

**Operation Alliance: 2002 Bali Bombings
Episode 3: Team Effort (Transcript)**

Voiceover: This podcast contains content that some listeners may find distressing. It contains depictions of real-life traumatic events, including commentary around significant injuries and death. It is not suitable for children and listener discretion is advised.

Ray Martin: Countering terrorism has been at the very core of the Australian Federal Police since the organisation was first established in 1979. But in 2002, an act of terrorism in Bali - right on Australia's doorstep - would prove to be a major turning point. For the first time, Australians understood just how close and how real the prospect of a terrorist attack was. For the AFP, they evolved overnight, forming critical alliances with police jurisdictions around the country and perhaps, most importantly with the Indonesian National Police. In doing so, they began one of the most significant operations in AFP history.

I'm Ray Martin, and coming up, you'll hear first-hand accounts and untold stories from some courageous men and women within the AFP. Men and women involved in this history-defining operation, whether they were assisting the injured, leading the search for answers, or helping the families of the victims.

Some of what you're about to hear may be confronting, but these are stories that need to be told. They're stories of extraordinary teamwork. These are the stories of 'Operation Alliance'.

Chris Lennard: I think it was a fairly unusual situation where the AFP was undertaking a joint investigation with a law enforcement agency from another country. The Indonesian National Police investigation where they allowed the AFP to assist.

Andrew Colvin: Bali rewrote the book, if there was a book about how international investigations are done, 'cause to that point, international investigations were largely the purview of the jurisdiction that the crime had happened in with a little bit of support coming in from other countries, mostly technical expertise. All of a sudden Bali became a joint arrangement.

Annie Lam: The scale of the Bali bombings for Op Alliance was... it, it needed to be a team effort. The culture difference, we needed the DFAT, we needed the linguists there. You know, the vastness and the size of the scene, we needed the bomb scenes from VicPol to be there with us.

Karl Kent: There was a high level of preparedness for mass casualty, but we had never attended a mass casualty event of this scale or complexity in terms of the numbers of deceased, in terms of the complexity of deployment into a foreign country and sustaining that operation for such a period of time.

Ray Martin: The investigation into the 2002 Bali bombings remains unprecedented within the ranks of the AFP. What became known as 'Operation Alliance' would

fundamentally change the organisation on so many levels. It would also change many people's opinion of just what the AFP was truly capable of.

Chris Lennard: I think it was a significant event in the history of the AFP. It's fairly well known that the AFP used to be referred to as 'the plastics'. That other law enforcement agencies around Australia looked at the AFP as being over-resourced and not doing real police work.

Ray Martin: In 2002, Chris Lennard was the AFP's Manager of Forensic Operations Support.

Chris Lennard: I think that attitude changed as a result of the AFP's response to the Bali bombings. I think it showed how the AFP could coordinate a significant response to a major incident of that type, how it could quickly gain collaboration from other state and territory agencies around Australia, and overall how a major incident could actually be managed by the AFP. And I actually had an interstate colleague come up to me in Bali and he said to me that he often wondered how the Australian forensic community would respond to a major incident here in Australia. And he said that now that he saw how the AFP responded and how they coordinated the Australian response, he said he was now confident that such an incident could be handled appropriately. That clearly had changed this individual's mind in terms of what he thought of the AFP. And I think overall it demonstrated the AFP's potential to respond to such an incident.

Andy Thorp: Some of the state services sent DVI teams. They'd rotate in and out. We had a team from Tasmania, one from South Australia and Victoria particularly, came a couple of times, I remember. Initially some of the search and rescue people that came were from, I don't know, Western Australia and other services, but they all had the opportunity to see how the AFP functioned offshore. So they went back with a different view of the AFP.

Ray Martin: That's Andy Thorp, who was among the first AFP investigators deployed to Bali and one of hundreds who would ultimately become part of Operation Alliance. It was an enormous team, made up of AFP officers alongside myriad experts from other law enforcement agencies, supporting the investigation in whatever way they could.

