

Chapter 10

Australian Federal Police

10.1 Australian police have been involved in peacekeeping operations since 1964 when officers were sent to Cyprus as part of the United Nations Force (UNFICYP).¹ However, police involvement in overseas deployments, including peacekeeping, has increased in the last decade: the Australian Federal Police (AFP) is currently deployed in Cyprus, Solomon Islands, Sudan, Timor-Leste, Nauru, Tonga, Vanuatu, Cambodia and Afghanistan.² As of January 2008, the total number of AFP officers deployed to international missions was 323. This number rose to 393 with the additional 70 who went to Timor-Leste in February 2008. The majority of deployed AFP officers are serving in peacekeeping operations in Solomon Islands (208) and in Timor-Leste (130).³

10.2 In this chapter, the committee examines the changing nature of peacekeeping operations and its impact on the AFP. It looks at the AFP's preparedness and capacity to meet the growing demands of these operations and its pre-deployment training regime, taking account of any additional skills required for peacekeeping.

Changing AFP contribution

10.3 Police carry out the function of maintaining law and order for the community. Their role in peacekeeping operations, while consistent with this broad function, presents particular challenges for AFP personnel. They are expected to deliver a police service and exercise discretion in a country that may have a different political and legal system and where law and order and the judicial system are failing or broken down completely. Increasingly, they are required to operate in multidimensional situations and actively participate in capacity building. AFP personnel may be called on to provide a range of police services and technical skills or train others in police functions; undertake investigations of alleged human rights abuses; and assist in managing refugee movements.

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- 1 Prior to the establishment of the AFP in 1979, the Commonwealth Police and the ACT Police participated in international operations. For more information, see for example: http://www.afp.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/3855/factsheetpeacekeepingidg.pdf (accessed 30 June 2008) and http://www.afp.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/3728/BriefHistoryOfAFP1979-2004.pdf (accessed 30 June 2008)
 - 2 *Committee Hansard*, 25 July 2007, p. 29; AFP, International Deployment, Current Deployments, http://www.afp.gov.au/international/IDG/current_deployments.html (accessed 30 June 2008).
 - 3 AFP Commissioner Mick Keelty, *Estimates Hansard*, 18 February 2008.

10.4 The contribution that the police make to peacekeeping is widely recognised.⁴ Assistant Commissioner Walters, AFP, stated:

There is a growing recognition, in the UN and in other organisations, of the importance of policing, particularly in postconflict societies. Once you create a security pause and law and order is restored, the role of policing in capacity building, in law enforcement and in the law and order institutions of those states is absolutely critical to building a solid foundation for economic growth and good governance.⁵

10.5 He also highlighted the role that the AFP is undertaking, particularly capacity building in the region:

We are very much trying to put our resources at the front end of what some people call failing or fragile states to make sure that they do not slide into the category of failed states where a lot more effort and resources need to be put into rebuilding institutions. Our focus is very much at that front end of trying to arrest the deterioration of conditions in those countries.⁶

10.6 He further acknowledged that the task at hand is 'very much a generational issue and will require long-term commitment'.⁷ The following section looks at the AFP's capacity to meet the demands of today's peacekeeping operations.

Capability

10.7 Unlike the ADF, the AFP does not have a deployment tradition—it has not been part of AFP culture.⁸ In 2004, however, the government recognised the need to establish a dedicated group within the AFP with the full time responsibility of international deployments. The establishment of the International Deployment Group (IDG) in 2004 was intended to assist planning within the AFP and overcome 'operational drawbacks linked to ad-hoc deployments, ensuring there are resources dedicated exclusively to the Group's activities, rather than other operational demands'.⁹

4 See Prime Minister, the Hon John Howard MP, Press Release, Transcript of doorstep interview, Perth, 2 February 2004.

5 *Committee Hansard*, 25 July 2007, p. 6.

6 *Committee Hansard*, 25 July 2007, p. 6.

7 *Committee Hansard*, 25 July 2007, p. 7.

8 Lieutenant General Ken Gillespie, Vice Chief of Defence Force, acknowledged the AFP's need for overseas operations capability and the IDG's role in instilling deployment culture into the AFP. *Committee Hansard*, 24 July 2007, p. 20.

9 Senator the Hon Chris Ellison, Minister for Justice and Customs, 'Australia boosts regional law enforcement capacity', Press release, 2 February 2004.

Australian Federal Police in Solomon Islands



During the riots in Solomon Islands in April 2006 (image courtesy AFP).

International Deployment Group

10.8 Assistant Commissioner Walters explained that the IDG is 'a capability through which the AFP could deploy police officers and unsworn personnel offshore'.¹⁰ Its tasks are to contribute to 'offshore law enforcement initiatives' and participate in 'capacity development programs within the Law and Justice Sector'.¹¹

10.9 In March 2007, the IDG employed over 600 people: approximately 250 were Australia-based and 350 were involved in overseas operations.¹² Of the 350,

10 *Committee Hansard*, 25 July 2007, p. 8.

