



BLUESTAR



TATTOO TABOO:
Is ink a
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issue?



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to government

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Magazine Cover

AFPA members take a stand against the AFP Uniform Policy regarding visible tattoos

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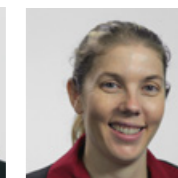
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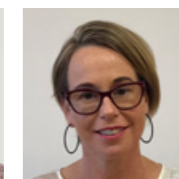
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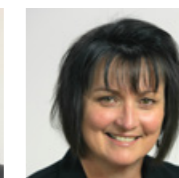
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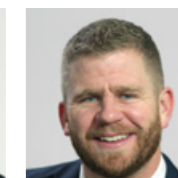
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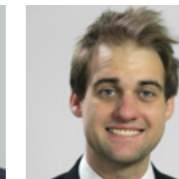
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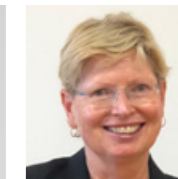
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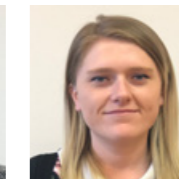
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Black Dog Ride
Supporting those with PTSD



Australian Police Rugby Fever
Our members take to the pitch



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Tattoo Taboo
Is it a workplace issue?

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Angela Smith, President



President
Angela Smith

Your mental health Our concern

- **Member Musters**
- **AFP Executive Level Enterprise Agreement**
- **Uniform Policy – Tattoos**
- **ACT Integrity Commission**
- **Senate Inquiry into the mental health of first responders – AFPA Submission**
- **Federal Election – AFPA Policy Document**

▶ Since early this year, Graeme and I have been conducting AFPA musters around Australia at stations, offices and airports.

We've spoken to a large portion of the membership, both in groups and to individuals, and it's a truly valuable touchpoint.

The themes are similar wherever we go: how the EA is working, the next EA, promotions processes, the Adjudication Panel outcomes, and, more recently, tattoos.

We have lobbied the commissioner to move along with the AFP Executive Level Enterprise Agreement (ELEA), as the current agreement expires in less than six months (February 2019). After waiting a month for a reply, Deputy Commissioner Neil Gaughan was appointed lead negotiator for the ELEA. We have also made representations to NMPSS to have the ELEA and the general agreement line up. The effect of this, from our point of view, is that it gets buy-in from a larger cohort as well as saving time and money by having one bargaining process.

The tattoo issue has created an extraordinary amount of concern by a large proportion of our membership. As you all know, in August the AFP suddenly changed the uniform policy in relation to tattoos from nothing offensive to covering up all tattoos. The response by AFPA members was epic. We spoke to the AFP executive several times and requested they wind back this policy to its previous iteration. We were told no. You then saw our email which states where we stand.

We disagree with such a conservative stance, which is out of touch with society. The days where tattoos only appeared on the skin of crims and old salty sea dogs are long gone.

Sleeve tattoos are now commonplace on both men and women, and anyone who is still shocked or irked at the sight of a tattoo can relegate themselves to history. Get with the times. Interestingly, the national media has expressed great interest in this topic, so watch that space. You may also be interested to know the Australian War Memorial has put together a series on tattoos and war.

A standout issue has popped up lately relating to ACT Policing. I'm very concerned with the ACT government's election promise to stand up an integrity commission that is touted to include ACT Policing members. This is a ludicrous situation. ACT police, under the AFP's auspices, already come under three layers of oversight: the AFP's Professional Standards (PRS), the Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity (ACLEI) and the Commonwealth Ombudsman. To put a fourth layer over ACT Policing brings about an unworkable and extremely onerous process. And which oversight body has precedent? There could be multiple investigations running concurrently. I hate to imagine the stress this will place on members, especially if it's a vexatious complaint. A PRS investigation can take years to finalise as it is, and hangs over your head like a dark cloud.

Where's the evidence to suggest ACT police are corrupt and require such a regime?

Where's the evidence to suggest ACT police are corrupt and require such a regime? To include ACT Policing in this commission will be an arduous one for the local government. Firstly, the Australian Government Territory (Self Government) Act 1988 must be amended. Section 23 excludes the power to make laws for the provision of AFP police services to the ACT. Secondly, AFP employees are appointed under federal legislation; this integrity commission is for ACT public servants. ACT police are not ACT public servants, we are constables of police of a federally funded body. Under the contract between the AFP and ACT government, the government utilises 'enabling' staff, that is, forensics, tactical response and so on. How does the commission envisage they are included under this regime? And if the public is under any illusion that we protect our own, they are very much mistaken. The AFP has instilled a culture of dobbing in your mates and colleagues over the slightest of mistakes and misdemeanours. And if you don't report something however minor it seems, you will then face an investigation for failing to report.

The AFPA will continue to fight to prevent the inclusion of ACT Policing in the ACT's integrity commission.

In March this year, the Senate referred an inquiry into the role of Commonwealth, state and territory governments in addressing the high rates of mental health conditions experienced by first responders, emergency service workers and volunteers.

Given the focus we at the AFPA continue to have on mental health and wellbeing, we jumped at the opportunity to provide a submission to this inquiry.

A copy of our submission can be found in this edition and we look forward to the opportunity to appear at a public hearing to reiterate our position on matters contained in the submission and provide additional insight and evidence. A big thanks to those members who provided feedback and evidence which was included as part of the submission. Recalling your experiences can be challenging, but with your assistance we are hopeful we can agitate for the change and support that is desperately needed.

Finally, as we move closer to the next federal election, together with your executive I'm committed to identifying key issues that will form the basis of our election policy document and lobbying efforts. Preparatory work is already underway to help shape this policy document and it will be provided to all political parties and independents.

We will encourage all politicians to support our proposals and ask each party to advise us of their policy commitments.

Once available, we will publish them for your information and examination prior to the election. ▶

A copy of the Association's submission can be found on pages 16-22

Top: Angela talks live on ABC Radio about the AFP Uniform Policy and Anti-Consorting laws

Bottom: Angela addressing the Canberra media about the ACT Integrity Commission





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VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Graeme Cooper, Vice President



Vice President Graeme Cooper

Regular items

We all belong to the Association for different reasons. Be it legal support, welfare assistance, industrial representation, insurance cover or lifestyle benefits, there is a compelling reason for membership for each AFP employee. I wanted to use my report in this edition of BlueStar to remind members of some of the membership benefits you might have forgotten about, and to highlight some of the new benefits we have recently added.

Here at the AFPA, we are always on the lookout for new opportunities to deliver even more value for your AFPA membership and I'm excited that in recent months we have been able to deliver new services exclusively for AFPA members. You should have recently received activation details for our member benefits program, Member Advantage. The program provides access to hundreds of discounts around the country for shopping, dining, leisure, travel, insurance, automotive and more. There are thousands of dollars' worth of savings to be had by using the Member Advantage program, including on everyday expenses like your groceries. If you haven't had a look at the benefits available through Member Advantage yet, I encourage you to do so. Our new partnership with Costco also provides over \$200 of discount vouchers for AFPA members to use in-store at Costco.

I am also excited to announce our new member referral program for AFPA members. One of our most difficult tasks is speaking with non-members to inform them of the benefits of membership. As an existing member, if you refer a non-member to the Association who joins and retains their membership for 12 months, we will refund you 25 percent of your membership fees for that year. You can refer up to four new members each year, in which case we will refund you all your fees for that year.

Life and trauma insurance cover and other welfare benefits are still an important part of the assistance we provide to all members. Our life insurance cover provides between \$100,000 - \$200,000 in benefits, depending on your membership tier. This cover is not medically underwritten and does not require details of your role in the AFP or the location to which you are deployed. Additional life insurance is available for purchase through our policy at very competitive premiums and the insurance arrangements can be continued if you were to leave the AFP.

Trauma (Critical Injury/Illness) insurance cover provides between \$10,000 and \$25,000 in benefits. The AFPA also helps with funeral, household and education expenses when a member dies. Injury and Illness Assistance is available if a member is facing the loss of their income and Severe Hardship Assistance can provide relief from severe financial hardship. All these benefits are available to you immediately upon joining the Association.

Legal support and industrial representation is provided to all members and delivered by our seven-member Legal and Industrial team. Our assistance for members through the PRS process starts before interview and involves attending interviews, providing natural justice responses and answering employment suitability questions. Legal matters which cannot be managed in-house are briefed out at AFPA expense. Last financial year, we approved more than \$500,000 in legal expenditure for members.

Critically important too is the advocacy we provide to improve the AFP for the benefit of all employees.

The mental health of our workforce is of significant concern and in this edition, you can read our submission to the Senate Committee enquiry into the management of employee mental health by first responder agencies. The manner in which AFP is funded is also an issue we will continue to agitate, particularly as we move toward the next federal election. Ultimately, that's why we belong to the AFPA - because we're all in this together.



LEGAL AND INDUSTRIAL

Michael Chilcott, Counsel

Michael Chilcott,
AFPA Counsel

Regular items

Workplace violence must never be tolerated

As my deadline loomed with the usual threats, the headlines of many media outlets were giving prominence to an incident that occurred on a football oval in Perth last weekend that resulted in a severe facial injury to an AFL player and the suspension for eight weeks of the person who inflicted that injury. The commentary surrounding the incident focused on many aspects, including the welfare of those involved, the role of the criminal law in sport and violence in sport.

▶ This was a workplace incident. It happened in the full view of a crowd of spectators numbering about 60,000 as well as a large television audience. It occurred amidst a contest in a sporting code, the Australian Football League, that clamours with other sporting leagues for the participation and interest of as many people as possible, including children. It presents as being reflective of our society. It both unites and divides our society in support or not of the various teams and the players who represent those teams.

Those players are offered as leaders and role models in our society. The attention and influence of these players mean that they are frequently engaged in community and charitable work. It is often said that what happens at the elite level – good, bad or indifferent – is replicated in junior competitions by young players emulating their heroes.

First and foremost, of course, they are skilled sportspeople. It was in this context that the incident occurred resulting in a severely broken jaw and numerous displaced teeth. It was an

act of violence that in modern sporting contests is rarely seen. No modern player rejoices in the nickname of "Captain Blood" as did Jack Dyer, a legend of the Richmond Football Club, whose fearsome exploits dominated the sport in the 1940s.

The injury occasioned in this most recent incident meant the suspension of the injured player's career for many months and some degree of permanent impairment. He is 18 years old.