With the death toll rising and survivors making their way back home, the AFP was suddenly faced with a new challenge - managing the vast number of Australian state and territory police who simply wanted to 'help'.

Andrew Colvin: It wasn't difficult to get their support. It was difficult to manage their support. So I never felt that there was anything that I was going to get a no, if I needed, and the states and territories were offering everything, but trying to manage it and control it was a little bit challenging.

Ray Martin: In 2002, Andrew Colvin was the AFP's new National Coordinator of Counterterrorism.

Andrew Colvin: We fell into a routine. I mean, a lot of the DVI, we didn't have the depth of expertise in DVI. There's a national capability that exists for a good reason,



because we're not doing it every other day. Queensland led a lot of the DVI response. All the jurisdictions came into line and gave me resources that we put onto a roster that, they helped us at the airports. They helped us do interviews. They helped us track down survivors' families. They helped us have the difficult conversations that we needed to have. And in terms of, while we're still compiling a brief of evidence in Indonesia, a shadow brief, if you like here, we're doing all the other things, we're also trying to work out do we have a threat in Australia? And that was where some of our intelligence agency partners were very focused is, if this has happened in Indonesia and Bali, could it happen here in Australia? And the state police came to the table. So they gave investigators and we started to manage a national police intelligence investigation.

Ray Martin: Today, Peter Crozier is an AFP Assistant Commissioner, but back in 2002, Peter was a Sergeant attached to ACT Policing. He began working with Operation Alliance in November of that year. He really was taken aback by the way everyone involved in the investigation worked together.

Peter Crozier: You saw people at their absolute best. I don't know if the organisation realised the value and what levels of expertise we had, because unless you were working with someone who was involved in bomb data, bomb intelligence, unless you were working closely with someone who was doing criminalistics or chemical criminalistics or DVI or facial recognition or all that sort of stuff, if it wasn't real to you, it was distant. So you knew it might have been there or individuals did, but you never saw it in actually operating. You saw the thoroughness of people, you saw the commitment.

Ray Martin: It's hard to put into words the enormity of the task being faced by the joint Operation Alliance team. Amid the October heat and humidity in Bali, AFP investigators would spend weeks alongside their Indonesian counterparts examining complex bomb sites, trying to determine what - and who - was responsible for the explosions.

Mick Travers: It was new to me. Never worked with the INP before. Obviously, there was language problems. A lot of the time we were working, especially in the early days, we were working through interpreters. I found actually after the interpreters left and we could talk one on one with the INP members, it was just police to police, things started to work a lot better, and I suppose when they realised that we were just there to help them with the investigation, we weren't trying to take their investigation from them, whether it be at the scene or the hospital or anywhere down the track.

Ray Martin: Mick Travers was one of the first AFP officers deployed to Bali. Mick was tasked with assisting the Indonesian National Police to recover human remains as well as critical evidence that would help towards the investigation.

Mick Travers: I'm sure they were under huge pressure. Bali relies on tourism and while Jalan Legian, one of the main tourist streets is closed, there's no tourists. They wanted to, you know, the Balinese people wanted it to be over, I suppose, and for them to be able to get on with their lives, whereas we wanted to make sure from an

AFP and Australian point of view that the absolute most thorough investigation could take place. Remember, there were other countries there as well and I think that helped. I know that we had Japanese forensic members who worked at the scene with us for a while too, so I think the Indonesians realised it wasn't just Australia trying to push something on them. It was the rest of the world, especially of those who'd been impacted by the death of their citizens who wanted to help the INP and therefore the Balinese and Indonesians to get results and get the offenders.

Ray Martin: With each passing day, pressure was mounting on DVI teams to provide information about loved ones to grieving families. Hundreds of post-mortem examinations were being conducted in Bali, along with many more ante-mortem collections in both Indonesia and Australia.

AFP officers along with their State and Territory counterparts collected 600 witness statements from travellers arriving back in Australia from Bali, along with other vital evidence such as films and video footage. It all needed to be processed quickly.

