

# “A vital force in the region”

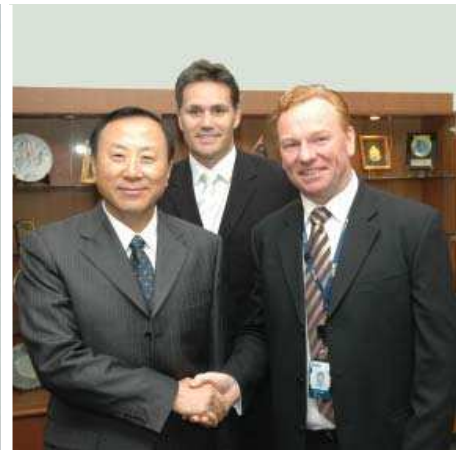


Photo by Mel Hill

## Several high-profile international arrests have earned praise for the AFP's role in cooperating with law enforcement around the world.

The Australian Federal Police has proven to be a vital key to protect the interests of Australians at home and overseas, Minister for Justice and Customs David Johnston said after the arrests.

The string of public successes began with the recapture of fugitive Tony Mokbel who was tracked down in Greece and taken into custody in Athens on 5 June.

This was quickly followed up with three arrests by the Indonesian National Police (INP) in which the AFP had a pivotal supporting role. On 9 June Abu Dujanah, a long-term priority target of the INP and AFP's Jakarta Regional Cooperation Team, was arrested in Central Java. Abu Dujanah is the alleged leader of the military wing of terrorist group Jemaah Islamiyah and is wanted for his role in the 2004 Australian Embassy bombing. He is also suspected of providing post-event support for the 2002 Bali bombers.

Minister for Justice and Customs Senator David Johnston presents a Proceeds of Crime cheque for almost \$3.4 million to Vice Minister Zhang Xinfeng of the Ministry of Public Security (MPS).

The third arrest took place on 10 June in Jakarta when the INP arrested alleged people-smuggler Abraham Lauhenapessy, otherwise known as Captain Bram. Lauhenapessy has been a high-priority target of the INP and AFP for five years. It is believed Lauhenapessy may have facilitated the arrival of more than 1500 people into Australian territory since 1999.



The INP followed up with the arrest of Zarkasih, believed to be the current leader of Jemaah Islamiyah. "The Australian Federal Police has proven to be a vital key in the fight against transnational crime, as highlighted this week through its instrumental involvement in three significant and high profile arrests," Senator Johnston said.

"The detention and arrest of these three alleged criminal masterminds proves the AFP's ability to work with their law enforcement partners worldwide to stop crime."

"The arrests serve as solid examples of how the everyday activities of the AFP are achieving extraordinary results. They also prove the AFP's diversity of skills across all functional areas including counter-terrorism operations, people smuggling and drug operations.

"Developing strong and productive working relationships with law enforcement agencies worldwide was critical to achieving successes like these arrests," Senator Johnston said.

"I applaud the excellent work being undertaken by the AFP," he said. "They have been tasked by the Australian Government to protect the interests of Australians both nationally and internationally and they have responded to that task with success."

### Operationally a good first half to 2007

As the first half of the year to an end, a number of notable achievements for the AFP's International Network have highlighted the importance of the

strong, cooperative relationships with its overseas law enforcement counterparts.

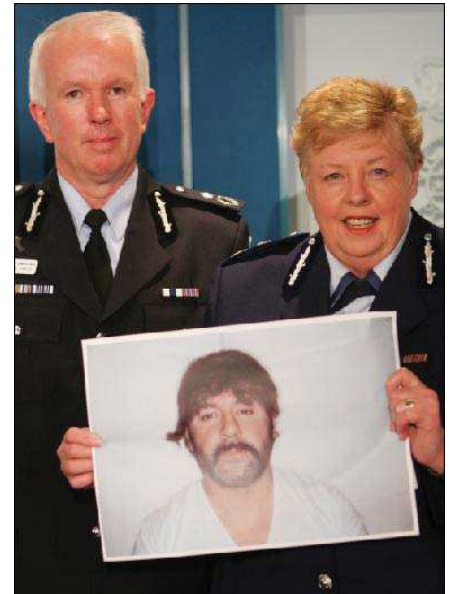
The success of the operation to re capture Tony Mokbel in Athens can be directly attributed to the relationship developed between the AFP and Hellenic [Greek] Police over the past five years. The strong cooperative links built up with the INP, particularly since the 2002 Bali bombings, aided their success in capturing Abu Dujanah and Abraham Lauhenapessy.

