

# Innovative administration by staff

**W**ITH the introduction of the Unified Workforce and the Office Structures Review, increasingly staff members are occupying administrative positions allowing police members to return to the work for which they were trained.

Southern Region has about 50 staff members located predominantly within the Administration Branch.

The Branch has four sections: Personnel, Finance, Resource Management and Support Services.

Finance and Personnel provide traditional services, while Resource Management and Support Services are breaking new ground.

Resource Management has helped transfer budgetary controls into the hands of operational management and in a fresh approach, Support Services has subdivided its services into Registry, Archives, Accommodation and the Logistic Services Unit (LSU).

LSU has assumed responsibility for transport management, asset control, stores, firearms, police equipment accountability and most Regional purchasing.

The Archives Unit was introduced to meet a growing need and in conjunction with a National Headquarters Registry Review, Registry and Archives have emerged as vital to operational effectiveness.

New to the Region last year, Ms Linda Ricciardi has fitted well into the Accommodation Unit as the role of 'officer responsible'.

Working tirelessly to meet operational demands together with the other three units of Support Services, she is often seen as the lynch pin between the various needs of the police user groups.

If the level of commitment and the way in which the Administration Branch staff has met the challenges of police operational needs is any guide, there is little doubt there are greater achievements ahead.

## The Pay Office

The small but efficient staff member team in the Personnel Branch Pay Office get it right, with very few exceptions.

Rest assured that problems in the area of money, particularly a person's pay, produce the longest, loudest complaints. Happily these are few.

The Pay Office handles approximately 25,000 variations to pay packets each year - that's about 900-1000 each fortnight.

The OIC, Mr Steve Hepworth, said there is usually only one legitimate complaint per fortnightly pay.

## Equal opportunity

Two staff members who have a special place within the Region are keyboard operators Jenny Hyland and Steve Pattison.

Both are sight impaired and epitomise the AFP's equal opportunity employment policy. With a combined experience of six years, Jenny and Steve are well regarded for their competence and productivity.

## Southern sets the pace in OH&S

**S**OUTHERN Region has taken a recognised lead in the area of Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S).

Employee Relations Officer (ERO) Detective Sergeant Col Arnold, Detective Constable Tony Smith and the Region's Welfare Officer Detective Sergeant Monica Fletcher take the most active roles in the implementation of the OH&S Act.

ERO, Detective Sergeant Col Arnold is attached to the Region's Co-ordination Branch and plays an important role in the provision of support services.

He has had 27 years of Federal Policing experience and has occupied the ERO position since its creation. He believes EROs must be proactive.

With the support he has received from the various OH&S representatives, Col is happy to report that the number of reported accidents/incidents has decreased from 67 in 1990 to 15 (to date) in 1992.

"Another area of vital concern to

me is the rehabilitation of sick and injured members," Col said.

To ensure the best possible service to members, Col establishes and maintains a close association between himself, Comcare and the various rehabilitation providers.

Early intervention in the case of injuries, plus early identification of potential problems has resulted in Southern Region maintaining a 100 per cent return to work.

In addition the number of claims, average time off and average costs per claim have also decreased resulting in the Region's compensation costs decreasing accordingly.

The ERO's other areas of responsibility are advising management and members on industrial issues (which includes advising members on matters pertaining to grievances and attempting to find a solution on an informal basis without recourse to more formal approaches).

Col said, "I also have a role to play in Equal Employment Op-

portunity (EEO) and Sexual Discrimination issues.

"The majority of problems can usually be resolved without recourse to formal procedures."

He added that with the assistance of management, members and the AFPA, the Region's current improvement in the areas of OH&S and rehabilitation of injured workers can be maintained.

Col believes further improvements are achievable if the organisation continues to look upon its employees as 'whole people' and not just on the period while they are at work.

"It must be remembered that the longer a person is absent from work on sick leave, the less chance there is of getting him or her back to work.

"It is not the time to become complacent with our successes.

"We must strive for continued improvement that will, in the long run, be of benefit to both the AFP and members alike," he concluded.