

WHITE PAPER REPORT

Protecting the Protectors: Arming Police Officers with Resilience Training

Organisation: Resilience Builders

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This white paper presents an in-depth, independent evaluation of the eResilience pilot program delivered by Resilience Builders (RB) to Victoria Police (VP) employees. Our review underscores the urgent need for robust resilience training to address the significant mental health challenges faced by first responders and highlights how the eResilience program stands out as a solution with compelling results.

Context and Imperative: First responders, including police officers, are regularly exposed to high-stress and traumatic situations that pose substantial risks to their mental health. The 2019 Australian Government Senate Inquiry shed light on these pressing mental health issues, sparking increased attention and action from organisations like Victoria Police to safeguard their personnel's well-being. The need for effective resilience training is more critical than ever.

Program Goals and Advantages: The eResilience program is designed to elevate participants' resilience scores by a minimum of 10%. It offers a range of benefits, including reduced stress, enhanced adaptability to change, improved productivity, and heightened awareness of workplace psychosocial risks. For Victoria Police, these benefits translate into lower stress-related health issues, better staff retention, and a decrease in workplace injury claims, thus contributing to a more resilient and effective workforce.

Evaluation of Resilience360 Questionnaire: The Resilience360 self-assessment tool, used to gauge resilience changes among participants, demonstrated substantial improvements from pre- to post-program. The program yielded statistically significant enhancements in resilience scores, validating its effectiveness. While the questionnaire's internal reliability was generally strong, recommendations for refining specific sub-scales were provided to further enhance its accuracy.

Program Review and Recommendations: The eResilience program was meticulously evaluated against 12 critical criteria for resilience programs. Key recommendations include tailoring the program to address the unique roles within Victoria Police, clarifying and expanding the explanation of resilience components, and optimizing the timing and context of program delivery. These adjustments are poised to elevate the program's impact and relevance.

Conclusion: The eResilience program by Resilience Builders has proven to be a highly effective intervention for boosting resilience among first responders. With strategic refinements and targeted adaptations, the program holds the potential to significantly enhance the mental health and overall well-being of Victoria Police employees, making it an invaluable asset in the pursuit of a healthier, more resilient workforce.

INTRODUCTION

This white paper primarily aims to review the e-resilience training pilot program provided by Resilience Builders (RBs) for a cohort of Victoria Police (VP) employees. Before delving into the specifics of the eResilience program, it is essential to understand the context and need for resilience training among first responders, such as police officers.

The term "first responder" typically refers to professionals like paramedics, police officers, firefighters, and other emergency personnel trained to assist in critical, often life-threatening situations (Australian Government Senate Inquiry, 2019). First responders regularly face extremely challenging situations that require a unique skill set, often involving significant danger. While the risks associated with these professions are traditionally viewed through the lens of physical threats, there has been a growing recognition in recent years of the long-term mental health and psychosocial risks that first responders face. This increasing awareness parallels a broader societal trend of rising mental health referrals and diagnoses. The chronic and acute traumatic events and circumstances that first responders routinely experience elevate their occupational risk, as described by the Centre for Traumatic Stress Studies in an Australian Government Senate Inquiry (2019):

“In essence, it is the cumulative exposure to horrific accidents and life-threatening events, as well as the personal threat to the individual officers, that leads to a cumulative risk of developing a range of mental health disorders. It is striking that there is little actuarial modelling of this risk of mental [health disorders] during the career of an emergency service worker in any of the emergency services.”

Since the 2019 Senate Inquiry report, "The People Behind 000: Mental Health of Our First Responders," emergency service organisations have increased their focus and investment in the mental health and well-being of their employees. For example, the Victoria Police Annual Report (2022-2023) provides detailed data on critical incidents, claims, and related costs over the past three years within the occupational health, safety, and well-being section (p. 14). The average cost per claim indicates that the total cost of claims was approximately \$215 million (2021-2022), \$214 million (2022-2023), and \$239 million (2022-2023), reflecting a significant and increasing annual budgetary impact (around a 12% increase in the past 12 months). The report also highlights the organisation's commitment to employee well-being through various initiatives, including the establishment of a Health, Safety, and Wellbeing Taskforce in 2023. The task force focuses on preventing mental health injuries, encouraging employees to seek help, and supporting members in staying at work and returning to health. In summary, Victoria Police is committed to ensuring both the safety of the community and the mental health and well-being of its workforce.

In the context of improving workplace mental health, evidence-based resilience programs are frequently implemented to help individuals move back along the mental health continuum towards better mental health. Resilience has been defined in various ways, with frequently

cited definitions provided by Fisher, Ragsdale, & Fisher (2018, p. 10) and Bryan, O'Shea, & MacIntyre (2019, p. 8):

1. "The process by which individuals are able to positively adapt to substantial difficulties, adversity, or hardship."
2. "A dynamic process encompassing the capacity to maintain regular functioning through diverse challenges or to rebound through the use of facilitative resources."

