



Protection – on the front line

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Recent years have seen some remarkable changes and growth in the range and extent of the work of the Australian Federal Police (AFP). Our profile with the Australian Government and the public has also markedly increased. Much of this can be attributed to the challenges and opportunities presented by the changes to Australia's national security environment 11 September 2001. One area of the AFP that has been transformed since 2002 is protection, and this article provides an overview of a change of historic proportions.

Until 2002, AFP protection services primarily consisted of the personal protection of high officer holders such as the Governor-General, Prime Minister and in the diplomatic community, witness protection and a protective security intelligence capacity. Separately, the Australian Protective Service (APS) delivered protection services for critical Australian installations such as major airports and key Department of Defence

and Department of Foreign Affairs sites plus a range of ancillary security services such as alarm monitoring and personnel vetting for external clients on a commercial basis.

In response to the September 11 2001 terrorist events in the USA, the Government took the opportunity to review Australia's counter-terrorism arrangements across the whole of government. One outcome was a significant expansion of the AFP's capacity for counter terrorism investigative services. Another was to integrate the Australian Protective Service into the AFP.

The intervening period has been one of sustained growth and increased scale of operations. The Protection Portfolio now comprises about 1500 employees, in over 27 locations around Australia and several overseas locations in



South East Asia and the Pacific. It is at the forefront of the AFP's contribution to Australia's national security protection measures.

A notable area of growth has been in the field of aviation security. The AFP delivers a counter terrorism first response capability at major airports, the Air Security Officer program, explosive detection canine program, regional rapid deployment teams to regional airports and a protective security liaison officer network situated in major airports.

The outputs of the former APS are now combined with the Protective Security outputs of the AFP within the protection portfolio. Today the combined budget represents roughly a quarter of the entire AFP. The Protection portfolio is now a principal functional stream of the AFP headed up by the National Manager Protection, Tony Negus.

On 1 July 2004, major legislative changes enabled the integration of the APS within the AFP. All protective service staff were transferred into the AFP and the time of the APS as a separate Public Service entity passed. The integration process continues, but has matured to the point that various implementation plans across all functional areas are actioned by the relevant business areas.

Project Merida

From January 2002 until July 2004, the integration was led by a specific project team established by the Commissioner called Project Merida. The Project Merida reporting lines were kept at a high level and the team facilitated the involvement of existing business areas to analyse the complex and sizeable tasks ahead, to develop solutions and then implement them. The project team was also careful that integration activities did not unduly distract the organisation from its primary function – the daily delivery of protection services.

A key objective by engaging existing business teams was to facilitate ownership by those areas of the integration as it would affect them. For example, the APS and AFP both delivered training. The Project Merida team brought together personnel from the National Training Centre of the APS and Learning and Development faculties of the AFP. They facilitated the development of a model for delivering training outcomes on an integrated basis consistent with the overall objective of integration.

A comprehensive communication strategy was custom made for all key stakeholders in the integration process, including all employees, clients of the APS, the wider AFP, Commonwealth partners of the AFP and APS and the Australian Government. Delivering relevant information in a timely way to the people, who needed it was an integral feature of the communication strategy. This contributed to dealing effectively with the change management issues for employees triggered by organisational change of this scale, and securing the support and confidence of key senior decision makers (both within and external to the AFP) that was vital to its success on 1 July 2004.



A staged approach

The integration process began when the Minister for Justice and Customs announced on 14 February 2002 that the Australian Protective Service would operate as a division of the AFP.

The Commissioner determined that the integration of the APS into the AFP should take a measured and considered approach that allowed change to occur with minimal disruption to day to day operations. To achieve this Project Merida was established with a four-stage plan.

Stage I – Project Planning and Establishment (concluded 1 July 2002)

- legislation program;
- financial management;
- communications plan; and
- people strategies.

Stage II – Analysis and Review (concluded March 2003)

- change management;
- people strategies;
- corporate support;
- professional standards; and
- operational delivery.

Stage III – Implementation (April 2003 and ongoing)

- legislation program;
- communications and marketing;
- workplace relations;
- professional standards;
- operations delivery;
- people strategies (human resources, health & safety services);
- Learning and Development;
- corporate support (finance/commercial);
- Information Technology/Information Management; and
- governance.

Stage IV – Evaluation

Stage I and II are now complete. Stage III recorded major achievements on 1 July 2004.

