



Realistic evaluation of Police practice in reducing burglary

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The burglary research team

Background

- 6% of households burgled in 2000
- 1% of households burgled twice or more (representing 37% of all burglaries)
- Burglary most serious crime concern of survey participants
- Victims of burglary as affected as victims of assault
- Household burglary results in \$100m of insurance claims a year
- Only 17% of burglaries resolved

Need for evaluation

- 1999 NZ govt commits to addressing burglary
- Burglary a priority in 2000 Crime Reduction Strategy
- 2000-3 - \$13m funding for burglary reduction
- Legislative changes – bail, second-hand dealers, DNA
- Auditor-General: ‘the Police need to understand better the relationship between policing practices and desired policy outcomes’

Police interventions to reduce burglary

Drawing on rational choice & routine activity theories interventions focus on

- victims
- property
- locations
- offenders

Other aspects are: emergency response, investigation, forensics, specialised squads, intelligence.

Contexts

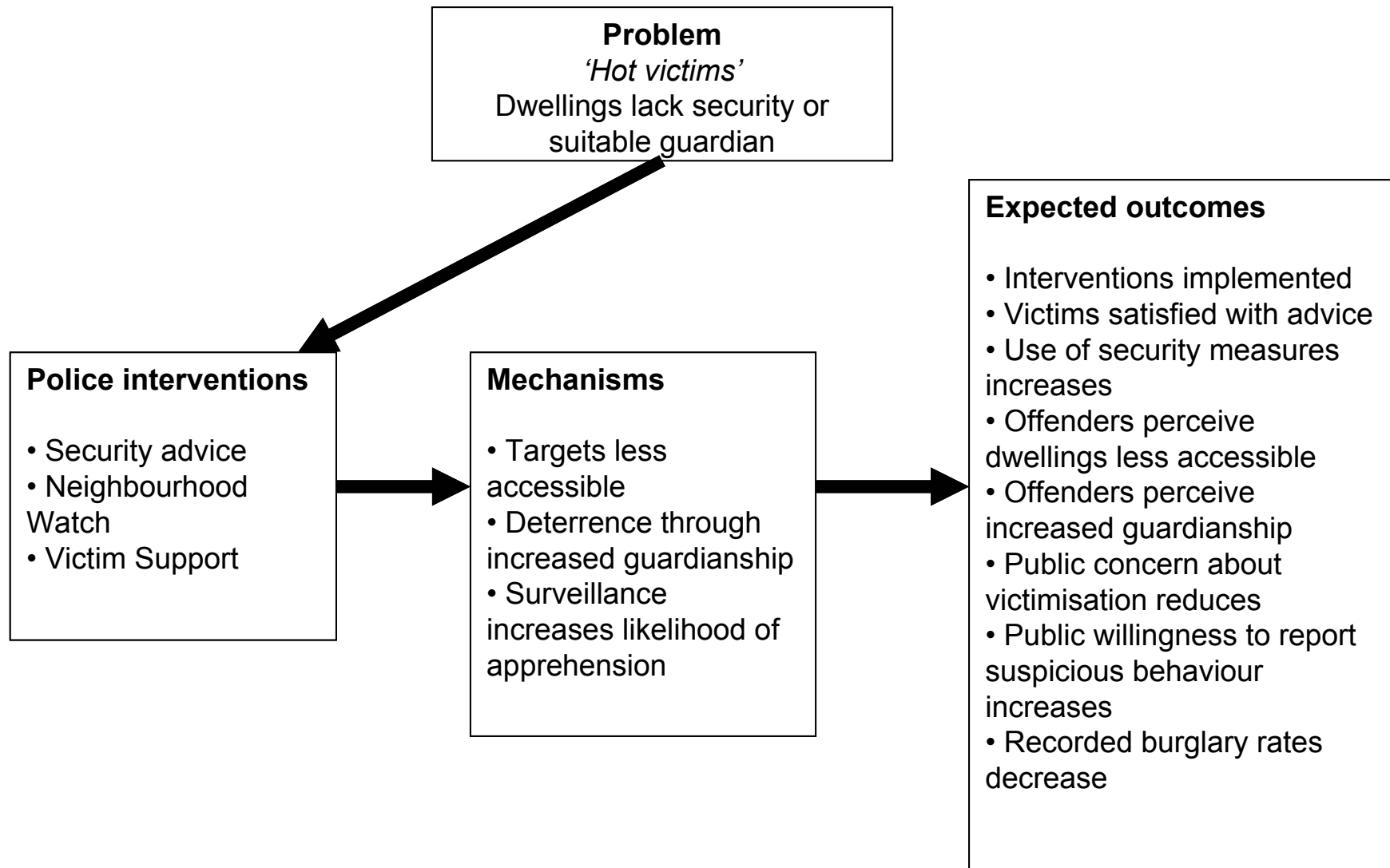
Regional differences in

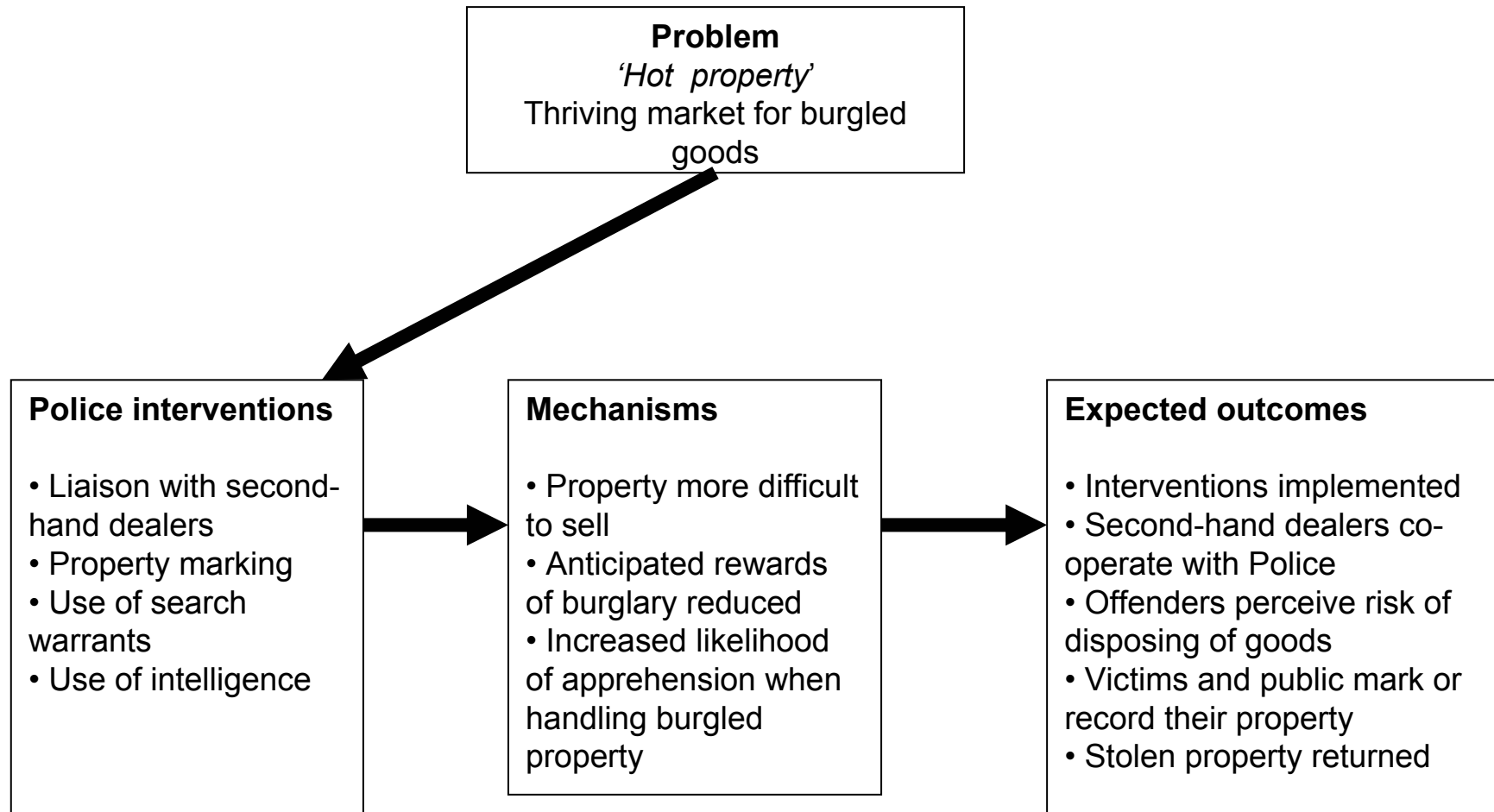
- demographics
- geography
- burglary rates
- mix of Police interventions
- intensity of Police interventions
- general crime prevention initiatives