The AFP's global capacity was also highlighted through several significant breakthroughs resulting in arrests in the UK on 18 June when authorities announced the arrest of 63 people around the world, as part of the multi-agency *Operation Lobate*. As part of the ongoing investigation, our Online Child Sex Exploitation Team worked with State authorities to arrest four people in Australia.

A further opportunity for relationship-building at a multilateral level was announced during the 27th Association of South-East Asian Nations Chiefs of Police (ASEANAPOL) annual meeting which Commissioner Mick Keelty attended in Singapore in June.

The AFP has previously attended these annual meetings as an observer, but from next year Australia will attend the meetings as a dialogue partner, along with selected countries including China and Japan.

This is an honour for Australian law enforcement and a reflection of a mutual recognition of the importance of



Acting AFP Commissioner John Lawler and Victoria Police Chief Commissioner Christine Nixon hold up an image of Tony Mokbel after his arrest.

further strengthening the cooperation between law enforcement agencies in the region. The status will enable Australia and other new dialogue partners to offer and receive fresh perspectives and experiences on approaches to transnational crime initiatives.

This is the latest step in strengthening our international links through multinational forums and follows a landmark move in February when the AFP became the first policing agency in the Asia Pacific – and only the second in the southern hemisphere – to sign an agreement with Europol. This agreement allows the AFP unprecedented access to Europol and the opportunity for a permanent AFP liaison officer to be attached to Europol.

On 12 May, Commissioner Keelty joined former Commissioner Mick Palmer and his wife Kay at a ceremony on Thursday Island to commission the AFP's new boat, the *Mick Palmer*. The 7.5 metre vessel with an operating range of about 500km, is used by members at the AFP's post on Thursday Island as a short-to-medium distance patrol craft



**Proceeds returned**

Concrete proof of the benefits of international cooperation was also in evidence in June with the handing over to China and Lebanon of more than \$4 million of proceeds of crime.

Chinese Vice Minister Zhang Xinfeng of the Ministry of Public Security (MPS) received a cheque for almost \$3.4 million from Senator Johnston while on a visit to Australia in June.

The funds were forfeited to the Australian Government on 29 November 2006 following civil forfeiture proceedings made possible by the valuable assistance of Chinese authorities.

The MPS delegation was in Australia to enhance the relationship with the AFP meeting with Sydney Office Manager Warren Gray and Deputy Manager David Stewart. In Canberra, the delegation took time to lay a wreath at the National Police Memorial in memory of former Beijing Senior Liaison Officer Federal Agent Brice Steele, who died in the Yogyakarta air crash in March.

On 8 June, Mr Keelty presented a proceeds of crime cheque for \$683,500 to Governor of the Central Bank of Lebanon, Riad Salame. These repatriated funds resulted from *Operation Fordo*, the AFP investigation into the fraudulent evasion of tobacco excise. Cooperation between the AFP Beirut Office and Lebanon's Special Investigations underpinned *Operation Fordo* which also resulted in the return of approximately \$A1.5 million of illegal proceeds from

bank accounts in Lebanon to Australia under the Proceeds of Crime Act.

**Restructure**

This quarter has also been marked by an internal success, with the smooth transition to a new senior executive structure.

In late May, the AFP Senior Executive met with the Executive Management Board to discuss the AFP's senior executive structure, its culture, the rise of technology-enabled crime, and the AFP's current ranks and titles.

Acting on the recommendations of a review undertaken by former New Zealand Police Commissioner Rob Robinson, who was commissioned to look into the AFP's executive structure, a second deputy commissioner position, Deputy Commissioner Operations, was brought into effect on 29 May with Assistant Commissioner Peter Drennan now acting in the role.

Deputy Commissioner Operations has responsibility for Economic and Special Operations, Border, the International Deployment Group, and Forensics and Technical.

