

Policing Foreign Shores: Cyprus 1964

The Queensland Police Service has always had a strong tradition of supporting overseas deployment of Police to the world's trouble spots. In 1964, the Australian Government responded quickly to the United Nations request for Civilian Police in Cyprus after violence erupted on the streets. All six Australian states and both territories supplied officers for Cyprus. All officers were sworn in as seconded members of the Commonwealth Police Force and served as members of the United Nations Police Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP).

The first contingent included five Queensland Police officers. Australian Police keepers were unarmed except when escorting payrolls. Peace keeping generally involved continuous cooperation and liaison with Cyprian Police, and included observation at checkpoints and in sensitive areas, mobile patrols and convoy escorts. It was a dangerous job. The final group of Queensland Police went to Cyprus as part of the seventh contingent between 1970 and 1971. Thirty-nine Queensland Police officers were deployed to serve as members of UNFICYP between 1964 and 1971.

Today Queensland Police officers, as seconded members of Australia Federal Police, have proven their metal under very hostile and dangerous conditions in places such as East Timor and the Solomon Islands, and have won international recognition for their peace keeping work in these troubled communities



The first contingent of Australian Police arrive at the Nicosia Airport, Cyprus, 1964.