11 AFP, International Deployment, <http://www.afp.gov.au/international/IDG.html> (accessed 22 February 2008); *Committee Hansard*, 25 July 2007, p. 9.

12 AFP, International Deployment, <http://www.afp.gov.au/international/IDG.html> (accessed 30 June 2008). By November 2007, IDG had 709 members, out of which 450 were serving overseas. Sources: Nick O'Brien, 'AFP's international deployment role grows', *Australian Security Magazine*, 1 February 2008, p. 32. Assistant Commissioner Paul Jevtovic, quoted in Juani O'Reilly, 'Policing the neighbourhood and keeping peace in the Pacific', *Platypus Magazine*, Edition 96, September 2007, p. 11.

100 officers had been seconded from Australian state police and thirteen Pacific Island countries.¹³ The 250 Australia-based personnel were mostly unsworn officers and worked in Canberra in areas such as HR, finance, contracts and logistics, capacity building and training.¹⁴

10.10 Commissioner Mick Keelty has noted that while a proportion of the IDG is directed to security, the IDG has a broad spectrum of skills. Its major skill is 'a capability for capacity building to train police in developing countries and also a forensic capability' with only a proportion of the total number in the IDG directly related to riot control and security. According to Commissioner Keelty:

We are one of the only countries in the developed world that has a capacity in policing to put offshore to deliver part of the legal justice systems in other countries and it is something that has become quite a key focus for both the organisation and, indeed, governments.¹⁵

10.11 Associate Professor Elsinia Wainwright thought the expansion of the IDG was 'the right trajectory for the AFP':

I think that the expanded IDG is a good idea, if they can find the right personnel, because there has been a shortage of police to do these kinds of tasks, and training up police in a standing body does...make good sense, particularly as it will decrease the need to backfill from the states.¹⁶

10.12 It should also be noted that the IDG has UN accreditation as a training organisation.

Operational Response Group

10.13 In 2006, the government announced that it was lifting the IDG's capability by establishing a 150-strong Operational Response Group (ORG). This initiative allows the IDG to have a group in 'a constant state of readiness for emergency responses to law and order issues and stabilisation operations'.¹⁷ The AFP informed the committee

13 AFP, International Deployment, <http://www.afp.gov.au/international/IDG.html> (accessed 30 June 2008).

14 *Committee Hansard*, 25 July 2007, p. 22. AFP overseas deployments are based on 20-week blocks, with 16 weeks in a mission and four weeks on leave, after which the officer will rotate back to mission. A deployment can be done over a 40-, 60-, 80- or 100-week period. Some officers stay in the same mission, for example RAMSI, for the duration of their deployment, whereas others might rotate out of one mission and go into another. Some officers can deploy with their families (determination 20 positions), however, most positions are unaccompanied (determinations 2 and 19). *Committee Hansard*, 25 July 2007, pp. 14–15.

15 AFP Commissioner Mick Keelty, Speech, Law Council of Australia, 35th Annual Legal Convention, 23 March 2007, p. 2.

16 *Committee Hansard*, 20 August 2007, p. 8.

17 Prime Minister, the Hon John Howard MP, Press Release, Transcript of press conference, Australian Federal Police, New South Wales Headquarters, Sydney, 25 August 2006.

that the ORG has 'highly-skilled capability in crowd control and riot management with rapid deployment capability, as well as...the infrastructure to support our offshore missions'.¹⁸

10.14 By July 2007, the ORG had grown to encompass around 200 personnel including an operational arm of 150 split into a group of approximately 50 tactical operators—'the traditional SWAT members who are trained up to that level'—and a group of around 100 to comprise a riot response group with lethal capability. The remaining group of 50 provide support across areas such as dogs, marksmen, maritime, and aviation ground surveillance capability.¹⁹

10.15 Dr Anthony Murney, Manager, Planning and Development, IDG, noted that the ORG gives the AFP the ability to operate in environments that it 'has not been able to operate in initially, in previous kinds of interventions, in as professional a way as we might like'.²⁰ Associate Professor Wainwright thought there is a need for this sort of capability:

It makes good sense to build up the capability the AFP has to go in at the sharp end of activities, more alongside the ADF. This is, I think, in response to a clear need that was perceived in East Timor...²¹

10.16 Furthermore, Assistant Commissioner Walters told the committee that the AFP and the ORG had learnt a lot in the last two years and are now at the 'cutting edge' with training initiatives.²²

Committee view

10.17 The committee believes the establishment and expansion of IDG and the development of tactical capability through the ORG are necessary for the AFP to be able to participate in, and contribute to, international peacekeeping operations. The committee acknowledges the pioneering nature of the ORG which epitomises the AFP commitment to developing the particular skills necessary for the challenges of modern peacekeeping. It supports the AFP's work in this area and believes that the AFP is now at the forefront in developing a broad-based capability to assist other countries to deliver an effective policing service.