This white paper provides an independent review of the effectiveness of the eResilience pilot program delivered by Resilience Builders to a pilot group of Victoria Police officers and general staff.

The review is structured as follows:

1. Introduction (pp. 3-4).
2. Program summary provided by Resilience Builders (pp. 3-9), explaining the program.
3. Data analysis of reported improvements in resilience and a psychometric review of the Resilience360 assessment questionnaire (pp. 9-15).
4. Benchmarking the Resilience Builders eResilience program against peer-reviewed recommendations by Ijntema, Burger, and Schaufeil (2019), who systematically reviewed resilience programs (pp. 17-21).
5. Summary of findings, recommendations, and conclusions (pp. 22-23).

PROGRAM SUMMARY

This section is provided by Resilience Builders.

The resilience development program, eResilience, delivered to the Victoria Police pilot group was a fully online, self-paced eLearning program comprising five separate content modules. Each module, designed to be completed in 30-40 minutes, was intentionally crafted to provide meaningful, evidence-based content in an engaging manner. Participants completed the Resilience360 self-assessments both before and after the program to measure their perceived progress. Additionally, post-module activity guides were provided to reinforce the learning and practical applications between each module. The entire eResilience program is designed to be completed over approximately five weeks.

Resilience is not dependent on a single skill; rather, it encompasses a diverse set of skills and coping mechanisms. To overcome setbacks and daily challenges, it is essential to develop positive habits that help buffer against inevitable adversities. A common misconception is that resilience is built primarily through traits like gratitude, empathy, and mindfulness. While these traits are important, science tells us they are just three components of a much larger and more complex framework. Our step-by-step process for developing a comprehensive resilience toolkit goes beyond just a 'metaphorical' hammer, making it well-suited to vocations where

pressure and stress must be managed through effective coping and resilience instincts for optimal functioning.

This program is effective because it focuses on four crucial pillars: physical resilience, social resilience, emotional resilience, and spiritual resilience. These pillars enable individuals to take control of their well-being. Key content areas include “Tools for Tough Times” and “Making Healthy Habits Stick.” The eResilience program consists of self-paced modules, ideal for people who need content flexibility and have limited time.

Key Elements

1. **Investment:** Participants must invest time and effort to maximise the program's benefits.
2. **Uncertainty:** The outcome of resilience-building activities cannot be predetermined. Embracing the discomfort of uncertainty is essential for growth.
3. **Risk:** Whether involving physical exertion, emotional vulnerability, or perceived social standing, clients are encouraged to engage in self-exploration and self-honesty.
4. **New Environment:** A mix of online and experiential learning creates opportunities for establishing reference points, events that participants can reflect on to bolster their confidence in facing future challenges.
5. **Focus:** Participants are encouraged to stay present, remain engaged, and embrace the opportunity for growth.

Resilience Assessment Tool

The impact of the program is measurable. The Resilience360 survey, developed using best practice psychometric principles, is crucial for measuring baseline resilience at the beginning of the eResilience program and reassessing resilience at its conclusion.

We use the unique Resilience360 scale because it is intentionally designed to reflect the content of the eResilience program. The Resilience360 profile helps clients identify their strengths and areas for improvement within the four resilience pillars: Physical, Social, Emotional, and Spiritual. Individual results are kept anonymous, with only aggregated results shared with participant organisations. The Resilience360 scale is suitable for repeated administration after the program to track the ongoing development of participants' resilience attributes.

Module Content Themes

- **Module 1: Discovering Resilience**
 - What is resilience?
 - Understanding discomfort
 - Tools for tough times
 - How to form good habits

- **Module 2: Physical Resilience**
 - How movement, sleep, and nutrition build resilience
 - The benefits of exercise on physical and mental health
 - The benefits of good sleep patterns
- **Module 3: Emotional Resilience**
 - Visualization and self-talk
 - Meditation and mindfulness
 - Better understanding your character strengths
 - Mental strategies to build great habits and achieve goals
- **Module 4: Social Resilience**
 - Building positive social connections
 - Trust and how to build it
 - Psychological safety
 - The power of vulnerability
 - High-performing teams
- **Module 5: Spiritual Resilience**
 - Understanding spiritual resilience
 - Altruism and serving others
 - How gratitude, compassion, and kindness help us flourish
 - The power of selflessness

Additional Support

- 3 x Resilience360 self-assessments with personalised reports
- 5 x Post-Module Activity Guides
- Recommended Reading Guides

Delivery Method

The eResilience program is delivered as an online, self-paced learning experience. To reinforce the program's teachings, clients receive post-module activity guides, which require a small weekly time investment to implement new habits that create meaningful behaviour changes.