Two Acts Two Agencies – One Act One Agency

Stage I concluded on 1 July 2002 with the passage of amendments to the *Australian Protective Service Act 1987* establishing the APS as a public service Statutory Agency and the Commissioner as its Agency Head (replacing the Secretary of the Attorney-General's Department). This first step had the desired effect of enabling the delivery of improved operational outcomes, although under a dual administration for the Commissioner characterised as "Two Acts, Two Agencies" (i.e. APS Act 1987 and the APS, AFP Act 1979 and the AFP, with the Commissioner in charge of both). The direction of Integration has been to streamline this by moving to a "One Act One Agency" environment.

The Commissioner takes charge of the APS

The outcome of Stage I on 1 July 2002 was that the APS became an operating division of the AFP legally, financially and through high level organisational restructuring. The Commissioner formally became the Agency Head of the APS per the Public Service Act 1999. Changes to the senior management structure of the APS were made to align command, responsibility and decision making with current AFP practice. Federal Agent Audrey Fagan was appointed to a new role of Executive Director Protection (EDP), combining operational responsibility for the APS and AFP Protective Security. The ongoing integration work under Project Merida continued under the EDP with a Coordinator Protection Integration appointed to lead its day to day operations. The Director of the APS, Mr Martin Studdert became the General Manager Guarding and Security. Federal Agent Peter Wood was appointed to the vacant Manager Operations position and part of the APS management team.

To assist the analysis and planning for the integration, two significant examinations were initiated in 2002. A high-level due





diligence process was commissioned to assist the AFP to examine the APS business, to identify significant risks and ensure they could be treated, managed and transitioned. A Staff Opinion and Analysis Review survey (SOAR) was conducted in June 2002 with APS personnel. This gave the AFP a baseline for future comparisons (SOAR reviews are conducted periodically in the AFP) and assisted the Project Merida team to devise appropriate change management plans to best assist staff to acclimatise to the inevitable changes in their workplace.

During the 1990s the AFP had embarked on a major organisational change program featuring the national teams model (a move away from the traditional linear hierarchical paradigm) and strongly asserted the independence of the office of constable where operational decision making was at issue. In some ways this was in contrast to the way the APS had evolved during that time.

The outcome of the analysis was the Stage II Report containing a series of recommendations to the Commissioner. All

recommendations were accepted and became the strategic directions for the integration. This has ensured greater synergy between the AFP and APS protective framework for security functions and strengthened the AFP's ability to fulfil its protective security and counter-terrorism responsibilities. It delivered a high level of common understanding about the direction of the integration, which was disarmingly and simply summed up as "One Act One Agency," a catchphrase now well known in the protective service employee population.

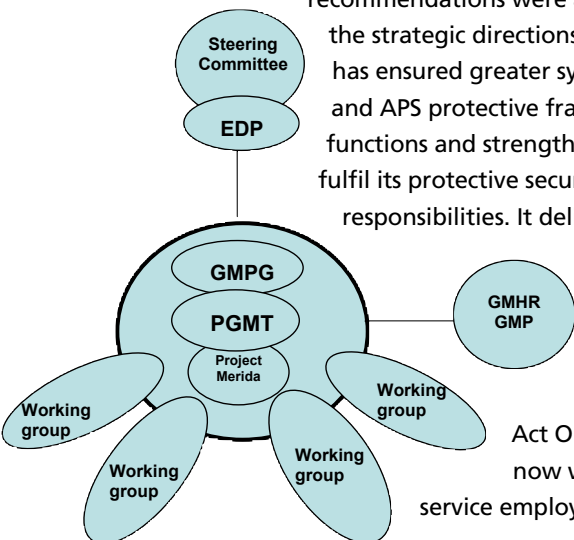


Diagram one

The overall Project Merida organisation is outlined in diagram one. Running parallel to the integration process, the AFP introduced the Functional Model alignment. Diagram one, reflects the terminology of the time.

Key:

Steering Committee: Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, Chief Operating Officer, Executive Director Protection.

EDP: Executive Director Protection

GMPG: General Manager Protection & Guarding

GMHR: General Manager Human Resources

GMP: General Manager Policy

PGMT: The Protection and Guarding Management Team

Working Group: Various numbers of functional working groups, some forming sub groups for specific tasks, all coordinated under Project Merida.