18 Assistant Commissioner Paul Jevtovic, IDG, quoted in Juani O'Reilly, 'Policing the neighbourhood and keeping peace in the Pacific', *Platypus Magazine*, Edition 96, September 2007, p. 11.

19 *Committee Hansard*, 25 July 2007, p. 20.

20 *Committee Hansard*, 25 July 2007, p. 21.

21 *Committee Hansard*, 20 August 2007, p. 9.

22 *Committee Hansard*, 25 July 2007, p. 20.

Personnel

10.18 The Police Federation of Australia (PFA) drew attention to an AFP shortage of police officers despite budget increases for recruitment.²³ Like the ADF, the AFP is experiencing recruitment and retention difficulties. The AFP noted that, with the rapid expansion of the national security sector over the past few years, policing 'now faces one of its most critical challenges in continuing as a sustainable and steadfast national and community resource'.²⁴

10.19 It should also be noted that while Commissioner Keelty acknowledged that there are 'a finite number of people able to be deployed', he indicated that the IDG had no difficulty deploying, at short notice, the 70 extra AFP officers required in Timor-Leste in February 2008. He acknowledged that there was a limit to what the IDG could do but that 'at the moment we are managing the requests that are coming from the government'.²⁵

Recruitment process

10.20 The Australian Government announced in August 2006 that it had allocated \$493 million for the IDG to increase its staffing levels to 1,200 personnel by June 2008.²⁶ The increase in funding would strengthen the IDG's capacity to deploy 'skilled personnel for long-term capacity-building, peacekeeping missions and bilateral programs', and to relieve the pressure of seeking contributions from state and territory police services.²⁷ It would enable the IDG to deploy around 750 sworn officers offshore and at short notice.²⁸

10.21 In July 2007, Assistant Commissioner Walters told the committee that IDG recruitment was on track and 'very attractive to a lot of people', with applications

23 *Submission 14*, p. 4. The total number of AFP officers is around 6,600, of which 30% are females. Just over a third are sworn officers (around 2,600). Approximately 2000 sworn and 2100 unsworn AFP officers meet the selection criteria for overseas deployment. AFP, answers to questions on notice 6 and 10, 25 July 2007. Mr Mark Burgess, PFA's Chief Executive Officer, was of the view that there was a need to recruit in excess of 13,000 police across Australia in the next three years and that several jurisdictions were 'struggling to meet their own requirement'. *Committee Hansard*, 6 September 2007, p. 12.

24 *Submission 28*, p. 9.

25 AFP Commissioner Mick Keelty, *Estimates Hansard*, 18 February 2008.

26 Juani O'Reilly, 'Policing the neighbourhood and keeping peace in the Pacific', *Platypus Magazine*, Edition 96, September 2007, p. 11.

27 *Committee Hansard*, 25 July 2007, p. 8; *Submission 15*, p. 7.

28 *Committee Hansard*, 25 July 2007, p. 26.

coming from AFP and state and territory police officers and former police officers wanting to rejoin the service.²⁹

10.22 Some submitters expressed concern about the recruitment for the IDG having an adverse affect on other police jurisdictions in Australia. In response to this claim, the AFP pointed out that only 0.02 per cent of the total police strength in Australia is seconded from state and territory services to the AFP.³⁰

Committee view

10.23 The committee supports the AFP's endeavours to attract quality staff to the IDG and believes that this places the AFP in a strong position to respond to the demands of international deployments.

Equipment and logistics

10.24 Until now, the AFP has not had primary responsibility for the full range of equipment and logistics necessary for international peacekeeping operations because it has been either part of UN missions or able to rely on ADF capability. Assistant Commissioner Walters informed the committee that the AFP has decided to expand its own capabilities due to the increasing number of missions and because the AFP may be required to deploy to missions not involving the ADF.³¹

10.25 Major General Adrian Clunies-Ross, RSL, argued that the AFP needs to build independent capabilities:

They will inevitably be working in conjunction with the Defence Force, and it would seem to me reasonably logical that they would have their own means of transport, communications and various other things. It would be impossible for them to work from the Defence Force's capabilities...³²

10.26 Although the ADF and the AFP are separate organisations and have their own requirements for self-sufficiency, the AFP is not looking to build a 'complete logistical capability' within the IDG, as Assistant Commissioner Walters noted:

29 *Committee Hansard*, 25 July 2007, pp. 21–22 and 28. During a Senate Estimates hearing on 18 February 2008, Commissioner Keelty stated 'Phase 1 occurred in the period October to December 2006. We had 66 positions advertised and filled. Phase 2 occurred over the period January to June 2007, and 169 positions were advertised and filled. Phase 3 occurred over the period July to December 2007, and 95 positions were advertised and will be filled in the period between January and June this year. Phase 4 seeks to recruit 220 additional positions and it is also scheduled to be finished by June 2008'.

