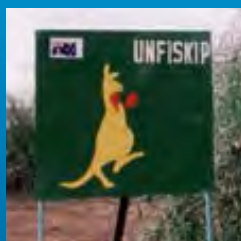




# AFP

AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL POLICE



# Cyprus

Foundations of Peace

1964–2014

Commemorating Australian police peacekeeping in Cyprus





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# Cyprus

Foundations of Peace  
1964–2014

This publication is dedicated to the hundreds of hard-working, compassionate and courageous Australian police who have served in Cyprus since 1964.

To view the on-line version and additional material, please visit:

<http://www.afp.gov.au/cyprus50>



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- Turkish Cypriot administered area
- Area controlled by Cyprus Government Greek Cypriot area
- Buffer Zone
- Sovereign Base Area (U.K.)



# Commissioner's Foreword

When the Cypriot government called for assistance from the international community to quell internal conflict in 1964, the United Nations was quick to respond with the establishment of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP).

UNFICYP was a unique approach to peacekeeping for the United Nations and a landmark event for Australia. For the first time the United Nations deployed a civilian police component as part of a peacekeeping mission to bring an end to hostilities in a troubled nation.

For Australia, it commenced a 50-year commitment of service to Cyprus and a fine tradition for Australian law enforcement. This tradition of international service has continued following the AFP's formation in 1979.

In the years that followed Cyprus, Australian police have served from Timor Leste and the Solomon Islands to Asia, Africa and throughout the world. Indeed, since its formation on 19 October 1979, the AFP has become the international face of Australian law enforcement.

More than 300 members of the AFP's International Deployment Group (IDG) currently serve in overseas missions in the Asia-Pacific region. This includes important contributing roles in the Solomon Islands and Timor Leste.

While the police role in peacekeeping and capacity building operations varies with each mission, each shares the same basic principles: to uphold the rule of law, uphold the rights of individuals and resolve incidents with minimum use of force.

IDG is now recognised internationally as one of the premier areas for preparing law enforcement officers for overseas missions and to uphold these principles. The important lessons and experience gained by Australian police are captured and absorbed into current teaching.

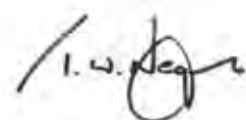
This process of capturing lessons learned was recently enhanced with the release of the IDG's Strategic Framework for Police Development. The document explains the approach used by IDG to deliver police development support to developing and post-conflict nations. This demonstrates the professionalism and sophistication the AFP brings to this important aspect of law enforcement.

As we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Cyprus mission on 24 May, it is appropriate to remember those first police officers that disembarked in Nicosia in 1964.

We also remember the fallen police officers – Sergeant Llewellyn Thomas, Inspector Patrick Hackett and Sergeant Ian Ward who died in service to Cyprus.

I express my best wishes to both current and former members who will be commemorating their service in Cyprus.

This publication, Cyprus: Foundations of Peace 1964–2014, honours the courageous, committed and compassionate Australian police peacekeepers who have served their country since 1964.



Commissioner TW Negus

# A tradition of peacekeeping is born

For the young Australian police officers descending the stairs of the QANTAS aircraft City of Brisbane at Nicosia in Cyprus, on 26 May 1964, it was the start of a personal odyssey.

Together with the two-man advance party, the 40 Australians were about to embark on a 12-month mission that would bring them into contact with a world vastly different from their homes in 1960s Australia. This was a secondment as the first Australian Civilian Police contingent to the United Nations Forces in Cyprus.

In contrast to the generally routine duties back home, the Australians were brought into close contact with the savagery of civil war. First Contingent member Ray Strong recalls some confronting times. "Some of the atrocities were unbelievable and you'd never wish to see things like that. But it happened and we were there and there was nothing we could do about it."

'To put it mildly, it was a culture shock,' says retired AFP member Mick Richards. 'It was like going back a thousand years. We had no idea what we were going into.'

But the young, mostly 20-something men were also beginning a legacy of international service and sacrifice for Australian law enforcement that remains unbroken to this day.

In the years that followed Cyprus, Australian police have served from Timor Leste and Solomon Islands to Asia, Africa and throughout the world.

More than 300 members of the AFP's International Deployment Group (IDG) currently serve in overseas missions in the Asia-Pacific region and further afield.

This number converts into thousands stretching back to the first deployment of Australian police to Cyprus.

Through these myriad deployments Australian law enforcement has established an international reputation of professionalism. With its formation on 19 October 1979, the AFP has become the international face of Australian law enforcement. That reputation has indeed been built on the lessons of those who have gone before.

This process of lessons learned from hard-won international experience was further enhanced in 2013 by the release of the Strategic Framework for Police Development.

For the first time, the IDG has captured the collective wisdom from multiple international deployments into a single framework. The new doctrine will guide police development missions with evidence-based knowledge and consistency.

IDG Coordinator Design, Evaluation and Plans Michael Hawley says international deployments are often in "uncertain, complex and potentially volatile environments".



2007 An AFP member in the north of Cyprus.





"The new doctrine guides mission intent and will assist in making the right decisions needed at the right time." It is often stated that capacity development in a fragile country is dependent on establishing rule of law but "where is the evidence of that?" he says.

"That is why the doctrine is important. It allows us to guide mission and program development based on knowledge and the wisdom of the AFP's collective experience."

This experience of excellence, hard-won by Australian police wherever they serve is a common thread that runs through the history of its law enforcement deployments.

Characteristically, the professionalism of the Australian police officers has been well received by the local populations. Australians also bring an attitude that breaks down barriers particularly in Cyprus.

There is a large Cypriot population in Australia and this did in fact help the Australians engage with the local population.

Australians also brought empathy to Cyprus that extended beyond the core law enforcement role.

Federal Agent Rod Walker received the call at 11am one morning to return a three-year-old girl's body from the southern zone to her parents in the north.

Arriving at the hospital Rod realised that he had actually played with the girl during escort trips to the hospital.

On arriving at the Turkish checkpoint on the buffer zone, about 4000 people were waiting with the parents for the return of the child's body.

Knowing the Greek military would not let the undertaker within the no-man's-land of the buffer zone, Rod decided the only way to maintain the dignity of the occasion was to carry the body to the parents.

So it was that Australian law enforcement commenced its operations in Cyprus and the international arena.

Six-time Cyprus contingent member Geoff Hazel said it is a proud tradition that he is honoured to have taken part in. "To be part of history, it makes me feel pretty damned happy and pretty special."



# Cyprus, the UN and Australia

Ghostly icons are tangible reminders that while Cyprus now operates under a semblance of normality, its history is filled with conflict.

Showrooms full of new cars lie abandoned and covered in dust. Villages with personal treasures are still buried beneath the rubble of war. A holiday resort town lies empty and crumbling away while its sparkling beaches still beckon nearby.

“When the war started, people just ran,” says Charlie Gaughran (25th, 31st, 32nd, 38th, 39th and 47th contingents).

Cyprus has close links to Greece and Turkey. Its population is made up mainly of Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots (77 per cent Greek Cypriots, 18 per cent Turkish Cypriots and 5 per cent other nationalities, including Armenians and Maronites in 1964).

Cyprus came under British administration in 1878 after centuries of rule by the Ottoman Empire. This move was the



2012 Stuart McDonald shares a moment with a Turkish Cypriot elder.



1996 Australian police work alongside international military units under the banner of the United Nations.

result of political manoeuvring with the Ottomans and the natural extension of British imperialism.

The period of British rule was noteworthy for the emergence of what is known as the ‘enosis’ movement. It is a nationalist movement among Greek communities in other nations to integrate within the Greek motherland. This movement saw armed conflict between Cypriot and British forces in the late 1950s.

Resistance to the movement from Turkish Cypriots became evident through the calls for an independent state, separating Greek Cyprus from Turkish Cyprus.

The British relinquished control of Cyprus in 1960 – with the exception of two British military bases at Akrotiri and Dhekalia. The Republic of Cyprus was declared. Cyprus, Greece, Turkey and the United Kingdom entered into a treaty to guarantee the basic provisions of the Constitution of Cyprus. A division of power was then established, giving both Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots a voice under President Archbishop Makarios III — the first elected president of the new Republic of Cyprus.

The simmering tensions quickly turned to open and violent conflict. By late 1963 riots and killings were so extreme that President Makarios called on the United Nations for assistance. British troops were only able to restore a fragile peace. Realising the longer term potential for hostilities the United Nations established the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus.

An excerpt from the mandate of the UN mission in Cyprus was originally defined by Security Council resolution 186 (1964) of 4 March 1964 in the following terms: “In the interest of preserving international peace and security, to use its best efforts to prevent a recurrence of fighting and, as



necessary, to contribute to the maintenance and restoration of law and order and a return to normal conditions.”

Although the mandate was expanded following the 1974 incidents it remains the imperative upon which United Nations peacekeepers operate in Cyprus.

Australia was unable to respond to the call for contributions to the military mission to Cyprus (due to commitments elsewhere). Once the United Nations decided on the untried approach of deploying civilian police to the small traumatised country, Australia responded positively.

