

The Commissioner's comment

“ I understand that elsewhere in this journal there is a piece which describes the role of the AFP Task Force. It would be wrong of me to begin my contribution without first expressing my gratitude to the Task Force and the role it played leading up to the incorporation of the two former forces into one.

Having said that, I trust members of the former Task Force are not offended when I say that while they were dealing in ideas, since 19 October the AFP has been dealing with people. All told, there are 2582 Members and 245 public service support personnel.

When one considers the quality of personnel from the former ACT and Compol forces, who have been incorporated into AFP, it is not surprising to find that forms of elitism are apparent among groups of Members.

I am all for elitism providing that it is the AFP as a whole which is being seen to be elite. Elitism on the part of one or another section of AFP would be wrong.

I ask you then, in whatever part of AFP you are working, to support your colleagues in other sections. For instance, the general duties and protective service elements have different roles. Each is important and each belongs to the same force.

Perhaps, when this is universally recognised throughout the force and when at the individual level Members in each arm of the Force support and encourage their colleagues in the other — then we may be on the way to earning that tag: 'elite'.

To each and every person working for AFP I offer my thanks for the way in which you have come together and worked together during the first weeks.

There have been some problems. It would have been a fool who expected there wouldn't be. But I am heartened that events have validated the belief that the incorporation of the forces would enable them to handle problems jointly.

Instead of two sets of problems and two forces to tackle them, there is now one force with one set of problems. To my mind, the scoreboard therefore shows two down and one to go. ” ”



The Commissioner, Sir Colin Woods

Colin Philip Joseph Woods, KCVO (1977), CBE (1973), was born in Bermondsey, south of the Tower Bridge, London, on April 20, 1920, the son of the late Michael Woods, Sub-Divisional Inspector, Metropolitan Police. He married Gladys Ella May (nee Howell) in 1941 and they have one daughter, Edna (resident UK).

After education at LCC Primary and Secondary Schools and Finchley Grammar School, Sir Colin joined the Army (60th Rifles) and was commissioned in the Royal Ulster Rifles (1939-1946).

In 1946 Sir Colin joined the London Metropolitan Police as a Constable and progressed through ranks to Deputy Commander. He was Commander, Traffic Department, 1966-1967; head of Management Services, 1968; Commandant, National Police College, 1969-70; Assistant Commissioner (Traffic Department) 1970; Assistant Commissioner (Crime), 1972; Deputy Commissioner, 1975-1977, and was then appointed Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary in England and Wales, 1977-1979.

His recreations are listed as walks, opera (Sir Colin's favourite is "La Traviata"), carpentry (prefers cabinet-making involving skilled hand work).

Sir Colin first arrived in Australia on May 18, 1979, for a four-week period during which he was involved in planning for the AFP and was able to visit all States to meet the State Commissioners. Sir Colin returned to Australia at the end of August to take up his appointment and was sworn in by Mr Justice R. A. Blackburn on September 11, 1979 as the first Commissioner of the Australian Federal Police.