30 *Committee Hansard*, 25 July 2007, p. 22. Commissioner Keelty referred to two groups to join the IDG: secondees, who serve in the IDG for two years (or sometimes for a shorter period of 12 months) and then return to their parent police force; and recruits for permanent service.

31 *Committee Hansard*, 25 July 2007, p. 11.

32 *Committee Hansard*, 5 September 2007, p. 8.

Our preference is not to do that but to utilise ADF where we feel that is appropriate and where ADF resources are available. We find the current arrangements with PDL [Patrick Defence Logistics] to provide the logistical support is probably the most effective and efficient way for us to provide the capability.³³

10.27 He further stated that the IDG's capability development cell will be looking at AFP requirements, best practice and new technologies in consultation with other organisations, including Defence.³⁴ More recently, Commissioner Keelty indicated that a number of their contracts were 'on the back of the interoperability between the AFP and ADF...[to] maximise the benefits for the government in terms of what we acquire and how much it costs'.³⁵

10.28 One proposed major acquisition is protected response vehicles. The committee understands that, due to the sometimes volatile situations that the IDG officers face during overseas deployments, the AFP is looking to buy such vehicles to 'provide the most secure capability' for its officers.³⁶ According to Commander Steve Lancaster, Manager, ORG, the AFP is looking at a combination of small and large vehicles, some enclosed and some open-air troop carriers suitable for the tropics.³⁷ He explained that observing the capacities of other forces in East Timor had given the AFP an opportunity to assess the most appropriate kinds of transport for the IDG's role in the Asia-Pacific region. For example, the Portuguese police unit used 'smaller, nimble teams' that are able to respond effectively to multiple strikes around the city. In contrast, the Royal Malaysian Police proved effective for 'big public demonstrations' and used open-air troop carriers to move around *en masse*.³⁸ The AFP provided no information on the number of vehicles required or the budget allocated for the procurement. The committee understands that the first of the new vehicles are expected to be delivered at the end of 2008.³⁹

10.29 In February 2008, Mr Andrew Wood, Chief Operating Officer, AFP, stated that under the current budget allocation for 'supplier expenses', the IDG had a little over \$150 million which, in his view, was 'quite reasonable resourcing'.⁴⁰

33 *Committee Hansard*, 25 July 2007, p. 16.

34 *Committee Hansard*, 25 July 2007, p. 11.

35 AFP Commissioner Mick Keelty, *Estimates Hansard*, 18 February 2008.

36 Nick O'Brien, 'AFP's international deployment role grows', *Australian Security Magazine*, 1 February 2008, p. 32.

37 *Committee Hansard*, 25 July 2007, pp. 11–12.

38 *Committee Hansard*, 25 July 2007, pp. 11–12.

39 Leigh Funston, 'AFP seeks protected vehicles', *Australian Security Magazine*, 1 February 2008, p. 14.

40 *Estimates Hansard*, 18 February 2008.

Committee view

10.30 The committee notes the need for the AFP to have logistical capability of its own. It accepts the view that the AFP cannot build 'a complete logistical capability', and in some cases will rely on the resources of the ADF to assist it during a peacekeeping operation. It recognises that where the AFP requires its own capability, compatibility with Defence systems should be a primary consideration.

Recommendation 9

10.31 The committee recommends that the AFP adhere to a procurement policy that requires, where possible, any equipment purchased for use in a peacekeeping operation to be compatible with equipment or technology used by the ADF.

Training for peacekeeping operations

10.32 The AFP started to train its officers for overseas deployments in 1999 but it was not until 2004, with the establishment of the IDG, that increased attention and resources were given to train and prepare police for multidimensional and complex missions overseas.⁴¹

10.33 In the following section, the committee discusses the AFP's prerequisites for employment with the IDG, examines pre-deployment training for international operations and assesses its adequacy. The committee then looks at training in areas of health, safety and wellbeing.

Prerequisites for international policing

10.34 The AFP informed the committee that in practice, an officer for deployment to a peacekeeping operation is required to have more than four years policing experience.⁴² Commissioner Keelty explained:

There is no point in sending police overseas to train and develop foreign police if they are not developed themselves in the domestic environment.⁴³

10.35 He noted that the biggest challenge for the AFP is:

...to ensure that all AFP members have: an incredibly clear and focussed understanding of the basic tenets of policing; a deep knowledge of the principles underpinning the profession of policing; a comprehensive

41 AFP, IDG Fact File, p.7, <http://www.afp.gov.au/international/IDG.html> (accessed 2 July 2007); AFP International Deployment, Pre-deployment training, http://www.afp.gov.au/international/IDG/pre-deployment_training (accessed 30 June 2008); *Submission 28*, p. 15.