This matter was taken before the AFL Tribunal. Admissions were made to the Tribunal which, was tasked to determine an appropriate penalty.

The Tribunal, in effect on behalf of the Australian Football League, decided that the assailant was to be suspended from participation in competition for eight weeks. However, there is no reason why he cannot continue to train with his colleagues, be supported by his club and supporters and, in time, return as a player or return to work.

The Tribunal took into account many factors including the serious nature of the incident, the serious injury that the assailant inflicted, the fact that the assailant had never been reported, fined or reprimanded in 175 games or seven seasons of senior football and the references attesting to his good character from "an abundance of people" such as school principals, peers, representatives of charities and his ex-coach.

The media has reported that the victim of the assault will not, despite some early speculation, ask for police to investigate the matter. However, it can be noted that if this assault had occurred in the community, outside the sporting contest, it is likely that the offender would be charged with assault causing grievous bodily harm and, in all likelihood, despite being a first offender, face a period of imprisonment.

Workplace violence or serious workplace misconduct can never be tolerated. It impacts on the health, well-being and morale of all involved and all who it directly and indirectly touches. Normally, a person who assaults another in the workplace can expect consequences from their employer and the criminal law.

If an AFP employee had conducted himself or herself in relation to another person in a manner similar to that which occurred in Perth last weekend either in the course of their duties or, I venture an opinion, on the sporting field, that police officer would find that he or she would be asked by the Commissioner to explain why their employment should not be terminated and, quite likely, face criminal charges. Before there are howls of protestation, let me quickly add that each case is different and that the Commissioner's actions would undoubtedly be based on the material that was brought before his investigators. But, really, would we expect otherwise?

If the facts were established on that available material, and putting the prospect of criminal charges to one side, it is quite likely that the Professional Standards Panel would look at that employee's future.

The PSP was introduced by the AFP as the body that considers the future of those who have been established to have committed 'Category 3' acts of misconduct.

We now know a little about the operations of the panel. Unlike the AFL Tribunal, we now know that the panel does not question the findings of fact that have been made by the investigators. The AFL Tribunal determines whether or not there has been misconduct by a player. The members of the panel might think that the evidence is ambiguous or barely supportive of the allegations of a breach of the Code of Conduct. Yet, there is no obligation, we are told, for the PSP to reject the findings of fact in these circumstances. The facts are only considered to determine the appropriate action that should be taken in respect of the employee.

In the AFL Tribunal, a good record and seniority is an important feature of the Tribunal's deliberations. In policing, seniority

tends to aggravate the misconduct. Colloquially, a person of that experience "should have known better". A non-existent PRS record, contrition or evidence of a change of behaviour is taken into account and the PSP may use it to mitigate the action that might have been taken in respect of the employee. However, do not assume it will. In our experience, there is little evidence from the PSP of compassion or empathy for a situation that the employee might have faced at the time of the actions that constituted the misconduct. Its focus has been the reputational interest of the AFP and not much else.

Unlike the AFL Tribunal, the PSP will not hear any oral submissions, it will accept only four character references (specifically, two relating to an employee's work and two private ones), contrition seems to play the deliberations of the panel, although its proceedings and deliberations are secretive - leading to the risk of gossip, rumour and innuendo.

The AFL player knew his future two days after the incident. Although there have been recent improvements, AFP employees to wait months to hear the outcome of the PRS investigation and the PSP decision. We are aware of one employee, who is suspended, and has not had a resolution of their matter after 11 months. In other cases, two or three years passed even though the officers were suspended. In one matter, further delay occurred because the AFP did not accept the adjudicator's decision that the evidence did not establish the allegation. The investigation continued. The evidence remained ambiguous, yet the employee was terminated. In this case, we have asked for reviews of the investigation. Yet, the Commissioner has shown no interest in doing so. This is despite the fact that the AFP did not actively defend an application we took to the Fair Work Commission.

The player who was suspended by the AFP Tribunal still, according to the media, has a future in his chosen profession. He is being wooed by other clubs with the prospect of no diminution in his remuneration. The AFP employee who is terminated will face the prospect of an enormous cost, personal, health and financial. Their security clearance will more than likely be impacted restricting employment opportunities.

Your Association urges the AFP to take great care when exercising the ultimate power of an employer by terminating a person's employment. Termination should be reserved for the most obvious cases. Compassion and understanding and consideration of the broader impacts should play a significant role in the decision-making process. If a sporting code can do it, so can a significant, courageous public institution like the AFP. ◀

Tattoo Taboo: Is ink a workplace issue?

Since the announcement by the AFP to change the uniform guideline which now requires tattoos to be covered when in uniform or while wearing AFP insignia, your Association has been pressuring the AFP to abandon this non-sensical change in policy.

▶ The AFPA was swamped with feedback from members concerned about the nature of the change and the circumstances in which it was imposed. The amount of feedback highlighted to us the depth of feeling amongst members about what was for many a very personal change.

Furthermore, it demonstrated the complete disregard the AFP seemingly has for its employees.

This change was imposed without any consultation with the workforce or the AFPA and the origin for the immediate decision to change the policy remains blurred and unjustified.

We acknowledge that the AFP is within its rights to ask employees to conceal their tattoos, so long as the policy does not amount to discrimination. Furthermore, we accept that the AFP and the commissioner can decide what an appropriate uniform policy looks like. However, what they have failed to communicate is a valid business reason for doing so. Furthermore, what we do know is that regardless of how you feel or may be affected you are expected to comply with the changes. If you do not, you may be subject of internal investigation.

While we have encouraged every member to seek an exemption on the grounds offered as reasons an exclusion can be sought (cultural, religious and medical), it is our view that you ought not need to justify the way you look, starting now.

It's a baffling decision from an organisation that prides itself on inclusiveness and diversity.

Tattoos are not a fringe cultural element in today's society. These days you'd have to live under a rock not to notice an increasing number of 'inked' Australians. It's estimated that today over 40 per cent of all Australian adults have at least one tattoo.

With this in mind, what they are demanding of you is disrespectful and out of touch. It has undermined your ability to turn up to work 'as you are', by requesting you hide something of your identity that is so common and accepted in the community. So how did the AFP get it so wrong? Was it that it underestimated the response to this regressive policy change? Is it that it just doesn't care what you think? Where does it stop? What other elements of your personality might become unacceptable in the future and required to be hidden?

While this may not be considered the most important issue presently confronting the AFP, it has significantly impacted members both tattooed or not for varied reasons. If it negatively affects you, our members, we will defend your views. We must continue to defend against the small things to prevent the big things.

We will continue to raise this issue with the AFP and in the national media until common sense prevails and the AFP abandon this conservative change. ◀





Are you eligible for a First Home Owner New Home Scheme Grant?

Buying a home in the country's most expensive property market, NSW, can be a lofty challenge for any first home buyer. CoreLogic RP Data's Sydney median value of more than \$1 million is just a bridge too far for many.

Thankfully, the state government has acknowledged these difficulties by offering a hefty first home owner grant to help give you a leg-up on the first rung of the property ladder. Are you eligible, how much could you receive and how do you apply?

ARE YOU ELIGIBLE?

There are a number of eligibility rules, but the following are most relevant:

- The home you're purchasing must be brand new or you must be building a new home.
- You must never have owned a home before.
- The value of the home must not exceed \$750,000.
- You must not have ever received a first home owner grant in any state or territory.
- At least one applicant must be an Australian permanent resident or citizen.
- You must be over the age of 18.
- You must intend to live in the home for a period of at least six months.

Most first home buyers won't have any trouble fitting these criteria. However, if you're not sure, feel free to get in touch with an expert advisor at Police Bank and we can help assess your situation.

HOW MUCH WILL YOU RECEIVE?

When things seem too good to be true, it's usually best to run the other way and not look back. When it comes to the First Home Owner New Homes Scheme, the opposite is true. You really do receive \$10,000 from the government to go towards your new home.

That's not all either. If you purchase a home with a value less than \$550,000 you won't have to pay stamp duty at all thanks to First Home Owner New Homes Scheme exemptions. That could mean savings of \$20,000 or more.

Police Bank have been helping first home buyers into their dream properties for decades now, and we'd love to be there to guide you – from applying for your loan through to the day you move in and beyond.

Police Bank is a member-owned institution, meaning we prioritise the financial wellbeing of our community. For home loans that work for you, turn to Police Bank today. Visit www.policebank.com.au or call us on 131 728.

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Inquiry into the mental health conditions experienced by first responders

On 27 March 2018, the Senate referred an inquiry into the role of Commonwealth, state and territory Governments in addressing the high rates of mental health conditions experienced by first responders, emergency service workers and volunteers to the Education and Employment References Committee (the Committee) for inquiry and report by 5 December 2018.

Your Association has provided a submission to the inquiry following consultation and feedback from members with a focus on the following inquiry Terms of Reference.

- 1) the nature and underlying causes of mental health conditions experienced by first responders, emergency service workers and volunteers;
- 2) research identifying linkages between first responder and emergency service occupations, and the incidence of mental health conditions;
- 3) management of mental health conditions in first responder and emergency services organisations, factors that may impede adequate management of mental health within the workplace and opportunities for improvement, including:
 - a) reporting of mental health conditions,
 - b) specialised occupational mental health support and treatment services,
 - c) workers' compensation,
 - d) workplace culture and management practices,
 - e) occupational function and return-to-work arrangements,
 - f) collaboration between first responder and emergency services organisations,
 - g) post-retirement mental health support services, and
 - h) resource allocation; and
- 4) any other related matters.

At the time of publication there was 112 submissions received by the Committee for publication and consideration. As part of the inquiry there will also be a number of public hearings being held around the country to hear directly from interested individuals and organisations.

The AFPA has requested the opportunity to appear at a public hearing to reiterate its position on matters contained in the submission and provide additional insight and evidence.

A copy of the Association's submission can be found on the following pages.

Committee Secretary Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment

The Role of Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments in Addressing the High Rates of Mental Health Conditions Experienced by First Responders, Emergency Service Workers and Volunteers

The Australian Federal Police Association (AFPA) represents the professional and industrial interests of more than 4000 employees of the Australian Federal Police (AFP). The purpose of this submission is to highlight for the committee the ways in which organisational practice, governance and management structures inside the AFP amplify the effect of exposure to traumatic incidents by AFP employees.

