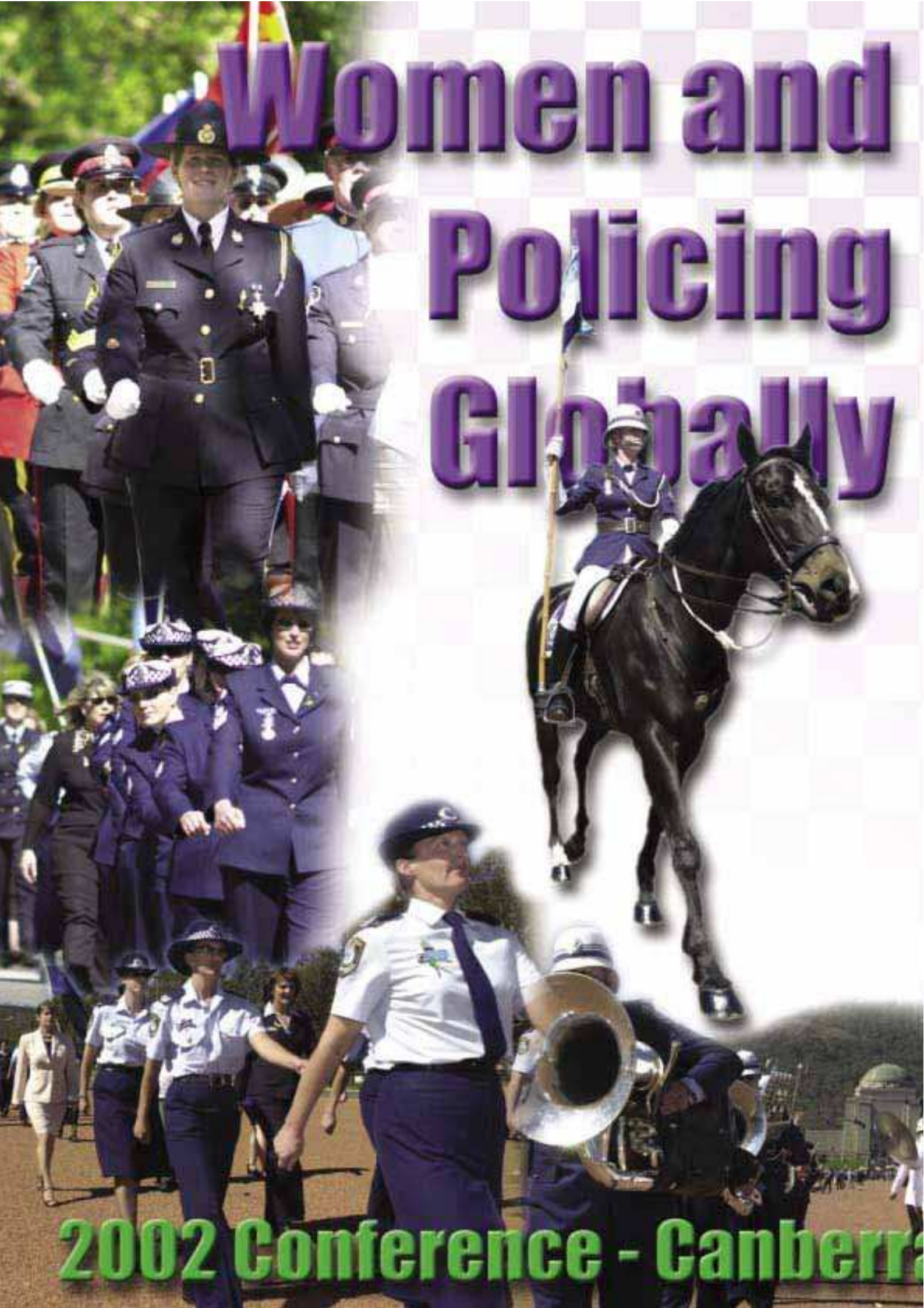


# Women and Policing Globally



2002 Conference - Canberra

“The best women and policing conference ever” convened in Canberra in October this year with hundreds of delegates jetting in from all corners of the globe for the four-day event. Co-hosted by the AFP, the Australasian Council of Women and Police (ACWAP) and the International Association of Women Police (IAWP), the Women and Policing Globally 2002 conference was a major boon for Australia, Canberra and, more importantly, the AFP. It was the first time the conference was held south of the equator and only the second time outside the USA.

