

THE JOINT SERVICES STAFF COLLEGE

by Detective Superintendent Bill Stoll

THE Joint Services Staff College (JSSC) offers an opportunity for members of the Australian Federal Police to benefit from exposure to the management and operations of one of the largest Departments of the Commonwealth and experience at first hand the best the fighting services offer by way of officer development.

The College is located about 8 km from Canberra City on the Cotter Road, Weston. Early in the development of Canberra the complex was intended for use as a commercial venture, but when this did not eventuate the Forestry School of the former Department of the Interior moved in. In 1969 the premises were selected for use as an interim Joint Services Wing, the forerunner of JSSC. Excellent facilities are available in the College including an extensive reference library and well equipped syndicate rooms. The buildings are set amongst established grounds overlooking a small lake, with a modest golf course, tennis and volleyball courts and with direct access to open recreation areas. Course members are offered an active social program officially, with a number of social activities being organised by members during the six months of the course.

The aim of JSSC is to provide selected military and civilian officers of Lieutenant Colonel rank or equivalent with an advanced education in preparation for senior appointments in the Department of Defence and the Services. Military officers attending will have usually completed single-service staff college courses and for the majority JSSC offers the final formal development opportunity of their careers.

Overseas students from selected nations are invited to attend each course. Course 33-86 from 13 January 1986 to 27 June 1986 included service officers from New Zealand, U.K., U.S.A., India, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and Canada. Course membership totalled 45 with 27 Australian Service Officers, four civilian officers from within the Department of Defence, one AFP and 13 overseas members.

The course is divided into four studies. The first is designed to provide knowledge of Government, the Department of Defence, Defence Force and strategic theory. The second study concentrates on enhancing the course members' understanding and knowledge of the major factors influencing Australia's national security. Study three covers Australian defence policy and the fourth examines the employment of Australian forces in joint and combined operations.

Members are asked to consider major

problems confronting Australia, including economic, political and defence issues, often at Government or Departmental level, relating to national and international trends and opinions. Emphasis is placed on the need for individual research and the development of appropriate solutions. JSSC aims to enhance the ability of course members to analyse and appraise complicated proposals and issues. Much of the research and discussion takes place in syndicates and each student is required to prepare and deliver presentations to the course members and visitors within syndicate and full course. Individual papers are also prepared for assessment by the course Directing Staff.

Graduates of the Course are required to:

- comprehend Australia's national objectives and the major factors which influence the formulation of defence and foreign policies;
- comprehend Australia's defence policy and the process of government decision in defence matters;
- apply those aspects of government policy which bear upon the defence and the security of Australia;
- comprehend the Defence administrative and operational organisation and activities of the three arms of the Australian Defence Force;
- evaluate alternative methods of command and control, organisations; and
- comprehend modern management concepts.

An assessment is provided to the member's Command at the completion of the Course.

So, having outlined the aims and objectives of JSSC what use is it to the AFP and how is it relevant to the career development of individual officers of the rank of Superintendent?

Clearly, as recorded in the expectations placed upon members, much of the command and control, management, policy development and issues relating to Australia are directly relevant to law enforcement in addition to the armed services. The majority of guest lecturers are selected with a view to providing an alternative point of view to that which might be expected of course members. The presentations on Australia's economic and strategic outlook and those on the various world regions are outstanding. All presentations are on a confidential basis which ensures a degree of frankness otherwise impossible, especially in the case of visiting politicians and public identities.

Course content is presented in such a way that even if the material is not directly relevant to law enforcement or administration it is interesting from a personal development and awareness

viewpoint. The Course includes a 'service visit' which provides the opportunity for service members, and of course civilians, to see first hand the expertise and equipment available to Australia's armed forces. An 'industrial' visit enables study of selected Australian industries offering technology for defence purposes. The management styles of various companies in electronics, manufacturing, finance and banking and energy are also examined, particularly as to the impact that Government policy has in these areas.

The overseas study tour for Course 33-86 was to Malaysia and Thailand. It is aimed towards providing course members with an appreciation of the international environment in which Australia's national policies are formulated, and complements the study of regional areas undertaken at JSSC.

The Services provide transport, usually in C-130 Hercules aircraft. This, coupled with the opportunity on this particular course to travel with the Royal Malaysian Air Force in the East Malaysian States of Sarawak and Sabah by service helicopter presented some interesting experiences. On a rotation basis the overseas study tours include China, India, Pakistan and the South West Pacific Areas in addition to those already mentioned.

AFP members selected to undertake JSSC should approach the course with basically two aims. The first is to get the most out of the course from a professional and personal point of view using all the resources provided for this aim to be achieved. The second is that the course presents a unique opportunity to bring the role and functions of the AFP to the attention of senior members of the Australian Defence Force. Early in the course members from each of the services and the overseas students are required to deliver a presentation on their own service. The AFP member, as part of the civilian presentation, has the opportunity to provide an overview of this Force. It has become traditional that a display of some of our equipment and specialist skills is also arranged. The presentation is well received and provides course members with an awareness of the role and capacity of the AFP. Not surprisingly, some had little or a distorted view of what this Force is about.

During the course the AFP member is made welcome and every assistance is available both from the JSSC Directing Staff and fellow course members when specialist matters are being considered. The course is conducted in a most professional manner and is a thoroughly enjoyable and beneficial six months, somewhat removed from the law enforcement environment.