

Commissioner's Message



In the absence of Commissioner McAulay, I have been asked to provide the message for this edition of *Platypus* while performing the duties of Commissioner.

This issue introduces the new *Crimes (Investigation of Commonwealth Offences) Amendment Act 1991* which is expected to be proclaimed not before 31 October and the cover story refers to the AFP's preparations for its introduction, with particular emphasis on aspects relating to pre-charge detention and video tape interview recording.

Accordingly, the process of major change is with us once again and I am reminded of such by the Commissioner's Message in the August 1989 edition of *Platypus* when he spoke on the major change to AFP employment for both police and public servants. In the last paragraph of that message the Commissioner said: "...all Australian workplaces and organisations are undergoing a similar degree of change to that presently being experienced by the AFP. I therefore call upon you all to not feel threatened by the process, but to join me to use this environment of change to create an AFP that does its job better, making it a better environment for us all in the future".

And so, change is with us yet again in the form of this legislation. With the forthcoming proclamation of these new provisions, they will introduce what probably are the most significant legislative changes dealing with the investigatory process for Commonwealth, and most ACT offences, since the creation of the AFP in 1979.

Irrespective of debate, scrutiny and views expressed on the legislation prior to and during its passage through the Parliament, it is now incumbent upon us all, from investigator to manager levels, to ensure the legislation is properly applied

and complied with.

While the Attorney-General has undertaken to review the new provisions after they have been in operation for a sufficient period, the AFP collectively, and each of us individually, will nevertheless be judged on the way in which the provisions are implemented and practised from the outset.

Therefore, our professional image and approach in enforcing the legislation will come under close public examination. Training is well advanced, equipment is in place and the resolution of the transcription of tapes almost completed. The rest is up to us. We must again emerge as a more professional AFP that is equipped to meet the needs and demands of the Australian community.

**Deputy Commissioner
(Operations) Brian Bates.**

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The Platypus has been adopted by the Australian Federal Police as a symbol representing the diverse requirements placed upon members in the execution of their duty. This unique and tenacious Australian mammal is a survivor against increasing pressure from today's environment. It leaves no stone unturned in its daily pursuits and has equipped itself with a range of features to adapt to changes over many years. It is capable of passing unnoticed, if required, yet demonstrates an unfailing dedication to explore all possibilities in an effort to maintain its special place in Australia's wildlife, at times against large and more powerful opponents — a quality admired and respected by members of the Australian Federal Police.

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