

ACT Law and Order Policy

Overview

The prime responsibility for any government is to keep its citizens safe. The failure to control crime undermines our communities and is ultimately a cost to all. ACT's top priority in government is to increase the law and order vote by one billion dollars (\$1000 million) in order to achieve a "zero tolerance for crime" policy, implemented and working effectively within 12 months. This will include an increase in police numbers, reintroducing community policing, and a focus on victims' rights rather than criminals' rights.

Policing

Community confidence and therefore support of the police has been eroded. Police need to be brought back into the community. The test of police efficiency will be the absence of crime and disorder.

- Increase police numbers, and recruit overseas police with experience in zero tolerance policing.
- Recruit back some experienced officers who have taken early retirement.
- Employ private sector security services for petty crime and for basic fraud/theft investigations and use non-sworn officers where possible to free up frontline staff
- Ensure more police are on the street. Re-introduce community policing.
- Zero tolerance policing. Early intervention for minor crime e.g. vandalism, disorderly behaviour, graffiti.
- Allow police to earn overtime beyond certain hours worked
- Ensure present laws are enforced by police.

Sentencing and Prisons

- "Truth in sentencing" – sentences served in full – to be introduced.
- Life without parole (LWOP) for aggravated murder.
- Bring back private prisons with contractual provisions that include zero tolerance for drugs, prisoner education and discipline as priorities.
- Prisoners must participate in educational opportunities available, and if they don't, they must work.
- Introduce an audit hit-squad (e.g. former Army, SAS officers) with power to search, to ensure compliance with "no drugs" policy.
- Where drugs are found, prisoner privileges to be removed.
- Prisoners with drug and alcohol addictions to be placed in appropriate programme.
- Disestablish gang wings in prisons

Three Strikes and You're "in" – in for life!

- A "three strikes" law, which targets violent offenders only, will be introduced – offences will be clearly defined to prevent the injustices which have occurred under similar laws overseas.
- On conviction for a second "strike" offence, the criminal receives the maximum penalty for that particular offence, and a warning of the consequences – 25 years to life – of conviction for a third.
- A person convicted of a third "strike" offence goes to jail for 25 years to life. No judicial discretion

Victims' rights

- State to pay reparations awarded to the victims and recover from the offender through wages or welfare cheques.
- Strengthen Proceeds of Crime legislation to enhance asset seizure for victim reparation

Immigrants

- Unless naturalised New Zealand citizens, courts will have the power to send home convicted prisoners upon completion of their sentence.

Gangs

- Establish special unit in IRD to audit the income of gangs.
- Creation of an organised crime tactical operations unit
- Where criminal offences take place, confiscate the assets used to facilitate the crime (e.g. cars and motorbikes)
- Firearms offences will attract maximum sentences.

Courts

- Review court system which has become an expensive legal bureaucracy that is failing to deliver.
- Introduce a good behaviour bond for released criminals.
- Concurrent sentencing and automatic parole to be phased out.
- One law for all.
- Introduce a sliding scale of legal aid dependant on the number of convictions.
- Review bail laws, a breach of bail means straight to jail.
- Speed up courts (e.g. night courts) to clear backlogs and reduce unfair delays.

Mental Health

Mental illness is a significant driver of criminal activity, and drug related offences properly fall into this category. The ideology of Community Care has failed the most seriously mentally ill, their families and the public. It has cost lives and needs a comprehensive review.

- Supervised housing and proper care to be provided, this will more than pay for itself.
- A comprehensive review of the last two decades of community care to build on success and learn from mistakes.