

SAS to AFP — now it's Interpol



• Senior Sergeant Nigel Spitz.

One of Western Region's most respected and longest serving members has transferred to Interpol, A.C.T.

He is Senior Sergeant Nigel Spitz, who joined the former Commonwealth Police in Perth in July 1968, having spent the previous eight years with the SAS.

Nigel's initial duties were in uniform at the airport. He joined the Plainclothes branch in 1970 and was promoted to First Constable.

He was promoted to Sen. Constable in October 1975, designated Detective in August 1976, promoted to Sergeant in July 1978, and Senior Sergeant last July.

Nigel gained a broad spectrum of knowledge during his work in all squads of the Division and used it to train young detectives, especially during the past two years while in charge of the Fraud Squad. He was also co-ordinator of the Emergency Squad.

Nigel has been an enthusiastic member of the cricket club and as president of the Social Club has proved his worth in furthering relationships with outside agencies.

Meeting is first for coast unit

• Twenty-six members of the AFP's new Coastal Protection Unit attended their first operational meeting at a seminar at Barton recently. Attending were: Back row — Constable Wally Maier, Senior Constable Mick Sheely, Senior Constable Dave Jackson, Senior Constable Les Summerfield, Sergeant Lindsay Manwaring, Senior Constable Tony Powell, Sergeant John Bowerman. Third row — First Constable Michael Martin, Sergeant Des Killmier, Senior Sergeant John Buchanan, Senior Constable Darryl Gossip, Senior Constable Clive Quilty, Senior Constable Daryl Dennis, Senior Constable Ian Atkinson.

Ports Watch has modern part to play

Titles like 'Ports Watch' for a police squad at a busy, bustling, modern-day airport may appear to some as incongruous, even antiquated.

Titles can be deceptive. There's nothing incongruous or antiquated about the AFP's Ports Watch, or Airport CIB as it's known to its former OIC, Senior Sergeant Chuck Dove.

Chuck was OIC when 'Platypus' visited the squad at Sydney's International Airport. He's since handed over to Senior Sergeant Jeff Williams, with Chuck now as Acting Inspector with Eastern Region's drug squad.

Chuck said he was very proud of the level of detection techniques, dedication and successes achieved by the 12-person team.

"So much, however, depends on top class liaison with airport security officers, but more importantly with Customs personnel," he said.

"We achieve excellent rapport. We work hard at maintaining it."

The Airport CIB, to use Chuck's term, has a diverse role, one that includes top-line terrorist alerts, armed hold-up suspects, baby-minding of lost children, and the smile and assistance its members provide for little old ladies lost or frightened by the sheer size and noise of today's busy, international airport.

Chuck recalled only days before our visit an elderly Russian woman migrant who, with no money, was totally bemused as she just sat and waited . . . and waited.

"Her son had somehow missed her," said Chuck. "We arranged an interpreter to help her and some hours later her son, by then frantic, finally caught up with his mother."

"Like all police officers, our role at Sydney International Airport doesn't remove us from being in the people business."

And the liaison with airport security was easily illustrated. The day we talked to Chuck a Qantas

security officer was working with the team interviewing an Australian who it was alleged had stolen a considerable number of aircraft life jackets.

"Today, of course," said Chuck, "much of our activities result from information which comes via the latest in today's computer technology."

"When you think that that technology holds some 30,000 names that might bring us into action, it certainly keeps us busy," he said.



• The entrance to the Ports Watch home at Sydney Airport. Squad member Laurie Cullen helps a member of the public.



• Senior Sergeant Chuck Dove, at Ports Watch headquarters with Australia's biggest collection of police badges.



• A Customs Barrier point seizure, but one in which the Ports Watch squad quickly become involved — interviewing suspects who unsuccessfully tried to smuggle these Australian native birds out of the country.



Second row — Sergeant John Holroyd, Senior Constable Gavin Kearney, Senior Constable Bill Haldane, Inspector Jim Howard,

Sergeant Brian Baker, Station Sergeant Bob Bradley. Front row — Ms Loraine Johnson, Inspector Eddie Richards, Assistant

Commissioner A.J. Watt, Superintendent D. Dixon, Inspector John Deeks, Mr Kevin Gascoigne.