

A new era in online learning for the AFP

Expanding opportunities to learn and improve skills from investigating crime to touch-typing has inspired the development of a new online learning system.

The AFP has long recognised that training and education are crucial to the continuing success of its operations. The AFP College delivers a variety of training courses to maintain and increase the skills of members, and the organisation has entered into arrangements with educational institutions to streamline access to tertiary education.

Yet demand is expected to outstrip even this significant supply. As well, time constraints and deployments to remote locations can make it difficult for staff to attend face-to-face courses.

These problems led the AFP to look beyond traditional teaching for a suitable solution.

After researching the gamut of organisational educational requirements and consulting with members, the AFP's Learning and Development program found that increasing access was the solution. But with classroom training already expanded beyond the College's walls and the online education system operating at capacity, the way to implement the solution was not easy. However, a new online system eventually provided the answer.

The new system, named iAspire, provides increased functionality, is based on user-centred design and provides the opportunity for AFP members to participate in a greater range of courses without being connected to the AFP network.

National Manager Human Resources Paul Jevtovic said the learning management system had been designed with a primary focus on user needs.

"The iAspire Learning Management System offers an interactive, modern web interface with newly-updated course content," Assistant Commissioner Jevtovic said.



Technology Assisted Learning Team Leader Brett McGavock

"iAspire provides a simple and logical user interface, with the look, feel and function of traditional desktop applications. This provides ease of navigation and facilitates a better learning experience.

"It is flexible, convenient and designed for AFP members to meet their personal and professional development needs as well as deliver measurable information to management."

The AFP College is a registered training organisation located in Barton, Canberra. The Technology Assisted Learning (TAL) Team at the College is responsible for the development and delivery of AFP online learning.

TAL Team Leader Brett McGavock said the new system introduced much greater ease of access for online courses.

"iAspire enables course participants to improve their skills and qualifications with greater ease and flexibility," he said.

"They can access the system from locations external to AFP offices which means that all AFP staff, including those who are overseas or in remote areas, have the opportunity to expand their knowledge and skills."

The College develops, delivers and coordinates training programs for Australian Government law enforcement partner agencies and international law enforcement agencies.



Brett McGavock shows Assistant Commissioner Jevtovic the new system

Nationally, the AFP's focus is on helping government agencies build capacity within their own organisation by developing their investigation skills in relation to crimes against the Australian Government and in line with the Australian Government Investigation Standards.

The AFP's international training programs focus on helping our international partners build capacity within their own organisations and address the AFP's aims of preventing and investigating transnational crimes such as drugs and human trafficking, terrorism and money laundering.

Online learning is essential to the AFP. Many staff members have grown up with computer technology, and are familiar with the concept of computer-based training. Online learning provides all AFP staff with opportunities to expand their knowledge and skills in a wide

range of subjects such as functional specific courses, operational safety, digital imaging, forensic investigations, leadership and management, equipment training and computing. It even provides typing tutorials.

"iAspire also interacts with the AFP's human resource management system to record course results in each participant's

personnel file, which allows staff to easily access their course results and training history," Mr McGavock said.

"This functionality also enables managers to monitor participation in compulsory courses and to generate reports on training undertaken by staff."

iAspire was launched on 1 June.



Assistant Commissioner Jevtovic, Brett McGavock and TAL team member Naomi Graham