By Catherine Crane and Brian Hartigan. Photos by Brian Hartigan.

Almost 700 delegates from 49 countries and all Australian policing jurisdictions converged on Canberra for four days of talks, debates, presentations and workshops on women in policing and the policing of women.

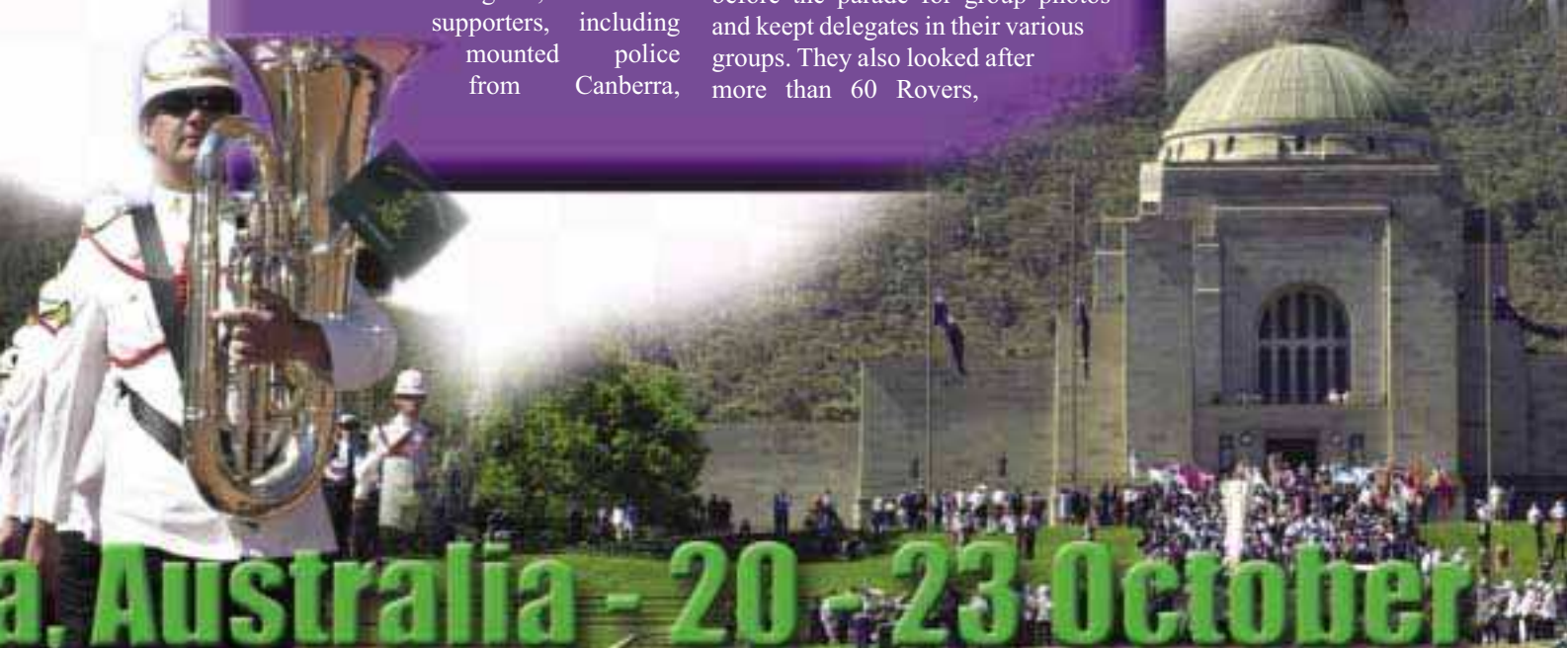
The conference began on Sunday 20 October with a spectacular All Nations Parade from the Australian War Memorial to the National Convention Centre. Coordinated by Detective Superintendent Chris Lines, ACT Policing, the All Nations Parade was as spectacular, colourful, loud and grand as most parades ever before seen on Canberra’s most marched-upon thoroughfare. Almost 1000 delegates, friends and supporters, including mounted police from Canberra,

Victoria and New South Wales as well as the musical might of the combined NSW Police Band and the Band of the Royal Military College Duntroon, marched down Anzac Parade.

Although predominantly blue, the rainbow of colour reflected in the myriad uniforms was augmented by the spectacular sea of national, jurisdictional and association flags from the 49 countries represented.

While still very much a celebration of women and policing, the parade was tinged with a touch of sadness as delegates wore green and gold ribbons recognising Australia’s National Day of Mourning for those recently killed in Bali.

