

How to de-escalate a dispute before it turns violent.

Even communities which respond to many types of disputes with violence have some types that they respond to with non-violence. It is a matter of turning more of them to non-violence.

EXISTING NON-VIOLENCE RESPONSE OPTIONS

There are existing non-violence response options, such as:



Peace and Good Order
Committees



traditional mediation with
community
representatives



the local land court



through the police

THE SHIELD, NOT THE BULLET

An important aspect of protecting your community through ‘**the shield, not the bullet**’ is demonstrating to those you believe might attack anyone in your community, that your community is making violence too costly for them compared to non-violence.

This needs to be believable to them, so ShieldPNG recommends a community Justice Exercise to practice and demonstrate a commitment to non-violent justice.

WHO ELSE CAN TAKE PART



IF YOU WISH

This can involve **a police officer in the demonstration**, if you wish.



IF POSSIBLE

If possible, it can also include **representatives from actual or potential rivals**.

CONTINUED · HOW TO DE-ESCALATE A DISPUTE

The Justice Exercise

The Justice Exercise should cover the types of disputes and situations most likely to escalate to violence, including payback. There are lots of ways it can be done. See our resource on the Deterrence through the Justice Exercise for detailed information.

THE IMPORTANT PARTS ARE

- gather a range of people from your clan, including those likely to be involved in any dispute response
- discuss the impact of cycles of violence on all people in the clan
- discuss about how to better protect the clan by deterring attacks through non-violent justice
- discuss what is needed to achieve it – including gathering evidence and providing it to the police to enable a conviction and ensuring any attacker is arrested
- practice a non-violent justice response to different the most likely disputes and attacks
- share information about your clan doing this, including photos and video if possible, so that other clans know the increased cost of any attack and can do the same

This most effective as a deterrent when it occurs long before a dispute arises and is communicated clearly.

The ShieldPNG Peacemakers system seeks to turn Connections on both sides of a rivalry, encouraging all to commit, practice and demonstrate non-violent responses.