In May 1964, 40 Australian civilian police arrived in Nicosia to assist the United Nations mission. They were sourced from state, territory and national police jurisdictions around the country, all sworn in as Commonwealth Police officers.

Australian police working with police and military units from other nations contributed to a de-escalation of conflict over time. As has been typical in Cyprus, the volatility of the situation never completely abated. In 1974 widespread killings occurred after a series of incidents. Turkey despatched thousands of troops in support of those with Turkish roots.

Consequently, the landscape in Cyprus changed, with the country divided into the Turkish north and the Greek south, with the United Nations responsible for a buffer zone in-between. Up to a quarter of the population were compelled to abandon their homes and relocate to regions aligned with their own ethnicity.

The United Nations mandate was then expanded to include “supervising a de facto ceasefire, which came into effect on 16 August 1974, and maintaining a buffer zone between the lines of the Cyprus National Guard and of the Turkish and Turkish Cypriot forces.”

Now entering its 50th year, the United Nations presence in Cyprus continues to be extended. Civilian police and military personnel from many nations have taken part in maintaining peace in the country, working with local authorities and communities.

Normal, everyday life continues on the island, adapting to the division of the country and the underlying tensions which periodically flare into hostility.

“You cross that barbed wire line and step into an environment where people are shooting at you, and when you step back out of it again you are back in normality, going to the bank or for a coffee. It’s a little surreal,” says Australian peacekeeper Peter Baldwin, of the 49th contingent, in summing up the situation.

1985 Good relations with local communities is one of the strengths of the Australian mission.



1964 Newspaper cutting of the advance party for the first Australian contingent departing.



1998 Minefield warnings are commonplace in the buffer zone.

# The Australian way

It was a culture shock – to say the least – for the first Australian police officers deploying to Cyprus.

The comforts of home were left far behind in 1960s Australia. What faced the new peacekeepers were spartan living conditions, uncertain utilities – and a country in the grip of civil war.

In the early years, living conditions were particularly sparse. Hotel accommodation in towns was highly regarded, especially compared to the tents the military units were living in. Living spaces were clean, the food was good. However out in the villages, such as Ayios Theodoros, even basic amenities were missing. There was no electricity and no showers. Tinned Spam was a staple on the menu.

Yet, in classic style, the Australians have adapted and overcome privations in a 50-year legacy of service to the nation. The Australian police peacekeepers with their practicality, compassion, resilience and sense of humour have made their mark on the United Nations Mission to Cyprus.

Andrea Coleman (90th contingent) says that Australians are open to new ways of doing business. “People went there for the opportunity to work in a different country, alongside police from other nations,” Federal Agent Coleman says.

Similarly, Mick Travers (26th and 38th contingents) says nothing is preconceived with Australians. “There’s nothing judged. [We all thought] we’re in their country now so we’ll just take everyone on face



Top: Pre 1984 Australian quarters at The Rocks, NCO's rooms.



Left: 1993 Geoff Hazel enjoys an Australian bush dance.

“We came to realise we’d better have a shower after a little time, so we rigged up this wooden framework and got some hessian and surrounded it. Then we got a bucket and put holes in it and another bucket. One would stand and pour the water and you’d do a quick soap up. You’d get half the bucket and then swap over.

That was quite interesting in the middle of the paddock and we had quite a lot of viewers. They thought we were crazy.”

Mick Richards (1st contingent) while stationed at Ayios Theodoros

A British Colonel had to use the police radio while responding to a major incident which required British troops to be dispatched.

Using radio voice protocol which was strictly based on the British military procedures he listed his requirements, which he wanted to be on-forwarded to his ‘Sea Gull,’ code name for his 2IC. While not stressed he was obviously anxious to have his message passed on.

The colonel, anticipating a response from the Australian radio operator of “Five Zero Alpha (our call sign) ‘Message Understood! Wilco Out!’”, instead heard: “Listen Sport, I don’t want you to panic. I’ll pass the message for you”, which of course our member duly did.

Needless to say, the next day apologies to the Colonel were warranted. While not all members of AUSCIVPOL (Australian Civilian Police) could grasp the concept of correct voice communication, I believe that we were effective in our task.

Roy Farmer (4th, 9th and 10th contingents)



1992 The field is set for the Melbourne Cup.





**2012 A dawn service at Wayne's Keep Military Cemetery is held yearly to commemorate Anzac Day.**

value. If they're open to you we're open to them. That's the Australian way," Mr Travers says.

The Australian practice of having no ranks in the mess also surprised more traditional organisations. According to Mick Travers, some couldn't believe how relaxed the mess was.

"Having officers and other ranks all in a bar drinking together and being on the same level surprised people because they were used to the formal army mess," he says.

Sharing this culture is a normal trait for the Australians. Landmark Australian events have been included in the United Nations calendar in Cyprus for many years and include other nations. "We really shared our culture and our days of significance," Federal Agent Coleman says.

A down-to-earth practicality also distinguishes Australians on mission. Jason Byrnes (62nd contingent) says it

is the Australian ability to know when to be strict and when to be flexible that the UN has relied upon. "It's the negotiating, the liaison, the finding practical solutions to unique problems, which is part and parcel of policing," Superintendent Byrnes says.

"A shepherd takes his entire flock of sheep into the buffer zone without a permit. Technically, he has to be detained and taken outside and that's what the UN soldiers wanted to do. But I had to argue with them and say: 'Can you herd sheep? Because I can't. There's a minefield 200 metres away. Do you really want sheep to be blown up everywhere?' So it's about common-sense, trying to resolve issues," he says.

Mr Travers says the practical nature of Australians has shaped our contribution. "Put that Australian culture, that Australian belief, that Australian way of doing things into a UN mission, and we really do contribute. We punch well above our weight."

# First contingent



**Top:** 1964 First contingent member Ian Hardy steps onto the tarmac at Nicosia.

**Right:** 1964 First contingent members pose with members of the local community.



"The military instructors trained us at Duntroon College in Canberra in counter-terrorism, dismantling of bombs, booby traps, things like that. We thought 'Hello! What are we in for here?'"

Cyprus first contingent member Bob (Doc) Gillespie's memories of preparing for the United Nations Mission to Cyprus in 1964 characterise the beginnings of Australia's overseas police commitments.

The turmoil in Cyprus prompted Australia to deploy its first ever police peacekeepers - 40 experienced police officers chosen from jurisdictions around Australia to embark on an uncertain journey.

As the pioneers of Australian police peacekeeping they had limited preparation and inadequate equipment. Mick Richards, also a member of the first contingent, recalls a somewhat

"We were issued with Commonwealth Police black uniforms, black boots and of course we arrived in Cyprus in May, which was the start of summer.

In Cyprus they have no rain between March and November, none whatsoever, not one drop of rain. Then from November to February snow, sleet - you name it, they get it.

The rest is desert, 40-50 degrees heat. And dust! By the end of the day our black trousers and uniforms were grey. Our boots were grey. But it took three months for us to get our

summer uniform and then another month before we got our desert boots and our summer caps, instead of the hot berets. Sometimes we wore shorts we had bought ourselves. A few even cut off their trousers themselves to make shorts"

Bob (Doc) Gillespie  
(1st contingent)



rudimentary approach to training. "We saw a short film with a few scenes and a few donkeys. It was all very vague, we didn't know what to expect."

Despite the uncertainty the first contingent landed in the Cypriot capital, Nicosia, in May 1964 after a two day flight from Sydney, brimming with enthusiasm, ready for a landmark adventure.

The situation facing them in Cyprus was characterised by the cruelty – and reality – of civil war. The unchecked murder and brutality from all sides was shocking and distressing.

Abduction, murder, rape and harassment were daily occurrences and a common task for the UN police was digging out wells in the scorching heat to recover bodies.