Meanwhile, forensic teams had 46 separate crime scenes to assess across Bali, Java and Sulawesi, which resulted in close to 3,000 forensic exhibits and samples being obtained. It was, by any measure, an extraordinary team effort, involving many long hours.

Linzi Wilson-Wilde: We're talking about 14, 15 hours a day, seven days a week for the first two months. Most of my team were working about 12 hours a day, seven days a week. And remember, we weren't just doing the disaster victim identification part of the Bali bombing. We were also doing the DNA analysis for the criminal investigation. And we were also running the DNA analysis for the forensic science normal cases. So all of these competing priorities were at play, trying to get the deceased identified, the samples for the investigation and maintain a normal workflow.

Ray Martin: Linzi Wilson-Wilde was the Team Leader of Biological Criminalistics at the AFP.

Linzi Wilson-Wilde: I had a small team in the biological criminalistics and I knew I wasn't going to be able to meet the expectations and turnaround times that were going to be required, given that I had 11 people. And we didn't have the legislation in place either, so I couldn't send samples out to other jurisdictions, they had to be done in Canberra. So I asked my counterparts and they answered the call. They sent scientists to Canberra to help us, so we had about 50 scientists on the case and these were just DNA, DNA scientists working on the case and they would rotate in. And I also had to send a biologist to Bali to advise and ensure we had the right samples coming in.

David Roys: The work that was done by our forensic biologists back here, just doing that was incredible. In fact, it wasn't just the AFP. There were certainly scientists from all over Australia, worked together.

Ray Martin: David Royds led the AFP's forensic chemistry team, which - at the time - comprised just five people. Australia's forensic community was quick to lend its support.

David Royds: All scientists around Australia were using techniques and procedures which they were familiar with, that had been tried and tested by other laboratories and so forth. So this allowed us to do a thing called interoperability, which means that scientists from other laboratories could actually come to our laboratory and just pick up the tools and just start work straight away without any induction or training or whatever, because they were effectively trained, were all effectively using pretty much the same procedures. So we had many, many scientists from Victoria, from Tasmania, from Queensland, from Western Australia, Northern Territory, South Australia, all working in our laboratory from time to time helping with this massive great task. And it was a really wonderful example of interoperability working well.

Ray Martin: As the Operation Alliance investigation picked up pace, what also needed to work well was the cooperation between Australian forensic teams and the Bali Police Forensic Laboratory, known as LABFOR.

Annie Lam: The relationship with LABFOR was pretty much a partnership. Everything we did was in consultation with LABFOR. So we had a team of crime scene examiners, and they had the same team makeup. So we were working together. We had a great relationship with LABFOR, to be honest.

Ray Martin: Annie Lam was an AFP crime scene investigator and one of the first Australians deployed to Bali to assist the Indonesian forensic team.

Annie Lam: They were really appreciative that we were there. And obviously some of the equipment that we brought, they didn't have. So, you know, it was not only conducting the examination but also letting them know what we were doing at the same time. They had obviously chemists as well, so when we were working in their facilities at their police station, we worked with those members. If we were out in the field, LABFOR had their different members deployed. So, you know, I worked with quite a number of them in the different roles.

Ray Martin: Annie was one of just a handful of female crime scene examiners assisting the LABFOR team. Another was Dr Sarah Benson.

Sarah Benson: Whenever we were working together, it was because we knew we could complement each other with what we brought to a problem. LABFOR had that knowledge of explosives and how to analyse samples, what they might be looking for because they'd come across explosives in their criminal environment before. I didn't have that hands on operational experience, but I did have this theoretical knowledge. I did have this new whizz bang technology. I did have this training that I'd done in these new types of explosives and different types of explosives and trying to combine them together. I think that's where we struck up this respect between us, is we can work together to solve this problem. I think when you look at it that way through that lens, there's less rub. There's less concern on trust or any of those aspects. And fully

recognising that we were there to support. We as the AFP, didn't have jurisdiction, we're there to support the international effort led by the INP of which LABFOR was the forensic component, so respecting that, recognising that, helps with all of those things.

