

# Shaping up for the 90s

By John Ireland

On 13 March 1990, Commissioner Peter McAulay announced he had reviewed the organisation structure of the Australian Federal Police in the light of directions and objectives outlined in the Corporate Plan, the implementation and operation of the Career Structure Review and the changes necessary to optimise the implementation of the "Changes in the AFP".

Reorganisation to some may seem to be a way of life within the AFP and, having been associated with the implementation of a number of reorganisations in the past, there are times when I share that view.

While significant change certainly has been and is a part of Commissioner McAulay's command, changing the organisation structure has not.

Apart from the introduction of regionalisation in the ACT Region, the organisation structure of the AFP which existed at the end of Major General Ronald Grey's command has remained unchanged.

The reorganisation promulgated in Administrative Circular 292 of 13 March 1990, is essentially the final step in the reform process which began two years ago with the development of the

## Final step in the AFP's reform

Corporate Plan and implementation of the CSR.

### **Authority, accountability**

It takes account of the changes necessary to ensure the effective implementation of the Proposals for Change, and is designed to provide the AFP with a structure which will see us well into the 1990s and, as with the other reforms, our continued effectiveness into the 21st Century.

The reorganisation recognises the need to ensure that authority and accountability are placed with operational decision-makers, with "Headquarters" units remaining responsible for national co-ordination and operational support.

Ambiguity of command permits the situation to arise where investigating personnel could find themselves in the situation of being answerable to two bosses. It is essential, therefore, that any hint of ambiguity be removed.

The changes also take account of and are being implemented at the same time as the introduction of the National Operations Plan and national intelligence targeting.

The restructuring of the Investigations Department and the introduction of the National Operations Plan and national intelligence targeting, both to be administered by that Department, will assure the AFP's continued ability to deal effectively with major national criminal activities and threats, and for Regional priorities to be taken account of properly.

### **National crime**

Under the National Operations Plan, a crime may be declared national against established criteria and responsibility for its investigation becomes the responsibility of the Assistant Commissioner (Investigations) rather than the relevant Regional officer(s)-in-charge.

The investigating team and resources needed will then be decided by the AC(I) and the Deputy Commissioner (Operations) in consultation. These team members and their resources will be freed from other matters so they can concentrate on solving the crime and

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bringing in a prosecution.

Apart from Regional and other commands continuing to meet normal salary and accommodation expenses, the Investigations Department will meet the cost of a national operation. At the same time, the Assistant Commissioner (Investigations) will ensure relevant Regional and other officers-in-charge are kept abreast of national operations.

The concept behind the National Operations Plan is not new and has been successfully used in a number of state and international police forces. In some areas it is referred to as the "major crime plan".

The Plan enables Regional officers-in-charge to concentrate on, and be accountable for, all regional operations and priorities. This accountability also will be shared, in some operations, with Headquarters Unit.

## National Intelligence Project

The national intelligence project concept also enhances the ability of the AFP to identify and respond to criminal threats and at the same time provide for localised priorities in criminal intelligence activities.

Targets will be identified by the Investigations Department in consultation with Regional and other operational officers-in-charge. Regions then will be required to ensure that the project is given priority in resource allocations.

The changes also continue to reinforce the role of the Deputy Commissioners in the administration and operations of the AFP.

All operation activities under the reorganisation are accountable to the Deputy Commissioner (Operations). He is assisted in ensuring that operational activities are co-ordinated, that resources are effectively managed, and management is kept informed, by the newly created Operations Co-ordination Division.

This Division takes over the previous management reporting and co-ordination functions administered by the Investigations Department.

## Internal Security and Audit Division

The changes also create a unit entitled Internal Security and Audit Division which is dedicated to protecting the integrity of the AFP, minimising the

risk of security breaches and pursuing any allegations of corruption within the AFP.

This new Division, headed by Commander Adrien Whiddett, will be responsible for security of personnel, including a process of 'positive vetting' of all employees and potential employees, and physical security, which includes the security of buildings, property and systems.

It will carry out compliance and efficiency audits, including identifying areas where the AFP is vulnerable to fraud, and will be responsible for the identification and investigation of allegations of corruption and corrupt practices.

In protecting the integrity of the AFP and pursuing any allegations of corruption within it, the new Division will play an important part in shaping the AFP of the 1990s.

