

AFP Blue Paper To 2030 and Beyond

The future of federal policing



AFP



Commissioner's foreword

The mission of the Australian Federal Police (AFP) since its inception has been to protect Australians and Australia's interests. This ambitious mission reflects not only the broad range of threats faced by Australia, but also the community the AFP serves which spans the nation and beyond.

As the Commonwealth's policing agency, our success into the future is dependent on adequately understanding emerging threats and opportunities confronting Australia, successfully developing capabilities and tactics to keep pace with the changing threats and importantly, maintaining the trust and confidence of the community and government.

Success in our policing mission is an outcome of effective strategies, plans and partnerships. As the AFP approaches the 2030s the magnitude of converging geopolitical, economic, social, environmental, legal and technological changes are such that traditional planning timeframes and scope are insufficient.

To ensure our future success and growth, the AFP must engage comprehensively with the community, law enforcement partners, government, industry and academia.

The *AFP Blue Paper* considers the AFP's journey over the past 45 years and challenges which have given rise to our agency as it currently stands. The Blue Paper outlines how the AFP can position itself to best protect lives, livelihoods and Australia's way of life into the 2030s and beyond.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Reece P Kershaw'. The signature is stylized and fluid, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

REECE P KERSHAW APM
COMMISSIONER
AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL POLICE


OVERVIEW

Keeping pace with the dynamic nature of both criminal and non-criminal threats is becoming increasingly difficult.

Rapid advancements in technology, environmental and geopolitical shifts and the borderless nature of crime is fundamentally changing our society and giving rise to new forms of criminality.

Australia is facing a proliferation of threats, increased vulnerabilities and importantly, continues to feature prominently as an attractive target of criminality, foreign interference and espionage.

The combination of these factors, along with the ability of emerging threats to bypass traditional defences such as physical borders or geography, are increasingly impacting the daily lives of ordinary Australians.



In order to stay ahead, the AFP must continue to evolve.