Ray Martin: For the investigation to move forward at the rate it needed, collaboration between AFP forensics and Indonesia's LABFOR would be critical.

It would also mean having to address some cultural challenges, as Karl Kent, the Head of ACT Forensic Operations, observed.

Karl Kent: That was uncommon in Indonesia to have a senior female crime scene investigator. That was not really a role that, at that particular time in Indonesia, a senior woman might perform. So, it was those sort of factors that challenged the relationship. And how would an Indonesian police officer or a crime scene officer from LABFOR take direction from a senior female crime scene officer? Those sort of things were interesting challenges at different times. But also, we had very different capabilities. We had some high-tech capabilities that, at that time, had not been implemented in Indonesia. So, we were able to do some aspects of in-the-field analytics, very rapid analytics, people like David Royds and co were fantastic at identifying post-blast materials from the scene very quickly with those techniques. And so, it was a really important interface that, that relationship wasn't, because of those different capabilities, that they weren't seen as being inferior in terms of the investigative role, of course they were not. But it was very, very important that trust got built and we were able to work effectively together, which was for many months, and then extended into large-scale capability work, capability and capacity building with the INP for many years to come after that.

Ray Martin: The October 2002 Bali bombings occurred just a few months after a Memorandum of Understanding - or MoU - was signed between the AFP and Indonesia's National Police. Dr Benny Mamoto is a former high-ranking member of the INP. At the time of the bombings, he was pursuing terrorist networks across southeast Asia, Pakistan and Afghanistan. Dr Mamoto says the importance of that MoU cannot be understated.

Benny Mamoto (via translator): So this relationship had indeed already been established beforehand. However, at the time of the Bali bombing, the relationship became critical. The meetings between Commissioner Mick Keelty, the Head of the National Police, General Gories Mere, and General Made Mangku Pastika, were vital to enable smooth cooperation at the lower levels. The assistance was even greater in operational connections undertaken by the joint investigation. The relationship was committed to combatting this terrorism problem... and we shared the same enthusiasm.

Ray Martin: That enthusiasm sparked an unrelenting desire for justice and the pursuit by Australian and Indonesian investigators to find those responsible. That pursuit would lead them to members of a terrorist cell called Jemaah Islamiyah, otherwise known as JI - an extremist group with deep connections to al-Qaeda and operating within southeast Asia.

Jl had already come to the attention of the intelligence community, although for Andrew Colvin and the AFP's counterterrorism team, this was the beginning of a steep learning curve.

Andrew Colvin: If we're honest with ourselves, we didn't know much at all, but we didn't have a reason to know. Our sisters in the intelligence community knew a lot more, and that was their job to know that, but terrorism hadn't really transitioned from being an intelligence and a national security issue to a policing issue. It was still being held as an intelligence issue. So yeah, Jemaah Islamiyah was known and there were aspects of it that needed to be investigated in Australia as well. So that all of a sudden came very much onto our radar and we had to learn a lot more. And yeah, the Indonesian police taught us an enormous amount. They knew about the network. They probably didn't describe it the way that we did or we eventually did, but their intelligence and their understanding was amazing.

Ray Martin: As the investigation continued, teams of forensic experts from Australia and Indonesia had been collecting DNA evidence and human remains from the bomb sites in the belief that someone, somewhere, would find a clue leading to the identity of the killers. For Ben McDevitt, the AFP's General Manager of National Operations at the time, a critical breakthrough came from an unexpected source.

Ben McDevitt: Being in the mortuary at a particular point in time with a couple of photofit specialists from Victoria Police when the task was a very gruesome task and it was trying to actually put together the face of the suicide bomber who'd killed himself in Paddy's Bar. And actually watching these people holding up pieces of skin and bone and trying to place it together so that these Victorian police photo fit experts could actually draw a composite of what that person looked like. And that'll always stick in my mind. And guess what? They did a good enough likeness that he was identified. That's quite extraordinary.

Ray Martin: Graham Ashton was the Forward Commander in Bali. Normally based out of the AFP office in Melbourne, Graham was aware of the new photofit technology being developed.