Sergeant Phil Spence, Federal Agent Rod Walker and Sergeant Bob Sobey marshalled the 600 delegates before the parade for group photos and kept delegates in their various groups. They also looked after more than 60 Rovers,





Venturers, Scouts and Cubs who were on hand to carry the sea of flags that added so much colour and pagentry to the parade.

The march ended at the National Convention Centre, where delegates and invited guests attended a moving opening ceremony. In the spirit of the Sydney Olympics, all the flags were run by scouts into the auditorium to the strains of *The Man from Snowy River*.

Victoria Police Constable Daina Jowsey wowed the gathering with an accomplished rendition of the national anthem. Later, she followed this up with a double helping of national fervour in the form of *This Wide Brown Land For Me* and *I Still Call Australia Home*. Her performance was more than worthy of the standing ovation it received.

At the opening ceremony, Federal Minister for Justice and Customs Senator Chris Ellison welcomed delegates to Australia, while ACT Chief Minister Jon Stanhope welcomed delegates to the national capital.

A minutes silence in memory of the Bali bombing victims was observed during the ceremony.

Federal Sex Discrimination Commissioner Pru Goward stressed to delegates, during the keynote address, how important it was to have diversity in policing, not only for women in policing, but for the women in the communities they serve.

“Having more women police officers I am sure has the ability to change the way women are policed,” Ms Goward said.

Following the ceremony, Commissioner Mick Keelty introduced foreign delegates to their first official taste of Aussie culture and hospitality

by hosting at a cocktail function in the centre’s exhibition hall.

The hall itself was dominated by a decorative Aussie rural instillation and by the AFP’s own exhibition booth. Coordinated by Federal Agent Ann McEvoy and Helen Coventry, the booth was manned throughout the conference by volunteer AFP staff, answering questions and speaking to delegates about the many roles and functions of the AFP.

Another popular exhibit, the Jurisdictional Display, highlighted the history of women in policing in Australia and New Zealand. It featured a written history as well as numerous representative photos of the history and development of women police in each jurisdiction. Federal Agents Margaret Rhodes, from Southern Project Axiom, and Joanne Loades from National Employment Assistance and Psychological Services coordinated the material from each jurisdiction – a mammoth task in itself – to bring together an informative and interesting display. Many delegates were surprised to see a photo of themselves from 10, 15 or even 20 years past.

## DAY 2

After the pomp and ceremony of Sunday’s activities, it was down to the serious business of the conference proper.

Delegates gathered at the National Convention Centre at 9am on Monday to begin a hectic three-day program.

Monday’s program had a strong international focus, initiated by Anne Gallagher, former advisor to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, who gave a keynote address on violence against women





and gave an international perspective on women's human rights.

As the morning progressed, the international theme continued with Margie Moore from the US National Centre for Women and Policing speaking on gender and excessive force.

Professor Frances Heidensohn, University of London, asked and answered the most pertinent, "Why do we need women in policing?"

Following several other engaging speakers and a break for lunch, Federal Agent Delia Quigley presented a personal insight into her three overseas peacekeeping experiences – roles she could not have applied for, let alone hoped to experience, a few very short years ago.

Federal Agent Quigley told delegates of her experiences in Haiti, Cyprus and East Timor. She was the first woman peacekeeper to return to East Timor following the election-related violence and explained how she and her fellow female peacekeepers often felt pressure to perform well – not only as police officers but also because they were women police officers.

### DAY 3:

A highlight of Tuesday's program was a presentation by Superintendent Hellen Alyek from Uganda. Superintendent Alyek is one of 16 female police officers in the Ugandan police force and is the founding officer of the Ugandan Child and Family Protection Unit. Before the official establishment of this unit, Superintendent Alyek often sheltered victims of domestic violence, rape and female genital mutilation in her own home and often had to ward off victims' family members as they came to collect their "property".



Superintendent Alyek didn't pull any punches in her presentation and told how police in Uganda must contend with a cultural environment that allows, and in some cases, promotes harmful practices against women and children.

During her powerful oration, she said police in Uganda battle with HIV/AIDS-affected men who rape female children because they believe it will cure them of AIDS. Police also encounter cases where local witch doctors tell people that child sacrifice will make them rich. There are, she said, regions within Uganda where girls are circumcised as a matter of course as soon as they turn 16.