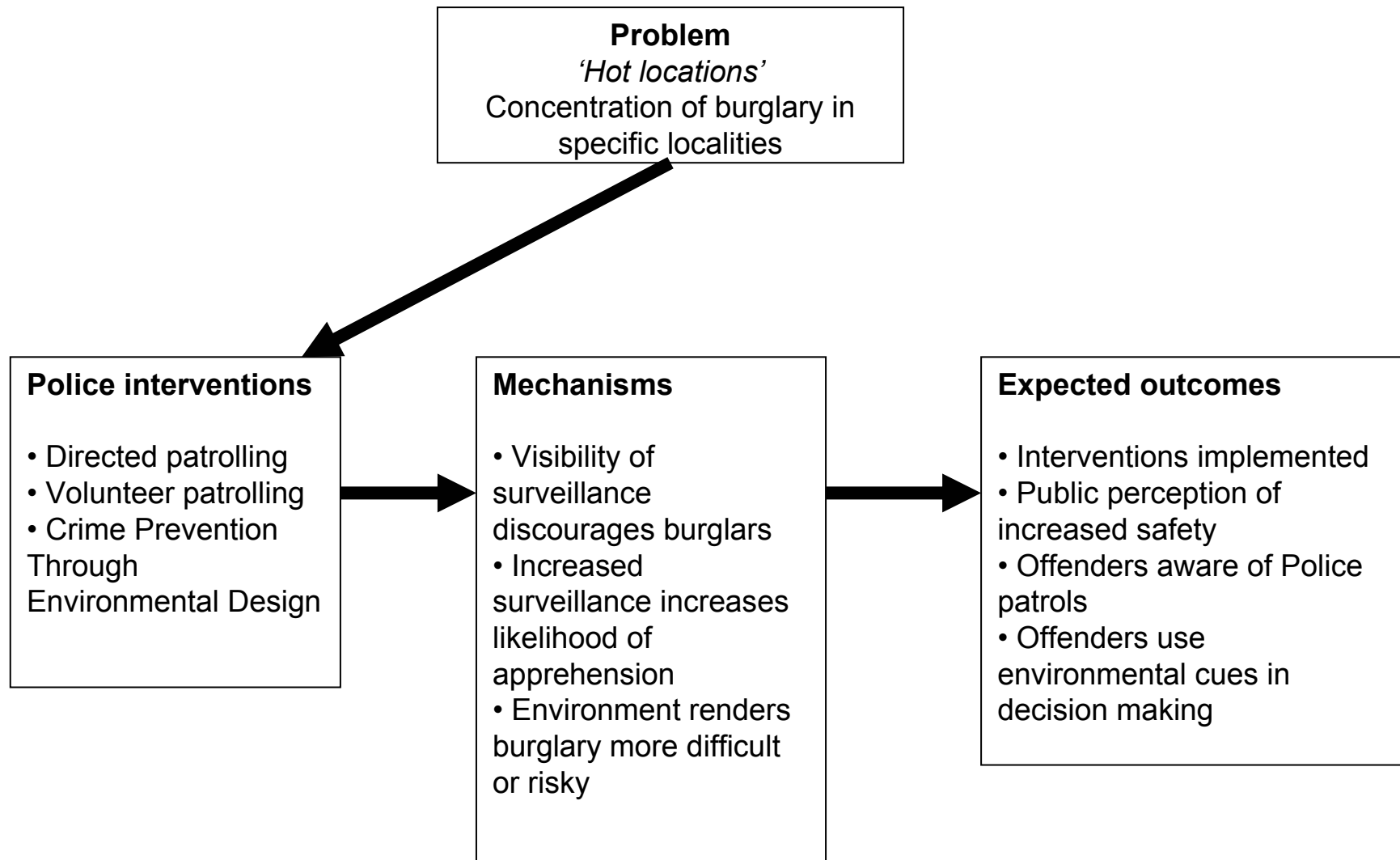
Multiple inter-linked contributors to outcomes