Target Group

The eResilience program is designed for Victoria Police sworn and unsworn employees. The program was delivered as part of an initiative with the Victorian Government Department of Health in supporting wellbeing resources in regional Victoria. Victoria Police employees working or residing in eligible regional Victoria local government areas (LGAs) were invited to apply for access to eResilience.

Eligible LGAs include: Alpine Shire, Ararat Rural City, Bass Coast Shire, Benalla Rural City, Buloke Shire, Campaspe Shire, Central Goldfields Shire, Colac Otway Shire, Corangamite Shire, East Gippsland Shire, Gannawarra Shire, Glenelg Shire, Hindmarsh Shire, Latrobe City, Loddon Shire,

Mildura Rural City, Moira Shire, Moyne Shire, Northern Grampians Shire, Pyrenees Shire, Southern Grampians Shire, Strathbogie Shire, Swan Hill Rural City, Towong Shire, Wangaratta Rural City, Wellington Shire, and Yarriambiack Shire.

Expressions of interest for the Resilience Builders eResilience program were circulated to eligible Victoria Police employees (both sworn and unsworn) in August 2023. Approximately 120 Victoria Police personnel completed the expression of interest online form and were onboarded to eResilience.

Expectations

We expect an improvement in participants' overall resilience scores of at least 10%, based on the results of previous Resilience Builders programs.

Expected Benefits for Participants

- Knowledge of a broad range of evidence-based techniques proven to build resilience and improve well-being.
- Reduced stress and anxiety.
- Improved ability to perform under pressure.
- Solid understanding of strategies for maintaining mental and physical health and how to implement them successfully.
- Improved ability to cope with change.
- Enhanced productivity, focus, and connectedness.
- Improved ability to respond appropriately in challenging situations.
- Creation of healthy habits for life.
- Increased awareness of workplace psychosocial hazards and how to mitigate them.
- Establishing a foundation for participants to appreciate the potential protective effects of resilience training independently.

Expected Benefits for Victoria Police

- Reduction in stress-related health issues.
- Improved staff retention and talent management.
- Effective monitoring of workforce well-being over time.
- Capacity building for measuring and reviewing existing interventions to improve well-being and performance.
- Potential incorporation of resilience measurement principles into police recruitment processes.
- Identification of negative responses associated with psychosocial hazards.
- Potential use of the Resilience360 instrument to correlate resilience with performance and productivity.
- Reduction in absenteeism.
- Reduction in workplace injury claims.

Step-by-Step Program Guide

Step 1: Participants are introduced to the program's functionality and course outline during a 30-minute information session facilitated by Resilience Builders.

Step 2: Participants log in to the program and complete their first Resilience360 self-assessment, receiving a personalized report via email. This report details their overall resilience score, individual construct scores, strengths, and development opportunities. The primary goal of Resilience360 is to establish a baseline before starting eResilience, identifying areas of strength and those needing development. This allows participants to tailor their resilience plans by practicing specific techniques.

Step 3: Participants complete one module of eResilience each week for five weeks, with each module taking approximately 30-40 minutes. Throughout each module, participants access the information and guidance needed to improve their overall resilience, well-being, and performance. They learn about various coping tools and techniques and how to make these healthy new habits stick. A 10-question quiz is completed at the end of each module, with a minimum score of 80% required to pass. Between modules, participants are encouraged to practice resilience-building techniques using the 5 x Post-Module Activity Guides.

Upon completing the program, participants are invited to complete the Resilience360 self-assessment again. They receive an updated personalized report via email, outlining their overall resilience score (ranging from 30-150) and individual scores for the four resilience pillars: Physical, Emotional, Social, and Spiritual. This report also compares their strengths and development opportunities to their pre-program assessment from five weeks earlier. Participants then use the following 4-6 weeks to embed their new resilience behaviors into their daily routines. After this period, they are invited to complete the Resilience360 self-assessment once more.

REVIEW RESILIENCE360 QUESTIONNAIRE

It is crucial to measure perceived changes in resilience for several reasons. First, both Resilience Builders and clients, such as Victoria Police, expect that the eResilience program will effectively enhance knowledge, awareness, and practical resilience skills that can be applied to daily life and professional functioning. To achieve this, the Resilience360 self-assessment questionnaire serves as a key tool for measuring and tracking client progress. Statistical analysis is essential to determine whether observed changes are statistically significant and, in simpler terms, meaningful. Data coding and Excel data transformations were initially performed to facilitate paired comparisons. Only police members who completed both pre-program and post-program Resilience360 assessments are included in the analysis. All analyses were conducted using SPSS version 29.

