



A proud heritage of federal policing on display

The *Centenary of Federal Policing in Australia* exhibition displays a range of objects and images that place federal policing in the social context of Australia over the past 100 years.

The first federal policing agency – the Commonwealth Police Force – was created within two weeks of the ‘Warwick Incident’ when Prime Minister Billy Hughes was the target of egg-throwing protesters. He was incensed that the attending Queensland police would not charge the protester under Commonwealth law at his direction.

While the protester was charged under Queensland law, Prime Minister Hughes was convinced that this was just the latest of a number of jurisdictional incidents that convince him that there was a state of latent rebellion in Queensland and that its police force was against him.

Short of deploying the army, Hughes felt the best way to protect Commonwealth interests and prevent insurrection was the establishment of a Commonwealth Police Force.

Since that time, federal policing in Australia has adapted to suit the needs of protecting Australia. That evolution saw the Australian Federal Police created in the wake of the 1978 Sydney Hilton bombing, and since 1917 Australia’s federal policing agencies have evolved in line with the communities that they serve and have created a strong heritage of police service of which all Australians can be proud.



1917: The Egg Cartoon

The *Worker Magazine* published this infamous cartoon on 27 December 1917.

The artist has used the egg-throwing at Warwick to represent how the young Australian Federation defied the Prime Minister Hughes and voted NO at a rate of almost two-to-one at the 20 December referendum.

While the Warwick Incident generated numerous parodies of Prime Minister Hughes, more serious underlying political concerns caused him to create the first Commonwealth Police Force.

Courtesy of the National Library



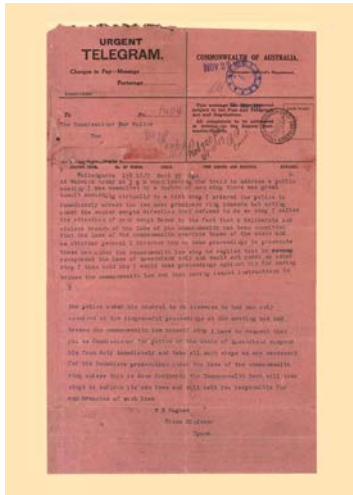
1917: Prime Minister Billy Hughes

Billy Hughes was a dynamic and committed politician.

His physical features were relentlessly exploited by cartoonists of the time, but he was much respected by ex-servicemen for his support.

When he died in 1952 aged 90 and still in politics 450,000 spectators witnessed his funeral procession in Sydney.

AFP Museum Collection

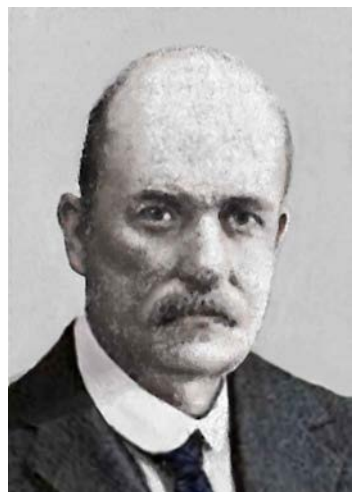


1917: The telegram that went viral

This telegram was sent by Hughes from Wallangarra Railway Station, 100km south of Warwick, just hours after the Warwick Incident and was a pointed attack on the Queensland Police.

Within days newspapers around Australia reproduced its contents. In today's terms it was an attack on the integrity of the Queensland Police that went viral.

Courtesy of Queensland Archives



1917: The First Commissioner

NSW Police Inspector William Anderson was appointed Commissioner of the Commonwealth Police Force.

Tasked by PM Hughes to recruit former service men and retired police he was able to quickly dispatch officers to keep an eye out for subversives. The CPF only operated in Queensland and was wound up in late 1919.

AFP Forensics modified Poul Poulsen image



1918: The Bulletin Magazine cover

On 8 January 1918 the Bulletin Magazine published a cover cartoon depicting Prime Minister Hughes about to release the new Commonwealth Police Force (CPF) onto the adolescent states of the Australian Federation. However, members of the CPF did not wear uniform, and they only saw duty in Queensland.



AFP Museum Collection



1924: Sergeant Cook and the NSW Police

In 1927 when the Commonwealth Police (Federal Capital Territory) was formed, Sergeant Philip Cook transferred from the NSW Police Force with the rank of Sergeant First Class to head up Canberra's first local police service. He retired from the Commonwealth Police (FCT) in December 1936.

AFP Museum Collection



1925: Peace Officers and the Waterfront

The Peace Officer Act of 1925 created a group of federal officers to serve Commonwealth warrants on the unions engaged in a prolonged waterfront strike. Work on the wharves was hard and uncertain, but any disruption to the passenger and cargo service was a threat to the Australian economy.

Image courtesy State Library of Victoria



1927: Canberra's own Police Force

With the relocation of Federal Parliament to Canberra in May 1927, 10 Peace Officers from Sydney formed the basis of the new force responsible for Parliament House security, traffic matters and community law enforcement. The new force was named Commonwealth Police (Federal Capital Territory)

AFP Museum Collection



1942: Female Peace Officers recruited

By 1942, the Peace Officers were combined with the Defence Officer Guard to provide a security service to Australia's munitions factories and essential establishments for the war effort. To release men for military service women were recruited to check passes and inspect women's hand bags for contraband.