Graham Ashton: At that time, Victoria Police was pioneering really, a new sort of computer technology to photofits. something called FACE technology, facial automated something or rather, you know, had an acronym F-A-C-E. They were pioneering that, so they could give you almost a 3D computer image of someone rather than a sketch drawing. That was a big advance at that time. And Victoria Police was good enough to make them available to us. They sent up the team to Bali. And that team did a great job, not only on that photofit, but the photofits they put together of the three suspects we had on the motorbike. Because they really just ended up being spitting images of the terrorists that we caught.



Ray Martin: DVI expert Ken Rach says that the ID from the digital photofits was consistent with what they'd found at Paddy's Bar and that later aligned with DNA samples taken from the suspect's family members.

Ken Rach: They've got the two legs and basically a part of the head and what they did to try and reconstruct was, the head was pretty well mangled and they actually stuffed it with newspaper to pad it out and then photographed it and got a photograph of who they thought was the person, and then they did a composite photo and compared it all. And when we actually found that body, I think it was a couple of weeks by the time we actually got to that body in the system, we found the legs and they'd actually, whoever did the recovery from Paddy's, actually put them both, put both legs and the head into the same bag, which was quite amazing, we thought. And eventually we matched them all back with DNA. The condition of the remains with the legs and the head was consistent with him having a backpack and detonating a backpack. I think we had one of our people with AFP and a few of the locals actually went to an island somewhere where Iqbal had actually come from to get DNA samples from the family to match it up, to finally get the positive ID. So it was very complex and complicated, but we just persevere until we get a result.

Ray Martin: Perseverance and patience are key factors in any investigation. Yet just a few weeks in, the Operation Alliance team were already starting to see some significant breakthroughs, as Graham Ashton recalls.

Graham Ashton: For me, there were probably two breakthrough moments in the investigation, in terms of catching those responsible or at least identifying them. The first was the motorbike that was found outside a mosque not far from the crime scene. We did find an eyewitness account, and we took thousands of statements. The AFP officers around the country and in Bali took thousands of statements from witnesses. And a big job of the intel team was putting that together, looking for potential leads and cross matches. And one of the things they did find that was interesting was that three people were seen on a motorbike leaving the scene, that looked a bit suspicious. The other thing that was suspicious to them was that the headlight was working, and the taillight wasn't working. That piqued the interest of intel officers and then investigators. So we had this motorbike with these three people on it, as a bit of a lead to try to follow up, and then a motorbike was found outside a mosque abandoned. The Indonesian Police responded to that and sure enough, this motorbike had had wiring changes made to it to isolate the taillight and a switch from the headlight. And then we were able to track that motorbike back to a dealership, again in Bali. And when investigators spoke with the people at the dealership, they immediately remembered the sale. And there was a reason that they remembered the sale and that was because the people had not tried to barter the price, they just paid cash straight away for the motorbike and they thought that was pretty unusual, these guys. So it sort of stuck in their mind and again with our photofit people, they were able to provide descriptions of the three. And those three descriptions were incredible for us to how detailed they were and how accurate they ultimately were. That was one key lead. And while that was happening, we had a forensic breakthrough with the crime-scene vehicle that ultimately dovetailed into that first lead. We found the chassis of the van that contained the major explosive