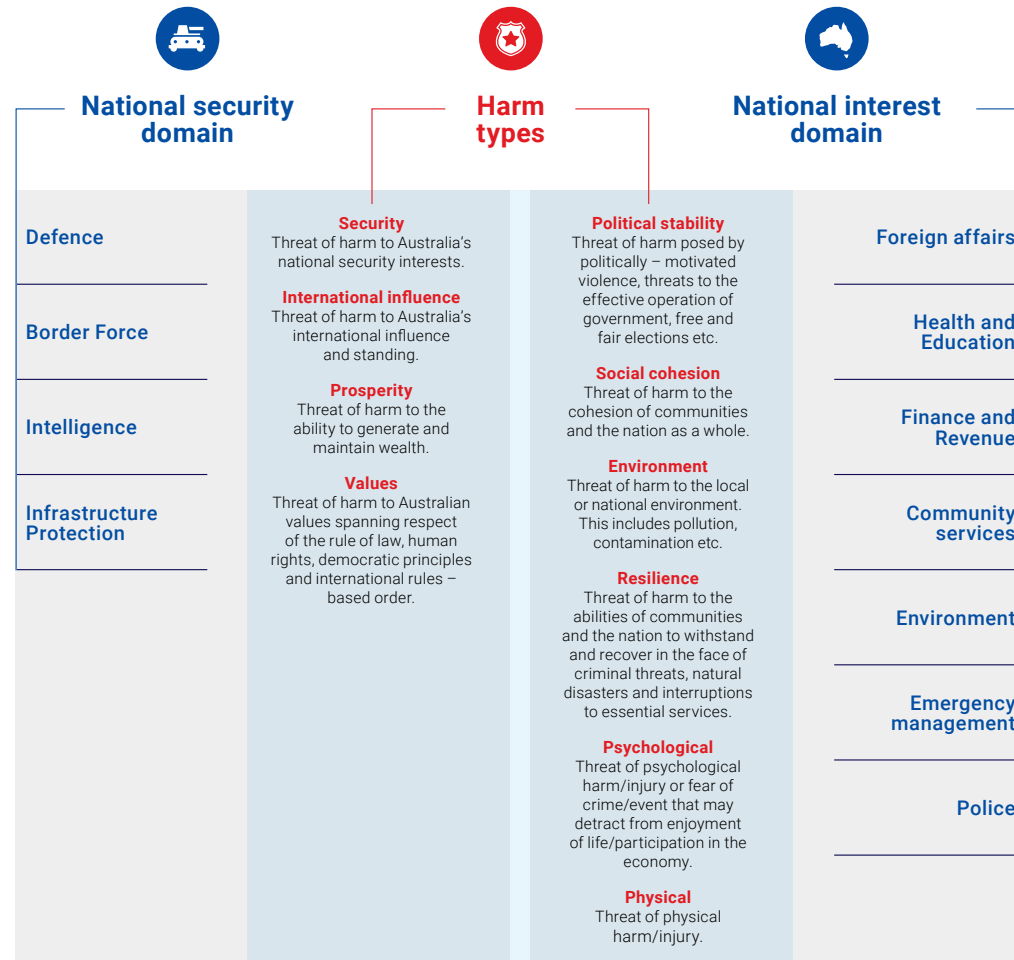
The AFP of today

The AFP of today reflects more than 104 years of growth and evolution of the role, function and responsibilities of federal policing.

In the past 40 years the AFP has emerged as a unique federal agency that exercises statutory functions under a broad and complex legislative suite of Commonwealth and State legislation.

The AFP protects Australians from a wide range of harms by virtue of its diverse functions that span policing, intelligence and national security.

While some of the AFP's remit is shared by partners, the AFP is alone in combining all these roles and functions within a single policing agency.



Crime does not respect borders, cultures or political systems



The AFP of today reflects not only the emergence of new threats but is also a product of its success in mitigating them via:

- / ability to rapidly pivot to address emerging threats or government priorities
- / capability to generate operational effects internationally through deep policing partnerships and geographic reach
- / proven capability to coordinate and/or lead multi-national and cross jurisdictional policing interventions

- / capacity to develop innovative capabilities and doctrine
- / success in positively informing and shaping a contemporary legislative framework and suite of statutory powers.

As a consequence, the AFP has amassed the trust and confidence of the Australian community and government.



- AFP HEADQUARTERS
- INTERNATIONAL POSTS
- POLICE DEVELOPMENT MISSIONS/UNITED NATIONS
- SECONDMENTS

*Kyiv temporarily relocated to The Hague

Changing nature of federal policing

While AFP's core functions have largely endured more than 40 years, the scope of the AFP's responsibilities has significantly increased as a result of expanding Commonwealth laws and the evolving threat environment.

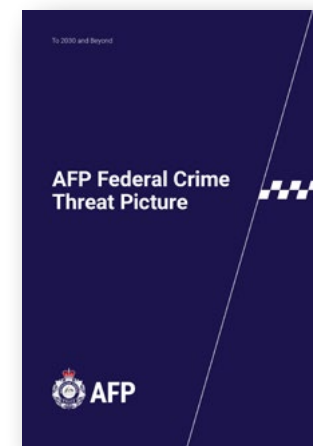
AFP functions in 1979	AFP functions in 2022
Provide POLICING SERVICES to the Australian Capital Territory	Provide POLICING SERVICES to the Australian Capital Territory, Jervis Bay and the Australian external territories
Policing Commonwealth law and SAFEGUARDING Commonwealth interests	Policing Commonwealth law and SAFEGUARDING Commonwealth interests and investigation of state offences that have a federal aspect
PROTECTION of designated high office holders and dignitaries	PROTECTION of designated high office holders, dignitaries and witnesses
PROTECTION of Commonwealth INFRASTRUCTURE , places and property	PROTECTION of Commonwealth INFRASTRUCTURE , places and property
Any other policing function essential to keeping Australians and Australian interests safe	Any other policing function essential to keeping Australians and Australian interests safe, including protective and custodial services
	Engagement and COOPERATION with domestic partners to fight crime and keep Australians safe
	Engagement and COOPERATION with international partners and non-government bodies to combat crime and support regional security, safety and stability
	OFFSHORE peace, stability and security operations, capacity building missions and capability development
	CONFISCATING property or wealth from criminals that has been illegally obtained

Strategic outlook – need for change

The world post the Second World War has been categorised by the emergence of free trade, increased movement of people across borders for migration, employment or recreational purposes and a telecommunication and information revolution, which has changed the way we live our lives.

