Chapter 1

Introduction

Examination of the Australian Federal Police Annual Report

1.1 The Parliamentary Joint Committee on Law Enforcement (the committee), formerly the Parliamentary Joint Committee on the Australian Crime Commission, has provided oversight for the Australian Crime Commission (ACC) for a number of years. However, the jurisdiction of the committee has recently widened to include the Australian Federal Police (AFP), through the provisions of the *Parliamentary Joint Committee on Law Enforcement Act 2010* (the Act).

1.2 While the committee will continue to provide oversight of the ACC, subsection 7(1) of the Act added a number of functions relating to the AFP, including:

- to monitor and to review the performance by the AFP of its functions;
- to report to both Houses of the Parliament, with such comments as it thinks fit, upon any matter appertaining to the AFP or connected with the performance of its functions to which, in the opinion of the Committee, the attention of the Parliament should be directed;
- to examine each annual report on the AFP and report to the Parliament on any matter appearing in, or arising out of, any such annual report; and
- to examine trends and changes in criminal activities, practices and methods and report to both Houses of the Parliament any change which the Committee thinks desirable to the functions, structure, powers and procedures of the ACC or the AFP.[1]

1.3 This examination of the AFP's 2009–10 annual report is the first to occur under paragraph 7(1)(f), which creates a statutory duty to examine each annual report of the Australian Federal Police (AFP).

1.4 As noted by the AFP Commissioner, Mr Tony Negus, the AFP's first appearance before the committee is a significant milestone in the oversight of the AFP.[2]

1.5 The committee appreciates the AFP's engagement with the committee so far, and looks forward to an effective oversight relationship in the future, as it undertakes the committee's wider duties to monitor, review and report on the AFP's performance of its functions.

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1 *Parliamentary Joint Committee on Law Enforcement Act 2010*, para 7(1)(d–g).

2 Commissioner Tony Negus APM, *Committee Hansard*, 17 June 2011, p. 1.

Report under consideration

1.1 The AFP's Annual Report 2009–10 (the report) was presented to the Minister for Home Affairs, the Hon. Brendan O'Connor MP, on 30 September 2010, and was tabled in the Senate on 25 October 2010 and in the House of Representatives on 18 October 2010. As the report was the most recent available when the committee's jurisdiction expanded to include the AFP, it was selected for examination.

Examination of the Report

1.6 In examining the report, the committee held a public hearing at Parliament House, Canberra on 17 June 2011. The witnesses who appeared before the committee and answers to questions on notice are listed in Appendix 1.

Acknowledgments

1.7 The committee acknowledges the cooperation of Commissioner Negus and other officers of the AFP. Both under the committee's former incarnation, and since it formally assumed responsibility for oversight of the AFP, the AFP has regularly provided the committee with written reports and briefings on its operation, and has demonstrated a commitment to assist the committee with its various inquiries. The committee is pleased that the AFP continues to be frank and forthcoming with the information it provides to the committee.

Note of references

1.2 References to the committee *Hansard* are to the proof *Hansard*: page numbers may vary between the proof and the official *Hansard*.