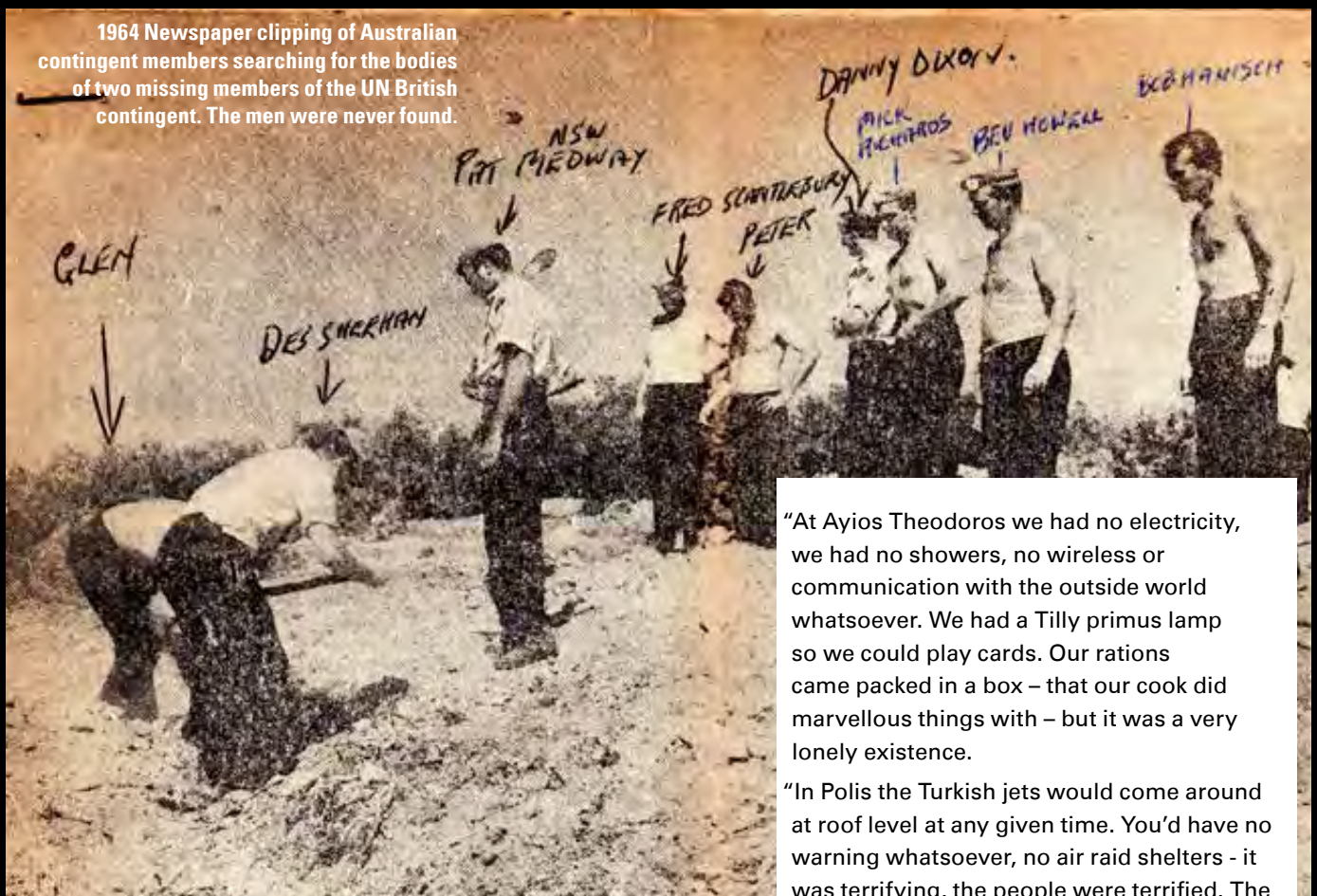
Former NSW police officer Carl Hermanson says that what he experienced in Cyprus was far different to what he was used to. "It was violent, it was brutal, there was savagery. Man's inhumanity to man is unbelievable, what one can do to another, when you see what does happen, the atrocities that do happen."

The duties of the 1st contingent members stationed around the island included carrying out mobile patrols in rural areas and patrolling wharves on foot. They did guard duty to check passes and limit the harassment of truck drivers at checkpoints, and they generally observed that human rights were not being violated.

1964 First contingent member Bob (Doc) Gillespie.



1964 Newspaper clipping of Australian contingent members searching for the bodies of two missing members of the UN British contingent. The men were never found.



"At Ayios Theodoros we had no electricity, we had no showers, no wireless or communication with the outside world whatsoever. We had a Tilly primus lamp so we could play cards. Our rations came packed in a box – that our cook did marvellous things with – but it was a very lonely existence.

"In Polis the Turkish jets would come around at roof level at any given time. You'd have no warning whatsoever, no air raid shelters - it was terrifying, the people were terrified. The planes would strafe. It was petrifying."

Mick Richards (1st contingent)



Importantly, they had no police powers of arrest and could only report on crimes to the best of their abilities.

The task was made more difficult by the lack of information and intelligence networks. "We didn't know who our enemies were, who our friends were. We had to be very, very careful about what we did, what we said, because we didn't know who was who," says Carl Hermanson of the early months in Cyprus.

Early on in the mission it became obvious to the Australians that their arms – Webley and Scott 38 revolvers – would be of little use against the semi-automatic weapons extensively in use on the island. After persistent rumours that Sten-gun carrying youths possessed more shells than all the Australians put together (Toowoomba Chronicle 1/6/1964), a radical decision was made: dispense with them altogether.

Contingent member Ray Strong explains the rationale. "We put our firearms away. They were useless anyway. So we decided we'll go without them and it worked terrifically well. It was well accepted by the locals that we were prepared to walk around unarmed."

This tactic was a landmark event for Australian policing in Cyprus. It led to negotiation and diplomacy being the basis of interaction with local people, rather than the threat of weapons to achieve outcomes. Not taking sides, gaining the trust of local populations and engaging with communities are still hallmarks of Australian Federal Police deployed overseas.

The first contingent to Cyprus has left a legacy that stretches over 50 years of Australian police peacekeeping. Those who sent them seemed to have little knowledge of what they would encounter and what they would need to achieve their goals. But through adaptability, hard work and humour the contingent members forged a successful place in the landscape of Cyprus which continues to this day.

"We were the guinea pigs. We did it hard and I know for a fact that what we did assisted those that followed us," says Ray Strong.



**Top: 1964 John Strickland on duty at Radio Base.**

**Middle: 1964 First contingent members catch the attention of a local child.**

**Bottom: 1964 First contingent members in Cyprus.**



# Life on duty

## The early years

The first waves of UN peacekeepers operated in a country where Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots were intermingled. Although the population was predominantly Greek in the south and Turkish in the north, the two communities had co-existed for generations.

However, the hostilities of the early 1960s led to a different landscape. The conflict continued, even after the horrific murders, violence and military aggression of 1963-64 had begun to abate.

The UN presence undoubtedly improved the situation. Even so, murders and abductions for political purposes still took place. UN police principally worked with the UN military as liaison between communities. This also extended to liaison between the Cypriot Police and the Turkish Cypriot Police Element. Fourth contingent member and 9th-10th contingent Deputy Commander Roy Farmer says that he often worked with the local police to quell tensions.

"There were Turks on one side of the fence and they had rifles. On the other side there were Greeks, similarly armed, and they're all yelling at each other and Cyprus Police Chief Inspector Kyrias was in the middle trying to talk sense to them. I joined Kyrias and talked to them too and eventually they all backed off and went home."

Observation at roadblocks, checking and issuing of passes and vehicle patrols were routine duties that led to long hours for UN police. Graham Taylor (3<sup>rd</sup>, 58<sup>th</sup> and 59<sup>th</sup> contingents) recalls the difficulty of this work.

"The road searches were sometimes horrific. People would come out in their trucks with milk, and water and vegetables and they would make them take everything off. Sometimes the lines would be two to three hundred metres long," Mr Taylor says.

"Sometimes people would perish in the sun, which got up to 40 degrees in the summer. We didn't have any power, we could only observe and report back. They were very long days, sometimes from six in the morning to eight o'clock at night."

Although the situation in Cyprus was volatile, one of the greatest personal dangers to peacekeeping police was road traffic accidents. Tragically during this period two Australian police died on the road. Sergeant Lewellyn Thomas (South Australia Police) was killed in 1969 and Inspector Pat Hackett (New South Wales Police Force) in 1971.



**Top: 1964 Australian police overseeing Cypriot Police identity checks. Middle: 1972 "All the local kids knew the red kangaroo". Roy Farmer. Bottom: 1972 Australian police on a routine visit to Ayios Theodoros.**

# Life on duty

## A country split

### Cyprus shattered again in 1974.

In the decade following the United Nations' (UN) arrival in Cyprus in 1964, the island nation had stabilised. Although still volatile, the daily conflicts across the country had diminished. That is until an unsuccessful coup was held against President Archbishop Makarios.

A power struggle had developed between those Greek Cypriots wanting Enosis, union with Greece, and those wanting to remain an independent country. The 11th contingent stepped into simmering tensions between various factions that finally bubbled over in July 1974.

Hostilities erupted between Greek Cypriots who were divided over the movement to become part of mainland Greece. The Turkish Cypriots were caught in the middle. The Turkish Government made a decisive call to send in its own troops to protect Turkish communities. Eventually, 40,000 members of the Turkish armed forces occupied the northern part of Cyprus.

UN personnel were despatched to alleviate attacks on Turkish communities. Contingent member Ian Hill was sent to Paphos to set up radio communications.

"Firing started all around me," Mr Hill says. "So I grabbed a radio and sat in the corridor and put as much space between me and the windows as possible so that I could keep communication going between the UN and between the Turkish Cypriots. There was mortar fire outside and machine gun fire. This went on until the evening."

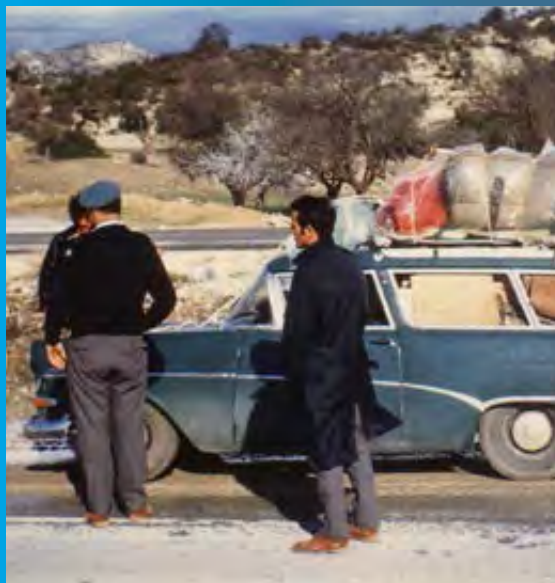
Peacekeepers were in danger of being caught in the crossfire and bombing attacks, while witnessing the sheer terror of civilians as people were executed and injured. Over the next month, about 10,000 people, both Greek and Turkish Cypriots, were killed in the conflict.