Commissioner Mick Keelty drops by to chat with staff at the Australian Federal Police information booth in the National Convention Centre





## “What are the three key components policing needs to improve for women?” Ask the Commissioners – all of them

“It is predominantly the parents who insist on female circumcision as they believe their daughters won’t be able to marry and won’t be accepted in their culture,” Superintendent Alyek said.

She did, however, offer a ray of hope when she told of how the situation for women in Uganda was improving, with laws finally being introduced that would make domestic violence and other abuses a crime.

Her story and the power of her delivery prompted immediate response with the instigation of a collection to help build a new shelter for women. More than \$600 was raised.

Domestic violence and its policing were the common themes of presentations made by Superintendent Chris Lines and Federal Agent Gerry Morris during one of many breakaway sessions in the smaller rooms and theatres of the convention centre. Both spoke of the AFP’s Family Violence Intervention Program (FVIP) and how ACT community policing had changed its approach to policing domestic violence.

Tuesday evening saw delegates and their guests in the Great Hall at Parliament House for the major social event of the conference, during which several awards were presented.

Presenting the awards consumed a large part of the evening with both the international and Australian women police associations having an extensive list to go through.

The Australasian Council of Women and Policing’s national Awards for Excellence in Policing recognise the achievements of the women and men who significantly contribute to making policing and law enforcement better for women.

ACWAP president Chief Commissioner Christine Nixon said there were many exceptional women and men in policing today and the awards paid tribute to those who worked to improve policing.

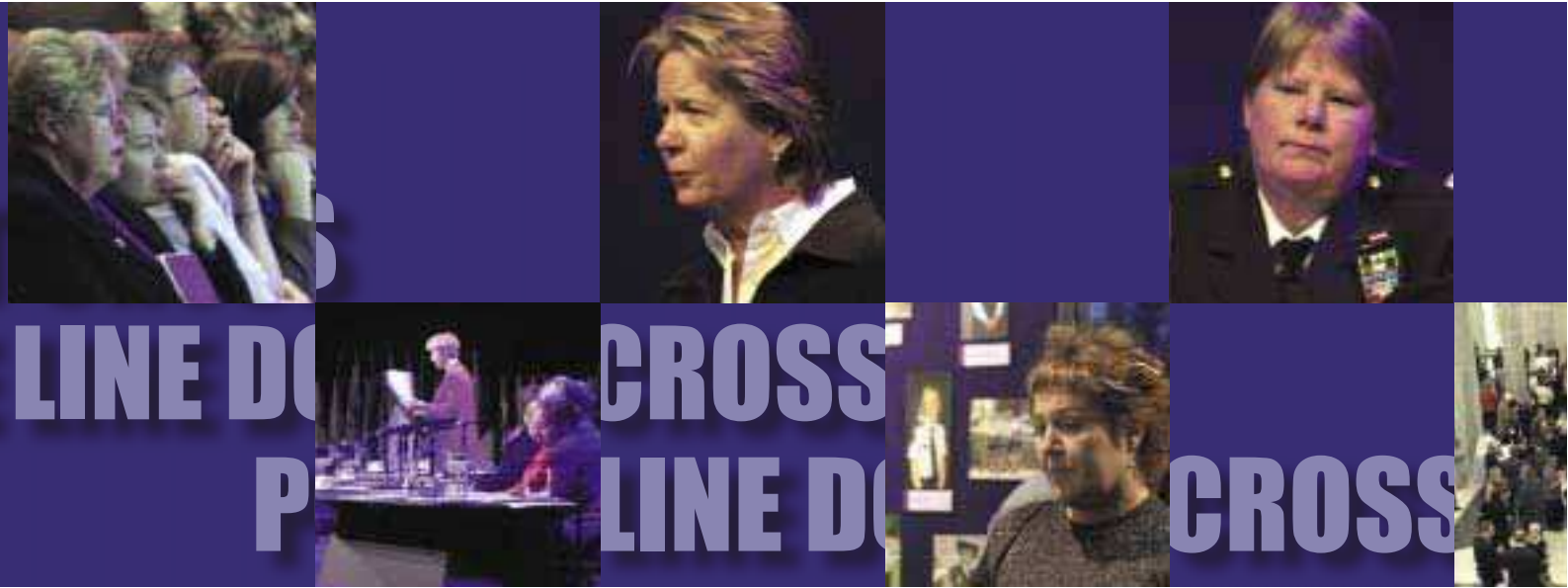
### DAY 4:

With the events in Bali fresh in everyone’s minds, Wednesday morning’s Terrorism Panel was one of the conference’s most popular and emotional sessions. Chaired by ACT Chief Police Officer John Murray, the panel included Margie Moore from the US National Centre for Women and Policing, NYPD’s Captain Terrie Tobin and Kathy Burke, a retired NYPD detective and trauma counsellor.

