



Neighbourhood watch®

A Neighbourhood Watch Association of the A.C.T. has been formed in Canberra to consolidate the successful introduction of the scheme in the area.

Since the A.C.T. program began in 1984, it has been extended over a wide area of Canberra.

Formation of the Association will enable the Watch Scheme to progress as a cohesive organisation.

The program provides for the division of the A.C.T. into eight districts, each containing 20 Neighbourhood Watch areas, and headed by district committees. These committees meet quarterly to discuss progress and responsibilities.

The chairman of each District Committee is a member of the newly-formed Association, which will meet every six months, or sooner if required.

The arrangement ensures that all residents in Watch areas have a two-way flow of information and ideas with all other Watch areas in Canberra and elsewhere.

To date, the AFP has had some of its most successful participative work in community policing with the introduction of the Watch.

Experience has shown that not only burglary but other property crime, and in some instances crimes against the person, can be reduced dramatically by the proper implementation of the Watch. The scheme has been operating overseas for up to two decades, and many examples of its effectiveness have been reported.

Since its inception in Canberra, there has been an equally dramatic decrease in burglary, shown in the following statistics for areas that have been in operation for 12 months:

Watch areas	Implementation date	Before	After	Percentage change
Kambah 1	25 Sept 84	16	7	-56.25
Campbell 72	07 Jan 85	26	12	-53.85
Kambah 2	09 Jan 85	21	5	-76.19
O'Connor 78	11 Jan 85	14	17	+21.43
Holt 111	11 Feb 85	35	28	-20.00
Giralang 96	12 Feb 85	35	8	-77.14
Peace 31	13 Feb 85	20	17	-15.00
Reid 73	22 Apr 85	45	25	-44.44
Lyons 50	23 Apr 85	14	9	-35.71
Macarthur 20	24 Apr 85	4	4	00.00
Average for all Watch Areas		230	132	-57.39

one voice

• By AIR MARSHAL DAVID EVANS, Chairman Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordination Committee.

WITH the recent forming of the Neighbourhood Watch Association of the ACT, the organisation structure for Canberra is now complete. Of course, within that structure many new areas will be formed over the coming months.

The purpose of the tiered structure — the Association, District Committees, Area Committees and, at grass-roots level, Zones — is to learn from each other, to assist each other and finally, for the Association, to speak for the whole organisation with one voice on matters of interest or concern to the Neighbourhood Community.

Statistics, which I know can be presented to lead or mislead, are consistent as far as Neighbourhood Watch is concerned. In areas where Neighbourhood Watch operates incidents of petty crime, theft, break and enter, and vandalism are reduced quite dramatically.

More importantly, it brings neighbours together by the injection of a common interest. People make the effort of knowing what is going on in their zone and area.

They become interested in their neighbours and show a genuine willingness to lend a helping hand and to co-operate in community projects.

Finally, it puts into place a day-to-day interface with the police and makes us all aware that we (the community) and police share a common aim; to make our homes and our neighbourhood safe and secure; where we can walk the streets without fear.

Neighbourhood Watch has proved to be an effective deterrent to petty crime. However, it can only succeed if all citizens exercise their responsibilities.

And really, it is not very onerous to show some concern for your neighbours. It will be reciprocated.



• Courtesy "Police Life".