stakeholder perspectives, and actions to reduce inconsistency interact to shape DHB policy equity and effectiveness. Analysing the deep generative relationship between understanding an organisation's context and developing DHB policy content identified this relationship as a critical factor in DHB policy development. The relationship, however, was not static; it ranged from explicit when considering external contextual influences to more implicit when identifying internal organisational factors, such as staff demographics. The individual findings from the *Context* and *Content* themes, in conjunction with the established relationship between the two,

provided sufficient knowledge to answer the core question—as an element of the primary research question—what policy components contribute to an appropriate, effective, and consistent organisational policy for workplace DHB?

The triangulated data from the interview findings identified a high level of agreement across both interview groups. Where there was dissonance or silence, this could be explained and accounted for in terms of the experiences anticipated under the NZDF DHB policy. For example, it was unsurprising that DHB targets were silent on NZDF's operational needs and support for managers. Likewise, it was not expected that managers could validly comment on the impact that DHB reports not being actioned had on targets, or on how the NZDF structure worked against them. Accordingly, silences could be understood as arising from the differing experiences of each group, rather than from participants being excluded from having their experiences heard. Analysing the findings revealed overlaps between the interview theme *Lack of Clarity* and the *Content* theme, leading to the assimilation of the former into the latter. Applying a pragmatist perspective to the remaining two themes, *Inequity* and *Inconsistency*, led to interpreting them within the more action-oriented construct of social equity and to considering how this could influence DHB policy development. Within a social equity approach, the themes of *Inequity* and *Inconsistency* provided specific actions that organisations could take to tailor workplace DHB policies to their own context, thereby addressing the supplementary element of the primary research question: which organisational factors need to be considered when tailoring DHB policies?

Interpreting how the amalgamated themes of *Context*, *Content*, *Equity*, and *Consistency* interacted to develop more equitable and effective DHB policies, the primary research question, identified largely co-existent but significantly influential relationships. It confirmed that the components of organisational contextual understanding, integrated with a social equity approach to DHB policy development, are critical for the development of equitable and effective DHB policies. Despite identifying the critical function the two components have in advancing equity and effectiveness in workplace DHB outcomes, the coexistence rather than generative or causal links between them makes it easy for organisations to ignore them. DHB policies can readily be developed and implemented without either a contextual understanding or a social equity approach. The current research provides a clear answer to the primary question of how

organisations can tailor their DHB policies to improve equitable and effective outcomes. However, unless organisations deliberately incorporate contextual understandings and social equity into their policy development processes, such improvements are unlikely to occur.

Chapter 10: Discussion and Research Contributions

Introduction

The purpose of this research was to identify policy components to enable organisations to develop discrimination, harassment, and bullying (DHB) policies tailored to individual organisational contexts to achieve equitable and effective outcomes. In doing so, organisations can be better placed to ensure equitable access to DHB policy protections for all organisation members, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of their policies. This chapter first analyses how the current research has addressed the primary research question regarding how organisations can tailor DHB policies to be more equitable and effective. In addition to providing actionable steps organisations can apply to assist in developing equitable and effective DHB policies tailored to their environments, this research makes a number of practical and theoretical contributions to the body of knowledge surrounding workplace DHB policy development. The original contributions from this research will be presented before discussing the limitations of the research and areas for future research.

How the Findings Strengthen the Importance of this Research Area

This study demonstrates that equity and effectiveness in DHB policies depend on contextual tailoring and robust accountability mechanisms. The current research highlighted the importance of DHB policies being tailored to an organisation's unique contextual environment as a starting point for developing equitable and effective policies to address workplace DHB. From there, the experiences of those who had engaged with DHB policies highlighted the critical need to identify and mitigate factors that enabled or failed to eliminate opportunities for inequities and inconsistencies within the policy and its supporting processes. The research outcomes advance and expand established knowledge and best practices surrounding workplace DHB policies, thereby making an original contribution to the DHB policy literature. These outcomes explain how an organisation's context influences policy content, a new and original concept, enabling processes to translate contextual knowledge into DHB policy components. Similarly, generating the cyclical relationship between inequities and inconsistencies and the need to mitigate both determined this an essential foundation for policy improvement. Establishing accountability and governance

mechanisms to oversee policy application offers actionable steps organisations can take to enhance the fairness and effectiveness of outcomes.

The policy development elements identified in this research assist in mitigating the high occurrence of workplace DHB, which has been investigated and confirmed in research worldwide (Bartlett & Bartlett, 2011; Bentley et al., 2012; Cooper-Thomas et al., 2014; S. Einarsen et al., 2003; Gardner, O'Driscoll, et al., 2013; Magee et al., 2014; Salin, 2009). Recent New Zealand research indicates that one in five workers reported experiencing bullying alone each year (Human Rights Commission, 2022; Ministry of Business, Innovation, and Employment (MBIE), 2020; WorkSafe NZ, 2019), with 40% of workers reporting being bullied at some point in their working lives (Human Rights Commission, 2022). New Zealand's bullying rates, excluding harassment and discrimination, have been reported as higher than those in comparable countries (MBIE, 2020; WorkSafe NZ, 2019). The adverse impact DHB has on individuals, workplaces, and whole organisations has received considerable research attention, as have potential interventions and actions to address and resolve this behaviour and its effects (Giga et al., 2008; Jones et al., 2017; Pelletier, 2016; Porath & Pearson, 2013). DHB policies create the foundation for the majority of interventions, and are accepted as a vital element of an organisation's DHB prevention and resolution programme (Ferris et al., 2021; Rayner & Lewis, 2010).

This research identified three gaps in current DHB policy development processes and regulatory requirements that enabled inequitable and ineffective DHB policies to be developed and implemented. First, was the disconnect between organisational context and DHB policy content. Second, was the inability to identify and mitigate organisational factors that enabled inequity and inconsistency in DHB policy application and outcomes. Finally, while the absence of a DHB policy can mean employees believe their organisation accepts or condones DHB (Ritzman, 2016), a poorly fitting, inequitable, and inconsistently applied policy will likely cause more harm than it prevents (Brinkley, 2019; Whitaker & Niolon, 2009), compounding the harm DHB causes to both individuals and the organisation as a whole. Conversely, tailoring DHB policies to the context and culture of an individual organisation is accepted as being standard practice to increase the likelihood that such policies will be effective at preventing and resolving DHB (Magee et al., 2014; Vartia & Leka, 2011; WorkSafe NZ, 2019; Zapf & Vartia, 2020). By identifying pragmatic

processes and options to assist organisations in developing tailored DHB policies, this research improves the capacity to develop contextually appropriate, equitable, and consistently applied policies. Ultimately, this reduces harm to individuals caused by DHB and improves organisational outputs. The significance of this research lies in the processes identified to assist organisations to achieve equitable and effective DHB policies.

Despite the importance of organisational DHB policies being highlighted by many regulatory bodies (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 1999; Magee et al., 2014; WorkSafe NZ, 2014), the current research determined that it was more important for those impacted by DHB that they have an equitable and effective way to resolve the DHB. This requires that DHB policies not be compliant with regulations merely by existing; but must measurably resolve DHB in a manner that acknowledges the experiences and victimisation DHB targets face. However, there appears to be a disconnect between the acceptance of workplace DHB policies as a key element for preventing and resolving DHB, and readily available processes to assist organisations in developing tailored, equitable, and effective approaches. This gap is further entrenched by a perceived inability of regulatory bodies to assess the effectiveness of DHB policies. These deficiencies allow organisations to meet regulatory compliance requirements through poorly tailored or standardised DHB policies, without ensuring that their policies are equitable or effective.

Appropriateness of Current Research Design

The current research advances the importance of context in developing options to address social issues, in this case, workplace DHB. It determined that organisational context influences DHB policy content and assisted in identifying areas of potential inequity. Both outcomes align with pragmatist research frameworks (Kaushik & Walsh, 2019; MacMullan, 2022; Morgan, 2014a) and that pragmatist knowledge cannot be separated from the context of the issue being investigated (Glasgow, 2013; Morgan, 2014). Additionally, workplace DHB is a social issue as it negatively impacts both individuals and the well-being of larger groups within society (Kulik, 2025); therefore, investigating policy-based options to improve workplace DHB outcomes fits within a classical pragmatism paradigm (Dewey, 1938; Turyahikayo, 2021). The value and originality of the current research lie in the understanding and processes it generates to enable organisations to develop equitable and effective workplace DHB policies that can improve and

enhance the management of DHB. While meeting the requirement for pragmatist research to generate practical and positive change within the relevant social contexts (Biesenthal, 2014; Dewey, 1938; Kelly & Cordeiro, 2020), it requires that responses to new actions resulting from research outcomes be evaluated before subsequent action is taken (Kelly & Cordeiro, 2020; Maarouf, 2019).

The current research findings expand on the importance of organisational context when developing DHB policies. These findings identify the need to understand the multiple, intersecting contexts within an organisation, including power dynamics, minority group membership, and other inequalities that contribute to systemic inequities as a critical element of DHB policy development. The importance of intersectionality was crucial to understanding as it highlights the influence of individual realities within an organisational context when developing DHB policy; thus, ensuring that policies do not unintentionally provide some employee groups more protection than others. The pragmatist perspective that interventions to address social issues must be dependent on the specific context (Glasgow, 2013; Morgan, 2014a) means there can be no universal or standardised policy to address workplace DHB effectively across all organisations. To expect this universality invites policy outcomes that are less effective and can cause harm (Hobfoll et al., 2008; Whitaker & Nolon, 2009).

The complexity within the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) as a military organisation within wider New Zealand society provided an opportunity to identify and analyse more factors that could influence the development of tailored, equitable, and effective DHB policies than would likely be found in any other single organisation. While it is unlikely that many organisations will face all the contextual factors or organisational complexity that affect DHB within NZDF, the range of identified factors means that no organisation is likely to find no relevance to the outcomes of this study. For example, while few organisations have formal rank structures, power imbalances, and the ability to influence policy application through cronyism, lack of knowledge or self-interest can exist wherever one person holds authority over another. The lack of effective accountability and governance mechanisms for managing DHB within NZDF is another clear lesson for all organisations. The richness of data derived from the complexity of the NZDF validated its use as the subject of this embedded case study. For the NZDF itself, while its complexity will always make change more difficult, numerous changes could be made to protect its members from DHB

while holding those responsible to account. Specific issues have been raised elsewhere in this research. Still, significant improvements could be made by broadening reporting options and the definitions of DHB, as it currently applies, which results in large amounts of DHB going unreported. The inconsistent and biased application of its DHB policy could be reduced by comprehensive DHB recording processes, and the accountability and governance mechanisms mentioned previously.

The overall research design enabled me to successfully answer the identified research questions. Amalgamating the findings and themes from this research provided data to further the understanding of which policy components contribute to the development of equitable and effective DHB policies, and how those elements integrate with one another. The current results aligned with best practices identified in the literature as a start point before offering advanced and original guidance on how organisations can incorporate contextually appropriate and equitable practices into their DHB policies to ensure effective outcomes for DHB incidents. The collection of data from the diverse, and at times contradictory, sources included in this research determined that robust findings were generated to underpin the development of new DHB processes for tailored DHB policies.

Theoretical Contributions to Collective Knowledge

This research makes multifaceted contributions to the collective understanding of how to prevent and manage workplace DHB through policy development and implementation, and how to conduct research in this area. The new contributions offer both practical implications and theoretical developments to advance the development of equitable and effective DHB policies. The integration of findings from the rapid literature review with the highly personal and impactful experiences of those who have engaged with an organisational DHB policy is not only an original research design, but identified clear developmental steps that contribute to effective policy development. More importantly, however, is the underlying finding that equity cannot be achieved without a deep contextual understanding. This contextual understanding applied within a social equity approach generates the identification of multiple factors that undermine equitable access to protections and effective outcomes under a DHB policy. Developing processes to further the mitigation of policy elements that lead to inequity, this research determined that effectiveness cannot be achieved without robust accountability measures. Accordingly, unless regulatory requirements expand to

mandate context-specific DHB policies with clear accountability and governance mechanisms, compliance will not produce effective policies. Underpinning these conclusions, the current research developed two theoretical contributions to advance the development of equitable and effective DHB policies. The first contribution is the generation of a socioecological framework, adaptable to different organisations and their environments, to provide a structure for a robust contextual analysis. The second determined how current DHB regulatory requirements limit organisational DHB policy effectiveness.

Contribution 1. An Original Methodology for Undertaking Workplace DHB Research

This research makes an original contribution to research design in the area of workplace DHB by integrating three sources of evidence that have not previously been examined together: (1) a rapid review establishing best practice criteria for equitable and effective DHB policies, (2) the lived experiences of targets who attempted to use the NZDF DHB policy, and (3) the perspectives of managers responsible for interpreting and applying that same policy. By triangulating all three datasets, the study provides the first empirically grounded assessment of how organisational DHB policies perform when measured simultaneously against best practice standards and the experiences of both policy users and policy implementers.

This approach generates new theoretical and practical insights into why DHB policies succeed or fail, determines the organisational conditions required for equitable outcomes, and generates a novel framework for tailoring DHB policies to specific organisational contexts that was not previously available in the literature. The triangulation of the three evidence sources creates a new explanatory framework for understanding DHB policy effectiveness by advancing understanding of why DHB policies succeed or fail; how policy design interacts with organisational context; how equity is produced or undermined through policy processes; and the organisational conditions required for consistent, fair DHB policy outcomes.

Contribution 2. The Application of Socioecological Frameworks to Support Contextual Understanding

As this research has identified, an in-depth understanding of both internal and external contexts is required before a tailored, equitable, and effective DHB policy can be developed. The requirement to tailor DHB policies to the environment they will operate within has been evidenced and endorsed by international research (Escartín, 2016; Magee et al., 2014; Ritzman, 2016; Vartia & Leka, 2011; Zapf & Vartia, 2020); professional bodies (Employment NZ, 2024); and regulatory agencies (Krug et al., 2002; Safe Work

Australia, 2022; Standing Committee on Education and Employment (SCEE), 2012; WorkSafe NZ, 2019).

Despite widespread acceptance of this need, practical frameworks for systematically developing contextual understanding remain scarce. A pragmatist solution to this deficiency demands a functional process to guide organisations through a process to develop a deep contextual understanding of their internal and external environments. The current research developed a socioecological model adapted for military and mixed employment environments. Applying a socioecological approach to creating contextual understanding advances a framework to identify areas that require further investigation or may highlight potential inequities in the policy development and implementation processes. The ability of organisations to apply the same socioecological framework beyond DHB policy development processes further advances its pragmatist utility as it offers broader opportunities to improve their culture and, ultimately, the health and safety of their members.

Tailored Socioecological Models for DHB. Socioecological approaches advance the understanding of an organisation's social and professional structure and how members interact with and are influenced by its environment and each other. Socioecological models are the accepted standard for harm prevention interventions (Krug et al., 2002). These models determine that the start point for understanding that violence of any form, including DHB, results from "the complex interplay of individual, relationship, social, cultural and environmental factors" (Krug et al., 2002, p. 12). Each factor plays a contributing role in the understanding of the context an organisation operates within. The model itself (Bronfenbrenner, 1977) depicts nested layers of influence radiating from the individual through familial, community, and broader societal levels. Surrounding the internal layers, the final layer encompasses temporal influences that evolve, including sociohistorical conditions and life-changing events. Overall, socioecological models provide a framework to integrate individuals into their social environments (Reilly & Gravdal, 2012), workplaces are such an environment.

Given that workplace environments are recognised as enabling DHB (Bentley et al., 2012; Hoel & Beale, 2006; Hutchinson, 2012; Magee et al., 2014), this behaviour can be effectively framed by applying an ecological perspective (Johnson, 2011). To create a foundation for the development of a contextually appropriate DHB policy, any such socioecological framework must reflect the nature of DHB and its specific

organisational context. Bronfenbrenner's initial socioecological framework has been extensively applied since its inception and variations tailored to multiple issues and environments (Johnson, 2011), including investigating improvements to US soldier training (Walker, 2016), pro-environment behaviour in rural Chinese villages (Sun et al., 2024), and school-level cannabis use (Butler et al., 2022). While identifying a single framework to meet all organisational requirements may be difficult, by amalgamating socioecological frameworks appropriate to the specific situation, organisations can develop an approach to generate a deeper understanding of DHB within their own context. To illustrate this pragmatic process, I will again use NZDF as a case study to develop an amalgamated socioecological framework.

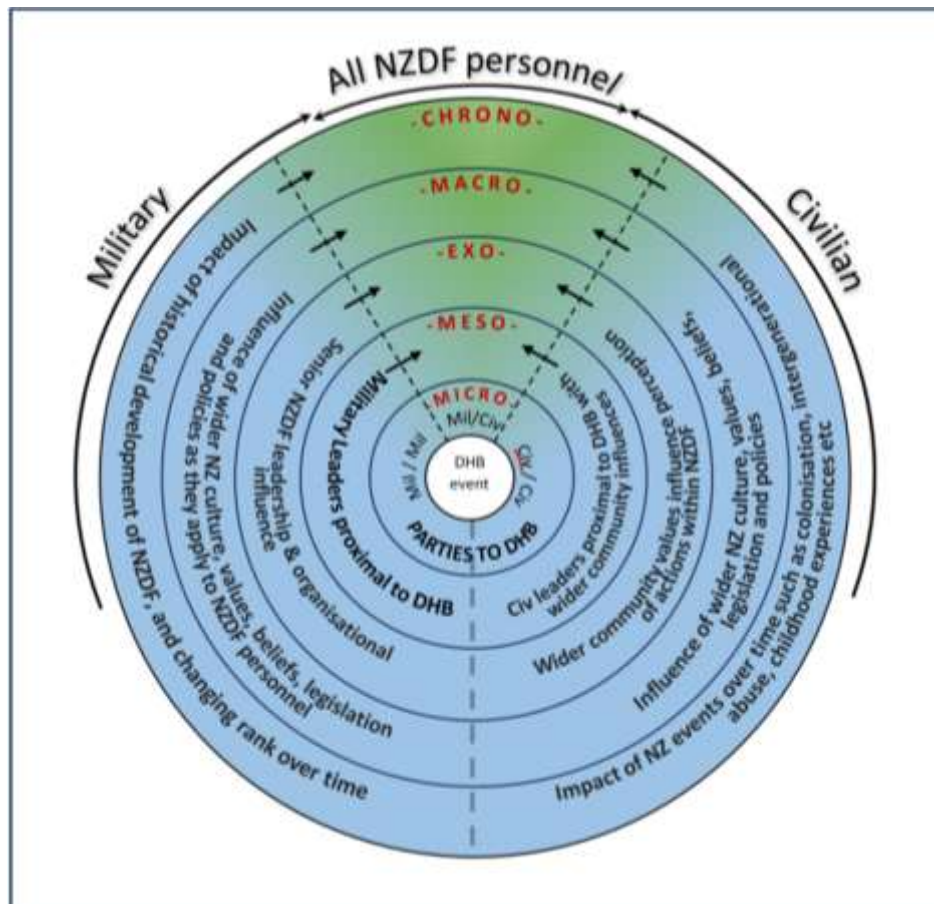
Any socioecological model to assist in understanding DHB within NZDF and developing an effective policy within a suite of interventions must integrate multiple elements. Contextual elements would include New Zealand's cultural environment, a model of the DHB, and the military context. While no extant socioecological framework was identified that specifically addressed DHB within a New Zealand military organisation, I identified separate frameworks that addressed each element. The identified frameworks included one to address the broader New Zealand cultural context (Auckland City Council et al., 2016), Johnson's (2011) Socioecological framework to describe bullying, and three frameworks that addressed differing military contexts (Department of Defense, 2014; Moorhead, 2020; Walker, 2016). Integrating elements of these socioecological frameworks with established NZDF contextual considerations led to the development of a socioecological model that represents DHB within the NZDF. This model, depicted in Figure 13, places the DHB event at the centre, with influences radiating from it depending on the parties' status as either military or civilian NZDF personnel. This demonstrates the complexity of DHB within NZDF and other organisations with multiple employee groups, and the multiple influences that impact DHB behaviour and its resolution. See Appendix V for a detailed explanation of the NZDF socioecological model.

Using the socioecological model illustrated in Figure 13, any organisational DHB policy would sit within the Exo/Community level. While an organisational policy, it be strongly influenced by wider New Zealand society, from both military and non-military perspectives, including the differing legislative status each group holds. Simultaneously, any policy must address DHB within NZDF in a manner that is seen to be effective and equitable for military and non-military personnel, whether they are targets, witnesses, or

alleged perpetrators. This places any such policy not only within the Exo/Community level, but within the 'All NZDF personnel' sector of the model, necessitating a balancing of military and non-military influences.

Figure 13.

A Socioecological Model of DHB in NZDF.



Note. Based on Bronfenbrenner's (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, 1979) socioecological framework, this diagram illustrates the socioecological layers within the NZDF, how they influence incidents of DHB, and how that influence changes across military and non-military staff.

While providing a framework for understanding the organisational contexts that affect DHB, this model can place any adverse behaviour at its centre. With this flexibility, it is possible to overlay other inappropriate workplace behaviours, such as drug or alcohol misuse, using the same model to effectively map targeted primary, secondary, or tertiary-level interventions integrated with organisational, job or individual-focused actions, and to align them with other planned interventions across the organisation.

While this socioecological model was developed specifically for NZDF, the tailoring process could readily be applied to any organisation. It would require a generalised understanding of the organisation

under review to develop initial assessment and the application of appropriate frameworks to start the process. While this particular socioecological model depicts NZDF's environment specific to DHB, a start-point for refocussing it to any other organisation or issue would be identifying what the issue is that requires investigation, mitigation, or intervention, and place this at the centre.

1. Identify key groups within an organisation where considerations such as differing cultures, understandings, work conditions, or legislation can mean the identified issue is interpreted differently or impacts the groups differently.
2. Identify what factors influence each group at each level of the socioecological framework. Influences may differ or be similar for each group including social, community and organisational factors.
3. Identify and understand the influence external factors may have on the issue being investigated and the different groups within an organisation; for instance, legislation, changing societal expectations, or historical influences.
4. Ensure that no factor is considered in isolation but that potential influences are investigated across all adjacent factors, socioecological layers, and groups.

By applying a tailored socioecological framework to examine similarities and differences among employee groups and how internal and external influences affect them differently, organisations are better positioned to identify systemic inequities. Recognising potential and actual inequities in the management and resolution of DHB is the first step toward removing or mitigating them. Resolving these inequities then sets the conditions to improve the overall equity and effectiveness of the final policy.

Contribution 3. Current Regulatory Requirements Limit DHB Policy Effectiveness

Both within New Zealand and internationally, workplace DHB has been identified as a psychosocial hazard (Ferris et al., 2021; International Labour Organisation (ILO), 2020; MBIE, 2020; WorkSafe NZ, 2019). As such, the harm caused by DHB is increasingly required to be managed through health and safety legislation and regulatory bodies (Lippel & Cox, 2021; MBIE, 2020; SCEE, 2012; WorkSafe NZ, 2017). Baldwin (1990) stated that "in spite of statutes, regulations and codes ... discrimination still takes place and many workplaces remain unsafe". Legislation protecting against psychosocial workplace hazards with regulatory bodies to

enforce compliance has been implemented across the world since Baldwin's statement (Chan-Mok et al., 2014; Lippel & Cox, 2021); yet, the efficacy of enforcement bodies has been regularly challenged for an inability to bring about the reduction in psychosocial harm, such as DHB, that has been expected (Chan-Mok et al., 2014; D'Cruz et al., 2019; Hoel & Einarsen, 2010). This has often been attributed to the complex nature of DHB (Baldwin, 1990), the attempt to treat and regulate DHB the same as physical health and safety issues (Chan-Mok et al., 2014; Hoel & Einarsen, 2010), the inability to address the underlying causes of the behaviour (D'Cruz et al., 2019), and the lack of inspectors and other regulatory staff specially trained in workplace DHB issues (Squelch & Guthrie, 2012).

Organisational-level policies are crucial to prevent and address DHB and other adverse workplace behaviours (Cooper-Thomas et al., 2013; Hodgins et al., 2020; SCEE, 2012). Thus, regulatory processes must be capable of ensuring that such policies are equitable, effective, and do not reinforce discriminatory practices. Benefits from DHB policies can only be realised when they are regularly updated and mitigate limiting factors such as inconsistent policy application, trivialisation of DHB, and any lack of policy awareness (Hodgins et al., 2020; McLinton, 2014). If regulatory bodies cannot measure the efficacy of workplace DHB policies, organisations can meet minimum compliance requirements while avoiding responsibility for implementing robust, measurable, and effective DHB policies (Hodgins et al., 2020).

The current research indicates that having a DHB policy alone is insufficient. An ill-fitting policy that fails to address inequities in access and protections does not reduce or resolve DHB; instead, it risks creating further harm (Whitaker & Nolon, 2009). Two factors undermine the assumption simply having a DHB policy will deliver positive outcomes. First, while templated policy options are readily available, the quality varies considerably (Richards & Daley, 2003). They also risk poor alignment to an organisation's environment and context (Magee et al., 2014; Vartia & Leka, 2011; Zapf & Vartia, 2020). Second is the persistent gap between policy and practice; even a well-designed DHB policy will fail expectations without robust implementation, accountability, and consistency measures (Leka, Aditya, et al., 2008). Accordingly, requiring organisations to confirm they have a DHB policy should be the starting point for regulatory compliance rather than the conclusion. Without additional measures, merely having a DHB policy offers limited benefit to those affected by DHB and does not guarantee equitable protections or outcomes.

Currently, New Zealand's health and safety regulatory body, WorkSafe NZ, has little publicly available information on its capacity to assess the efficacy of workplace DHB policies. Their inspection policy makes no mention of DHB or any other psychosocial harm (WorkSafe NZ, 2016). A '*Workplace features assessment tool*' is provided to assess how effectively workplaces address bullying. It asks if there is a policy, are bullying risks are assessed, did stakeholder engagement occurred, and is the policy followed and reviewed (WorkSafe NZ, n.d.). The current research advances the findings identified by the rapid literature review, determining that minimal regulatory provisions are insufficient to ensure effective DHB policies. Regulatory compliance activities to ameliorate the risk of both physical and psychosocial harm caused by DHB should, at a minimum, include:

- a. Assessment that the implemented policy addresses the contextual environment of the organisation (Hutchinson, 2012; Magee et al., 2014; Rayner & Lewis, 2010; Salin, 2008; Vartia & Leka, 2011);
- b. Appropriate policy implementation processes (Caponecchia & Wyatt, 2011; Magee et al., 2014; Zapf & Vartia, 2020);
- c. Confirmation that identified inequities have been addressed within the policy and its procedures (Berlingieri, 2015; ILO, 2020; MBIE, 2020);
- d. The establishment of accountability and governance procedures to ensure consistent and appropriate policy application (Osler, 2021; Pearson & Porath, 2005; Roehling, 2020); and
- e. Effective DHB data recording and evaluation processes to determine continuous improvement policy amendments (Leka, Aditya, et al. Ferris et al., 2021; 2008; Magee et al., 2014; Zapf & Vartia, 2020).