DRIVERS OF CHANGE

Evolving threat environment	Social changes and changing expectations of policing	Maintaining legitimacy and public trust in policing	Capability and capacity risks	Changing nature of federal policing
<p>Geopolitical environment / erosion of international rules-based order, war in Ukraine, increased competition for natural resources, foreign interference, espionage, AUKUS.</p> <p>Digital Revolution 4.0 / encryption, Artificial Intelligence, Quantum Computing, Biotechnology, Cloud/networks, IoT devices, increased access to space.</p> <p>Federalisation of crime / increasing trend with borderless crime, cyber-enabled and cybercrime.</p> <p>Extremism / religiously motivated groups being replaced by ideological motivated extremist individuals and groups.</p> <p>Illicit economy / ongoing strong demand for illicit drugs, lethality of synthetic opioids.</p>	<p>Workforce / demographics, ageing population, immigration driven population growth.</p> <p>Labour market / labour mobility, career expectations, employer credentials, demand for talent, generational priorities and values, health and wellbeing, remote and flexible work.</p> <p>Illicit drugs / changing community views on illicit drugs, increasing support for legalisation/ decriminalisation of low harm drugs.</p> <p>Policing careers / evolution of the perception of policing as a career in line with the evolving community expectations about careers, multi-generational work expectations and evolving capabilities required by policing.</p>	<p>Global issues / justice issues arising in international communities can, and have had reverberations in Australian communities.</p> <p>Post COVID / continued association of policing with lock-down enforcement, sovereign citizen movement.</p> <p>Legislative frameworks / increasing scale (approx. 11,000 Commonwealth Acts passed since 1901) and complexity (130 national security laws passed since 2001).</p> <p>Representative of the community / challenges in mirroring the diversity of the community served in all its forms.</p>	<p>Capability / keeping pace with criminal threats necessitates ongoing capability investment and development, procurement of off-the-shelf capabilities often unavailable, capability sustainment challenged by technology lifecycles, resource and specialist staff availability, workforce and capability planning capabilities maturing.</p> <p>Capacity / specialist capabilities small and agile, increasing competition for specialist talent, recruitment and onboarding timeframes.</p> <p>Demand management / proliferation of threats contributing to additional demand on AFP capabilities and capacity. Sustainably managing demand necessitates effective prioritisation and demand management to ensure resources are deployed sustainably against harm posed and law enforcement impact.</p>	<p>Functions / functions of the AFP are broad and have continued to expand post establishment of AFP in line with evolving threats and community expectations/government direction.</p> <p>Specialisation / increasing breadth and specialisation of functions is challenging traditional notions of policing roles and career paths.</p>