At the centre of the conversation surrounding the mental health of first responders needs to be societal recognition of the nature and frequency of their exposure to traumatic incidents. In the policing context, police work is sometimes dangerous, often unpleasant but almost always demanding. Police officers accept this to be an inherent part of their work, though it can be harmful to individuals.

Considered in the context of defence force personnel, who may deploy in and out of theatres of war, police are deployed operationally all of the time. Defence personnel are recognised as having unique health and fitness requirements and these are supported by specifically tailored and resourced structures. This same assistance does not exist for police, rather the operational demands of the role are ignored, and care is provided in a manner commensurate with public servants. That harm is caused to police through this approach cannot be surprising.

The AFPA thanks the Committee for its attention to this important topic. We would welcome the opportunity to address the Committee and elaborate on any of the matters contained within this report.



REPORTING OF MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS

For an AFP employee to disclose a mental health condition can be career limiting. Indeed, so serious are the consequences for individuals there is a culture of active avoidance with respect to diagnosis and disclosure. Disclosure is likely to have consequences.

“I have only come forward because I have no further plans for promotion and expect to retire in the next few years. If I had remained focused on promotion or other duties, such as overseas postings, I would never have declared this given the toxic culture that exists within the AFP Executive.”

AFP Superintendent

All AFP employees are required to maintain a minimum 'secret' level security clearance. This can be withdrawn if an employee has a

mental health condition. Police officers may have their Use of Force qualification revoked, thereby rendering them non-operational. This will almost certainly lead to a significant reduction in salary because of the loss of the 22 percent operational composite payments. The prevailing attitude amongst employees is that opportunities will be lost. Non-disclosure is often the preferred option.

In the AFP, operational employees receive a 22 percent composite allowance for expanded working hours and normal patterns of attendance required under the operational AFP working patterns. The allowance was first paid in 1999 and is in lieu of shift penalties and for flexibility. It is not paid for salary adjustments, experience premiums or additional hours of attendance and is not paid for doing 'police work'.

Historically, policing as an industry has demonised those who suffer from mental health conditions. In part, this is because policing has been a male dominated occupation and engagement with the emotional consequences of police work has not been encouraged. The term 'broken biscuit' was used to disparagingly describe those who were

not fully functional as a result of their psychological injuries.

“Comments have been made to me about being a broken biscuit, called a numpty because I have PTSD.”

AFP Federal Agent, 9 years

It is also due to the nature of the duties police are called upon to undertake. However, an organisational attitude which deliberately ignores the inherent nature of police work and instead imposes additional layers of bureaucratic demand upon employees can and does cause greater harm than the operational work undertaken.

For example, a police officer may spend several hours in attendance at the scene of a death. That time will be at best unpleasant, if not horrendous. Frequently though, the only concern of the organisation, as articulated by those with managerial control over that police officer, will be that the relevant paperwork is done as quickly as possible, so overtime

payments are minimised. The experience of the officer during the operational activity is of secondary consideration. This organisational attitude causes greater harm than operational exposure.

One recent example illustrates the consequence of disclosure. In March 2018, the following Category 2 conduct complaint was established against an AFPA member:

In February 2017, [AFPA member] breached section 8.2 of the Code of Conduct (an AFP appointee must act with due care and diligence in the course of AFP duties) by failing to disclose his change in mental health in a timely manner.

This member has been diagnosed with PTSD. Existing procedures within the AFP discipline and integrity regimes mean that any delay in the disclosure of a mental health diagnosis to the AFP may be considered a breach of the AFP Code of Conduct. Following advocacy on his behalf by the AFPA, the complaint was withdrawn, but it should have been levelled against him in the first place.

A further attitude pervades life in the AFP, which suggests that the singular focus of everyone and everything should be the delivery of operational outcomes. Anything, including employees, may be sacrificed in the interests of delivering on this goal. In the absence of a sophisticated model of psychological care which prioritises employee welfare, it makes the organisation cannibalistic, actively preying upon and consuming its people. That they get harmed through this process is inevitable. Regardless of what change is achieved by the AFP and what improvement can be delivered in managing the mental health of employees, people will not trust that the organisation has their best interests at heart until it stops actively seeking to cause them harm.

Recommendation:

1. Employees engaged in operational duties are currently compensated through the payment of a 22 percent composite allowance. For police officers, this allowance is paid to them as part of their salary from the moment they complete recruit training and forms a core part

of their remuneration. If an employee is rendered non-operational, they will likely lose this allowance and sustain a 22 percent reduction in income. This provides a significant disincentive to employees seeking treatment for mental health issues. Employees should instead be supported by the organisation through treatment with their salary maintained.

OCCUPATIONAL MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT AND TREATMENT SERVICES

The recent focus by the AFP on the mental health of employees followed the suicide of Federal Agent (FA) Sue Jones in the AFP Melbourne Office in February 2017. It was not the subject of any concentrated organisational effort before that.

Following FA Jones' suicide, the Mental Health Strategy Board was established, comprising SES Band 1 and 2 officers and chaired by the Chief Operating Officer (COO). The AFPA was represented on the Board by our President. The purpose of the Board was to provide high level direction and leadership to enable the AFP to focus appropriate attention upon employee mental health.

“There is widespread mistrust in AFP medical welfare services.”

AFP Detective Sergeant

In January 2018, Phoenix Australia published its review into the AFP's management of employee mental health. This report was commissioned by the AFP and concluded that *“significant further work is needed to create a workplace environment within the AFP that is conducive to good mental health”*. Almost 40 recommendations were made by Phoenix Australia to guide the AFP toward the achievement of this goal.

In March 2018, the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) tabled in Parliament its report called 'Managing Mental Health in the Australian Federal Police'. This report was similarly critical of the AFP management of employee mental health and made several additional recommendations as to the work which was required.

The AFP accepted the recommendations of both reports and acknowledged the need for improvement. However, one of the first actions by the AFP after the publication of these reports was to disband the Mental Health Strategy Board. This means that there is now no collective of senior managers specifically focussed upon delivering the report recommendations. Disturbingly, the Board was referenced in both reports as being an initiative geared toward improving the management of mental health.

“The forms they ask you to complete are a tick and flick ‘all is good’ form. These are clearly a ‘backside’ covering exercise.”

AFP Federal Agent, 8 years

Approaching six months after publication of the Phoenix Australia report, not nearly enough has been done to deliver the changes recommended by the two reports. The AFPA understands that no additional resources have been sought from government by the AFP Commissioner to expedite implementation of the recommendations and to ensure their sustainability. The AFPA

is very concerned not enough meaningful attention or dedicated resources are being applied to improving employee mental health by the senior AFP managers and the program of implementing the report recommendations is at risk of stalling.

The Phoenix Australia report specifically recommended the engagement of psychologists at the rate of one per 250 staff, or about 25 given current AFP staffing levels. At present, the AFP employs fewer than ten. We understand bureaucratic and resource impediments have inhibited the delivery of this increase. We are not sure that the AFP is intent upon meeting this recommendation.

In mid-2017, the AFP introduced a Welfare Officer Network, comprising trained employees deployed around the country to assist AFP employees through difficult times and to be on hand as soon as possible after risk events occur. The AFPA advocated for the establishment of this program for more than 12 months, so its establishment was welcome. Structurally, however, the Welfare Officer Network needs to be supported the additional layers of professional assistance. Social Workers are required, so cases requiring more intense or protracted management can be handed off by the Welfare Officers. Internal psychologists are an additional layer. Neither of these supporting layers has been delivered and feedback from welfare officers to the AFPA has been they are starting to burn out. Again, resourcing limitations have impeded the proper development of this welfare program.

The external Employee Assistance Program (EAP) comes in for sustained criticism by AFPA members who have sought help though this service. From the AFP perspective however, it is at the centre of the present mental health care arrangements established for employees. Feedback from AFPA members indicates frustration at having to engage with different counsellors each time the EAP is contacted, requiring the retelling of the need for assistance on each occasion. The counsellors have no experience of policing and cannot relate to the experiences of police officers. There is a reluctance to provide operational details to people external to the AFP even though this information might assist the counsellors. In short, the engagement of an external provider to deliver mental health care to AFP employees is wholly inadequate. Instead, the capacity to provide this care must exist internally.

The AFP is well aware that its employees are reticent about the EAP role, yet it continues to see the EAP as a core response to the Phoenix Australia and ANAO recommendations.

The AFP has no system to identify the frequency of exposure to traumatic incidents by individual employees. Certain investigative areas, such as those involving sex crimes, child exploitation, or counter terrorism, have long ago been identified as involving a heightened risk of exposure and 'in theory' employees receive pre-deployment screenings, regular check-ups and post deployment debriefings.

“The way mental health is currently being addressed is inadequate. After three and a half years in PNG with the AFP I was told that if I wanted a psych debrief, then I needed to request one.”