One of the key strengths of workplace health and safety legislation is the incentive it provides for organisations to implement effective policies to prevent and address DHB (Mollison, 2016). However, this incentive translates into action only when clear, measurable steps exist to determine whether a policy is effective. If ineffective policies face no consequences, the regulatory requirement to have a policy loses its capacity to drive positive change, as reduced regulatory oversight has been shown to result in poorer outcomes and greater efforts to avoid compliance (D'Cruz et al., 2019). Establishing a more comprehensive

system for assessing DHB policy effectiveness would require regulatory and compliance agencies to develop consistent and readily applicable evaluation measures. While a level of flexibility would be necessary to accommodate organisations' differing needs, several policy issues remain consistent and could serve as the basis for an assessment framework. This enhanced level of engagement by regulatory and compliance agencies is significant, given the study's finding that achieving a contextually appropriate DHB policy grounded in a social equity approach requires greater resources and organisational commitment than adopting a standardised policy. Such a framework could include assessment queries; for examples:

- a. Does the policy align with and address DHB risks specific to the organisation's industry and environment in addition to general risk factors for DHB?
- b. Are any groups of employees less able to access the policy and its protections; and, if so, what mitigation measures are in place?
- c. What alternative reporting procedures are in place, and are they readily accessible?
- d. What measures are in place to ensure suitable resolution actions are applied to specific DHB cases?
- e. What accountability measures are in place, and are they consistently applied?
- f. What governance processes are in place and how are they applied?

With additional regulatory requirements, organisations should reasonably expect corresponding support mechanisms to meet them. Administrative and regulatory bodies, such as WorkSafe NZ, play a vital role in ensuring compliance and assisting organisations in understanding their requirements and what best practice DHB policies and procedures entail (Mollison, 2016). As with the development of additional assessment frameworks, support mechanisms would require further materials to guide organisations through a DHB policy development process that includes contextual assessment; mitigation of identified risks and inequities; and the development of appropriate reporting, resolution, accountability, and governance mechanisms. Many organisations, particularly small or not-for-profit entities, may lack the resources to engage policy specialists, highlighting the need for clear guidance on designing and implementing equitable and effective DHB policies. A means-tested DHB policy drafting service could assist resource-constrained organisations while offering costed options for larger entities. This approach could

accelerate the adoption of effective DHB policies across a broader range of organisations, reducing financial and intangible costs by preventing or resolving DHB earlier and minimising escalation (Mollison, 2016).

Regardless of the measures adopted, consistent evidence indicates that a DHB policy alone is insufficient to effectively address workplace DHB (Gardner, O'Driscoll, et al., Ferris et al., 2021; Gardner, O'Driscoll, et al., 2013; Magee et al., 2014). If additional measures are required to ensure that a DHB policy is effective and enables organisations to realise its benefits, regulatory compliance measures must align with such measures. In the absence of additional requirements, organisations may remain compliant while continuing to permit known physical and psychosocial risks associated with DHB.

Practical Contributions to Collective Knowledge

The practical contributions this study makes to collective knowledge advance the understanding surrounding processes developed for organisations to apply to improve the equity and effectiveness of tailored DHB policies. These are not isolated contributions, but are underpinned and enhanced by the application of the socioecological framework to analyse contextual influences and a revised regulatory framework. The contributions are an eight-area action plan for organisations and a structured DHB policy development process underpinned by an evaluation framework to assess the impact a DHB policy has had.

Contribution 4. An Eight-Area Action DHB Framework

Effective policy development and implementation can take considerable time and financial resources that organisations may not have ready access to, during which the risk of DHB and the harm it causes can continue unchecked. Additionally, research has clearly shown that DHB policies alone cannot remove the risk of workplace DHB and that integrated actions are required (Ferris et al., 2021; Magee et al., 2014). Even if wholesale DHB policy redevelopment is not immediately available as an option for organisations, considerable research has been conducted to provide organisations with multiple measures and interventions that can be implemented to assist in reducing the overall harm DHB causes. Li et al. (2023) moved beyond policy requirements and focussed on actions that could be taken across organisational systems, risk identification, implementation, evaluation, organisational learning, leadership involvement, worker participation, and prevention areas. Similarly, Blackwood et al. (2026) identified that success factors for workplace bullying included senior leadership support, worker participation, organisational ownership,

risk assessment, multi-level interventions, evaluation and monitoring, and long-term implementation approaches. Research including Roehling and Huang (2018) and Ferris et al. (2018) identified similar practical actions organisations can take across comparable organisational areas.

By analysing the organisational implications identified during the discussion of each theme in this research, eight practical areas were developed where organisations can take immediate action in to improve equity and effectiveness in DHB management and resolution. While this eight-action framework for addressing DHB is consistent with the literature (Blackwood et al., 2026; Ferris et al., 2021; Li et al., 2023; Roehling & Huang, 2018), it does not appear that the eight action areas developed from the current research have previously been brought together in a single operational model to address workplace DHB. This originality is a strength of this model as it represents a more integrated organisational governance framework than most individual studies have previously provided.

This eight-action framework structure removes any duplication of implications previously identified across the themes from this research of Context, Content, Equality, Inconsistency, and Clarity within this research, and reframes them into eight action areas organisations can work through to improve DHB management and resolution. The eight action areas of the framework are detailed in Table 27.

Contribution 5. Policy Development Process for Tailored DHB Policies

This research provides a structured process for tailoring DHB policies to organisational context while mitigating for inequity and inconsistency of policy application. Developing an effective DHB policy requires a series of cumulative organisational processes, beginning with understanding the organisational context, identifying equity issues, and addressing inconsistency challenges to ensure accountable and accurate policy application. The rapid literature review provides comprehensive lists of areas for consideration by leaders and policymakers to achieve a policy tailored to fit the organisation itself and the broader context in which it operates (Ferris et al., 2021; Magee et al., 2014; MBIE, 2020; Richards & Daley, 2003; Roehling, 2020; Salin, 2003; Zapf & Vartia, 2020). Strengthening this framework, the interview findings clarified how unmitigated, standardised policies and procedures can harm those exposed to DHB when they fail to consider contextual factors surrounding DHB or the inherent inequities within organisations. A DHB policy

development process would assist organisations in developing DHB policies better suited to their people and environment, with higher levels of equity to advance effective policy application and DHB resolution.

Table 27.

Eight-Area Action DHB Framework

Eight-Area Action DHB Framework		
Action Area and Purpose	Potential Actions	Expected Outcome
1. Action Area: Understand and Assess Organisational DHB Risk		
Understand where DHB risks exist and who is most affected.	• Conduct organisational DHB risk assessments. • Analyse workforce demographics and vulnerable groups. • Assess cultural, structural, and power-related risk factors. • Review organisational and industry-specific risk factors. • Identify barriers different groups face in accessing, reporting, and support. • Evaluate whether equal processes are producing equitable outcomes. • Incorporate DHB into existing health, safety, people, and risk-management systems. • Treat DHB as both an individual behaviour issue and an organisational risk.	A prevention strategy tailored to actual organisational risks rather than generic policy assumptions.
2. Action Area: Build Leadership Accountability and Governance		
Ensure DHB management is actively led rather than delegated to policy documents.	• Hold leaders accountable for culture and DHB outcomes. • Define responsibilities for managers, investigators, decision-makers, and executives. • Establish governance mechanisms and oversight structures. • Monitoring of policy compliance and case outcomes. • Actively manage conflicts of interest. • Implement review and escalation pathways where bias may exist. • Ensure leaders visibly support reporting, accountability, and respectful behaviour.	Improved confidence that DHB concerns will be managed consistently regardless of status or influence.
3. Create Accessible and Equitable Reporting Systems		
Remove barriers that prevent people from reporting concerns.	• Provide multiple reporting pathways. • Allow reporting outside normal management lines. • Accept verbal, written, bystander, and group reports. • Recognise and enable reporting of hostile work environments. • Protect participants from retaliation. • Encourage early reporting. • Ensure staff know how and where to seek help. • Design reporting systems to support affected individuals rather than organisational convenience. • Review reporting outcomes through an equity lens.	Increased reporting confidence and earlier intervention.
4. Strengthen Investigations and Decision-Making		
Improve consistency, fairness, and procedural integrity.	• Use trained DHB investigators and decision-makers (see Appendix T). • Establish clear investigation standards. • Conduct timely investigations. • Implement standardised evidence-gathering processes. • Apply appropriate evidential standards consistently. • Create documented decision-making criteria. • Manage confidentiality and procedural fairness appropriately. • Undertake immediate safety assessments following reports	More reliable, defensible, and equitable outcomes.

- Introduce quality assurance and oversight mechanisms.

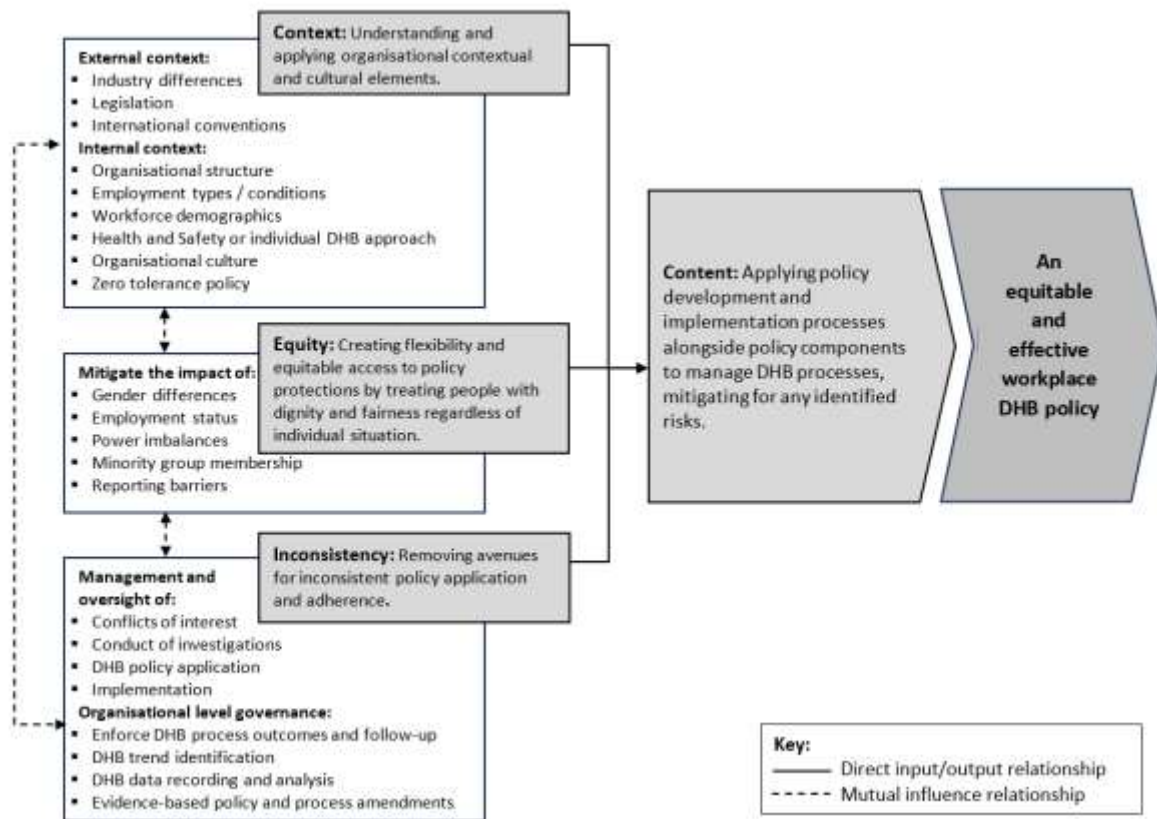
5. Provide Effective Support and Protection		
Support participants and minimise harm throughout the process.	• Provide support to targets, witnesses, respondents, and managers. • Offer independent advocacy where appropriate. • Ensure support personnel are trained and trusted. • Apply trauma-informed approaches. • Actively manage retaliation risks. • Reduce reliance on self-help models where power imbalances exist. • Ensure support options are clearly communicated and accessible.	Greater wellbeing, procedural fairness, and trust in organisational processes.
6. Improve Resolution, Restoration and Follow-Up		
Ensure concerns are resolved effectively and sustainably.	• Match resolution options to the seriousness of the conduct. • Consider power imbalances when selecting resolution methods. • Use informal approaches only where appropriate. • Focus on behavioural change and accountability. • Include workplace restoration activities. • Monitor implementation of agreed actions. • Conduct mandatory follow-up after case closure. • Evaluate whether outcomes remain effective over time.	Reduced recurrence of DHB and improved workplace relationships.
7. Build Organisational Capability Through Training		
Ensure key personnel can apply DHB systems effectively.	• Deliver organisation-wide DHB awareness training. • Provide specialised training for managers. • Provide specialist DHB investigation training. • Train leaders on accountability and culture (see Appendix T). • Reinforce learning through ongoing development rather than one-off training.	More capable and consistent decision-making across the organisation.
8. Monitor, Evaluate and Continuously Improve		
Learn from data and improve system effectiveness.	• Establish comprehensive case recording systems. • Monitor reports, investigations, outcomes, and corrective actions. • Analyse trends and repeat behaviours. • Measure effectiveness of interventions. • Review whether different groups experience different outcomes. • Evaluate implementation quality as well as policy content. • Use findings to refine systems, training, and prevention activities. • Communicate organisational trends and lessons learned where privacy allows.	A DHB system that continuously improves rather than remaining static.

In addition, to generate a DHB policy that improves DHB management and reduces the negative impact an ill-fitting, inconsistently applied policy can have, an organisation needs to engage directly and in a meaningful manner with those impacted by such a policy (Escartín, 2016; Rayner & Lewis, 2010). It is only through this level of stakeholder engagement, including targets, and commitment to implement mitigations into the policy to reduce the potential for inconsistencies and inequitable treatment that organisations can hope to achieve a DHB policy that is equitable and effective, not merely compliant.

The new links this research generated between organisational context and policy content, including the active identification and mitigation of issues that enable inequity and inconsistency in the development of DHB policies within a social equity context, was not identified elsewhere in the related literature. While there is much research on what information should be included in a DHB policy (Duffy, 2009; King, 2019; Magee et al., 2014; Rayner & Lewis, 2010; WorkSafe NZ, 2017), what should influence and inform policy components remains less clear. The original framework presented in the current research determined what influenced policy content decisions and developed a DHB policy development process that can be tailored to its organisational context. It is not a simple linear process, as the outcome from each phase is dependent on and influences the other phases, requiring an iterative approach. Figure 14 illustrates the interactions between each policy development process and how each phase is impacted by the preceding and subsequent step. Removing one or more of the *Context*, *Equity*, or *Inconsistency* steps will degrade the level of equity and effectiveness an organisation could hope to achieve, as each step identifies specific issues that require mitigation to reduce the negative impact they can have on DHB policy outcomes. Further, each step contributes unique insights to the policy development process while influencing the others, creating both direct and indirect impacts on the final policy and its implementation.

Figure 14.

Framework for Developing a Tailored DHB Policy.



Developing the amalgamated themes of *Context*, *Content*, *Equity*, and *Inconsistency* into a DHB policy development process would see each element addressed in the following manner:

1. **Phase 1 – Conduct of an internal and external contextual analysis of the organisation.** Seeks to identify organisational areas factors with potential to create inequities, be they structural, industry-based, related to staff demographics, or any other factor that could impact the implementation and application of a DHB policy.
2. **Phase 2 – Development of actions to safeguard equitable DHB policy application.** Requires the removal or mitigation of any and all risks identified in the previous contextual analysis. On completion of the accountability phase, this process will require review to ensure no new risks to equitable policy application have been identified that require mitigation.
3. **Phase 3 – Improving equity and effectiveness through consistency, accountability, and governance.** Data and outcomes from both previous phases will inform the design of a two-tiered accountability process, and may require a review of contextual considerations. This will

address accountability at the policy application management and oversight level, and at organisational governance level.

4. **Phase 4 – Developing policy content.** The culmination of all preceding phases. All tailored risk mitigation and accountability actions are woven together with best practice recommendations to develop a comprehensive, equitable DHB policy able to be effectively measured and evaluated.

Phase 1 – Conduct of Contextual Analysis of the Organisation. Expanding on previous research (Hutchinson, 2012; Magee et al., 2014; Rayner & Lewis, 2010; Salin, 2008; Vartia & Leka, 2011), the current research determined that an organisation’s internal and external context influences DHB prevalence, its policy, and how that policy is implemented and managed. Contextual influences were identified as critical factors by both interview groups, particularly how they impacted at an individual level, effecting an individual’s ability to access DHB policies and achieve equitable outcomes. Examples of the NZDF influences identified by interview participants included the hierarchical and rank-based organisational structure and how it reduces DHB reporting. The direct and indirect protection of those participating in DHB behaviours was identified, along with multiple ways the organisation’s structure and context worked against targets. The link between an organisation’s context and the equity and effectiveness of DHB policies should challenge organisations to review how they incorporate these factors into the development of DHB policies aiming to enhance and improve the well-being and safety of their employees and staff members (Magee et al., 2014; Salin, 2008; Whitaker & Niolon, 2009).

Despite acknowledging that an organisation’s context can impact DHB and its subsequent management, little was located in the literature on how organisations can conduct a contextual assessment and what it should include. The current research outcomes made it clear that any organisational contextual analysis must include both external factors that influence an organisation but cannot be controlled, and internal elements where a level of control is retained. Although organisations may have varying control over contextual factors, they are still required to provide the “highest level of protection against harm ... as is reasonably practicable” (Health and Safety at Work Act, 2015, s (3)2). This requires a thorough understanding of all contextual factors that may create harm before mitigation can occur.

The reviewed literature identified external contextual influences to include international conventions (ILO, 2019a), industry differences (Berlingieri, 2015), and national legislation (Employment Relations Act, 2000; Health and Safety at Work Act, 2015). External factors influence the content and processes of DHB policies before internal contextual factors are considered (MBIE, 2020; Mollison, 2016). Interview responses expanded on the impact different legislation has for staff on the management and resolution of DHB within NZDF. Internal factors such as culture, leadership, and power imbalances were clearly identified within the literature (Bentley et al., 2012; ILO, 2020; Rayner et al., 2001; Thompson & Catley, 2021) and by interview responses as impacting the prevention, management, and resolution of DHB within NZDF. Although external factors will vary between organisations, a detailed contextual assessment would help identify those that are most relevant. Organisations can then modify or mitigate internal factors to reduce the negative effect external factors may have and enhance equitable DHB policy protections. Without identifying these factors, organisations cannot develop effective mitigation strategies, increasing the risk that DHB policies will be weakened by contextual influences.

Identifying contextual factors that impact DHB and the access employees have to policy protections cannot occur in isolation. Applying the socioecological framework detailed later in this chapter, or another analytical process (Berlingieri, 2015; Caponecchia & Wyatt, 2011; Magee et al., 2014; Vartia & Leka, 2011), can assist organisations to identify factors. Once identified, organisations must assess how contextual factors influence the equity of policy outcomes and whether they may hinder consistent application. Policies should then be designed to improve equitable, consistent, and accountable practice.

Phase 2 – Safeguarding Equitable DHB Policy Application. As a member of the ILO who has ratified Convention 190 (ILO, 2019b) supported by Recommendation 206 (ILO, 2019c), the New Zealand government requires employers to take steps to prevent and control workplace DHB, and treat those affected equitably (MBIE, 2020). While equality is more readily accepted than equity and simply requires that all people are treated the same, equity is more concerned with “the distribution of fairness” (Guy & McCandless, 2012, p. 5). The rapid literature review from this study identified numerous areas within DHB policies where equality within the policy itself can lead to inequitable outcomes. Examples provided were the impact of minority group membership (MBIE, 2020; Salin, 2021), access to reporting options

(Berlingieri, 2015; ILO, 2020; Officer of the Auditor General (OAG), 2023a, 2023b; Thompson & Catley, 2021), and power imbalances (Gardner, O'Driscoll, et al., 2013; Lutgen-Sandvik et al., 2007; Osler, 2021). Inequity issues were frequently highlighted by interview participants, who often identified layered characteristics that created additional intersected vulnerabilities, along with NZDF specific issues including the impact of different employment statuses and military operational activities. (For detail on the impact of inerectionality see, Collins, 2012; Crenshaw, 1991; Sasson-Levy, 2017)

Equity cannot be assumed to result from standard policy development processes, as policies may unintentionally influence outcomes through unmitigated inequalities or seemingly equal practices that lead to inequities (Pager & Shepherd, 2008). Referring to racial discrimination, Pager and Shepherd (2008) described it as structural or institutional discrimination, policies or processes that systemically disadvantage particular groups. As Baciú et al. (2017) noted, such inequities generate systematic disadvantages and inequitable experiences. To avoid reinforcing inequitable outcomes in DHB policies, organisations must embed equitable processes from the outset to address both known and potential inequities. The rapid literature review offered little on equitable DHB policies but the interview findings determined the need for more than mere structural or contextual adjustments. Any area where equal treatment could produce inequitable DHB outcomes must be mitigated within the policy, as equality of treatment or access does not ensure equitable or appropriate outcomes (Kachtan, 2016; Smooth, 2013).

Equitable DHB outcomes require all staff have equitable, rather than identical, access to policy processes and protections. Developing a policy that enables equitable outcomes requires consideration of any factors that could limit equitable treatment, including minority group membership, power imbalances, access to reporting options, or differing legislative protections. Once identified, all potential inequities require mitigating. To reduce the potential for inequitable treatment, organisations need to critically review where inequities could occur through an in-depth contextual assessment, particularly of internal organisational factors, which then provides initial insight into what potential barriers may be. As equity can mean different things to different individuals, a level of flexibility would need to be built into any DHB policy and its supporting processes to ensure people are treated with dignity and fairness, regardless of

their individual situation within an organisation. Only by mitigating the identified barriers can organisations begin to provide their staff with equitable as well as effective processes for addressing DHB.

Identifying organisational inequities and the processes required to mitigate them necessitates that these measures be detailed in any DHB policy. Leaving known inequities unmitigated —particularly those that restrict access to policy protections or fair resolutions—undermines an organisation’s ability to demonstrate it has taken reasonably practicable steps to ensure employee “health, safety, and welfare” (Health and Safety at Work Act, 2015, s (3)2). Where such inequities relate to prohibited grounds of discrimination under the New Zealand Human Rights Act (1993) or equivalent legislation, organisations may also breach statutory requirements. This underscores the need to incorporate identified equity risks into policy development and accountability processes to mitigate inequitable practices. A socioecological analysis of the organisational context can assist in identifying any potential sources of inequity.

Phase 3 – Improving Equity and Effectiveness Through Consistency, Accountability and Governance. Policy processes, decisions, or elements that enable inconsistent policy application can compromise equitable and effective DHB outcomes and need to be identified and mitigated. Removing avenues for inconsistent policy application and adherence requires that individual accountability measures be embedded throughout the policy processes and enforced through robust governance procedures. Improving DHB policy application and outcomes requires policies address the management of DHB processes by minimising inconsistent behaviour (Brinkley, 2019; Gardner, O'Driscoll, et al., 2013; OAG, 2023b; Roehling, 2020) and improving accountability (Bastick, 2014; OAG, 2023b; Osler, 2021; Porath & Pearson, 2013), while implementing governance and oversight mechanisms (OAG, 2023a; Roehling, 2020).

Management of DHB Processes. Responses from both interview groups, mirrored in the literature, identified where more detailed policy-based procedures and decision support would reduce inconsistent DHB policy outcomes. Consistency reducing policy areas included unclear and incomplete definitions (Bastick, 2014; Becton et al., 2017; Wall et al., 2018), poor investigation processes (A. Ballard & P. Easteal, 2018; Magee et al., 2014; Thompson & Catley, 2021), inappropriate DHB resolution options (Ferris et al., 2021; Magee et al., 2014; Thompson & Catley, 2021), and a lack of follow-up (Cowan, 2011; Johnson, 2015a; SCEE, 2012). This step in the policy development process should identify areas where inconsistency

could reduce equitable and effective outcomes, and embed appropriate actions to minimise this risk.

Where potential policy inconsistencies have been identified due to a lack of knowledge, self-interest, or other factors, accountability measures should be implemented to ensure reliable and consistent policy application (Bastick, 2014; OAG, 2023a) while holding leaders responsible for their behaviour and their decisions as they relate to DHB (Francis, 2019; Namie & Namie, 2011; Osler, 2021).

DHB Governance. Regardless of the accountability measures implemented to ensure consistent and appropriate application of DHB policy, if enforcement or governance mechanisms are weak or absent, DHB will remain unchecked (Quinn et al., 2025). Organisational governance provides a mechanism to enforce and maintain correct and expected principles and workplace practices. It enforces ethical and effective work environments while minimising behaviour such as DHB (D’Cruz & Noronha, 2016). Demonstrated ability and willingness of an organisation to hold those making DHB decisions accountable for their actions will likely result in better-informed, more consistent policy application, which in turn can lead to increased trust in policy processes and reporting of DHB. Without clearly defined checks and measures embedded within any DHB governance process, “good governance will only be a mirage” (Sunder, 2013, p. 41). To implement and maintain effective DHB governance, robust data pertaining to prevalence, patterns of behaviour, and outcomes must be effectively collected to enable intervention evaluation and continuous improvement (D’Cruz & Noronha, 2016). Effective governance to monitor and uphold the equitable and appropriate application of an organisation’s DHB policy, therefore, requires two elements: a structured and resourced governance mechanism, and accurate and complete DHB data recording mechanisms to document the governance process. Without informed governance and oversight mechanisms, organisations are likely to find it difficult to verify they are meeting their legislative requirements.

Phase 4 – Writing the Policy. Before policy makers can expect to commence development of an effective policy, they must have a clear understanding of the specific challenges their organisation faces and how they can be mitigated (Vartia & Leka, 2011). Early identification and mitigation of policy issues are essential; delaying mitigation efforts may lead to unintended consequences that undermine the effectiveness of DHB policy. Achieving clarity requires that the three previous policy development elements—assessing the organisation’s context, identifying equity issues, and developing governance

mechanisms—inform the development of the policy document and supporting processes. Considerable guidance was identified in the literature to inform the development of integrated DHB policies that promote equitable and effective outcomes. The specific processes and components an organisation should apply to tailor a DHB to its environment are closely linked to the level of context and cultural understanding that policy makers have. This is mainly due to the requirement for additional processes or components likely to be required to address specific risks or issues an individual organisation may face (Magee et al., 2014; Salin et al., 2020; Zapf & Vartia, 2020). By way of example, understanding the impact that having two employee groups governed by very distinct legislations has on NZDF should trigger policy development processes to include significant consultation with both groups, and clear procedures to ensure equity of outcomes across both groups and how to address DHB when individuals from both groups are involved.

Contribution 6. DHB Policy Evaluation Framework

The rapid review confirmed that accountability (Namie & Namie, 2011; Osler, 2021; Porath & Pearson, 2013), monitoring and evaluation measures (Magee et al., 2014; Rayner & Lewis, 2010; Vartia & Leka, 2011), and accurate DHB data recording (ILO, 2020; OAG, 2023b) are essential for ensuring equitable access to DHB policies, providing effective resolution options, and enhancing the overall policy impact. While the interview findings advanced the outcomes from the rapid review, the key insight was not the findings themselves, but the need to explicitly embed actions within DHB policies to ensure consistent implementation and set the conditions for long-term positive change (Francis, 2019; ILO, 2020; Magee et al., 2014; Richards & Daley, 2003). Inconsistent policy application and lack of accountability were two pervasive findings in the interview data that would be significantly reduced by accountability and evaluation measures mandated in DHB policies. When mandated by policy, it becomes difficult to avoid or ignore minimum requirements which are then included in any implementation plan.

While accountability measures, including the accurate recording of DHB data, may mirror or sit alongside other organisational accountability processes, with a tailored DHB policy any evaluation process would need to align with that policy. Additionally, just as an understanding of DHB is required before a DHB policy can be effectively developed or applied, likewise, a sense of the impact of DHB is needed before evaluation processes targeted to measure appropriate data.

Proposed DHB Policy Evaluation Framework. When developing any evaluation plan, specific measures must be identified and appropriate methods implemented to collect the required data, incorporating data from a variety of sources wherever possible to lend credibility to the resulting outcomes (Escartín, 2016). Given the resources required to implement and sustain evaluation programmes, using existing assessments within organisations can be a more sustainable option. It removes the requirement to add another measure organisation members then need to be encouraged to complete, on top of extant measures or surveys, meaning a higher level of participation is likely to be achieved than any newly implemented measure that could be seen as yet another task.