Additionally, assessing the integrity of the Resilience360 self-assessment questionnaire is important. The results section addresses five key questions:

1. What is the level of reported change in resilience from the beginning to the end of the eResilience program, as measured by the Resilience360 questionnaire?
2. If changes are observed, are they significant and meaningful?
3. Is the Resilience360 questionnaire a reliable instrument?
4. Are any modifications to the questionnaire necessary or recommended?
5. Based on preliminary evidence, how does the Resilience360 questionnaire compare to industry-standard resilience questionnaires?

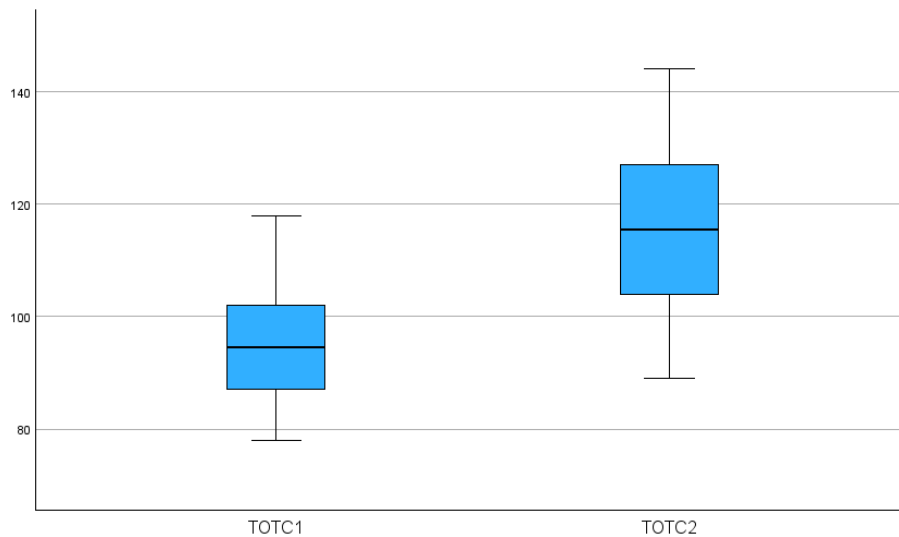
The results are presented in tabular form. Table 1 (pre-program vs. post-program) and Table 5 display average scores for the four dimensions of resilience and a total score, accompanied by relevant significance tests using t-tests for dependent group comparisons. Table 2 presents effect size data, while Tables 3 and 4 provide internal reliability data.

Table 1: Mean, Standard Deviation (in parentheses), Percentage Change, and Significance (Two-Tailed) for Self-Rating Resilience360 Pre-Program vs. Post-Program

Police Cohort n = 34	Resilience360 pre-program	Resilience360 post-program	Percentage Change	Significance level P value (two tailed)
Total Raw Score	94.74 (10.6)	115.15 (10.3)	+21.5%	0.001*
Physical Scale	18.71 (3.9)	23.24 (4.3)	+24.2%	0.001*
Social Support Scale	18.76 (3.3)	22.53 (3.7)	+20.0%	0.001*
Spiritual Pro-Social Scale	21.65 (2.2)	25.74 (3.0)	+19.0%	0.02*
Emotional Scale	16.35 (2.7)	20.12 (3.1)	+23.0%	0.001*
Psychological Recover Scale	19.26 (3.2)	23.53 (3.2)	+22.0%	0.001*

The results indicate reported improvements in Resilience360 ratings from pre-program to post-program, including the total score and all five subscale scores. The calculated significance levels are primarily at the 0.001 level, suggesting there is an extremely low probability that the observed changes from pre-program to post-program ratings are due to chance.

Figure 1: Box Plot Showing Reported Improvements in eResilience Program Scores (Pre- and Post-Program Total Scores on the Resilience360 Scale)



Although p-values are crucial, calculating effect sizes is equally important. Unlike p-values, effect sizes are not influenced by sample size. For instance, highly significant p-values can often be inflated by large sample sizes, which may correspond to weak or inconsequential effect sizes (Gullivan & Feinn, 2012). Table 2 presents the calculated effect sizes along with a description of these effect sizes.

Table 2: Reported Effect Sizes with Cohen’s d (Hedges Correction) for Total Scores and Sub-Scale Scores on the Resilience360 Scale

Police Cohort n = 34	Effect Size Point Estimates	Effect Size Description
Total Score	-2.8	Very large
Physical Scale	-2.2	Very large
Social support Scale	-1.3	Very large
Spiritual/Pro-Social Scale	-1.3	Very large
Emotional Scale	-1.7	Very large
Psychological Recover Scale	-1.5	Very large

When evaluating reported differences in an intervention program, it is important to consider best practices in scale development. Specifically, we need to assess whether the Resilience360 Scale is a reliable and valid measure of resilience. Psychometric best practices generally involve three main phases:

1. **Item Development:** This includes identifying domain and content validity.
2. **Scale Development:** This phase involves pre-testing questions, sampling and administering surveys, item reduction, and factor extraction.
3. **Scale Evaluation:** This includes assessing test dimensionality, reliability, and validity (Boateng et al., 2018).