Image courtesy of the Australian War Memorial



1950s: The Cold War

With end of the Second World War over, allied governments of the west entered into a secret war of spies and espionage with the communist nations. With Britain conducting nuclear tests in the Australian Outback, Peace Officers provided security. In Canberra, several embassies were guarded by federal officers.

AFP Museum Collection



1960s: German Shepherd Dogs

Gina, a 19 month old German Shepherd dog, was imported by the Commonwealth Police to improve the bloodstock of its Weapons Research Establishment kennels at Salisbury. Gina is being held by her new master First Class Constable Mason Clark and two of the puppies by air hostess Miss Mary Lynch.

AFP Museum Collection



1960: Commonwealth Police (Compol)

The Commonwealth Police was made up of detectives from the Commonwealth Investigation Service and the uniform members from the Peace Officer Guard.

‘Compol’ existed between 1960 and 1979 when its amalgamated with the ACT Police and the Federal Bureau of Narcotics in 1979 to form the AFP.

Image courtesy of Norm Headland



1978: The Hilton Bombing

The 1978 bombing of the Hilton Hotel in Sydney during the Commonwealth Heads of Government Regional Meeting revived the idea of a single federal law enforcement agency.

Two council workers and a NSW Police officer were killed by the blast from a bomb concealed in a kerbside garbage bin.

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1979: Australian Federal Police

The Australian Federal Police began operations on 19 October 1979. It was formed from the Australian Capital Territory Police and the Commonwealth Police.

The Australian Narcotics Bureau was transferred to the AFP in early November 1979. The AFP's first Commissioner, a former London Metropolitan Police Deputy Commissioner was Sir Colin Woods KCVO CBE QPM.

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1984: Australian Protective Service

The AFP's protective service function was taken over by the newly formed Australian Protective Service (APS) in 1984.

The APS returned to the AFP in 2002, in order to enhance Australia's counter terrorism measures in response to the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks in the US.

AFP Museum Collection



1984: Anti-Nuclear Demonstrations

An AFP officer finds himself escorting an anti-nuclear protester from the Naval establishment HMAS Stirling in Perth.

The Australian naval base was hosting US nuclear powered vessels at the time and was the focus of many prolonged protests.

AFP Museum Collection



1984: The Miner's Demonstration

Wollongong miners stormed the doors of Kings Hall, Parliament House in Canberra, during a wild demonstration.

Old Parliament House was a regular location for a range of protests in the 1970s. It remains the site of the Aboriginal Tent Embassy.

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1991 - The AIDEX Demonstration

The Australian International Defence Equipment Exhibition (AIDEX) attracted a large number of demonstrators and required the temporary reassignment of many Canberra-based staff to maintain public order.

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1994: Peacekeeping Missions

Australia's police have deployed to many overseas peacekeeping missions. Starting with Cyprus in 1964, other missions have include Haiti, Mozambique, Sudan, PNG, Afghanistan, East Timor and the Solomon Islands.

Originally undertaken by the Commonwealth police, all overseas police missions have been coordinated by the AFP since 1979.

Image courtesy of Bob Sobey



2000s: Airport Security

The security of Australia's international airports is a direct responsibility of the AFP. Specialist trained officers use a number of modern security techniques to ensure the safety of travelers.

The use of dogs to detect a wide variety of contraband remains an effective policing and security technique.

AFP Museum Collection

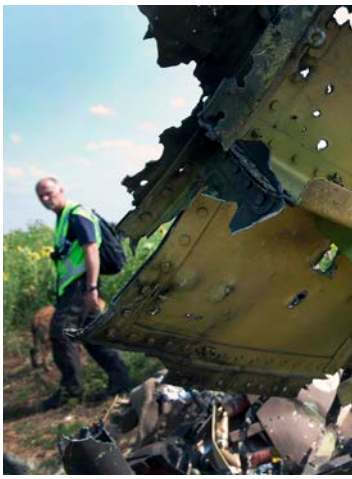


2002: The bombing in Bali

The bombing of Paddy's Bar and the Sari Club on the Indonesian Island of Bali resulted in 202 people being killed, among them 88 Australians.

An invitation by the Indonesian National Police for the AFP to participate in the investigation was a turning point in the AFP's history.

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2014: Malaysian Airlines Flight 17

Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 was a scheduled passenger flight from Amsterdam to Kuala Lumpur that was shot down on 17 July 2014 while flying over eastern Ukraine, killing all 283 passengers and 15 crew on board.

The AFP was in Ukraine days after the event undertaking crime scene investigations.

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2017: AFP a global presence

As the Australian Government's chief source of advice on policing issues, the AFP enforces Commonwealth criminal law with an emphasis on combating organised crime, countering terrorism and protecting Commonwealth interests from criminal activity in Australia and overseas.

AFP Museum Collection



The Centenary of Federal Police in Australia exhibition as it was installed in Warwick Art Gallery in October 2017.