Merely tracking reported DHB incidents is insufficient to evaluate DHB policy effectiveness. As policies are likely to be implemented as part of a wider suite of interventions, it must be accepted that it is unlikely the effect of a new DHB policy can be measured in isolation from other interventions (Marsh & McConnell, 2010). Although assessing the long-term impact of DHB policies on organisational patterns and prevalence is beyond the scope of this study, an integrated evaluation plan remains essential. As such, an option for DHB policy evaluation plans can be derived from the evaluation framework detailed by Marsh and McConnell (2010) and the measures used to assess programmatic success, recommended by Pate and Beaumont (2010). Combining the two approaches provides a robust evaluation framework that leverages existing organisational data-collection processes to assess the effectiveness of DHB policy. This evaluation framework can then be readily incorporated into DHB policies to be implemented alongside other policy actions. The proposed framework is detailed in Table 28.

Limitations of Current Research

The design, conduct, and findings of the current study were not without flaws. Although the rationale for research design decisions was presented in the earlier methodological and methods chapter, these limitations still influenced the research findings and how the research was able to provide pragmatic insights into DHB as experienced within a complex organisation like the NZDF. The following sections outline the notable limitations of the current study and their influence on the findings.

Single Researcher Limitations

Having a single researcher conduct the analysis and theme categorisation was a key limitation. Additional researchers may have led to different themes being generated from the same data, potentially altering the research findings. This was a known limitation of the research design, leading to the inclusion of highly specific selection criteria for the rapid literature review and to the member and independent review of the

Table 28.

Proposed Evaluation Framework for DHB Policies.

Indicators	Evidence
Process indicators	
1. Legitimacy of policy options	• Policy consultation records • Extent consultation feedback requiring substantive or critical amendments were incorporated into the policy
2. Adherence to policy development process	• Alignment of DHB policy development against mandated policy process
3. Policy approval: minor or major amendments required	• Minutes from approval board meetings
4. Support for policy amendments	• Policy consultation records • Minutes from board meetings and executive leadership meetings
5. Innovation: was the policy based on new concepts and processes?	• Variance between the old and new policy • Knowledge and research used to inform policy development
Pragmatic indicators	
1. Did implementation follow the plan and objectives?	• Implementation review
2. Did the policy achieve the stated objectives?	• Implementation review • Measures within organisational culture surveys, including: ~ are employees consistently demonstrating the stated core values ~ are employees confident in calling out DHB behaviours ~ do individuals feel comfortable to be themselves at work ~ can individuals perform their duties free of DHB behaviours ~ have individuals witnessed DHB behaviours towards others ~ do individuals understand how to report DHB behaviour ~ do individuals trust any complaint will be addressed effectively and without causing them additional harm • Measures within exit surveys, including: ~ was DHB a contributing factor in deciding to leave? If yes, what kind of behaviour was it, and from whom? ~ was this behaviour reported? To whom? ~ Did reporting DHB behaviour damage their career in any way? How?
3. Resource use: Did implementation comply with resource allocation?	• Budget reports • Implementation review
4. Did the policy benefit all or limited NZDF members?	• Demographic data linked to organisational survey responses • Responses related to diversity in organisational survey responses and other gathered data
Political indicators	
1. Has the policy enhanced confidence in senior leadership?	• Measures within organisational survey responses and other gathered data, including: ~ is the culture in my branch / organisation improving ~ the level of confidence in senior leadership ~ would employees say the organisation is a good place to work

Note. Evaluation framework based on Marsh and McConnell (2010) and Pate and Beaumont (2010).

interview data coding. The identified steps were included to mitigate as many as possible of the risks inherent in single researcher studies. The detailed positionality statement also clearly identified potential researcher biases, enabling readers to consider the study outcomes in light of this additional information. While the mitigations remained a limitation, they helped reduce the negative impact that having me, as the sole researcher, could have had. Having at least one additional researcher involved in the detailed coding or reviewing the coded data would further reduce the impact of this limitation.

Limitations of the Embedded Case Study Research Design

Using the NZDF as the embedded case study is a methodological limitation that may lead non-military organisations to assume there is little relevance in the research outcomes to their own context. NZDF has a very specific contextual and cultural environment that cannot be replicated. Thus, assumptions could be made limiting the transferability of the research that would also limit the contribution it can make to the collective knowledge regarding effective DHB policies. While embedded case studies can be viewed as less transferable than multiple case study designs (Bass et al., 2018), this perspective has been challenged. Yin (2009) argued that case studies, embedded or otherwise, “are generalizable to propositions and not to populations or universes” (p. 15). The theoretical proposition underpinning the current study is that tailoring a DHB policy to the context of an organisation will be more effective than a standardised policy, not what a tailored DHB policy for NZDF may look like.

The NZDF’s organisational complexity and distinctive DHB challenges also make it a fertile setting for identifying issues that may otherwise require multiple cases to reveal, and was therefore able to offset some of the limitations of a single embedded case study. Selecting NZDF for the embedded case study enabled the identification of a range of issues that might otherwise have required multiple case studies. As Tsang (2013) noted, understanding the study’s context is essential for assessing the degree to which findings can be appropriately applied to differing situations and environments. Studying an organisation with such a complex context enhances the applicability of the findings to a broader range of settings than

would a more conventional commercial or public organisation. Nonetheless, including an additional and substantially different organisation could further strengthen the transferability of the results.

Time Constraints

This study's time limitation resulted in two methodological constraints: 1) the type of literature review selected, and 2) the inability to meet all sample quota criteria for the semi-structured interviews. The time limitations may have impacted the overall findings of the current study. Time constraint was due to a combination of standard doctoral research frameworks and the limited availability of NZDF personnel, which led to the research design decision to conduct a rapid rather than a systematic literature review. Rapid literature reviews are commonly conducted to inform policy development but relevant information can be overlooked in the data extraction process and publication bias can occur (Ganann et al., 2010). The very detailed protocol applied to the conduct of the rapid literature was a mitigation action designed to focus the selection of literature for the review, reducing bias and interpretation that could be applied to the selection process. While a full systematic review would have provided a "gold standard" evidence synthesis (King et al., 2022, p. 152) to underpin the current study had time not been an issue, the rapid review provided consistent findings with across the themes that were generated from the data.

The constrained timeframe led to the development of a quota criteria for the semi-structured interview sample groups to generate the widest diversity among participants as possible in the time available. While the quota criteria could not be met in the allocated time frame, leading to less diversity than planned, it was likely less than would have been achievable without the participant select criteria. The limited diversity may have impacted the data collected, subsequent thematic analysis, and consolidated research findings. The unmet criteria related to civilian versus military participants, military service affiliations, and military rank, whereas gender and ethnicity were met or exceeded. While this limitation may have affected findings specific to the NZDF, meeting the gender and ethnicity quotas suggests the final outcomes will remain broadly transferable to other organisations. Ideally, had time permitted, I would have extended participant recruitment until all quota criteria had been met.

Future Research

Based on the research findings and identified limitations, several recommendations and opportunities for future research were constructed to both expand the current findings and explore new research areas. This future research includes testing and evaluating the new processes and frameworks presented in this research, and investigating additional regulatory requirements for organisational DHB policies.

Explore the Impact of a Tailored DHB Policy

Although tailored DHB policies are widely recommended, there is little empirical research comparing the effectiveness of tailored versus non-tailored policies. Such evidence could strengthen regulatory standards. Exploring this knowledge gap would require careful ethical consideration to avoid exposing potential DHB targets to policies known to be less effective, thus risking additional harm. One option is a longitudinal case study that evaluates the equity and effectiveness of an existing non-tailored DHB policy while a tailored policy is being developed, and compares outcomes with those of the tailored policy after implementation. Such a study would clarify differences in policy effectiveness and, unlike the current study, allow for greater sample diversity due to fewer time constraints. This research could identify specific policy areas that enhance effectiveness, inform necessary adjustments, and provide more detailed guidance for organisations developing context-specific DHB policies.

Evaluation of Proposed DHB Policy-Related Frameworks

The current study offered three new models as potential frameworks to assist organisations in developing equitable and effective DHB policies: (1) a DHB policy development process, (2) a DHB policy evaluation process, and (3) a tailored socioecological model. None of the models were tested, as that was outside the scope of the current study. Future exploration of the new frameworks could provide organisations with clear, functional frameworks to develop tailored policies with appropriate, effective accountability and evaluation processes, grounded in detailed contextual analysis.

Review Regulatory Requirements and Assessment Options

An unanticipated and novel finding was that existing workplace health and safety compliance requirements for DHB appear to reinforce the use of standardised DHB policies, despite standardised policies being known to be less effective. Future research could investigate how regulatory bodies, such as WorkSafe NZ, could raise minimum compliance standards for DHB policies, require such policies to be tailored to

organisations, and how they may subsequently be assessed. The outcomes of such a programme of research could provide a framework for regulatory bodies to raise minimum compliance levels for workplace DHB policies, thereby helping prevent DHB and assisting organisations in effectively addressing this behaviour.

Conclusion

The abundance of research on workplace DHB and other inappropriate workplace behaviours in New Zealand and internationally confirms that DHB behaviours are prevalent and harmful to individuals and the organisations to which they belong. While DHB policies are key to addressing DHB behaviours, a clear process to provide organisations a framework to develop policies tailored to their specific organisational context is difficult to find.

This study identified a relationship between understanding an organisation's contextual environment and its ability to identify, remove, or mitigate inequities among its employees. These inequities affect an individual's ability to access the protections of a DHB policy and achieve an effective resolution. The second relationship identified that consistently applied accountability processes were the precursors to an effective DHB policy that achieved its desired outcomes. The combination of the two relationships led to a proposed policy development process to assist organisations in developing a tailored DHB policy likely to achieve equitable and effective outcomes. To further advance this DHB policy development process, a suggested policy evaluation framework and socioecological model to assist organisations in developing an in-depth contextual understanding were provided. The final contribution this study made was the identification that the minimum compliance requirements maintained by workplace health and safety regulatory agencies, and the apparent inability to assess the effectiveness of DHB policies, enable ineffective and potentially inequitable policies to remain in place.

Following a pragmatist tradition, the findings and contributions from this research advance collective knowledge in the area by providing a functional framework and relational understanding that provides a platform from which organisations can develop more equitable and effective workplace DHB policies. Given the long-term, far-reaching harm DHB behaviours cause, knowing that tailored policies are more effective is not enough to prevent these behaviours or to minimise the additional harm that resolution processes can

cause. Organisations need functional and accessible processes that are easily applied to encourage them to step beyond mere compliance requirements and to strive for the benefits that an equitable and effective DHB policy can provide for both their staff and operational and financial outcomes.

While this study makes significant contributions to the development of tailored DHB policy frameworks, further work is required to fully operationalise the process and supporting framework. However, without regulatory agencies requiring more than the existence of such a policy and the ability to assess its appropriateness for the specific organisation and its effectiveness, there is little to encourage organisations to assume the additional work and cost required to develop, implement, and maintain the consistent application of a tailored, equitable and effective DHB policy.

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Appendix A

Auckland University of Technology (AUT) Ethics Committee Approval



Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC)

AUT

TE WĀNANGA ARONUI
O TĀMAKI MAKĀU RAU

19 June 2023

Denise Wilson
Faculty of Health and Environmental Sciences

Dear Denise

Re Ethics Application: **23/85 Discrimination, Harassment, Bullying and Hazing (DHBH) policies within the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF).**

Thank you for your responses to AUTEC's conditions.

Your ethics application has been approved for three years until 19 June 2026.

Standard Conditions of Approval

1. The research is to be undertaken in accordance with the [Auckland University of Technology Code of Conduct for Research](#) and as approved by AUTEC.
2. All public facing documents must have the AUTEC approval number and be of a high standard of spelling and grammar. Dates on the Information Sheet(s) and Consent Form(s) must be consistent.
3. Any amendments to the project must be approved by AUTEC prior to being implemented.
4. A progress report is due annually on the anniversary of the approval date.
5. A final report is due at the expiration of the approval period, or, upon completion of project.
6. Any serious or adverse events must be reported to AUTEC, this includes unforeseen issues that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project.
7. AUTEC grants ethical approval only. You are responsible for obtaining management permission for access from any institution or organisation at which your research is being conducted and you need to meet all ethical, legal, public health, and locality obligations or requirements for the jurisdictions in which the research is being undertaken.

The application number and title need to be referenced on all correspondence related to this project.

All forms are available online <http://www.aut.ac.nz/research/researchethics>

For any enquiries, please contact ethics@aut.ac.nz

(This is a computer-generated letter for which no signature is required)

The AUTEC Secretariat
Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee

Cc: michlingw@yahoo.co.nz

Appendix B

New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) Research Ethics Committee

UNCLASSIFIED

HEADQUARTERS NEW ZEALAND DEFENCE FORCE
Organisational Research
MINUTE

5000/PB/5/3

21st June 2022

COS CPO



APPROVAL TO CONDUCT RESEARCH: DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT AND BULLYING (DHB) POLICIES WITHIN THE NEW ZEALAND DEFENCE FORCE (ORG RESEARCH 2022/11)

References:

- A. DFO 3, Chap 5, Part 14: Authority to Conduct Human-related Research

Background

1. In accordance with Ref A, LTCOL Michling Werder, Human Resources Service Delivery (HRSD) Special Project Officer, has requested approval to conduct research looking at what elements of a Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying (DHB) policy would make an effective policy for New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF).
2. This project aims to determine what makes an effective DHB policy within a military organisation and what do commanders and managers need in a DHB policy to support effective and consistent application of the policy.
3. The expected benefit of this research is recommendations of NZDF culturally appropriate policy elements to support the development of a DHB policy that aligns with the prevalence and patterns of DHB behaviour within NZDF.
4. This research is being undertaken in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Philosophy, Auckland University of Technology.
5. This project is sponsored by BRIG Matthew Weston, Chief People Officer.

Methodology

6. The study is qualitative in nature, with data to be collected through a literature review and interviews. Interviews will be conducted with NZDF personnel who are commanders, civilian managers and who have a range of leadership experience.
7. The literature review will include information from our Five eyes military partners, as well as policies from other New Zealand Government agencies such as the New Zealand Police and Work Safe New Zealand.
8. In-depth, semi-structured interviews held via zoom or in person will be conducted, and recorded. Participants will be recruited via being purposively selected by the researcher, and then by snowball technique.

UNCLASSIFIED

Appendix C

Interview Participant Information Sheet



Participant Information Sheet

Date Information Sheet Produced: 19 June 2023

Project Title

Discrimination, Harassment, Bullying and Hazing (DHBH) policies within the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF).

An Invitation

*E ngā mana, E ngā reo, Nga hau e wha
Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa*

*Ko Taranaki tōku maunga
Ko Patea tōku awa
Nō ngā hau e wha oku tipuna
Ko Ngāti Tumatauenga tōku iwi
He āpiha ahau no te Ope Taua o Aotearoa
Ko Mish tōku ingoa*

Nō reira, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa

I joined the New Zealand Army in 1998 and have fulfilled a variety of roles over the last 25 years. I have maintained my interest in the wellbeing of others, particularly our NZDF whanau, over the years through implementing practical initiatives such as the Soldier Performance Centre in Linton and my personal study into the impact of violence and trauma on society and our people. In late 2021 I was tasked with reviewing and redeveloping the NZDF policy on discrimination, harassment and bullying (DHB) in DFO 3, Part 5, Chapter 3. This interview is a part of a wider piece of research to identify what will make a functional and effective discrimination, harassment and bullying policy for NZDF.

Your experience with the current policy is invaluable to identify specific areas within the policy that may reduce its effectiveness or unintentionally create barriers to the reporting or addressing of DHB behaviours. It is your knowledge as someone who has experience with this policy that this interview is focussed on, rather than the DHB situation that led to your involvement with the policy.

This research has been supported by the NZDF People Capability Portfolio leadership as it enables the DHB policy review to be tailored to fit our specific organisational culture and environment, while being based on international best practice. It has been approved by both the NZDF Research Ethics Committee and the AUT Ethics Committee, and has been developed to meet the academic requirements for a Masters of Philosophy.

What is the purpose of this research?

The aim of this research is to understand the impact the current DHB policy can have on individuals, and the reporting, investigation and resolution of DHB within NZDF. This will inform the development and implementation a policy tailored specifically to NZDF, it's culture and personnel. The purpose of these interviews is to identify and understand any areas of disfunction and incoherence with the current DHB policy that may reduce its effectiveness.

The findings of this research may be used for academic publications and presentations.

How was I identified and why am I being invited to participate in this research?

You have been invited to participate in this research through methods that included a combination of purposeful (specifically identified) and snowball (referred by someone else) selection. These methods included a number of tailored emails to purposefully selected individuals due to either previous involvement with the researcher, or your involvement with the NZDF DHB policy (DFO3, Part 5, Chapter 3) in any number of capacities. These emails also included an invitation for those email recipients to pass the invitation to participate on to others they felt may be interested in participating in the research. An invitation to participate was also extended to health and safety practitioners within NZDF through an article in the monthly 'Safety Always' newsletter from the NZDF Directorate of Safety that ran in April and May 2023.

How do I agree to participate in this research?

Your participation in this research is voluntary and whether or not you choose to participate will neither advantage nor disadvantage you. You are able to withdraw from the study at any time. If you choose to withdraw from the study, then you will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to you removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of your data may not be possible.

What will happen in this research?

This component of the research involves a one-off, one-on-one interview with the researcher either face to face or via an online platform (MS Teams), whichever is your preference and is logistically supportable. The interview will consist of a number of open-ended questions designed to elicit detailed responses on your experiences with this policy.

What are the discomforts and risks?

If you have been involved in a DHB situation yourself, the questions in this interview may bring back some uncomfortable feelings.

How will these discomforts and risks be alleviated?

If there are any ways you can identify to reduce the risk of discomfort for you, such as where the interview takes place, or bringing a support person with you please advise the researcher and all possible steps will be made to accommodate these requests.

Any support person you bring with you will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement to protect your privacy.

Should the interview discussion move into areas of your personal experience with DHB that are upsetting or cause you any distress, the interview recording will be paused. We then have options of taking a break and continuing with the interview, or reconvening at a later date to complete the interview. This will be entirely up to you.

Should the questions raise issues you would like to address, NZDF has a range of support services available for staff including social workers, chaplains and anti-harassment advisors. There is also counselling services including Employment Assistance Programme (EAP) and other support available through NZDF4U Wellbeing Support who can be contacted on:

- 0800NZDF4U / Text 8881

Additionally, AUT Student Counselling and Mental Health is able to offer three free sessions of confidential counselling support for adult participants in an AUT research project. These sessions are only available for issues that have arisen directly as a result of participation in the research and are not for other general counselling needs. To access these services, you will need to:

- drop into our centre at WB203 City Campus (Auckland), email counselling@aut.ac.nz or call 09 921 9998.
- let the receptionist know that you are a research participant, and provide the title of my research and my name and contact details as given in this Information Sheet.

You can find out more information about AUT counsellors and counselling on <https://www.aut.ac.nz/student-life/student-support/counselling-and-mental-health>

What are the benefits?

NZDF will benefit from this research through the use of the outcomes informing the development of a DHB policy that not only reflects current international best practice in this area and New Zealand legislation, but aligns with extant NZDF policies such as Op Respect, and has been tailored for the culture of the NZDF to be functional and effective in addressing and ultimately reducing DHB behaviour within NZDF.

How will my privacy be protected?

Your interview will be audio recorded and transcribed by myself or an appropriate transcription service (with all data linking you to your interview responses removed). The recording will be destroyed once the transcriptions are complete. All hand written notes from your interview and the transcription of your interview (with the exclusion of names) will be identified by an alphanumeric code that has no link to your identity. The document identifying individual codes to interview participants such as yourself will be held in a separate, password-controlled folder within the NZDF secure network and will be transferred to AUT once all data analysis is complete. This document will be held separately from the interview data in accordance with AUT's research data management protocols. This will ensure your confidentiality as there will be no information held in the same place as your responses that will be able to link a particular set of interview notes to you or anyone else. Any data that leaves the NZDF secure network for analysis will be non-identifiable as described here.

All data will be saved in a password protected file on a limited access folder on a file server, both inside and outside NZDF. Transfer of data will be either in password protected files and/or FTP sites.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

It is expected that the interview process will take no more than one hour. There are no other costs involved.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

My intention is to commence interviews from a month from the date this invitation was sent you to provide you sufficient time to consider your participation. Should you require further information, or if you are comfortable to commence at an earlier date, please contact me at michling.werder@nzdf.mil.nz.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

Yes. Once the interview responses have been analysed, I will send out a brief summary of the overall findings that will then be used to further inform the review of the NZDF DHB policy.

What do I do if I have concerns about this research?

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor. **Project Supervisor Contact Details:**

- **AUT.** Professor Denise Wilson, Auckland University of Technology, denise.wilson@aut.ac.nz
- **NZDF.** GPCAPT Lisa D'Oliveira, lisa.d'oliveira@nzdf.mil.nz

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary of AUTC, ethics@aut.ac.nz, (+649) 921 9999 ext. 6038.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Please keep this Information Sheet and a copy of the Consent Form for your future reference. You are also able to contact the research team as follows:

- **Researcher Contact Details:** LTCOL Michling Werder; michling.werder@nzdf.mil.nz
- **Project Supervisor Contact Details:**
 - **AUT.** Professor Denise Wilson, Auckland University of Technology, denise.wilson@aut.ac.nz
- **NZDF.** GPCAPT Lisa D'Oliveira, lisa.d'oliveira@nzdf.mil.nz

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee, AUTC Reference number 23/85.

Appendix D

Oral Interview Consent Form



Oral Consent Protocol

For use when interviews are being conducted by videoconference.

Project title: Discrimination, Harassment, Bullying and Hazing (DHBH) policies within the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF).

Project Supervisor: Dr Denise Wilson (AUT) and GPCAPT Lisa D'Oliveira

Researcher: LTCOL Michling Werder

When the participant joins the videoconference ask:

☐ Do you agree to my recording your consent to participate? Yes ☐ No ☐

If they agree, the researcher will commence recording and ask the following questions, clearly documenting the participant's responses prior to the interview commencing:

- ☐ Have you read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 9 May 2023? Yes ☐ No ☐
- ☐ Have you had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered? Yes ☐ No ☐
- ☐ Do you understand that notes will be taken during the interview and that the interview will also be audio-recorded and transcribed? Yes ☐ No ☐
- ☐ Do you understand that taking part in this study is voluntary (your choice) and that you may withdraw from the study at any time without being disadvantaged in any way? Yes ☐ No ☐
- ☐ Do you understand that if you withdraw from the study then you will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to you removed or allowing it to continue to be used? However, once the findings have been produced, removal of your data may not be possible. Yes ☐ No ☐
- ☐ Do you agree to take part in this research? Yes ☐ No ☐
- ☐ Do you wish to receive a summary of the research findings? Yes ☐ No ☐
- ☐ I wish to receive a copy of my interview transcript for verification prior to it being included in the study (please tick one): Yes ☐ No ☐
- ☐ Please confirm you name and contact details:

Participant's name: Date :

Participant's email address :

Additional Contact Details (if appropriate):

.....

I will now turn off the recording of the Consent and then will start a separate recording for the interview.

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 19 June 2023, AUTEK Reference number 23/85.

Note: The participant will be emailed a copy of this signed form

Appendix E

Written Interview Consent Form



Written Consent Form

For use when interviews are involved.

Project title: Discrimination, Harassment, Bullying and Hazing (DHBH) policies within the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF).

Project Supervisor: Dr Denise Wilson (AUT) and GPCAPT Lisa D'Oliveira

Researcher: LTCOL Michling Werder

Note: This form is to be provided to the participant to read, complete and sign prior to the interview commencing.

- ☐ I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 9 May 2023.
- ☐ I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.
- ☐ I understand that notes will be taken during the interview and that the interview will also be audio-taped and transcribed.
- ☐ I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary (my choice) and that I may withdraw from the study at any time without being disadvantaged in any way.
- ☐ I understand that if I withdraw from the study then I will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to me removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of my data may not be possible.
- ☐ I agree to take part in this research.
- ☐ I wish to receive a copy of my interview transcript for verification prior to it being included in the study (please tick one): Yes ☐ No ☐
- ☐ I wish to receive a summary of the research findings (please tick one): Yes ☐ No ☐
- ☐ Please confirm you name and contact details:

Participant's signature:

Participant's name:

Participant's email address :

Additional Contact Details (if appropriate):

.....

Date:

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 19 June 2023, AUTEK Reference number 23/85.

Note: The participant will be emailed a copy of this signed form

Appendix F

Oral Confidentiality Agreement for Participant Support Person



Oral Confidentiality Agreement for Interview Participant Support Person

For use when interviews are being conducted by videoconference.

Project title: Discrimination, Harassment, Bullying and Hazing (DHBH) policies within the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF).

Project Supervisor: Dr Denise Wilson (AUT) and GPCAPT Lisa D'Oliveira

Researcher: LTCOL Michling Werder

- ☐ Do you understand that your role is to support (insert participant's name), not actively participate in the interview? Yes ☐ No ☐
- ☐ Do you understand that all the discussion heard within this interview is confidential? Yes ☐ No ☐
- ☐ Do you understand that no part of the interview can be discussed with anyone other than the researcher or the participant you are supporting? Yes ☐ No ☐

Support person's signature:

Support person's name:

Support person's email

Additional Contact Details (if appropriate):

.....
.....
.....
.....

Date:

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 19 June 2023,

AUTEC Reference number 23/85.

Note: The support person will be emailed a scanned copy of this form.

Appendix G

Written Confidentiality Agreement for Participant Support Person



Written Confidentiality Agreement for Interview Participant Support Person

Project title: Discrimination, Harassment, Bullying and Hazing (DHBH) policies within the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF).

Project Supervisor: Dr Denise Wilson (AUT) and GPCAPT Lisa D'Oliveira

Researcher: LTCOL Michling Werder

- ☐ I understand that my role is to support (insert participant's name), not actively participate in the interview.
- ☐ I understand that all the discussion heard within this interview is confidential.
- ☐ I understand that no part of the interview can be discussed with anyone other than the researcher and the participant you are supporting.

Support person's signature:

Support person's name:

Support person's email

Additional Contact Details (if appropriate):

.....

Date:

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 19 June 2023,
 AUTEK Reference number 23/85.

Note: The support person will be emailed a scanned copy of this form.

Appendix H

Data Management Plan

TAILORING DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT AND BULLYING (DHB) POLICIES TO ORGANISATIONS TO IMPROVE THE EQUITY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF OUTCOMES.

About your data

Describe each data source that you will be handling or creating?

Include information about the formats, size, and type. Sensitivity classification is covered in the following questions.

- *Data will be text based, specifically interview transcripts and a literature review.*

Describe the sensitivity classification of each of the data sources that you are creating or handling.

Note: During the lifecycle of the data, its sensitivity classification may change as a result of operations such as de-identification. Describe this here.

- *The data related to the literature review has very low sensitivity and is assessed as public.*
- *The data related to the interview transcripts is assessed as 'very sensitive' as many interview participants are serving military personnel. A job has been logged with AUT ICT.*

For each data source described above, who will have access to each?

- *The researcher (Michling Werder) will be the only person who has access to the raw data. The one document that links participant codes to names is held on a personal computer and will be deleted once the interviews are complete.*

Will your project will handle large amounts of data (>1TB)?

- *No*

What are the primary types of data you will collect? If other, describe in the free text field below.

- *Interviews or focus groups*
- *Other*

In addition to the interview data, demographic data including military service, rank, gender, and ethnicity will be collected.