Captain Tobin, whose visit was sponsored by AFP Protective Security, was a first responder to the events at ground zero in New York on September 11, 2001, and gave a presentation on behalf of the women of ground zero. Before actually addressing a captivated audience, Captain Tobin showed a documentary titled *The Women of Ground Zero*, which was commissioned on behalf of the women of ground zero.

In an emotional speech, Captain Tobin spoke of two women who lost their lives that fateful day – Yamel





Merino and Kathy Mazza – the former, a 24-year-old emergency medical technician.

“On September 11, she [Merino] was working in a triage area close to the twin towers. It is believed that Yamel was struck by falling debris and killed instantly,” Captain Tobin said.

Kathy Mazza was a captain with the Port Authority Police Department.

“Kathy could have saved herself on September 11, but instead, according to an eyewitness account, she stayed and rescued hundreds, if not thousands of people. At one point, the lobby of Tower One became overcrowded, as people were bottlenecked trying to get through the building’s revolving doors.

“Kathy used her firearm to blow out the windows, allowing people to do a mass exit.”

Choking back painful memories, Captain Tobin said that Kathy Mazza’s body was found on 9 February this year.

As well as highlighting the remarkable acts of bravery during September 11, Captain Tobin also reported on the outcomes of a study by a US consultancy – McKinsey and Co – into the NYPD’s response on the day. The consultants identified 16 critical tasks that needed to be performed and, according to their report, the NYPD performed well in 10 of the 16.



McKinsey and Co identified a number of problems with site security, maintenance of on-site traffic access for emergency vehicles, delays in the implementation of an effective credentialing system, delays in erecting portable fencing and in the management of hazardous material – all issues it seemed to the casual observer in the aftermath, excusable in the face of the scope of the disaster.

Captain Tobin was awarded a bravery medal for her part in the events of September 11, 2001. Her recount of those events proved emotionally draining for most who heard her speak.

Detective Constable Dee Quigley relates experiences as a peacekeeper to the Women and Policing Globally 2002 conference





A full copy of McKinsey and Co's report can be found at [www.nyc.gov](http://www.nyc.gov)

The final session of the conference was a commissioners' panel involving all Australian police chiefs or their representatives. Deputy commissioners from England, New Zealand and Fiji also took part. The panel gave delegates an opportunity to ask their bosses, "What are the three key components policing needs to improve for women?"

Specific issues raised with the panel included communication and women's networking within policing, attitudes of middle management, access to child care and leave, flexible and family friendly work places, and covert forms of discrimination in the workplace.

One concrete commitment easily extracted from the commissioners was an agreement to place women's policing issues on the agenda for the next South Pacific Police Commissioners' Forum.

At the end of four days of conferencing, about 150 presentations and speeches and several social functions, 660 delegates from 49 countries and all Australian jurisdictions were happy to declare the Women and Policing Globally 2002 conference, "the best ever".

After hosting 660 delegates from 49 countries and all Australian jurisdictions as well as 10 Australasian police commissioners, and after three years of planning, the AFP staff involved in the organisation and running of the Women and Policing Globally 2002 conference were happy to finally breathe a huge sigh of relief as the conference proper came to a close at 5.30pm on Wednesday 23 October.

Organisers and helpers also took the opportunity to reflect on a job well done.

Executive Director Protection and co-chair of the Conference Organising Committee, Federal Agent Audrey Fagan said that feedback from the conference had been very positive.

"Most delegates said it was the best conference they had ever attended – the best run and, importantly, the most diverse in terms of delegates, issues, speakers and presentations," she said.

"Planning for the conference started three years ago and the AFP, ACWAP and the IAWP worked closely as a team to bring it together.

"To finally see the conference take place and to see all the delegates enjoy themselves and take part in an interesting and solid program is extremely satisfying.

"But, to all those involved in organising and running the conference, I thank each and every person who helped make this conference such a success."

Looking back over the preceding four days, participants and organisers reflected on presentations from academics and working police officers on a diverse range of issues including human rights, violence against women and international and domestic terrorism. Investigating and prosecuting war crimes, trafficking in women and improving the status of women within policing also featured.

