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**Federal Election
2022**

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**Valedictory for PSO
Adam Dunning**

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AFPA members are continuing to benefit from attending the Tharwa Valley Forge. Course attendees are able to forge, bash and shape their very own knife.

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Alex Caruana
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Vice President



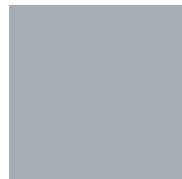
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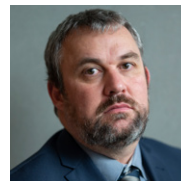


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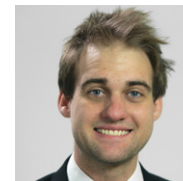
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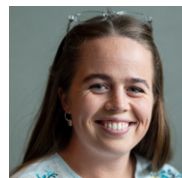
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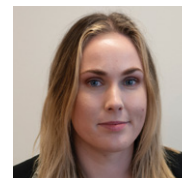
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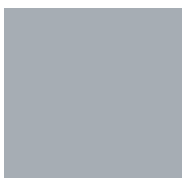
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Member Support
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Courtney Posantzis
Membership Services
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My long recovery from COVID-19

A PANSW member details his experience with the virus



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Vale Adam Dunning

17 years after his passing, we honour PSO Adam Dunning



Australian Federal Police Association is proudly sponsored by Police Bank and Police Health



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Return to the Forge

Almost two years since our first visit, we returned to the Tharwa Valley Forge



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Alex Caruana, President

President
Alex Caruana

Regular Items

► Welcome to the first edition of BlueStar for 2022! I hope you all had an amazing festive season and were able to spend some well-earned time with your loved ones over the December and January period.

2022 is shaping up to be a big year for the AFP. A federal election looms on the horizon. COVID continues to present fresh challenges through the restrictions imposed on our workforce and equally, through the gathering storm of social unrest.

In just a little over a year the final pay increase will be due to members, necessitating the commencement of bargaining for new enterprise agreements. Large-scale investigations and operations, both foreseen and unforeseen, continue to mount increasing the demands on the workload of members across the country. On all measures, it looks to be a busy time for us all. Rest assured, whether you require assistance legally, industrially or on a welfare front, your Association is here to help.

RECENT ACT PROTESTS

I would like to begin by commending all members of ACT Policing, and those members from National who lent support, for their outstanding work over the course of January and February during the anti-vaccine mandate protests in Canberra. Whether you were on the frontline or working day-to-day duties with depleted resources, you all conducted yourself magnificently with professionalism and integrity. It was one of the largest demonstrations the capital has seen in decades and, despite being under-resourced, it was managed superbly by each and every one of you in the face of hostility and intense media scrutiny. You should all be proud of your efforts throughout such a trying period.

AUSTRALIA DAY HONOURS

I would like to congratulate the four AFP members who received Australia Day honours this year. Detective Superintendent Anita Van Hilst, Detective Superintendent David Nelson, and

Detective Sergeant Louise Denley each received an Australian Police Medal. Ms Kim Crimmins received a Public Service Medal. D/Supt Van Hilst was recognised primarily for her service in counterterrorism which saw her deployed to Jordan in 2017 amid the Syrian Civil War. D/Supt Nelson was awarded for his management of the AFP's contribution to the investigation of the tragic downing of MH17 in Ukraine – an operation he continues to lead to this day. D/Sgt Denley was honoured for her trail-blazing service to ACT Policing, being the first female police motorcyclist, pursuit driver and full-time rescue squad member, which led to her promotion to Sergeant in 1996 where she became the first female Traffic Sergeant in the AFP's history. Ms Crimmins was recognised for her crucial work as a Victim Liaison Officer and Family Investigative Liaison Officer, in which she provided guidance, direction and comfort to victims of crime, including those affected by the downing of MH17.

These awards were richly deserved and reflect the outstanding professionalism these four individuals have shown over the course of their careers in their respective fields.

More information about these recipients can be found on page 30.

FEDERAL ELECTION

The work done by these four individuals highlights the amazing job all AFP employees do in service of their nation, their communities, and the world at large. Your Association believes your service has gone underappreciated by governments of all political persuasions for far too long. That is why, during this election campaign, the AFPA will be continuing to push the government and our federal parliamentarians to recognise the work you all do every day, both as individuals and as an organisation.

The main pillars of our campaign centre around:

- Recognising those who serve through the introduction of presumptive legislation for AFP employees who suffer from a psychological injury;

- Recognising the need to future-proof the AFP through more resources and personnel for the AFP, assurance that AFP Protective Service Officers will continue their vital work at Defence facilities, exemption from the federal government's efficiency dividend, and a Law Enforcement White Paper to ensure Australia's law enforcement agencies are equipped to deal with the changing crime environment in the decades to come;
- Recognising the hard work of AFP employees via an exemption from the government's Public Sector Workplace Relations Policy and empowering an oversight body to review employment-related decisions;
- Recognising community safety through a reform to firearms legislation to ensure consistency throughout the Commonwealth; and
- Recognising integrity through the creation of a fit-for-purpose Commonwealth Integrity Commission in which police officers are not held to a different standard to powerful parliamentarians and high-ranking public service officials.

More information about our election platform can be found on page 12. Keep an eye on your inboxes for a more comprehensive document outlining our requests for whichever party forms government.

The election will also see an incredible surge in work for our members working in Close Personal Protection. By all accounts, more candidates and politicians will require protection than perhaps ever before, due to the rise of anti-establishment sentiment over the last two years.

We are currently fighting hard to ensure members deployed for the election receive appropriate remuneration for their efforts.

ZONE CONVENOR AND DELEGATES ELECTIONS

December saw the finalisation of elections for the positions of AFPA Zone Convenors and Delegates. I thank all members who nominated and extend my congratulations to those who were elected to these roles. We had a strong field of candidates. I'm delighted to see so many passionate and dedicated representatives returning to their roles. Equally, I am very excited to commence work with the newly elected Zone Convenors and Delegates. For privacy reasons, we will not be publishing the names of these members in this magazine, however, we sent an email to all members on 10 December 2021 titled "Update on Zone Convenor and Delegate Elections" should you wish to know the names of the representatives in your workplace. Alternatively, please do not hesitate to contact us at afpa@afpa.org.au or chris.chilcott@afpa.org.au for a full list of delegates in your Zone.

Zone Convenors and Delegates are crucial for the AFPA to function at its full capacity. They are the eyes, ears and faces of the AFPA in the workplace, particularly given the difficult circumstances presented by COVID-19. The AFPA holds regular meetings with the Zone Convenors and Delegates in each Zone where we provide updates on what the AFPA has been doing.

More importantly, your representatives provide insight into the issues affecting the workforce on the ground and give us feedback on what action members want from their Association.

There are currently several vacant Zone Convenor and Delegate positions still available. The process to fill these positions will take place over the first half of 2022.

The current vacant positions are:

- Canberra Zone – 5 Delegate positions;
- Protective Service Officer Zone – 3 Delegate positions;
- Executive and International Zone – 1 Zone Convenor position and 1 Delegate position;
- Northern Territory Zone – 1 Zone Convenor position;
- Queensland Zone – 1 Delegate position;
- Specialist Response Group Zone – 1 Zone Convenor position; and
- Intelligence (Canberra) Zone – 1 Zone Convenor position.

If you are interested in nominating, or know somebody who might be, we strongly encourage you to reach out to us at afpa@afpa.org.au, and we will let you know what you need to do to nominate.

IN THIS ISSUE

This edition, we'll be returning to Tharwa Valley Forge for a look at what our most recent batch of AFP knifemakers has been creating, on page 18. We also feature a story from a Police Association of NSW member who contracted COVID-19 on page 20.