Eventually, ceasefire lines were drawn up – one in the north to contain the Turkish army and another in the south for the local military, the Greek Cypriot National Guard. The meandering ribbon of land between the warring factions was declared as the United Nations buffer zone, or as some refer to it, the Green Line.

In the period that followed, tens of thousands of people relocated, Greek Cypriots moving to the south of the country and Turkish Cypriots to the north.

The buffer zone changed the nature of the UN's concerns in Cyprus and it took responsibility for the barrier. It ranged in width from metres in the capital Nicosia to kilometres in the countryside. Soon the area was strewn with landmines which, tragically, have claimed the lives of many in the subsequent decades.

In November 1974, Sergeant Ian Ward (New South Wales Police Force) was killed when the vehicle he was traveling in ran over a landmine in the buffer zone.



**Top: 1974 Thousands of people relocated during the hostilities of 1974. Middle: 1974 Ian Hill examines the road ahead. Bottom: The aftermath of 1974. The abandoned Nicosia airport and a showroom of then-new vehicles, untouched since 1974.**



# Working inside the buffer zone

Rows of black t-shirted protestors from the Greek Cypriot ELAM movement (the National Popular Front), stand in the buffer zone, chanting, brandishing flags. They are well organised and their sheer numbers and neo-Nazi insignia bristle with intimidation.

They have forced their way into this protected area and are insisting on proceeding to the so-called, Republic of Northern Cyprus, where the Turkish Cypriot police and military await with loaded weapons. Before them stand less than a dozen United Nations (UN) peacekeeper police backed by a handful of British military personnel in blue helmets.

The UN police commander steps forward to talk to the leaders of the protest and after a brief discussion the rows of black-shirts file back to where they had come from. The situation is diffused. After some tense negotiation with leaders, the Australian Commander, Superintendent Adrian Norris, has averted a potential disaster.

This is work inside the buffer zone.

As part of its mandate in Cyprus, the United Nations Civilian Police (UNCIVPOL) is responsible for the area known as the buffer zone – the area that divides the Greek south from the Turkish north. Apart from the village of Pyla to the west of the country, the buffer zone is essentially a no-man's-land scattered with minefields.

Running along the length of Cyprus, it is the area between two ceasefire lines, kilometres wide in some places yet in Nicosia spanning perhaps only a street – with armed Greek Cypriot and Turkish guards a few metres apart.

The buffer zone has been off-limits to all unescorted or unauthorised Cypriots since its creation in 1974. One of the major functions of the UN police has been patrolling the area and managing problems that arise.

The UN keeps constant vigilance through observation posts and mobile patrols. Dale Cooper (36th Contingent) likens the buffer zone to a separate country for which the UN are the community police.

Australian police are tasked with averting incidents in the buffer zone or dealing with the aftermath. A large part of their duties have been to conduct patrols, issue and check passes, deal with minor crimes and liaise with local communities, monitor human rights and contribute to peace in the buffer zone.



**Top: 2013 A confrontation with members of the ELAM movement. Middle: 1983 Ross O'Connor advises a local man against parking in the buffer zone. Bottom: 1995 The Ledra Palace Hotel - a landmark building.**

# Life on duty



1990s fighting fires within the buffer zone is a frequent task of United Nations personnel.

The encroachment of the buffer zone is an ongoing occurrence. Farmers pick asparagus or follow their flocks that have strayed into the zone, and hunters shoot small animals along its expanse. For many the buffer zone is an inconvenience or annoyance which should be ignored – with some asking “Why do I need a pass? I have lived here for decades”. But it remains a magnet to protestors who see its existence as the symbol of unwanted division of the country.

Even minor incidents can lead to potentially serious consequences. Time and again, Australian police have encountered events requiring a police, military or even diplomatic response. Paul Whittaker (62nd contingent) recalls incidents of hunters tracking beyond the “safe hunting line” right up to the Turkish cease-fire line, where they were fired at and occasionally shot.

“The local hunters are dressed in ex-National Guard camouflage gear, with machine-gun belts and carrying shotguns. I imagine, and so do the Turkish lads, that they look just like opposing and approaching enemy soldiers,” Federal Agent Whittaker says. Life for soldiers, too, is not easy. “Imagine if you can, being posted, as a Turkish soldier, to a lonely, cold, windswept cliff top on the northern side of the buffer zone. Here they sit and look with binoculars at every movement and they do it for about \$A1 a day.”

The buffer zone was heavily mined during the conflict of 1974, making the area potentially lethal. Many Cypriots have died as a result. In 1979, Australian police officer Jack Thurgar risked his life, entering a minefield to carry out a farmer whose tractor had run over a mine. Fortunately, the pair survived the incident

and Thurgar was awarded the Star of Courage, Australia’s second highest bravery decoration.

## Working relations

Of course, Australian police do not work alone. Since the inception of the United Nations Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP), they have been part of an integrated international effort involving civilian police and military personnel. UN peacekeepers have come from many nations, but those arriving in 1964 came from Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Austria, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

Over the ensuing years the configuration of the countries has changed. Of major impact for Australia was its integration with the Irish Contingent in 1999, leading to changes in administration and work processes. Australians have also worked closely with members of the Cypriot Police and the Turkish Cypriot Police Element.

Many friendships and solid working relations have been forged with UN and local personnel throughout 50 years of participation in UNFICYP. Perhaps the temperaments have differed, methods and procedures been varied, but 26th and 38th contingent member Mick Travers says no matter where they are from it is one solid police family. “The patch may be different but they’re made of the same cloth. ”

## Fires

In the heat of summer fires often break out in the buffer zone and helping to put them out is part of the normal routine of police peacekeepers. In these circumstances there is a common goal, with police, military, civilians, Greek and Turkish, working together.

## Crowds

By its nature, the buffer zone is a target for demonstrators. It is a clearly defined area flanked by ‘Keep Out’ signs, an icon of Cyprus’s troubles. Cypriots protest against the unwieldy and often heart-breaking situation of a divided country, where once friendly communities have been torn apart, economies disjointed and violence tragically marking many families.

The ‘protest season’ sees marches by women against the loss they have suffered. There are also protests by school children and by habitual foreign protestors, who whip up local sentiment. More recently the rise of the ELAN movement – the European Left Alternatives to Neoliberalism – has seen a new element emerge, holding demonstrations against non-Greek people in Cyprus.



### The Women's March Home

Every year 20,000 women, Cypriots and foreigners travel to the edge of Nacaria Square for the Women's March Home.

"After their rally, they all pour [back] onto these buses. One bus is going to break through the buffer zone and head to the Turkish side, [but] at their peril because the Turkish military will actually shoot at them," Mr Walker says. "But you don't know which bus it will be. So I'm sitting down at Camp Goldfish, the Swedish camp, Sector 4, and we hear on the radio 'It's yours'.

"So it's a mad scramble, we get in our trusty Land Rover, the military get in their big four-wheel drives and we're running at a million miles down this track. The bus pulls up, the doors open and these women, 48 to 50 women, are running in all directions heading toward the north, towards the Turkish side through the buffer zone. We can see the Turkish military. They've got their machine guns up and they're ready to go.

"So we've gone out and rugby tackled these women to the ground. These Swedish guys, they had no idea how to do it, so Steve Olinder and I are rugby tackling these women and we corral them all up and we've got them sitting down on the side of the road. Okay, we won the battle, we stopped them getting over to the Turkish side.

"Then the Swedish Commander comes up and he says 'Thank-you very much. Until now this area was an unknown landmine zone. Now we know where the grass is flat that there are no land mines'."

Rod Walker (27th contingent)

1987 Rod Walker stops a woman protestor inside the buffer zone. The story featured in a local magazine.

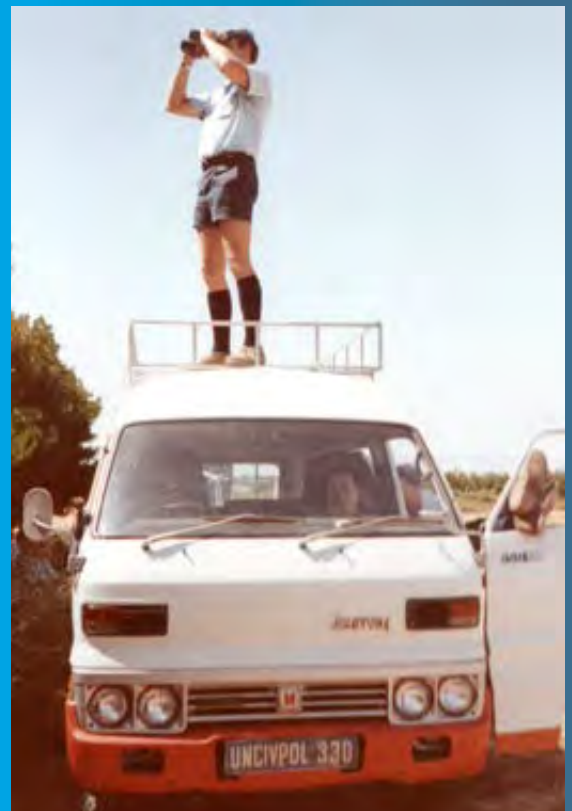


"There was a tiny woman about five feet nothing, if that. She was a Greek Cypriot and couldn't speak English and was showing wedding photos to anybody in a blue beret. She was smiling and happy and I wondered what she was talking about, because nobody knew. The next day she was front page on every paper.