What are the secondary types of data you will collect?

- *Other – Specify below*
- *Nil*

Does your research involve data from or about human participants? This includes secondary datasets.

- *Yes. Ethics approval from the organisation the participants belong to has been granted. Provisional approval from AUT has been granted, awaiting a detailed data management plan for full approval.*

If your research does involve data from or about people, select the identifiability below.

~~Directly Identifiable / Indirectly Identifiable / De-identified and re-identifiable / Permanently Unidentifiable~~

- *Current research is unidentifiable*

Contains direct identifiers, including:

- *NHI*
- *Name*
- *Street address*

- Phone number
- Online identity (e.g., email, twitter name)
- Identification numbers (e.g., community services card number, driver's license)

Contains indirect identifiers, including:

- Date of birth
- Identification of relatives
- Identification of employers
- Clinical notes
- Any other direct or indirect identifiers that carry significant risk of re-identification

Data are considered de-identified if:

- Fields listed under the definition of identifiable data are excluded, and fields that might be used for deliberate re-identification are included, such as:
 - Encrypted NHI or study code
 - Year of birth or age in years at a given date
 - Event dates
 - Gender
 - Ethnicity (Level 2 as defined by Statistics New Zealand)
 - Mesh block or suburb
 - Deprivation index

It is not possible to precisely define anonymised data as re-identification risk depends on characteristics of the specific data set and other data that it might be linked to.

At a minimum, for data to be considered anonymised:

- Fields listed under the definition of identifiable or de-identified data are excluded, and the data are obfuscated to minimise re-identification risk, including but not limited to the following measures:
 - Disclosure of the bare minimum data set for purpose
 - Use of 5–10-year bands rather than dates
 - Aggregation of ethnicity data (Level 1 as defined by Statistics New Zealand)
 - Blurring of geographic data (by area unit or city)
 - Exclusion of low-frequency characteristics useful for re-identification (eg, rare medical conditions) The resulting data set has k-anonymity ≥ 5
- De-identified and re-identifiable

Indigenous data

Are you collecting, processing or otherwise handling Māori data - i.e. data involving Māori participants, culture, language or knowledge?

- *Yes, some interview participants are Māori.*

Are you collecting, processing or otherwise handling data targeting Indigenous peoples other than Māori?

- *Yes, other interview participants come from a range of ethnic backgrounds found in NZDF.*

If you are collecting, processing, or otherwise handling Māori data, consideration should be given to Te Mana Raraunga's [Principles of Māori Data Sovereignty](#). Describe how you will uphold these principles. These are:

Rangatiratanga | Authority Control - Māori have an inherent right to exercise control over Māori data and Māori data ecosystems. This right includes, but is not limited to, the creation, collection, access, analysis, interpretation, management, security, dissemination, use and reuse of Māori data.

Jurisdiction - Decisions about the physical and virtual storage of Māori data shall enhance control for current and future generations. Whenever possible, Māori data shall be stored in Aotearoa New Zealand.

- **Self-determination** - Māori have the right to data that is relevant and empowers sustainable self-determination and effective self-governance. Whakapapa | Relationships Context - All data have a whakapapa (genealogy). Accurate metadata should, at minimum, provide information about the provenance of the data, the purpose(s) for its collection, the context of its collection, and the parties involved.
- **Data disaggregation** - The ability to disaggregate Māori data increases its relevance for Māori communities and iwi. Māori data shall be collected and coded using categories that prioritise Māori needs and aspirations.
- **Future use** - Current decision-making over data can have long-term consequences, good and bad, for future generations of Māori. A key goal of Māori data governance should be to protect against future harm. Whanaungatanga | Obligations Balancing rights - Individuals' rights (including privacy rights), risks and benefits in relation to data need to be balanced with those of the groups of which they are a part. In some contexts, collective Māori rights will prevail over those of individuals.
- **Accountabilities** - Individuals and organisations responsible for the creation, collection, analysis, management, access, security, or dissemination of Māori data are accountable to the communities, groups and individuals from whom the data derive. Kotahitanga | Collective Benefit priorities - Data ecosystems shall be designed and function in ways that enable Māori to derive individual and collective benefit.
- **Build capacity** - Māori Data Sovereignty requires the development of a Māori workforce to enable the creation, collection, management, security, governance and application of data.
- **Connect** - Connections between Māori and other indigenous peoples shall be supported to enable the sharing of strategies, resources and ideas in relation to data, and the attainment of common goals.

Manaakitanga | Reciprocity Respect - The collection, use and interpretation of data shall uphold the dignity of Māori communities, groups, and individuals. Data analysis that stigmatises or blames Māori can result in collective and individual harm and should be actively avoided.

- **Consent** - Free, prior, and informed consent shall underpin the collection and use of all data from or about Māori. Less defined types of consent shall be balanced by stronger governance arrangements.

Kaitiakitanga | Guardianship - Māori data shall be stored and transferred in such a way that it enables and reinforces the capacity of Māori to exercise kaitiakitanga over Māori data.

- **Ethics** - Tikanga, kawa (protocols) and mātauranga (knowledge) shall underpin the protection, access and use of Māori data.
- **Restrictions** - Māori shall decide which Māori data shall be controlled (tapu) or open (noa) access.

Rangatiratanga | Authority - all participants, including Māori, are voluntary participants and are able to withdraw their data at any time up until the data are all processed together. All participants will be offered the option of having a copy of their interview transcript returned to them for their records, or if they wish, to clarify points they wish to make. The data will be stored at AUT, Auckland, New Zealand

For this research:

- **Whakapapa | Relationships** - These data have reduced value outside the context of the NZDF.
- **Whanaungatanga | Obligations** - The data from this research. Māori individually and collectively as Māori members of the NZDF by improving the processes for effectively addressing discrimination, harassment, and bullying, which can adversely impact their health and well-being.
- **Kotahitanga | Collective Benefit** - The collection of this interview data supports the collective benefit of all NZDF members individually, and organisation wide.
- **Manaakitanga | Reciprocity** - No data will be identifiable within the final research as Māori. An information sheet provides detail about the research and the processes of participation selection

and data storage. Detailed consent forms ensure that informed consent is actively given for every participant.

- **Kaitiakitanga / Guardianship** - All data will be controlled to protect the confidentiality all participants.

If you are collecting, processing, or otherwise handling Indigenous data, consideration should be given to the CARE principles. Describe how you are upholding these principles.

These are:

Collective Benefit

- **For inclusive development and innovation** - Governments and institutions must actively support the use and reuse of data by Indigenous nations and communities by facilitating the establishment of the foundations for Indigenous innovation, value generation, and the promotion of local self-determined development processes.
- **For improved governance and citizen engagement** - Data enrich the planning, implementation, and evaluation processes that support the service and policy needs of Indigenous communities. Data also enable better engagement between citizens, institutions, and governments to improve decision-making. Ethical use of open data has the capacity to improve transparency and decision-making by providing Indigenous nations and communities with a better understanding of their peoples, territories, and resources. It similarly can provide greater insight into third-party policies and programs affecting Indigenous Peoples.
- **For equitable outcomes** - Indigenous data are grounded in community values, which extend to society at large. Any value created from Indigenous data should benefit Indigenous communities in an equitable manner and contribute to Indigenous aspirations for well-being.

Authority to Control

- **Recognising rights and interests** - Indigenous Peoples have rights and interests in both Indigenous knowledge and Indigenous data. Indigenous Peoples have collective and individual rights to free, prior, and informed consent in the collection and use of such data, including the development of data policies and protocols for collection.
- **Data for governance** - Indigenous Peoples have the right to data that are relevant to their world views and empower self-determination and effective self-governance. Indigenous data must be made available and accessible to Indigenous nations and communities to support Indigenous governance.
- **Governance of data** - Indigenous Peoples have the right to develop cultural governance protocols for Indigenous data and be active leaders in the stewardship of, and access to, Indigenous data especially in the context of Indigenous Knowledge.

Responsibility

- **For positive relationships** - Indigenous data use is unviable unless linked to relationships built on respect, reciprocity, trust, and mutual understanding, as defined by the Indigenous Peoples to whom those data relate. Those working with Indigenous data are responsible for ensuring that the creation, interpretation, and use of those data uphold, or are respectful of, the dignity of Indigenous nations and communities.
- **For expanding capability and capacity** - Use of Indigenous data invokes a reciprocal responsibility to enhance data literacy within Indigenous communities and support the development of an Indigenous data workforce and digital infrastructure to enable the creation, collection, management, security, governance, and application of data.
- **For Indigenous languages and worldviews** - Resources must be provided to generate data grounded in the languages, worldviews, and lived experiences (including values and principles) of Indigenous Peoples.

Ethics

- **For minimising harm and maximising benefit** - Ethical data are data that do not stigmatize or portray

Indigenous Peoples, cultures, or knowledges in terms of deficit. Ethical data are collected and used in ways that align with Indigenous ethical frameworks and with rights affirmed in UNDRIP. Assessing ethical benefits and harms should be done from the perspective of the Indigenous Peoples, nations, or communities to whom the data relate.

- **For justice** - Ethical processes address imbalances in power, resources, and how these affect the expression of Indigenous rights and human rights. Ethical processes must include representation from relevant Indigenous communities.
- **For future use** - Data governance should account for potential future use and future harm based on ethical frameworks grounded in the values and principles of the relevant Indigenous community. Metadata should acknowledge the provenance and purpose and any limitations or obligations in secondary use inclusive of issues of consent.

For this research:

- **Collective Benefit** - *All interview data, including that gathered from Māori participants will be used to collectively improved the health and well-being of the whole NZDF community through improving the addressing of DHB behaviours.*
- **Authority to Control** - *A detailed consent process was adhered to for the collection of this data. The qualitative nature of the data will ensure the world view and perspective of Māori participants will be upheld.*
- **Responsibility** - *The researcher is bound by the organisational values of courage, commitment, comradeship and integrity to treat all participants and the insights they provide with respect and, and to ensure that the data is only used for the purposes for which it was provided.*
- **Ethics** - *The manner in which the interview data will be collected (including location, interview means etc) will be done in a way to uphold the well-being of all participants, and will be sufficiently flexible to accommodate any additional supports required for Māori participants.*

Storing your data

On which AUT managed platforms will you store your data during its post-analysis data retention phase?

- *Network Drive. The data will be stored as detailed in conjunction with the requirements detailed by AUT's Cybersecurity Support for data classed as 'very sensitive'.*

Identify and detail any other storage or processing platforms you will be using.

- *Audio recorded interviews will be recorded and initially transcribed by 'Otter' software. The audio recordings will be deleted once transcriptions are complete. The audio recordings are saved using anonymised participant codes as the naming convention so as to be unidentifiable.*

What is your planned data retention period?

- *6 years*

Documenting and describing your data

What documentation and metadata will accompany the data? e.g. What information is needed for the data to be to be read and interpreted in the future?

- *Other (specify) - The data will be saved as text documents so will not require additional documents. Transcripts will include the name of the researcher, the date and location of the interview. If the interview was done virtually, the platform used will be detailed.*

Title: Tailoring Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying (DHB) policies to organisations to improve the equity and effectiveness of outcomes.

Sample Group: Target/witness OR Commander/Manager

Creator and Interviewer: WERDER, Michling

Identifier: Unique participant code.

Date: Date(s) of interview (yyyy-mm-dd).

Method: Recorded on Microsoft Surface Pro Laptop, using Otter.ai

- Processing:** *Initial transcript completed by Otter.ai software, followed by an 'intelligent verbatim' approach completed by the researcher.*
- Language:** *The interviews will be conducted in English.*
- File formats:** *Interview transcripts will be stored as Word documents.*
- Access information:** *This data is not being accessed by any other researchers.*
-

Ethics, privacy and legal considerations

How will the undertakings given to participants about consent, confidentiality, de-identification, and other ethical considerations be assured?

- *All these actions will be undertaken by the researcher to ensure all steps are followed as advised to the participants.*

Who will be responsible for notifying data breaches to AUTC and to the NZ Privacy Commissioner when they are notifiable breaches under the NZ Privacy Act 2020?

- *The researcher.*

Will you be receiving data from another researcher/organisation, from within NZ or from another country? List the countries that you are receiving data from in the text box below. This could be a secondary data set, or if a collaborator is sharing data with you.

- *No*

Will you be sharing data captured in New Zealand with any collaborators?

- *No*
-

Publishing and sharing your data

Describe any planned or expected data sharing or publishing.

- *The raw, un-analysed data will not be published. The data will only be published in an analysed form with the research dissertation and any subsequent publications.*

When your research involves human participants, have you obtained appropriate informed consent for data sharing?

- *No. There will be no data sharing.*

In considering the principles of F.A.I.R. describe what approaches you will take to make your data findable.

- *There will be no data sharing.*

If you are sharing your data, what governance or licensing will you apply? Will licences be machine readable? Detail any limitations or restrictions which may apply and how provenance details will be included.

- *There will be no data sharing.*

As per the F.A.I.R. principles, in making your data accessible, what standardised communication protocols be employed where the data is made open?

- *The data will not be made accessible.*

As per the F.A.I.R. principles what measures will be taken to make the data interoperable? Note any data standards and vocabularies that will be used.

- *The data will not be releasable so will not need to be interoperable.*
-

Planned Research Outputs

Text – “Tailoring Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying (DHB) policies to organisations to improve the equity and effectiveness of outcomes”.

- *Dissertation*
-

Planned research output details

Title	Tailoring Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying (DHB) policies to organisations to improve the equity and effectiveness of outcomes.
Type	Text
Anticipated release date	2024-12-30
Initial access level	Restricted
Intended repository(ies)	None specified
Anticipated file size	1 MB
License	Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial No Derivatives 4.0 International
Metadata standard(s)	None specified
May contain sensitive data?	No
May contain PII?	No

Appendix I

Registered Protocol for Rapid Literature Review

Werder, M. V. (2022) Policy elements to effectively and consistently address discrimination, harassment, bullying and hazing (DHBH) within the New Zealand Defence Force.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

1. **Title.**

a. **Identification.** Policy elements to effectively and consistently address discrimination, harassment, bullying, and hazing (DHBH) within the New Zealand Defence Force: PRISMA-P for a rapid review.

b. **Update.** NA

2. **Registration.** In accordance with the guidelines, this rapid review protocol was registered with the International Prospective Register of Systematic Reviews (PROSPERO) on 16 December 2022, and was last updated on 16 December 2022 (registration number 384481).

3. **Authors.**

a. **Contact.** Corresponding author: Michling V. Werder. michlingw@yahoo.co.nz

b. **Contributors.** NA

4. **Amendments.** NA

5. **Support.**

a. **Sources.** This rapid review is funded by the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) through salary support of the corresponding author.

b. **Sponsor.** NZDF has sponsored this research.

c. **Role of sponsor or funder.** Funding by way of salary support is part of a wider piece of research to identify effective discrimination, harassment, bullying, and hazing (DHBH) policy elements for NZDF. Additional research elements will include the provision of secondary NZDF data to identify the context of DHBH within NZDF, and access to interview participants to identify policy elements managers and commanders require to assist them in the effective and consistent application of a revised DHBH policy for the NZDF. The NZDF is not involved in the project protocol and analysis plan, nor the collection and analyses; however NZDF ethics approval has been sought and approved for the use of their data and access to their personnel. The funder will have no input in the interpretation of the study results.

INTRODUCTION

6. **Rationale.** There has been significant legislative, policy, and social expectation change over the last 15 years in the area of DHBH including the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 (NZ) and NZDF's Operation Respect. These changes have left NZDF's DHBH policies and procedures out of date, arguably reinforcing the organisational culture that supports DHBH rather than creating cultural change to reduce both its tolerance and occurrence. The misalignment between NZDFs current DHBH policies and their application, and national expectations, was brought to light by recent WorkSafe NZ involvement resulting from notifications made to WorkSafe NZ by civilian members of the NZDF in 2018. One of the key outcomes for this engagement was the requirement to review their current DHBH policy and scope resourcing and training requirements across NZDF.

There has been significant research in recent years to investigate and develop effective DHBH policies in both military and non-military environments. This research has identified areas where policies have inadvertently reinforced organisational cultures that support DHBH and made recommendations for addressing these deficiencies. Six key themes directly relate to NZDF and its current DHBH policy.

- a. The use of specific language in DHBH policies over vague or innocuous wording leading to enhanced effectiveness by limiting individuals' ability to apply their own values and perceptions which in turn leads to inconsistent application of DHBH policies (Dougherty, 2017; Johnson et al., 2015).
- b. The influence both formal and informal power imbalances have on DHBH cannot be overlooked (Kalamdien & Lawrence, 2017). This imbalance is intensified by military policies requiring targets to report DHBH to superiors, giving superiors authority over outcomes and subsequent investigations. This is a key issue as evidence demonstrates much military sexual assault and DHBH is perpetrated by those of higher rank or a friend of target's ranking officer (Sadler et al., 2018).
- c. DHBH policies requiring DHBH targets to confront their abusers are largely unsuccessful and damaging as the inherent power imbalance hinders a target's ability to resolve the behaviour by confronting the perpetrator (Johnson et al., 2015). Research recommends that DHBH policies do not place this requirement on targets (Johnson, 2015).
- d. DHBH training research has identified prohibited behaviour training as detrimental as it alienates individuals by painting men as abusers and women as victims, reinforcing an evidence-based and adversarial process that reduces reporting. Two more effective strategies have been identified, bystander and manager training, as these approaches tend to empower all personnel to act and make them allies in reducing DHBH rather than potential perpetrators (Dobbin & Kalev, 2020).
- e. The ability for bystanders to report DHBH themselves as this builds on the benefits of bystander training, influencing organisational culture by placing responsibility on all personnel, and by assuming all personnel are allies in reducing DHBH (Dobbin & Kalev, 2020; Dougherty, 2017).
- f. Placing responsibility for DHBH within organisational Health and Safety mandates allow it to be seen as an organisational risk to be addressed with urgency, rather than an individual issue. This provides improved long-term individual and organisational outcomes (Rayner & Lewis, 2020).

Before attempting to tailor any policy to a specific organisation's culture, it is critical to ensure that the policy tenets to be reviewed have tested to be effective and efficient in achieving the overall outcome sought. Without this, regardless of how well a policy may 'fit' an organisation, its effectiveness will be minimal at best, and potentially cause additional harm at worst. This literature review aims to provide the framework for a DHBH policy that encompasses proven elements to support the appropriate treatment of identified DHBH behaviour within the NZDF.

7. Objectives. To determine what is required to develop a tailored and coherent policy within the NZDF to effectively address the occurrence of DHBH for both military and civilian members of the NZDF. The aim of this rapid review is to identify for the NZDF, what elements of a DHBH policy would increase the effectiveness in addressing this behaviour through aligning it to current New Zealand legislative requirements and international best practice. To this end, the proposed rapid review will contribute to answering the primary research question of "What elements of a DHBH policy would make an effective policy for NZDF?" by answering the following core question:

- a. **Core question.** What makes an effective DHBH policy within a military organisation?

The supplementary question will further inform the primary research question, but is outside the mandate of the rapid review and will be answered via a qualitative interview programme:

- b. **Supplementary question.** What do commanders and managers in the NZDF need in a DHBH policy to support effective and consistent application of a renewed policy?

METHOD

8. This rapid systematic literature review is one element of a mixed-method design based on a pragmatist theoretical foundation. Outcomes of the literature review will be supported by demographic and DHBH pattern and prevalence secondary data from NZDF, and the outcome of a qualitative interview programme to identify policy application issues for NZDF commanders and managers. This will inform the outcome of the rapid literature review, allowing potential new policy elements to be further refined to operate effectively within the NZDF context.

9. Eligibility Criteria.

- a. **Types of studies.** All relevant English language non-randomised controlled trials (RCTs), including narrative reviews, systematic reviews, cross-sectional and observational studies will be included, without restrictions on publication type. Inclusion will be restricted to 2005 or later, unless deemed seminal work related to the research question and literature review objectives. Grey literature searches will be limited to literature to that specifically addressing NZDF or military partners, and New Zealand government agencies.
- b. **Types of participants.** Studies involving adults (over 18 years old), employed (paid or unpaid) in both military and non-military organisations, men and women, of any ethnic background and nationality will be included.
- c. **Types of interventions.** Any experimental studies including the manipulation of environments to observe the effect of DHBH type behaviour on participants will be excluded on ethical grounds.
- d. **Exclusion criteria.**
 - (1) Studies dated prior to 2005, unless deemed seminal pieces of work related to the research question and literature review objectives to ensure a focus on contemporary literature within the constraints of the rapid review;
 - (2) Non-English language studies;
 - (3) Studies involving school aged students; and
 - (4) Studies at non-military training establishments, trade training institutes, universities or any other tertiary training or education establishments.

10. **Information sources.** An electronic search strategy will be designed to search relevant references in the following databases: PsycINFO, Scopus, Emerald Insight, SpringerLink, Taylor & Francis Online, JSTOR, Business Source Complete, Wiley Online Library, EBSCO, Google Scholar, and Sage Journals. The electronic database search will be supplemented by separate information requests through military agencies for relevant research and policies, as well as information requests to other New Zealand government agencies for associated DHBH policies. The focus will be peer-reviewed, published data with the following modifications for a rapid review: narrow research question, English language articles only, reduced search timeframe, limiting grey literature to that specifically addressing NZDF and military partners and use of one reviewer for study selection and data extraction.

11. **Search strategy.** The proposed search strategy is presented in Table 1. All citations identified by this search will be entered into a bibliographic management software program (EndNote), and duplicate entries due to overlaps amongst the databases will be excluded. The primary researcher reviewer will conduct title, abstract and full-text screening against inclusion criteria. The reference lists of included studies will be screened for additional relevant studies, and grey literature such as military journals and New Zealand theses databases that may not be included in the above search criteria will be searched, particularly for NZDF or New Zealand specific studies and research that meet the search criteria.

Table 1. Database Search Strategy	
Subject	Search Criteria
1	Armed force* OR armed service* OR military OR militaries OR para military OR para militaries OR defence force* OR army OR armies OR navy OR navies OR air force*
2	Policy OR policies OR strateg* OR program* OR procedur* OR guideline*
3	Bully OR bullying OR hazing* OR harass* OR discriminat*
4	Proximity search between 1 and 2 and 3
5	Proximity search between 2 and 3

12. Study records.

- a. **Data management.** Thematic analysis is an effective analysis approach for applied research such as policy or practice arenas and being independent of theory and epistemology is a useful tool for an analysis founded on pragmatism. The rapid literature review will be analysed via a thematic analysis following the approach detailed by Braun and Clarke (2006) using NVivo software to identify key elements of an effective DHBH policy.
- b. **Selection process.** The review author will screen the titles and abstracts yielded by the search against the inclusion criteria. Full reports will be obtained and then reviewed by the review author for all titles that appear to meet the inclusion criteria or where there is any uncertainty. The review author will then decide whether these meet the inclusion criteria, with additional information sought where necessary to resolve questions about eligibility. Exclusion reasons will be recorded against each excluded title.
- c. **Data collection process.** A comprehensive data extraction form will be developed and trialled on a limited selection of titles to confirm functionality. It will then be used by the sole reviewer (review author) to limit extraction bias across all selected titles. Any previously unidentified overlapping, duplicate or companion titles will be analysed to ensure data is only extracted and collected once.

13. **Data items.** Data to be extracted include the type and size of organisations, general demographics of employees, specific policy elements identified, country of origin, measurable outcomes, type of DHBH behaviour, and resolution options. The flexibility to extract additional data will be retained by the author, with finalised data extraction criteria to be detailed in the final report.

14. Outcomes and prioritisation.

- a. **Primary outcome.** The primary outcome of the rapid literature review will be the identification of specific elements for inclusion in a DHBH policy to enhance and support its effective and consistent application, to effectively address and therefore reduce DHBH behaviour within organisation.
- b. **Secondary outcome.** The secondary outcome is the identification of specific requirements for the management and reduction of DHBH within military organisations.

15. **Risk of bias in individual studies.** To assess the risk of bias (RoB) within this rapid review, the methodological quality of potential studies will be assessed by using the Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI) tools. Zeng et al. (2015) assessed the JBI tool as being one of only six RoB assessment tools available to assess all design types, with JBI having the widest range of methodological assessment tools (Ma et al., 2020), allowing the wide range of studies expected from this rapid review to be assessed with a common RoB framework. The JBI tools have been found to be more sensitive to aspects of validity, with greater coherence, than the critical appraisal skills program (CASP) tool which is second only to the JBI for number of assessment tools (Hannes et al., 2010). For this review, all studies will be assessed by the primary researcher only. Any studies with an unclear outcome will be annotated and included in the review.

16. **Data synthesis.**

- a. **Rapid Literature Review.** Thematic analysis is an effective analysis approach for applied research such as policy or practice arenas and being independent of theory and epistemology is a useful tool for an analysis founded on pragmatism (Braun & Clarke, 2014). The rapid literature review will be analysed via a thematic analysis following the approach detailed by Braun and Clarke (2006) using NVivo software to identify key elements of an effective DHBH policy.
- b. **Qualitative interview.** The qualitative interview data will also be analysed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) process, allowing for the identification of themes across the complete data set rather than merely within an individual interview (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This too will be supported by NVivo software.
- c. **Data synthesis.** Integration of the data sets will occur at the interpretation and reporting level using a woven narrative approach allowing for the results to be discussed together in a thematic manner (Fetter, Curry, & Creswell, 2013). Assessment of the confirmed, expanded and potentially discordant themes will enable recommendations to be made for elements to be included in a reviewed NZDF policy at address DHBH behaviour and its impacts effectively and efficiently.

17. **Meta-bias(es).** No meta-analyses will be conducted.

18. **Confidence in cumulative evidence.** The quality of evidence will be assessed using the Grading of Recommendations Assessment, Development and Evaluation (GRADE) methodology to provide a transparent and structured approach for summarizing and rating the quality of evidence for each outcome detailed in this rapid review. The quality of evidence will be assessed across the domains of risk of bias, consistency, directness, precision and publication bias, using additional domains if deemed appropriate. The overall quality of evidence will be rated as high, moderate, low, or very low for a given outcome, according to the level of certainty and the likely impact of further research on the confidence of estimates of effect.

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Appendix J

Deviations from the Registered Rapid Review Protocol

Exclusion Criteria

During the conduct of the rapid review searches, additional exclusions were identified to produce more targeted search results. These exclusions are as follows, and were applied to all search criteria and screening processes:

- Non-adults,
- Non employment related DHB
- Studies unrelated to DHB policy or policy implications

Ethical Exclusions

Exclusions were added on ethical grounds to exclude any experimental studies that included the manipulation of environments or interventions to observe the effect of DHB-type behaviour on participants will be excluded on the basis of the ethical principal of beneficence, specifically the requirement to do no harm.²

Information Sources

Due to their status as publisher databases, the following information sources were removed from the search strategy:

- a. Emerald Insight
- b. SpringerLink
- c. Taylor and Francis Online
- d. JSTOR
- e. Sage Journals

Search Strategy

Detailed search criteria across all databases deviated somewhat from what was detailed in the protocol. The search parameters and limitations of each database meant that specific search criteria, varied from database to database. These individualised search criteria are detailed in Appendix K.

Risk of Bias Assessment

Any studies with an unclear outcome will be included in the review to minimise the impact of not having a second researcher validating the assessment of the primary researcher.

During the conduct of the risk of bias appraisals some gaps were identified in the suite of JBI tools available. This required the identification and use of the following appraisal tools in addition the JBI suite:

- a. **Case study.** CEBMa appraisal tool (<https://www.cebma.org/wp-content/uploads/Critical-Appraisal-Questions-for-a-Case-Study.pdf>).
- b. **Literature and integrative review.** John Hopkins Nursing Evidence-Based Practice appraisal tool (https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/evidence-based-practice/docs/appendix_f_nonresearch_evidence_appraisal_tool.pdf).