And on a poignant note, we remember PSO Adam Dunning, who was murdered while deployed in the Solomon Islands in 2004. The AFPA valedictory article for Adam starts on page 26.

As always, if you require any support from your Association, please do not hesitate to reach out to us on **(02) 6285 1677** or at afpa@afpa.org.au.

In solidarity,

Alex Caruana
President



Acting Manager,
Legal & Industrial
Giles Snedker

LEGAL AND INDUSTRIAL

Giles Snedker, Acting Manager, Legal & Industrial

Comcare – Hiding behind the Guidelines.

▶ It is a fact that working in policing is associated with an increased risk of developing mental health issues and that employees in police and emergency services organisations have the highest rates of workers' compensation claims outside the defence forces.

While prevention and early intervention such as the AFP Shield program are vital to improving workplace mental health and wellbeing, the workers' compensation system performs an important role in supporting the treatment and recovery of affected members.

The 2020 survey, *Answering the Call: The Beyond Blue National Mental Health and Wellbeing Study of Police and Emergency Services*, painted a depressing picture of the experiences of police and emergency services employees with the workers' compensation claim process.

Out of the nearly 15,000 employees surveyed, a staggering 14% had made claims for mental health reasons. Of those, only 8.2% of employees making a claim had a positive experience, with 70.3% having a poor experience. Two-thirds of employees who had made a claim reported that the process was unsupportive and stressful, and over half reported that it had an overall negative impact on their recovery

Taking the Police Sector in isolation, 15.5% had made a claim because of psychological trauma, stress, or a mental health condition, with 61.4% reporting the workers' compensation process had a negative impact on their recovery. An overwhelming 70.9% found the process was unsupportive, and a mere 21.7% felt they were very fairly treated.

We frequently represent members who have had claims or treatment pathways denied by Comcare for various reasons, and in particular we still see members having claims denied for mental health conditions. This is often due to Comcare determining that the injury either did not occur in the course of employment or that required treatments fall outside its guidelines. This results in members having a prolonged fight to be able to receive the most appropriate treatments.

Presumptive workers' compensation laws place the burden of proof on the employer, rather than the employee. This greatly reduces the administrative burden on the injured member and saves the employee from reliving their trauma simply to get the treatment they deserve.

As part of the medical treatment, the member was prescribed medications that unfortunately caused debilitating side effects. This led to the member being referred by their GP to trial using cannabis oil (CBD) and the member commenced taking CBD, with significant improvements in their mental health. However, the subsequent application for reimbursement for the costs of the CBD treatment was declined by Comcare on the basis that cannabis oil is not listed in the Australian Guidelines for the Treatment of Acute Stress Disorder and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and Complex PTSD (the Guidelines), nor is it listed as an area for further research as a treatment for PTSD. In the absence of endorsed supporting medical information or clinical justification and noting the direction of the Guidelines, Comcare was not able to approve the use of CBD oil or fund the above reimbursement request and made a determination to this effect. A second request for further costs was also declined.

The member was then forced to apply for a reconsideration of the determination, and request and obtain additional evidence to support the treatment regime, placing undue pressure on the member's mental health. Comcare eventually accepted the claim over four months later.

Another example is a member who was suicidal and could not get Comcare to fund a lifesaving treatment because it was for depression and not considered a compensable condition of PTSD. Fortunately, the member had prior military service and was able to obtain the assistance of the DVA.

While it is accepted that some form of guidance is required in the Comcare process, rigid adherence to the Guidelines can not only prevent a member suffering from mental health issues from accessing the most suitable treatments or result in a claim being declined but also cause delays in access to appropriate care. This can lead to an adversarial process that is extremely stressful and potentially harmful to the recovery of people with mental health conditions. It places emphasis on people with mental health issues proving they have a mental health condition that it was caused through their employment and that treatment plans outside those in the guidelines are necessary. This can be difficult where the cause of the injury may be recurrent exposures over

extended periods of time or where new treatments are shown to be effective.

In part, this is as a result of a workers' compensation system that was originally designed to help those suffering from physical injuries rather than mental health problems, and it simply fails to adequately cater for sufferers of mental health issues who require treatments outside the Guidelines. We have seen this in the guidance provided to members by Comcare, which is plainly geared to physical ailments rather than any psychological ailment. The AFPA believes that each member suffering from psychological injuries must be treated on an individual case-by-case basis, and Comcare needs to acknowledge that people respond to different treatment and recovery plans that may fall outside the Guidelines.

As a final note, presumptive laws, such as those afforded to Queensland first responders, would allow physical and mental injuries for frontline officers to be deemed work-related by default unless there is evidence to the contrary. Accordingly, the AFPA has been calling for officers to receive mental health care plans similar to Australian Defence Force members to prevent members from being re-traumatised by having to go through the arduous process of proving their injuries were work-related. ◀

Australian Law Enforcement – Support us to support them



“Paying it forward”

It is only through donations that AUSPOL remains viable. AUSPOL assists members and members' families in times of need.

We need every AFPA member to contribute.

www.afpa.org.au/auspol/





MEMBER SERVICES

Courtney Posantzis, Member Support Administrator

Member Support
Administrator
Courtney Posantzis

▶ I am really pleased to introduce myself as the new Membership Services Administrator. I have the pleasure of being handed the reins for this edition of our BlueStar magazine from my colleague Gerry O'Connor.

Since my engagement in late September, I have thoroughly enjoyed getting to know the AFPA membership and wider AFPA team. I am really thrilled to work with a group of such caring individuals.

I am building on the excellent work that has already been undertaken – and I am incredibly keen to ensure that you are making the most of your subscription year-round!

I warmly encourage you to reach out to the AFPA at any stage – in order to deliver a functional and seamless membership experience, we need to hear from you! From simple things like basic housekeeping (change of details, which you can do here on our website or by emailing us afpa@afpa.org.au), to feedback or suggestions (again by emailing afpa@afpa.org.au), we are really keen to have your input.

When you join us, don't forget your Insight deductions must be turned on! If you need help, we would be glad to help. Alternatively, your pay team can be a great source of assistance. We also have direct debit options for interruption-free payments if that is your preference. Easy to set up – you just need to let us know. I am going to sound like a broken record, but please email us at afpa@afpa.org.au to discuss your options.

Have you checked out your Membership Advantage portal lately? Any trouble accessing your account, let us know – this can be fixed very quickly! I want to see you making the most of these savings (in twelve months of being a savvy shopper, you could cover the cost of your membership + more!) If you navigate your way to our website, you can access your portal. Alternatively, you can jump straight in via this link!

You will notice that we also have housed within this portal AFPA exclusive benefits – we're really pleased to be able to bring you Samsung, Costco, Coffee Club and RM Williams.

Once you have had a look around and explored the bigger member portal, make your way down to this toggle to access those exclusive benefits:



Happy shopping!

External to this we also have an exclusive deal with Oakley Sunglasses. Why not get in contact if you want to hear more about the ridiculous savings we've managed to secure for you on these products?

On the subject of retail therapy, we have a whole line of merchandise; I may be biased, but I think it also makes a fantastic gift – don't forget to have a look at our website. Scroll down the page to the left-hand side, and you will find the handy link to access more details. You can also access the order form directly.

We're incredibly proud of the work that we do to support our members in their most vulnerable moments. You too can have a hand in this vital work – consider making an AUSPOL donation alongside your deductions each fortnight. Super easy to set up within Insight (and you have the added satisfaction knowing that you are contributing to helping your at-risk colleagues). You can read more here on our website.