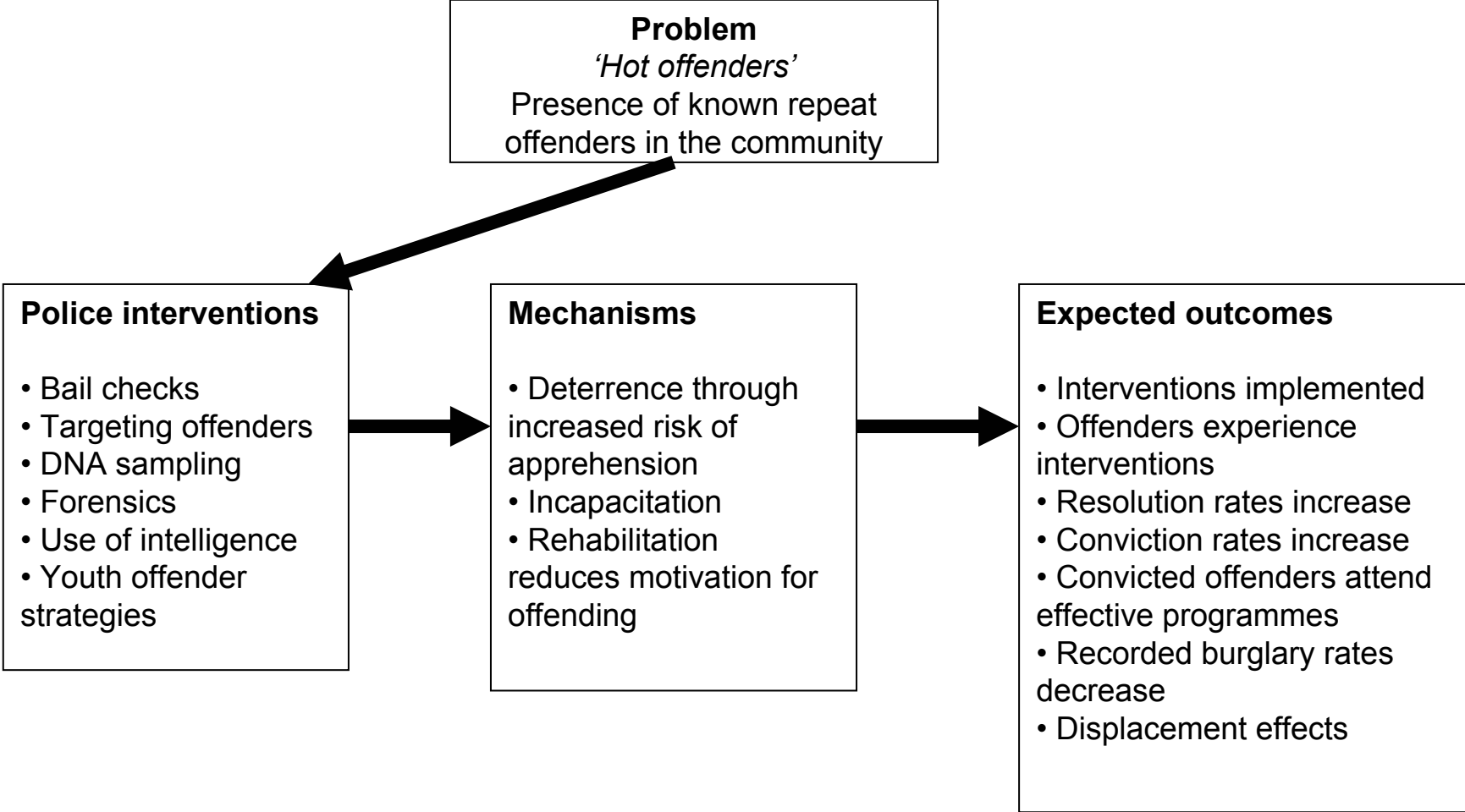
Realist approach

- Tracks intervention content and tests 'theory of action' or mechanism
- Addresses why intervention works/doesn't work and in what circumstances
- Pawson and Tilley developed when evaluating UK crime prevention initiatives in 1990s