at the Sari Club site. We found the engine for that on the roof of a bank across the road, and that was examined by Indonesian forensics, Australian forensics, a couple of times. The engine number had been filed off, perhaps not unexpectedly, so we had trouble finding an identification for that vehicle. It was a bit of a dead end. A diligent Indonesian forensic officer, having like the fifth time over the engine, noticed there was a piece of, small piece of metal welded onto the actual engine block, which he thought looked a bit unusual. So he had a chip at that with a chisel and a hammer. That chipped away and then underneath that was a number imprinted on the engine. And it wasn't the engine number, it was something called a DPR number, which was a number when you registered vehicles in Bali at one time, you had to have what's called a DPR number or a commercial registration number on the engine. So that was a major breakthrough in terms of identifying the vehicle. So the Indonesian Police raced down to the Denpasar Motor Vehicle Registry, found the number, and then it was a pretty quick exercise to say when it was first registered under this number in Bali, it belonged to this person. Went and saw that person, he'd sold the vehicle eight years ago. And they went through about five different owners, chasing them down over a period of about 12 hours, and then finally they learned that what appeared to be the most recent person that purchased it was a fellow called Amrozi. And once they knew that name, well, things started to gel because they knew of an Amrozi connected to Jemaah Islamiyah. They had an address in East Java for him, and his face jumped out of the photofit that the car dealership had provided, motorbike dealership had provided of one of the people that was at the purchase of the motorbike. So Indonesian Police raced over to arrest Amrozi. And sure enough he was there. He wasn't accompanied by other members that were on the photofit, but it turned out that there was his brothers involved and others were involved, and they were on this photofit as well. So he was transported to Bali, interrogated by the Indonesian Police at that time, so and then that led us on getting more evidence from the searches. We found where the bomb was constructed, and those other leads then quickly flowed from that and we had enough evidence for him to be charged, and ultimately for the others to be pursued and captured as well.

Ray Martin: The arrest of Amrozi would prove a major turning point in the investigation, although as Dr Benny Mamoto explains, getting Amrozi's confession would still take some time.

Benny Mamoto (via translator): Firstly, the key to unlocking it was Amrozi's confession. So, when he was caught, he remained silent for 15 hours; he didn't want to speak. I got a phone call from Mr Gories Mere to come to Surabaya to interrogate Amrozi. After approximately two hours he finally confessed and explained who was involved. Starting from there we began to identify. That's where the help of the AFP was very, very advantageous, namely with the use of technology – how we could track the whereabouts of the handphones; how we could discern the communication network. That was the first time we got technological assistance with the result that we could quickly track down the whereabouts of the suspects. Because without that we were still doing everything manually. At that time technology had no impact in Indonesia, but thanks to the help of the AFP we were able to use technology with the result that we could quickly arrest the first Bali bomb suspects one by one.



Ray Martin: With the investigation now picking up pace, the Operation Alliance team was rapidly putting together the pieces of the forensic jigsaw puzzle to identify more suspects. As Annie Lam explains, no detail was too small.

Annie Lam: We were going into hotel rooms where the suspects were using to plan or having meetings in hotel rooms. So immediately of course, when you check out of a hotel, it's cleaned. So we were essentially going into a clean hotel room. So what we were doing at those places was doing trace DNA swabs of all the high traffic areas. So inside doorknob, tap handles, just to prove the presence of someone in there. We went to other scenes in Jakarta where they were using these scenes to draw the designs, build the bombs, get the chemicals together. And in a lot of those places, their toothbrushes were still there. They had papers and newspapers. There were drawings. There were writings from their planning material. So whilst they tried to pack up, some of these places still had physical evidence and forensic evidence there. I remember in one of the meeting places there was newspaper on the floor. And one of the newspapers, when we treated them in the lab with the chemical treatment, a footprint came up. And it was a footprint of one of the suspects, from the chemical treatment. But also when we collect the toothbrushes where they left behind, toothbrushes is something that has a high yield DNA. We get their DNA profiles from their toothbrushes.

Ray Martin: When it comes to forensic science, sometimes the tiniest detail can yield the greatest results.

Annie Lam: I was at the Renon site collecting debris. Bits of debris that we're collecting are millimetres. You're using a dustpan to collect, but we had to zone an area. So you're literally on your hands and knees collecting debris. But when we went back to the hotel and we're looking at that in our lab conditions that we set up, there was a piece of a SIM card in there and a mobile phone.

Ray Martin: Those tiny fragments would soon be identified as coming from a Nokia 5110 mobile phone, used to detonate the explosive device outside the US Consulate. That evidence would eventually lead the Operation Alliance team to another suspect - Ali Imron, who was arrested in January 2003.