Since our last edition, we have had a number of our members retire from the force, and many of these are taking advantage of their AFPA Badge Board Benefit – If you or your colleague wants to utilise this benefit on your behalf, it's very simple. Please provide us with an invoice that states the recipient's name clearly; we then pay up to the amount that the member is eligible (based on their membership status).

The handy guide below shows you the amount you may be eligible:

BRONZE 150	GOLD 400
SILVER 250	PLATINUM 600

More importantly though, please join me in thanking these long-serving officers for their outstanding commitment and contribution to the force – we wish them all the very best in the next stages of their life.

Leave without pay is a fact of AFP life, and I wanted to let you know that your membership takes this into account – did you know that you may be eligible for a fee waiver during this period? Let us know the circumstances for your leave; we then do the heavy lifting and make an application on your behalf to the National Executive. If granted, you receive a stay on your fees for the length of time that is applicable to your personal circumstances. Fuss-free membership is our goal! All we need from you is to hear from you in these moments, and we do the rest.

For some of these members, this simple act of reaching out means we can help you in other means – due to your leave, personal circumstances, or health situation, and we can offer a wide variety of simple support in these moments. AFP has paid utility bills, provided meals, house cleaning, gardening services, movie tickets for the children of affected members... the list goes on.

In the last quarter, we have provided a number of services. These include (but are not limited to!)

- Housecleaning
- Gardening services
- Death benefit payment
- Support for bereaved family members
- Terminal illness payment
- Financial assistance in the form of a lump sum payment to alleviate financial stress

We would like to do more of this work – sometimes, the hardest thing to do is just to reach out. I encourage you to take that first step – we'll do the rest of the work. It's another way your AFP membership works for you!

I am really excited for the next quarter and working on your behalf to support and improve the already great offerings included in your AFP membership.

For those of you reading the print version of Blue Star, we've included QR codes for each of the links in the sidebar.

Courtney Posantzis

Member Support Administrator ◀

QUICK LINKS

Update your details:



Member discounts:



AFP Merchandise:



AFP Homepage:



AUSPOL



2022 FEDERAL ELECTION

Troy Roberts, Media and Government Relations Manager

Media and Government Relations Manager, Troy Roberts

Regular Items

▶ At the time of writing, signs point to the election being called for the end of May. The pre-election environment has been interesting for the Liberal/National coalition, the Labor-led opposition and crossbenchers/Independents.

This election will be significant and shape what Australia will look like for the next eight years. The last few years have seen Australia having to deal with a pandemic, the management of that pandemic, and now the future will see the recovery from that pandemic.

If you believe the bookies and the polls, Labor has this election in the bag; however, we learned a valuable lesson during the last election: two-horse races are an open market.

This election could also redefine what a marginal seat looks like from voters' perspectives, as well as the swing between the parties. Previously, a seat held by under five per cent was considered a marginal seat; that threshold may change moving forward. Crucial New South Wales by-elections in mid-February showed that this level of five per cent should be taken with a grain of salt. We saw swings of over 18 per cent in the seat of Willoughby, and for the first time in electorate history, the seat of Bega switched from the Liberal Party to the Labor Party. People will say that state elections are different to federal elections, and in some ways, that is true, but you'd be a mug to ignore those numbers. The federal branches of both major parties will be picking apart the data to find an edge. The March state election in South Australia will be very interesting and may give a glimpse into how people could vote in the federal election.

In saying that, this election may also see the rise of the "Independent". During the Morrison Government years, we've seen the importance of Independents. It seems that Australians are pivoting away from large, traditional parties to a more tailored candidate for their local electorate. The likes of Dr Helen Haines, whom we worked with on the Commonwealth Integrity

Commission, is an excellent example of how a hardworking Independent can bring benefits to their electorate. They don't have to toe the party line, and they can think and vote independently for the people they represent.

As you'll be well aware, the AFPA does have an election manifesto, Operation Recognition. This platform aims to benefit the AFP and improve workplace conditions for its members.

If successful, the AFP will transition to a better working environment that reflects an operational police force and not a public service department.

The lead-up to the election will be an extremely busy time. The term 'caretaker period' is often confused with a quiet time when politicians, candidates, and public service departments can relax for six weeks and wait before a new government is announced. However, I can tell you now that politicians and candidates will be working harder than anyone during this time – their very careers and livelihood will depend on it.

You will start seeing politicians and candidates walking the streets, door-knocking or in public places such as shopping centres, all to gain your vote. While some people will walk straight past them, I urge you not to. Instead, please take five minutes to have a conversation with them. If they are the sitting members, they likely wouldn't know about the minor issues in the electorate that affect you daily. This is the time to effect change and plant the seed for improvements.

The AFPA, as part of Operation Recognition, will provide talking points to assist in engaging with candidates.

“This election will be significant and shape what Australia will look like for the next several years.”

While we don't know the local issues within your electorate, we do know about the issues holding back the AFP and its workforce. Politicians and candidates will want to hear about both, so please take the time to speak with them and provide them with your own story.

Tell them how you've missed the last three Christmas Days with your family as you've had to work overtime due to staff shortages. Tell them how reviewing 10,000 images of child exploitation material affected you. If you're a former or retired member, tell them if you're struggling with mental health injuries sustained while working for the AFP and can't get help from the Commonwealth.

Tell them your personal story; this will resonate with them and encourage them to speak with the AFPA.

If you live in a marginal seat, take this opportunity to use that to your advantage. It would be a poor candidate indeed that wouldn't give you five or ten minutes to discuss issues that affect you. Remember, you have something they want – your vote. While they may not be able to directly deliver what you want, they may open doors that lead to a path where change could occur.

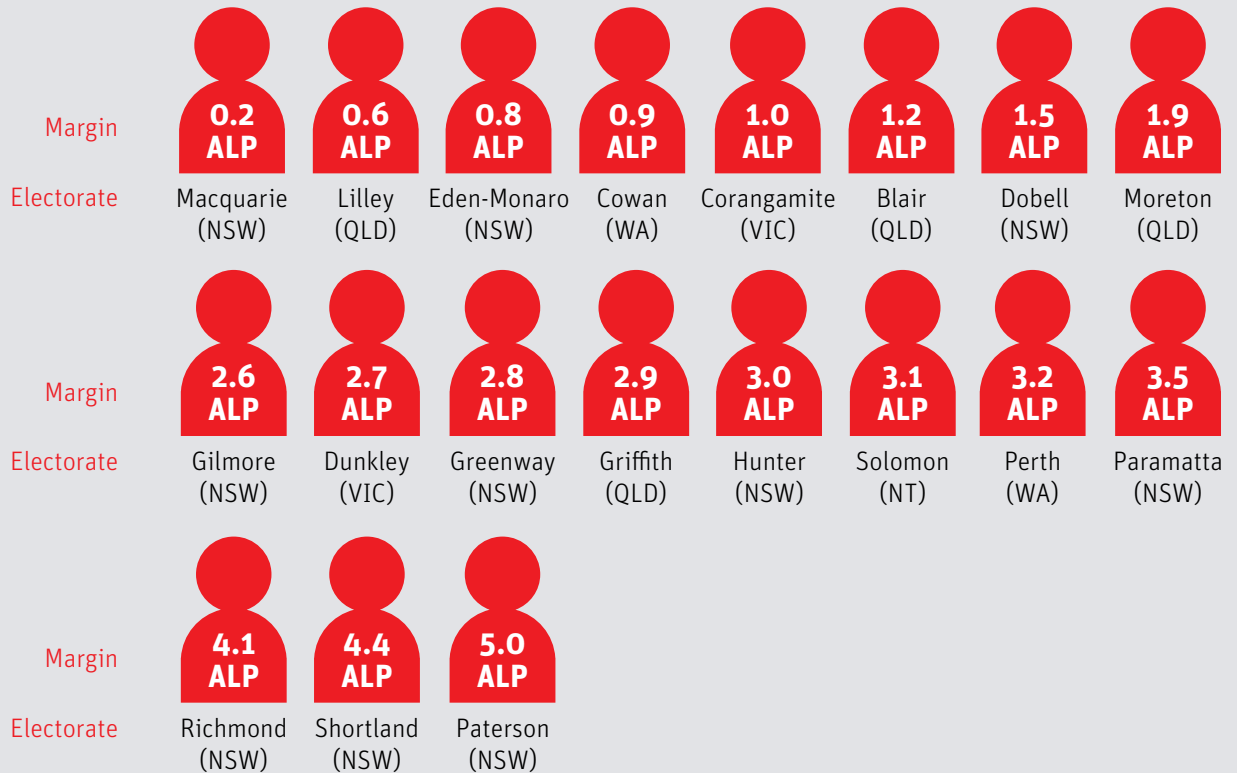
Please take a minute to review the supplied tables of marginal Federal electorates.