The Project Steering Committee responsibilities were:

- setting broad overall project direction;
- resolving matters of policy affecting more than one portfolio and/or crossing project boundaries;

- reviewing progress;
- endorsing major project deliverables;
- addressing any areas of serious concern;
- acting as the ultimate arbiter for the resolution of all major project issues and policies; and
- representing to ministerial and other senior officials and other key stakeholders.

Working groups

The membership of working groups included senior functional managers and experienced officers from both the AFP and APS. The working groups drew upon expertise from external agencies where appropriate (for example, officers from the Attorney-General's Department were key participants in the Legislation Working Group). Each of the working groups developed an implementation plan for their functional area and a Protection and Guarding Management Team Manager was assigned as a sponsor to each working group. They carried overall responsibility for the development of the implementation plans, and day to day operations were facilitated by the Project Merida team.

Major Working Groups

- Legislation;
- Operational delivery;
- Workplace Relations;
- Professional Standards;
- Human Resources and Health & Safety Services;
- Learning and Development;
- Finance/Commercial;
- Corporate Support (Information Technology / Information Management);
- Governance; and
- Communication/Marketing.

One Act – One Agency

On 1 July 2004 legislative changes to the *Australian Federal Police Act 1979* became law. This was a momentous time for the APS, the AFP and the integration process generally. Simultaneously:

- the APS transferred fully under the AFP Act,
- APS staff transferred to the AFP,
- Australian Protective Service closed;
- Determinations were issued by the Commissioner;
- employee terms and conditions were preserved;
- implementation plans for functional areas were delivered to the relevant National Manager;
- protective service operational guidelines and procedures compatible with AFP business rules and systems were introduced;
- AFP Professional Standards regime were applied to all protective service employees; and
- APS identification cards were replaced with AFP identification cards.

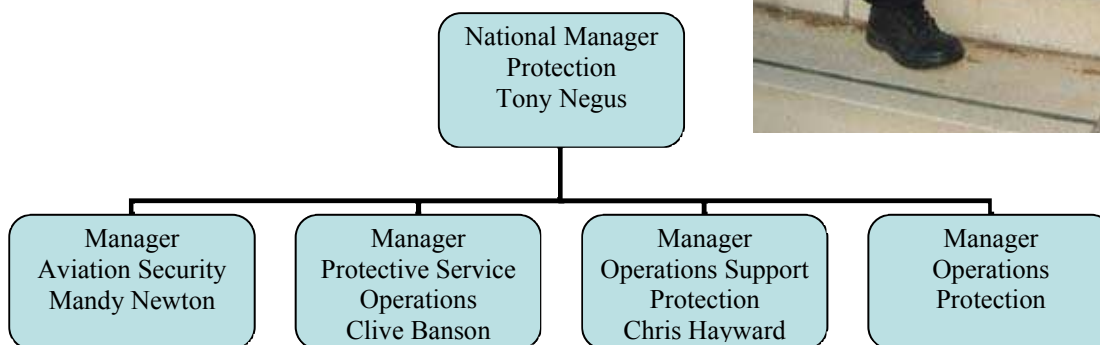


This paved the way for major work to go ahead under the various implementation plans. For example fresh industrial negotiations began and in April 2005 a new Certified Agreement for Protective Service Officers was delivered, replacing transitional arrangements. In fulfilment of the Commissioner's early direction to the Project Merida process, this remarkable organisational change occurred without undue disruption to the day-to-day delivery of protection operations.

Protection portfolio today

Management structure

The Protection Portfolio was established by the Commissioner in January 2003 and is included within the responsibilities of the Deputy Commissioner. The National Manager Protection, Federal Agent Tony Negus, and his Protection Management Team have day to day management responsibilities of the portfolio.



Key operational services are:

- the protection of Commonwealth assets, critical infrastructure, diplomatic missions and offices of high office holders (for example Government House, The Lodge, Parliament House);
- personal protection for high office holders, their families and visiting internationally protected persons;
- National Witness Protection Program;
- Air Security Officer Program;
- Explosive Detection Canine Program;
- Bomb Appraisal Officers;
- Counter Terrorism First Response capability at key Australian infrastructure, particularly major airports;
- Rapid Response Deployment teams of Protective Service Officers for regional airports;
- Protective Security Liaison Officer network at airports;
- protective security intelligence teams; and
- special events planning (e.g. AFP contribution to major events like the Commonwealth Games, Melbourne 2006).



