



Fact Sheet



October 2004

AFP assists in tracking down Bali Bombers

On 12 October 2002, shortly after 11:00 p.m. local time, three bombs exploded on the resort island of Bali in Indonesia. A total of 202 people died, including 88 Australians. Many more were injured.

Australia's response to the Bali bombings was one of the most significant operations ever undertaken by the relevant agencies.

At the height of the investigation, about 500 Australian police from Commonwealth, State and Territory law enforcement agencies were involved, led by the Australian Federal Police (AFP). They worked with agencies from Indonesia, the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Germany and New Zealand.

The AFP's primary focus in the Bali bombings was supporting the investigation by the Indonesian National Police (INP), which has so far resulted in 36 arrests.

The multi-national operation involved investigation, intelligence, disaster victim identification including the use of pathology, odontology and radiology, forensic investigations, bomb data and family liaison functions.

Within hours of the blasts, the AFP had activated an Incident Coordination Centre in Canberra and major incident rooms in each capital city. Later that morning, after the Indonesian National Police (INP) accepted an offer of support, the AFP operation formally began.

A team of AFP investigators, intelligence, crime scene and disaster victim identification experts immediately flew to Bali to join other AFP officers already there.

They established a forward command post and started the massive operation to debrief more than 7 000 visitors departing from Denpasar Airport.

Teams of AFP and State and Territory police obtained more than 600 witness statements and other critical evidence such video footage.

Hospital liaison teams tracked critically injured victims through the Australian medical system. These people were able to provide investigators with important evidence and accounts of the events of 12 October.

AFP involvement included a joint financial investigation team and the AFP's high-tech crime team. These efforts were also supported internationally with the FBI, the German Bundeskriminalamt and the Dutch National Police all joining the investigation team in Australia. The British Metropolitan Police Antiterrorist Branch also assisted, including sending investigators to Canberra to provide investigative support and advice.

Australia's major forensic response to the bombings was coordinated through the AFP laboratories in Canberra. In Bali, the AFP used mobile forensic capability and established forward command post facilities for crime scene investigation, bomb-data analysis, post-blast analysis, chemical and physical enhancement, fingerprint comparison, digital imaging, and photograph production.

Identifying all victims was a major operation. This involved hundreds of post-mortem examinations in Bali and many more antemortem collections in Indonesia and Australia. Pathologists, radiologists and odontologists supported the disaster victim identification teams.

The Canberra-based forensic major incident room coordinated the activities of more than 200 Australian Federal, State and Territory police and medical and coronial personnel in Bali. This does not include personnel who travelled to Bali independently and many more were involved in supporting the disaster victim identification process in Australia.

Forensic teams examined 46 separate crime scenes across Indonesia, and conducted several examinations in Australia—obtaining more than 2 900 forensic exhibits and samples.

To support the survivors, witnesses and families of the victims, the AFP introduced a Family Liaison Program. Information sessions were held around Australia for survivors and families affected by the Bali bombings. Liaison officers also assisted families during the trial of offenders by providing regular court updates.

The AFP maintains a Jakarta-based team that provides analytical, technical, and investigative support to the INP investigations team tasked with apprehending the suspects who remain at large.

For more information:

AFP National Media (Canberra): (02) 6275 7100