As I mentioned earlier, this election will shape the medium-term future of the AFP. With the current Coalition Government, we've seen what they offer. But, if the government changes, will the Australian Labor Party be any different? That's what we aim to find out over the next few months, and we'll keep you informed of developments and commitments as we move forward. ◀

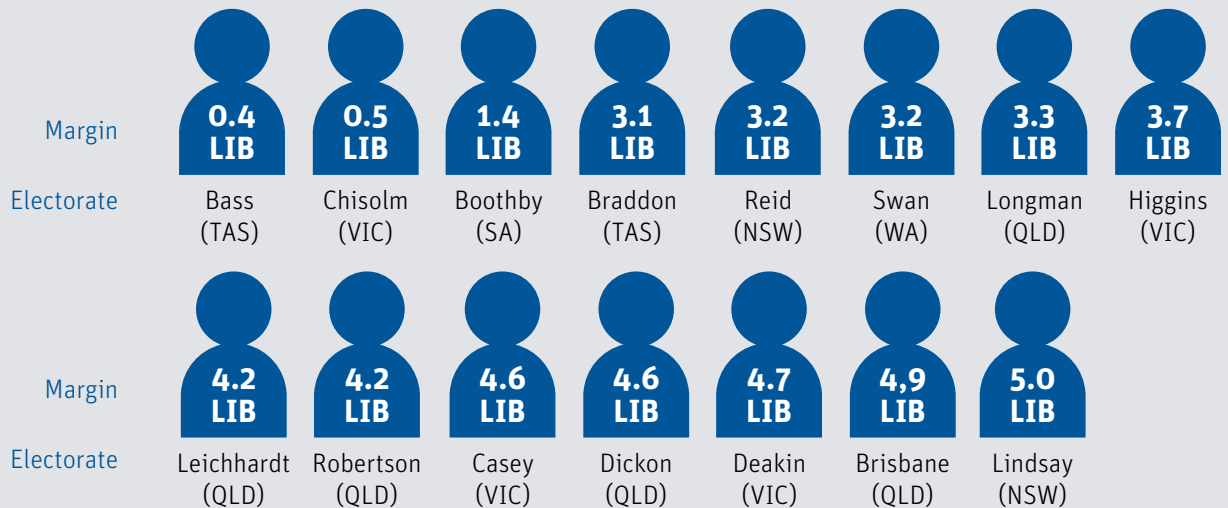


Swing Seats:

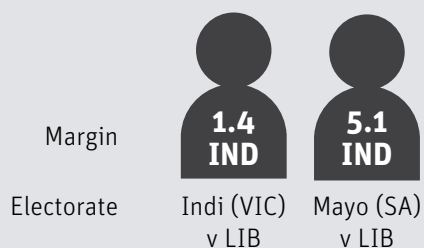
LABOR



LIBERAL



INDEPENDENT/MINOR PARTIES



Current Marginal Seats:

LABOR

Electorate	Member
Macquarie (NSW)	Susan Templeman
Lilley (QLD)	Anika Wells
Cowan (WA)	Anne Aly
Eden-Monaro (NSW)	Kristy McBain
Corangamite (VIC)	Libby Coker
Blair (QLD)	Shayne Neumann
Dobell (NSW)	Emma McBride
Moreton (QLD)	Graham Perrett
Gilmore (NSW)	Fiona Phillips
Dunkley (VIC)	Peta Murphy
Greenway (NSW)	Michelle Rowland
Griffith (QLD)	Terri Butler
Hunter (NSW)	Joel Fitzgibbon
Solomon (NT)	Luke Gosling
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LIBERAL

Electorate	Member
Bass (TAS)	Bridget Archer
Chisholm (VIC)	Gladys Liu
Wentworth (NSW)	Dave Sharma
Boothby (SA)	Nicolle Flint
Swan (WA)	Steve Irons
Braddon (TAS)	Gavin Pearce
Reid (NSW)	Fiona Martin
Longman (QLD)	Terry Young
Higgins (VIC)	Katie Allen
Leichhardt (QLD)	Warren Entsch
Robertson (NSW)	Lucy Wicks
La Trobe (VIC)	Jason Wood
Dickson (QLD)	Peter Dutton
Casey (VIC)	Tony Smith
Deakin (VIC)	Michael Sukkar
Brisbane (QLD)	Trevor Evans
Lindsay (NSW)	Melissa McIntosh
Hasluck (WA)	Ken Wyatt
Flinders (VIC)	Greg Hunt
Stirling (WA)	Vince Connelly
Kooyong (VIC)	Josh Frydenberg

INDEPENDENT/MINOR PARTIES

Electorate	Member
Indi (VIC)	Helen Haines (Independent)
Mayo (SA)	Rebekah Sharkie (Centre Alliance)
Warringah (NSW)	Zali Steggall (Independent)
Kennedy (QLD)	Bob Katter (Katter Australia Party)
Melbourne (VIC)	Adam Bandt (Greens)
Clark (TAS)	Andrew Wilkie (Independent)

How to come back from home loan rejection

Picture this: you've found a home you love and can see yourself living in. You get your paperwork together, prepare to go in hard at auction, but at one of the final hurdles, your home loan is rejected.



The good news is, a lot of prospective borrowers who are rejected on their first application go on to become homeowners.



It's an unfortunate scenario, but one that people find themselves in for a variety of reasons. It could relate to employment status, the size of the deposit or even the evaluation of the property. As a regulated lender, we have strict criteria that we are bound by under law. If home loan applications don't meet that criteria, we have to turn them down.

The good news is, a lot of prospective borrowers who are rejected on their first application go on to become homeowners. Here are a few ways they do it.

1. SAVE A BIGGER DEPOSIT

Having a small deposit exposes both you as the buyer and us, as your potential lender, to a greater degree of risk. If the market changes direction, it's easier to move into negative equity territory with a low deposit. In that scenario, the market value of the property falls below the amount owed.

Therefore, if your deposit is too small, your loan may be rejected. An easy way to fix this problem is to wait for a bigger deposit before entering the market.

While Police Bank does offer loans for different loan-to-valuation ratios, higher deposits are also generally associated with better lending terms, such as lower interest rates.

2. DO A FINANCIAL HEALTH CHECK

Any potential lender will look at your financial situation, including your employment, your level of debt and your history of servicing that debt. We do this to make sure that you're in a good position to repay the home loan.

Sometimes there are red flags that indicate a potential customer may have trouble paying us back, such as a bad credit history, irregular employment or a high level of debt.