But perhaps most valuable of all was the free and frank exchange of ideas and experiences as delegates established friendships and networks with police officers and law enforcement practitioners from around the world.

More than 100 AFP members attended the conference. Also, through the auspices of the Law Enforcement Assistance Program, the AFP sponsored delegates from Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Malaysia, Fiji, Brazil, Thailand, Philippines, Sri Lanka and two from East Timor – the world's newest police force.

The next Women and Policing Globally conference will be held in San Francisco, USA. It was also decided at this year's event that Leeds, England, would host the 2005 conference.





# Both Sides of the Thin Blue Line

Extract from the keynote address by Commissioner Pru Goward, Federal Sex Discrimination Commissioner, at the opening of the Women and Policing Globally 2002 conference.

Policing for women remains one of the great challenges and, while we are all proud to have Christine Nixon as the first female State police commissioner, nobody would disagree when I say there is still a long way to go for us in Australia and, perhaps, for other countries also. It does seem extraordinary that in 2002 we are still racking up firsts like the first woman police commissioner and that the mother of all firsts – the first woman Australian Prime Minister – still seems a generation away.

However, as women working in what is recognised as one of the most masculinised professions in the world, you share not just those frustrations, but the every-day frustrations of every-day work.

Reference to international figures confirms that women are poorly represented in police forces all around the world.

You all have had the experience therefore of entering a male dominated profession as part of a minority. In Australia for example, in 2001, women made up 18.9 per cent of all sworn officers – and this

is an impressive increase. In 1995 they made up only 13.5 per cent.

Then, you all have the common experience of working in this male-dominated profession – of working in this highly gendered organisation and often within sexually hostile work environments.

According to Wendy Austin's paper on the socialisation of police women, the force values masculine traits such as physical strength and exploits of violence – traditionally essential to good police work, although less so today.

There is often the belief a woman officer will not respond as capably in a physical confrontation as a male officer. The fact is, however, that very little police time is actually taken up in physical confrontation. Further, is there any evidence of this? This would make an excellent PhD topic since it is a claim made against women police officers and women in armed combat.

At the Australasian Women in Policing Conference held in 1996, a female police officer recalled her experiences as a junior officer. She remembered being ordered out of the police car and back in the station when violent confrontations were expected; and forced to work in the station every Friday and Saturday night for months on end, because her supervisor was frightened she would get hurt.

This caring behaviour is unwarranted and detrimental to women. It fosters the attitude that







Pru Goward, Federal Sex Discrimination Commissioner, speaks at the opening of the Women and Policing Globally 2002 conference



their position in the police force is a favour, out of the ordinary, and that they are not quite up to it. It is the reverse of sexual hostility. Together they make the two sides of the discrimination coin.

All this makes it difficult for women to progress in this occupation, as reflected in the figures – the higher up the police hierarchy we look – the fewer women we find.

The lack of a female presence in these higher positions means there is a lack of female leadership in the police force. This means the police force has a leadership lacking in diversity.

This is a universal problem and nobody wins – not the police, the safety of the community, not women.

I am sure I do not need to remind you of the dangers of “group think” in a leadership group. You’re more likely to come up with the best solution if everyone in the leadership team tosses in a different answer than if everyone starts out with the same idea. At least there’s a choice.

You are also more likely to facilitate change in the way you do things if you have a pool of leaders who think and do things differently.

This is what we need – a new way of thinking about how we make police forces all around the world more female-friendly work environments. Indeed, more diversity-friendly environments, more merit-friendly environments.

We also need a new way of thinking about how women are policed.

Rape, for example, still suffers one of the lowest report rates of any violent crime in Australia. In large part, that low reportage reflects the lack of confidence among victims that they will be helped and dealt with appropriately by the criminal justice system.

Likewise, domestic violence remains an intractable crime, [again] in part reflecting the lack of confidence women have in the system – the belief that it will not stop the beatings for them to report it, and it could, on balance, make their lives worse.

Ultimately policing is subjective. It takes judgment. It requires making decisions about who to police, when and how – and what crimes have priority.



Right now the way women are policed in Australia is reflective of community values – but it is also inevitably based on male decisions about what is appropriate, acceptable and expected behaviour for women, because men still run the police force. We would have a [similar] problem if women ran the police force. The point is, we need both.

Rape and domestic violence are two crimes that reflect the subjectivity of policing, but the treatment of Indigenous women is also a barometer of how values-driven police work is.