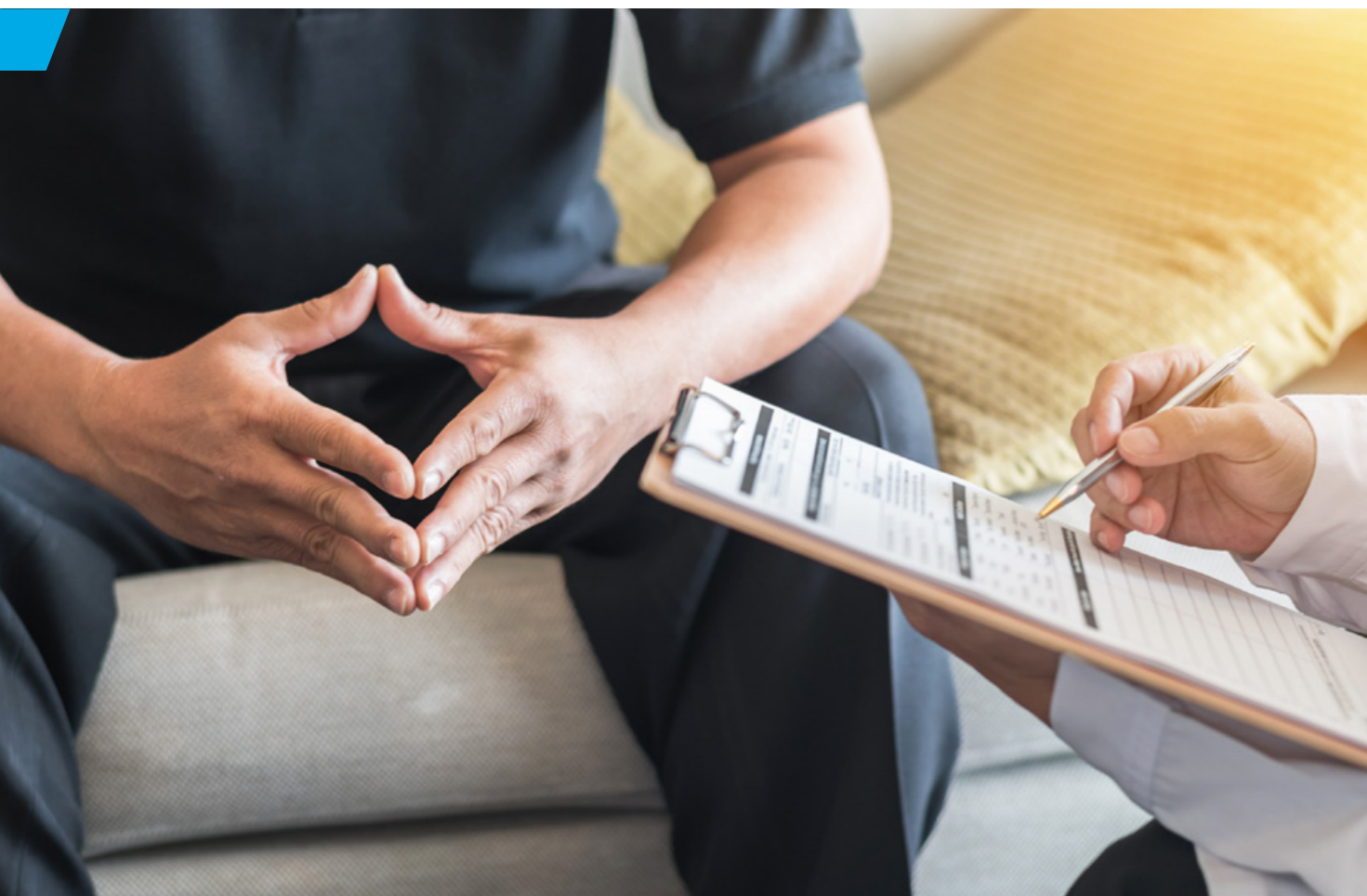
AFP Detective Senior Constable

However, even these are inconsistently applied. For the remainder of employees, repeated exposure to traumatic incidents can still occur and the organisational expectation is for employees to monitor their own exposure and responses and find help for themselves. However, if an employee does seek a change in operational area as a mechanism to limit further potential for exposure, it is often denied to them owing to insufficient personnel.

“I’m disappointed with the way in which police and other emergency service workers are treated in comparison with our colleagues from the ADF... if military veterans were treated in such a manner there would be public outrage.”

AFP Team Leader

It is extraordinary that an organisation of the maturity and sophistication of the AFP cannot report on the number and frequency of traumatic incidents being attended to by employees. We understand a pilot program may be under



development, however, the ability to measure and report on this exposure is not currently in place.

Recommendation:

- Additional resources must be made available to the AFP to specifically fund the provision of mental health services for AFP employees. The AFP Commissioner confirmed at Senate Estimates hearings that no additional funding has been sought from government to assist with delivering the recommendations of the two mental health reports. This has resulted in too little change taking too long to deliver.
- The AFP must develop and implement a traumatic incident tracking tool for employees, so frequency of attendance and seriousness of incidents can be measured. The tool will allow appropriate and timely intervention and mitigation mechanisms to be enacted to control employee exposure when required. Deidentified information gathered through the tool should be shared with relevant stakeholders so a proper appreciation of employee exposure to traumatic incidents can be gained.

WORKERS COMPENSATION

The relationship between the AFP and Comcare is an impediment to AFP employees accessing treatment. It is each employee's responsibility as an individual to engage with Comcare to lodge a claim for their illness or injury and to demonstrate how it was related to their work as an AFP employee. There are no systems or processes in place within the AFP to support or assist employees while making a claim and the organisation adopts a 'hands off' attitude.

In the case of physical injury, the claims process is often routine if the circumstances surrounding the injury can be tied directly to a single event. However, with mental injury, the causal factors can be cumulative or of extended duration. More troubling, employees who are acutely mentally unwell may be emotionally or mentally incapable of telling how their psychological injury occurred. Indeed, to do so may cause them additional harm. In this case both the AFP and Comcare are either unwilling or unable to assist the injured employee access treatment or care.

“I have no confidence in AFP wellbeing services. They are here to protect the AFP by doing the absolute minimum to satisfy workers compensations claims.”

AFP Federal Agent

On four occasions over the last twelve months, the AFPA has assisted members through the payment of their expenses for in-patient mental health treatment. In each case, the member was so acutely unwell they required immediate hospitalisation as they were at risk of self-harm. They did not have the personal financial resources available to fund the treatment for themselves and the AFP was not willing to assist. The AFPA paid for the cost of treatment as the need was real and we were not prepared to accept the risk these members may injure or kill themselves whilst they waited for a public bed to become available.

In one of these cases, the matter was brought to the attention of the AFPA by a senior manager within the AFP HR section, who made a specific request of the AFPA to fund the treatment. This illustrates the circumstances of these individuals are known at senior levels of the AFP, however the organisation is not capable of finding ways to provide the immediate assistance required by these people.

On two other occasions AFPA members with mental health conditions, having had extended periods off work because of their illness, had exhausted all their accumulated annual leave and personal leave entitlements. The AFP had granted them a period of Miscellaneous Leave with Pay, so they could continue receiving an income. Following an arbitrary decision of the AFP HR section, their paid leave was to cease so the AFP no longer had to fund their absence. This decision coincided with their requiring immediate hospitalisation for their respective conditions and could have provided a trigger for self-harm.

Generally, the experience of AFPA members with mental health conditions receiving treatment from Comcare has been inconsistent and poor.

“My life in the past 2.5 years has changed dramatically. Comcare have provided no assistance and I have used substantial amounts of personal leave when I've not been capable of functioning properly at work. The sessions with phycologists have also been at my expense.”

AFP Federal Agent, 13 years

One of the most significant impediments for employees with mental health conditions seeking assistance from Comcare is the need to demonstrate how the condition was caused as a result of the course of their employment. The Comcare model was designed to manage physical injury, where a specific incident can be identified as having caused the harm. When the cause of the injury may be repeated small exposures over extended durations, it can be extremely difficult for those suffering the mental illness to gain acceptance for their claims.

Legislative change which provides a rebuttable presumption in favour of an AFP employee's mental health condition being related to their employment would overcome this difficulty. Such a scheme would acknowledge the type of work undertaken by AFP employees and recognise the inevitable toll such exposure has upon individuals. It would remove the burden for employees to prove their work caused them harm and instead put the onus upon Comcare to identify why an employee's illness could not have been caused by their employment with the AFP.

Introducing a “provisional acceptance” of claims by Comcare for a defined period would also be helpful, removing the impediment of protracted timeframes for deciding whether to accept a claim. The AFPA understands this concept is being explored by Victoria Police, allowing for

the payment of 13 weeks of treatment as required, whilst a more thorough assessment is carried out as to whether the injury was work related.

Ultimately though, a system needs to be developed whereby an employee experiencing acute mental health issues can be provided the care they need immediately, even before embarking upon the Comcare approval process. This will require empowering the AFP to carry the financial burden of paying for care when and as required, with an understanding the expense may be recoverable from Comcare once a claim has been accepted. Such a system must also acknowledge that in some instances the cost of delivering the required care may not be recoverable. That financial burden ought not be passed onto the injured employee.

Recommendations:

- AFP employees who disclose mental health conditions to the AFP must be supported by the organisation to access the treatment they require, when they require it. If necessary, the AFP should fund this treatment, and continue to pay the employee.
- The AFP should have in place systems to assist employees with mental health conditions engage in the Comcare claims process and end the current 'hands off attitude' whereby employees are abandoned by the AFP as soon as they disclose they are unwell.
- Legislation change should be pursued for workers compensation, such that a police officer who is diagnosed with PTSD is presumed to have developed their condition through the course of their employment, unless the relevant insurer can prove otherwise.
- A system allowing the provisional acceptance of claims should be introduced with a 13-week timeframe, allowing the provision of assistance immediately. Such a system would act to limit the delays in the provision of treatment caused by current approval processes.

WORKPLACE CULTURE AND MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Organisational process and procedure within the AFP causes harm to employees. The integrity and disciplinary processes overseen by the Professional Standards



(PRS) unit of the AFP involve the internal investigation of employees for the full spectrum of matters, spanning from misdemeanour 'customer service' complaints to allegations of corruption.

It is routinely the case that matters, regardless of their seriousness, will take years to be formally concluded. This protracted duration is a function of insufficient resourcing within PRS and is a significant stressor for AFP employees. Extended delays cause an expectation of a negative outcome. For employees to work under this expectation for such extended periods does impact their mental health. To illustrate, one AFPA member has been the subject of investigations by PRS for more than eight of the 18 years he has been employed by the AFP, owing to his involvement in two critical incidents.

The power to conduct these investigations stems from Part V of the Australian Federal Police 1979 Act (the AFP Act). It affords the AFP extraordinary control over employees, including conducting coercive investigations where failure to satisfactorily participate brings a potential criminal sanction. Taken to its most extreme, the AFP Commissioner has the power to suspend an employee from duty without pay, deny them approval to undertake secondary employment, and delay acceptance of their resignation from the organisation for up to three months.

The necessity for the organisation to wield this power is obvious from the perspective of identifying corrupt practices and serious misconduct, but the coercive powers are more commonly used for much less serious matters. One recent example highlights how



the PRS system is used by the organisation as a tool to exact punitive punishment upon employees. An AFPA member had the following category 2 conduct complaint established against him:

Between 2014 and 30 April 2018, [AFPA member] breached Section 8.11 of the AFP Code of Conduct (an AFP appointee must behave in a way that upholds the AFP Core Values, and the integrity and good reputation of the AFP) when he failed to declare his secondary employment as a volunteer junior rugby coach for the Randwick District Rugby Union Football Club and Sydney Night Patrol – Saint Vincent's De Paul and Sydney Delta Therapy Dogs.