"[Previously] she had knocked on the door of the house that she used to own before the intervention. The Turkish Cypriots who were living there invited her in and gave her lunch and coffee, and they brought out these [wedding] photographs that were on the wall that they had kept. They were the woman's photos from the 1930s.

"It was brilliant. It was amazing to be a part of that."

Geoff Hazel (36th, 37th, 74th, 75th, 76th and 77th contingents)



1980s Australian police peacekeeper observes a rally.

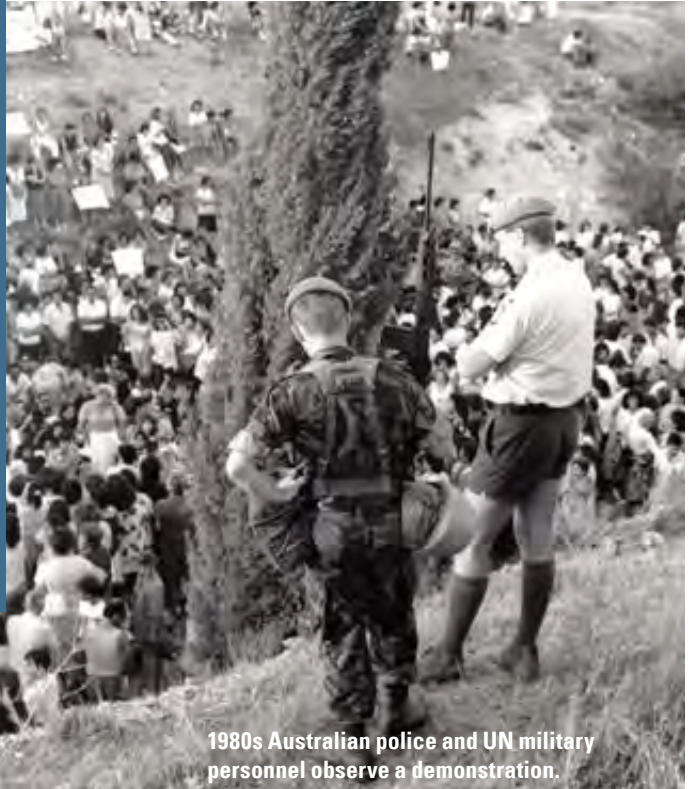
# Life on duty

"We found that our cameras became greater weapons than our pistols. We took photos to gain evidence. I was mainly in the criminal investigations, with the [case of] the shepherds that were abducted, shot and thrown down the wells.

"My reports and the other reports went in to the United Nations headquarters. I might add that we, as United Nations Police, had no powers of arrest but our reports along with photographs went to the United Nations headquarters for attention and liaison with the Cypriot authorities.

"Eventually, two Cypriots were arrested for the murder of a shepherd. That was the very first time anyone had been arrested for a crime against a member of the opposing faction after months of murder and mayhem. That was also the first time we started to see a lull in the abduction and terrorism we had experienced on the island."

Bob (Doc) Gillespie (1st contingent)



1980s Australian police and UN military personnel observe a demonstration.

Although some protests are peaceful and routine, erupting clashes can result in injury and death. Local and UN police are also at risk of injury and their skill in handling large and volatile crowds is often tested.

Crowd control also has a more positive side. The opening of crossing points on the buffer zone in April 2003 was a cause for celebration. For the first time, Cypriots could pass from the Greek side to the Turkish side at designated points. The efficient operation of the border crossings took several days of refinement, particularly at Greek Orthodox Easter, which happened to coincide with Anzac Day.

Geoff Hazel, Commander of the Australian contingent, recalls that events on Anzac Day were nonetheless challenging.

"We were halfway through the breakfast and everyone's phones and radios started going off like you wouldn't believe. Every street leading to the crossing point was blocked for at least 2 kilometres. People were just abandoning their cars and walking. There were thousands of them going through. All of the Aussies went home and changed from their fancy gear into their work gear."

## Investigations

"We had no powers of arrest, no powers of detention, no powers of charging. Those things were all left to the local police and we were advisors to them on what we saw." The situation as First Contingent member Carl Hermanson experienced in 1964 continues to this day.

Although having limited police powers, the Australians were frequently called on to investigate major and minor crime. The results of their efforts were passed on to other organisations to action, the most serious of which were relayed to the United Nations in New York.

Shootings and homicides have been investigated throughout the 50-year period that Australians have been in Cyprus. 1996 saw the greatest unrest and ensuing violence in Cyprus since the 1974 division of the country. Amid riots and inter-communal violence along the buffer zone, two young men were killed in separate incidents.

Australian police officers were called on to investigate the deaths and present their findings to the United Nations. Detective Superintendent Shane Austin (38th and 47th contingents) recalls leading the investigation into the first death. "The Investigation identified that an unidentified member of the Turkish National Army had ambushed and then



murdered the deceased. While the investigation report and supporting evidence was provided to the Cyprus Police and the Turkish North Cypriot Police nothing came of it. Diplomatic drums were banged but the divided jurisdiction with the suspect on one side of the buffer zone and the prosecution on the other side meant nothing came of it. The file was sent to the UN for the day when the opportunity may arise to call the murderer to account.”

Investigations become particularly challenging when they cross several jurisdictions and where they spill outside the buffer zone. When investigating the death of a Greek protestor who had crossed onto the Turkish side during the 1996 unrest, Peter Baldwin (49th contingent) found that local officials preferred to carry out their own enquiries – as it did not take place in the buffer zone.

This is a standard response from the Turkish and Greek sides. The investigation can only show that the shots were not fired in the buffer zone.



2003 Several crossing points in the buffer zone were opened by Turkish Cypriot authorities.



1996 Hostilities in the buffer zone resulted in the death of a Greek Cypriot who crossed onto the Turkish side of the buffer zone.



# Life on duty

## Humanitarian work

Monitoring human rights and liaising with communities has been part of the United Nations' (UN) Cyprus mission from the earliest days. Graham Taylor was part of the 3rd contingent and later Commander of the 58th and 59th contingents.

On his first deployment he remembers visiting a village Mukhtar (the chief village representative) to "ask how things were going", whether people were unhappy about anything in particular. Whether it was excessive searches at roadblocks to unfair treatment in police matters to information on former friends and neighbours, the Mukhtar would report on village concerns.



1998 Robin Wheeler assists with food delivery to a Marionite community in northern Cyprus.

Once Cyprus was divided following the 1974 unrest, the nature of humanitarian work changed. Although the north became almost exclusively populated by Turkish Cypriots and the south by Greek Cypriots, small communities of Greeks chose to remain in the north, cut off and largely isolated.

'The Northwind Patrol' was established by the UN to keep in contact with these communities and to deliver pensions, food and to monitor their situation. The community welcomed the visits and they often became social occasions and a chance to receive news of loved ones.

One 90th contingent member recollects the pleasure of the visits. "We got to know some of the women up in the north because they used to invite us in. It was all about having cups of tea and coffee and eating their cakes. We couldn't say no because they were so excited, it was the highlight of their week. That was almost the only contact they had from the outside world, these people in their seventies and eighties. Each family used to take a turn to host us."

In addition, Australian UN police have also been part of keeping communication open between family members separated by the buffer zone. Messages are relayed and family reunion visits in the Ledra Palace have been supervised by police.

The humanitarian patrols also play an essential part in health services on the island. The delivery of medical supplies to those in the north and the transport of people for medical treatment – predominantly from the north to hospitals in the south – are part of the daily routine for humanitarian officers.

Escorting people on pilgrimages is another important and rewarding function of humanitarian work in Cyprus. The historic and cultural connections between people and their former homes remains strong and Australian police assist in maintaining the links, whether through escorting a religious pilgrimage to Apostolos Andreas Monastery or a once-yearly visit to a former village.

Andrea Coleman (90th contingent) worked in the UN Civil Affairs Team Sector 1 and found it a moving experience.



"We arranged family reunions as well. They could only take place in the Ledra Palace Hotel. A father may not have seen his daughter or family or grandchildren for years and years. They would talk, hug each other and you'd have to say after an hour or two that it was time to go. They never knew if they would see each other again. It was awful.

