

# PSRT STANDS OUT FROM THE CROWD

*By Louise Allen, Media and Public Affairs Branch*

The Public Safety Response Team (PSRT) is responsible for supporting police operations involving demonstrations, crowd control, court security, VIP protection and waterborne operations.

Sergeant Owen Law, PSRT said officers had to remain vigilant and alert at all times when policing large crowds.

The community has an expectation that police will deal with people who are responsible for unruly behaviour, and PSRT officers are particularly skilled in this area.

Apart from protests, PSRT officers also attend major events such as the Indy grand prix, the Gympie Music Muster, New



PSRT officers demonstrate protective formations, one of the crowd management techniques they employ.

Year's Eve celebrations, the Whitsunday Fun Races and Brisbane's Riverfire.

Sergeant Law said PSRT officers attended jobs throughout the state to assist general duties police.

"While we are based in Brisbane, PSRT officers travel extensively. Officers have attended both rural and urban locations from the Gulf of Carpentaria to the South Australian and Northern Territory borders.

"We provide tactical advice and assist in the planning of major operations that may attract large crowds.

"People have the right to feel safe whether they are attending a protest or a festival. Our job is simply to keep the peace," he said.

"We are specially equipped to respond in the interest of public safety to instances of confrontation, violence and other duties



which exceed normal police responses.

"For these reasons the members undergo a high level of training in order to provide them with the skills and knowledge they need to effectively carry out the required tasks."

PSRT officers operate in a team environment while performing high-risk duties. They are trained to operate in arrest, shield and close personal protection teams.

Given the wide variety of jobs PSRT officers attend, Sergeant Law said it was imperative for the unit to be multi-skilled.

"We have trained divers, search and rescue coordinators, explosive searchers,

planning, and disaster management officers as well as officers with waterborne capabilities.

"Members of PSRT also provide some instruction by way of specialist courses to general duties police and other members of the Specialist Services Branch.

"The incidents we respond to usually attract a significant amount of public interest so it is important we act with expertise and the utmost professionalism," Sergeant Law said. ■

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