Scott Lee: Certainly as we moved into 2003 there was continuing investigations that were undertaken both in Jakarta and Bali in terms of the information that we were obtaining. And very much our people were deploying right to the front line in the field in terms of affecting those arrests. So, with Ali Imron, certainly he was one of the individuals that we arrested in Kalimantan.

Ray Martin: Scott Lee, who's now the AFP's Assistant Commissioner for Counter Terrorism and Special Investigations, was part of the Operation Alliance team that interviewed Ali Imron at Kerobokan Prison.

Scott Lee: The Ali Imron arrest was one of those key arrests in terms of how we identified the premises in terms of where the vehicle borne IED that went to the Sari Club and also the suicide vest for Paddy's was constructed. Those were very much key

developments in the investigation. And also, the reconstruction of the device that went into the van for the Sari Club and very much how Ali Imron described to us about how that device was constructed. Which we also had an individual with us who was from the Australian Bomb Data Centre at that time, an AFP officer. And again, there was some key developments from that reconstruction which really, given that the way they described, or he described the way that device had been constructed, very much matched our assessments of the crime scene around how the device detonated and the damage that was caused to the Sari Club and why the fatalities were so high in that location. Certainly from my own perspective, there was a level of anger there in terms of the way he very calmly described what had occurred, the way the device was deployed and driven to the site, et cetera.

Ray Martin: Nathan Green was a young crime scene examiner working out of the AFP's Sydney office. He'd deployed to Bali and was sent to accompany Scott Lee to Kerobokan Prison in order to record an interview with Imron and Amrozi.

Nathan Green: The purpose of the conversation was around the construction of the device. We were very confident based on the evidence, what the device was that was used in Paddy's Bar to cause the initial stampede out into the street. But the van that was the main charge outside the Sari Club, obviously destroyed the van and a significant portion of everything else around it. Based on some testimony and some intelligence and the analysis that was done by forensics and our Indonesian counterparts, we had a pretty good idea. When I say 'we', the weapons and technical intelligence, the Bomb Data Centre experts, had a very good idea of how the device must have been constructed. And that was basically put to the bombers by the investigations team under Scott Lee. We were seeking basically their endorsement, I guess, of whether it was right or wrong. So it was a very technical- focused discussion around how the events occurred, where were the triggers of the device? What were the triggers? Where was the staging point?

We were sitting at a table, three feet away from the alleged Bali bombers and it was a surreal feeling, that these people were the alleged masterminds behind the murder of 202 people, including 88 Australians. And it was just nothing that I'd been prepared for. It sticks with me to this day. There was no evil about them. You'd walk past them in the street. They look like any of the hundreds of friendly Indonesians that we were dealing with every day. They looked like the police that were helping us out. They didn't reek of evil. They didn't have an evil glint in their eyes. They smiled when they were talking to us. They looked like normal people. You would never have thought it. But I remember it challenged me, like I remember sitting there feeling very, very angry that they were allegedly responsible for what had occurred and the reason we were there, but they just looked like normal people.

Ray Martin: 'Closure' is a word that's often bandied about and in some cases, over-used. But it can be said that the dedication, commitment, and extraordinary teamwork of those involved in Operation Alliance in finding and arresting those responsible for this deadly atrocity would bring some form of closure to the survivors and the families who lost loved ones.



AFP Family Liaison Officer, Mike Nicholas, says it was important for the survivors to see justice finally served.

Mike Nicholas: Although we had a few of the perpetrators convicted, there were still quite a few at large. Right up until 2011 was when one of the suspects in the bombing, a guy by the name of Umar Patek, was apprehended in Pakistan, I believe. And he was extradited back to Jakarta. And he was going to face trial in Jakarta. And they had made a decision that they needed some Australian victim impact statements or victims to give evidence at his trial. So three Australian victims went across to Jakarta for the trial and they gave evidence.

Ray Martin: In 2012, Umar Patek was sentenced to 20 years' jail for his role in the Bali bombings.

The spiritual leader of Jemaah Islamiyah, Abu Bakar Bashir was released from prison in Indonesia in 2021 after serving two-thirds of a 15-year sentence for terrorist offences. He's denied any involvement in the Bali bombings.

