

THE ASSOCIATIONS' PAGE

Federal Police Association



THE PAY QUESTION



I am sure that all members of the A.F.P. are anxiously awaiting the outcome of the new Industrial Award arrangements. Although there has been some progress by way of preliminary meetings with various Government Departments there appears to be some reluctance to come to terms with the real issues.

The patience of members will surely be put to the test before the final solution is found and there is little doubt that this state of limbo is causing unrest which is presently being felt throughout the Australian Federal Police.

The complexities of reconciling two separate terms and conditions of employment is compounded by the number of Government Departments involved, not to mention the existence of two Associations. Further, the assurances given by the Ministers that no-one will be disadvantaged and the interpretation of these assurances makes the task of untangling these complexities much harder.

Recent increases obtained by our colleagues in Victoria and New South Wales together with the knowledge that Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia are in the process of similar wage cases also exerts pressure on the Administration and Associations. To achieve the maximum benefit for all members of the A.F.P. the two Associations must form a unified front on this vital issue irrespective of former differences.

If the A.F.P. is to achieve its aims of formulating a first class Police Force second to none in Australia then the terms and conditions of employment offered to existing and future members must also be second to none.

However, whilst some advise caution against forcing the issue of an early settlement for Industrial Awards, members cannot be expected to have an inexhaustible supply of patience especially when common knowledge reveals that procrastination is the operative word as far as some Government Departments are concerned.

You may rest assured that I shall continue to impress upon all those concerned that an early and amicable settlement is of paramount importance, however, I suspect that the road will not be an easy one to travel in our endeavours to achieve our aims.

Alan K. Bilbie
Secretary

Commonwealth Police Officers' Association



A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY



Since the last issue of 'Playtpus' a number of important things have happened which affect members of both Police Organisations.

Executive members of the Commonwealth Police Officers' Association and the Federal Police Association have met at Executive levels to discuss the formation of one Association for members of the Australian Federal Police Force, and as a result formed a Joint Executive Committee. As an act of good faith, it has been agreed by the Joint Executive Committee, we will enter into a contractual arrangement which will give top priority to certain matters during the merging of the two Police Organisations. These matters include the name of the new organisation, its Constitution, assets of both organisations, and employment of personnel by the new organisation.

It was also decided by the Joint Executive Committee it would be in the best interests of all members if we remained within the area of the Conciliation and Arbitration Commission. To do this will give our new organisation and its members certain advantages, some of which, whilst not exhaustive, but perhaps the most important, being:

Firstly, the organisation has a corporate structure;
Secondly, representation must be equitable;
Thirdly, elected representatives are legally bound and have certain legal obligations to fulfill under the Act;

Fourthly, every member of the organisation has the right, as a member, to bring any breach of the Act to the notice of the prescribed Court.

So, it can be seen there are some tangible advantages in having an organisation registered and operating under the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Act.

We now have a unique opportunity, when merging the two organisations, of making the resulting organisation the best possible Police Organisation that we can have. I think it may be appropriate if I borrow a few words from a leading Industrialist, and conclude my comments by saying that, 'An organisation is a co-operative of people: it is made up of many different types of members from a variety of backgrounds and personalities within our society. The organisation means something different to each member and this depends of their needs. However, we have one common interest by belonging to an organisation and that is we have a desire to co-operate with other members to improve our jobs and our working conditions.'

Yours faithfully,
P. N. CURTIN