42 AFP, answers to questions on notice 3 and 6, 25 July 2007.

43 *Estimates Hansard*, 18 February 2008.

understanding of the AFP's stated values, and, most importantly, the ability to apply all of this knowledge in an appropriate cultural framework.⁴⁴

10.36 Officers must also meet several other requirements including that of being 'Use of Force' qualified (certified competency to use weapons) for the duration of deployment.⁴⁵

10.37 According to Assistant Commissioner Paul Jevtovic, IDG, officers with particular skills or expertise may also be recruited by the IDG. He noted in an interview that in the early years, the recruitment for missions such as RAMSI was more about 'getting people offshore, but as the missions have evolved along with our understanding of the challenges, we now advertise specific positions'. He further explained that through this process, the AFP can better assess people's skills and match them with roles AFP officers may have in the future.⁴⁶

Pre-deployment training

10.38 Assistant Commissioner Walters explained that there is 'a fairly comprehensive training program', depending on the officers' skills, level of experience and status of being either sworn or unsworn.⁴⁷ State and territory police officers can join the AFP through the lateral entry program in which officers are trained in AFP processes and procedures.⁴⁸

10.39 The IDG Learning and Development Branch reviewed training requirements in 2006 in light of the various environmental and jurisdictional challenges encountered during deployments.⁴⁹ A restructured training program commenced in March 2007. It is conducted in three stages:

- pre-deployment training (PDT);
- mission update information sessions—conducted immediately prior to deployment together with administrative and logistics tasks; and

44 AFP Commissioner Mick Keelty, 'Policing in a Foreign Space', Speech at the National Press Club, 11 October 2006.

45 AFP, answer to written question on notice 6, 25 July 2007. Other requirements are: current passport, completion of pre-deployment training; medical and psychological clearance; no current professional reporting standard issues or open compensation case; and current first aid certificate.

46 Assistant Commissioner Paul Jevtovic quoted in Juani O'Reilly, 'Policing the neighbourhood and keeping peace in the Pacific', *Platypus Magazine*, Edition 96, September 2007, p. 12.

47 *Committee Hansard*, 25 July 2007, p. 25.

48 *Committee Hansard*, 25 July 2007, pp. 14 and 25.

49 AFP, International Deployment, IDG Training Unit, <http://www.afp.gov.au/international/IDG.html> (accessed 20 June 2007).

- in-country briefing—conducted by the force in command of the specific mission.⁵⁰

10.40 The PDT is a five-week (35-day) course, compulsory for all personnel undertaking overseas duties under the IDG. It focuses on core skill requirements (with two broad themes, capacity development and safety), on assessment and performance feedback. The course is divided into three parts: operational safety and administration; formal instruction; and scenario phases.⁵¹

10.41 The first ten days are reserved for use of force qualification or re-qualification; the rest of the program focuses on 'providing participants with the skills to live and work in a foreign environment'. The participants learn a 'coaching approach to capacity development...delivered within a setting of cultural appropriateness, values and human rights'.⁵²

10.42 The course content is modified in accordance with changing mission requirements. It usually covers topics such as culture and mentoring skills, capacity building, humanitarian assistance, and the UN Standard Generic Training Modules (SGTM), the minimum skill and knowledge requirements for United Nations Police.⁵³ In addition, police officers are trained in negotiation and conflict resolution.⁵⁴ Human rights training, delivered by the AFP's legal team, covers child and gender issues, based on the UN training package.⁵⁵ Legal training provides an overview on the criminal process of host nations.⁵⁶ Theoretical knowledge is then put into practice in the scenario phase, a practical nine-day field exercise during which the 'participants are immersed in a fictional mission developed to simulate a variety of situations the members may encounter when deployed overseas'.⁵⁷

10.43 Professor Andrew Goldsmith, Flinders University, observed the challenges facing the AFP in preparing officers for international deployments:

I know of no other single police force in the world that has had to respond in such a way across areas which, if we are to be completely frank, are not

50 AFP, International Deployment, International Deployment FAQ, http://www.afp.gov.au/international/IDG/idg_faq.html#training (accessed 6 March 2008).

51 AFP, International Deployment, Pre-deployment training, http://www.afp.gov.au/international/IDG/pre-deployment_training (accessed 30 June 2008).

52 AFP, International Deployment, Pre-deployment training, http://www.afp.gov.au/international/IDG/pre-deployment_training (accessed 30 June 2008).

53 *Submission 28*, pp. 11–12.

