

Joining forces with Europol



Above: Commissioner Mick Keelty and Director of Europol, Max-Peter Ratzel, signing an agreement that will significantly help in the fight against transnational crime.

Left: Commissioner Keelty, Director Ratzel and AFP National Manager Border and International Tim Morris at Europol Headquarters in The Hague.

The AFP and Europol have joined forces to fight crime, making the AFP the first policing agency in the Asia-Pacific, and only the second in the Southern Hemisphere, to sign an agreement with Europol that will significantly help in the fight against transnational crime.

On his return from signing the agreement at Europol's headquarters in The Hague, Commissioner Mick Keelty said. "This is a significant achievement in the AFP's contemporary strategy in tackling international organised crime.

"This agreement will allow the AFP unprecedented access to an extensive intelligence information database and provides the AFP with the opportunity for a permanent liaison officer position to be attached to Europol."

Commissioner Keelty said this agreement was significant in Australia's strategic approach to strengthening its international capacity for fighting all forms of transnational crime, including terrorism.

It will also provide a platform for participation in training activities, and advisory support in relation to individual criminal investigations.

"In policing in the global crime environment, no one can afford to operate as a single agency — or as a single country. Collaborative partnerships need to be entered into to combat the challenges of modern-day crime," Commissioner Keelty said.

The Director of Europol, Max-Peter Ratzel said: "This agreement is the result of the mutual commitment of both parties to

fighting serious international crime. The Australian Federal Police continues to work successfully at a national level and it will now be possible to combine our expertise to deter transnational crime in our areas of mutual interest."

Europol AFP liaison officer, Federal Agent Ray Imbriano, will join the Third Party State Liaison Bureau in The Hague consisting of representatives from Canada, United States, Colombia, Iceland, Switzerland, Norway and Interpol.

Europol is a conglomerate of 27 European nations working together to tackle all forms of serious international crime. There are approximately 110 Liaison Officers and a total of 580 officers working from the Europol complex.