"There were also occasions where we would try and bring the communities together. We got permission to bring Turkish and Greek Cypriots to the Ledra Palace for a darts match. Some of these people had been friends for years but hadn't seen each other. It was a huge success. Events like that could help break down the barriers."

Charlie Gaughran (25th, 31st, 32nd, 38th, 39th and 47th contingents)



2007 Humanitarian visits to minority communities in the north of the country deliver food and water and check on the well-being of residents.

# Life on duty



1983 Australian civilian police transport patients in need of medical treatment across the buffer zone.

"The Varosha village sits abandoned and inaccessible within the buffer zone. Every year the UN facilitates a pilgrimage so the former residents can access their village and attend a religious service in the nearby church of Agios Giorgios.

"Sector 1 military, civil affairs and UN police helped to facilitate the pilgrimage. We were supposed to prevent people from entering their houses, now dilapidated with collapsed roofs and fallen walls. Overcome with emotion many locals rushed inside their family homes where cherished possessions had been lost. It was a moving experience for all of us."



2007 Reece Strachan delivers supplies to a Maronite community in the north of Cyprus.

Bob Sobey recalls returning the body of a nine-day-old baby to his mother after he died in a hospital in the south.

"Still thinking of what to say to the mother, I arrived at the Turkish checkpoint to see the mother standing there with her relatives. I somehow knew that word had already reached her in relation to her son's death. I took the tiny bundle off the back seat and walked towards the mother.

"As I got near, a woman approached me and asked if she could take the baby. I handed the baby over to her and turned to the mother. I put my arms around her and we held each other for a number of minutes sharing a tear. We said a few words to each other, though through the language barrier we did not understand the words, through our eyes we understood the meaning."

Bob Sobey (57th contingent)



# Life on mission

## Ceremonies and awards

For more than five decades, Australian members of United Nations Civilian Police have performed acts of bravery, diplomacy, compassion and diligence in Cyprus. For some, thanks may come in the form of a handshake from a farmer or a smile from an old woman. But there is also more formal recognition.

The United Nations (UN) established a medal for service in Cyprus in the early days of its United Nations Force in Cyprus mission. The United Nations Peacekeeping Medal (UNPM) is an award that is still bestowed on all who serve for at least six months on the island.

Acknowledging the need for Australian recognition, the Australian Government introduced the Police Overseas Service Medal in 1991. It was awarded retrospectively to all who have been deployed to Cyprus and continues to be awarded to this day.

The ceremony for presenting these medals is a significant and poignant part of the tour that acknowledges peacekeeping as an opportunity to represent Australia as well as the AFP. Justine Adamek (80th contingent) recalls being awarded the UNPM. "We were all dressed in our ceremonial uniforms, buttons and shoes glinting in the light."

Some ceremonies have become so entrenched in the Australian psyche that they are central to understanding the nation's culture, none more so than Anzac Day. A dawn ceremony is held yearly on 25 April at Waynes Keep, the British military cemetery, situated in the buffer zone dividing Cyprus. Rick Smeltink (17th, 96th/97th contingents) has felt the importance of the occasion. "There are Australians in the cemetery. It's an opportunity to represent your country."

The mark of respect for Australia's war dead is also honoured by Turkish troops who stand to attention on their side of the buffer zone during the ceremony – with Anzac Day marking an age-old bond between the two countries.

In 1988, the UN itself was awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace for its presence in Cyprus. Australian Kathy Burdett (28th and 29th



**1965 Ian Hardy receives a UN medal for his service in Cyprus.**



**2003 Police Remembrance Day is marked with a ceremony at the cairn erected in memory of Sergeant Ian Ward.**

# Life on mission

contingents) was moved to be part of the Honour Guard. "I was thinking of all the people who have served with the UN and those who lost their lives, it was a big thing to carry with me."

In 1979, Jack Thurgar (16th contingent) was awarded the Star of Courage, the second highest decoration for bravery awarded by the Australian Government. He recalls the events after a farmer inadvertently drove into an unmarked minefield during a UN exercise to reclaim farming land in the buffer zone.

"This particular anti-tank mine is designed to disable tanks, so a little tractor couldn't stand much chance. He was blown high in the air and when he landed with a crunch nearly all his clothes had been blown off. He was black and charred and had diesel fuel on him."

In all likelihood, the farmer had been killed and UN personnel were evaluating how best to move the body. "Suddenly, the rag doll figure moved and I could see these red eyes. I made eye contact and saw the pleading in those eyes, I knew something had to be done."

Jack Thurgar walked into the minefield. "I could see some of the mines because of erosion, some of the soil had been washed aside. I was trying to steer my way to the large anti-tank mines, because if I could see them then I probably wasn't going to step on them. I was probably 80 to 85 kilograms at that time and I knew it took about 100 kilos to set these ones off."

"I could see that he had one leg almost completely blown off and he needed urgent medical treatment. There would be no time for sappers to clear a lane or try to see if we could do a winch operation."

"I made the hard decision to take him back out, so I put him in a fireman's carry and tried to find my way out. But I couldn't quite see on the hard ground, so it was by luck and by God that I was able to make my way gingerly out. When the helicopter landed I went with him to keep pressure on the wounds to stop him from dying."

However, Jack Thurgar's assistance to the farmer didn't stop there. "The doctors were insisting that they would not treat UN personnel in the civilian hospital. So I went in and I was a bit angry at the time. I found a doctor and just picked him up in a bear hug and carried him out and said 'He's yours!' He could see straight away that it was a Greek Cypriot civilian so he immediately started yelling and everything happened then."

The farmer, Chrysos Seas, survived the accident and later spearheaded a UN campaign that cleared the area of thousands of mines. Jack Thurgar travelled to Cyprus to meet with him in 1990 just before the farmer died of heart complications, possibly related to the incident in the minefield.

"Suddenly, the rag doll figure moved and I could see these red eyes. I made eye contact and saw the pleading in those eyes..."



1979 Jack Thurgar was awarded the Star of Courage for his rescue of a Cypriot farmer from a minefield.



# After hours

Melita Zeilonko (31st, 32nd, 38th and 39th contingents) clearly recalls preparations in Cyprus for the 1989 Melbourne Cup.

“There was an ex-ABC employee working for the AFP,” she said. “He would contact a local radio station and ask them to record it live. At exactly three o’clock we would listen to the race ... everyone who knew the result was sworn to secrecy.”

Without doubt, Australian contingents in Cyprus celebrate with enthusiasm and imagination. From ‘The Cup’, Australia Day, ANZAC Day and Christmas Day to barbeques and sporting events, the need for bonding among Australian deployees has seen a burgeoning of events and special occasions.

But underlying the amusement and celebration of these events is the crucial interaction between contingent members and the opportunities to forge relationships with other UN personnel on ‘Australian’ soil.

1980-81 The Australian contingent cricket team.



1976 Jim Cuneen and Richard Allatson open the batting Australia v England. England won!  
*Photo: Courtesy of the Estate of Richard Allatson*



1985 The Australia Day Regatta—a tradition in Cyprus.



1992 The Melbourne Cup run in Cyprus.



1983 The first ‘Aussie Fun Run’ field.

# Life on mission

1980 Reminders of home adorn an Australian bar.



1996 Peter Polkinghorne and Tracy Wilson prepare for the Australia Day Regatta.



1995 Accommodation in Cyprus is usually comfortable but simple.



1972 A touch of Australia whilst serving overseas.



# The Kangaroo Club

The Australian Civilian Police (AUSTCIVPOL) mess, with its ‘flattening’ of ranks, meant that all police members could drink and socialise together in Cyprus.

Naturally, bars have always played an important part in the Australian experience, none more so than the legendary Kangaroo Club – which soon became a popular place to meet for all peacekeepers.

Located for 15 years at headquarters near the disused Nicosia airport, the Club hosted innumerable functions.

UN police from around the world have been introduced to Australian culture and customs through the Club and the Australian mission, which is the most enduring of all UN police in Cyprus.

So it was a gut-wrenching day, says 59th contingent member Erica Hanisch, when the Club closed down.

“Everyone talked about the Kangaroo Club. It closed down with no warning, no ceremony, no chance for a last drink,” she said.

“A lot of effort went into building and decking it out, making rosters, and stocking it. It left a big hole in the culture of the Australian contingent when it closed.”

**1980s and 1990s The legendary Kangaroo Club. It was cornerstone of the Australian contingent’s social life until its closure in 1999.**





# Life and community



2014 Gerry Morris greets a local shepherd.  
*Photo courtesy of United Nations.*





“You’d go into the office with a Greek or a Turk and the first thing you’d have was this strong, black coffee,” says Roy Farmer (4<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> contingents). “In the Greek sector they’d also offer you a Coke, in the Turkish sector it would be Pepsi. I got on well with them and we would chat away.”

Engaging with the community is an effective way for peacekeepers to perform their role and gain the confidence of the people they are working with. Twenty-seventh Contingent member Rod Walker says that it is obvious when you are starting to make an impact. “Word soon spreads that you’re not a bad bloke and you can do things, and they will actually talk to you.”

Peacekeeping contact in Cyprus comes in many forms. Whether it’s carrying out humanitarian duties or having a coffee, employing the village tailor or sharing a joke with the cook. Or even attending a wedding, dinner or other family function - on one memorable occasion, a circumcision.

