

Commissioner's



message

It seems that at this time every year for the past five years I comment on what a busy year it has been, but 2005 has again been a strong year operationally for the AFP seeing us increase our workload in many fields both nationally and internationally.

I am pleased to report that the year was characterised by many high points. Our partnerships expanded and deepened; we took on a range of new national security responsibilities and implemented some innovative measures to tackle crime across many fronts. We also succeeded in achieving record funding for the fifth successive year.

From the massive task of helping in the aftermath of the Indian Ocean tsunami, to investigating the second Bali bombing in Indonesia, to addressing domestic terrorism, to the growth in internet-based crime which saw us launch the AFP Online Child Sex Exploitation Team.

The AFP's ability to deploy teams overseas is made possible though strong and long-standing relationships with law enforcement counterparts in those countries; these relationships are further enforced by the presence of our international liaison officers.

The AFP's commitment to the development of the Jakarta Centre for Law Enforcement Cooperation has continued in Indonesia, with the Centre becoming an international training hub for law enforcement and the second of our internationally recognised Management of Serious Crime (IMOSC) courses finishing there in September.

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We have also significantly increased our work in aviation security. In September the Australian Government accepted in principle all the recommendations of the Wheeler Review into airport security and policing. The Government then announced, through the Council of Australian Governments (COAG), a number of major roles for the AFP in the future of airport policing.

These new roles will complement the existing Protective Service role and Protective Security Liaison Officers at eleven airports around Australia. New roles include the Airport Police Commanders (to be appointed this month), Joint Airport Intelligence Groups and the management and coordination of uniform policing services at all eleven locations with counter terrorism first response capability.

There are also Joint Airport Investigation Teams established at five locations and early investigational activity has already achieved results.

After consideration of this substantial expansion it was agreed by the Executive to establish an additional Protection portfolio, under National Manager Aviation. A team known as *Project Jupiter* has been formed to implement the major changes from these initiatives, drawing on expertise from a number of areas. *Project Jupiter* is led by Federal Agent Mandy Newton.

The myriad of challenges that have confronted us have enabled us to grow and mature as a leading law enforcement agency. Our work is sometimes emotionally trying, and in reflecting on

the past year I would like to thank every member for the personal strength and professionalism they have displayed. I would also like to thank friends and families for the ongoing support they have provided often requiring them to be separated from loved ones for long periods of time.

While the spectre of terrorism continues to dominate the international law enforcement landscape and media coverage throughout 2005, in this edition of *Platypus* we will also highlight the quiet achievers; those areas of the AFP that are crucial to our ongoing success, however often not formally recognised.

Foremost is our commitment to policing the Australian Capital Territory.

ACT Policing has achieved strong operational results in the past year with overall crime in 2004-2005 reducing by 13.2 per cent. Significantly, crime reduction results in the past year were achieved after a reduction in crime in 2003-2004 of 7.9 per cent.

Reductions in the total number of offences reported in 2004-2005 indicate that the strategies and measures adopted by ACT Policing have been effective. Targeted strategies such as *Operation Halite* have again proven to be among the most effective means of tackling crime head on and reducing incidences of reported crime.

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Time and again, ACT Policing has also proven its ability to manage major events and peak holiday periods both successfully and professionally, and I would like to acknowledge the families and the members of each team that will work over the Christmas period, and commend you for your ongoing commitment to policing and the AFP.

The AFP has always been committed to providing our members with the tools required to perform their duties to the highest level; this is also true of our executive secondments.

This year Manager Aviation, Federal Agent Mandy Newton was seconded to QANTAS where she was able to gain a deeper understanding of the industry from a commercial perspective. This placement is part of a wider executive development program designed to equip current and future leaders with the strategic capabilities to run their part of the business successfully. Now sitting in the role for almost 12 months, Federal Agent Newton will be turning her attention to the protective service teams involved in the lead up to the March 2006 Commonwealth Games.

The past five years have seen the AFP establish working relationships with many organisations, to combine knowledge and skills to better perform a wider range of duties. This was illustrated in the first and second terrorist attacks in Bali.

What we have learnt is that by working together we are far better equipped to assist. This tactic will again be used during the Commonwealth Games in Melbourne where the AFP and many other government organisations will assist Victoria Police in providing a safe and secure Games for all Australians.

These working partnerships have developed throughout many organisations including the Department of Environment and Heritage, where we worked together to recover illegally exported dinosaur fossils.

Finally, our Pipes and Drums band had the opportunity to visit Norfolk Island earlier this year where they celebrated the 60th anniversary of VP Day with eight days of music. We also catch up with AFP's Sergeant Larry Andrews, who explained that his responsibilities on Norfolk and those of his team run much deeper than 'normal' community policing.

In reflecting on this turbulent year I hope over the Christmas period each reader has the opportunity to reflect on the positive things that we have and will continue to achieve as an organisation.

I'd like to wish you and your friends and families a safe and very happy New Year.

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