

# Commissioner's Message

In a recent briefing to incoming Minister for Home Affairs and Justice, Jason Clare, I outlined the AFP's outstanding recent performance throughout a challenging 2011.

Minister Clare has taken over the portfolio from Brendan O'Connor at a crucial time – and I look forward to working with him, his office and the wider Government to protect the Commonwealth's interests and the Australian community.

I am confident that the AFP – with a new Strategic Plan on the horizon – is well positioned to meet the challenges that this undertaking presents.

As we move into February, the AFP's track record has ensured that we continue to uphold a reputation as a high-achieving agency. Of the performance indicators set in our 2010-11 Portfolio Budget Statements, the AFP met or exceeded 30 of its 32 performance targets.

Significantly, there was a 39 per cent increase in the number of high priority cases reaching court, a 'return on investment'

ratio of 10 to one for drug and fraud investigations, and the restraining of in excess of \$41 million of proceeds of crime, more than double the amount of the previous 12 months. The one-year-old Criminal Assets Confiscation Taskforce – led by the AFP – has played an enormous part in this result.

In another important area of AFP business, as transition takes place in Afghanistan and security is handed over to the Afghanistan National Security Forces, the AFP is assessing opportunities to best further contribute to the capacity development of the Afghan National Police (ANP).

Under Operation Illuminate, 28 AFP officers have so far trained more than 2000 ANP officers in the province of Uruzgan and 200 in a major crime taskforce in Kabul.

While this is basic training, it's helped equip them with the skills that they need to maintain the civilian police force in that country.

It was certainly a stark reminder of the challenges that we both face

when the AFP recently handed over \$80,000 worth of training aids to the Afghan National Police Training Centre at Tarin Kowt. As part of the process, worn and outdated equipment – including crude and unrealistic wooden replicas of firearms – were replaced with modern training tools.

In Australia, the AFP continues playing a key partnership role in multi-jurisdictional, multi-agency efforts, whether investigating criminal activity or responding to a regional emergency.

This is the way the AFP must operate into the future.

Since my last Platypus column, the AFP and the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service have collaborated on several significant drug operations along the Australian east coast. Since September 2011 the agencies have combined to seize 300 kilograms of cocaine in Queensland during Operation Avalon and

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more than 270 kilograms of the same drug in Melbourne as part of Operation Paradigm.

Only two months ago, Operation Manzanita culminated in the seizure of 97 kilograms of heroin and 118 kilograms of pseudoephedrine in a consignment coming through Port Botany in Sydney.

In this edition of Platypus we see further evidence of the success of AFP collaboration, with the AFP Human Trafficking Team and allied stakeholders stepping up their efforts against human traffickers with a multi layered array of sanctions and punitive measures.

Finally, as the AFP moves further into 2012, I am reminded of a significant milestone approaching in October – the tenth anniversary of the Bali Bombings.

The 2002 bombings reshaped Australia's counter terrorism framework, and highlighted the AFP's ability to respond effectively as key partners in the national and international law enforcement community.

Through Operation Alliance, hundreds of AFP personnel and whole of government partners worked closely with the Indonesian National Police, leading to the successful prosecution of the perpetrators.

Official commemorations will follow later in the year.

**T.W. Negus APM**  
**Commissioner**

