

# Commissioner's message



As you will see in this edition of Platypus, 2010 is proving to be an eventful year for the AFP. In line with the recommendations of the Federal Audit of Police Capabilities (the Beale Review), and to more accurately reflect national security priorities, we have recently refined the structure of the organisation.

The appointment of a third Deputy Commissioner better aligns the AFP to meet the demands of the ever-changing law enforcement environment. I welcome the opportunity to introduce Andrew Colvin, Peter Drennan and Michael Phelan in this edition.

Structurally, we have also redefined our operations to fit within the new Organised Crime Strategic Framework as outlined by the Australian Government. This has had a significant impact on our Border and International, and Economic and Special Operations portfolios. The functions of both portfolios have been realigned into two new portfolios named Serious and Organised Crime and Crime Operations. The realignment of our priorities will help to ensure the AFP continues to play an effective and constructive role within the whole-of-government commitment to combating organised crime and other criminal activities that pose a risk to our national security.

One way in which we already contribute to this effort is through international deployments to countries such as Afghanistan. Our members do a fantastic job in helping the Afghan National Police build their capabilities across a

range of policing duties, and this issue of Platypus provides some insight into the difficulties they face.

It is likely that our role in Afghanistan will continue for some time. The work we do there is an important component of the overall strategy to protect Australia's interests, through building global stability and in disrupting the activities of organised crime syndicates. Helping to build strong governance structures in countries like Afghanistan makes it more difficult for criminals to engage in activities such as drug trafficking.

AFP operations targeting these activities stretch from Afghanistan to the streets of our own cities and towns as we work with our State and Territory counterparts to combat the scourge of illicit drugs. One example of the success such cooperation can bring is highlighted in this edition. The AFP, together with other State and Federal agencies, was recently invited by Cambodian authorities to take part in the destruction of several tonnes of safrole oil, a precursor chemical used in the production of ecstasy. This is another example of the importance of partnerships in combating illicit drugs, through sharing resources and information.

Recently, Minister for Home Affairs Brendan O'Connor opened the Australian Illicit Drug Data Centre which will operate under the auspices of the AFP. This centre will provide drug profiling information on seizures at our borders and from the streets. For the first time, all law

enforcement agencies in Australia will have access to intelligence information detailing the chemical signatures of drugs that show where they originated and where they were manufactured. This is an important step forward in the fight against illicit drug use in Australia and in this issue we look at the developments that led us to this point.

In this edition, we also bid farewell to one of the longest serving members of the AFP executive, James Robertson, who will be leaving the AFP in July. Dr Robertson began his role in the forensic services area 20 years ago and will leave us after having made an enormous contribution to improving our forensic capabilities. Dr Robertson has handed over the reins at Forensics to Assistant Commissioner Julian Slater, but he will remain with the AFP until July to oversee the implementation of recommendations of the Beale review, helping to lay out the blueprint for the AFP's future.

The next 12 months will be a significant period for the organisation and I encourage you to find out more about what will be happening by reading this edition of Platypus.

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**Commissioner**