

commissioner's overview



The 2003 *Annual Report* is the last of a series of three such publications that have highlighted the four key areas of my personal vision for the Queensland Police Service: *Performance, Professionalism, People and Partnerships*. Of the two previous reports, one focused on People and the other on Partnerships. This year's *Annual Report* focuses on the remaining two themes: Performance and Professionalism.

It is critical to the future success of the Service that we continually strive to improve our performance and our professionalism. In order to strengthen our focus on operational performance, I introduced formal Operational Performance Reviews (OPRs) as a trial in 2001–02. These reviews have now been in place for two years and have proved an effective performance management tool. OPRs have become central to the Service's strategic management and operational planning. The 29 district-level OPRs systematically examine, analyse and review key policing issues in each district, and focus on developing effective policing in response to these issues. The structure of the OPRs is closely tied to Problem-Oriented and Partnership Policing (POPP), a proactive approach that looks beyond simply reacting to crime in order to develop strategies to address its causes. The OPR process recognises the benefits that can be achieved by engaging other agencies and the community in partnerships to develop collaborative responses to policing problems.

Recent performance has been encouraging, with downward trends in a number of crime categories. For example the statistics illustrate that the rate of homicide, unlawful entry, armed robbery, unarmed robbery and motor vehicle theft are at their lowest level for the past nine years. The rate of assault in Queensland was 31 percent below the national average, robbery was 48 percent below, unlawful entry was 8 percent below and motor vehicle theft was 26 percent below.

To maintain these positive trends, the Service must ensure that it prepares itself to respond effectively to new forms of crime, and any additional challenges that may arise as the twenty-first century unfolds. As the globalisation of communities and economies advances, so do opportunities for associated crime and other invasive influences, including terrorism, high-technology crime and illicit transnational activities such as money laundering, people smuggling and drug and firearms trafficking.

In response to these external influences, and the tragic events in New York on 11 September 2001, a new national framework was agreed to by the Leaders' Summit on Terrorism and Multi Jurisdictional Crime in April 2002, to guide Australia's response to terrorism and transnational crime. The need for a coordinated national response was again highlighted just six months later, in October 2002, by the terrorist attacks in Bali that resulted in the death or injury of many Australians.

Professionalism is the second theme of this year's *Annual Report* and another key component of my personal vision for the Service.

A highlight of the year was the 7th Retraining Conference of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) National Academy Asia Pacific Chapter, hosted by the Queensland Government in May 2003 at the Gold Coast. This brought to Queensland the opportunity to examine world-class training in managing and responding to the threat of terrorism. The conference, the largest law enforcement conference ever held in Australia, involved senior

executives and key personnel from diverse agencies and organisations from a broad range of countries associated with countering terrorist threats.

The professionalism of the Service was also recognised in the 2002 Premier's Awards for Excellence in Public Sector Management. The Service won the Leadership Excellence Category with a project focussing on minimising alcohol abuse in Indigenous communities in Mount Isa, Doomadgee, Mornington Island and Normanton. The Service was also a finalist in 'Focusing on Our People' for its Volunteers in Policing (VIP) Program.

Investing strongly in education and training is one of a number of strategies employed by the Service to ensure the professionalism of its members and the quality of the services they deliver. In support of this, high levels of accountability are demanded by the organisation, which are maintained through a strong focus on complaints management and the implementation of client service standards.

In addition to highlighting some of the key achievements of the Queensland Police Service during the 2002–03 financial year, this Annual Report also presents the department's audited financial statements, and discharges statutory obligations that arise under s.39 of the *Financial Administration and Audit Act 1977*.

The Queensland Police Service delivers policing 24 hours a day to almost four million Queenslanders and the many visitors to the State. These services have to be delivered across a land mass of 1.7 million square kilometres, or around one quarter of Australia. The delivery of policing services is predominantly, and most visibly, undertaken by the Service's 8,434 police officers, supported by 3,257 staff members who provide administrative, specialist and expert support to policing operations. In line with the Service's 10-year staffing plan, the number of police in Queensland will continue to grow by around 300 per year until 2005.

As at 30 June 2003, there were 438 police stations, 33 Neighbourhood Police Beats and 45 Police Beat Shopfronts across the State. The Service's vehicle fleet consisted of 1,696 cars, 87 motorcycles and 63 other vehicles including 'booze buses'. The Service's four fixed-wing aircraft recorded 2,450 flight hours, and a fleet of 53 vessels patrolled Queensland waters. The 22 horses in the Mounted Unit and 64 police dogs were also used in a range of policing operations. The Service continued to maintain its own secure digital radio network and an extensive information technology network, together with substantial training assets including Academies at Oxley and Townsville.

It is from this extensive resource base that the Service responds to calls for service and local law and order issues. This is the core business of the Queensland Police Service. Performance in this area is directly linked to the achievement of the Government Priority 'Safer and More Supportive Communities'.

As events continue to unfold both locally and on the international stage, it is clear that maintaining public order and community safety are issues of great importance to all Queenslanders. The Service remains committed to the achievement of safer and more supportive communities. To this end, the organisation will continue its strong focus on performance management and professionalism.

I would like to close by formally acknowledging the contribution of a number of members of the senior executive who retired during the period covered by this Annual Report. In August 2002, former Deputy Commissioner Ron McGibbon, APM, retired from the Service after a career that spanned some 43 years. Mr McGibbon made a significant contribution to the operations and management of the Service, characterised by strategic leadership, enthusiasm and dedication. In addition, Assistant Commissioner Graham Williams, APM, Assistant Commissioner Andrew Kidcaff, APM, and the Director of Human Resources, Mr David Gill, also retired during the year. I would like to acknowledge the significant contribution made by these four officers and thank them for their dedication and commitment to the Queensland Police Service.

Bob Atkinson APM
Commissioner