² National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research. (1979). *The Belmont report: Ethical principles and guidelines for the protection of human subjects of research*. US Department of Health Education and Welfare. <https://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/regulations-and-policy/belmont-report/read-the-belmont-report/index.html>

Data Analysis

Further review of the data analysis options appropriate within this study refined Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis (TA) process identified within the registered protocol to the application of King and Brooks (2018)³ template codebook TA approach. This amendment provided for a more structured and specific TA analysis process that better aligned to the data collected within the rapid review without significant deviation from the intent to apply TA as detailed within the registered protocol.

³ King, N., & Brooks, J. M. (2018). Thematic analysis in organisational research. In C. Cassell, A. L. Cunliffe, & G. Grandy (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative business management research methods: Methods and challenges* (pp. 219–236). Sage. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781526430236>

Appendix K

Detailed Rapid Literature Review Search Criteria

Within the databases included in this rapid review, the search criteria mechanisms were not uniform. This required some of the search criteria specified in the registered protocol to be amended. The primary reasons for this were:

- a. Reducing search results to a more manageable sized outcome
- b. Broadening search results when little or no outcomes were provided by the initial criteria
- c. The search mechanisms themselves required the search process to be amended, such as the inability for Google Scholar to process proximity searches.

To ensure reporting integrity and transparency, each search (amended or otherwise) that was undertaken has been documented and detailed within this appendix.

CINAHL

CINAHL Search 1. Achieved 144 results with the following criteria:

- a. **Keywords.** (Armed force* OR armed service* OR military OR militaries OR para military OR para militaries OR defence force* OR army OR armies OR navy OR navies OR air force*) **AND** (Bully OR bullying OR hazing* OR harass* OR discriminat*) **N5** (Policy OR policies OR strateg* OR program* OR procedur* OR guideline*)
- b. **Subject inclusions.** Military personnel; discrimination; sexual harassment; work environment; bullying; racism; health policy; stigma; mental health; sexual abuse; workplace violence; depression; violence; military services; prejudice; stress disorder; suicidal ideation; suicide; and sexism.

CINAHL Search 2. Achieved 65 results with the following criteria:

- a. **Keywords.** (Armed force* OR armed service* OR military OR militaries OR para military OR para militaries OR defence force* OR army OR armies OR navy OR navies OR air force*) **AND** (Bully OR bullying OR hazing* OR harass* OR discriminat*) **AND** (Policy OR policies OR strateg* OR program* OR procedur* OR guideline*)
- b. **Subject inclusions.** Military personnel; health policy; stress disorders; mental health; sexual abuse; sexual harassment; stigma, work environment; violence; racism; depression; military services; suicide; social work; stress, psychological; and discrimination.

CINAHL Search 3. Achieved 79 results with the following criteria:

- a. **Keywords.** (Armed force* OR armed service* OR military OR militaries OR para military OR para militaries OR defence force* OR army OR armies OR navy OR navies OR air force*) **N5** (Bully OR bullying OR hazing* OR harass* OR discriminat*)
- b. **Subject inclusions.** Military personnel; sexual harassment; sexual abuse; stress disorder; stress, psychological; depression; intra-professional relations; prejudice; rape; violence; discrimination; employment; and sexual trauma.

CINAHL Search 4. Achieved 345 results with the following criteria:

- a. **Keywords.** (Bully or bullying or hazing* or harass* or discriminat*) **N5** (Policy or policies or strateg* or program* or procedur* or guideline*)
- b. **Subject inclusions.** Bullying; discrimination; work environment; racism; prejudice; socioeconomic factors; depression; workplace violence; support, psychosocial; agism; sexual harassment; stress, psychological; coping; and interpersonal relations.

PsycINFO

PsycINFO Search 1. Achieved 69 results with the following criteria:

- a. **Keywords.** (Armed force* OR armed service* OR military OR militaries OR para military OR para militaries OR defence force* OR army OR armies OR navy OR navies OR air force*) AND (Bully OR bullying OR hazing* OR harass* OR discriminat*) N5 (Policy OR policies OR strateg* OR program* OR procedur* OR guideline*)

PsycINFO Search 2. Achieved 17 results with the following criteria:

- a. **Keywords.** (Armed force* OR armed service* OR military OR militaries OR para military OR para militaries OR defence force* OR army OR armies OR navy OR navies OR air force*) AND (Bully OR bullying OR hazing* OR harass* OR discriminat*) AND (Policy OR policies OR strateg* OR program* OR procedur* OR guideline*)

PsycINFO Search 3. Achieved 89 results with the following criteria:

- a. **Keywords.** (Armed force* OR armed service* OR military OR militaries OR para military OR para militaries OR defence force* OR army OR armies OR navy OR navies OR air force*) N5 (Bully OR bullying OR hazing* OR harass* OR discriminat*)

PsycINFO Search 4. Achieved 122 results with the following criteria:

- a. **Keywords.** (Bully or bullying or hazing* or harass* or discriminat*) N5 (Policy or policies or strateg* or program* or procedur* or guideline*)

Medline

Medline Search 1. Achieved 15 results with the following criteria:

- a. **Keywords.** (Armed force* OR armed service* OR military OR militaries OR para military OR para militaries OR defence force* OR army OR armies OR navy OR navies OR air force*) **AND** (Bully OR bullying OR hazing* OR harass* OR discriminat*) **N5** (Policy OR policies OR strateg* OR program* OR procedur* OR guideline*)
- b. **Subject inclusions.** Military inclusions; sexual harassment; bullying; mental health; social discrimination; social support; stress, psychological; cyberbullying; depression; and harassment, non-sexual.

Medline Search 2. Achieved 99 results with the following criteria:

- a. **Keywords.** (Armed force* OR armed service* OR military OR militaries OR para military OR para militaries OR defence force* OR army OR armies OR navy OR navies OR air force*) AND (Bully OR bullying OR hazing* OR harass* OR discriminat*) AND (Policy OR policies OR strateg* OR program* OR procedur* OR guideline*)
- b. **Subject inclusions.** Military personnel; sexual harassment; sex offences; stress disorders; bullying; stress, psychological; depression; social stigma; rape; and interpersonal relations.

Medline Search 3. Achieved 45 results with the following criteria:

- a. **Keywords.** (Armed force* OR armed service* OR military OR militaries OR para military OR para militaries OR defence force* OR army OR armies OR navy OR navies OR air force*) N5 (Bully OR bullying OR hazing* OR harass* OR discriminat*)
- b. **Subject inclusions.** Military personnel; sexual harassment; stress disorders; stress, psychological; bullying; depression; interpersonal relations; prejudice; rape; sexual trauma; social support and aggression.

Medline Search 4. Achieved 276 results with the following criteria:

- a. **Keywords.** (Bully or bullying or hazing* or harass* or discriminat*) N3 (Policy or policies or strateg* or program* or procedur* or guideline*)

- b. **Subject inclusions.** Bullying; discrimination; prejudice; social support; sexual harassment; workplace; social discrimination; racism; stereotyping; and stress, psychological.

Business Source Complete

Business Source Complete Search 1. Achieved 79 results with the following criteria:

- a. **Keywords.** (Armed force* OR armed service* OR military OR militaries OR para military OR para militaries OR defence force* OR army OR armies OR navy OR navies OR air force*) **AND** (Bully OR bullying OR hazing* OR harass* OR discriminat*) **N5** (Policy OR policies OR strateg* OR program* OR procedur* OR guideline*)
- b. **Subject inclusions.** Psychology; bullying; racism; sex discrimination; prejudices; sex crimes; group identity; sexism; sexual harassment of women; stereotypes; offences against the person; prevention; cyberbullying; PTSD; psychological stress; race discrimination; sexual assault; sexual harassment prevention; social stigma; violence against women.
- c. **Thesaurus term inclusions.** Work environment; employment discrimination; sexual harassment; discrimination; race discrimination; bullying in the workplace; sex discrimination in employment.

Business Source Complete Search 2. Achieved 46 results with the following criteria (reduced to abstract search from all text):

- a. **Keywords.** (Armed force* OR armed service* OR military OR militaries OR para military OR para militaries OR defence force* OR army OR armies OR navy OR navies OR air force*) **AND** (Bully OR bullying OR hazing* OR harass* OR discriminat*) **AND** (Policy OR policies OR strateg* OR program* OR procedur* OR guideline*)
- b. **Subject inclusions.** Psychology; sex discrimination; anti-discrimination laws.
- c. **Thesaurus term inclusions.** Employment discrimination; work environment; harassment; sexual harassment; discrimination; race discrimination; bullying in the workplace; sex discrimination in employment.

Business Source Complete Search 3. Achieved 34 results with the following criteria:

- a. **Keywords.** (Armed force* OR armed service* OR military OR militaries OR para military OR para militaries OR defence force* OR army OR armies OR navy OR navies OR air force*) **N5** (Bully OR bullying OR hazing* OR harass* OR discriminat*)
- b. **Subject inclusions.** Sexual harassment; military personnel; armed forces; United States armed forces; navies; women military personnel; military service; bullying; Canadian military; prevention of sexual assault; rape; racism; sex crimes; discrimination in the military; hazing; prevention of harassment; sex discrimination; sexual abuse victims; sexual harassment laws; sexual harassment of women; abuse of military personnel; armies.
- c. **Thesaurus term inclusions.** Harassment; sexual harassment; work environment; employment discrimination; discrimination; police; race discrimination; bullying in the workplace; employment discrimination; glass ceiling (employment); interpersonal relations; organizational behaviour; racial harassment; violence in the workplace.

Business Source Complete Search 4. Achieved 87 results with the following criteria:

- a. **Keywords.** (Bully or bullying or hazing* or harass* or discriminat*) **N3** (Policy or policies or strateg* or program* or procedur* or guideline*)
- b. **Subject inclusions.** Bullying; anti-discrimination laws; sex discrimination; sexual harassment prevention; age discrimination; sexual harassment of women; offences against the person; bullying prevention; complaints and complaining; gender inequality; harassment – law and legislation; sex crimes; anti-bullying laws; employment discrimination; sexual assault; sexual harassment law; sexual harassment investigation; prevention; victims of bullying; investigations; sex discrimination; work environment; discrimination policy; sexism; discrimination prevention.
- c. **Thesaurus term inclusions.** Sexual harassment; employment discrimination; work environment; harassment; discrimination; bullying in the workplace; race discrimination; sex discrimination in

employment; employment discrimination; age discrimination in employment; violence in the workplace; employment complaints; interpersonal relations.

SCOPUS

SCOPUS Search 1. Achieved 129 results with the following criteria:

a. **Search criteria.**

ALL ((*armed AND force** OR *armed AND service** OR *military OR militaries OR para AND military OR para AND militaries OR defence AND force** OR *army OR armies OR navy OR navies OR air AND force**) AND (*bully OR bullying OR hazing** OR *harass** OR *discriminat**) W/5 (*policy OR policies OR strateg** OR *program** OR *procedur** OR *guideline**)) AND PUBYEAR > 2004 AND (LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, "SOC") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, "PSYC") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, "ARTS") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, "BUSI") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, "MULT") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, "HEAL")) AND (LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Sexual Harassment") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Human") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Humans") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Adult") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Military Personnel") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Military") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "United States") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Workplace") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Army") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Psychology") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Discrimination") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Sexual Assault") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Depression") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Bullying") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Sexual Crime") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Prevalence") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Armed Forces") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Hazing") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Interpersonal Relations") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Military Service") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Policy") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Prevention") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Sex Offenses") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Employment") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Posttraumatic Stress Disorder") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Gender Harassment") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Harassment") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Organizational Culture") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Physical Abuse") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Police") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Psychological Well Being") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Racism") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Sexism") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Social Psychology") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Violence") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Absenteeism") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "British Armed Forces") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Military Culture") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Sexual Coercion") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Sexual Misconduct") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Sexual Trauma") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Threat") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Best practice"))

SCOPUS Search 2. Achieved 106 results with the following criteria:

a. **Search criteria.**

ALL (*armed AND force** OR *armed AND service** OR *military OR militaries OR para AND military OR para AND militaries OR defence AND force** OR *army OR armies OR navy OR navies OR air AND force**) AND TITLE-ABS-KEY (*bully OR bullying OR hazing** OR *harass** OR *discriminat**) AND TITLE-ABS-KEY (*policy OR policies OR strateg** OR *program** OR *procedur** OR *guideline**)) AND PUBYEAR > 2004 AND (LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Human") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Humans") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Military Personnel") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Soldier") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "United States") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Armed Forces") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Adult") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Policy") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Army") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Discrimination") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Sexual Harassment") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Military Service") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Posttraumatic Stress Disorder") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Social Discrimination") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Depression") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Sexual Assault") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Sexual Crime") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Trauma") OR LIMIT-

TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Violence") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "British Armed Forces") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Bullying") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Canadian Armed Forces") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Military Sexual Trauma") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Policy Implementation") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Rape") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Sex Offenses") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Stress Disorders, Post-Traumatic")) AND (LIMIT-TO (LANGUAGE, "English")) AND (LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, "SOCI") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, "PSYC") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, "ARTS") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, "BUSI"))

SCOPUS Search 3. Achieved 28 results with the following criteria (expanded proximity to AND due to lack of results):

a. Search criteria.

ALL (*armed* AND *force** OR *armed* AND *service** OR *military* OR *militaries* OR *para* AND *military* OR *para* AND *militaries* OR *defence* AND *force** OR *army* OR *armies* OR *navy* OR *navies* OR *air* AND *force**) AND ALL (*bully* OR *bullying* OR *hazing** OR *harass** OR *discriminat**) AND PUBYEAR > 2004 AND (LIMIT-TO (PUBSTAGE, "final") AND LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE, "ar") OR LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE, "bk") OR LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE, "ch") AND LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, "SOCI") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, "ARTS") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, "PSYC") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, "BUSI") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, "DECI") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, "MULT") AND LIMIT-TO (LANGUAGE, "English") AND (LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, "ECON") AND LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Discrimination") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Sexual Harassment") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Peacekeeping") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Armed Forces") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Job Satisfaction") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Military") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Policy") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Prejudice") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Racism") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Violence") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Army") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Gender Harassment"))

SCOPUS Search 4. Achieved 75 results with the following criteria (reduced to title/abstract/keyword due to unmanageable number of results with all text):

a. Search criteria. TITLE-ABS-

KEY ((*bully* OR *bullying* OR *hazing** OR *harass** OR *discriminat**) W/5 (*policy* OR *policies* OR *strateg** OR *program** OR *procedur** OR *guideline**)) AND PUBYEAR > 2004 AND (LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, "SOCI") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, "PSYC") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, "ARTS") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, "BUSI") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, "MULT")) AND (LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Human") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Bullying") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Humans") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Adult") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Discrimination") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Psychology") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Sexual Harassment") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Racism") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Cyberbullying") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Policy") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Aggression") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Violence") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Prevention") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Workplace") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Depression") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Intervention") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Social Support") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Workplace Bullying") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Coping") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Harassment") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Social Discrimination") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Discrimination (Psychology)") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Interpersonal Relations") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Peer Victimization") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Sexism") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Perceived Discrimination")) AND (LIMIT-TO (LANGUAGE, "English")) AND (LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "National Institute on Drug Abuse") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "Centers for Disease Control and Prevention") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "National Institute on Aging") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "National Natural Science Foundation of China") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "Ministerio de Economía y Competitividad") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "National Institute of Justice") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-

SPONSOR, "National Institute of Child Health and Human Development") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "Medical Research Council") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "Health Resources and Services Administration") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "National Cancer Institute") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "National Office for Philosophy and Social Sciences") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "Japan Society for the Promotion of Science") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "National Health and Medical Research Council") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "Norges Forskningsråd") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "U.S. Department of Education") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "Health Services Research and Development") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "Institute of Education Sciences") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "Office of Justice Programs") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "European Regional Development Fund") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "Maternal and Child Health Bureau") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "National Eye Institute") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "National Institute for Health Research") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "National Institute of Food and Agriculture") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "U.S. Department of Justice") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "United States Agency for International Development") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "Fahs-Beck Fund for Research and Experimentation") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "Jordan University of Science and Technology") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "Ministry of Higher Education, Malaysia") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "Ministry of Science and Technology, Taiwan") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "U.S. Department of Energy") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "U.S. Department of Health and Human Services") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "American College of Surgeons") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "Cecil G. Sheps Center for Health Services Research, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "Center for Health Administration Studies") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "Children's Hospital of Philadelphia") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "Department of Health, Australian Government") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "European Cooperation in Science and Technology") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "Fonds de Recherche du Québec-Santé") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "Fonds de Recherche du Québec-Société et Culture") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "Howard Hughes Medical Institute") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "International AIDS Society") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "National Institute of Nursing Research") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "National Key Research and Development Program of China") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "Office of Naval Research") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "Ontario Mental Health Foundation") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "School of Medicine, Duke University") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "U.S. Department of Agriculture") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "U.S. Food and Drug Administration") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief") OR LIMIT-TO (FUND-SPONSOR, "United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization")) AND (EXCLUDE (EXACTKEYWORD, "Adolescent") OR EXCLUDE (EXACTKEYWORD, "Chil

d") OR EXCLUDE (EXACTKEYWORD, "Middle Aged") OR EXCLUDE (EXACTKEYWORD, "Young Adult") OR EXCLUDE (EXACTKEYWORD, "Crime Victims") OR EXCLUDE (EXACTKEYWORD, "Aged") OR EXCLUDE (EXACTKEYWORD, "Student") OR EXCLUDE (EXACTKEYWORD, "Longitudinal Study") OR EXCLUDE (EXACTKEYWORD, "Schools") OR EXCLUDE (EXACTKEYWORD, "Students") OR EXCLUDE (EXACTKEYWORD, "Animals") OR EXCLUDE (EXACTKEYWORD, "Adolescents") OR EXCLUDE (EXACTKEYWORD, "Statistics And Numerical Data") OR EXCLUDE (EXACTKEYWORD, "Nonhuman") OR EXCLUDE (EXACTKEYWORD, "HIV Infections") OR EXCLUDE (EXACTKEYWORD, "Human Immunodeficiency Virus Infection") OR EXCLUDE (EXACTKEYWORD, "High School") OR EXCLUDE (EXACTKEYWORD, "Middle School") OR EXCLUDE (EXACTKEYWORD, "Education") OR EXCLUDE (EXACTKEYWORD, "Juvenile") OR EXCLUDE (EXACTKEYWORD, "Acoustic Stimulation") OR EXCLUDE (EXACTKEYWORD, "Animal Experiment") OR EXCLUDE (EXACTKEYWORD, "HIV") OR EXCLUDE (EXACTKEYWORD, "Health Care Delivery") OR EXCLUDE (EXACTKEYWORD, "School Child") OR EXCLUDE (EXACTKEYWORD, "Task Performance") OR EXCLUDE (EXACTKEYWORD, "Adolescent Behavior") OR EXCLUDE (EXACTKEYWORD, "Auditory Stimulation") OR EXCLUDE (EXACTKEYWORD, "Child Behavior") OR EXCLUDE (EXACTKEYWORD, "Drug Dependence") OR EXCLUDE (EXACTKEYWORD, "Mother") OR EXCLUDE (EXACTKEYWORD, "Substance-Related Disorders") OR EXCLUDE (EXACTKEYWORD, "Teacher") OR EXCLUDE (EXACTKEYWORD, "Age Factors") OR EXCLUDE (EXACTKEYWORD, "Aging") OR EXCLUDE (EXACTKEYWORD, "Climate") OR EXCLUDE (EXACTKEYWORD, "Disease Severity") OR EXCLUDE (EXACTKEYWORD, "Neuropsychological Tests") OR EXCLUDE (EXACTKEYWORD, "Patient Attitude"))

Google Scholar

For all Google Scholar searches:

- a. **Saturation point.** Search result title/abstract scanned, only results that meet the search criteria added to lit review lib. Review continued to page 10 as a minimum, or 5 pages after the last selected item, which is the greater number.
- b. **Duplication.** Results that were selected on prior searches on Google Scholar in this process (as indicated by a change in text title colour) were not selected to reduce duplication

Google Scholar Search 1. Proximity searches not able to be conducted on Google Scholar so Search 1 not completed.

- Search #3 – proximity search changed to AND
- Search #4 – proximity search changed to AND

Google Scholar Search 2. Achieved a total of 35 results. Due to character limitations in the search window, this search was separated into two searches. The totals from the individual searches were then combined to determine the final total for this overall search. The two sub-search criteria were:

- a. **Sub-search 1.** 23 results - (Armed force* OR armed service* OR military OR militaries OR para military) AND (Bully OR bullying OR hazing* OR harass* OR discriminat*) AND (Policy OR policies OR strateg* OR program* OR procedur* OR guideline*)
- b. **Sub-search 2.** 12 results - (para militaries OR defence force* OR army OR armies OR navy OR navies OR air force*) AND (Bully OR bullying OR hazing* OR harass* OR discriminat*) AND (Policy OR policies OR strateg* OR program* OR procedur* OR guideline*)

Google Scholar Search 3. Achieved 16 results with the following criteria (proximity search changed to AND due to Google Scholar limitations):

- a. **Keywords.** (Armed force* OR armed service* OR military OR militaries OR para military OR para militaries OR defence force* OR army OR armies OR navy OR navies OR air force*) AND (Bully OR bullying OR hazing* OR harass* OR discriminat*)

Google Scholar Search 4. Achieved 49 results with the following criteria (proximity search changed to AND due to Google Scholar limitations):

- a. **Keywords.** (Bully or bullying or hazing* or harass* or discriminat*) **AND** (Policy or policies or strateg* or program* or procedur* or guideline*)

Appendix L

Initial Rapid Literature Review Codebook Template

Parent Code	Child Code	Description
Policy development		Elements specific to the development of an effective DHB policy rather than generic policy development.
	Dissemination of policy	How can a DHB policy be effectively broadcast across an organisation.
	Over all policy content	What broad elements need to be contained within a DHB policy.
	Policy language and aims	Specific language requirements such as detailed or generalised definitions, inclusive or generalised language to support a DHB policy.
	Stakeholder engagement	What stakeholders need to be involved with DHB policy development, and at what stages.
	What doesn't work	What can be harmful or ineffective when developing DHB policies.
DHB prevention		Elements detailed/required within a DHB policy to support prevention.
	Leadership	Impact of leadership on DHB and what can be specified within a DHB policy to reduce DHB and improve the application of the policy.
	Organisational culture	What impact can organisational culture have on prevention options, and what can be done within a DHB policy to improve it.
	Policy enforcement and monitoring	How to ensure the policy requirements are enforced and applied consistently.
	General Training	Training options to support DHB prevention and policy application.
	Training - Common training and programmes	Training or programmes for all members of an organisation such as bystander training, explaining what is and isn't DHB, education on the policy processes, with a view to help prevent DHB, identify it and educate individuals on the policy to address it.
	Training - Manager and Commander training and programmes	Training specific to managers and commanders to educate on how to apply the policy, and be aware of inappropriate behaviour before it results in reports.
	What doesn't work	What programmes or training can be harmful when striving for a DHB-free organisation, what can have unintended but negative outcomes.
Reporting processes		Options and recommendations for the reporting of DHB incidents.
	Initial reporting options	Different options for targets or witnesses to make initial reports of DHB behaviour.

Formal complaints process	Options for when a more formal pathway is required due, such as due to the severity of the situation, the wishes of the target or the power imbalance between target and alleged perpetrator.
Safety and confidentiality	How can the safety and confidentiality of targets, witnesses and alleged perpetrators be maintained.
False or vexatious reports	Options for when a report of DHB is found to be vexatious or malicious (not when DHB has not been found but the report was made in good faith).
What doesn't work	What processes or procedures inadvertently reduce reporting or make it harder for targets or witnesses to make reports safely?
Investigation process	What potential DHB investigation options are appropriate.
Initial investigations	What procedure should these follow, who should conduct them, what training would be required to conduct these investigations, and what outcomes should they look to address.
Further or formal investigations	Options for undertaking investigations of reported DHB incidents at a formal level, or after an initial investigation has found a prima facie case. To include what procedure should these follow, who should conduct them, what training would be required to conduct these investigations, and what outcomes should they look to address.
What doesn't work	What processes or procedures inadvertently reduce the transparency or legitimacy of an investigation process and the associated outcomes, limiting the effectiveness of a DHB policy to meet its specified outcomes.
Resolution phase	What does resolution in a DHB situation look like for all parties, including the organisation.
Resolution options	Including formal and informal options.
Incident follow up	What processes need to be in place to ensure the resolution was implemented correctly and was effective, and what the process needs to be if the resolution fails.
What hampers resolution	What elements of the proceeding process, organisation culture etc lead to reduced effectiveness of planned resolution actions.
Organisational reporting	What reporting processes need to be in place at the organisational level to track the prevalence and trends of DHB within NZDF, and to feed that information back into DHB prevention, creating a cyclical process.

Appendix M

Application of Information Power Model for Sample Size

Dimensions of Information Power	Information Power within Current Study		
	Application of Information Power	Level of Information Power	Related Sample Size
Aim	Aim is narrow, focusing specifically on DHB policy elements within NZDF	Higher	Smaller
Specificity	Participants are highly specific to the research questions as all have direct experience with the policy in question.	Higher	Smaller
	With the addition of the quota purposive sampling participants were selected based on their ability to not only share specific experiences, but to ensure identified population groups within NZDF were represented.	Higher	Smaller
Theory	Within a pragmatist paradigm, a wider variety of theories and concepts have been integrated within this research. This indicates that a larger sample size may be required to effectively address all the theoretical perspectives identified.	Lower	Larger
Dialogue	The researcher is new to qualitative research and collecting interview data.	Lower	Larger
	The researcher has extensive experience with the subject matter through their experience with the policy under review, and their previous work with trauma within the NZDF.	Higher	Smaller
	The researcher has 25 years military service with NZDF which enables them to engage deeply with participants through their understanding of NZDF culture, structure and language. The military cultural competence (see Meyer et al, 2018; Atuel & Castro, 2018) this experience brings provides a safe place for participants to raise potentially difficult issues as they know there is no need to explain, translate or justify their responses.	Higher	Smaller
Analysis	The embedded case study design of this research lends itself to a smaller sample size than the larger sample size required within a cross-case research design.	Higher	Smaller
Assessment within current study		High	Small

Appendix N

Semi-Structured Interview Participation Invitations

NZDF Directorate of Safety Monthly Newsletter Participation Invitation

The article circled in red was included in the May and June 2023 newsletters. This newsletter is sent via email to all NZDF health and safety practitioners, and is also posted on the Directorate of Safety intranet page.

DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, BULLYING AND HAZING (DHB) POLICY REVIEW

From LTCOL Mish Werder, Director of Safety
Special Project Officer
BA, PGDipHealSc, MIntlSy (Dist), psc(j)

Discrimination, harassment, bullying and hazing (DHB) behaviours are health and safety hazards that cause harm to individuals and detract from the operational readiness of the NZDF. With this understanding that DHB is a workplace hazard rather than an individual issue, responsibility for this has been relocated alongside Op RESPECT, under DoS.

The priority for work in this space is the rewriting of the existing DHB policy ([DFO 3 New Zealand Defence Force Human Resource Manual, Part 5, Chapter 3](#)) which is over ten years old and predates the HSWA 2015. The intent of this review is to develop a policy that supports NZDF operational effectiveness by ensuring that NZDF values of Tū Kaha (courage), Tū Tika (commitment), Tū Tira (comradeship) and Tū Māia (integrity) are upheld. This will assist in creating and maintaining environments for military and civilian personnel that are free from DHB as a key enabler for developing high performing teams and NZDF mission success. To achieve this, the policy review will address the processes and options for reporting DHB, investigating reports of DHB, and options to resolve

DHB for the individuals involved and restoring balance in the workplace.