Beyond being a fundamental waste of resources, the use of the provisions from Part V of the AFP Act to investigate the above type of matter is an inappropriate application of these coercive powers. Whilst the AFP must operate a disciplined force, there should also be limitations upon the extent to which the organisation can insert itself into the private lives of its employees.

Many of the mental health issues experienced by employees are caused or exacerbated by the inability of individuals with managerial responsibility to actually manage people.

“Since my time off, again (December 2017) I have had limited contact with my team leader irrespective of a contact form that I signed to be contacted on a regular basis.”

AFP Sergeant

The AFP makes no training in personnel management or leadership available to employees below the executive levels. When assessing the suitability of employees for promotion to team leader positions, candidates are assessed on their operational abilities and knowledge. They are then elevated to a position where a significant component of their role is leading and managing people, for which they have not been prepared by the organisation. Indeed, employees can conceivably advance through large parts of their career with no

information provided to them about the organisational expectations of leading and managing people.

The AFPA favours the development of a training continuum for leadership and management training, beginning at senior team member levels. To begin, employees should be trained in the practical aspects of personnel management, including how to properly utilise AFP systems. The expectations of leadership and management roles should be a key part of an employee's career development. The development of leadership skills should be the focus of an educational program that is mandatory before employees can apply for promotion. Assessments as to the leadership qualities of an individual should be an important component of the promotional process and poor leadership attributes should be an inhibitor to promotion.

The AFP senior executive presently rejects such an approach as being too linear, favouring instead a loose process where no pre-existing knowledge needs to be attained and the opportunity to train and educate prospective leaders is foregone. By contrast, vacant positions that are to be filled by transfer at level are routinely advertised as requiring a certain level of experience or training as a prerequisite. The AFP's approach to these matters is inconsistent. This need for improvement in leadership and management training of AFP employees is a recommendation in the Phoenix Australia report.

Recommendations:

8. The coercive powers contained within Part 5 of the AFP Act should only be available for the investigation of Category 3 or 4 matters, not Category 1 or 2 matters.
9. Management and leadership training should be prioritised by the AFP and delivered to employees in advance of promotion. Advancement should be contingent upon the successful completion of this training.
10. Career pathways for police officers within the AFP should be better developed with the organisation taking a more active role, including through mentorship and planning for a policing career spent with the AFP.

CONCLUSION

The current way the AFP manages the mental health of its employees will continue to cause harm. The systems for monitoring exposure to trauma and delivering assistance are immature, ineffective and insufficiently resourced. The statutory relationship between the AFP and Comcare proves an impediment to accessing care. The organisation does not possess appropriate internal capability to provide psychological assistance to employees, rather it contracts out this care to an external organisation roundly criticised by consumers.

At the heart of the solution to these problems lies money. Simply, the AFP cannot deliver the personnel and processes required to care and support its employees without additional resources being made available for this specific purpose. The funding must be significant, and it must be ongoing.

Policing in the modern age must adopt a greater and more sophisticated understanding of the causes and treatment of mental injury. Attitudes of the past must be abandoned and each disclosure of a mental health condition by an AFP employee should be considered recoverable by the AFP and Comcare. Unfortunately, this remains a long way from reality.

AFP progress in this area should also be a matter of enduring interest and attention by Senators. The AFPA would encourage reporting to the Senate by the AFP on a regular basis, on how the recommendations of the Phoenix Australia and ANAO reports are being implemented and sustained.

Trust between the AFP and its employees has been eroded by the lack of care exhibited over an extended period of time. It cannot be recovered until the organisation can demonstrate it is no longer actively seeking to cause harm to its people. ◀



POLICE WEEK

A CELEBRATION OF OUR NATION'S POLICE

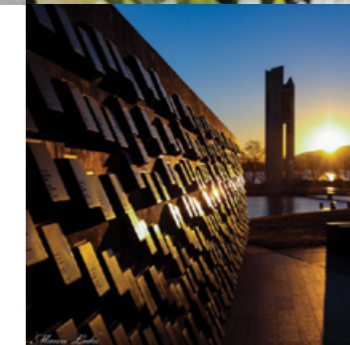
The Police Federation of Australia (PFA) will be holding the inaugural Police Week from 15 – 29 September 2018.

Bookended by the Wall to Wall: Ride for Remembrance and National Police Remembrance Day; the event will draw the policing community together to honor those officers who have paid the ultimate sacrifice, while celebrating the selfless work undertaken by Australia's police right across the country.

Providing a unique opportunity to meet others who work in law enforcement, Australia's Police Week 2018 aims to bring together supporters of policing in a range of formal and informal activities.

While a focus will be on the National Police Memorial in Canberra, all jurisdictions will be holding their own events under the auspice of Police Week.

This includes events such as the Wall to Wall: Ride for Remembrance, a 100km Century Bike Ride, a Police Summit Conference, the inaugural National Police Bravery Awards, the 2018 PFA Federal Council Meeting and the International Council of Police Representative Associations (ICPRA) Biennial Conference.



Black Dog Ride

Raising awareness of depression and suicide prevention

The Association has proudly donated \$500 to support a recently retired AFPA member, Craig Baird who participated in this year's charity Black Dog Ride.



AFPA President Angela Smith and retired AFPA member Craig Baird



Black Dog Ride began in 2009 as a ride to raise awareness of depression, evolving into a national charity involving thousands of Australians who have raised millions for mental health programs and fostered mental health awareness around the nation.

Craig joined the Australian Federal Police (AFP) in 2002 after previously serving 15 years with the NT Police as a Detective Sergeant. Most of his time with the AFP was serving in the Australian Capital Territory. In March 2017, Craig was medically

Craig after arriving in Emerald, QLD on day 2



retired with Post Traumatic Stress and related Depressive Disorder, after 30 years of policing had caught up with him.

Over Craig's extensive policing journey, he lost too many close colleagues, friends and family members to suicide.

Now after his own battles with depression, he finds himself looking back and just wishing these people had reached out to someone and/or received the assistance they deserved.

On the 10th August 2018, Craig departed from Dubbo NSW on a life changing journey on his motorcycle as part of the charity Black Dog Ride. Over the next seven days, he travelled north through Lightning Ridge, Roma, Emerald, Winton, Camoweal, Renner Springs, Katherine and arrived in Darwin on 17th August.

He was joined by approximately 300 riders in the Top End who rode from every state and territory, culminating in a national meet up, that will include a dinner and fundraiser.

During the trip the Black Dog Ride groups from each state and territory raised awareness of depression and suicide prevention in regional communities across the country. The aim is to break down the stigma and get people talking about depression and encourage people to seek support and ultimately prevent suicide.

The riders are a make-up of all walks of life, some retired and serving emergency service personnel, parents and partners who have lost love ones, or people who just support the charity. With this in mind, the ride hopes to empower both the participants of the ride and the communities they visit with the knowledge that mental illness can be managed, and that people can live a fulfilling life with a mental illness.

If you would like more information about the Black Dog Ride or would like to get involved or donate to support their vital work visit their website www.blackdogride.com.au.
To donate to Craig's fundraising page visit <https://blackdogride.giveeasy.org/campaigns/top-end-black-dog-ride/>. All donations are tax deductible and will be greatly appreciated.



Left: Group ride with NSW Police Minister Troy Grant

Below: Craig with his wife Kat and son Josh in Dubbo at the start of the ride

Bottom: Craig Baird on his bike



Talking in Code – The Code 9 Foundation

Peer to peer support for police suffering from PTSD

By Brendan Roberts (The Police Association of Victoria) and the AFPA's Melanie Atlee

For all its fake news, selfies and spam advertising, Facebook still has the power to do what it made it a global phenomenon – connect people.

▶ For all its fake news, selfies and spam advertising, Facebook still has the power to do what it made it a global phenomenon – connect people.

For police suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, it can be a valuable tool for support, one that can connect sufferers at any time of day or night when more traditional areas of support may be out of reach.

Victoria Police, Sergeant Mark Thomas, began The Code 9 Foundation and its Facebook support page in 2015, two years after he was hospitalised and diagnosed with PTSD.

"I went to a suicide in 2003 and I knew there was something wrong with me after that day, every other deceased I had been to never worried me, it was part of the job and I got on with it. But I was hurt this day, I knew it," he said.

But while acknowledging that you have PTSD or suffer from another mental health condition is important, it means little if you don't take steps to address it.

"We really push that now, that if you don't feel right just go speak to someone, a GP, a psych, whoever. I just didn't know what was happening to me with my own situation and I didn't pay it enough attention. (This foundation) is basically taking the mistakes that I made with my own situation and helping others not to make the same ones."

Mark's own experiences exposed a glaring gap in the peer support on hand for police and emergency services workers suffering from PTSD.

"When I was hospitalised with PTSD back in 2013 I felt intensely alone, I thought that no one could possibly know what I was going through. When you're in that situation your brain can't equate that there are other people experiencing the same thing," he said.

Victoria Police, Sergeant Mark Thomas invites AFP police to join Facebook support page



"I had to look forward to something, because tomorrow was black, it's a bizarre situation where you cannot see any future. So, I thought about it and decided to start a support group for coppers who are newly diagnosed or going through recovery, so that a few of us could get around them and tell them we knew what they were feeling, to reassure them that they were not alone and that they had support available."

Mark then set about establishing the private Facebook page and grew its reach by tagging many of his colleagues, who in turn tagged in many of theirs, and a network was formed.

"Whoever comes into the group, whoever adds them, vouches that they are coppers."

It's not the first 'private' Facebook page created for police and emergency services workers suffering from PTSD or mental health conditions tied to their work, but it carries an important caveat for users that many others don't.

"We just don't tolerate negativity, we don't want to know about it, if you want to be negative, go somewhere else, because social media can be a toxic place if you're in a negative place and we want to help people to recover," Mark said.

"The Code 9 Foundation is all very positive, there's no operational talk in the forum. If someone's struggling they can just post something and there's that immediate support from people who know what they're going through and empathise."

Due to its popularity, the group is now open to all emergency services workers. Its numbers have swelled to 2700, with about 2000 of those police.

"The page is open and active around the clock, quite often in the early hours of the morning someone will simply post that they can't sleep, and soon enough there will be someone else responding and saying they can't either. It brings it back to our motto, that you're never alone."

As well as general peer support, the page offers practical advice for navigating the system when it comes to dealing with mental health injury.

The Foundation also organises group gatherings in different geographical areas across metropolitan and regional Melbourne to give members a regular and relaxed face-to-face meeting point.