Like many indigenous people around the world, Australia's Indigenous people make up this country's most disadvantaged and also over-policed group.

Over-policing generally results from the imposition of police control on individuals and community activities at a level unlikely to occur in the broader community.

In Australia women are over policed in public spaces. So much so that, according to analysts such as Chris Cuneen, women are more likely to be detained for public order offences than men. This is even more so the case for Indigenous women, who comprise nearly 80 per cent of all cases where women are detained in police custody for public drunkenness.

Why are women over-policed in public spaces?

This is an excellent research topic but in the absence of any definitive answer, allow me to speculate. Perhaps it is because those police who make policing decisions – in the main, senior duty police officers who are predominantly white and male – will make arrest decisions based on their ideas about what is appropriate behaviour for women in public places.

Even today, it is considered most unladylike to drink or swear in public. Thirty years ago, I remember it was not considered ladylike for a woman to smoke in the street. Women certainly did not go into bars and Dad had to bring Mum a beer in the car where she sat with we four children, because it was so unacceptable for her to even be seen in the lounge of a hotel. Today, that no longer holds, but it reminds us that only a short time ago, society had different rules for the behaviour of men and women in public – rules we find laughable today. Today, it is still considered much more unacceptable for women than men to swear loudly, cat call, hassle by-standers, wolf-whistle or drink too much in the street or in a park or a bar – that is still quite beyond the limit.

So when women do, it is noticed and it is policed.

The visibility of Indigenous women in public makes them even more likely to have their behaviour policed – especially if they are consuming alcohol in a public place.

It is hardly surprising then that Indigenous women are in prison, with alarming frequency, for committing public order offences.

A self report study in the Kimberly region of Western Australia found that one in three Aboriginal women in the region has been locked up in a prison cell on one or more occasions – most for public drunkenness or an offence related to public disorder. Now citizens are entitled to be able to be in a public place peaceably and without being assaulted or harassed by others and it is the duty of the police to uphold that entitlement and maintain order. But one in three women in a community being incarcerated





“We can all think of queen bees who actually hated other women, but fortunately, queen bees only live a season, before their selfish gluttony condemns them to the past”

is a phenomenal rate for what is essentially a trivial offence.

Our governments and police leaders do have a duty to consider whether or not the public order laws are being applied fairly, without discrimination. The consequences of incarceration, in particular the consequences for self esteem and for its role in confirming the person’s worthlessness, powerlessness and criminality, and thus for the likelihood of recidivism, make the importance of keeping Indigenous women out of prison for trivial offences even more important.

Nobody in Australia doubts the importance of keeping Indigenous families in tact for the survival and improvement of Indigenous people. The rate of family breakdown in Indigenous communities has had and continues to play a significant role in ensuring Indigenous Australians remain at the bottom of the heap; the poorest, the least likely to be employed, the most likely to die young and have their children die. Locking up their mothers at the rate of one in three is no way to tackle what is undoubtedly our most disturbing and persistent social problem, to say nothing of the double disadvantage this inflicts on Indigenous women.

Having more women police officers, I am sure, has the ability to change the way women are policed. For no other reason, that is a good reason for advancing more women in the police force, to say nothing of the interests of women themselves.

What’s more, promoting women to more senior positions within the police force has the potential to change the culture and promote a flexible diversity that promotes excellence.

This is because a good female leader in any profession will bring with her, not only an understanding of the needs of more junior women coming up behind her, but is more likely to understand the needs of female clients, staff, voters and consumers than her male counterpart and may be more likely to advance these. Yes, we can all think of queen bees who actually hated other women, but fortunately, queen bees only live a season, before their selfish gluttony condemns them to the past.

This is not because a female leader is a better person than her male colleague, or because she does not hold any sexist assumptions herself, but because her woman’s life experience will inevitably affect her judgment and outlook. Her experience as a poor child, a rich child, a Protestant or Catholic, Muslim or Jew, a black child or a migrant child will also be part of her life experience and affect her outlook and judgment – and in this profession, her policing decisions.

Changing the makeup of the leadership is the catalyst for real change.

However changing the policing of women, and the police force as a sexually hostile work environment, requires more than just a shift in rank and numbers within the force.

There are other steps that need to be taken.





First, women in male dominated industries often have little contact with other women in their industries. Women need to establish and foster contacts, generate discussion on issues such as work and family and promotional opportunities, and ensure that women's issues are not kept on the sidelines. This Women in Policing Globally conference is clearly part of that strategy and, within Australia, there appears to be a strong network of women police officers. With the labour shortages emerging in Australia, as in other developed countries, your issues are also being recognised by male police leaders who should be only too keen to be part of, and promote, these networks.

