

Commissioner's Overview



I have much pleasure in presenting the Annual Report of the Queensland Police Service for the 2000-01 financial year. This is the first Annual Report to be issued since my appointment as Commissioner in November 2000, and I would like to take this opportunity to record my thanks, and appreciation, for the significant contribution made to policing, and to the Queensland Police Service, by my predecessor Commissioner Jim O'Sullivan.

In 1987 Mr O'Sullivan was appointed to head the investigation team seconded to the Fitzgerald Inquiry. He retired thirteen years later having served as the Commissioner for an eight year period from 1992 to 2000. His professionalism, dedication, leadership and vision for the Service drove the changes that took place in the post-Fitzgerald period to the structure, operations and culture of the Service. As a direct consequence of the efforts of Mr O'Sullivan and those who supported him, the Queensland Police Service has evolved into a highly effective and respected organisation that we can all be proud of.

Under Mr O'Sullivan's leadership the Service made a strong commitment to maintaining high ethical standards. I intend to continue to reinforce this commitment over the coming years.

Over the past decade the organisation has grown rapidly in line with Government policy and the 10-Year Staffing Plan. The Service is working towards achieving a total police strength of 9,100 officers by 2005, and to this end, recruits and trains around 600 new officers each year to meet growth and attrition. While this heavy emphasis on expanding the size of the Service has presented a number of challenges, the outcome of these efforts will be a 42% increase in the number of police officers over 10 years. Complementing this has been an increase in the number of civilian staff members supporting policing operations. As a result, the Service now has in excess of 11,000 employees providing policing and supporting services throughout the State.

Significant advances have also been made in the technologies available to enhance police work, including the recent development of DNA matching. We are now at the beginning of the 21st Century and, while we do not know what lies ahead, there will clearly be new challenges and opportunities. As a result of the firm foundations that have been laid, the Queensland Police Service is well positioned to meet new challenges and to take full advantage of new opportunities.

I intend to build on these foundations and have a personal vision for the Service focussing on four key areas: Professionalism, People, Performance and Partnerships.

The theme for this, my first Annual Report, is partnerships. I intend to highlight the three remaining key areas of my personal vision for the Service in future Annual Reports. However, as this is the International Year of Volunteers, it is timely to reflect on the strong partnerships that have been formed with volunteers and volunteer organisations, and the valuable contribution that these partnerships continue to make to our organisation.

The Queensland Police Service is extremely privileged to have the support of a strong volunteer workforce. Our volunteers support operational police in facilitating a range of community crime prevention, liaison and victim support activities. They serve tirelessly on numerous committees, organise or assist with school and youth activities, raise funds and provide support to others in times of need.

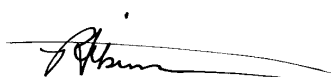
The contribution made to policing by volunteers and volunteer organisations should not be understated. The number of people involved in Neighbourhood Watch and other Watch Committees, Police Citizens Youth Clubs, Blue Light Committees, Crime Stoppers, Safety House, Volunteers in Policing, Cell Visitor Schemes and the Queensland Police Museum reflects the outstanding contribution made by volunteers to day to day policing. There are also volunteers who give their own time and resources to help the community through Police Legacy, Community Supporting Police and Police Blue Heart Awards. I am extremely grateful for the ongoing support provided by these volunteers and I am pleased to have the opportunity to express my thanks and appreciation formally in this Annual Report.

The Service has achieved a great deal over the past twelve months. It is not possible to highlight all of the excellent work that has been accomplished. However, I would like to briefly mention the professional manner in which members of the Service planned for and provided security services for major public events, particularly the Olympic Games.

The success and safe conduct of the activities in Queensland related to the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games, both the Torch Relay across the State, and the events held in Brisbane, was the result of effective long-term planning by the Service. I would congratulate all staff involved in these memorable activities.

While these highlights demonstrate the commitment, dedication and professionalism of members of the Service, the inherent dangers of policing were also tragically reflected this year with the loss on duty of two highly respected police officers; Senior Constable Norm Watt and Senior Constable Dave Shean. It is important for us all to remember that police frequently risk their own lives when responding to problems in the community. The loss of these officers is felt deeply, not only by their families and friends but also by all members of the organisation they served.

It is always difficult to predict what lies ahead. However, I have no illusions that some of the challenges I will confront over the coming years as Commissioner will be significant. Whatever they may be, I am confident that the Service, in partnership with the community, has the capacity to respond effectively. I hold this view because of the faith and confidence I have in the quality of the people who make up the Queensland Police Service and the willingness demonstrated by members of the Queensland community to contribute to the achievement of positive policing outcomes through volunteering their time and efforts to helping police in their task of keeping Queensland a safe and pleasant State in which to live, work and visit.



Bob Atkinson APM
Commissioner



*Supporting the community:
Since 1996, members of the
Service participating in Bluey
Day have raised more than
\$850,000 for treatment
programs and research into
childhood cancer and other
life threatening illnesses.*