A comprehensive analysis of all phases of the Resilience360 Scale's development is beyond the scope of this report. Therefore, the focus here is on scale evaluation, which is often where psychological questionnaires may fall short.

Test Dimensionality

The Resilience360 Scale is designed as a multidimensional instrument with five proposed sub-factors of resilience: physical, social, spiritual, emotional, and psychological recovery. From a psychometric perspective, the expectation is that these five distinct latent resilience variables underlie the Resilience360 Scale. Generally, five latent variables are considered a relatively complex measure (Mellenbergh, 2019). Thorough assessment of test dimensionality and factor loadings typically requires a principal components analysis (PCA), which necessitates a sample size of at least 150. Consequently, this method was not suitable for the smaller cohort used in this study.

Test Reliability

Assessing the reliability of a scale is crucial from a psychometric standpoint. For instance, peer-reviewed psychometric journals typically require a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.65 or higher. Cronbach's alpha measures the amount of shared variance among items within a scale. A low alpha value may indicate an insufficient number of questions, poor interrelatedness among items, or heterogeneous constructs (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). Scales and sub-scales with Cronbach's alpha coefficients below 0.65 often require adjustments such as item reduction or changes to latent variables.

Scale development is a time-consuming and rigorous process to meet psychometric standards. Given that the Resilience360 Scale is relatively new and has undergone several iterations, the results from its administration to the Victoria Police pilot group are expected to be informative and relevant for this report. Accordingly, I have calculated Cronbach's alpha for the total score and the five sub-factor scores both before and after the e-resilience training program (see Table 3). The Resilience360 Scale features a symmetrical design with six items for each sub-scale (i.e., a 5 x 6 model). While this design is ideal for administration, scoring, and interpretation, most psychological scales often cannot maintain symmetry after psychometric analyses. Despite this, with six items per 360° factor, there is room for item reduction and modifications if needed, without falling below the 'golden psychometric standard' of a minimum of three items per scale.

Table 3: Cronbach’s Alpha Internal Reliability for the Resilience360 Scale (Pre and Post Scores)

Police Cohort n = 34	α initial alpha	Possible maximum α with item/s reduction	Recommendations
Pre Physical Scale Items (6 items)	0.71	NA	No Changes Recommended
Post Physical Scale Items (6 items)	0.87	NA	No Changes Recommended
Pre Social Support Scale (6 items)	0.57	0.60	Delete Items 2 and 7
Post Social Support Scale (6 items)	0.76	NA	No Changes Recommended
Pre-Spiritual Pro-Social Scale (6 items)	0.20	0.47	Delete Items 3, 23 and 28
Post Spiritual Pro-Social Scale (6 items)	0.81	NA	No Changes Recommended
Pre Emotional Scale (6 items)	0.52	0.64	Delete items 9, 19 and 29
Post Emotional Scale (6 items)	0.75	0.86	Delete items 9 and 29
Pre Psychological Recover Scale (6 items)	0.73	NA	No Changes Recommended
Post Psychological Recover Scale (6 items)	0.86	NA	No Changes Recommended
Pre Total Scale (30 items)	0.85	NA	No Changes Recommended
Post Total Scale (30 items)	0.94	NA	No Changes Recommended

While there is room for further refinement, the Resilience360 Scale demonstrates highly promising initial internal reliability estimates. The total of 30 items on the Resilience360 Scale are well-integrated as a collective measure, with pre- and post-program average alpha coefficients of $\alpha = 0.895$.

However, some sub-scale Cronbach alpha scores are lower and will require adjustments (see Table 3 for recommendations):

- **Physical and Psychological Recovery Sub-Scales:** Both produced pre- and post-program average alpha coefficients of $\alpha = 0.79$ and $\alpha = 0.795$, respectively. These sub-scales are robust and do not require changes.
- **Social Support Sub-Scale:** This sub-scale yielded a pre- and post-program average alpha of $\alpha = 0.63$, which is marginally acceptable. The pre-program alpha is modest and suggests room for improvement.
- **Emotional Resilience Sub-Scale:** This sub-scale also produced a pre- and post-program average alpha of $\alpha = 0.63$, indicating marginal reliability and a modest pre-program alpha.
- **Spiritual Pro-Social Sub-Scale:** This sub-scale showed a pre- and post-program average alpha of $\alpha = 0.50$, which falls below psychometric standards, with the pre-program alpha being particularly low.

In summary, the overall internal reliability of the Resilience360 Scale is excellent for the combined items at both pre- and post-program stages. The physical and psychological recovery sub-scales are robust and require no changes. The social and emotional sub-scales are acceptable but could benefit from improvements. The spiritual pro-social scale needs substantial revisions.

