

Section 7



Community and Environment

Community Engagement

As identified in the Purchase Agreement, the outcome for ACT Policing is “in partnership with the community, create a safer and more secure ACT through the provision of quality police services”.

ACT Policing seeks to provide a professional and credible police service to the ACT Community, through its commitment to service. This is achieved by developing stronger partnerships with the Government, other emergency service agencies and the community to achieve a safer, more secure community in the ACT.

ACT Policing's Crime Prevention Group liaises closely with the community. Working in partnership with the community and other government agencies, Crime Prevention staff provide information and education programs for groups such as:

- Neighbourhood Watch;
- children and young people in schools;
- disadvantaged and at-risk children and young people;
- victims of crime;
- victims and perpetrators of family violence;
- business and multicultural communities; and
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Further details on these are reported in the Crime Prevention section of this report.

Cost–Benefit Analysis of Business Regulation Reform

This issue is not applicable to the AFP as it is a Commonwealth Government Agency.

Commissioner for Environment Reporting

During the reporting period there were no requests made of ACT Policing to assist in the preparation of the State of the Environment Report.

Ecologically Sustainable Development

While the AFP does not fall within the scope of this plan, the AFP is committed to implementing policies to support ecologically sustainable development.

During 2003–2004, the AFP continued to implement policies that reduce its impact on the environment. Where possible, solutions are sought that ensure energy savings will be achieved, achieve a high rate of return for the money invested, minimise additional maintenance costs and do not compromise member comfort.

The AFP continued to progress development proposals for the Wanggirrali Ngurrumbai Centre (an AFP firing range and training facility at Majura, Canberra) and the Australian Institute of Police Management which incorporate environmentally sustainable practices and allow environmental and security (power and data backup) self-sufficiency.

Water and energy management are key issues in the planning of building works at the Wanggirrali Ngurrumbai Centre, with the proposed facilities to integrate a number of sustainable design principles, providing maximum long-term benefit to the AFP. Proposed design principles for the current building works program at the Wanggirrali Ngurrumbai Centre which will reduce running costs include: collection of rainwater for re-use in toilet areas, irrigation and fire fighting; wind, solar and mini-hydro power generation; solar hot water; low energy light fittings and natural day lighting; natural ventilation systems using high thermal mass and night purge; high levels of insulation; hydronic slab heating and cooling; and overland drainage for surface water using swales and dry ponding. AFP and Australian Protective Service establishments participate in office paper recycling programs. The AFP photographic unit at Weston undertakes silver recovery procedures and spent photographic processing chemicals are removed from AFP premises by commercial

waste disposal contractors who are responsible for compliance with industry standards. Chemical and biological waste from Forensic Services is similarly removed.

The AFP's Environmental Crime Management Strategy has as its major components biodiversity conservation, heritage protection and air, land and water pollution.

The AFP investigates environmental crime and successful prosecutions are publicised as a deterrent to future potential offences involving environmental damage.

In April 2004, the AFP entered into a joint training initiative with the Canberra Institute of Technology at the AFP's Wanggirrali Ngurrumbai Centre at Majura. The initiative involves an environmental restoration project to be undertaken by students in the CIT Diploma of Environmental Science program, including measuring and recording the natural flora, fauna, geology and site degradation components of the site.

During 2003–2004, the Australian Protective Service has, where possible, continued to implement policies that reduce its impact on the environment. These measures are restricted due to the contractual arrangements of leases and the condition and age of some of the buildings currently occupied. Measures undertaken include: pursuing energy savings, recycling and minimising additional maintenance costs. During 2004–2005, increased resources will be allocated to pursuing further energy savings and introducing measures to responsibly dispose of superceded equipment.

Fuel Management Plans

While the AFP does not fall within the scope of this plan, work has been undertaken in the wake of the Canberra bushfires to ensure that AFP premises and grounds are maintained so as to reduce fire risk.

At the Weston complex, all garden beds, median strips and embankments near buildings had combustible material removed and were re-covered with crushed rock, river pebbles, or sprayed concrete.

At the Majura complex, long grass around the occupied area, car parks and driving track is kept low on a regular basis. A contractor was engaged to slash the paddocks in the later half of the reporting period.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Reporting

The Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer liaises with the Aboriginal community and ACT Policing in order to establish and maintain positive relationships and foster mutual understanding.