To inform this policy development NZDF has approved a piece of research to identify what international best practice is for DHB policies, and how best to tailor that for the specific environment of NZDF. To assist with this process we are interested in hearing from people, both military and civilian personnel, who have had experience with the current DHB policy. Specifically, we are focusing on two groups who have had experience with the current DHB policy. The first group are those who have had experience of the current policy as a target or witness of DHB. The second group is for commanders, managers, or other roles such as Anti-Harassment Advisors (AHAs) who have had experience in applying the current policy to resolve a DHB situation.

For further information on what this would involve please contact DHBpolicyreview@nzdf.mil.nz with the subject heading "DHB Interviews." Please note that there are a limited number of interview places available and additional criteria to meet to ensure there is good representation across all NZDF personnel. Ngā mihi mahana nui.

Email invitation to NZDF Anti-Harassment Advisors (AHAs) and investigators

Within the NZDF, AHAs are trained and tasked with providing advice to members seeking information on options to resolve discrimination, harassment, bullying, and hazing behaviours, and to provide guidance and support while they navigate the resolution option the target or witness has chosen. They are also well placed to provide commanders and manager information on the resolution of such behaviour.

The email below was sent to all current AHAs after engagement and support from the overall AHA oversight element. The email was sent from an email address set up specifically for the purpose of identifying participants for the interviews, and no information on who responded was passed to AHA or investigator's managers or the overall oversight element. A similarly worded email was sent to the investigators separately. AHAs as a cohort are aware of who each other is, and their participation in the AHA role along with their names, locations and contact details are prominently displayed across NZDF both in hard form such as on unit noticeboards and on the relevant NZDF intranet pages. Thus, there was no additional risk or breach of privacy or confidentiality in sending the invitations to the group AHA email address. The email to the investigators was sent using the blind copy (BCC) addressee function. The email read:

From: DHB Policy Review

Sent: xxx

To: xxx

Cc: xxx

Subject: Invitation to participate in Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying research

Kia ora koutou,

I am sending you this email in your capacity as an AHA to advise you of research that is being undertaken within the discrimination, harassment, bullying and hazing (DHB) space.

DHB behaviours are workplace hazards that can cause harm to individuals and detract from the operational readiness of the NZDF.

The priority for work in this space is the rewriting of the existing DHB policy (DFO 3, Part 5, Chapter 3). NZDF, along with Auckland University of Technology who is supervising the research, has approved a piece of research to identify what international best practice is for DHB policies, and how best to tailor that for the specific environment of NZDF.

Responsibility for this research and policy development has been relocated alongside Op Respect, under the Directorate of Safety.

To assist with the research and policy development, NZDF is interested in hearing from members of the NZDF who have had experience applying the current DHB policy to resolve DHB situations, as well as targets and witnesses of DHB who have had experience navigating this policy. Your role as an AHA can provide a unique perspective of this policy. The research is concerned with how the policy itself did or did not support the resolution of the situation, not the specifics of the situation or the people involved.

There are a limited number of interview places available.

For further information on what this would involve please

contact DHBpolicyreview@nzdf.mil.nz with the subject heading "DHB Interviews - AHA". Access to this e-mail address is restricted to LTCOL Mish Werder who is conducting the research.

Please note that this research is also meeting the research criteria for the degree of a Masters of Philosophy for the researcher.

Ngā mihi mahana,
Mish

LTCOL Michling Werder

Dir of Safety Special Project Officer, Directorate of Safety
Te Ope Kātua o Aotearoa | New Zealand Defence Force

Email Invitation to Individuals Known to the Researcher, or Referred by Others

Recipients of this email were purposefully identified from NZDF members known to the researcher, or referred to the researcher by others. Criteria for this selection was broader than the detailed purposeful selection criteria in order to encourage a wider response from email recipients, subsequently offering a broader range of potential participants for the detailed selection criteria to be applied to. This email read:

From: DHB Policy Review

Sent: xxx

To: xxx

Cc: xxx

Subject: Invitation to participate in Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying research

Kia ora koutou,

I am sending you this email as our paths have crossed sometime in the past and I felt that you may have an interest in being involved with a piece of research I am undertaking, or perhaps knowing someone who would be interested and passing this on to them.

I am currently working towards redeveloping and updating the current NZDF Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying (DHB) policy (DFO 3, Part 5, Chapter 3). This policy is over ten years old, predates the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 and is no longer aligned to more recent NZDF policies. DHB behaviours are health and safety hazards that cause harm to individuals, detract from the operational readiness of the NZDF and are contrary to the values and ethos of the NZDF. With the accepted change of focus supported by the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 that sees DHB as a workplace hazard rather than an individual issue, responsibility for the DHB policy has been relocated alongside Op Respect, under the Directorate of Safety.

The intent of this policy review is to develop a policy that supports NZDF operational effectiveness by ensuring that NZDF values of Courage, Commitment, Comradeship and Integrity are upheld. This will assist in creating and maintaining environments for military and civil staff that are free from DHB as a key enabler for developing high performing teams and NZDF mission success. To achieve this, the policy review will address the processes and options for reporting DHB, investigating these reports, and options to resolve DHB for the individuals involved and restoring balance in the workplace.

To inform this policy development NZDF, along with Auckland University of Technology (who is supervising the research) has approved a piece of research to identify what international best practice is for DHB policies, and how best to tailor those for the specific environment of NZDF. To assist with this process we are interested in hearing from people, both military and civil staff, who have had experience with the current DHB policy. Specifically, we are focussing on two groups of people:

- a. Individuals who have had experience applying the current DHB policy to resolve incidents of DHB such as commanders, managers or roles such as AHA's; and
- b. Individuals who have had to navigate the current DHB policy from the perspective of a target or witness of DHB behaviour.

All information that may identify an individual from either group will be removed from their interview responses. It is not the specifics of the DHB situation or the people

involved that the research is interested in, instead it is concerned with how the policy itself did or did not support the resolution of the situation, not the details of the situation itself.

For further information on what participation would involve please contact me on DHBpolicyreview@nzdf.mil.nz with the subject heading "DHB Interviews". If you know of someone else who you think may be interested in participating in this research, please feel free to forward his email to them.

There are a limited number of interview places available, with additional criteria to meet to ensure there is good representation across all NZDF personnel.

Please note that this research is also meeting the research criteria for the degree of a Masters of Philosophy for the researcher.

Ngā mihi mahana,

Mish

LTCOL Mish Werder [BA, PGDipHealSc, MIntISy (Dist), psc(j)]

Dir of Safety Special Project Officer, Directorate of Safety

Appendix O

Demographic Data Collection Form for Semi-Structured Interviews

Sample group: _____

Participant code: _____

The below demographic data will be used to ensure that sufficient diversity of participants is achieved across both sample groups. Your name will not be linked to this data.

For military members please answer questions 1, 2, 3 and 5

For civilian members please answer questions 1, 4 and 5

1. Gender – Select one option

☐

Male

☐

Female

☐

Prefer not to specify

☐

Other

2. Service – Select one option

☐

Army (go to Question 3)

☐

Navy (go to Question 3)

☐

Air Force (go to Question 3)

☐

Civil Staff (go to Question 4)

5. Ethnicity – Select all options that apply

☐

Māori

☐

Pacific Peoples

☐

Asian

☐

Middle Eastern, Latin
American and African

☐

Pakeha

☐

European

☐

Other

3. Rank – Select one option

☐

Up to Cpl (equivalent)

☐

Sgt - WO (equivalent)

☐

2Lt - Capt (equivalent)

☐

Maj + (equivalent)

4. Civilian position – Select one option

☐

Non-manager

☐

Manager

Appendix P

Semi-structured Interview Guides

Commanders and Managers Interview Guide

Introduction

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. The purpose of this interview is to gain a better understanding of the issues managers and commanders have when attempting to resolve a DHB situation by using the current NZDF DHB policy. By doing this we can identify what needs to change in the new DHB policy to better support and inform managers and commanders to effectively resolve the situation, and restore balance within the workplace. So, there are no right or wrong answers to any of these questions, it is your experience of interacting with the policy that is of value.

Participation in this study is voluntary and your decision to participate, or not participate is entirely your own. The interview should take approximately one hour. With your permission, I would like to audio record the interview because I don't want to miss any of your comments. All responses will be kept confidential, and any information that could identify these responses as yours will be removed. None of your responses will be shared with anyone in your command chain, or anyone outside the research team in any way that could identify you.

While this interview is specifically addressing your experiences with the current NZDF DHB policy, it is not possible to completely separate this from the situation that led you to need that policy. You may decline to answer any question, or stop the interview at any time, for any reason, to have a break.

Are there any questions about what I have explained? May I turn on the digital recorder?

Establishing Background Context

1. Before we begin, could you tell me a bit about your current role within NZDF?
 - **Prompt:** How long have you been in this role? What are the best things about this role?
 - **Prompt:** Was this the same role you were in when you found yourself needing the current DHB policy? **If yes:** move on to the next question. **If no:** what role were you in when that occurred? How long ago was that? Was that the same rank/level you are now?
2. Can you tell me a little about the situation that led to you needing the current DHB policy?
 - **Prompt:** What occurred? When? Where? Was this a one-off incident or part of a pattern
 - **Prompt:** What was your role? Who else was involved?
 - **Prompt:** Can you tell me about what concerned you the most about this incident/situation?

Reporting

3. Can you tell me about how this situation was reported to you?
 - **Prompt:** Can you describe how you were able to identify this behaviour as DHB? What role did the policy have in that process? Was the policy clear on what role you had?
4. What challenges (if any) did you experience on receiving the report of this DHB situation?
 - **Prompt:** How did you deal with any challenges? Did the policy help? How?
 - **Prompt:** What could have made this process easier for you?

Informal Resolution

5. What was your understanding from the policy about informal resolution options that were available?
 - **Prompt:** What were your thoughts on how effective these options might be? Why was that?

- **Prompt:** Are there any factors that you think would make informal resolution options are more useful and effective option to resolve DHB?
6. What challenges (if any) did you experience while undertaking an informal resolution process?
- **Prompt:** What are your thoughts on how well the policy prepared you for this process?
 - **Prompt:** Did this process resolve the DHB situation? How?
 - **Prompt:** What could have made improved this process? Made it more effective?

Formal Resolution

7. What was your understanding from the policy about formal resolution options that were available?
- **Prompt:** What were your thoughts on how effective these options might be? Why was that?
 - **Prompt:** What were your concerns (if any) about your level of knowledge, or the guidance provided in the policy to effectively navigate the policy requirements?
 - **Prompt:** Are there any factors that you think would make formal resolution options are more useful and effective options to resolve DHB?
8. What challenges (if any) did you experience while undertaking a formal resolution process?
- **Prompt:** What are your thoughts on how well the policy prepared you for this process?
 - **Prompt:** Did this process resolve the DHB situation? How?
 - **Prompt:** What could have made improved this process? Made it more effective?

Support in Navigating the DHB Policy

9. After this process was complete, how do you feel about how it was resolved?
- **Prompt:** Was there any follow up? What was this? When did it occur? Who followed up?
 - **Prompt:** Can you tell me about any support you either requested or received during this process? This may have been through friends or peers; NZDF support services, command chain.
 - **Prompt:** Was there additional support that may have been helpful? What would that look like?
10. Can you talk me through any negative reactions (if any) you were aware of in the workplace during or after this resolution process?
- **Prompt:** Was there professional or personal backlash against any party? How was that resolved?
 - **Prompt:** What are your thoughts on resolving this tension in the workplace?

Conclusion

11. Is there any part of your experience navigating the DHB policy that made an impression on you – good or bad - that we haven't discussed today?
- **Prompt:** Additional support? Different resolution options? More information? How would that make it easier for you? Tell me more about that. Why is that important to you?
12. Can you talk me through any additional information or services that would have been helpful to you if the parties (including those managing the situation) to the DHB were diverse (eg: gender, ethnicity)? From each other? From you?
13. Do you have anything else you'd like to share about this topic?

Targets and Witnesses Interview Guide

Introduction

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. The purpose of this interview is to gain a better understanding of the issues targets and witnesses of DHB behaviour have when attempting to resolve the situation by using the current NZDF DHB policy. By doing this we can identify what needs to change in the new DHB policy so individuals feel supported to report DHB, and can trust that the process will effectively resolve the situation without causing additional harm. So, there are no right or wrong answers to any of these questions, it is your experience of interacting with the policy that is of value.

Participation in this study is voluntary and your decision to participate, or not participate is entirely your own. The interview should take approximately one hour. With your permission, I would like to audio record the interview because I don't want to miss any of your comments. All responses will be kept confidential, and any information that could identify these responses as yours will be removed. None of your responses will be shared with anyone in your command chain, or anyone outside the research team in any way that could identify you.

While this interview is specifically addressing your experiences with the current NZDF DHB policy, it is not possible to completely separate this from the situation that led you to need that policy. You may decline to answer any question, or stop the interview at any time, for any reason, to have a break.

Are there any questions about what I have explained? May I turn on the digital recorder?

Establishing Background Context

1. Before we begin, could you tell me a bit about your current role within NZDF?
 - **Prompt:** How long have you been in this role? What are the best things about this role?
 - **Prompt:** Was this the same role you were in when you found yourself needing the current DHB policy? **If yes:** move on to the next question. **If no:** what role were you in when that occurred? How long ago was that? Was that the same rank/level you are now?
2. Can you tell me a little about the situation that led to you needing the current DHB policy?
 - **Prompt:** What occurred? When? Where? Was this a one-off incident or part of a pattern
 - **Prompt:** What was your role? Who else was involved?
 - **Prompt:** Can you tell me about what concerned you the most about this incident/situation?

Reporting

3. Can you tell me about how you got to the point where you decided to report this situation?
 - **Prompt:** Can you describe how you were able to identify this behaviour as DHB? What role did the policy have in that process?
 - **Prompt:** Did the single reporting line impact your decisions? **If yes,** how? **If no,** why was that?
 - **Prompt:** Did you try any other ways to address this situation prior to making the decision to report it? **If yes:** Can you talk me through that? **If no:** Can you talk me through that decision?
4. What challenges (if any) did you experience when reporting this DHB situation?
 - **Prompt:** How did you deal with any challenges? Did the policy help? How?
 - **Prompt:** What could have made this process easier for you?

Informal Resolution

5. What was your understanding from the policy about informal resolution options that were available to you?

- **Prompt:** What were your thoughts on how effective these options might be for your situation? Why was that?
 - **Prompt:** What are your thoughts on how well the policy prepared you for this process?
 - **Prompt:** Are there any factors that you think would make informal resolution options are more useful and effective option to resolve DHB?
6. If you experienced an informal resolution process, what challenges (if any) did you experience?
- **Prompt:** Did this process resolve the DHB situation? How?
 - **Prompt:** What are your thoughts on how well the policy prepared you for this process?
 - **Prompt:** What could have made this process easier for you? More effective?

Formal Resolution

7. What was your understanding from the policy about formal resolution options that were available to you?
- **Prompt:** What were your thoughts on how effective these options might be for your situation? Why was that?
 - **Prompt:** What are your thoughts on how well the policy prepared you for this process?
 - **Prompt:** Are there any factors that you think would make formal resolution options are more useful and effective option to resolve DHB?
8. If you experienced a formal resolution process, what challenges (if any) did you experience?
- **Prompt:** Did this process resolve the DHB situation? How?
 - **Prompt:** What are your thoughts on how well the policy prepared you for this process?
 - **Prompt:** What could have made this process easier for you? More effective?

Support in Navigating the DHB Policy

9. After this process was complete, how do you feel about how it was resolved?
- **Prompt:** Was there any follow up? What was this? When did it occur? Who followed up?
 - **Prompt:** Can you tell me about any support you either requested or received during this process? This may have been through friends or peers; NZDF support services, command chain.
 - **Prompt:** Was there additional support that may have been helpful? What would that look like?
10. Can you talk me through any negative reactions (if any) you faced after reporting this situation?
- **Prompt:** Was there professional or personal backlash? Did you feel believed? Did you feel safe in the workplace? How was that resolved?

Conclusion

11. Is there any part of your experience navigating the DHB policy that made an impression on you – good or bad - that we haven't discussed today?
- **Prompt:** Additional support? Different resolution options? More information? How would that make it easier for you? Tell me more about that. Why is that important to you?
12. Can you talk me through any additional information or services that would have been helpful to you if the parties to the DHB were diverse (eg: gender, ethnicity)? From each other? From you?
13. Do you have anything else you'd like to share about this topic?

Appendix Q

Data Triangulation for Semi-Structure Interview Findings

Themes and codes	% of Interview participants discussing the finding			Interview findings
	TWG ⁽¹⁾ n=14	CMG ⁽²⁾ n=10	Convergence ⁽³⁾	
1. Theme One – Equality under the policy leads to inequity. Focussing on equality within the policy to ensure that all members have the same access to policy actions and protections leads to inequity as factors such as demographics, position, power (both formal and informal) and employee status lead to differing levels of access to the policy, and differing levels of actions being taken and resolutions being applied.				
1.a. Demographics. Demographic differences across employees impacts an individual's access to DHB policy protections and the level of resolution they are able to attain.				
1.a.a. Age and seniority differences	36	40	Partial agreement	While prominence was comparable, the meaning attributed to this finding was not. The CMG felt that in recent years junior staff were less likely to accept poor behaviour without raising it as an issue however, the TWG consistently stated it was more difficult for junior staff to raise DHB issues and were less likely to be taken seriously.
1.a.b. Ethnicity differences	7	20	Agreement	Alongside comparable prominence, both groups stated there was differing treatment that was based on ethnicity and/or nationality.
1.a.c. Gender differences	21	10	Agreement	Alongside comparable prominence, both groups highlighted difficulties directly related to gender differences and how females were treated.
1.b. Employment status. Employment status impacts how a DHB policy is applied to individuals, and the level of resolution available.				
1.b.a. Differing employment status	21	10	Partial agreement	Prominence was inside the margin for agreement but meanings attributed to this finding were not comparable. CMG comments related to difficulties inherent in effectively managing two employment groups with differing legal status and cultures. The TWG focused on the additional legislative and union protections civilian staff had over military personnel in DHB situations, and NZDF's seeming reluctance to address civilian DHB perpetrators.
1.b.b. Duty of care	-	30	Silence	While the TWG sample is silent, the theme that the CMG voiced, that NZDF had a moral obligation and imperative to address DHB and ensure outcomes resolved the issue for individuals and the wider work environment, was evident throughout other TWG responses.
1.b.c. Rank, position and power	36	60	Agreement	While some of the specific comments between the two interview groups differ, the underlying theme that seniority, power and position often protects perpetrators of DHB from consequences and accountability that more junior staff face was common across both.
1.c. Reporting options and processes. How policies are written and their content can have unintended consequences when inequities amongst staff are not considered. Barriers to reporting DHB can result from individual and organisational factors, but all contribute to lower reports being made leaving DHB to continue.				
1.c.a. Barriers to reporting				
▪ Lack of trust in the process	50	50	Agreement	This finding had strong agreement in prominence and meaning, with the impact of a lack of trust in the current DHB process being consistent and covering similar outcomes.
▪ Mandatory reporting	-	10	Silence	The CMG identified that mandatory reporting can have a negative impact on targets, and create an additional barrier to seeking assistance.
▪ Multiple abusers or targets	21	10	Agreement	With a common prominence and meaning, both groups identified the inability of the current DHB policy to address DHB situations with multiple perpetrators or targets.

Themes and codes	% of Interview participants discussing the finding			Interview findings
	TWG ⁽¹⁾ n=14	CMG ⁽²⁾ n=10	Convergence ⁽³⁾	
▪ Power imbalance	50	20	Partial agreement	Prominence did not meet the agreement criteria. While the CMG acknowledged the impact power imbalances can have on reporting DHB, the TWG identified a much broader sphere of influence power had.
▪ Rationalising DHB behaviours	-	20	Silence	A fear of initiating further conflict or the reality of the reporting and investigation process can lead to targets doubting themselves and rationalising that the behaviour they suffered wasn't so bad.
▪ DHB report content and format	28	20	Agreement	With common prominence and meaning, both groups identified that verbal reports should be acted on like written reports, which despite being stated in the current policy, did not occur.
▪ Reporting outside line managers	43	40	Agreement	The prominence and identification of the need for clear and accessible reporting options outside line managers was consistent across both groups.
▪ Retaliation and retribution	36	30	Agreement	The prominence and identification of retaliation and retribution as the reality faced by those reporting DHB was consistent across both interview groups.
▪ Third party reporting	14	50	Partial agreement	Despite a difference in prominence, both groups identified the inability for witnesses to report DHB. The varying prominence was likely due to the number of targets rather than witnesses interviewed.
▪ DHB reports not actioned	43	-	Silence	The CMG was silent on DHB reports not being acted on while the TWG cited often having to report multiple times, through multiple channels before any action was taken.
▪ Hostile work environment	21	-	Silence	The current DHB policy provided no protection for situations where a single person or group of people created a hostile work situation where the individual behaviours did not meet the bullying threshold, but the accumulation of them caused significant harm.
1.d. Target agency and desired outcomes. Inequities limiting access to the potential protections within a DHB policy and how it is applied to them limit agency amongst those who may need to access this policy.				
1.d.a. Target agency	28	60	Partial agreement	Despite a difference in prominence, the sense that those reporting DHB had little control over what then occurred, didn't feel they had viable options and had little ability to challenge unfair processes was common about both groups.
2. Theme Two – Inconsistent application of the policy. While differing DHB situations can require equitable rather than equal actions, all should result in an effective application of the policy that resolves the issue, follows up on actions and records the process. Factors that interfere with this result in inconsistent policy application which undermines the effectiveness of the policy and creates additional inequities which can further alienate and marginalise targets of DHB and negatively impact the organisation.				
2.a. Accountability. An inability or unwillingness to accept responsibility for decisions and/or actions at the individual or organisational level regarding DHB and the application of the policy undermines its effectiveness and the willingness of targets of DHB to engage with the policy or those who are meant to uphold it.				
2.a.a Accountability	71	100	Agreement	There was a comparable prominence and a strongly aligned meaning that accountability was lacking across NZDF, particularly in senior levels, that resulted in perpetrators of DHB often facing little to no consequences.
2.b. Conflicts of interest. Conflicts of interest risk actual, potential or perceived bias in decision making of those with power and influence. Conflicts of interest can undermine both the equity and effectiveness of any DHB policy.				
2.b.a. Manager implicated in DHB	57	50	Partial agreement	Despite a comparable prominence, CMG had a narrower perspective of the impact when a manager is implicated in DHB than the TWG. For TWG, the implication extended beyond participating in DHB to actively or passively providing protection of perpetrators by limiting actions or choosing to take no action.
2.b.b. Use of prerogative	21	30	Partial agreement	A similar prominence did not extend to meaning. The CMG supported the appropriate use of command prerogative to influence decisions, while the TWG found this was used to undermine or even dismiss investigation outcomes that upheld DHB complaints.
2.b.c. Rank and cronyism	64	40	Partial agreement	A similar prominence but not meaning. The CMG finding largely related to senior military and civilian staff not being held to account; the TWG found cronyism was experienced throughout the organisation.

Themes and codes	% of Interview participants discussing the finding			Interview findings
	TWG ⁽¹⁾ n=14	CMG ⁽²⁾ n=10	Convergence ⁽³⁾	
2.c. Leadership. Leadership actions in response to DHB can have both negative and positive impacts on the effectiveness of the policy.				
2.c.a. Leadership modelling positive behaviours	-	40	Silence	While the TWG was silent on this finding, the CMG was vocal on both how vital this was and that current leaders failed to model positive DHB behaviours.
2.c.b. Responsibilities and duty of care	50	60	Agreement	The groups shared prominence and meaning. Common themes were the requirement for leaders to take responsibility for DHB processes and exercise a duty of care, and their inability or unwillingness to do so.
2.d. Management and oversight of policy processes. How the policy is interpreted and applied by management and leaders directly influences the level of policy effectiveness and ultimately equity for DHB targets.				
2.d.a. Burden of proof and evidence	21	20	Agreement	The groups shared prominence and meaning, identifying a lack of understanding of evidence and burden of proof rules, and how to apply them.
2.d.b. HR or legal involvement	36	50	Agreement	Both groups shared prominence and a sense that the organisations HR and legal services were ill placed to provide constructive or appropriate advice for the management of DHB cases.
2.d.c. Immediate and safety actions	43	20	Partial agreement	Despite the shared prominence, the two groups had different meanings for this finding. The CMG focussed on what should be done while the TWG focussed on when their sense of safety had been ignored.
2.d.d. Impartiality	64	50	Agreement	This finding had shared prominence and meaning, albeit from different perspectives with the CMG identifying what should occur while the T&W group provided examples of their experiences with biased and partial investigators and managers.
2.d.e. Inconsistent policy application				
▪ Known DHB and offenders ignored	78	40	Partial agreement	Despite both groups applying a similar meaning to this finding, it was a considerably larger issue for the TWG than the CMG identified.
▪ Known policy inconsistently applied	64	50	Agreement	Despite similar prominence and meaning across both groups, the TWG was far more vehement in their expression of the impact inconsistent DHB policy application had.
2.d.f. Investigations	36	20	Partial agreement	While there was a similar prominence with this finding, the meaning applied to it was not similar. The CMG identified issues with governance and investigating senior people, whereas the TWG questioned poor investigation processes and the ability for NZDF to set aside investigation outcomes.
2.d.g. Lack of management knowledge				
▪ Lack of knowledge of policy and process	43	60	Agreement	Prominence and meaning for was similar this finding. Both groups identified a lack of DHB knowledge adversely impacted how the policy was applied, alongside poor knowledge of DHB processes including investigations.
▪ Minimisation of DHB, trauma and impact	64	20	Partial agreement	Despite the significant difference in prominence, the meaning attributed to this finding was similar. Both groups identified a lack of knowledge or understanding of the impact DHB has, and how that influences actions taken or not taken by commanders and managers.
2.d.h. Timeliness	50	30	Agreement	Both groups acknowledged that delayed processes, regardless of the reason, were detrimental.
2.e. Organisational context. Organisational elements and factors influence the effective and equitable application of a DHB policy. Negative impacts must be mitigated, wherever possible, within the policy itself to ensure consistency and equitable application of the policy.				
2.e.a. Adversarial process	43	40	Partial agreement	With a common prominence, both groups identified that the DHB process was adversarial and worsened by rank and power imbalances between targets and those accused of DHB, but the TWG identified additional elements.
2.e.b. Organisational risk	21	10	Partial agreement	A shared prominence and meaning identified that not addressing DHB equitably or effectively, or not following through on investigation outcomes damages NZDFs reputation up to and including action from WorkSafe NZ for not complying with the HSAW Act.

