



Deputy Commissioner J.C. Johnson, QPM.



Deputy Commissioner R. Farmer, QPM.

Meeting a Challenge

By Deputy Commissioner R. Farmer

Ten years on and where are we at? From the functions and the responsibilities I have held in this time we have, in my view, come a long way, albeit that further development will occur.

At a recent meeting of members to discuss the current proposals for change, one member seemed critical that "the goalposts were always being shifted". My response to that is if we don't initiate action to move "the goalposts", then someone will do it for us. During my 39 years of police service, thank goodness my Commissioners, and at times the police associations, did initiate changes. Otherwise I might still be earning 900 pounds a year, wearing a button-up collar tunic, travelling about on official duty in public transport and missing out on the technological benefits of change.

I expect that by the year 2000, this organisation, its functions, priorities and the terms and conditions of its members, will be markedly different to those we experience now. I might add my expectation is that such changes will be of benefit to both the AFP and all its members.

It is not the responsibility of the Executive, any executive, to maintain the status quo. It is our intention to implement measures that will design an AFP well suited for the turn of the century.

These first ten years have taken us some distance down this track. I think it is fair to say some have had difficulty in adapting and, indeed, may never totally adapt, due to old loyalties and preferences. I must say, however, that negative convictions of this sort are vastly overshadowed by professionalism in the carrying out of duties and responsibilities.

Our growth and sophistication in systems and techniques locally, national and internationally is a credit to every police and staff member in the AFP. With others, I feel privileged to have been present at the conception, birth and formative years of this organisation of ours. I hope you feel the same. ■

Benefits of Change

By Deputy Commissioner J.C. Johnson

In 1979, the Fraser Government made an historic decision in respect to Australian policing by introducing the Australian Federal Police Bill into the Australian Parliament.

That decision by the government followed some 36 years of deliberations by successive governments into ways of rationalising police/law enforcement services in the Commonwealth arena.

My initial research into the background of federal policing uncovered an ACT Police File dated 1942 where a NSW Police Inspector reported to the Commonwealth Government on ways of rationalising Commonwealth law enforcement.

The officer recommended to the Attorney-General at the time the amalgamation of the Commonwealth Investigation Service and the ACT police force into one organisation to serve the Commonwealth Government's law enforcement requirements Australia-wide.

Coincidentally, that officer reported on similar lines to the report provided on the same subject to the Australian Government by Sir Robert Mark, a former Commissioner of the London Metropolitan Police, on 6 April 1978.

The decision of the Australian Parliament late in 1979 to pass the AFP Bill into law was a momentous and far-reaching decision in the best interests of all Australians and Australian law enforcement. The past 10 years has seen our organisation progress from a relatively stumbling and inauspicious beginning to a Police Force ranking with the best law

enforcement organisations in this country and around the world. AFP successes in priority areas of law enforcement have been outstanding as have our initiatives in personnel management, training and employment strategies.

In respect to some of the employment and personnel management initiatives we have taken, other police forces and organisations around Australia look upon the AFP as leaders in the field. The changes to our organisation flowing from the Career Structure Review have not only made our organisation more efficient and less bureaucratic but have also had the side effect of allowing the Australian Federal Police Association to argue successfully for salary increases for all of our police personnel. The introduction of employment by contract and the concept of a unified workforce where all of our employees are employed under the AFP Act will result in a further enhancement of efficiency and effectiveness and contribute to making the AFP a better organisation in which to work.

The last decade has brought home to me that we live in a changing world, a world that will continue to change at an even more rapid rate over the next 10 years. I am confident that the progress experienced since our commencement in 1979 will continue and future AFP administrations will have the foresight and flexibility to meet the challenges of the ever-changing world of crime. ■