Ali Imron would be spared the firing squad for repeatedly showing remorse and cooperating with police. He remains behind bars for his role in the attacks.

Ali Imron's brothers - Mukhlas, Amrozi, and Imam Samudra - would be executed on November 9, 2008.

The so-called mastermind behind the attacks, Hambali, was captured in Thailand in August 2003. He remains behind bars at Guantanamo Bay where he's facing a US Military Tribunal for orchestrating the bombings in Bali as well as the J.W Marriott Jakarta bombing in 2003.

In what can only be described as an eerie experience, Ken Rach from the Queensland Police Service - who was in Bali working on victim identification - had his own encounter with Hambali, although at the time, Ken had no idea who he'd come in contact with.

Ken Rach: When we first went up to Bali, they put us in a hotel out near Kuta Beach at the end of Poppies Lane. Two units downstairs, two upstairs, and a shared balcony. We had armed guards around the place everywhere we went. And we went into this hotel, my air conditioning wasn't working, and there wasn't another room available. And it was about 45 degrees in my room, so I'd just sit out on the balcony, even though we were supposed to be locked in the room, I thought, well, I'd rather see something coming if I was going to be attacked. There was a little Indonesian guy in the room next to me that was sitting out on the balcony, I'd try and have a conversation with him, I'm sure he understood me, but I couldn't understand him. The investigators had moved out and we went to the counter and they said, "oh no, they've moved to another hotel. They'll pick you up in the morning and move you to the other hotel where the security's better". And we go, "Okay." So anyway, we moved to that one the next day, we disappeared. After two weeks, we had to go home again. When I came back, I got off the plane, and Graham Ashton, who was the AFP Commander called me aside and said, "I've got something very disturbing to tell you." I go, "Oh no, something's

happened at home, you know, my wife's sick. Oh, what's going on?" and he said, "No, no, nothing like that." He said, "Do you know who that Indonesian guy in the room next to you was at the first hotel?" And I said, "No idea. I couldn't really converse with him." And he said, "That was Hambali." And I said, "What?" So he was one of the organisers, he's now in Guantanamo Bay, but I had absolutely no idea. And that's one thing that really sticks with me, that I was actually sharing a balcony and conversing with one of the guys that actually organised the whole terrorist attack. And that's one thing that's really hard to sort of... what would I have done? And I think of it often, what would I have done if I'd have known at the time? Yeah, so that stands out more so than the actual dealing with all the death and the mayhem in the mortuary.

Ray Martin: October 12, 2022, marks the 20th anniversary of the tragic events that took place in Bali where 202 lives were taken and hundreds more damaged and forever broken. For the AFP, the victims and their families will never be forgotten, neither will the lessons learned from that time - lessons that have shaped the AFP's capabilities in counterterrorism, forensic science, disaster victim identification, and family liaison.

In the next episode, we explore how the AFP is working to help prevent the next phase in the evolution of terrorism.

Scott Lee: There's no doubt that our response to the original Bali bombing and what has occurred since then in terms of our joint investigations and the collaboration between the two services over the past 20 years, has just continued to strengthen that relationship. Not only in terms of our counter-terrorism efforts but across the full spectrum of what we do for policing.

Linzi Wilson-Wilde: I think the Bali bombing really brought AFP forensics into the fore and made them a justifiable laboratory with skills and expertise that is well respected. And I think that's tantamount to their response. I think they earned the reputation and they deserve it.

Reece Kershaw: So we're dealing with multiple national security issues, and that's where the AFP now is front and centre in combating those threats and working with all the agencies. So for us, we have to have that capability. We have to keep investing in our people and in technology and being innovative, you know, and adaptive and agile.

Ray Martin: And we look at the impact the Bali bombings had on some of the men and women of Operation Alliance, as they reflect on their lasting memories from this history-defining period.

Mick Travers: That's a point in time when we, you know, we really, I don't know, turned the corner, but perhaps started walking uphill just that little bit prouder of the organisation that we were then, and we've achieved now.

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