Doing a financial stocktake and putting together the paperwork to show you've got a solid financial history – or have corrected past mistakes – may help next time you apply.

3. FIND A DIFFERENT PROPERTY

Sometimes the reason a lender rejects a loan is because they have doubts about whether the property would resell for a similar or higher value than the asking price. This can happen for a number of reasons, including the market it's in, the supply of similar properties (such as, in a high rise) or specific faults with the property that's been chosen. Often, you'll be advised if this is the case and the simple fix is to find a new property.

4. ASK FOR FEEDBACK

Everyone's personal situation is different, which means the reason you've been rejected for a home loan won't be the same as your neighbour's. A quick call to your prospective lender may set you on the right path for approval next time.

Once again, there are many Australians who have had their first home loan rejected who have gone on to be happy homeowners. Sometimes, it's just a matter of a few small corrections.

If you're looking to buy your first or your next property, visit [policebank.com.au/loans/home-loans/](https://www.policebank.com.au/loans/home-loans/)

Police Bank is a community-based bank started by Police for Police and we are here for you and the broader policing family. If you have any questions or are interested in how we can help you, please don't hesitate to speak to one of our team members in the Contact Centre on 131 728 Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm, or visit www.policebank.com.au.



Return to the Forge

It's been almost two years since we took our readers down the winding country road to the Tharwa Valley Forge. Just past the bridge crossing the Murrumbidgee, it's worlds apart from Canberra's planned streets and government departments.

▶ The Forge is run by Ali and Karim at the Cuppacumbalong Homestead, and the courses they run on-site offer the chance to experience a wide range of traditional "artisan" handicrafts. Whether it be knifemaking, leatherwork, metallic artwork, or a fusion of all three – the creations made by participants displayed around the property are something else.



“Many first responders and veterans have benefited from attending the Forge over the years;”

From the initial selection of a piece of metal (either through reclaiming or forging), it takes a full day to create a finished knife. People are free to choose their own material for the handle (there is no shortage of local wood for reclaiming), as well as a design for laser etching on the blade if they want one.

A typical knifemaking course involves lots of bashing superheated metal into the shape of a knife, plenty of grinding

to put an edge on it, and a fair whack of just standing there holding the blade inside the forge as the fire slowly makes it pliable. This mix of stages means that at times you'll be working by yourself, concentrating intensely and not being able to hear a thing, and other times you'll be kicking back with half an eye on your creation as you get a chance to chat with your fellow knife-makers.

Knifemaking in particular gives attendees almost complete freedom to craft a unique piece that they'll be able to gaze at and use daily for years to come.

This unique environment facilitates demonstrated psycho-social benefits, especially for those living with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

During the course, people can engage or withdraw from conversations with new people at their own pace, allowing them to mitigate the social and general anxiety that can prevent them from leading the kind of life they want. If things become too much in the group environment, they can go back to working by themselves or take a break and walk around the grounds.

Many first responders and veterans have benefited from attending the Forge over the years; ADF service personnel, firefighters, ambulance workers and police members have all enjoyed learning in a safe environment and meeting new people.



Cuppacumbalong Homestead is breathtaking and expansive, and is surrounded by beautiful gardens

There has been sustained research conducted by the University of Canberra (among other institutions worldwide) into the merits of courses like the Forge's, with peer-reviewed findings showing exposure to social environments such as these as being an effective part of holistic mental health treatment plans.

Simply stated, if you are already receiving help from a mental health care professional, a course like this can really fit in well with your plans to get better.

The AFPA has seen the benefits of the Tharwa Valley Forge's knifemaking courses firsthand with our members who have attended them, and it is for this reason that we have been sending them to the Forge as often as possible over the last several years.

The last couple of courses have been attended by local Canberra-based members, but the AFPA is keen to expand this nationally so that any eligible members based around the

country able to travel to Canberra can participate in a course. We appreciate that there are logistical obstacles to this occurring; Karim has said he would like to see similar establishments to the Forge opening in other states across Australia. In the meantime, we will maintain our relationship with the Forge for the benefit of our members who are struggling with a physical or mental injury/illness.

Anecdotal evidence demonstrates these courses has been beneficial for most if not all AFPA participants.

Our membership team has spoken directly to members who've gone to the Forge and heard how it assisted them in their journey through and beyond their mental health issues.

We firmly believe that providing opportunities like this represents a proactive measure to address some of the myths and demons of people suffering from mental health issues (either job-related or not)

There will be a number of scholarships available in this calendar year (2022), and we are hoping to fill every one of these positions. ◀

To read our previous article on the Tharwa Forge, go to www.afpa.org.au/magazine/bluestar-june-2020/

To contact the AFPA Membership Services area, please email afpa@afpa.org.au, or call **(02) 62851677**.



Karim's pizza oven often goes into overdrive feeding hungry knifemakers at the end of a day



COVID-19, No Ordinary Virus

This article was kindly supplied by the Police Association of New South Wales (PANSW).

By Sgt Lenny Kerr (PANSW member)

In July 2021, I returned a positive COVID-19 test. I have not been the same since. I graduated with class 234 in 1988 and have been a NSW police officer for 33 years. I was front line operational for about 16 years and have been a prosecutor ever since.

► Like most of us, I first became aware of COVID-19 through the media and the unfolding events overseas. I watched as the Australian media picked up the story. I recall having a bad feeling about it.

KEEPING AN OPEN MIND

Prior to catching COVID, I considered myself to be physically healthy and fit with no underlying health issues.

I know people, both professionally and socially, who have talked about COVID being non-existent or being nothing more than a virus. I also know people who were anti-vaccination and pro-vaccination.

It has been a political and divisive issue.

I kept an open mind and respected people's rights to a view. For myself, I had made the decision to get the vaccine and was due to get the 'jab'.

SYMPTOMS THAT KEPT GETTING WORSE

In July 2021, I came home from work and was feeling tired, after a long week. In the following days, I developed a headache, sore throat, and a runny nose. This developed into a fever, shivering cold, aching joints and muscles. This was like nothing I had previously experienced.

During this time, I had undergone COVID testing at the local COVID clinic and contacted work advising I was ill and would not be able to come in pending the results of the COVID test.

I was subsequently notified by the Department of Health that I was positive for COVID-19.

This also had implications for my household. My symptoms continued to worsen. Headache, shaking, fever, muscle, and joint pain continued and there was no relief, no sleep – it was relentless. A bad cough and severe sore throat had developed and I was continuously shaking and shivering.

I was contacted by various Superintendents in relation to contact tracing and my thoughts and concerns turned to colleagues and their families being infected and the possible consequences.

Owing to the concerns of infecting others in the household, we went to the COVID hotel at Mascot. Oxygen levels and heart rates were monitored throughout the day. You were not allowed to exit the motel room and any contact was at a distance with nurses wearing special clothing.

... AND WORSE

I was incredibly fatigued, bedridden and my terrible headache had not subsided. The sounds of trucks and trailers hitting potholes outside my hotel room window were piercing with the continuous migraine.

I could not get any relief from it at all. My oxygen levels had declined and I developed a delirium where I perceived that I had to do the perfect 'COPS' event each night or I would suffer worsening of COVID in the form of severe reflux and other continuing symptoms in the morning. There was no relief, no sleep, nothing to get back some strength.

My oxygen levels were reduced to the point that I was taken by ambulance to St Vincent's Hospital.