Thirty-fourth contingent member Brett Simpson echoes the feelings of many who have served in Cyprus, where special bonds have been forged between peacekeeping police and the people they help to protect.

“I fell in love with Cyprus so much that I was more nervous for my continuance interview than I was for the original one. It was the best time in my life. The Cypriots are a wonderful people,” he said.

The natural friendliness and respect for local culture of many Australians has allowed them to know many Cypriots on a first-name basis. ‘Paris’, who cooked and cleaned and was a mother figure to many. ‘Stavros’, who owned the mattress factory in a building shared with the UN. ‘Poppy’, who worked for Nicosia Airlines. And shop keeper ‘Met Met’.

Local police Chief Inspector Kyrias and several of the local Mukhtars also befriended Australian police.

Mal Holst (28<sup>th</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup>, 38<sup>th</sup> and 39<sup>th</sup> contingents), says good relations have also been encouraged by Australian involvement in local fundraising activities. “We were looked on with favourable eyes,” he said.

Migration has also cemented a pre-existing relationship with both Greek and Turkish Cypriots, with many in contact with friends and relatives who have settled in Australia. This has opened doorways unavailable to those of other nations, with the kangaroo and the Akubra the symbols of friendship and trust.

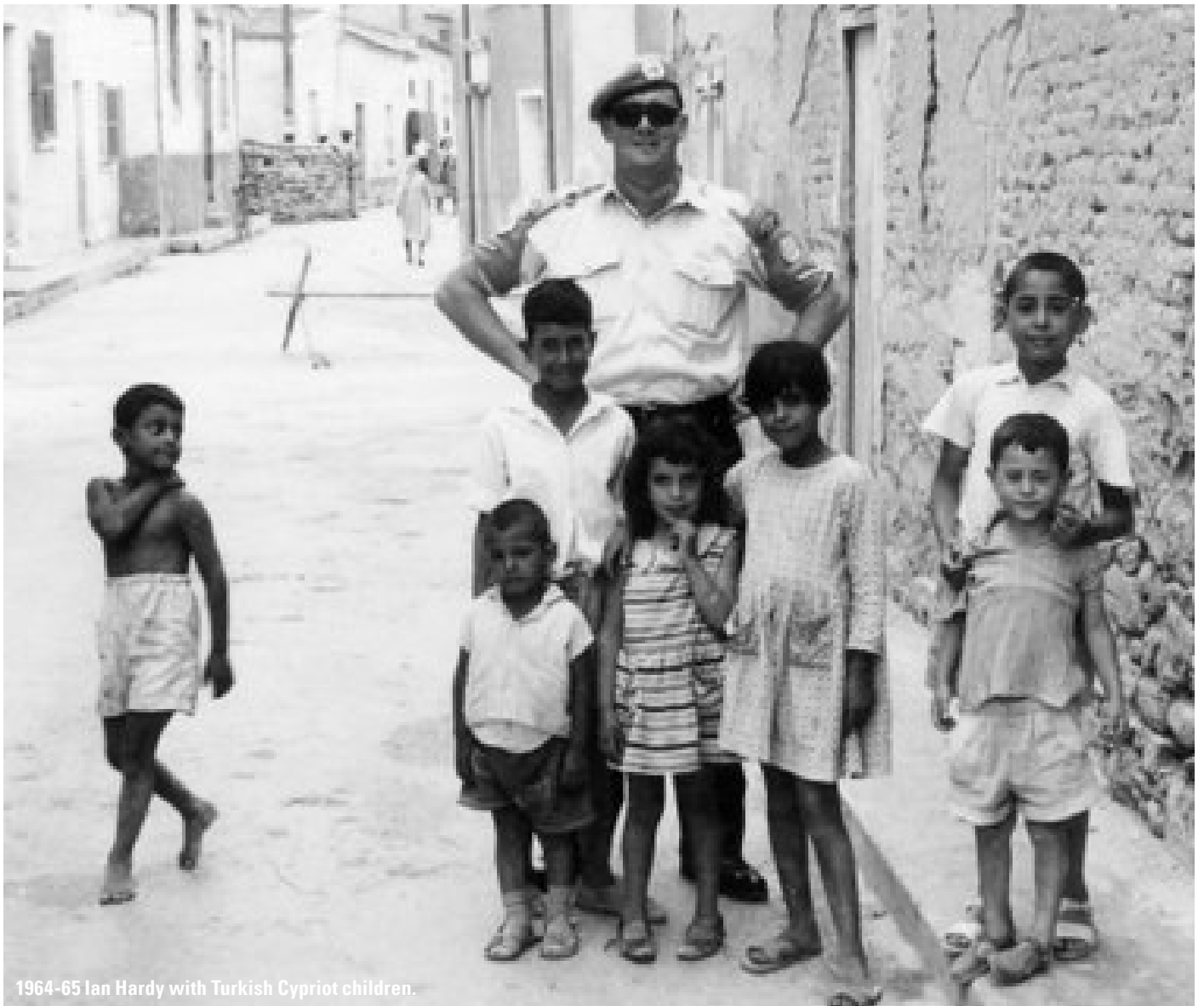
# Life and community

“There was a tailor everyone went to on the south side. His fabric came from someone in the north. They had been partners before the buffer zone was created. There was no way for them to be in contact, no phone or travel between the two sides, so when you went to be measured up the tailor would write a note to the cloth supplier which you would deliver when you went there and then bring the cloth back with you.”

Erica Hanisch (59th contingent)



1980s Liaison with local farmers is an on-going task for Australian police peacekeepers.

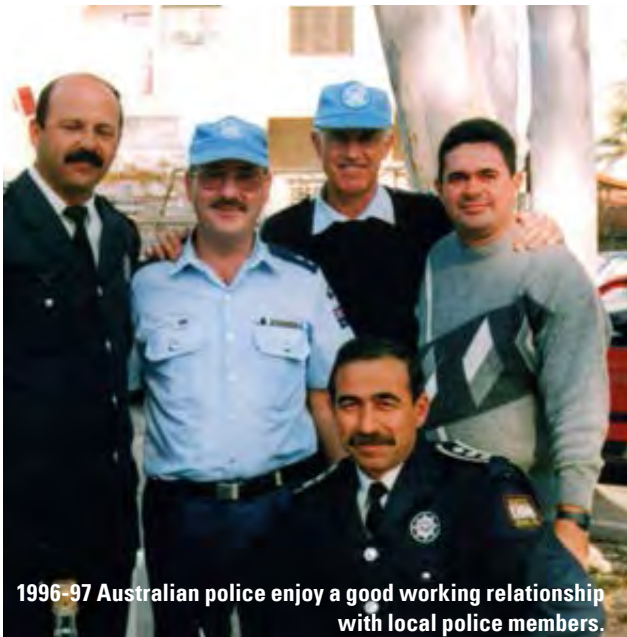


1964-65 Ian Hardy with Turkish Cypriot children.





1985 Paul Roland and Clifford Cooke share a joke with an elderly villager.



1996-97 Australian police enjoy a good working relationship with local police members.



1993 AFP members enjoy lunch with members of the Cypriot community.

# Cyprus Roll of Honour

Three names hold a significant and tragic place in the history of Australian police peacekeeping in Cyprus: Sergeant Llewelyn Thomas, Inspector Patrick Hackett and Sergeant Ian Ward.

All three lost their lives in the pursuit of peace for a stricken country. Their sacrifice as Australian police officers is honoured and mourned by those who knew them and the community as a whole.

The 'Dag Hammarskjöld Medal' is a posthumous award given by the United Nations to military personnel, police, or civilians who lose their lives while serving in a United Nations peacekeeping operation. The medal is named after Dag Hammarskjöld, the second Secretary-General of the United Nations, who died in a plane crash in 1961.

The medal is egg-shaped and made of clear lead-free glass, engraved with the name and date of death of the recipient, the United Nations logo, and the inscription "The Dag Hammarskjöld Medal. In the Service of Peace," in English and French.

It has been awarded to three Australian police peacekeepers who served in Cyprus – RIP:

## Sergeant Llewelyn John Thomas

United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) (South Australia Police) - died on Saturday, 26 July 1969.

## Inspector Patrick Mark Hackett

UNFICYP (New South Wales Police Force) - died on Sunday, 29 August 1971.

## Sergeant Ian Donald Ward

UNFICYP (New South Wales Police Force) - died on Tuesday, 12 November 1974.





## Sergeant Llewelyn John Thomas

11 April 1943 – 26 July 1969

Llewelyn Thomas commenced his career with the South Australia Police as a police cadet in 1961 and was appointed a probationary constable in 1963. He attained the rank of first class constable in 1968.

Llewelyn was selected to be part of the Sixth Contingent of the United Nations mission to Cyprus in 1969 and was sworn in as a special member of the Commonwealth Police at the rank of sergeant.

Sergeant Thomas was tragically involved in a motor car accident at Mari, near Limassol, and died of his injuries. He was posthumously awarded the Police Overseas Service Medal with Cyprus clasp, the United Nations Medal and the Dag Hammarskjöld Medal.



