

Our policies so far

Law and Order

National is in the process of releasing our comprehensive law and order package. We have already announced some of the policies in this package. They include:

ENHANCING POLICE TOOLS

National's policy is to extend the Police's crime-fighting toolkit by:

- Introducing Tasers, subject to a positive evaluation of the Taser trial. Tasers have been shown to be an effective tool for deterring offenders who would have gone on to harm the public or police.
- Requiring DNA samples to be taken from all those arrested for offences punishable by imprisonment. DNA profiling is an invaluable tool for identifying and catching criminals, and for exonerating the innocent.
- Giving police the ability to issue time-bound, on-the-spot protection orders to protect families. These will provide police with an immediate response to dangerous domestic situations, and ensure that potential victims are protected until courts are able to deal with the matter.
- Strengthening the bail laws by overturning the 2007 amendments to the Bail Act. Labour has indicated that the law was amended to reduce the prison population. National believes that protecting the public is the most important consideration.

CLAMPING DOWN ON GANGS

Criminal gangs are a key target in the fight against crime. National's policy is to remove their legitimacy, power, and status by:

- Strengthening the provisions in the law that make it illegal to be a member of a criminal organisation.
- Amending the Crimes Act to make it easier for police to conduct surveillance on gang communications.
- Changing the Local Government Act to give police more power to remove and storm gang fortifications.

- Amending the Sentencing Act to make gang membership an aggravating factor in sentencing.

National is investigating other means of undermining gang power. We believe all legal and practicable means should be used to make it much tougher to be a member of a criminal gang in this country.

PUTTING VICTIMS FIRST

Victims of crime are being neglected and they deserve more support. National's policy on victims' rights is to:

- Establish a Victim Compensation Scheme (VCS) funded by a levy on all offenders at sentencing. It will help victims with one-off expenses not covered by ACC or other state help.
- Direct prisoner compensation into the VCS. National will redirect any unclaimed money in the Victims Claims Trust Account into the VCS.
- Establish a Victims Services Centre within the Ministry of Justice to co-ordinate agencies that deal with victims and help Victim Support. It will administer the VCS.
- Upgrade the Victim Notification Register to better inform and protect victims. This will allow victims to be on an "active" register, which will notify them of developments relating to their case, or on a "silent" register, for those who don't want further involvement, but which will ensure offenders are not paroled to live nearby.
- Review the Victims' Rights Act 2002. We want to enhance victims' rights and access to support services, such as strengthening the ability to make a victim impact statement without censorship.

[More policy overleaf](#)

YOUTH JUSTICE

The youth justice system needs a set of tools for getting young people out of the crime cycle. National's policy is to:

- Extend the jurisdiction of the Youth Court so it has the power to deal with 12- and 13-year-olds accused of serious offences.
- Give the Youth Court new powers for following up on kids once they walk out the courtroom doors, such as parenting orders, mentoring programmes, and compulsory drug or alcohol rehabilitation programmes.
- Launch "Fresh Start" programmes for those who aren't bad enough to be put in a residential facility but need a serious dose of intervention. These will be up to a year long, and will give young offenders what they need to make a fresh start – structure, routine, boundaries, intensive support, and a sense of self-discipline. They will include up to three months residential training at, for example, army facilities.
- Introduce longer sentences in residential facilities for the worst offenders.
- Introduce "Spotlight Sentences" for serious youth offenders when they are released, requiring them to meet certain standards of behaviour. If they don't behave, they'll be subjected to intensive monitoring with electronic ankle bracelets.

For more information about our policies, please visit www.national.org.nz or email our Justice Spokesman Simon Power at simon.power@national.org.nz