

Commissioner's foreword



This edition of the *Police Vedette* is dedicated to the provision of forensic science services in Queensland. It includes an overview of how forensic science assists operational police in criminal investigations and provides information on the latest developments in the forensic sciences in Queensland.

Forensic science provides significant value to the criminal justice system and with the advent of new technologies and legislation, forensic science is becoming more effective in the Queensland Police Service's fight against crime.

The latest developments in DNA technology and the introduction of complementary DNA legislation by the Queensland Government in 2000 highlight this effectiveness. DNA from biological material at crime scenes can now identify a specific individual as a suspect in a crime. Thousands of DNA person samples have been collected from convicted offenders and as they are analysed, these samples are matching crime scene samples and enabling police to solve crimes including unlawful entry, serious assault and homicide.

DNA is only one important part of the forensic sciences and has been given considerable exposure as it has developed in recent times. Traditional disciplines such as fingerprints, forensic chemistry and ballistics are equally important. In Queensland, more than 4,000 offenders are being identified each year using fingerprint technology.

As in many disciplines, forensic science is about teamwork and partnerships. Forensic practitioners from many disciplines, from scenes of crime officers to laboratory scientists, work together to analyse and piece together many types of evidence to help solve crimes. The majority of these practitioners work in multi-disciplinary partnerships from different organisations within the Queensland Government, including the Queensland Police Service and Queensland Health.

While it is important to highlight the achievements of forensic science, it is also important to look at these achievements in perspective. Many crimes are solved through hard work and dedication by many police officers with assistance from members of the public. Information provided by people within the community will always be essential to the investigation of crime, however the combination of forensic science, investigating police and the community working together makes Queensland a safer place.

The future of forensic science in Queensland is very exciting. New methods, science and technologies, including the application of information systems and databases, will enable police services to use forensic science information more effectively. This information will continue to be used more and more in an intelligence led policing approach, focusing investigations and enabling police to better manage resources for increased outcomes.

I hope that you enjoy this edition of the *Police Vedette* and find the articles informative and interesting. I also would like to take this opportunity to thank forensic science practitioners within Queensland for their dedication, professionalism and service to the community.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bob Atkinson', written over a horizontal line.

Bob Atkinson APM
Commissioner