54 AFP, answer to written question on notice 12, 25 July 2007.

55 AFP, answer to question on notice 9, 25 July 2007.

56 AFP, answer to written question on notice 7, 25 July 2007.

57 Assistant Commissioner Paul Jevtovic, quoted in Juani O'Reilly, 'Policing the neighbourhood and keeping peace in the Pacific', *Platypus Magazine*, Edition 96, September 2007, p. 12; AFP, answers to written questions on notice 9 and 12, 25 July 2007.

just about policing; they are about community development and broader social development. A police officer from Belconnen is not necessarily naturally well-prepared to do capacity development in Baucau, East Timor.⁵⁸

10.44 In an attempt to foster situational awareness and help manage the challenges associated with preparing officers for international deployments in low-resource settings, the AFP has established an innovative training complex at Majura, ACT. The Wanggirrali Ngurrumbai Centre includes a site which simulates village or town conditions in a developing country. Various training scenarios are utilised to replicate deployment environments and include: a general store, burning buildings, exploded vehicles, roaming animals, limited toileting facilities and erratic water and power supply. The site also has a CCTV capacity which can be used to film recruits for training and development purposes.⁵⁹

10.45 During and after the pre-deployment training, police officers have time to decide if they want to go ahead with overseas deployment. Assistant Commissioner Walters explained:

They go through the predeployment training and into, as best as we can create here, the operating environment they will be working in. We have had instances of people self-selecting themselves out of deployment because, having put themselves in that environment, they realise, 'Maybe this is not what I thought it was going to be.' We think that is a positive.⁶⁰

10.46 Assistant Commissioner Walters noted that so far the AFP has had 'sufficient interest' in voluntary terms but that '[t]here is scope for the commissioner to direct people to undertake duties'.⁶¹

58 *Committee Hansard*, 20 August 2007, p. 55.

59 Assistant Commissioner Paul Jevtovic, 'IDG—one year on', *Platypus Magazine*, June 2005, p. 31; AFP Commissioner Mick Keelty, 'Opening of Australian Federal Police International Training Complex', 23 June 2005, https://www.afp.gov.au/media/national_media/national_speeches/2005/opening_of_australian_federal_police_international_training_complex.html (accessed 18 April 2008).

60 *Committee Hansard*, 25 July 2007, p. 15.

61 *Committee Hansard*, 25 July 2007, p. 29.

AFP—training for peacekeeping operations



AFP's Wanggirrali Ngurrumbai Centre, Majura, ACT (image courtesy AFP).



AFP pre-deployment training exercise, Wanggirrali Ngurrumbai Centre, Majura, ACT (image courtesy AFP).



AFP pre-deployment training exercise, Wanggirrali Ngurrumbai Centre, Majura, ACT (image courtesy AFP).

Adequacy of pre-deployment training

10.47 During the inquiry, many witnesses praised the way in which the AFP prepares and trains its officers to meet the growing demand for their services in peacekeeping and the high standards they have achieved in such a short period.⁶² Mr Norman Webber, UN Police Association of Australia (UNPAA), thought that the AFP 'have turned out one of the best, if not the best, UN policing groups in the world'.⁶³ Associate Professor Wainwright agreed with this assessment, saying that the IDG:

...is at the cutting edge of policing, stabilisation and post-conflict reconstruction and capacity-building operations at a time when internationally there are far too few civilian police to deploy to such operations and to meet the need which is there.⁶⁴

10.48 While some submitters to the inquiry regarded the AFP's performance as very positive, particularly the recent improvements since the formation of the IDG, they

62 See for example Professor Apthorpe and Mr Townsend, *Submission 32*, p. 4; and Professor Goldsmith, *Committee Hansard*, 20 August 2007, p. 55.

63 *Committee Hansard*, 6 September 2007, p. 12.

64 *Committee Hansard*, 20 August 2007, p. 1.

saw room for improvement through further consolidation and expansion.⁶⁵ The main area of concern was in coordination and cooperation particularly with the ADF and in language and cultural awareness training. These matters are dealt with in Chapters 11, 14 and 18. The PFA stated that it is 'satisfied that pre-deployment training meets all agreed protocols provided such training is regularly re-assessed'.⁶⁶

10.49 On this matter of scope for improvement, the committee notes, in particular, the efforts that the AFP is taking to ensure that it is getting independent evaluation of its performance. There are a number of projects underway, including a joint venture with Flinders University and the Australian National University (ANU) on a three-year evaluation called 'Policing the Neighbourhood'. Commissioner Keelty noted that one of the preliminary findings of this project helped in the development of a more focused course of training for our own police, particularly on human rights, on language and coaching skills.⁶⁷ The AFP is also collaborating with the University of Queensland in the development of performance measures to assist the AFP assess its contributions to peacekeeping operations.⁶⁸

Committee view

10.50 The committee commends the AFP for its pre-deployment training which, it believes, equips AFP personnel to assist other nations build capacity in the area of law and order. It notes, in particular, the AFP's open and flexible approach to developing new ways to improve its effectiveness, especially through independent evaluation of its performance. The IDG and its innovative training programs also provide a model for other countries.