Therefore, I recommend the following:

- **Combine the Social and Spiritual Pro-Social Scales:** Merge these into a coherent group of six items. Analysis suggests this combination would result in an acceptable pre-program alpha of $\alpha = 0.67$ and a post-program alpha of $\alpha = 0.77$, yielding an average alpha of $\alpha = 0.72$. This combined scale should be described simply as "Social."
- **Reduce Total Scale Items:** Decrease the total number of items from 30 to 21, maintaining symmetry with 6 items for physical, social, and psychological recovery sub-scales, and 3 items for the emotional sub-scale.
- **Simplify Scoring:** Respondents generally prefer shorter scales, and psychometricians accept reduced item scales if alpha coefficients improve, and item integrity is preserved. For scoring simplicity, the raw score for the emotional items could be doubled for client profiling, maintaining ideal symmetry.

To estimate how these recommendations would improve sub-scale reliability, I have recalculated the alpha internal reliability coefficients (see Table 4).

Police Cohort n = 34	α initial alpha
Pre-Physical Scale Items (6 items)	0.71
Post Physical Scale Items (6 items)	0.87
Pre-Social Scale (6 items)	0.69
Post Social Scale (6 items)	0.77
Pre-Emotional Scale (3 items)	0.64
Post Emotional Scale (3 items)	0.94
Pre-Psychological Recover Scale (6 items)	0.73
Post Psychological Recover Scale (6 items)	0.86
Pre-Total Scale (21 items)	0.80
Post Total Scale (21 items)	0.93

Note that recalculating the mean, standard deviation, percentage change, and significance levels using the proposed revised model with four sub-scales and 21 items still yields results very similar to the original model (see Table 1 vs. Table 4). However, the revised model demonstrates substantially stronger psychometric properties. This aligns with standard practices for scale development and re-development.

Table 5: Revised Model Mean, Standard Deviation (in brackets), Percentage Change, and Significance (Two-Tailed) of Self-Rating Resilience360 Pre-Program vs. Post-Program

Police Cohort n = 34	Resilience 360° pre-program	Resilience 360° post-program	Percentage Change	Significance level P value (two tailed)
Total Score (21 items)	66.32 (8.8)	81.06 (11.2)	+22.0%	0.001*
Physical Scale (6 items)	18.71 (3.9)	23.24 (4.3)	+24.0%	0.001*

Social Scale (6 items)	19.32 (3.4)	23.24 (3.3)	+20.0%	0.001*
Emotional Scale (3 items)	9.03 (2.0)	11.06 (2.4)	+22.0%	0.001*
Psychological Recover Scale (6 items)	19.3 (3.1)	23.53 (3.2)	+22.0%	0.001*

Unfortunately, it is all too common for commercial and industry psychological intervention programs to either a) use poorly designed questionnaires with little regard for psychometric principles or b) employ validated questionnaires that are not suited for the specific purpose. Therefore, I am impressed by Resilience Builders' adherence to sound questionnaire development procedures and their commitment to independent review processes.

Resilience Scale Comparison

While a comprehensive comparison of the Resilience360 Scale with other frequently used and cited resilience scales is beyond the scope of this report, one specific comparison may be insightful. The Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC; 2003), a 25-item instrument with proven psychometric properties, serves as a useful benchmark due to its similar number of items and multidimensional nature. A recent study with a large military air force population (Bezdzjian et al., 2017) reported a total scale Cronbach alpha coefficient of $\alpha = 0.91$ for the CD-RISC. The Resilience360 Scale's total Cronbach alpha coefficient is $\alpha = 0.93$, indicating that it is comparable to the CD-RISC in terms of overall scale reliability.

REVIEW OF THE eRESILIENCE PROGRAM

Ijntema, Burger, and Schaufeil (2019) conducted a meta-analysis of psychological resilience programs, reviewing 286 programs and refining this number to 21 that met their criteria. They identified 12 essential themes or criteria for resilience programs to improve consistency:

1. The program focuses on resilience.
2. The target population is clearly specified.
3. The work context for the program is defined.
4. Resilience is defined and includes elements of adversity, dynamic process, and positive adaptation.
5. The characteristics of adversity that necessitate resilience are outlined.
6. An explanation of how positive adaptation is understood is provided.
7. The process by which individuals adapt to adversity is displayed and explained.
8. The timing of the program in relation to the adversity is clarified.

9. The general aim of the program (e.g., to enhance resilience) and specific aims (e.g., targeted elements of resilience) are stated.
10. The method of measuring resilience, including the elements measured and at what time points, is explained.
11. Whether there is a baseline level of elements required for eligibility is specified.
12. An explanation of how the program enhances resilience, including its approach, mode of delivery, and duration, is provided.