## Inspector Patrick Mark Hackett

27 May 1940 – 29 August 1971

Patrick Hackett was a member of the NSW Police Force. He commenced as a Trainee in 1963 and was confirmed as a first class constable in 1968.

Patrick was sworn in as a Special Commonwealth Police Officer at the rank of inspector when he was selected to be part of Australia's Eighth Contingent to Cyprus. The contingent, part of the United Nations Peacekeeping Mission to Cyprus, was deployed to Cyprus in 1971.

Inspector Hackett was tragically killed in a car accident near Stroumbi when his vehicle left the road on a sharp corner. He was posthumously awarded the Police Overseas Service Medal with Cyprus clasp, the United Nations Service Medal and the Dag Hammarskjöld Medal.



## Sergeant Ian Donald Ward

12 April 1949 – 12 November 1974

Ian Ward commenced his career with the NSW Police Force in 1966 and was promoted to first class constable.

Ian was selected to be part of the 11th Australian Contingent of the United Nations Peacekeeping Mission to Cyprus in 1974. He was sworn in as a Commonwealth Police officer at the rank of sergeant.

Sergeant Ian Ward had only been in Cyprus for five days and was carrying out humanitarian duties when the vehicle he was travelling in drove over a landmine in an unmarked minefield near Lefka. Tragically, he was killed in the incident.

Ian was posthumously awarded the Police Overseas Service Medal with Cyprus clasp, the United Nations Service Medal and the Dag Hammarskjöld Medal. Ian was also awarded a number of medals for his service in the Australian Army during the Vietnam conflict.



# 1960

Cyprus gains independence from Britain, after a four-year war. Of the one million inhabitants on the island, approximately 80 per cent are Greek, 20 per cent Turkish.

Inter-communal violence involving the Greek and Turkish Cypriots remains an ongoing problem on the island.

Archbishop Makarios III is elected as the first President of the new republic.

# 1964

The Cyprus government makes an official appeal to the United Nations requesting assistance with managing the ongoing conflict.

The United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) is established. It consists of 200 police from Australia, Austria, Denmark, New Zealand and Sweden.

Led by the Commonwealth Police and its special members, the First Australian Police peacekeepers arrive in the capital Nicosia.

Two British UNFICYP members, Major Edward Macey and his driver Private Leonard Platt, go missing. Australians are involved in the search, but the men are never found.



**Departure of the First Contingent advance party.**



**Australians assist with the search for Major Macey and Private Platt.**

Widespread riots and killings follow a violent clash between a group of Turkish Cypriots and the Greek Cypriot police.

The Green Line – a line of ceasefire – is established by British personnel.

# 1963



**First Contingent members arrive in Cyprus.**

Sergeant Lew Thomas is killed in a car accident. He is the first Australian to die in peacekeeping operations.



**Sergeant Llewellyn Thomas**

# 1969



# 1971

Inspector Pat Hackett is killed in a car accident.



**Inspector Patrick Hackett.**

# 1975

The north of Cyprus declares itself an independent state, with the name of Turkish Federated State of Cyprus. It is not recognised by the international community.

As a response to the changed nature of its mission, the Australian contingent size is reduced from 35 to 16 members.



**Commonwealth Police in Cyprus.**

# 1976

Commonwealth Police become the sole supplier of members for deployment to Cyprus.

# 1977

The Commonwealth Police's annual report reports that "morale, health and discipline are excellent" on the island.

A pro-enosis coup against President Archbishop Makarios III leads to a Turkish backed counter-attack. Up to 10,000 people are killed.

Turkish troops are sent to Cyprus in support of the Turkish Cypriot population.

Two ceasefire lines are established — between them the area known as the buffer zone. UNFICYP's role changes to an interposition force between the Greek Cypriot and the Turkish Cypriot regions. Tens of thousands of the local population relocate, along ethnic lines, in response to the partition of the island.

Sergeant Ian Ward is killed when the Land Rover he is travelling in passes over a landmine which explodes. He is the third and last Australian to die in Cyprus.



**Civilian police examine UN sectors in the newly established buffer zone.**



**Sergeant Ian Ward.**

# 1974

# 1983

The Turkish authorities sign the Unilateral Declaration of Independence to establish the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. This is not recognised by the international community.

Australian peacekeepers move to a new headquarters building within the United Nations Protected Area, located at the abandoned Nicosia airport.

All contingent deployments are shortened to six month terms, instead of the previous 12.



**The Kangaroo Club was a well-known establishment in the UNPA.**

# 1984

Australians move out of The Rocks and into the repainted and reconditioned Kirribilli House.

Permission is granted to turn a disused British building adjacent to the headquarters into a briefing, entertainment and recreation area for the Australians. This is later dubbed the 'Kangaroo Club'.

AFP Commissioner Ronald Grey visits the Australian peacekeepers. Major General Grey was Commissioner from 1983 to 1988.



**Commissioner Grey inspects members of the Turkish Cypriot Police Element.**



**Kirribilli House.**

# 1980

The 17th Contingent is the first contingent to arrive as AFP members.



**Commonwealth Police members being sworn in as AFP members.**

Jack Thurgar rescues a Greek Cypriot farmer seriously injured in a minefield explosion. He is awarded the Star of Courage by the Australian Government for his actions.

The Australian Federal Police is formed and the 16th Contingent is sworn in as AFP members while in Cyprus.



**Jack Thurgar meeting Chrysos Seas.**

# 1979



# 1985

Sergeant Ian Ward's memorial is unveiled.



**The memorial for Sergeant Ian Ward.**

# 1988

Kathy Burdett is the first AFP female to serve in an overseas mission. She is a member of the 28th and 29th AUSTCIVPOL contingents to Cyprus.

The United Nations is awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. Australia is represented among the uniformed officers who accompanied UN Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar when he receives the award on behalf of the UN's Peacekeeping Forces in 1988.



**Kathy Burdett.**

# 1989

Melita Zielonko is the first AFP female officer sent to Cyprus on operational duties. Having led the campaign to enable women to serve overseas she is the third woman to be deployed to Cyprus.



**Melita Zielonko.**



**Prime Minister Bob Hawke visited the 26th Contingent in Cyprus.**

Australian Prime Minister Bob Hawke visits the island.

Deployed members build a summer recreation area, which is also used by the contingents from other nations.

The Police Overseas Service Medal is awarded for the first time after being approved by Queen Elizabeth II in June 1991. Awarded retrospectively to 1964, 750 recipients receive the award that year.

# 1990

The deployment of Australian contingents becomes staggered, with half of the members replaced every three months.

# 1992

# 1986

Sergeants Vincent Mylett and Greg Slater are awarded UN awards and Commissioner's commendations for the rescue of an elderly woman during an armed confrontation.

# 1987

# Early 1990s

# 1994

A Land Rover in use in Cyprus from 1980 to 1987 arrives at the AFP Museum.



The UN Land Rover now at the AFP Museum.

# 1997

AUSTCIVPOL receives access to email and the internet.

AFP Commissioner Mick Palmer visits the Australian peacekeepers. Mr Palmer was Commissioner from 1994 to 2001.

The Dags Hammarskjold Medal is established by the United Nations to honour those who lost their lives whilst on a UN peacekeeping mission.



The family of Inspector Patrick Hackett receives the Dags Hammarskjold Medal in 2010.

A riot follows the deaths of two Greek Cypriots. One individual dies and many more are injured, including two British UN peacekeepers.

The 50th Contingent arrives in Cyprus.



Conflict in 1996.

# 1996

The Kangaroo Club, previously located adjacent to the abandoned Nicosia airport, closes.

The Australian and Irish contingents become integrated, serving together in UNFICYP and UNCIVPOL HQ, as well as seven operation centres.

A new facility, CIVPOL House, is opened for Australian and Irish police and military in the United Nations Protected Area. The air-conditioned facility features, lounge areas, bars, a library and an entertainment area.

# 1999 2000





# 2003

Several crossing points are opened by the Turkish Cypriot authorities for visits in both directions. The UN approves an increase in police numbers, partly sourced from The Netherlands and India, to ensure safe and orderly passage.

Negotiations between the Turkish and the Greek sides to reunify the country ahead of an EU consideration fail.



**The 105th contingent with the Australian High Commissioner to Cyprus.**

# 2014

During the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of UNFICYP the AFP appoints its first female UNFICYP UNCIVPOL Commander, Superintendent Gerry Morris, a member of the 105th Contingent.



**Several crossing points in the buffer zone were opened by the Turkish Cypriot authorities.**

Cyprus is admitted to the European Union, but the northern Turkish Government is not recognised after a recent referendum fails to unify the country.



**The IDG Training Complex.**

The AFP's International Deployment Group (IDG) is established.

# 2004

The 100th Contingent departs for Cyprus.

# 2011

The first UN medal parade held at Pyla – the Greek-Turkish inter-communal village – is a success.

# 2005





2014 Nicosia from the air.



1993 Simon Hicks at UN observation post.



1993 The buffer zone.





1999 Graham Taylor meets local shepherd.



2012 ANZAC day.



1974 The funeral of Sergeant Ian Ward.

2004 UN observation post in the buffer zone.



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