My entry to the ambulance and the hospital, and my movement through the hospital, **was like a parting of the Red Sea.**

Corridors were closed down and people moved away. I was assessed and put into a COVID isolation ward. The room had positive air pressure with an airlock and was known as the 'bubble room'. I did not fully comprehend what was going on and was in what I can only describe as a fog. I was afraid of the great unknown and having to be placed on oxygen which may lead to a downward spiral. It was during this time I contacted my solicitor Patrick Duffy to get my affairs in order and contact lists as a precaution. Such was my fear.

THE BUBBLE ROOM

There were three of us in the bubble room, from all different walks of life, ages, cultures, occupations, backgrounds.

The room was silent but for the sounds of the machines and the meals/checks being conducted by nurses and doctors doing rounds. It was not possible to discern one from another with the protective clothing and face shields, other than by way of shoes.

One man who had a family, rapidly declined and coded. He was rushed to intensive care. I did not see him again.

Another man replaced him who had been in the ICU for 26 days after going to a butcher shop to buy meat and returning home with COVID.

Another patient regularly had reduced oxygen levels which constantly triggered alarms on the oxygen monitor and the immediate response of nurses and doctors. I was on oxygen and a drip and monitored throughout the day with various medications. The nursing staff had to enter the room via a positive airlock and were only able to stay with us for a limited time to minimise exposure.

I was afraid of my oxygen levels dropping any further. I saw others having to wear the full-face masks and being rolled over onto their stomachs to assist with airflow. This was not a good sign for them. I feared this would happen to me.

THE COVID HOTEL BACK AND FORTH

Although I regularly Facetime my young daughter, I put that aside during this time as I did not want to scare her given my appearance and the monitors and oxygen tubes.

After five days in the COVID ward, my oxygen had reached levels where I could return to the COVID hotel which I did.

We remained at the COVID hotel, recovering and excitedly anticipating our imminent release. A care package, together with

some Uber Eats meals provided a distraction, and an external visit albeit from the road outside via mobile phone was a welcome relief.

Whilst in the COVID hotel, I unfortunately developed an issue with the circulation in my left leg. This reached a point whereby I indicated to medical staff that if they did not get me an ambulance, I would not make it through the night.

I was taken via ambulance (with one of the paramedics being ex job) to Prince of Wales Hospital and was treated as a COVID positive patient.

Again, I was isolated and I was given strong painkillers. Immediate scans of my left leg revealed a 30cm blood clot had developed from my knee to my stomach. I was told this clot was directly linked to COVID-19.

FACING A WORST-CASE SCENARIO

There were discussions amongst my medical team about the worst-case treatment scenario which included my leg being amputated. Again, I was in contact with family, friends, PANSW and my solicitor.

In coming days, I underwent a number of surgeries, involving both vascular and respiratory teams. Doctors tried to clear the clot through blood thinners, balloons, and wires.

A cage was inserted into my main artery to catch any pieces of clot that may break free. The cage would prevent any fragments of the clot going to my lungs or heart which could potentially be fatal. A stent was also inserted into my stomach.

While in hospital, it was not possible to have any visitors. I am grateful to a friend who dropped off things I needed to get through and communications from colleagues. It meant a lot.

During the time in hospital, I again refrained from much communication as I did not wish to frighten or upset loved ones with my appearance and the monitors, lines, and bruising. The blood thinners I was on meant that I bruised easily. Each time they removed the drip I bled profusely.

26 DAYS LATER

I had reached a point where I could be released, however, before I could be released I had to learn to walk again, as the amount of time I had spent in the hospital and the surgeries I had undergone had caused such damage to my leg. This simple act was deeply emotional and physically challenging for me.

Some 26 days after testing positive, and after ticking all the boxes for release from hospital, I was waiting still dressed in a hospital gown until the nurse indicated I should get changed, lest someone think I was a hospital escapee – sound advice.

The COVID isolation ward, also known as the 'bubble room'



I was wheeled out of hospital into the daylight, and was picked up by staff from Campbelltown City PAC. I am deeply grateful to them for that.

STARTING ON THE ROCKY RECOVERY ROAD

I returned home, where I took stock and started my recovery process. The simple act of a shower with sutures and removing the various Elastoplasts and hospital tags was a major effort.

I had multiple further medical appointments with various doctors and further blood tests and scans. One of the challenges was that as the LGAs went into lockdown, my ability to access medical professionals and hospitals was severely compromised. There were requirements for a clear COVID test and this was problematic.

Two weeks later, I returned to Sydney to Prince of Wales Hospital to have the cage removed from my artery and for a clot that had developed around the stent to also be removed. The process involved entry through my neck and legs. I was discharged and again went through the process of healing and recovery.

A week later, I went back to my GP and was advised to have a COVID test, which I underwent without being immediately notified of the results.

Two days later, I attended hospital as a result of a further issue with circulation and numbness in my left foot.

I was admitted as a fresh 'COVID' positive patient on the basis that the COVID test days before had been positive.

I was placed on oxygen monitoring and had catheters inserted. I was informed I had contracted COVID for a second time and again placed into isolation for many hours and had further scans for the new clot.

The Department of Health advised that I should not have undergone the COVID test as persons who have contracted COVID will test positive for up to 6 months afterwards, although not infectious. Again, the conversation turned to the potential of having to amputate my foot.

COVID IS REAL!

Before this all happened to me, I didn't know anyone who suffered from COVID. I remain open-minded, but I can tell you that COVID is real. I have long term effects and felt on a few occasions that I wouldn't make it through the night.

Some four months later, I am undergoing physio. I have an ongoing dry cough and still get out of breath easily. I have lost mobility and have put on a significant amount of weight. I continue to suffer intermittent pain to my muscles and joints and will remain on blood thinners long term.

Some days are good and some are bad, but I am fortunate. I received numerous texts whilst in hospital which were in support of me. This really helped me and it reminded me of the camaraderie we experience as police and members of the PANSW.

PEACE OF MIND WITH PANSW

Being a member of the PANSW gave me peace of mind as I knew I could reach out for assistance and support.

My Organiser Ben Lee and my Industrial Officer Gabe Doyle supported me with my p902, questions that I had about my insurance cover and hospital stays, my entitlements, and even just for a chat. That was really important to me.

I remember when I was initially told about the 30cm clot; I sent Ben my solicitor's details as I wanted him to have that contact in the event I didn't make it through. That's how bad this experience was and I think that really reflects where I was at that point.

THE IMPORTANCE OF FIRST-HAND ACCOUNTS

In hindsight, I wish that first-hand accounts of people who have suffered from COVID had been used as part of the information and education process. The social media platforms promote information and disinformation. You need to speak with someone or see it firsthand to get an appreciation of what it is capable of.

The issue of COVID and getting vaccinated has been a divisive issue for some. I understand that and acknowledge the rights and freedoms of people.

**I also understand front line policing.
It needs to be remembered that policing
is a frontline contact sport.**

Every day, police face dangers. You go to a job, you don't know if there is a weapon. In the pandemic context, you now go to a job and you don't know if there is COVID. You can't see it, hear it or smell it and you worry about contracting it or bringing it home.

It's been a long road; COVID fatigue frustrates people. COVID did not give an inch and was relentless. If someone told me that COVID is not a real thing, I would shake my head and walk off.

If someone told me they were they were not getting vaccinated, I would say to them that they can make their own decision, but if they are exposed to COVID, they are playing Russian roulette with their health. COVID-19 is real and I am 'lucky' enough to say that I am living proof.

In closing I would like to thank the PANSW for their support.

I would like to thank Amanda and John Clarke, family and friends for their support and help during this difficult time. I'd also like to thank the vascular team at Prince of Wales Hospital and my friend and colleague solicitor Patrick Duffy, Madelaine, Darren and Hoota.

