

# Badge History



The 'Texas Rangers' version



The black and silver version



The final decision

**One of the most creative and, as it turned out, contentious issues confronting the AFP Planning Headquarters in the run up to the AFP commencing operations was the badge and shoulder flash design.**

With the adoption of a two-component police force — general service and police protective service — it was initially decided that the components would be distinguished by having separate cap badges and shoulder flashes. In the meantime, arrangements were made for an initial shoulder flash to be produced, based on a design which included the Australian Coat of Arms and which, it was understood, was agreed to by all parties.

When the then Minister for administrative services saw the flash, he objected to the use of the wattle and other embellishments and was reported as saying it looked like something that would be issued to the 'Texas Rangers'.

Apart from being worn by Sir Colin Woods and Deputy Commissioner Reg Kennedy, this design was withdrawn from general issue and new designs were produced, using only the actual Coat of Arms — kangaroo, emu, shield, federation star and bar.

The General Police Component was to carry the words "Australian Federal Po-

lice" and the Protective Service Component the words "Police Protective Service".

When shown the new 'flashes', senior officers of the two police associations, acting as a Joint Executive Committee, sent a telegram to Sir Colin stating:

**"The Joint Executive Committee of Associations representing members of the Australian Federal Police Force strongly reject the proposed issue of the black and silver shoulder flashes. We demand the original shoulder badges, previously approved by all parties, be issued forthwith.**

**A. Bilbie,**  
Federal Police Association  
**P.N. Curtin,**  
Commonwealth Police Officers' Association."

In informing the Minister of this resolution, the then Commissioner noted: "... this is one of the first things that the Associations have been able to agree on!"

Colour was once again introduced to the kangaroo, emu, shield and star. The flash is the one still issued today.

The badge design was far less controversial. Some designs were produced by

officers of the former ACT and Commonwealth Police Forces and, unsolicited, by a number of private individuals.

The design chosen, while similar to a number of suggestions, originated from the Police Planning Headquarters.

Contracting lead-times meant that to have a supply of badges available for Day One, an interim production using a moulding process was commissioned from the company which today produces the current plaques.

The interim arrangement produced a general policing and a police protective service badge. By the time the contract was issued for the production of the permanent issue one, it had been decided that both components would have the same badge.

So by the time the permanent badges and shoulder flashes were produced, it had been decided that all members from whatever component would wear the same cap badge and shoulder flash. The only differentiation was the cap. General police had the white topped cap with checkered hatband, whereas Protective Service members used the black cap with no hatband. This remained until the transfer of the protective service component in 1984.