Overseas service includes:

- peacekeeping missions;
- responses to overseas terrorist incidents that have an Australian interest; and
- provision of protective security to the Australian Diplomatic missions at Port Moresby, Jakarta and Kuala Lumpur.

The approach to implement the integration of the APS in stages has enabled detailed analysis of complex organisational issues including:

- harmonised employment and human resource framework;
- complementary people and professional standards regime;
- organisational design reforms;
- financial and corporate reforms;
- reconciling the 'commercial' APS business core with core AFP business;
- consultations with stakeholders; and
- operational delivery enhancements.

During April 2005 the Certified Agreement for Protective Service Officers was finalised with a resounding 81.6 per cent yes vote.

Conclusion

The Protection Portfolio has emerged from the ongoing integration process charged with delivering the AFP's primary responsibilities in providing specialised protective security services to the Commonwealth, and contributing the Commonwealth's counter-terrorism arrangements, particularly in the aviation sector.

The integration process continues. July 1 2004 marked a significant turning point where implementation plans were referred by the Commissioner to the appropriate functional area. This has seen integration mature to the point where the Protection Portfolio, rather than lead the integration through the vehicle of Project Merida, now is a very interested client of the other functional areas of the AFP as they go about integrating the various business units in accordance with the agreed plans.

Protection is a major part of AFP business in 2005. It is a credit to all involved that with the upheaval inherent in an organisational change of this magnitude the Protection Portfolio continues to deliver good operational results. Confidence in the portfolio can be noted by its ability to continue to attract further funding initiatives from Government in the recent Budget and maintain support from its client agencies.



The integration of Protective Service



The services provided to Commonwealth agencies and areas of Commonwealth interest in competition with the private sector included:

- establishment security and access control;
- security and fire alarm monitoring;
- escorts of valuable and sensitive property;
- protective security risk consultancy services;
- APS training services; and
- bomb appraisal and explosive detection canines.

With its integration into the AFP the Protective Service role has expanded and additional powers have been enacted to support these roles.

At the time of its full integration to the AFP on 30 June 2004, the Protective Service had 1327 employees, located in its national headquarters in Canberra and in its various stations in Canberra, Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane (including the Gold Coast), Perth, Adelaide, Darwin, Hobart, Cairns, Alice Springs (including Pine Gap), Exmouth, and Geraldton.

Protective Service officers are also responsible for security and counter-terrorist first response at major Australian airports and stationed at airports in Adelaide, Alice Springs, Brisbane, Cairns, Canberra, Coolangatta, Darwin, Hobart, Melbourne, Perth, and Sydney.

A review of Commonwealth counter-terrorism measures following the September 11 attacks in the US in 2001 paved the way for the Australian Protective Service to become an operating division of the AFP in 2002 and to be eventually integrated into the AFP on 1 July 2004.

The Australian Protective Service (APS) was formed in 1984 to perform a variety of protective security functions previously undertaken by the Australian Federal Police (AFP). These functions comprised core services to the Australian Government and some business activities in competition with private security organisations.