"We began meeting once a month at ANZAC House in the city, it was just an informal catch up, it wasn't group therapy or anything like that, just a bunch of like-minded people there to chill out and feel normal for a few hours with others who understand," Mark said.

The events are created and advertised on the Facebook page.

Recently, *The Code 9 Foundation* was granted status as a registered charity and has begun raising money to fund assistance dogs for emergency services workers suffering from PTSD.

"We know that policing no matter where you do it, takes its toll, and the negative impact of stress on you in addition to the ripple effect this has on your family and community can be devastating."

Mental Health for all first responders has no barriers, and Mark has generously invited all AFP police to join the Facebook support group. If you are an AFP police officer who might benefit from mental health education, support and viable self-help tools in a 'private' group made by police for police, you are encouraged to take up this invitation.

For information or if you are interested in joining the group email FA Pamela Damokas at Pamela.Damokas@afp.gov.au or on 0407 490 203. All contact with Pamela Damokas will be with the strictest confidence.

Alternatively, you can contact Victoria Police, Sergeant Mark Thomas, The Code 9 Foundation founder at mark.j.thomas@police.vic.gov.au.

Quotes by Victoria Police, Sergeant Mark Thomas, The Code 9 Foundation founder

The Benny Wills
BRAIN TUMOUR RESEARCH PROGRAM

GALA DINNER SAT 15 SEPT 2018

BOOK TICKETS NOW

The seventh annual Benny Wills Gala Dinner will take place on Saturday 15 September 2018 at the Canberra Southern Cross Club, Woden.

The Australian Federal Police Association is proud to support this event and help change the outcome for children diagnosed with brain tumours.

Tickets are \$120 each and include canapes, two course meal, drinks, entertainment, auctions and raffle.

Tickets can be purchased at www.bennywills.org/gala-dinner.aspx

AFPA
Australian Federal Police Association



This is a sign of a disconnection between providers and their members.

TAKE YOUR HEALTH INTO YOUR OWN HANDS

When it comes to your health, it's important to take a proactive approach. Know your body and what it needs. Do you have any pre-existing conditions that can be managed through services covered by health insurance?

What about in the future – do you plan to have kids or get surgery? Also, think about your wider family group including siblings, parents, grandparents, aunts, and uncles. Have any of them ever had diabetes, heart disease, cancer, osteoporosis or vision impairment issues? These are hereditary conditions and genetic disorders that you should keep in mind and take necessary precautions to prevent.

WHAT EXTRAS DO YOU WANT?

A lot of people don't know how to use extras to their advantage. Extras can cover you for those expensive out-of-pocket services that you might otherwise avoid. But with so many young people not being familiar with their policies, they're not using these support services.

The great thing about getting your health insurance through us is our cover is designed for you, police officers. Our coverage matches your needs, so you're not wasting money paying for services that aren't relevant.

From counselling and dietary support to acupuncture and health appliances, you're covered for treatment that appeals to managing life as an officer.

EDUCATE YOURSELF. COVER YOURSELF. USE YOUR POLICY.

Once you know about your health needs and what your cover offers, actually use it. Make the most of the services and start to value it.

Don't just scrap health insurance off your expenses list. You'll end up in public hospitals on long waiting lists, unable to choose your own doctor, and most likely, paying more for any treatments.

For more information about your Police Health policy, get in touch. We're happy to walk you through how to best use your cover to stay healthy. If you're going through a new situation or health issue, our team can advise you on options to help you.

Health comes in many forms, not just the physical body. Invest in all parts: mind, body and soul.

Health comes in many forms,
not just the physical body. Invest in
all parts: mind, body and soul.

Health insurance

Does it sometimes feel like your living costs list is too long? Whether your situation has changed or you're simply trying to tighten your pockets, you look at your expenses critically.

You pull out a big red pen, and begin culling. 'What do I need? What can go?' And, then you get to 'health insurance'. Now, any type of insurance is kind of a just-in-case purchase. This is, in part, the problem.

When you don't see immediate return for something you pay for, it's hard to hold value to it. Think about it – how often have you (even in the past) fully leveraged your health insurance?

According to a Guardian article, most Australians think their private health insurance is expensive and more than five million review their policy each year. The findings illustrate how the

majority of the population believe Australia has one of the best and most affordable health systems in the world.

1,000 people aged between 18 and 64 were interviewed and 87% responded that their current policy was expensive. Of this figure, nearly half (45%) said it was very expensive.

Another interesting fact is that many people don't know what they were getting in their policy. And here lies the problem. How can people be expected to value something if they don't know what that something is?



Ph: 1800 603 603 | www.policehealth.com.au





Federal Agent Claire O'Neill with 3 year old Caspar

In May 2018 the AFPA, on behalf of our member Federal Agent Claire O'Neill, commenced proceedings in the Federal Court against the AFP in relation to having all periods of paid maternity leave recognised as service for all purposes.

Claire had approached the AFPA in late 2016 after being knocked back for a rank advancement due to not satisfying the time served. Claire was advised that, because she took paid maternity leave at half-pay over 32 weeks, her rank advancement would be delayed by 16 weeks. Around this time, we also had several other members approach us raising similar concerns about the entirety of their paid maternity leave counting as service.

During her paid maternity leave, Claire spread the 16 weeks of paid maternity leave provided over a period of 32 weeks at half-pay. Spreading the 16 weeks of paid maternity leave is allowed by the AFP and it is contained within the AFP Enterprise Agreement 2012 – 2016, and the new AFP Enterprise Agreement 2017 – 2020. Both EAs contain a clause to the effect that, if a member spreads the paid maternity leave over a period greater than 16 weeks, none of the additional weeks beyond 16 will count as service for any purpose, including rank advancement.

All future rank advancements will be impacted by the AFP not recognising the entirety of Claire's paid maternity leave as service. Failing to recognise the additional 16 weeks of paid maternity leave also impacts on matters such as access to long service leave and AFP service medals.

I genuinely believe the AFP is headed in the right direction and I am excited by our future. A change in the maternity leave policy would be a clear demonstration that our organisation truly cares about working mums and about retaining the greatest capability for the benefit of our workforce.

Federal Agent Claire O'Neill

Initially, the AFPA raised the issue to the AFP based on it being discriminatory, as the 2012-2016 EA allowed for all members to take recreation leave at half-pay. The entirety of the recreation leave was counted as service. The matter was unsuccessfully conciliated in the Fair Work Commission, with the AFP not agreeing with the position of Claire and the AFPA.



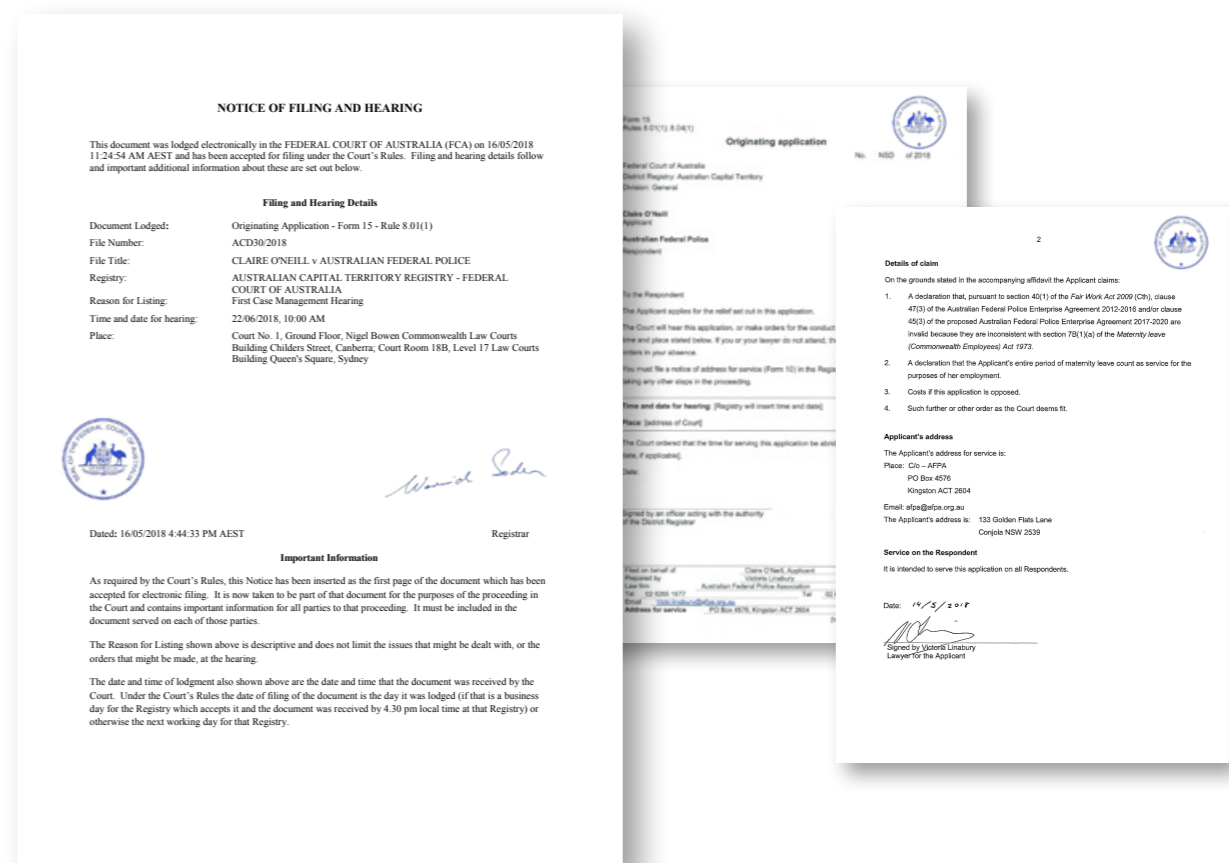
The AFPA sort advice from a leading Sydney barrister in anti-discrimination, who advised Claire to commence proceedings in the Federal Court to seek a declaration that the failure of the AFP to recognise all periods of paid maternity as being inconsistent with the Maternity Leave (Commonwealth Employees) Act 1973 (Cth). The effect of the declaration would be that the AFP would be required to recognise the entirety of Claire's period of paid maternity leave counted towards her service with the AFP, which would in turn impact on her rank advancement date.