Since 1998, the AFP has employed Aboriginal Community Liaison Officers, recognising the importance of this role in coordinating and monitoring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community activities within the ACT.

The Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer undertakes a wide range of duties which include:

- developing and maintaining a network of contacts between the police and the local indigenous communities within the ACT to strengthen cooperation and communication between the parties;
- improving community knowledge about policing services and law and order issues;
- attending new recruit training sessions on indigenous culture, heritage, behaviour and traditions;
- informing operational police about local issues that may affect relations between the indigenous community and police;
- establishing and maintaining a close personal rapport with elders of the Aboriginal community;
- assisting in mediation of disputes involving police and people from the Aboriginal community;
- advising police about areas of potential crime issues and suggesting preventative measures;
- implementing crime prevention strategies for ACT Policing as it relates to the indigenous community such as the Indigenous Family Violence Intervention Program;
- making representations to AFP management and other committees on behalf of the local indigenous community;

- participating in community events and where required, undertake public speaking appearances; and
- consulting with government and non-government agencies, community groups and businesses within the ACT, concerning crime prevention strategies relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

A secondary function of the Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer is to assist the AFP Recruitment Unit in the development and implementation of Indigenous recruitment, retention, career management and development strategies.

Multicultural Framework

Partnership policing is the underlying philosophy of modern day policing. Liaison and positive interaction with the community are essential for achieving the ideal of the community and police working together.

Canberra is a multicultural society and its diverse cultures, languages and religions pose special challenges for ACT Policing in order to ensure that multicultural communities are included in partnership policing strategies and initiatives.

ACT Policing, together with key community representatives from different cultural groups regularly implement initiatives to support the ACT's multicultural community.

ACT Policing continues to maintain a strong commitment to the ACT Police-Multicultural Advisory Board, which was established in February 2002. The ACT Police-Multicultural Advisory Board is a strategic community-based body

that advises the Chief Police Officer on policing issues in the ACT's linguistically and culturally diverse community, with its members drawn from ACT Policing, the ACT Office of Multicultural Affairs, and the multicultural community. It represents community diversity in terms of cultural background, multicultural expertise and gender. The aim is to help reduce misunderstandings and bridge any gaps between police and the multicultural community.

During 2003–2004, ACT Policing adopted new guidelines to help ensure respect towards multicultural communities when releasing announcements about offenders, missing persons and associated police incidents. The new guidelines, *Descriptions of Persons Issued to the Media*, were introduced in mid-September 2003 and were formally adopted on 1 December 2003 following a meeting of the ACT Police-Multicultural Advisory Board.

The practical guide aims to address concerns of multicultural communities about descriptions issued by police based on a person's ethnicity. Those concerns relate to inaccuracies which could reinforce negative media stereotypes and lead to intimidation, victimisation, people being made scapegoats and the unfair labelling of particular community groups.

The guide acknowledges that the use of multicultural characteristics in descriptions can, when used inappropriately, have the potential to offend members of the public and adversely affect relationships between police and the community.

All members of ACT Policing have access to the new guideline posted on the internal website.

Justice, Options and Prevention Policy Framework

During the reporting period ACT Policing continued to promote the policy framework released by the ACT Government, entitled *Justice, Options and Prevention, Working to Make the Lives of ACT Women Safe*. In consultation with the community, government and non-government representatives developed the framework addressing ways to mitigate violence against women.

An action plan, designed to implement the key objectives of the framework, was developed and released. It supported three outcomes:

- to provide protection and justice;
- options for women; and
- prevention of violence.

As part of its responsibilities, ACT Policing has continued its involvement and participation in the Family Violence Intervention Program and the Domestic Violence Prevention Council.

During the reporting period, ACT Policing commenced development of a resource (video/DVD and associated materials) aimed at personal safety. This development involved consultation with the community to identify issues that need to be addressed in the materials. This is a collaborative approach with the Young Women's Christian Association of Canberra and ACT Policing. It is expected the video/DVD and associated materials will be ready for release in the next reporting period. The video/DVD will replace a current resource 'Mind Yourself. Safety Information for Women' which ACT Policing uses in various seminars and presentations.