Training in health, safety and wellbeing

10.51 Training for health, safety and wellbeing is also an important part of the IDG's pre-deployment preparation. This training is based on and exceeds the requirements set by the UN and includes safety and first aid training and AIDS and HIV awareness. Participants are also provided with literature on these matters.⁶⁹

10.52 A medical examination is part of the international recruitment process. Its purpose is to identify 'any medical condition for which a further risk assessment or advice may be required' and to ensure that all medical procedures (examinations,

65 See for example, Major General Ford, *Submission 4*, p. 2. He suggested that lessons from community policing be incorporated into IDG training because individual and collective skills learned in community policing would be useful in peacekeeping missions.

66 *Submission 14*, p. 12.

67 AFP Commissioner Mick Keelty, Speech, Law Council of Australia, 35th Annual Legal Convention, 23 March 2007.

68 *Submission 28*, p. 11.

69 AFP, answer to written question on notice 13, 25 July 2007.

laboratory and vaccinations) are carried out in a timely manner.⁷⁰ Tests are also run to determine the suitability of an officer for overseas deployment. Assistant Commissioner Walters acknowledged that an AFP officer about to be deployed is making a significant commitment. He said:

[I]t is a big decision for officers to make and to say, 'If I'm going to do a 100-week deployment in the IDG, for a fair amount of time, what would be nearly a two-year period, I'm going to be away from my family'.⁷¹

10.53 The AFP conducts psychological testing and a range of 'other predeployment processes' to make sure that people, before they deploy, are medically and psychologically capable of undertaking the deployment.⁷²

Concerns relating to training and preparedness

10.54 While submitters were positive about AFP preparedness, several issues were raised which go to both the effectiveness of the officer performing his or her duty on deployment as well as safety issues. They concern unsworn officers performing the duties of sworn officers and alleged breaches of safeguards with regard to the use of arms.

Sworn and unsworn officers

10.55 Although the AFP is giving considerable attention to the training requirements of its members, the committee received a suggestion that unsworn police officers were performing duties that only sworn officers should undertake.

10.56 Mr Mark Burgess, CEO, PFA, noted that on a number of occasions, concerns had been raised about the lack of distinction between the role that a police officer, a protective service officer and an administration person is to perform on a deployment.⁷³ His concern was about the safety of police officers and protective service officers in situations where an officer was performing a function for which he or she was not fully trained. With regard to unsworn officers on deployment, he explained:

...they do not have the full training of a fully sworn police officer. We would argue that there is a duty of care, on behalf of not only the AFP commissioner but all commissioners who provide police officers to these deployments, to ensure that their officers are working side by side in policing functions with officers who are fully trained. We do not want to see a situation where police officers are working side by side with people

70 AFP, International Deployment, International Deployment FAQ, http://www.afp.gov.au/international/IDG/idg_faq.html (accessed 30 June 2008).

71 *Committee Hansard*, 25 July 2007, p. 15.

72 *Committee Hansard*, 25 July 2007, p. 15.

73 *Committee Hansard*, 6 September 2007, p. 11.

who are not fully sworn, not fully trained, but who, for all intents and purposes, from a visual perspective, look like police officers.⁷⁴

10.57 On the matter of unsworn officers, the AFP advised the committee that:

IDG Peacekeeping missions are structured through analysis of the roles, tasks and any constraints that have been set by the mounting authority; for example the United Nations. There is not a reliance on retired or unsworn personnel; rather IDG contributions are based on mission need and in the case of RAMSI this is achieved through a combination of sworn, unsworn and former retired members.⁷⁵

10.58 The AFP also noted that 'Unsworn AFP members are clearly distinguishable from sworn staff as their uniform incorporates a distinctive coloured shirt (taupe) which is mandatory dress in mission under Commander's Orders'.⁷⁶

Committee view

10.59 The committee notes the concerns raised about unsworn officers taking on the tasks of sworn officers. Apart from the one allegation, it had no other indication that unsworn officers were performing the duties of sworn officers. The committee notes the AFP's assurances that there is not a reliance on retired or unsworn personnel in peacekeeping operations.

Safety and bearing arms

10.60 While the vast majority of members of the AFP perform routine policing functions, they also face particularly tense situations during peacekeeping operations and may be called on to use force during their deployment.

10.61 Clearly, training for the safe and appropriate use of firearms—the degree of force required, when and against whom to use weapons—is an important consideration for AFP's international deployments. The AFP provided the committee with details about the weapons competency procedures which indicate that there is a robust certification system in place.

10.62 Because of the requirement that an officer have at least four years of policing experience for international deployments, all sworn AFP officers have weapons competency and are 'certified as use of force qualified under AFP Commissioner's Order 3'. To obtain weapons competency, police officers need to pass a written test that 'probes the member's understanding of police powers and procedures', and practical tests to establish 'proficiency in the use of firearms, batons, handcuffs and

74 *Committee Hansard*, 6 September 2007, p. 10.