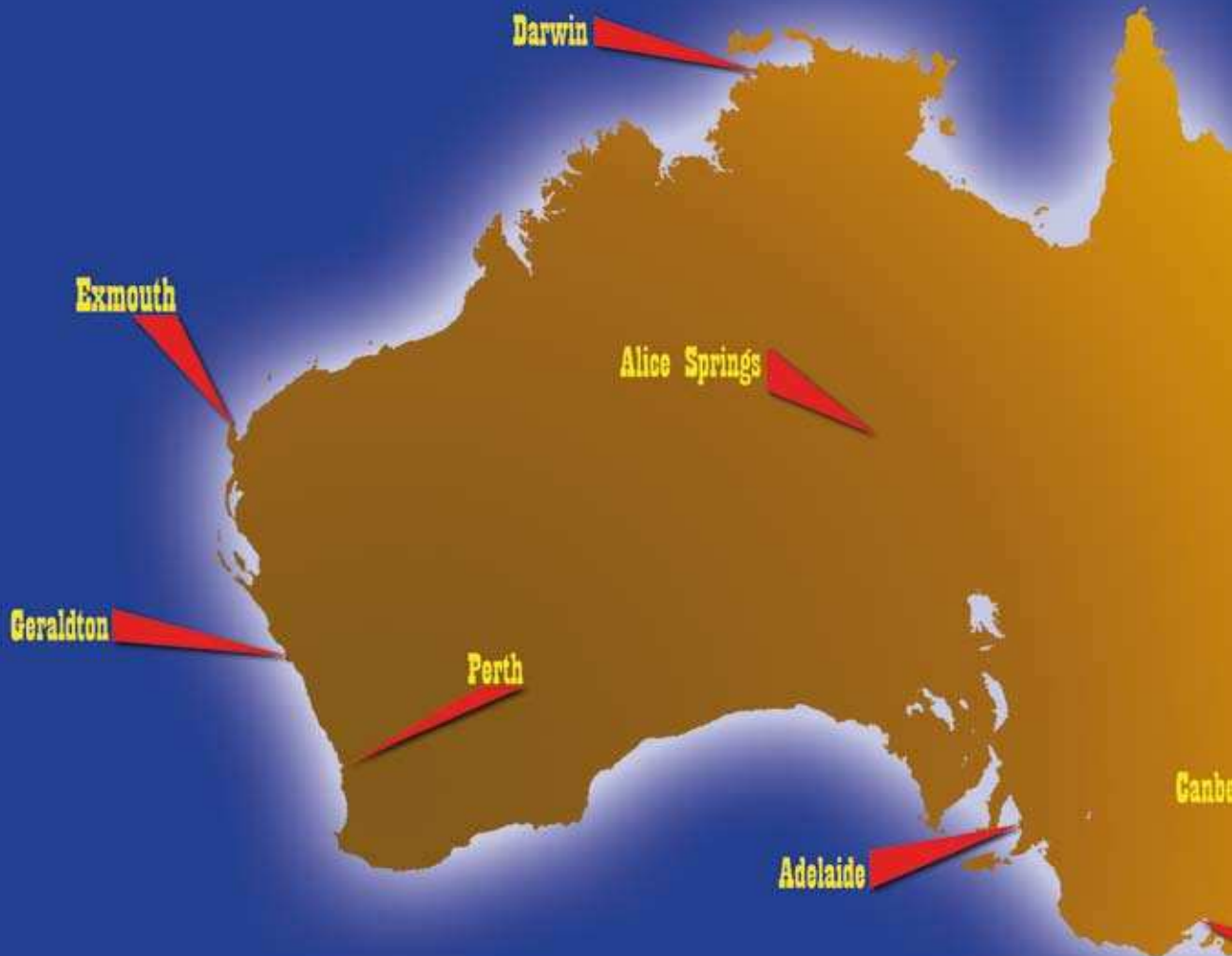
At that time the APS provided protective security for:

- the residences of the Governor-General, Prime Minister and office of the Prime Minister;
- Parliament House in Canberra;
- sensitive establishments, including the Australian–US Joint Defence Facilities at Pine Gap and Nurrungar, the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation facilities, and Maralinga (the former atomic weapons testing site);
- offices and residences of higher office holders when required; and
- some foreign diplomatic missions.



Protective Service Locations

June 2005



Suspect object X-ray



Nauru, Port Moresby, Solomon Islands, Jakarta and Kuala Lumpur.



Provision of guarding services



Explosive detection canines



Counter-terrorism first response



2002 - APS staff first deployed with AFP members overseas as part of the mixed skills of teams that were sent to investigate the Bali bombings of October 2002.



2003 - Protective Service officers with Prime Minister John Howard prior to deployment with the AFP contingent to the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI).



2004 - In the early hours of 22 December 2004, AFP Protective Service Officer Adam Dunning was shot and killed during a routine patrol in Honiara, Solomon Islands.

Protective Service Officer Dunning was afforded a funeral with full police honours.



2003 - Continuing a tradition of charity support in 2003 APS officers completed a long-distance run between Sydney and Canberra raising \$7000 in sponsorship for children suffering arthritis.



2005 - In January the new badge work and signage for Protective Service officers was introduced in the work place and coincided with notable growth in the field of Aviation Security through the delivery of Counter Terrorism First Response capability at major airports, the Air Security Officer Program, Explosive Detection Canine Program, Regional Rapid Deployment teams to regional airports and a Protective Security Liaison Officer network situated in major airports.