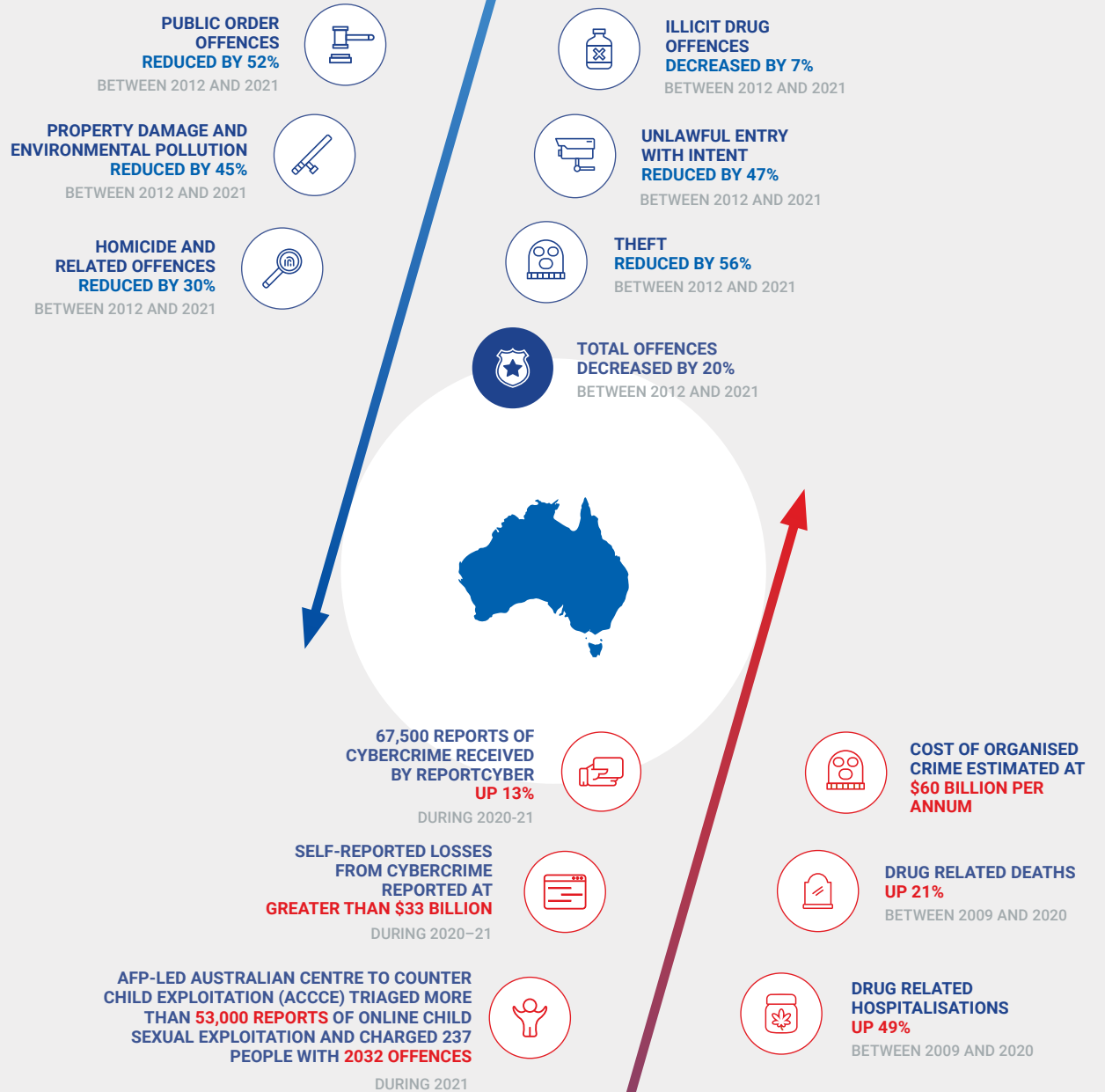
Changing impact of crime

The impact of crime on everyday Australians is changing. Australians are:

- / less likely to be victims of traditional state-based crime such as theft, property damage, etc.
- / experiencing increasing **drug related harm**, particularly among Indigenous and rural Australians
- / being actively targeted by criminals operating outside of Australia's borders such as via **cybercrime**
- / increasingly seeing the most vulnerable within our communities, subject to harm such as **child exploitation**.

The range of threats across the AFP's remit is increasing – from transnational serious organised crime, to cybercrime, foreign interference and more.*

*The threat environment is outlined further in the AFP's Federal Crime Threat Picture available on the AFP's website.



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Changing workforce needs

AFP's success is dependent on having the right people, with the right skills, in the right place and at the right time. Into the future the AFP will be increasingly challenged by:

- / the breadth of skills and experience required within policing, which continues to expand
- / the need for policing to be more representative of the Australian community; including gender, culture, diversity of ideas, knowledge and skills
- / increasing competition for projected workforce needs
- / balancing the needs of a multigenerational workforce and shifting ways of working.