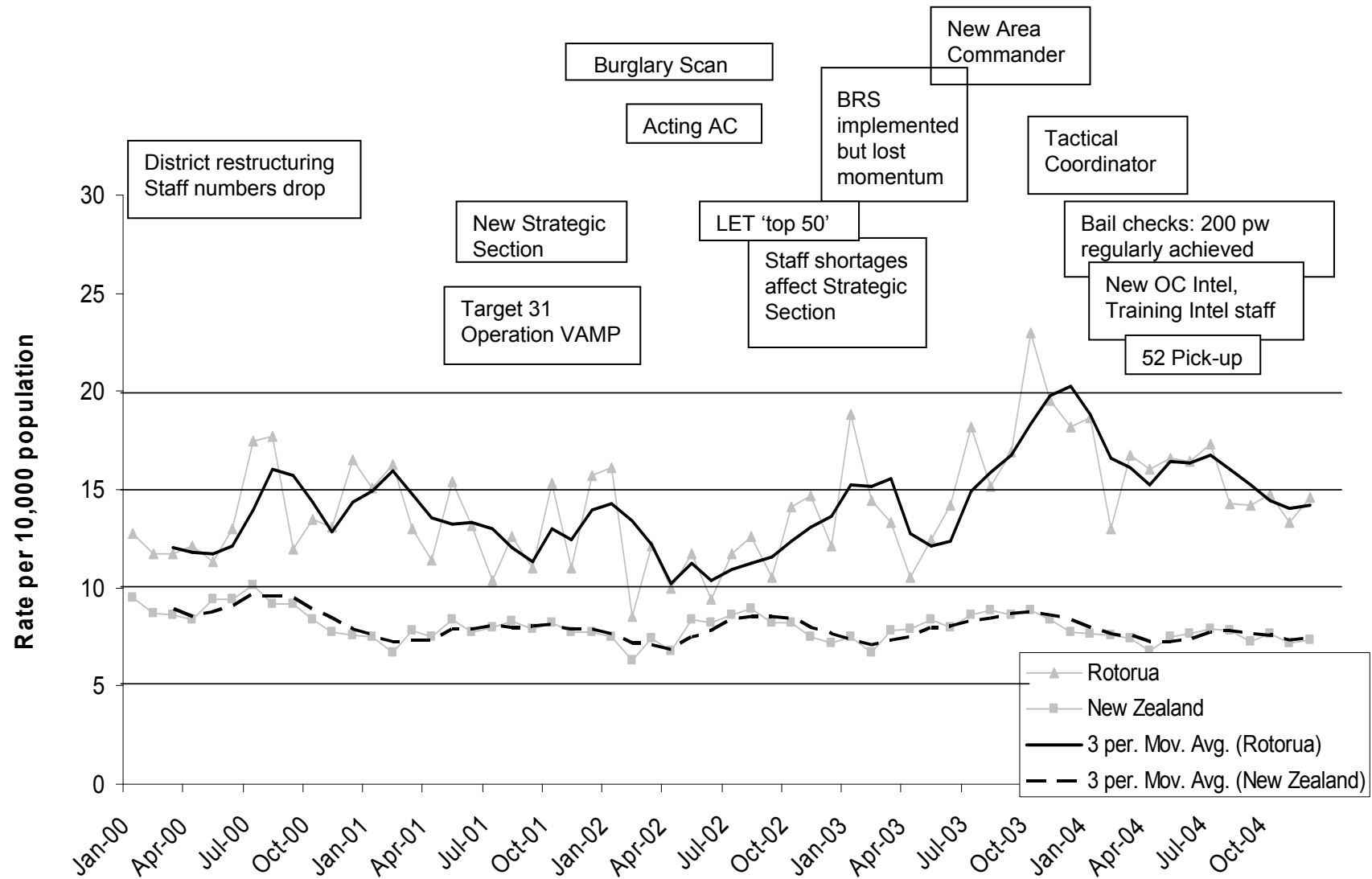




Design

- Case studies of four areas over 3 years
- Mixed methods –
 - literature review
 - household surveys in 2001 & 2003
 - interviews – key informants, victims, offenders
 - analysis of recorded crime & conviction data

Monthly rates moving averages of recorded dwelling burglary per 10,000 population for Rotorua Police area and New Zealand.



Conclusions

- Strategic direction as important as specific interventions
- Context influences strategic approaches
- Strategies informed by international good practice
- Strategies vary in intensity and sustainability
- Variety of contributors to recorded burglary rates
- The way forward
 - Multi-component problem-solving approaches
 - Partnerships
 - Integrate work with youth offenders
 - Enhance victim-focussed approaches

What we have learned

- Initial conceptual thinking important
- Value in working as a research team
- In depth interviews provided insight into context
- Realist approach not easy to explain to stakeholders
- Value of a long term view
- Interweaving of findings from mixed sources a strength
- Variety of methods of dissemination effective