Such a declaration, if the Court were to give it, would have an impact on all members who have taken paid maternity leave over a period greater than 16 weeks. We have, at this stage, received over 50 enquiries from members who say they have also taken paid maternity leave over a period greater than 16 weeks.

The proceedings first came before the Court on 20 July 2018. Orders were made for the AFP to file material by 24 August 2018, with submissions to be filed by both parties in the coming months.

The AFPA has yet to receive a date for hearing of the matter. However, we understand that this will likely be March 2019.

Members who have not yet come forward who think they might also be impacted are encouraged to contact the AFPA's Industrial Lawyer, Matthew Peterson at matthew.peterson@afpa.org.au.



Maternity Leave entitlements under review

By Federal Agent Claire O'Neill

NSW members provide their threads to those that need them

The NSW Cultural Reform Committee (CRC) coordinated a charity drive 'Care Threads' to donate business attire to those less fortunate.

▶ The purpose of the clothing drive was to help others who are struggling on the journey back to work, and to boost morale in the workplace. Trying to re-focus on helping others who could use out-of-date (and perhaps unfashionable!) work attire. A small and selfless donation could make a big difference to a number of people.

▶ **"It is amazing to think that people want to get rid of some of this stuff... It looks awesome and is a perfect fit..."**

NSW CRC Chair, Federal Agent Matt Davoren

All items of donated clothing will be donated to charities such as 'Dress for Success' 'Wear for Success' and 'Dress for Work':
<https://sydney.dressforsuccess.org>
<http://www.wearforsuccess.org.au/> and
<https://dressforwork.org.au>.

The clothing is donated to refugees or the long-term unemployed and others, by instilling confidence and self-belief in people by helping them look the part of their journey toward employment., Many of whom have struggled on the journey back to work. Although the clothes don't make the person it's a good start to the best possible chance of achieving their dream by "looking the part".

The NSW CRC encouraged NSW AFP members to go through their cupboards, lockers, work areas, wardrobes and get rid of the unused, unwanted and unclaimed suits, business shirts, ties, jackets, skirts and pants. Business attire that had been untouched and unused for months, if not years, were targeted and happily placed for donation.

The professional clothing that was donated will help people look and feel the part, and together with work skills training provided by the selected charities it will go some way to providing people with the best possible chance of achieving their dreams.

The NSW CRC took a light- hearted approach to the campaign and poked a bit of fun at some of their colleagues in the office, with some not-so-subtle hints about current fashions and lack of fashion sense.

There was an overwhelming response from NSW members and the designated donation location was laden with work clothes as you can see from CRC Chair, Federal Agent Matt Davoren, who started the initiative.

The AFPA would like to thank the NSW CRC, in particular Matthew Davoren and Carmen Begbie for their initiative and organising the clothing drive, and those NSW members who donated new and used work clothes.

A small act of kindness like this can make a world of difference for others, so thank you for your generosity and the great response! ◀

NSW CRC Chair, Federal Agent Matt Davoren laden with work clothes



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Captain Andy McCoola, AFPA member with AFPA President Angela Smith



Australian Police Rugby Fever hits the AFP in Canberra

Royal Military College, Duntroon, Portsea Oval played host to both the Women's and Men's Australian Police Rugby Union Teams on Friday 22 June and Friday 16 July 2018, respectively.

▶ The Australian Police Women's Rugby Union (APWRU) Team played their inaugural match against the Australian Defence Force (ADF) to compete for the Forces Cup. The Australian Police Rugby Union (APRU) team lined up against the ADF team for their 3rd annual match.

While both teams consisted of players from all over the country, the AFP was solidly represented.

The AFP members selected in the APWRU Team were:

- Anja Halstead from Uniform protection – Parliament House, Canberra
- Tamika Murphy from Protection Operations – Canberra
- Samantha Dal Molin from Regional Targeting Team – ACT Policing
- and Courtney-Leigh Smith

The AFP members selected in the APRU Team were:

- Andrew McCoola (captain) from ACT Police, Criminal Investigations
- Jordan Read from Woden – ACT Policing
- Mitch Greig from Protection – Defence Headquarters Russell
- Federal Agent Joel Rivers
- Tyson Pickavance from Sydney – National Response Operations
- along with Zac Jerrim and Josh Munro

MEN'S MATCH REPORT

On 16 July 2018 the Australian Police Rugby Union (APRU) men's team came together at HMAS Harman for the start of preparation for the 3rd

annual match against the Australian Defence Force (ADF) team. The team consisted of representatives from the AFP, Queensland Police Service and the New South Wales Police Force, with the addition for the first time of a representative from Australian Border Force (ABF). This match was a follow up to the highly successful inaugural match played by the Australian Police Women's Rugby Union team against the ADF Women's team in Canberra on 22 June 2018. In previous years the ADF had won the match, being played for the Major General Ronald Grey Trophy, named after former AFP Commissioner Grey (1983-1988), who had also served in a distinguished career in the Australian Army, reaching the rank of Major General.

The team prepared well and were greeted with a cold day at Portsea Oval, Duntroon on Friday 20 July 2018, for the match. Quite a substantial crowd came to watch the match including the Governor General, Sir Peter Cosgrove and his wife and officials from the AFP, NSW Police and Border Force. Teams were greeted on to the field by the Australian Army band.

The match started as a bit of an arm wrestle with both teams exchanging attacks in the midfield that were met with some solid and committed defence. After a long period of defence, the APRU team were beaten by a clever kick to the ADF winger, who scored the first try of the match making it 5-0. Similar play continued and eventually the ADF team had some lengthy periods of attack that were met with some solid defence from the APRU team. A couple of line breaks from the ADF team led to a couple of breakout tries and with about 15 minutes to go in the first half they had gone out to a 17-0 lead. The APRU team then had some lengthy periods of



From left to right: Andrew McCoola post match with the Governor General; Mitch Greig being presented his jersey; Jordan Read being presented his jersey

possession and after building toward the try line, and some good continuity, went over for a try under the posts leading into half time. The half time score was 17-7 to the ADF team.

After halftime it was again both teams exchanging some attacking periods but strong defence from both sides prevented any score until about 20 minutes into the second half, when the APRU team went over for a try after a good backline move. The score was 17-12, meaning the last 20 minutes of the match would be tight. Both teams played some good rugby, entertaining the large crowd and the APRU team dominated possession, threatening on the ADF try line for a long period, before a couple of penalties gave the ADF team field position. A try against the play from the ADF team with about five minutes remaining provided the full-time score of 24-12 to the ADF team.

Following the match Sir Peter Cosgrove congratulated both teams on the quality of the game and the ADF were presented the trophy for the third year running. Overall the match was a huge success and all players were honoured to represent the APRU team, all putting in strong performances. The APRU, and the members of the AFP that were involved, would like to thank the AFPA for their support of the team.

Looking forward, the APRU team to tour Hong Kong and take part in a Police International Championship in 2019 will be selected.

WOMEN'S MATCH REPORT

The Australian Police Women's Team came into camp on the Tuesday ahead of the game with a buzz of excitement. The camp started off with a skills session together with their opponents, the women's Australian Defence Force Team at a local Canberra Primary School. There the girls put 80 year four students through their paces of various rugby skills.

There was a lot of media attention and build up to the game with local media present at the Community Engagement. This level of media attention added to the action and was a first for many of the girls.

Then onto HMAS Harman where the girls would call home for the next four nights. This was where many of the team were able to meet each other for the first time.

The team consisted of players from all over the country including Western Australia, Northern Territory, Queensland, NSW, ACT, Victoria and South Australia. The team consisted of a range of abilities and experience, with some girls having only played league whilst other girls who lived in regional and interstate areas having limited exposure to a full 15-a-side match.

Despite these challenges and all their differences, it did not take long for the team to bond together as they were all there for the same purpose. To put on an entertaining game of rugby union and take home the Forces Cup.

Throughout the week the team was put through numerous drills and game plans by their coach Wayne Vincent (SA Police) aka Garry with the support of Scott Izod (AFP). New combinations were put together and the team began to really gel. Encouragingly, with each session everyone was feeling more and more confident in the limited time they had together.

The girls were assisted and supported by a great team that included their trainers, Mark Wagg and Bryon Holborrow (both retired NSW Police) who at each session and in between were providing much needed massaging and strapping. A big thanks also, for all the hard yards that had been completed in the lead up to the event by their President Brett Howard and Vice President Vince Hole. Both were instrumental in pulling everything together.

Once more, the girls joined with their challengers to attend the Last Post Ceremony at The Australian War Memorial where a wreath was laid. This was a very humbling experience for both teams.

The night before the game the girls enjoyed a team dinner which included a rugby kit auction with proceeds going to charity.



From left to right: Joel Rivers packing down at Hooker; Tamika Murphy; Anja Holstead and Courtney Smith

Finally, game day came and there was a feel of both nerves and excitement.

The girls knew that they were up against a team that had played together for many years, were well drilled, disciplined and fit.

But the girls, knowing their resilient background as Police knew that they could handle anything that came their way. Although, they had limited preparation they were extremely happy with what they were able to put together in such a short amount of time.

The game was extremely physical and fast. Although the final score did not go their way, the girls played with great pride and vigour and never gave up.

What was evident, and promising is the platform to build on going into the future and for another show down with the ADF girls.

Following on from this will be Hong Kong where the girls will be able to put themselves to the test against other police agencies from around the world at the Police International Rugby Championship.

The AFPA proudly sponsored both the women's and men's teams and although the final scores did not go our way, we were proud of the effort all players put into the game.

Both teams are now preparing for the Police International Rugby Championships in Hong Kong in September 2019, where they will be able to put themselves to the test against other police agencies from around the world.

Samantha Dal Molin with family before the game



Womens Team June 2018



In September this year the Australian Police Rugby Championships will be held in Wollongong. The AFP will be taking a Men's Team, and for the first time a Women's team who will both be competing in 10-a-side matches.