Themes and codes	% of Interview participants discussing the finding			Interview findings
	TWG ⁽¹⁾ n=14	CMG ⁽²⁾ n=10	Convergence ⁽³⁾	
2.e.c. Disciplinary process	7	50	Partial agreement	Despite a dissimilar prominence both groups acknowledged that using the military justice system to address DHB is problematic for reasons such as the influence of rank, intent of action and the required burden of proof.
2.e.d. Operational needs	-	50	Silence	Recognition from CMG that operational imperatives and requirements (generally a lack of resources), leads to difficulties in identifying and addressing DHB appropriately or in line with the policy.
2.e.e. Protection of offenders	71	60	Agreement	There was common prominence and meaning with both groups identifying that offenders, particularly senior staff, often avoided consequences or sanctions for behaviour that breached expected standards.
2.e.f. Duty of care	14	-	Silence	The TWG identified that there had been little organisational care for them while navigating the DHB process and afterward while the CMG was silent on this issue.
2.e.g. Organisational context and structure works against targets	78	-	Silence	With significant agreement, military TWG members identified how the NZDF context and the military culture made it more difficult to address DHB. This presented in ways such as the formal process penalising targets, managers waiting for perpetrators to be posted and unsanctioned processes or decisions being unable to be challenged.
2.e.h. Organisational cultural competence and understanding	28	-	Silence	Military TWG members stated a lack of understanding of military culture and how that impacted DHB situations in those investigating or resolving DHB consistently resulted in adverse outcomes for military targets of DHB.
2.f. Policy gaps. The lack of effective policy options for all DHB scenarios and targets, and the associated lack of flexibility within the policy to address all scenarios can result in some groups of targets feeling their situation is not covered by policy protections leaving some groups of targets less protected.				
2.f.a. Lack of flexibility and effective options	86	60	Agreement	While the TWG identified more specific issues, the underlying themes that the policy failed to address all DHB situations, failed to offer effective processes and outcomes were common across both groups.
2.f.c. Limited options for military	21	-	Silence	The CMG was silent on the limited options available for military personnel while this was raised as a significant barrier to effective resolution by military targets.
2.g. Policy Impact. The unintended and inequitable effect a DHB policy can have on the personal lives and careers of those impacted by DHB.				
2.g.a. TW - Career impact	100	-	Silence	The silence of these findings from the CMG was unsurprising as the targets of DHB are the only one who can speak with authority on the impact this experience had on them.
2.g.b. TW - Personal impact	93	-	Silence	
2.h. Resolutions and outcomes. Resolution options and outcomes must be appropriate, effective and lead to lasting behaviour change and a restoration of workplace relationships and effectiveness.				
2.h.a. Follow-up	57	50	Agreement	Prominence and meaning aligned for both groups, with both groups discussing the current lack of follow-up, and the requirement for robust audit trails, governance and follow up processes to be implemented and monitored.
2.h.b. Informal options	-	40	Silence	The TWG was silent on this finding. The CMG identified the need for clearer and enforced guidelines on when informal DHB resolution options should be applied and which were appropriate for differing situations, and the need for access to appropriate resources.
2.h.c. It's not DHB, but it's not right	14	30	Agreement	Both groups agreed that there was a requirement to take constructive action to rebuild workplace relationships and workplace environments after a DHB process is over.
2.h.e. Mediation	57	70	Agreement	There was agreement across prominence and meaning with both groups identifying issues with the use of mediation for serious situations or with significant rank/power imbalances. Both groups identified mediation as intimidating and revictimising for targets, often poorly facilitated, and used inappropriately.
2.h.g. No or limited resolution, change or outcome	78	50	Dissonance	While the prominence gap was less than 30%, the strength of TWG responses warrants a lack of agreement assessment. Similarly, there was some overlap in the meaning applied by each group, such as the lack of action taken and not auditable trail to enforce redress and investigation outcomes. However, the TWG went much further, identifying the lack of action even when complaints were upheld, cronyism protecting perpetrators,

Themes and codes	% of Interview participants discussing the finding			Interview findings
	TWG ⁽¹⁾ n=14	CMG ⁽²⁾ n=10	Convergence ⁽³⁾	
2.h.h. Impact of power imbalances	43	10	Partial agreement	untrained investigators being unable to discern outcomes from supplied evidence and being unable to challenge investigation outcomes because they weren't told of the outcomes or actions taken. Despite to divergence in responses in this finding, comments made throughout other findings by the CMG support agreement in prominence. Meanings applied were also similar with informal resolution options found to be ineffective when there is a rank and/or power disparity between the parties to a DHB situation.
2.i. Transparency. Inappropriate use of confidentiality and privacy over transparency can increase distrust in organisational practices, unintentionally alienating and marginalising DHB targets, while protecting DHB perpetrators and reinforcing the minimisation of DHB.				
2.i.a. Transparency	43	50	Agreement	The prominence and identification that greater transparency would lead to more effective DHB management was shared across both groups.
3. Theme Three – Lack of detail and clarity within the policy. While accepting that differing DHB situations can require equitable rather than equal actions, all should result in an effective application of the policy that resolves the issue, follows up on actions and records the process. Factors that interfere with this result in inconsistent policy application which undermines the effectiveness of the policy and creates additional inequities which can further alienate and marginalise targets of DHB and negatively impact the organisation.				
3.a. Policy clarity. Processes and definitions within a DHB policy must be both clear and easily understood to ensure targets can identify their situation and the process their report will take. Similarly, those charged with applying the policy must have clear guidance on how to define DHB situations, identify the appropriate process and apply it.				
3.a.a Definitions and identifying DHB	36	90	Partial agreement	This issue was raised considerably more by the CMG, however the requirement for DHB definitions to be flexible and holistic enough to support all DHB situations, and consistently understood was common across both groups.
3.a.b. DHB process clarity	43	70	Agreement	There was full agreement across prominence and meaning, with both groups identifying the need for clear procedures with supporting guidelines for targets and managers to reduce subjectivity and improve consistency of application.
3.a.c. Hostile work environment	14	-	Silence	While the CMG was silent on this finding, the TWG was clear that the lack of detail or acceptance of surrounding hostile work environments worsened the harm done and prevented the reporting or resolution of this DHB.
3.b. Reporting, evaluation and feedback loop. Without structured and consistent recording of DHB reports and subsequent outcomes it is not possible to measure the effectiveness of any policy, nor is it possible to identify DHB trends within an organisation or over time. Evidence-based evaluation and improvement of the policy is not possible without this detailed measurement.				
3.b.a. Malicious reports	7	10	Agreement	There was full agreement that there needs to be a clear process for addressing blatantly malicious complaints.
3.b.b. No audit of DHB reports, outcomes, or governance	50	60	Agreement	With full agreement, both groups identified an inability to record any actions taken or enforce the policy, and that DHB was addressed differently to other health and safety issues.
3.b.c. Tracking repeat perpetrators	36	40	Agreement	Both groups had experienced an inability for the current policy processes to accurately and formally record and track those found to have participated in DHB behaviour, particularly repeat offenders.
3.c. Support requirements. With such a wide range of support required to implement and manage an ongoing and effective application of a DHB policy, support options and avenues should be clearly identified, easily accesses and sufficiently resourced.				
3.c.a. Effectiveness of support options	86	30	Dissonance	While the CMG spoke solely about inadequacies within the AHA ⁽⁴⁾ system, the TWG was consistent on the ineffective support they received, from no support at all, support being offered to respondents only, or inappropriate and inconsistent advice being provided.
3.c.b. Peer support	21	20	Agreement	Despite agreement peer support can be valuable, it was acknowledged by both groups that there are caveats and it is dependent on individual connections.

Themes and codes	% of Interview participants discussing the finding			Interview findings
	TWG ⁽¹⁾ n=14	CMG ⁽²⁾ n=10	Convergence ⁽³⁾	
3.c.c. Self-help	7	60	Dissonance	The CWG acknowledged there were issues with self-help options which were worsened as power imbalances increased, but there was an expectation that this occurred. Conversely, for the one TWG who attempted self-help, twice, it had no impact on their abuse.
3.c.d. Support for bystanders	21	10	Agreement	Despite a stated expectation for bystanders of DHB to intervene, there are no processes to report or clear support options available which makes the reality of this difficult.
3.c.e. Support for respondents	7	10	Agreement	There was a common acceptance that respondents require support through the DHB as well as targets, particularly when DHB reports are found to be malicious or not made in good faith.
3.c.f. Support for targets	28	60	Partial agreement	While suggestions differed across the groups, there was agreement that the current support options were insufficient and potentially undermined the effective and equitable DHB resolution.
3.c.g. Support for managers and supporters	-	40	Silence	The CMG spoke of a lack of DHB specialists to advise managers, and that a lack of support for AHAs ⁽⁴⁾ such as mentoring, clinical supervision or ongoing training meant many AHAs were unable to provide appropriate advice.
3.c.h. Access to external support	36	-	Silence	While the CMG was silent, the TWG strongly voiced the need for access to ongoing external psychological support alongside a second opinion and/or advocate to review the process and outcome provided.
3.d. Training requirements. To support effective policy application, those it impacts, including those who are tasked with applying it, must be trained on its intent, processes, their responsibilities within the policy, and implications of not adhering to the specified actions and behaviours within the policy.				
3.d.a. General training	28	70	Partial agreement	While this finding was less prominent for the TWG than the CMG, the meaning was consistent with both groups identifying current training as being insufficient in content, delivery methods and consistency.
3.d.b. Supporter training and selection	-	60	Silence	The CMG was consistent in stating the AHA mandate was flawed, with significant gaps in both training and selection processes, often leading to AHA selection being used as remedial training for known bullies.
3.d.c. Commander and manager training	-	50	Silence	Issues raised by the CMG related to the insufficient and poorly detailed training that is currently available that leads to inappropriately applied policy elements and DHB resolution options.
3.d.d. Investigator training	21	-	Silence	With no CMG comment, the TWG identified significant gaps in investigator knowledge including lack of interview skills, poor investigation planning, and insufficient knowledge of evidence rules, burden of proof and DHB itself.

Notes

(1) TWG = Target and witness sample group.

(2) CMG = Commander and manager sample group.

(3) The convergence coding scheme applied is as follows:

Agreement – Full agreement between both data sets on prominence and meaning.

Partial agreement – Agreement between data sets is limited to prominence (+/- 30%) or meaning only.

Silence – One data set is silent on the factor.

Dissonance – There is disagreement or differing meaning attributed the identified factors, and the prominence of the factor is significantly different.

(4) AHA = Anti-harassment advisor.

Appendix R

Rapid Literature Review Themes with Extract Allocation Data

Themes	Description	Articles applied	Extracts applied
1. Theme One – Context. Provides the framework and fundamental elements of any policy. These concepts and questions must be understood from your organisation's perspective before any policy can be drafted as the decisions made here will directly impact and influence the content of any subsequent policy or associated interventions.			
1.a. Organisational context and culture. Developing a DHB policy requires an in-depth understanding of the organisational culture alongside the patterns and prevalence of DHB within the organisation. It also requires that policy makers understand what elements of the organisational context and culture can act as preventative and risk measures for DHB.			
1.a.a. Industry, structure and job conditions	The influence the type of industry or organisation has, its structure and conditions of work can have on preventative and risk factors for DHB. These considerations must be factored into any potential DHB policy.	19	44
1.a.b. Legislation and international conventions	National legislation and international conventions that the nation has signed up to, and how they may influence the underpinning decisions of the policy as well as specific content.	2	6
1.a.c. Minority related factors	Considerations relating to any minority groups specifically within the organisation or industry, and how these may impact the prevalence and potential resolution of DHB within the target organisation.	7	16
1.a.d. Organisational cultural aspects	The influence the type of industry or organisation, its structure and conditions of work can influence an organisation's culture. This culture must be understood as risk and protective factors as they relate to DHB.	14	43
1.a.e. Power imbalance	The need for DHB policies to account for the power imbalances inherent in DHB.	17	25
1.a.f. Tailoring policies	Are DHB policies tailored to specific organisational contexts more effective?	15	29
1.b. Organisational or individual DHB antecedents. Does DHB come from organisational or individual issues, such as a risk management approach which assumes not all risks can be removed versus a zero tolerance or personal focus.			
1.b.a. Individual approach	The implications and effects, intended or otherwise, of using an individual conflict approach to preventing and resolving DHB events.	8	26
1.b.b. Organisational or health and safety approach	The implications of using an organisational and/or health and safety approach to addressing and resolving DHB events.	20	49
• Risk management	The impacts of applying health and safety risk management processes to DHB.	3	21
1.b.c. Responsibility for DHB policy oversight	Where should responsibility for implementing and managing a DHB policy, and the reporting, investigation and resolution processes reside in an organisation.	8	11
1.c. Type of policy. Understanding the various types of policy options available, and the impacts each could have on the organisation.		13	24

Themes	Description	Articles applied	Extracts applied
1.c.a. Legal framework of DHB policies	What does the legislation surrounding DHB state and how does that impact organisational policies.	6	9
1.c.b. Zero tolerance	The potential for unintended consequences of zero tolerance DHB policies.	11	39
2. Theme Two – Content. These are the elements and processes that must be included within an effective DHB policy, including how the policy should be written to best fit within an organisation.			
2.a. Policy development. This code includes elements and requirements that do not necessarily relate to specific content, rather it relates to how the policy should be framed and developed.			
2.a.a. Clarity of language	Specific language requirements support an effective DHB policy.	15	43
2.a.b. Evaluation and recording	Requirement for, and methods to undertake policy evaluation and recording of DHB.		
• Evaluation and recording processes	Options available for evaluating the effectiveness of DHB policies and processes, and for the ongoing recording to DHB data, and how can these be implemented.	14	25
• Requirement for evaluation	Why is evaluation and recording/reporting required, and how can these processes benefit the prevention and resolution of DHB events.	16	34
2.a.c. Implementation and dissemination	Requirements to ensure effective implementation and dissemination of the policy.		
• Effective implementation	The importance of implementation processes and the influence it has on the effectiveness of a DHB policy.	10	19
• Implementation options	What options are available for effectively implementing DHB policies and processes, and what factors or elements should be considered.	13	30
2.a.d. General policy content	What broad elements need to be contained within a policy	21	2
2.a.e Stakeholder engagement	What stakeholders need to be involved with DHB policy development.	18	43
2.b. Policy introduction. This portion of the policy sets the conditions for the policy, including such elements like the purpose, responsibilities, and definitions.			
2.b.a. Definitions	Content and specific wording for DHB definitions.		
• Bullying	Bullying definition for DHB policy.	23	83
• Discrimination	Discrimination definition for DHB policy.	1	1
• Considerations	General definition requirements and considerations.	18	31
• Harassment	Harassment definition for DHB policy.	7	12
• Mobbing	Mobbing definition for DHB policy.	3	6

Themes	Description	Articles applied	Extracts applied
• Reprisals	Reprisal and retribution definitions for a DHB policy.	3	3
• Legitimate actions	Identifying and defining legitimate actions and behaviours.	9	12
2.b.b. Policy purpose	Clearly defines the organisations stance on DHB.	14	21
2.b.c. Roles and responsibilities	Roles and responsibilities in the policy and who will be accountable.	11	17
2.c. DHB prevention. Elements required within a DHB policy to support prevention.			
2.c.a. Enforcement and consistency	Ensuring policy requirements are enforced and applied consistently and DHB records are maintained as this impacts the effectiveness of any DHB policy.	24	53
2.c.b. Integrated DHB interventions	DHB policies alone are insufficient to prevent this behaviour in organisations and must be part of an integrated suite of actions and interventions.	17	46
• Organisational culture	The influence organisational culture has on DHB and how it is reported, investigated, and resolved.	14	41
• Training	Training options to support DHB prevention and policy application.		
▪ Bystander training	How can bystander training impact the willingness of DHB bystanders to report DHB events they witnessed, and/or to provide active support to targets of DHB.	7	9
▪ Common training and programmes	Training for all organisation members such as bystander training and explaining what is and is not DHB.	23	43
▪ HR agents	The influence HR agents specific have on how DHB policies are applied.	5	6
▪ Importance of DHB training	The impact DHB training can have on the patterns of DHB within an organisation.	12	21
▪ Manager and Commander training	Training requirements specific to managers and commanders to educate on how to apply the policy and be aware of inappropriate behaviour.	19	44
2.c.c. Leadership	Impact of leadership on DHB and the application of DHB policies.	23	59
• Leadership accountability	The importance of accountability in leadership relating to DHB, and how it can be achieved.	8	13
2.d. Report or Complaint processes. Options and recommendations for the reporting of DHB incidents.			
2.d.a. Reporting barriers	Barriers that can lead to targets or witnesses of DHB not reporting it.		
• Access to reporting options	Factors impacting the ability of DHB targets to access and use policy processes.	10	14
• For witnesses and bystanders	Factors that influence the willingness of witnesses or bystanders to report DHB.	4	14
• Under reporting	Factors that influence under reporting and the impact on organisations and effectiveness of DHB policies.	9	18

Themes	Description	Articles applied	Extracts applied
• Labelling, identifying DHB and incapacity to report	How the ability to identify DHB, the willingness of targets to label themselves as DHB targets, and an incapacity to report (for a variety of reasons) impacts reporting and subsequent resolution of DHB.	6	19
• Lack of control or confidence	Belief organisations will not act appropriately, abusers will be protected, and reporting DHB worsens a target's situation.	17	72
• Minorities	Does minority group membership impact target's willingness to report DHB.	7	12
• Positive influences	Factors that positively influence the likelihood of DHB being reported.	3	6
• Power imbalance	How power imbalances between parties to DHB impact the reporting of DHB.	10	16
• Safety, retribution, and confidentiality	The need to protect all DHB parties from retaliation and other negative impacts.	21	66
2.d.b. Vexatious reports	Options for when a DHB report has not been made in good faith.	4	9
2.d.c. Actions when DHB is identified	Responsibilities and actions to be undertaken once DHB is identified or reported.		
• Assessing DHB harm	Each DHB situation must be assessed to allow appropriate steps to be taken.	10	17
• Early actions	The importance of early intervention in DHB situations.	7	12
• Immediate actions	What actions should occur immediately a DHB report has been made, or the situation has come to light via other means.	10	19
▪ Safety measures	Assessment for immediate safety of all DHB parties.	6	7
2.d.d. Reporting process considerations	How can a report be made and what should be in it.		
• Early reporting	Processes to support reporting and investigation of early stage DHB situations.	4	6
• Reporting considerations	General factors for consideration when developing and implementing reporting processes.	7	14
• Multiple reporting channels	The need for multiple reporting channels to provide those impacted by DHB options they feel comfortable and safe to use.	12	23
• Report only once	Those reporting DHB should only need to make a report once. They should not have to report multiple times to multiple people before action is taken.	2	2
• Bystander reporting	Processes for witnesses to report DHB rather than requiring the target to.	4	4
2.d.e. Self-help	Are self-help options effective and should they be mandatory steps in reporting.	12	24

Themes	Description	Articles applied	Extracts applied
2.d.f. Support	Options for providing support, their effectiveness, and the impact of ineffective support processes.	13	32
2.d.g. Those accused of DHB	Support options or processes available for those accused of DHB.	8	13
2.d.h. Types of DHB reports	DHB reporting systems must support DHB reports with more one target or abuser or many situations of DHB will remain outside the organisational process.		
• Communal reports	Reports with multiple targets or multiple alleged perpetrators.	3	6
• Third-party reporting	Where a third party is able to report DHB situations or behaviour.	6	6
2.e. Investigation process. What potential DHB investigation options are appropriate.			
2.e.a. Investigation processes	Investigation processes, who should conduct them, training requirements, and what outcomes should be achieved.	15	13
• Evidence and standard of proof	Investigators often apply an inappropriate burden of proof to DHB investigations, leading to inconclusive outcomes.	5	9
• Outcomes	How are outcomes reached, what is the burden of proof.	7	20
• Investigation oversight	Effective management of investigations to ensure standards are met and consistency maintained.	3	6
2.e.b. Investigator requirements	Minimum requirements of an investigator such as impartiality and training.	13	26
2.e.c. Timeliness	Importance of action being taken swiftly across the organisation.	13	21
2.f. Resolution phase. What does resolution in a DHB situation look like for all parties, including the organisation.			
2.f.a. Barriers to resolution	What elements of the proceeding process, organisation culture etc., lead to reduced effectiveness of planned resolution actions	2	3
2.f.b. Confidentiality	Confidentiality of outcomes can limit the effective management of DHB.	12	23
2.f.c. Follow up	Processes to ensure DHB resolutions are implemented correctly and effective, and what must occur if resolution fails.	10	12
2.f.d. Considerations for resolution options	What factors should be considered when assessing the appropriate resolution option for a DHB case.	7	8
• Consistency	There must be consistent application of resolution options.	3	3
• Early intervention and resolution	Some resolution options are only appropriate in early stage DHB situations, the time frame involved is a key consideration when assessing resolution options.	1	1
• Power imbalance	Power imbalances between parties to DHB directly impact the appropriateness of resolution options.	4	5

Themes	Description	Articles applied	Extracts applied
• Previous DHB behaviour	If a person has previously undertaken DHB behaviours, a more serious level resolution is likely to be more appropriate.	2	3
• Severity of DHB	The severity of the DHB will directly impact the selection of resolution options.	5	7
2.f.e. Resolution options	Organisations should have multiple resolution options to ensure the option selected is appropriate for the DHB situation being addressed.		
• Discipline, formal, or punitive action	Formal action taken against the perpetrator of DHB.	4	9
• Multiple resolution options	To enable a resolution option to be appropriate for a DHB case there must be a selection of options available.	9	10
• Performance management	This is a process to improve an employee's behaviour with clear time frames, requirements, and consequences if expectations are not met.	5	8
• Interpersonal options:	Resolutions that revolve around rectifying the relationship such as mediation.		
▪ Arbitration	A formal form of alternative dispute resolution using a neutral third party who make binding decisions.	2	4
▪ Counselling and coaching	May be useful for low level DHB or where an offender was unaware of the impact of their behaviour.	3	5
▪ General Alternative Dispute Resolution	Describes methods such as mediation and facilitation.	3	7
▪ Generalised individual options	General considerations when analysing if individual resolution options are appropriate, and if so, which one.	6	10
▪ Mediation or conflict resolution	This is a way of managing conflict that uses an impartial person to help parties resolve their disagreements.	11	28
▪ Restorative justice	Requires offenders and victims to discuss the impact of the offence and how to right the wrong, requiring offenders accept the harm they caused.	3	6
2.f.f. Sustainable outcomes	Actions required to rebalance work environments and recovery beyond resolution of the specific DHB situation.	11	29

Appendix S

Semi-Structured Interview Themes with Extract Allocation Data

Themes and codes	Descriptions	Interviews applied		Extracts applied	
		TWG (1)	CMG (2)	TWG	CMG
1. Theme One – Equality under the policy leads to inequity. Focussing on equality within the policy to ensure all members have the same access to policy actions and protections leads to inequity as factors such as demographics, position, power (both formal and informal) and employee status lead to differing levels of policy access.					
1.a. Demographics. Demographic differences between members directly impact an individual's access to policy protections within the and the level of resolution they are able to attain.					
1.a.a. Age & seniority differences	The impact age and seniority have on perceived or actual ability to report DHB.	5	4	6	5
1.a.b. Ethnicity differences	The impact ethnicity has on perceived or actual ability to report DHB.	2	2	4	12
1.a.c. Gender differences	The impact gender differences have on perceived or actual ability to report DHB.	3	1	4	12
1.b. Employment status. Differing employment status and legal protections impact how individuals can engage with a DHB policy and how it is applied to them.					
1.b.a. Employment status	Varying across organisations, employment status influences how a DHB is accessed and applied.	1	5	11	22
• ERA ⁽³⁾ and union protections	Some employees have more protections than others.	2	-	5	-
1.b.b. Duty of care	Employer responsibility to protect employees from harm.	-	3	-	7
1.b.c. Rank, position and power	How these factors impact engagement with the policy.	5	6	7	15
1.b.d. Limited options for military	Military service limits legal protections and options.	2	-	4	-
1.c. Reporting options and processes. Barriers to reporting DHB result from individual and organisational factors. Reporting processes must remove or mitigate all possible barriers to facilitate the reporting and resolution of DHB.					
1.c.a. Barriers to reporting	Reporting barriers that pertain to the organisations contextual environment must be identified before mitigation action can occur.				
• Lack of faith in the process		7	5	13	12
• Mandatory reporting		-	1	-	2
• Multiple abusers or targets		3	1	10	4
• Power imbalance		7	2	9	4
• Rationalisation of DHB behaviours		-	2	-	2
• DHB report content and format		4	2	5	8
• Reporting options external line management		6	4	10	12
• Retaliation and retribution		5	3	13	5
• Third party reporting		2	5	7	12
• DHB reports not acted on		6	-	13	-
• Hostile work environments		3	-	10	-
1.c.b. Why targets report	Identifying why targets report DHB assists in developing processes that align to this need.	8	-	12	-

Themes and codes	Descriptions	Interviews applied		Extracts applied	
		TWG (1)	CMG (2)	TWG	CMG
2. Theme Two – Inconsistent application of the policy. Factors that result in inconsistent policy application undermines policy effectiveness, creating additional inequities in the management and resolution of DHB.					
2.a. Accountability. A lack of accountability for individual poor behaviour, including managers not applying the policy correctly, undermines trust in the organisation, reducing DHB reporting.					
2.a.a Accountability	Lack of accountability processes undermines policy effectiveness.	10	6	33	17
2.a.b. Leadership undermining DHB policy	Undermining of the policy by failing to model appropriate behaviours and policy application	-	8	-	24
2.b. Conflicts of interest. Conflicts of interest can vary but risk actual, potential or perceived bias in decision making that undermines both the equity and effectiveness of any DHB policy.					
2.b.a. Manager implicated in DHB	Requires alternative processes to support impartiality.	9	5	21	7
2.b.b. Use of prerogative	This reduces trust in the organisations commitment to the policy.	3	3	8	4
2.b.c. Rank and cronyism used to influence DHB reports	Vital these are identified to support impartial and consistent policy application.	9	4	25	7
2.c. Leadership. Leadership actions directly impact the effectiveness of any policy, requiring the responsibilities of leaders to be clear, with leaders held accountable for their action or inactions.					
2.c.a. Leadership modelling positive behaviours	Leaders must be accountable for modelling appropriate behaviours.	-	4	-	16
2.c.b. Responsibilities and duty of care	Duty of care and other responsibilities must be clearly detailed to allow leaders to be held accountable.	7	6	13	27
2.d. Management and oversight of policy processes. Poor management, knowledge and application of policy processes undermines the policy, policy effectiveness and ultimately equity for DHB targets.					
2.d.a. Burden of proof and evidence	The lack of understanding of ‘balance of probabilities’ and evidence rules.	3	2	6	3
2.d.b. HR or legal involvement	The biases of organisational HR and Legal services.	5	5	10	13
2.d.c. Immediate actions	Safety and report review actions that should occur.	6	2	10	11
2.d.d. Impartiality	The impact of partiality of equity and effectiveness.	9	5	18	12
2.d.e. Inconsistent application of known policy	The conscious misapplication of a known and understand DHB policy.				
• Known DHB and offenders ignored		11	4	32	6
• Management not applying known policy consistently		9	5	25	16
2.d.f. Investigations	Difficulties implementing fair investigation processes.	3	2	5	10
• Inconclusive investigations		1	-	5	-
• Poor processes		3	-	13	-
2.d.g. Mngt lack of knowledge	Lack of management knowledge of DHB and the policy.				
• Lack of knowledge of policy and process		11	6	32	9
• Minimisation of DHB, trauma and impact		9	2	25	2
2.d.h. Timeliness	The impact timeliness as on resolution and effectiveness.	7	3	17	6
2.e. Organisational context. Understanding organisationally specific factors that undermine consistent and appropriate DHB policy application allows for mitigation of those factors to support an equitable and effective policy.					