The stoic and tireless work of the nurses and doctors at St Vincent's Hospital and Prince of Wales Hospital on the front line dealing with COVID through all of this was humbling.

I also wish to thank the New South Wales Police Force for their support during this difficult period. Thanks to all those who reached out to me during this journey. To those who have COVID, my thoughts and prayers are with you. Stay safe. ◀

Comcare Claims – Claims for Domestic Services



David Tarrant
(Partner)

An eligible worker who suffers an injury as a result of their work duties with an organisation or agency covered by Comcare - such as the Australian Federal Police (AFP) - may have a potential Comcare claim.

Under the Comcare scheme a worker may have an entitlement to claim:

1. reasonable and necessary medical treatment and rehabilitation expenses;
2. payment of weekly wages;
3. payment for lump sum permanent impairment and non-economic loss;
4. and in some cases the cost of domestic care.

Domestic care or household services claims are limited to services of a domestic nature, which are provided by manual labour. Examples of these services include tasks such as gardening, laundry, housecleaning and childcare.

Childcare can be claimed as a household service or domestic care where a child or children were born at the time the worker was injured and the worker had responsibility for the care of the child or children during working hours and there is no other family member who is able to take over the care and/or the worker is now having to pay for childcare because of their compensable injury.

It is important to note that all Comcare claims are considered on their individual merits and a worker will have to establish that their employment was a significant contributing factor to them suffering the injury.

In the case of a claim for domestic services, after establishing the work was a significant contributing factor to the injury, Comcare will then determine whether a worker reasonably requires household services because of their work injury and if so, what services are required.

There are limits to the amount of compensation paid for the provision of domestic services so it is important to be aware of those limits so a worker is not out of pocket for the cost of these services.

If a worker is injured during the course of their employment they should notify their employer organisation [e.g. the Australian Federal Police (AFP)] in writing of the incident as soon as practicably possible after the injury.

They should also submit an Australian Government Comcare Workers Compensation Claim form along with a Certificate of Capacity to Work with the employer. The Certificate of Capacity will need to be completed by the workers treating doctor.

In the event that Comcare denies the claim the worker and AFPA members should contact David Tarrant from Carroll & O'Dea Lawyers on 02 9291 7121 who will advise the worker about requesting a reconsideration of the Comcare decision.

Time limits are crucial in Comcare matters and workers only have **30 days to submit** a reconsideration request form to Comcare if they are unhappy with Comcare's initial decision.

Following a request for reconsideration, Comcare will issue a reviewable decision. If the worker remains unhappy with that decision a worker has 60 days to file an Application for Review of a Decision in the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT).

If a claim cannot be resolved with Comcare following the lodgement of the application with the AAT the claim will proceed to hearing in the Tribunal which is a no cost jurisdiction. However, if a worker is successful in a claim in the AAT a worker would be entitled to claim a portion of their costs from Comcare.

If a worker's claim is not successful in the AAT a worker has 28 days to lodge an appeal in the Federal Court of Australia. However, an appeal to the Federal Court of Australia can only be made on a question of the law. Workers would require a solicitor and barrister's advice as to whether an appeal of the AAT decision would have reasonable prospects of success as there are costs consequences if a worker is unsuccessful in their appeal to the Federal Court.

For all matters including personal injury and workers compensation, please complete our enquiry registration www.codea.com.au/contact-us/

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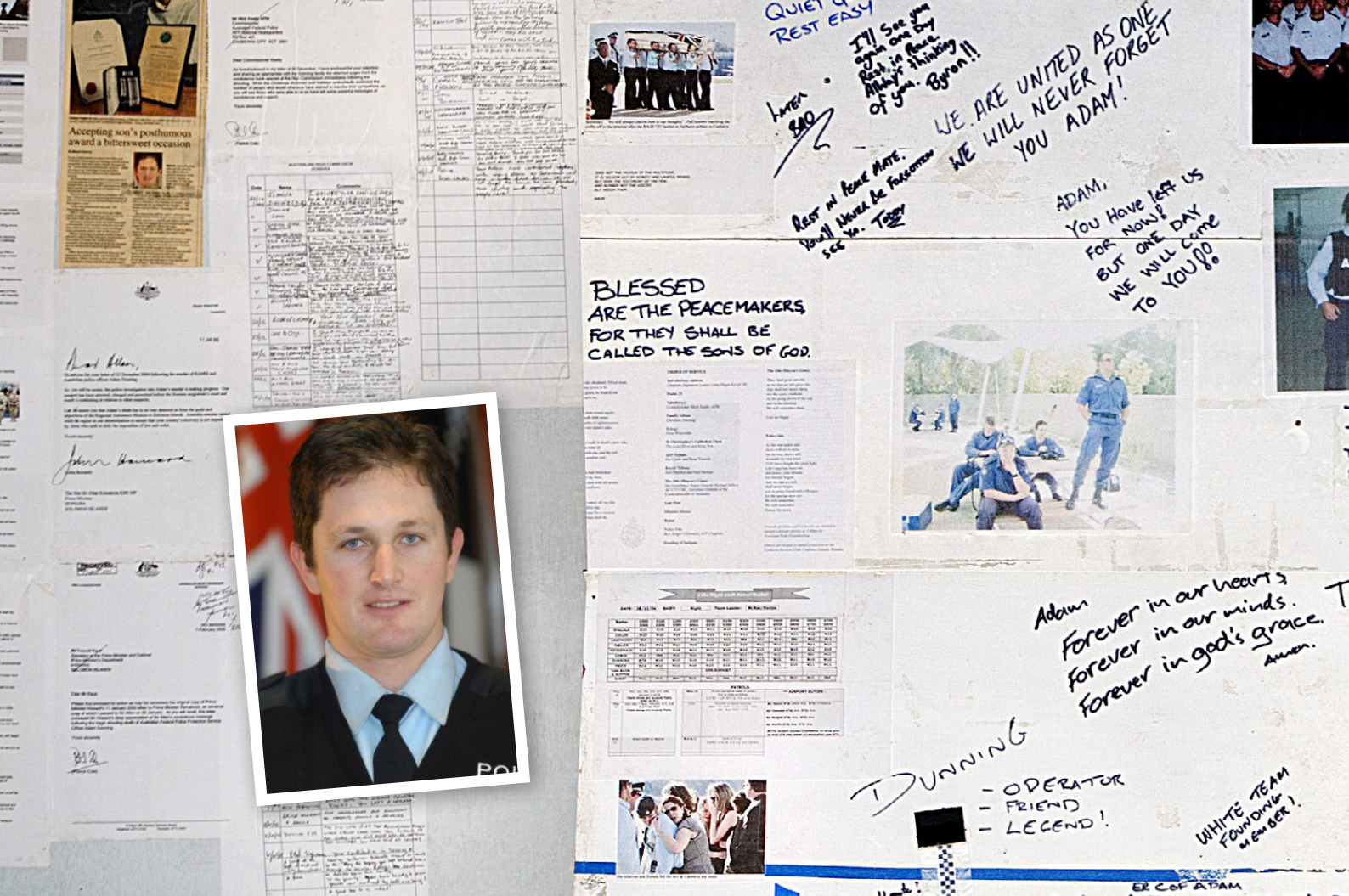
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Level 18, St James Centre, 111 Elizabeth Street, Sydney, New South Wales, 2000





In late 2004, AFP Protective Service Officer Adam Dunning was murdered on patrol in the Solomon Islands.

Adam had a distinguished career in both the AFP and the RAAF in the years leading up to his deployment to the Solomons.

We are extremely grateful for Adam's service to Australia, and by extension to his family for the man they raised.