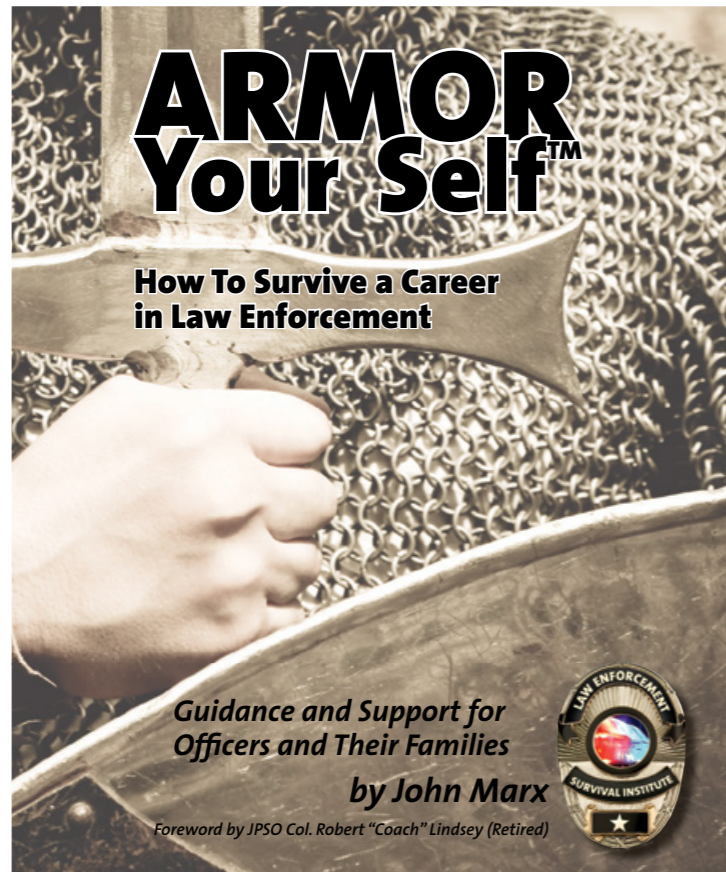
Contact can be made with the AFP Rugby Union (AFPRU) on e-mail at AFP-RugbyUnion@afp.gov.au if anyone would like more information about participating or supporting the AFPRU.

BOOK REVIEW



Armor Your “Self” To Survive Your Career

In his book *Armor Your Self™: How To Survive A Career In Law Enforcement*, John Marx offers strategies on how to build resilience and overcome the cumulative stresses that accompany a career in law enforcement.



About the author

Duane Wolfe a columnist for PoliceOne.com and a member of the International Law Enforcement Educators and Trainers Association. He retired from a career as a Minnesota Peace Officer after more than 25 years of service that began in 1988. During his career he served as patrolman, sergeant, S.R.T., Use of Force and Firearms Instructor. He is also a full-time instructor in the Law Enforcement Program at Alexandria Technical College, Alexandria, Minnesota. Duane has a Bachelor of Science Degree in Criminal Justice from Bemidji State University, and a Masters Degree in Education from Southwest State University. [Contact Duane Wolfe here: policejitsu@gmail.com](mailto:policejitsu@gmail.com)

Single copies of *Armor Your Self* are available online at www.amazon.com.au

For orders of five or more books please contact The Law Enforcement Survival Institute directly at info@LawEnforcementSurvivalInstitute.org

By Duane Wolfe

► Our law enforcement profession always faces new challenges, but none are as critical as the oldest of all challenges, which is the health and wellness of our people.

A new book identifies and provides strategies for dealing with the negative effects of working in law enforcement or any of the emergency services.

Police suicide, job burnout, divorce, PTSD and alcoholism are just a few of the negative outcomes of our career that we are warned about before joining up. Yet despite these warnings, such problems still plague members of our profession.

Police trainer John Marx, Executive Director of the Law Enforcement Survival Institute and editor of CopsAlive.com, is attempting to change that through his book, *Armor Your Self: How to Survive a Career in Law Enforcement*.

In his book, Marx gives our profession a comprehensive plan, or what he calls a “system of systems” to get to the root causes of these problems and to build wellness and resilience for all of our people.

Suffering in silence: Mental health and stigma in policing

Marx suggests that we have lumped all that ails our profession under the heading of “stress” when in fact it is a much more complicated issue, as complicated as the human beings that it affects. Because of this we are all operating under a number of myths about our own health and wellness.

Learn more about *Armor Your Self* and its author John Marx here:

www.ArmorYourSelf.com
www.LawEnforcementSurvivalInstitute.org
www.CopsAlive.com



John Marx,
Executive Director
of The Law
Enforcement
Survival Institute
and founder of
CopsAlive.com

Here are five myths we must change:

MYTH 1: BAD GUYS ARE THE NO. 1 ENEMY

We spend a lot of our day using good tactics and mindset to set us up for success so that we can go home at the end of our shift. Every year, however, more cops die by suicide than are killed by criminals. We do not know how many officers suffer from physical, spiritual and emotional trauma as a result of the negative stresses of this profession.

Marx named these negative health effects “Blue Trauma Syndrome.” One of the greatest difficulties and dangers of Blue Trauma Syndrome is you can’t see or touch it and, as a result, all too often, you don’t even know you have it.

Not one to shy away from creating new language to open minds, Marx has also coined the term Tactical Resilience™ to give us an intentional goal for building wellness success, and road map for developing the comprehensive initiatives needed to really inoculate our people from the hidden dangers of this career.

MYTH 2: YOU SHOULD ONLY FOCUS ON PHYSICAL THREATS

Because we can clearly see the effects of physical injury and death, we focus on avoiding obvious dangers. Blue Trauma Syndrome is the cumulative effects of depression, grief and emotional exhaustion created by all the stress we deal with in our careers. If ignored or unrecognized, this can lead to a downward spiral of inappropriate behaviors and coping strategies.

Alcohol and other drug abuse are just two of these poor coping strategies. How many officers have you seen fall victim to this? How many officers have you seen ruin their careers, marriages and families as a result?

MYTH 3: PHYSICAL FITNESS SOLVES EVERYTHING

Physical fitness is the key for a law enforcement officer to be prepared to do their job. It also helps in reducing stress, but it is not the panacea for all of our professional ills.

“Armor Your Self” has great tips and ideas to add to your current workout. However, physical exercise cannot deal with all the symptoms of accumulated negative stresses. Your mind is your greatest weapon and tool. In his book, Marx details a number of cognitive exercises that will aid in increasing memory, language skills, reaction time and problem-solving skills.

MYTH 4: MENTAL HEALTH IS FOR VICTIMS

This is probably one of the most dangerous beliefs in our profession. It will take far more emotional strength than physical strength to successfully and safely complete your police career. Despite what we like to think, humans, including cops, are emotional creatures.

If an officer is involved in a use-of-force situation with a suspect and broke their arm, who in their right mind would tell them, “Suck it up, buttercup.” Yet, too often, that is the response officers receive from their colleagues and administrators when it comes to mental trauma. Because mental trauma is unseen, we tend to minimize or ignore it.

Mental trauma is no different than physical trauma. Yet some see it as a weakness. Would you criticize an officer who broke their arm because they had a weak skeleton? No.

MYTH 5: IF YOU SUCCUMB TO STRESS OR TRAUMA, YOU SHOULDN’T ASK FOR HELP

We tend to bottle up the feelings and emotions that come with this job, but that is only a good strategy, in the moment,

when the public expects us to perform well and do our jobs professionally. Those emotional responses and the trauma that might go with them can’t stay bottled up forever. We need a safe way, with trusted supporters, to unpack those feelings and effectively process them.

Would you work with an untreated broken arm? Would your supervisors allow it? Until we change the attitude about coming forward and asking for help in regard to our mental health, too many officers just won’t do it. The officer who comes forward and asks for help is not an officer you need to worry about. The officers who don’t ask for help are the ones who pose risks. Most psychologists agree that it is far easier to treat emotional trauma in its early onset, rather than trying to deal with it after it has festered for months or even years. We should no longer suffer in silence!

If you are staying silent out of fear that your emotional injuries will affect your reputation, or your job, then we need to change our culture. We must change the ways we interact with each other, as well as our own individual mindsets, surrounding comprehensive wellness. To do this we must build trusted systems and begin discussing what it really takes to be fit for this work.

Marx’s book is an owner’s manual to a successful police career. This book provides guidance and suggestions for everyone involved in this career as well as our families. If you follow the recommendations and adhere to the routine maintenance, you will have a successful career in law enforcement no matter your role or position. ◀

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AFP Merchandise items



Coloured Shield Plaque | \$70.00



Australia Plaque | \$70.00



AFP Plaque (Glass) | \$65.00



AFP Plaque (Pewter) | \$60.00



Coaster Set | \$37.00



Cuff Links | \$25.00



Gloss Mug | \$20.00



Pen | \$20.00



Key Ring | \$12.00



Stubby Holder | \$9.00



Tie Tac (coloured, silver, gold) | \$7.00

AFPA Merchandise items



AFPA Soft Shell vest | \$60.00



AFPA Silk Woven Tie | \$25.00



AFPA Tie Bar | \$12.00



AFPA Lapel Pin | \$7.00



AFPA Stubby Holder | \$7.00



AFPA Eco Cup | \$15.00

See over the page for the Merchandise order form

Merchandise Order Form

▶ AFP/AFPA MERCHANDISE



SECTION 1: PERSONAL DETAILS

First Name:	Surname:
Position:	Team/Area:
Phone:	Email:
Billing Address:	
Postal Address:	
Send via: <input type="checkbox"/> Internal Mail <input type="checkbox"/> Express Post (\$15) <input type="checkbox"/> Hold for Collection	

SECTION 2: ORDER DETAILS

Item	Cost inc. GST (\$)	Qty	Total (\$)
AFP Coloured Shield Plaque	\$70		
AFP Australia Plaque	\$70		
AFP Plaque (Glass)	\$65		
AFP Plaque (Pewter)	\$60		
AFP Coaster Set	\$37		
AFP Cuff Links	\$25		
AFP Gloss Mug	\$20		
AFP Pen	\$20		
AFP Key Ring	\$12		
AFP Stubby Holder	\$9		
AFP Tie Tac (coloured, silver, gold)	\$7		
AFPA Soft Shell vest	\$60		
AFPA Silk Woven Tie	\$25		
AFPA Tie Bar	\$12		
AFPA Lapel Pin	\$7		
AFPA Stubby Holder	\$7		
AFPA Eco Cup	\$15		
		Subtotal:	
		Express Post (\$15):	
		Total (\$):	

SECTION 3: PAYMENT DETAILS

Payment Type: <input type="checkbox"/> Visa <input type="checkbox"/> Mastercard <input type="checkbox"/> AMEX <input type="checkbox"/> Please invoice me	
Card Number:	Name on Card:
Expiry:	CCV:

OFFICE USE | Processed by

Name: _____ Date: _____ Invoice Number: _____

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