WORKFORCE DRIVERS TRENDS AND CHALLENGES	
EXTERNAL DRIVERS	
Political	/ Criminal and non-criminal threat environment
Economic	/ Labour mobility – intra industry, State and country / Workforce demographics – ageing workforce
Social	/ Career expectations – attitudes to policing careers / Employer credentials – values, culture, diversity
Technological	/ Demand for specialist skills – war on talent
Environment	/ Generational priorities/values / Health and wellbeing
Legal	/ Remote/flexible work
INTERNAL DRIVERS	
Operating environment	/ Culture and values – employer of choice / Leadership – people, capabilities and issues
Legislation	/ Workforce diversity – skills, gender, ethnicity, thought and physical ability
Ministerial direction	/ Communication – employee engagement
Organisational strategies	/ Industrial/remuneration frameworks / Career offerings – flexible recruitment options
Organisational plans	/ Skills and competency approach, codification of statutory powers
Business plans	/ Individual and flexible learning outcomes
Initiatives	/ Technologically enabled

AFP future vision

In order to position the AFP to continue to succeed into the future, the AFP's ongoing development and strategic direction will be shaped by a shared commitment to:

VISION

Policing for a safer Australia.

MISSION

As Australia's national policing agency we protect Australians and Australia's interests.

ROLE

- / Preventing and disrupting threats to lives, livelihoods and Australia's way of life domestically and offshore
- / Preventing, disrupting and responding to serious criminal threats to Australia's national security and national interest
- / Leading and coordinating national policing responses to transnational and emerging threats
- / Developing and hosting specialist capabilities in support of AFP and partner agreed mutual priorities
- / Delivering community policing services to the Australian Capital Territory, Jervis Bay and Australian External Territories.

PRINCIPLES OF FEDERAL POLICING

- / Policing is intrinsically linked to community, with the AFP's community spanning the nation and beyond.
- / Policing is itself a community, with the AFP comprising a unique combination of sworn and unsworn skills, experience and perspectives to operate independently or in partnership with domestic and international partners.
- / The goal of policing is preventing public harm, with the AFP's primary role the prevention of harm to lives, livelihoods and Australia's way of life.
- / Policing is dependent on the strength of relationships with the AFP's spanning communities, industry, partner law enforcement and intelligence agencies, State and Commonwealth government and international stakeholders.
- / Policing relies on legitimacy, with the AFP committed to being accountable to the Australian community and government of the day in an impartial and transparent manner.

AFP of the future

To successfully meet its challenges and respond to the ever evolving operational and threat environment, the AFP will focus on five core priority areas.

AFP impact

Prevention of harm to Australians and Australia's way of life.

Minimising harm via **disrupting** threats at the first opportunity.

Responding to the manifestation of threats in the most efficient and effective manner to minimise harm, enable recovery, promote community resilience and support the rule of law.

Enforcing criminal law and assisting partners to enforce criminal law in support of the rule of law.

Future priorities

As a policing agency with a global footprint, the AFP is uniquely positioned to amass critical insights into threats and opportunities confronting Australia and our international neighbours.

The AFP's success is heavily dependent on the strengths of its people. The AFP's future ability to attract and retain skills and experience in an increasingly tight labour market will be heavily dependent on the AFP's positive employer credentials.

OUR POLICING INSIGHTS ARE HIGHLY SOUGHT DOMESTICALLY AND INTERNATIONALLY

WE ARE THE EMPLOYER OF CHOICE ACROSS LAW ENFORCEMENT

OUR PARTNERSHIPS ACCELERATE DISRUPTIONS AND OUTCOMES

WE ARE LEADERS IN EMBRACING AND LEVERAGING TECHNOLOGY

WE ARE FLEXIBLE AND AGILE TO DEFEAT THREATS

Criminal and non-criminal threats are increasingly rendering borders, geography and technology constraints irrelevant. The AFP's geographical reach, specialist capabilities and partnerships uniquely positions it to lead and coordinate policing responses to address future threats.

Crime and technology are increasingly indistinguishable with successful employment of technology being key to the AFP's future operational effectiveness and efficiency.

Organisational flexibility and agility has been key to the AFP past successes and will be increasingly important to its future successes in the face of rapid changes in the operating and threat environment.



The AFP Blue Paper represents the AFP's commitment to the government and community of Australia that the AFP will continue to evolve, innovate and adapt to play a critical role in protecting lives, livelihoods and Australia's way of life.

The AFP Blue Paper seeks to communicate the AFP's contemporary vision, mission, role, principles, and future priorities which will position the AFP for ongoing success.

afp.gov.au