In the following section, I will review the Resilience Builders' eResilience program in relation to these 12 inclusion criteria, based on the documents provided. This includes the Resilience Builders Framework (15 pages), Post Module Activity Guide (16 pages), Resilience360 self-assessment data (pre- and post-program) with spreadsheets (provided by Bethany Whitters, Lead Systems Developer at Strategic Surveys), and the 2022-2023 Victoria Police Annual Report.

Table 6. Review of eResilience Program with Benchmark Resilience Program Inclusion Criteria

Inclusion Criteria	Guiding Comments	Comments and Recommendations on Resilience Builders (RB) Inclusions
1. Program topic/focus	A focus on either individual resilience or psychological resilience?	The RB's approach combines individual resilience with physical, social, and spiritual resilience inclusions and psychological resilience with emotional and psychological recovery inclusions. Recommendation 1: Continue this combined approach as it supports both occupational and personal resilience development.
2. Intended Population	Resilience of what/whom? Employees, teams, the company, or business section?	RBs have used this or a similar program in educational contexts. This adaptation is an online program for a pilot group of "first responders" (Victoria Police employees—not teams or VP per se). Recommendation 2: Given potential differences in needs between active police officers and other Victoria Police (VP) staff, RB, with VP's support, might consider adapting the program to address both general and specific resilience needs of staff in different roles. The program could evolve into a general introductory component and a targeted role-specific component for greater specificity and impact.
3. Work Context	E.g., For health care, law enforcement, education, or accounting?	The RB's intended work context is Victoria Police. Literature confirms that the e-resilience program components are highly relevant for first responders (FRs), addressing psychosocial risks like violence,

Inclusion Criteria	Guiding Comments	Comments and Recommendations on Resilience Builders (RB) Inclusions
		<p>aggression, harassment, and conflict. Additional risks such as traumatic events and organisational justice further highlight the need for strong resilience skills. Annual reports indicate rising costs and attrition that affect all areas of operation.</p> <p>Recommendation 3: The program is relevant for FRs as currently designed. However, as the program scales up, it could benefit from feedback through focus groups or surveys to tailor the content to specific needs of FR populations like VP. This iterative approach would align with resilience development principles.</p>
<p>4. Definition Components</p>	<p>Is a definition included, and what components are included? Components should include adversity, dynamic process, and positive adaptation.</p>	<p>The RB's eResilience framework defines resilience as "how well someone copes with change and adversity," aligning broadly with Rutter's (2012) definition of resilience as positive adaptation despite significant adversity. The framework lists six validation points related to resilience:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strength-based perspective 2. Relevance of internal and external factors 3. Relevance of personal characteristics 4. Process approach with adversity as antecedent and positive adaptation as outcome 5. Organic understanding of resilience 6. Importance of action, change, and habits for personal resilience development <p>Recommendation 4: Continue using this approach, which is well-aligned and likely exceeds the definitional components prescribed.</p>
<p>5. Characteristics Adversity</p>	<p>What specifically triggers the need for resilience? E.g., single or multiple events, intensity, duration, frequency, and predictability.</p>	<p>Although specific triggers for resilience are not clearly stated in the framework, the centrality of resilience in FR contexts is well-documented. Benefits for clients and organisations are detailed in the supporting documents.</p> <p>Recommendation 5: Even if the specific needs for resilience are addressed verbally, a brief section on triggers could be added to the RB framework. For future programs, especially for VP and other FR organisations, detailing the personal and</p>

Inclusion Criteria	Guiding Comments	Comments and Recommendations on Resilience Builders (RB) Inclusions
		occupational resilience needs could enhance program relevance.
6. Explanation Positive Adaptation	Does the explanation include key aspects such as recovery, sustainability, and growth?	The RB's eResilience framework includes substantial information on positive adaptation (e.g., four pillars, five elements, and six-step process). However, recovery, sustainability, and growth are not prominently featured in the provided documents, though growth is a focus of the post-module activity guides. Recommendation 6: Incorporate or link recovery, sustainability, and growth into the framework more explicitly.
7. Adaptation Process	Are basic elements of resilience processes included? E.g., pre-adversity, adversity mechanisms, resources, and outcomes.	The RB's program reflects elements from the four major historical waves of resilience research: trait-oriented, developmental and ecological systems, interventions and training, and multilevel dynamics. The framework covers pre-adversity and adversity mechanisms and includes concepts like 'reference points' for process adaptation. Recommendation 7: Continue developing the eResilience program with a focus on contemporary adaptation, resources, and outcomes based on current research.
8. Timing	Is the timing of the program in relation to adversity explained (before, during, and after)?	The eResilience program is not specifically timed to coincide with particular adversities but aims to build foundational resilience skills for those in stressful circumstances. Recommendation 8: For a larger cohort, such as VP, the program could be implemented as part of initial training or induction. Additional modules could be developed to coincide with role transitions or periodically throughout employment.
9. General & Specific Aims	Are general and specific aims specified to manage adaptation process elements?	The framework does not explicitly state general and specific aims, though clients are asked about their reasons for increasing resilience in module review guides. Recommendation 9: Clearly define and communicate the general and specific program aims in Module 1.