Themes and codes	Descriptions	Interviews applied		Extracts applied	
		TWG (1)	CMG (2)	TWG	CMG
2.e.a. Adversarial process	Adversarial resolution processes reduce effectiveness.	6	4	11	4
2.e.b. Operational needs	These two factors can make it more difficult to identify and address DHB.	-	5	-	18
2.e.c. Organisational Culture			1		1
2.e.d. Protection of offenders	How power and cronyism work to protect abusers.	10	6	23	11
2.e.e. Organisational context and structure works against targets	How the organisational context works to disadvantage targets further.	11	-	26	-
2.e.f. Organisational cultural competence and understanding	How a contextual understanding of the organisation is required for those investigation and resolving DHB.	4	-	9	-
2.f. Policy gaps. Gaps in policy options can result in some targets feeling their situation is not covered by policy protections while simultaneously offering additional protections to some of those undertaking DHB behaviours.					
2.f.a. Lack of policy flexibility		-	6	-	10
2.f.b. Lack of effective options		12	-	33	-
2.f.c. Limited options for military		3	-	7	-
2.g. Policy Impact. The unintended and inequitable effect a DHB policy can have on the personal lives and careers of those impacted by DHB.					
2.g.a. TW - Career impact of being targeted poor DHB		14	-	24	-
2.g.b. TW – The personal impact DHB has		13	-	48	-
2.h. Resolutions. Not all resolution options are appropriate for all DHB situations. Applying inappropriate resolution actions impacts the effectiveness of the option to resolve DHB and to protect targets from further harm.					
2.h.a. Follow-up	Follow-up necessary to enforce DHB resolutions.	8	5	12	17
2.h.b. Informal options	Require clear guidelines for appropriate use.	-	3	-	7
2.h.c. Not DHB, but still not right	The need to rectify the impact of all poor behaviour.	2	3	5	4
2.h.d. Lack of resources	The impact resources have on available options.	-	1	-	1
2.h.e. Mediation	The impact of inappropriately applied mediation.	8	7	18	15
2.h.f. Moving parties to DHB	When is this appropriate, and who should be moved.	-	1	-	3
2.h.g. No or limited resolution	The impact of ineffective resolution processes.	11	5	30	8
2.h.h. Power imbalance impact	How power imbalances impact resolution process selection.	6	1	9	2
2.i. Transparency. Greater transparency enhances DHB management and delivers better outcomes for targets and the organisation.					
2.i.a. Transparency		6	5	24	11
3. Theme Three – Lack of detail and clarity within the policy. A lack of clarity and detail in DHB policies and associated procedures can lead to inconsistent or ineffective policy application of that.					
3.a. Policy clarity. DHB policies must be clear and easily understood to remove opportunities for inconsistent and inequitable application of processes.					
3.a.a. Definitions and identifying DHB	Definitions of DHB behaviours must be clear and succinct while maintaining flexibility.	6	9	9	41
3.a.b. DHB process clarity	Process clarity supports consistent application.	6	7	15	16
3.a.c. Hostile work environment	Clear definitions of this form of DHB are required.	2	-	11	-
3.b. Reporting, evaluation and feedback loop. The absence of structured DHB recording, governance and evaluation negates the ability to measure policy effectiveness.					

Themes and codes	Descriptions	Interviews applied		Extracts applied	
		TWG (1)	CMG (2)	TWG	CMG
3.b.a. Malicious reports	Processes required to identify and address these.	1	1	5	1
3.b.b. No DHB auditing, enforcement or governance	A lack of audits and governance significantly undermine the equity and effectiveness of DHB policies.	7	8	20	32
3.b.c. Tracking perpetrators	Policies lacking the ability to track repeat offenders fail at protecting employees from harm.	5	6	12	13
3.c. Support requirements. Support requirements vary but to be effective they must be appropriate to the situation, easily accessed and sufficiently resourced. Multiple support requirements were identified:					
3.c.a. Effectiveness of support options		12	3	36	4
3.c.b. Peer support		3	2	3	3
3.c.c. Self-help		1	6	2	10
3.c.d. Support for bystanders		3	1	3	1
3.c.e. Support for respondents		1	1	6	2
3.c.f. Support for targets		-	6	-	18
3.c.g. Supporter & manager support		-	4	-	21
3.c.h. Access to support options external to the organisation		5	-	9	-
3.d. Training requirements. Effective policies require comprehensive and ongoing training across all elements of the policy and its processes.					
3.d.a. General training	Training requirements for all organisation members.	4	7	5	22
3.d.b. Supporter training and selection	Supporter selection and training programmes are generally well-meaning, but insufficient.	-	6	-	16
3.d.c. Manager training	Insufficient manager training leads to inconsistent policy application, undermining effectiveness.	-	5	-	17
3.d.d. Investigator training	DHB investigators require specialised training.	3	-	5	-
Notes					
(1) TWG = Target and witness semi-structured interview sample group.					
(2) CMG = Commander and manager semi-structured interview sample group.					

Appendix T

Suggested DHB Training Syllabi

1. **Manager Training Syllabus: Managing Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying (DHB).** This training package would be suitable for all managers of staff who may be required to manage DHB situations. Suggested learning objectives include:

- a. **Learning Objective 1: Understand DHB and Organisational Responsibilities.** Define DHB and differentiate it from legitimate management actions; describe the impact of DHB; and explain organisational and managerial responsibilities for preventing and managing DHB.

Learning Outcomes. Participants will be able to:

- Define discrimination, harassment, bullying, hostile work environments, reprisals, and related DHB behaviours.
- Distinguish DHB from legitimate management action, workplace conflict, and performance management.
- Explain organisational, legal, health and safety, and managerial responsibilities for preventing and managing DHB.
- Describe the impacts of DHB on individuals, teams, organisational culture, and performance.

- b. **Learning Objective 2: Recognise DHB Risk Factors and Vulnerabilities.** Identify risk factors that increase DHB risk, including for hostile environments and emerging situations; and recognise the influence of power imbalances on DHB and how demographic and minority factors affect DHB.

Learning Outcomes. Participants will be able to:

- Identify organisational, cultural, and workplace factors that increase DHB risk.
- Recognise the influence of power imbalances, hierarchy, status, and informal influence on DHB situations.
- Recognise how gender, ethnicity, age, seniority, employment status, and intersectionality can affect an individual's experience of DHB.
- Identify early warning signs of hostile work environments and emerging DHB issues.

- c. **Learning Objective 3: Apply DHB Policies Consistently and Fairly.** Navigate DHB policies and processes effectively and consistently; identify conflicts of interest or biases that may undermine consistency; and apply equitable rather than equal responses.

Learning Outcomes. Participants will be able to:

- Navigate DHB policy requirements and reporting pathways confidently.
- Apply policy processes consistently without introducing personal assumptions or unsanctioned criteria.
- Identify and manage conflicts of interest that may undermine decision-making.
- Apply equitable rather than purely equal responses to differing DHB situations.

- d. **Learning Objective 4: Receive and Manage DHB Reports.** Appropriately respond to all DHB reports and undertake initial safety assessments; and identify when a DHB matter should be escalated.

Learning Outcomes. Participants will be able to:

- Respond appropriately to verbal and written DHB reports.
- Conduct immediate safety and wellbeing assessments following a report.
- Support early reporting while maintaining psychological safety.
- Recognise when a matter should be escalated or referred for specialist advice or formal investigation.
- Manage reports involving bystanders, multiple parties, hostile environments, and complex power dynamics.

- e. **Learning Objective 5: Select Appropriate Resolution Options.** Identify and apply the appropriate resolution option for differing DHB situations; and implement follow-up processes.

Learning Outcomes. Participants will be able to:

- Assess the suitability of informal and formal resolution options.
- Determine when mediation, facilitated discussions, or other informal approaches are inappropriate.
- Consider severity, power imbalance, and previous behaviours when selecting resolution pathways.
- Implement follow-up processes that ensure behavioural change and workplace safety.

- f. **Learning Objective 6: Support Participants Throughout the Process.** Identify and provide appropriate support options for all parties to a DHB situation; provide trauma-informed responses; and effectively manage retaliation risks.

Learning Outcomes. Participants will be able to:

- Identify support options for targets, witnesses, respondents, and managers.
- Provide trauma-informed and supportive responses to individuals involved in DHB matters.
- Recognise indicators of distress and refer individuals to appropriate support services.
- Manage retaliation risks and protect participants from further harm.

- g. **Learning Objective 7: Demonstrate Leadership and Accountability.** Model appropriate behaviours; apply accountability measures; proactively work to improve workplace culture; and effectively report, monitor and evaluate DHB systems.

Learning Outcomes. Participants will be able to:

- Model behaviours that contribute to psychologically safe and respectful workplaces.
- Understand leadership accountability for DHB prevention and management. [1](#)
- Monitor workplace culture and intervene proactively when concerning behaviours emerge.
- Contribute to organisational learning through reporting, monitoring, and evaluation systems.

2. **DHB Investigator Training Syllabus.** Given the complexity of DHB situations and the differences between investigating other employment or complaint matters, specific DHB investigation training should be required for all those required to investigate reported DHB, regardless of previous investigative experience in other areas. Suggested learning objectives include:

- a. **Learning Objective 1: Develop Specialist DHB Knowledge.** Define DHB and differentiate it from legitimate management actions; explain factors that contribute to DHB; recognise the influence of power imbalances on DHB; equity considerations affect investigations and outcomes.

Learning Outcomes. Participants will be able to:

- Define and differentiate all forms of DHB and related workplace behaviours.
- Explain the organisational, cultural, and psychosocial factors that contribute to DHB.
- Recognise the effect of power imbalances, workplace culture, and organisational dynamics on evidence and reporting.
- Recognise how equity considerations affect investigations and outcomes.

- b. **Learning Objective 2: Conduct Procedurally Fair Investigations.** Apply natural justice and procedural fairness principles; manage conflicts of interest; and balance transparency and privacy requirements appropriately.

Learning Outcomes. Participants will be able to:

- Apply principles of natural justice and procedural fairness.
- Maintain impartiality, independence, and objectivity throughout investigations.
- Identify and manage actual, perceived, and potential conflicts of interest.
- Balance transparency, confidentiality, and privacy requirements appropriately.

- c. **Learning Objective 3: Plan and Manage Investigations.** Develop and manage investigation mandates, plans, timeframes, and communication to all parties.

Learning Outcomes. Participants will be able to:

- Develop investigation mandates, scopes, and plans.
- Identify investigation risks and support requirements.
- Apply investigation timeframes and prioritisation principles.
- Establish appropriate communication plans for all parties.

- d. **Learning Objective 4: Gather and Assess Evidence.** Conduct effective and ethical interviews and evidence collection; and assess evidence credibility and reliability.

Learning Outcomes. Participants will be able to:

- Conduct effective and ethically sound interviews.
- Gather evidence from complainants, respondents, witnesses, and documentary sources.
- Investigate matters involving multiple complainants, multiple respondents, and hostile work environments.
- Assess credibility and reliability of evidence.

- Recognise common cognitive biases that can affect evidence assessment.

e. **Learning Objective 5: Apply Appropriate Evidential Standards.** Apply the balance of probabilities standard; assess evidence where corroboration is limited; and prepare defensible findings.

Learning Outcomes. Participants will be able to:

- Apply the balance of probabilities standard correctly.
- Distinguish between civil investigation requirements and criminal standards of proof.
- Assess evidence where documentation or witnesses are limited.
- Prepare defensible findings supported by evidence and reasoning.

f. **Learning Objective 6: Minimise Harm During Investigations.** Apply trauma-informed considerations to investigation processes; manage retaliation; provide suitable guidance to all parties.

Learning Outcomes. Participants will be able to:

- Conduct trauma-informed investigations.
- Identify and manage retaliation risks.
- Implement safety and wellbeing measures throughout the investigation process.
- Provide clear information and procedural guidance to all parties.

g. **Learning Objective 7: Produce High-Quality Investigation Outputs.** Produce evidence-based investigation reports to support decision makers; and identify organisational issues identified through investigations.

Learning Outcomes. Participants will be able to:

- Prepare clear, comprehensive, and evidence-based investigation reports.
- Present findings, conclusions, and recommendations logically and objectively.
- Communicate investigation outcomes to decision-makers effectively.
- Identify organisational issues and systemic risks revealed through investigations.

h. **Learning Objective 8: Contribute to Organisational Learning and Consistency.** Effectively and consistency record investigation outcomes to support DHB trend analysis; identify risk factors and procedural weaknesses; and support continuous improvement of DHB policies and procedures through evidence-based recommendations.

Learning Outcomes. Participants will be able to:

- Record investigation outcomes consistently to support organisational analysis and trend identification.
- Contribute to quality assurance, review, and oversight processes.
- Identify recurring DHB risk factors and procedural weaknesses.
- Support continuous improvement of DHB policies, procedures, and interventions through evidence-based recommendations.

Appendix U

Methodological Triangulation - Consolidated Themes

Findings ⁽¹⁾	% of Files discussing the finding			Convergence ⁽⁵⁾	Discussion
	CMG ⁽²⁾	TWG ⁽³⁾	Rapid literature review ⁽⁴⁾		
Consolidated Theme 1 – Context. The identifying and understanding of organisational contextual and cultural elements					
External and industry influences. These influence and shape DHB policies, with organisations often unable to influence these despite their impact.			64% ⁽¹⁾	Silence	This silence from the CMG and TWG was expected as this finding was largely outside the experiences of either sample group.
Internal organisationally specific context and culture. Understanding and mitigating the impact these have improve policy effectiveness.	80% ⁽¹⁾	100% ⁽¹⁾		Silence ⁽⁶⁾	The literature silence was expected as this related to the case study. The high prominence and consistency of meaning across both reinforced the vital critical role culture and context plays within DHB.
Consolidated Theme 2 – Equity. Treating people with dignity and fairness					
Demographics. Measurable demographic differences between members directly impacts access to the protections within the policy and the level of resolution they are able to attain.	50% ⁽¹⁾	50% ⁽¹⁾	24%	Agreement	The impact demographics and membership of minority groups has on an individual's experience of DHB is identified consistently across all data sets.
Employee status. Differing employment status can impact on how a policy is applied to individuals, and the level of resolution they are able to attain.	80% ⁽¹⁾	50% ⁽¹⁾		Silence	While the literature was silent, both interview samples identified employment status (military or civilian) directly impacted access to policy protections and the subsequent resolutions and outcomes.
Reporting barriers. With consistent reporting, no DHB policy can be effective so it is vital to identify and mitigate barriers that keep DHB under-reported.	90% ⁽¹⁾	93% ⁽¹⁾	64% ⁽¹⁾	Agreement	The prominence and identification of barriers to reporting as consistent across all data sets, reinforcing the validity of what targets (with the highest prominence) reported.
Consolidated Theme 3 – Accountability. Removing avenues for inconsistent policy application and adherence					
a. DHB Management and Oversight					
Accountability. An inability or unwillingness to accept responsibility for decisions or actions at individual or organisational levels undermines policy effectiveness and creates barriers to reporting.	100%	71%	38%	Partial agreement	There was consistent agreement across all three data sets that accountability vital in maintaining an effective DHB policy. Partial agreement was a result of lack of prominence, not differences in meaning.
Conflicts of interest. Generally meaning non-financial issues including self-interest and cronyism, managing a DHB situation while implicated in it, predetermining outcomes, or inappropriate use of prerogative.	60% ⁽¹⁾	78% ⁽¹⁾		Silence	Agreement on both counts across the interview sample groups supported conflicts of interest directly and negatively impact the equity and effectiveness of DHB policies despite literature silence.
Leadership. Leadership actions influence the management of DHB situations and policy application in negative and positive ways, directly impacting the effectiveness of any DHB policy.	60%	50%	51%	Agreement	Strong agreement in prominence and meaning for leaderships impact on DHB and on the application of any DHB policy, reinforcing this as a significant factor in addressing DHB within organisations.
Management of DHB. Interpretation and application of a DHB policy by management and leaders directly influences the level of policy effectiveness and ultimately equity for DHB targets.	90% ⁽¹⁾	100% ⁽¹⁾	71% ⁽¹⁾	Agreement	Despite the range of factors included, there was full agreement all data sets. This as a significant factor in the effectiveness of any DHB policy and attention should be taken to mitigate negative impacts.

Implementation. Implemented directly influences all policy processes and overall policy effectiveness.	40%		40%	Agreement / Silence ⁽⁷⁾	The silence from the TWG was not unexpected. Agreement across the other data sets was strong in prominence and meaning.
Policy gaps. Lack of policy options or flexibility to address all scenarios can leave targets feeling alienated while offering protections to some undertaking DHB behaviours.	60%	86% ⁽¹⁾		Silence	Specific to the case study, silence from the research was expected. With agreement in meaning and prominence, issues like limited policy flexibility and resolution options were common across both.
Transparency. Inappropriate use of confidentiality and privacy over transparency increase distrust in organisational practices, isolate targets, and protecting DHB perpetrators.	50%	43%	16%	Partial agreement	The need for transparency over confidentiality and the impact of failing to do this was common. The dissonance was in the lower prominence of the factor in the literature review documents.
Training. An effective DHB policy requires all organisation members, especially those tasked with applying it, to be trained on its intent, processes, and their responsibilities.	50% ⁽¹⁾	43% ⁽¹⁾	66% ⁽¹⁾	Agreement	This finding had strong agreement in meaning and prominence, with the need for ongoing training and the training types identified being consistent and covering similar outcomes.
b. DHB Governance					
Reporting, policy evaluation and feedback loop. Without these, policy effectiveness cannot be measured, DHB offenders cannot be tracked, and policies cannot be amended.	100% ⁽¹⁾	57% ⁽¹⁾	49% ⁽¹⁾	Partial agreement	Meanings were largely consistent, with TWG having a focus on tracking offenders, while the literature focussed on the policy evaluation. Dissonance was prominence linked to the CMG.
Consolidated Theme 4 - DHB policy development processes and content					
Resolutions and outcomes. Resolutions need to be appropriate to the specific DHB situation, with achievable, visible and measurable outcomes.	90% ⁽¹⁾	100% ⁽¹⁾	62% ⁽¹⁾	Partial agreement	While prominence and perspectives varied, the underlying meanings were consistent, with agreement that multiple resolution options, alongside measurable outcomes were required.
Defining and recognising DHB. DHB definitions must be clear, specific and accessible to all, ensuring those applying the policy are not able to apply their own values to DHB.	90%	50% ⁽¹⁾	62%	Agreement	Linked to clarity of language and processes, the consistent meaning was the need for clear, accessible and easily understood DHB definitions. Higher prominence in with the CMG related to the difficulty in applying ambiguous DHB definitions.
Language and clarity of DHB processes. Policy language must be clear and unambiguous, with processes clearly detailed to ensure they are applied as the policy intended.	70% ⁽¹⁾	43% ⁽¹⁾	33% ⁽¹⁾	Partial agreement	The need for clear, easily understand definitions and policy processes was consistent. The dissonance was the high prominence within the CMG sample for similar reasons as for defining DHB.
Support requirements. Diverse and flexible support is required, and avenues should be clearly identified, easily accessed and sufficiently resourced.	90% ⁽¹⁾	86% ⁽¹⁾	46% ⁽¹⁾	Partial agreement	The meaning of this finding was consistent, including the need for ease of access and multiple support options. The dissonance was in the prominence of the factor across the literature.
Policy development and integration processes. Best practice policy elements and processes required develop a tailored DHB policy to be effective within a specific organisation or industry.			75% ⁽¹⁾	Silence	This silence from the interview samples was expected as this finding was largely outside the experiences of either sample group.

Notes

⁽¹⁾ The detailed totals are an amalgamation of related codes to create an integrated triangulation and convergence assessment.

⁽²⁾ CMG = Commander and Manager interview group (sample size: n=10)

⁽³⁾ TWG = Target and Witness interview group (sample size: n=14)

⁽⁴⁾ Rapid literature review sample size n=45

⁽⁵⁾ Prominence agreement assessed as a variance <30%

⁽⁶⁾ A finding was assessed as silent where either interview data or rapid literature data was silent on a finding.

⁽⁷⁾ If two data sets agreed but the remaining set was silent, a secondary convergence code was applied with the final code annotated as 'Agreement / Silence.'

Appendix V

Description of Socioecological Model for DHB in NZDF

Socioecological Level	DHB in NZDF		
	Military / Military ⁽¹⁾	Military / Civil Staff ⁽¹⁾	Civil staff / Civil staff ⁽¹⁾
Individual	DHB incident	DHB incident	DHB incident
Micro / Relationships	Interaction between bully and target and how their individual military attitudes, values & beliefs influence those interactions. Attitudes and behaviours of others can influence DHB by encouraging, ignoring or intervening in the DHB actions.	Interaction between bully and target influenced by military or civilian attitudes, values and beliefs regarding DHB. This can create additional conflict or complexity. Attitudes and behaviours of others can influence DHB by encouraging, ignoring or intervening in the DHB actions.	Interaction between bully and target and how their individual civilian attitudes, values & beliefs influence those interactions. Attitudes and behaviours of others can influence DHB by encouraging, ignoring or intervening in the DHB actions.
Meso / Proximal leadership	Proximal leadership is dependent on the rank/role of the target and/or bully. Perceived or actual attitude of military leaders towards DHB highly influential, and influenced by the leader's military experience and culture, including attitudes, values & beliefs, and the formal & informal structures that guide military social relationships.	Potential conflict between military and non-military expectations and perceptions relating to DHB. This can lead to differing actions or understanding from immediate leaders, through to confusion and potential conflict as to whether a military or non-military resolution pathway is taken.	Proximal leadership is dependent on the rank/role of the target and/or bully. Perceived or actual attitude of leaders towards DHB highly influential, and influenced by the leader's civilian experience and culture, including attitudes, values & beliefs, and the formal & informal social structures that guide non-military social relationships.
Exo / NZDF Community	Senior NZDF leadership and organisational level influence through direct military socialisation. This includes the wider military community elements such as military units, individual services, the wider NZDF and the expanded influence into military families.	Potential conflict of military and non-military perceptions often linked to the pervasive nature of the military lifestyle, compared to more limited influence of NZDF being a job or career for many non-military members.	Senior NZDF leadership and organisational level influence experienced through the lens of civilian organisations and networks. This often leads to non-military interpretations being placed on military processes and culture.
Macro / Society	Engagement with wider NZ culture, values, beliefs, policies and legislation through the influence of NZDF, and how wider NZ society engages with the NZDF. This includes differing legislative protections for military personnel than for non-military employees.	Potential conflict and lack of understanding of the perspectives of parties to the DHB as well as those charged with managing the resolution of it.	Wider NZ culture, values, beliefs, legislation and policies that shape other levels such as gender and ethnic norms, inequities, attitudes about what is valued and what is not.
Chrono / Influences over time	Impact of historical development of the NZDF, the changing face of biculturalism within NZDF, in conjunction with the individual stories of all military members.	As above.	Impact of historical trauma, intergenerational abuse, adverse childhood experiences, colonisation etc.

Notes.

⁽¹⁾ The parties to any DHB incident within NZDF will be all military, all civilian staff or a combination of both.

Appendix W

Third Party Copyright Reproduction Permission

From: Robert Dyball <rob.dyball@anu.edu.au>
Sent: Wednesday, September 24, 2025 12:58:05 PM
To: Kourtney Collum <kcolum@coa.edu>; Michling Werder <michling.werder@autuni.ac.nz>
Cc: lholzke@coa.edu <lholzke@coa.edu>; kmeservey@coa.edu <kmeservey@coa.edu>
Subject: Re: Fw: Permission request to reproduce copyright work

Hi Michling

That is fine with correct citation. Technically, HER is published under a CC licence, although that would not have been the case in 2011

Cheers

Rob

Dr Robert Dyball
 Honorary Senior Lecturer, Human Ecology Program
 Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (SFHEA)
 Fenner School of Environment and Society, The Australian National University
 Room 2.16 Building 141, Canberra 0200 Australia
 Phone: [+61 \(0\)2 6125 3704](tel:+610261253704)
 Email: rob.dyball@anu.edu.au
 Visiting Professor, University of the Philippines Los Baños
 Editor, Human Ecology Review
 Co-Author Understanding Human Ecology
 Twitter @humanecology

From: Kourtney Collum <kcolum@coa.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, September 23, 2025 09:55
To: Michling Werder <michling.werder@autuni.ac.nz>
Cc: lholzke@coa.edu <lholzke@coa.edu>; kmeservey@coa.edu <kmeservey@coa.edu>; Robert Dyball <rob.dyball@anu.edu.au>
Subject: Re: Fw: Permission request to reproduce copyright work

Hello Michling:

I am cc'ing Rob Dyball, editor of the Human Ecology Review, who can address your question.

Be well,

Kourtney Collum, Ph.D. | College of the Atlantic

Provost and Dean of Faculty
 Partridge Chair in Food and Sustainable Agriculture Systems
 Phone: 207.801.5732 (o), 734.625.0794 (m)



On Mon, Sep 22, 2025 at 6:26 PM Michling Werder <michling.werder@autuni.ac.nz> wrote:

Good morning all,

Please accept my apologies for this group email, particularly if this email does not apply to you.

I am attempting to submit a request to reproduce part of an article (details below) that is copyrighted to you. Looking online last night (New Zealand time) suggested that Dr Kenneth Hill may be the appropriate channel for this request. His out of office reply provided your emails in his absence.

If this type of request is not handled by you, I would very much appreciate you advising me who I should be contacting.

As per the attached letter, I am seeking approval to reproduce a socioecological diagram from the article detailed below in my doctoral thesis. The purpose of this is to provide my readers with a graphical depiction of social ecological theory. This diagram is the best I have found to align with my thesis. My doctoral topic, underpinned by a pragmatist research paradigm, is on how organisations can develop tailored discrimination, harassment, and bullying policies that lead to equitable and effective resolutions and outcomes. My discussion on social ecological theory is to illustrate the importance of organisations' understanding their contextual environment at all levels before commencing policy development. This diagram clearly depicts the interactions between the nested ecological layers.

Again, as per the attached letter, I am seeking a non-exclusive licence from you to include this image in my thesis, with the image being fully and correctly referenced.

Thank you for your time, and I look forward to hearing back from you.

Michling Werder

Doctoral student
 Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand

From: Michling Werder

Sent: Monday, 22 September 2025 6:35 pm

To: info@societyforhumanecology.org <info@societyforhumanecology.org>;
khill@coa.edu <khill@coa.edu>

Subject: Permission request to reproduce copyright work

Dear Ken,

Please accept the attached letter as my request for permission to reproduce Figure 1 from the following copyrighted work as part of my doctoral thesis:

- Stranger, N. R. (2011). Moving “eco” back into socio-ecological models: A proposal to reorient ecological literacy into human developmental models and school systems. *Human Ecology Review*, 18(2), 167-173.

The specific details for this request are contained within the attached letter.

If you have any queries regarding this request, please do not hesitate to contact me at this email address.

For your consideration,

Michling Werder

Doctoral student

Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand

Email attachment:



Michling Werder
michling.werder@autuni.ac.nz

22 September 2025

Executive Director
Society for Human Ecology
105 Eden Street
Bar Harbour, ME 04609 USA

Dear Ken Hill

I am a Doctoral student at Auckland University of Technology and am writing a thesis on the development of equitable and effective policies for workplace discrimination, harassment and bullying for Doctor of Philosophy degree.

I am writing to request permission for the following work, for which I believe you hold the copyright, to be included in my thesis:

- Stranger, N. R. (2011). Moving "eco" back into socio-ecological models: A proposal to reorient ecological literacy into human developmental models and school systems. *Human Ecology Review*, 18(2), 167-173.
- The portion to be included would be Figure 1 "An adapted illustrated model of a Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory (Adapted from Berger, 2007)" on page 169.

A digital copy will be made available online via the University's digital repository . This is an open access research repository for scholarly work, intended to make research accessible to as wide an audience as possible. A small run of print copies may also be made.

I am seeking from you a non-exclusive licence to include these materials in my thesis. The materials will be fully and correctly referenced. If you agree, I should be very grateful if you would reply to me via email, or alternatively sign the form below and return a copy to me.

If you do not agree, or if you do not hold the copyright in this work, would you please let me know.

I can most quickly be reached by email at michling.werder@autuni.ac.nz. Thank you for your assistance. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Michling Werder

I _____ agree to grant you a non-exclusive licence for an indefinite period to include the above materials, for which I am the copyright owner, in the print and digital copies of your thesis.

Date: _____