

# FRAUD AND GENERAL CRIME



**L**INKS between illegal drugs and fraud are of special interest to the recently appointed Commander, Fraud and General Crime Division, Chief Superintendent Jim Allen.

"Behind every major drug operation is some sort of large financial base and a lot of those bases are the product of fraud money from companies of seeming respectability," he said.

"The AFP on a national level is, in effect, a large fraud squad coupled with a large drug squad. I would hope to put more emphasis on that nexus between drugs and fraud, funds permitting."

Mr Allen, as Division Commander, is responsible for the National Criminal Investigation Branch, the National Fraud and General Crime Co-Ordination Branch and the Crime Policy Branch.

"The history of the NCIB dates from 1982-83 co-incidental with Operation 'Diamond' — an investigation into a multi-million dollar tax-avoidance scheme," he said.

"It was a headquarters injection into a major national and international investigation. Previously there had been no real co-ordination of fraud work at the national level, as it had been handled independently around the country. The NCIB got going under Assistant Commissioner Col Winchester, then a Chief Superintendent heading the Criminal Investigation Division. He saw the potential during the 'Diamond' investigation for such a unit and the NCIB came into being as a result.

"From the time the NCIB was formed, the view of management has been, correctly, that it should not be an unnecessarily large unit but that it should be staffed as much as possible by appropriately qualified detectives and others with an identified potential for the type of work involved."

During his 25-year career Mr Allen has spent nine years investigating fraud, two years in special intelligence duties, a year as Commander of the Intelligence Division and two years in Washington as senior liaison officer. He has been Commander, Fraud and General Crime Division since January, 1988.

"I had been given the reference to Operation 'Diamond' in 1981-82 while in the Criminal Investigation Branch as a

Chief Inspector, and Detective Station Sergeant Phillips took the case to a successful prosecution during my time in Washington," he said.

The Crime Policy Branch assesses legislative initiatives by Government, as well as providing an AFP perspective in advance of other initiatives, and assists in managing the AFP's involvement in the Joint Federal/State Task Forces.

Mr Allen said the National Fraud and General Crime Co-ordination Branch was formed in 1983/84. "The move was part of the AFP's policy to co-ordinate its national effort," he said. "Operational procedures have been standardised. The location of an operation is determined by where the bulk of the work will be done rather than officers from any one area going in to handle it. The job of the Branch is to have an over-view of all operations and make sure they are staying within budget."

Mr Allen has some personal experience

on the work of the Branch covering "leaks" from ministerial offices and government departments. "While most 'leak' inquiries are never satisfactorily resolved, the impact of the investigation always leads to more stringent security measures being employed!" he said.

And the future of his area?

"Obviously the challenge facing us with fraud and general crime is expanding," he said. "Our involvement will become greater as the public sector becomes more aware of the ramifications of the Review of Systems for Dealing with Fraud on the Commonwealth. We are looking forward to it," he said. (This 'battle plan' to combat fraud, issued by the Government last year, was featured in the November issue of "Platypus".)

Mr Allen said that while it meant more work, the Division was pleased with increased public sector awareness of fraud and general crime and the need to do something about it.



**"The Lilliputians look upon fraud as a greater crime than theft and therefore seldom fail to punish it with death; for they allege that care and vigilance, with common understanding, may preserve a man's goods from theft, but honesty has no defence against superior cunning." — JONATHAN SWIFT in 'Gulliver's Travels'.**