Inclusion Criteria	Guiding Comments	Comments and Recommendations on Resilience Builders (RB) Inclusions
10. Measurement	Is there an explanation of how resilience is measured? Which resilience elements are measured? What time points does measurement occur?	<p>The Resilience360 scale is used before, during, and after the program, reflecting the four key pillars. Short quizzes measure client progress through the modules.</p> <p>Recommendation 10: Continue using the Resilience360 scale at selected intervals, with data management and client profiling overseen by lead systems.</p>
11. Eligibility Criteria	Is there a baseline level of resilience required to be eligible for the program?	<p>The current pilot group of VP employees volunteered without specific eligibility requirements. The program is designed to build foundational resilience in staff where resilience is crucial.</p>
12. Process to Enhance Resilience	What approach, mode of delivery, and duration are used to enhance resilience?	<p>The program is delivered electronically (eResilience), with self-paced modules and recommended reflection periods between them. Post-module activity guides support self-management. The program incorporates elements of Kolb's reflective learning model and shows significant positive results from the pilot.</p> <p>Recommendation 12: Maintain and further develop the e-delivery mode, as it suits employees with busy and shift-based schedules.</p>

FINDINGS

Measured Improvements

1. The pilot cohort of 34 Victoria Police staff demonstrated a strong and consistent trend toward improved resilience, as measured by the Resilience360 scale (pre vs. post). The overall improvement in perceived resilience following the e-resilience program was 21.5% (based on total Resilience360 scores). Improvements in perceived resilience for the five sub-scales ranged from 19.0% to 24% (based on Resilience360 scores).
2. Paired sample t-tests revealed highly significant differences between pre- and post-program scores, well beyond the generally accepted 0.05 level.
3. Cohen's d effect size comparisons indicated that the differences for both total and sub-scale scores were categorized as very large effects. Initial Cronbach alpha internal reliability estimates for the Resilience360 scale were generally robust, with total scale coefficients of $\alpha = 0.85$ pre-program and $\alpha = 0.94$ post-program. Although caution is warranted due to the moderate sample size, the scale is likely publishable in a peer-reviewed psychological assessment journal, assuming larger samples yield similar results.

eResilience Program

1. The Resilience Builders eResilience program satisfactorily includes almost all of the 12 key checkpoints for effective resilience programs identified by Ijntema et al. (2019).
2. I have rated checkpoints 1, 4, 7, 10, and 12 as excellent, checkpoints 6, 8, and 11 as very good, and checkpoints 2, 3, 5, and 9 as good.
3. The eResilience program features several unique elements, including a holistic approach to resilience building, reference points, quality of measurement, and reflective/experiential learning experiences.
4. The positive results from the eResilience program, relative to the relatively modest time and effort required for completion, are compelling. The projected cost-benefit ratio supports the systematic use of the eResilience program with early-career first responders.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Implement minor alterations to the Resilience360 scale as recommended.
2. Consider incorporating other brief pre- and post-screener instruments (e.g., DASS-21) in the data collection to examine the effect of 'Tools for Tough Times' on coping and stress management.
3. Embed the Resilience Builders eResilience program in the training/induction phase of recruitment, depending on organisational commitment from entities like Victoria Police.
4. Continue using the Ijntema, Burger, and Schaufeli (2019) checklist for internal and external auditing.

5. Maintain the online delivery of the program with a focus on developing extension modules for clients exposed to specific risks.
6. Continue using a data-informed approach to resilience building. For instance, peer-reviewed publications from EBSCO provide a steady flow of high-quality literature relevant to resilience programs. Additionally, attention to organisational annual reports, government reviews, and Workplace Victoria publications, such as LEAP reports, offer consistent evidence that psychosocial awareness and risk management are crucial. Programs like Resilience Builders, which have proven benefits, are essential for protecting employees.

CONCLUSION

It was a pleasure to review the Resilience Builders eResilience program for potential ongoing use with first responder organisations such as Victoria Police. The quality and delivery mode of the online modules are first-class, fit for purpose, and enhanced by the technical expertise provided by the Kajabi platform and Strategic Surveys. I anticipate that the eResilience program will be expanded to include niche responder-specific extension modules. From a cost-benefit perspective, the program is easily justified, and its adoption sends a strong message to employees and the community about the organisation's commitment to programs that positively impact mental health. The Resilience360 instrument is constructed using best practice psychometric standards, and the eResilience program meets peer-reviewed standards for the development of resilience programs.

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