75 AFP, answer to written question on notice 1(a), 25 July 2007.

76 AFP, answer to written question on notice 1(b), 25 July 2007.

OC [oleoresin capsicum] spray'.⁷⁷ Competency needs to be re-certified every 12 months. If a member fails to re-certify, he or she is no longer deemed deployable.⁷⁸

10.63 Assistant Commissioner Walters noted that 'officers carry firearms very much for the protection of the officer, for the protection of life and limb, effectively'.⁷⁹ He explained that, depending on the mission, the AFP has in place internal orders that relate to the use of weapons. Commissioner's Order 3 governs the use of firearms, and there may also 'be other mission-specific orders or directives...that might dictate when and how weapons might be used'.⁸⁰

10.64 The riots in Timor-Leste in June 2006 highlighted the importance of sound training in the use of weapons during periods of high level threats. Commander Lancaster explained in detail the situation in which AFP officers found themselves:

...it was still high risk right through the six months that we were there. There were occasions when we would have almost daily incidents of rock-and dart-throwing. Occasionally there were times where it just went 'off'...for want of a better word—for two or three days. On those occasions we probably had two incidents where we discharged firearms. It was the only time and they were only ever used as warning shots—basically, as a last resort.⁸¹

10.65 He also noted the important role that the ORG had in this highly volatile situation where the general duties police were out of their vehicles and in a very dangerous life-threatening situation until the tactical people, the ORG and the GNR (Portuguese National Republican Guard), turned up to assist.⁸²

10.66 He used AFP experiences in Solomon Islands in 2006 to highlight further the importance of good judgement based on sound training on the appropriate and proper use of force:

...being general duties, when we turned up to events where people were hammering each other with rocks, we had to have the standard operating procedure of not feeling compelled to go down there and deal with it straightaway. We learnt to make sure we had the right tools, the people and the support and to get the tactical people in order to go down and deal with the situation more efficiently. We found that worked better. Also, we had state police within our ranks, and these people had been shotgun trained in their home state. We brought in training from BLP and AFP shotgun training and gave them the capability to use the beanbag rounds, which are

77 AFP, answer to written question on notice 4, 25 July 2007.

78 AFP, answer to written question on notice 4, 25 July 2007.

79 *Committee Hansard*, 25 July 2007, p. 19.

80 *Committee Hansard*, 25 July 2007, p. 18.

81 *Committee Hansard*, 25 July 2007, p. 19.

82 *Committee Hansard*, 25 July 2007, p. 19.

less lethal, within their general duties. This was not used so they would get themselves into trouble; it was used so they would get themselves out of trouble, and that proved to be very effective as well.⁸³

10.67 Despite sound training and Commissioner's Orders in place, World Vision Australia referred to what it believed were shortcomings in pre-deployment preparations with regard to the application of force. It raised allegations pertaining to the use of force in RAMSI, including that some IDG members might be using weapons without having undertaken either approved training or a validation program to ensure their competency.⁸⁴

10.68 It also raised concerns about a training presentation on the use of less than lethal force, in which it understands training was given by a person not certified to deliver it and unacceptable, possibly illegal, information was provided.⁸⁵

10.69 The AFP informed the committee that the Professional Standards investigations had inquired into these allegations and in some instances found shortcomings, which the AFP have addressed.⁸⁶

Committee view

10.70 The committee notes the AFP requirements for weapons competency. It also notes the suggestion made to the inquiry that there may have been breaches of the rules governing the use of firearms. It has taken account of the AFP's assurances that its officers undergo thorough training and appropriate certification and that the alleged breaches were investigated and, where necessary, remedied. Yet, it is concerned that these issues have arisen. The committee urges the AFP to ensure that all weapons deployed on a peacekeeping operation have been approved by the Commissioner for use during the operation and all AFP members on a peacekeeping operation who are permitted to use particular weapons are fully qualified in their use.

10.71 The committee did not take evidence on the robustness of the Professional Standards investigations that looked into the allegations of inappropriate or improper use of weapons. It takes this opportunity to stress the importance of ensuring that investigations into alleged breaches of safety rules and regulations are independent and transparent. Furthermore, that there are appropriate reporting procedures in place that encourage members of the AFP to report breaches of safety rules or lapses in safety practices.

83 *Committee Hansard*, 25 July 2007, p. 19. BLP Training and Services provides training and services in relation to munitions, hostile environments, police and military tactics, etc.

84 *Submission 19*, p. 5.

85 *Submission 19*, p. 5.

86 For a full description of these matters see: AFP, answer to written question on notice 9, 25 July 2007; *Submission 19*, p. 4.

Conclusion

10.72 The AFP has taken major steps to improve its preparedness for peacekeeping operations and is continuing to expand to meet future requirements. It is recruiting to increase the number of IDG staff and looking to improving its logistical capability by procuring new vehicles. It has developed a pre-deployment training program that is both comprehensive and innovative. The AFP is also committed to open and independent evaluation of its performance as peacekeepers, showing a willingness to embrace change and reform to ensure that it remains an effective peacekeeping force. The committee considers that the AFP is well prepared for international deployments and acknowledges that its performance is of a very high standard.