Deputy Commissioner John Lawler has assumed the new role of Deputy Commissioner National Security with responsibility for Aviation, Counter-Terrorism, Protection, Intelligence (including the new AFP Operations Coordination Centre) and the International Network.

**AFP Operations Coordination Centre**

Activated on 5 April, the AFP Operations Coordination Centre (AOCC) provides a centralised command, coordination and communication support role for all the AFP's national and international functions.

The AOCC Operations Committee comprises the managers of the AFP's operational functions and has direct operational management responsibilities supporting the National Managers' Group.

The committee also provides a national forum for discussing a broad range of operational issues and activities across functions on a weekly basis.

**The Federal Budget**

The hard work of building international relations and responding to evolving criminal threats was recognised in the 2007-08 Federal Budget which saw the AFP budget increase to \$1.2 billion, with an additional \$304 million over five years for new programs.

The new funding provides for a range of additional capital and operational spending across the organisation which, has never been larger. Highlights of the new law enforcement programs involving the AFP include:

- \$151.4 million over four years to provide purpose-built accommodation for aviation staff at Counter-Terrorism First Response at Airports around Australia



Photo by Brian Harrigan

The new Collective Agreement introduced on 5 April “provides a common and improved employment framework”, and the importance of Protective Service work has been affirmed

- \$65.2 million over five years to upgrade the AFP’s operational and intelligence systems and technologies
- \$4.5 million over four years to expand the International Liaison Officer Network in Asia to strengthen the AFP’s capacity for counteracting the importation and manufacture of synthetic drug types, such as *ice* and their precursors. Additional funds of \$5.9 million have also been made available to establish a specialist rapid response team to help investigate offences involving amphetamine type substances
- \$3.3 million to undertake a detailed scoping study for the establishment of purpose-built IDG and training facilities at Majura
- \$9.1 million over four years to strengthen the AFP’s contribution to tackling sexual servitude and other serious crimes
- \$3.5 million over two years to contribute to multinational initiatives in Afghanistan
- \$2.5 million over three years to assist the UN Mission in Sudan.

Additional funding has also been allocated for a range of initiatives to strengthen AFP resourcing in areas such as counter terrorism, economic and special operations and high tech crime.

An indirect benefit to the AFP was an amount of \$58.8 million provided for the redevelopment of Constitution Avenue in Canberra, which is the precinct of the new AFP National Headquarters complex scheduled for occupation by May 2008.

### The Collective Agreement

The widely-endorsed Australian Federal Police Collective Agreement 2007–11 has been put into place to underpin our expanding staff and our evolving responsibilities.

The Australian Electoral Commission conducted the ballot for the Collective Agreement and a total of 3453 ballots were admitted with 70 per cent of eligible votes in favour of the proposal. As a result, the agreement became effective from 5 April 2007.

Key elements of the agreement are:

- pay increases exceeding an average of 4 per cent per year
- superannuation on composites
- a disputes resolution process with access to independent arbitration
- fairer work hours for federal operations and “high volume” employees with access to higher penalties for breaches of safety nets
- broad banding across a range of bands including bands 4 and 5 policing roles
- full integration of Protective Service Officers into the AFP.

Mr Keelty thanked all staff for their patience and contributions throughout



An executive retreat held near Jindabyne at the end of May considered the implementation of a range of cultural changes to the AFP.

Commissioner Keelty took the opportunity to make a presentation to Trevor Van Dam to mark his retirement as the AFP’s Chief Operating Officer.

the process of developing and endorsing the agreement.

While finally reaching the multifaceted agreement had been difficult, it had been a landmark because it was the first time the terms and conditions for all employees of the AFP had been consolidated into one document.

“It provides a common and improved employment framework with better clarity and certainty for all,” Mr Keelty said.

President of the Australian Federal Police Association Jon Hunt Sharman welcomed Protective Service Officers to this agreement.

“The AFPA has in the past represented Protective Service Officers under a separate agreement,” Mr Hunt-Sharman said.

“The AFP’s desire to fully integrate Protective Services into the AFP has culminated in this landmark agreement with the AFPA which will see pay and conditions for PSOs improved considerably. We also anticipate improved career opportunities and improved equity between AFP employees, especially in respect of employment conditions.

Mr Hunt Sharman also thanked Mr Keelty for his cooperation and accessibility throughout the negotiations.