But networking at any level needs to be about more than friendship and comfort – at its most successful, networking achieves change.

Strong networks go beyond defining the problem to creating the solution and being part of it. Effective networks are inclusive, strategic and have objectives which link gender issues with broader or mainstream issues, so that gender becomes everybody's business.

Engaging the leadership, the broader community and political leaders are all part of achieving change which is shared and embraced rather than accepted resentfully by male officers and the broader community. Too often over the past 20 years, change has been introduced without community

engagement and the rest have tagged along, resentfully catching up.

Increasing the visibility of women in the police force both in numbers and focus will foster much-needed change in this male-dominated profession. Often it is simple tactics, such as ensuring there are equal numbers of female "official spokespeople" as there are male, even if the ranks do not reflect this same equality, to project the impression of a more gender-inclusive police force. This works, not just with the broader community – half of whom are female – and potential clients of the police force, but it also works with would-be female recruits as well.

So yes, it is a long march ahead and we are only a little way along this particular journey. And yes, you all have families to feed and careers of your own to pursue, without the pain and effort of being a pioneer leader to add to your life load. And who am I, a humble Sex Discrimination Commissioner – who has never had to do any of this myself – to urge you to do it. But nobody said leadership was easy, and leadership is what this is all about.

If there is any consolation, it is for you to remember that the times have never been better, and women never better prepared, to take hold of the future. Leadership will bring its rewards, and the gratitude of your sisters.



# Mission impossible without an army of volunteers

An event as large and prestigious as the Women and Policing Globally 2002 Conference is no small undertaking. Even more amazing when you consider it was organised and staffed completely by volunteers.

Twenty-five members of Canberra's Police Volunteers, more than 60 Leaders, Rovers, Venterers, Scouts and Cubs, and more than 250 AFP staff had a direct input to organising or supporting the conference, which itself was organised by a volunteer committee – all of whom performed their own core jobs in parallel.

Volunteers were used in aspects of the conference as diverse as the very public greeting of delegates arriving at Canberra Airport to the behind-the-scenes efforts of wrapping gifts; from attending the AFP display booth in the exhibition hall to answering a dedicated 1800 info line; from staffing the conference registration desk to escorting non-participating delegates' partners on tourist tours of Canberra.

Some volunteers went above and beyond the call of duty as the conference unfolded, offering to personally conduct guided tours of Canberra and region on the days immediately after the conference. One took a small group of delegates to RMC Duntroon to equip them with Aussie slouch hats while another ducked away during a quiet moment to collect all the local Rotary pins and memorabilia he could track down.

Many of the core volunteers came together at various times in the lead up to the big event for briefings on all aspects of their involvement.

Although quite used to supporting to ACT policing, the Police Volunteers saw this conference as just a little bigger than most other events they have supported and were keen to gain any knowledge that would see them right on the day.

Help with correctly answering a-million-and-one anticipated delegates' questions was high on the agenda.

Organisers did their best to anticipate delegates' questions. "So, what overseas organisation does this AFP thing compare to in terms of its role and responsibilities?" or "How many women does the AFP employ in the policing role?" were among the obvious.

Not so obvious, but predictably inevitable, were the questions from left field, though in the end, these were few and far between.

This kind of attention to detail in preparation paid dividends in the end, with few if any questions left unanswered.

Of course, some delegates went home with just a little more than they bargained for. At a training and briefing session at the AFP's Wanggirali Ngurrumbai facility in Canberra, one volunteer was keen to know if he was allowed to inculcate some Aussie culture into his visitors.

"Surely they need to be taught how to say 'g'day mate' or 'wouldn't be dead for dollars' properly?" he enquired. Committee member Federal Agent Charmaine Quade assured him that after attending the previous Women and Policing Conference in Canada, and consequently learning the words of the Canadian national anthem by heart, it was the least we could do to send delegates home with a sense of where they had been.

Federal Agent Quade told the volunteers that their efforts were very much appreciated by all involved with organising the conference. Commissioner Keelty was fully aware of the value of their efforts, having been kept informed of their work all through the organising period and having witness them in action during the conference.

OPPOSITE and FOLLOWING PAGE: A small army of volunteers work feverishly both behind the scenes and directly in the public eye in support of the Women and Policing Globally 2002 conference



