

## From the Assistant Commissioner's Office Performing well, working hard

**A**SSISTANT Commissioner Antill said recently that Northern Region had experienced a very successful period with a high level of activity. This had been achieved by the excellent performance of the Region's hard-working, dedicated members and staff members.

"I want them to know personally that I appreciate their efforts and thank them on behalf of the whole of the AFP," he said.

In order to achieve Corporate goals, the Region placed strong emphasis on targeting organisers and financiers of criminal activity and recognised that attacking the financial structure of criminal enterprises was an integral part of investigations. Following his recent visit to the Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre (AUSTRAC) in Sydney, Assistant Commissioner Antill had firmly committed to maximise use of that organisation's facilities. He said that he had already sent members to Sydney to obtain first-hand knowledge of those facilities.

Assistant Commissioner Antill said that the Region's geographical size posed logistical problems in

deploying resources. The vast northern coastline presented special problems, particularly relating to detecting illegal importations. He said this was particularly apparent because of the near border with Papua New Guinea and the extensive island network in the Torres Strait. In recognition of the increasing demands placed on areas such as north Queensland and the Gold Coast, additional resources had been deployed in those areas.

Mr Antill said that the importance of maintaining co-operative working arrangements with other law enforcement agencies cannot be over-emphasised. He said that it was pleasing to see that the existing high level of co-operation with agencies such as State and Territory Police Forces, Australian Customs Service and the Criminal Justice Commission had achieved good results. "It is also pleasing to see that other agencies have such high regard for AFP members," he said. He was particularly pleased with the many complimentary remarks made by judges during trials.

In order to achieve the highly-skilled, professional workforce in the Region, a major emphasis had been on training and development of members. Mr Antill said that he believed in the importance of training and it would continue to be a priority. He noted that during recent years, nearly 7 per cent of members had been undertaking training at any given time and this had resulted in highly skilled, competent and dedicated workers.

The Region had seen major improvements in technology, particularly the extensive use of computers. The Local Area Network (LAN) had been introduced into Regional Headquarters, which enabled easy access to computer facilities for all members. The LAN provided general computing programs, in addition to access to AFP mainframe databases through



*Assistant Commissioner Bill Antill*

LAN terminals. Assistant Commissioner Antill supported the need for members to stay abreast of technology, not only in the computer field but also in other forms of communication. To achieve this, there had been increased provision of mobile telephones, portable laptop computers, and upgrading of radio communication facilities throughout the Region.

The Region had also seen the introduction of the Computer On-Line Police System (COPS), an incident reporting system which also functions as a management information system.

Mr Antill believed in the importance of consultative practices and to promote this had established consultative committees in all Branches. He said that these committees provided an important means to facilitate effective communication between officers of all levels and also acted as a forum to discuss suggestions and innovative ideas for improvement to the work environment or operational effectiveness. He was particularly happy with how the committees were functioning and that members now had the opportunity to have 'ownership' of matters affecting them.

In looking to the future, Mr Antill was confident that by continuing the initiatives already established, the Region would be more than capable of meeting the challenges facing it. He said that by maximising the skills of members and utilising modern technology, the Region would continue to play an important role in assisting the AFP meet its Corporate goals.



*Commissioner McAulay and Assistant Commissioner Antill during the Board of Management meeting held in Brisbane on 30th July 1992.*