THE PROBLEM
Increasing the number of female police officers is significant because:
In 2015, females made up only 26% of the QPS. In response, the QPS has decided to increase the gender balance of police officers; “A balanced and diverse police organisation means a better service to the people of Queensland” - Commissioner Ian Stewart.
- Equality enhances productivity
- Police services are more representative of communities
- Communities are more responsive to diversified services

RESEARCH QUESTIONS
- Why are there fewer women completing the application process and subsequently, fewer women making it into recruitment?
- How can the QPS increase the number of women successfully completing the application process, and thereby increase the number of female police officers?

METHODOLOGY
- A three phase mixed-method approach
  Phase 1: Public perceptions
    • 101 surveys examining perceptions of QPS
  Phase 2: Successful recruits
    • 17 interviews examining challenges of the application process
    • 41 surveys examining police recruit experiences in the QPS environment
  Phase 3: Unsuccessful recruits
    • Interviews examining challenges within the application process

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REFERENCES

FINDINGS
Public Perception:
- More males than females tended to think that women were too emotional and equally
- Significant gender difference in consideration of working in QPS (men are more likely to consider a career in the QPS than females).

Recruit Perception:
- Male recruits slightly more inclined to suggest that women were too emotional to be police officers.

Recruit Experiences:
- All interviewees stated that they felt welcomed and supported in the QPS and that everyone was treated the same.
- Important theme: although all recruits believe they were treated equally, there was a recurring theme that female applications had been prioritised.

Inconsistent:
All sampled recruits believed they were treated equally by gender, however survey results from the public revealed that females are felt that women in the QPS are not treated as well as men (see graph below).

IMPACT
- Changing QPS policies to reduce gendered barriers in recruitment process
- Increasing the gender balance and creation of a diverse police service
- Targeted QPS marketing for potential recruits