

SURF S@FE

ON A WAVE OF SUCCESS

Officers from the Queensland Police Service child protection unit – Taskforce Argos have won major recognition in Child Protection Week awards announced at State Parliament recently.

The detectives received the Education Initiative Award for their cutting edge Surf Safely Campaign which provides on-line personal safety tips for children using the internet.

The dedicated team of detectives at Task Force Argos have played a leading role in establishing strong international networks with other law enforcement agencies.

This enables the sharing of information with authorities in the United States, Europe and the United Kingdom High Tech Crime Centre – leading to the tracking of offenders across international borders.

In addition to these networks, officers continue to maintain a presence on the web by conducting covert operations in internet chat rooms.

“We see daily, examples of the Internet being used by offenders to prey on children so it is heartening to see the Internet also being used by children to seek out help when they are in abusive situations wherever they may be,” said Task Force Argos Detective Superintendent Peter Crawford.

Educating children and their parents about how to take preventative measures is also a major focus of Task Force Argos as is other investigations into extra-familial paedophilia (child abuse that is not committed by family members).

“Working in the Child Safety and Sexual Crime Group takes extreme dedication and professionalism,” Detective Superintendent Crawford said.

“It’s a personally demanding place to work especially for people who have children.”

The tips are based on a simple five R’s mnemonic:

Realise – people you chat with may not be who they say they are.

Refuse – requests for personal information and ensure your internet profile is private.

Review – your contacts, it’s not “kewl” to have contacts you don’t know.

Respond – quickly if you feel uncomfortable while on-line. Close the program, tell your parents or a trusted friend.

Report – any suspicious or dangerous on-line contact to police.

The Queensland Police Service Child Safety and Sexual Crime Group consists of Task Force Argos, the Child Sexual Assault Investigation Unit, the Child Protection and Investigation Unit and Child Protection Offender Register.

Task Force Argos is recognised as a leader in its field for monitoring paedophilia activities on the internet.