Recently, Commissioner Kershaw presented Adam's family with medals in recognition of his long uniformed service to Australia and his service in Timor-Leste and the Pacific (both in the RAAF and the AFP).

We would like to thank the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF) for their recognition of Adam's work and service to the Solomon Islands. We also thank Commissioner Kershaw for his considerable efforts in ensuring that Adam was posthumously awarded the RSIPF Medal for Excellence and the International Law Enforcement Cooperation Medal.

Adam passed away 17 years ago. Many of you would have commenced with the AFP long after Adam lost his life and would not know much about him. We hope that this valedictory will help you to gain insight into a wonderful human being.

Others would know him well and indeed would have worked with him on deployment. We see you, and we also thank you for your service to the AFP and Australia. This article was written to honour Adam, and the work all AFP members perform while on international deployment.

Vale Adam. We will always remember you.

Alex Caruana President

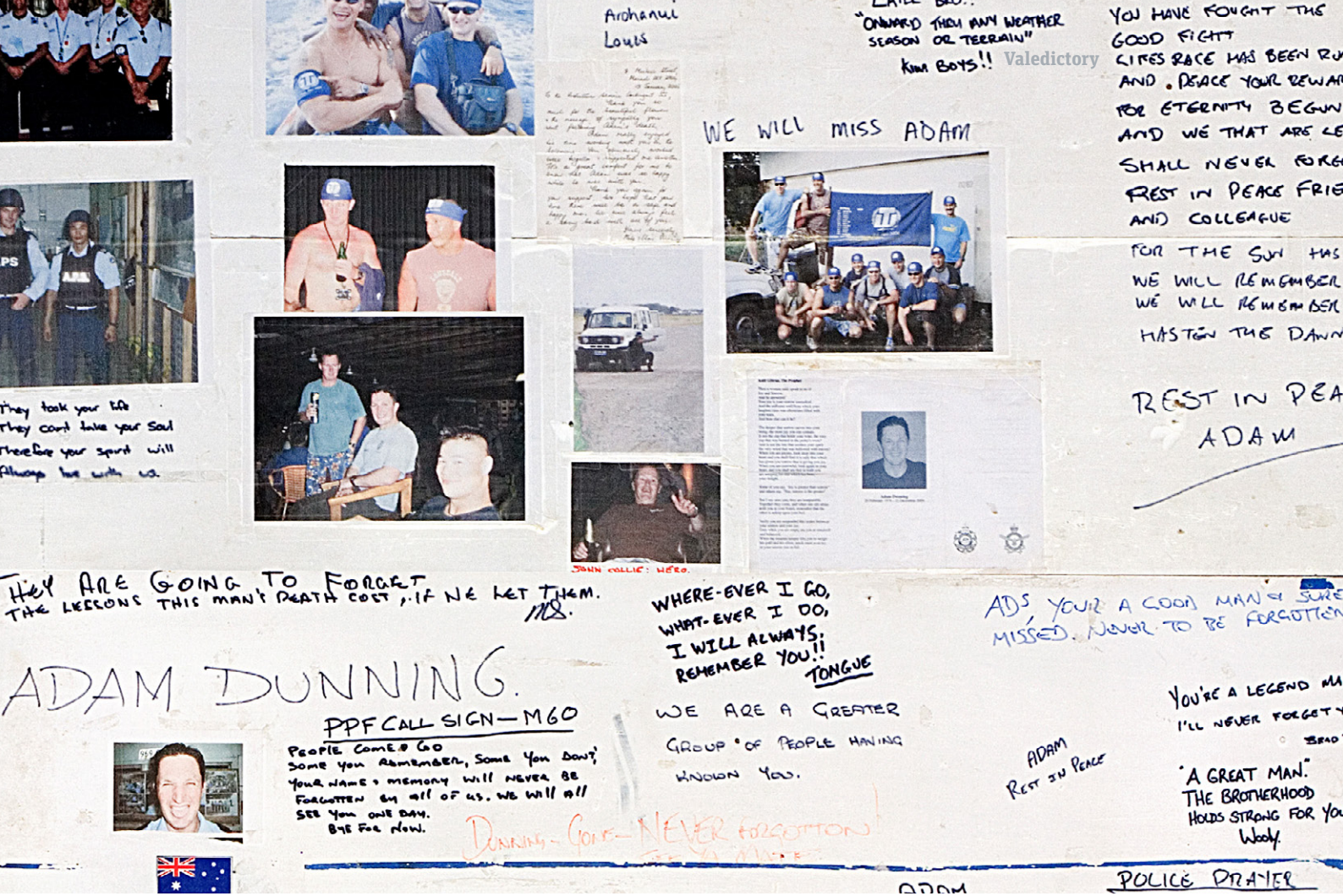
PSO Adam Dunning

▶ Adam joined the Australian Air Force Cadets (AAFC) in 1995, while still only a teenager. Despite his young age, Adam's positive attitude and selflessness were readily apparent to his senior officers.

In 1998, Adam joined the Air Force proper and was made dux of his recruit class. This early part of his RAAF career saw him go from strength to strength in all aspects of training.

His leadership, calmness and resolve again saw him recognised as someone special by his superiors.

After only a few short years in the Air Force, Adam deployed to Timor-Leste with the first wave of the UN peacekeeping forces to protect Timorese locals as the nation struggled towards independence. An Airfield Defence Guard, Adam was one of the heroes who secured Dili airport so that the bulk of UN forces were able to land safely.



In late 2004, AFP Protective Service Officer Adam Dunning was murdered on patrol in the Solomon Islands. Adam had a distinguished career in both the AFP and the RAAF in the years leading up to his deployment to the Solomons. We are extremely grateful for Adam's service to Australia, and by extension to his family for the man they raised.

Adam's colleagues left many touching messages and favourite photos for him

Adam and his unit conducted themselves with distinction and were recognised with a Meritorious Unit Citation. Upon his return, he remained a member of the 28th Squadron Reserve Unit.

In 2003, Adam joined the Australian Protective Service at the training college in Canberra. He once again excelled in all areas, proving his intelligence and physical capabilities many times over. His accuracy with a firearm was outstanding. During his training, Adam's civic-mindedness was again noted by the bosses. His mates loved working with him.

In October 2004, Adam deployed as part of the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands (RAMSI) after volunteering. He thrived in this new environment. Six weeks after arriving in-country, Adam successfully disarmed a

man wielding a pistol near the Honiara Magistrates Court. In front of hundreds of onlookers, Adam's actions were deft and low-key, with many of those nearby not even aware that something significant was unfolding near them. Thankfully, the pistol was subsequently discovered to be a replica.

A month later, Adam was on patrol protecting the Governor-General's and Prime Minister's residences in Kola'a Ridge, south-east of Honiara at around 3am. Even though it was the middle of the night, the temperature was still around 24 degrees Celsius with 100% humidity. There was no breeze to provide any kind of relief; Adam and his partner soldiered on in full kit under oppressive conditions.

As they continued their rounds of the precinct, a sniper hidden by the roadside took aim and ended Adam's life.

It is said that there is no greater sacrifice than to lay down your life for your fellow human being. Adam laid his life down for all Solomon Islanders.

It is a cruel tragedy that he was not able to see the longer-term benefits of RAMSI on the lives of the local populace, and the increased economic and political stability for the Solomon Islands in the years since he was deployed.

Senator the Honourable Chris Ellison, then Minister for Justice and Customs, paid tribute to Adam in the Australian Senate in early 2005:

***“He was a fine young man, and he is sadly missed by his friends and colleagues and of course his family and loved ones. I had the privilege of attending his funeral and seeing first-hand the tributes paid to him. The one I recall readily was a tribute paid by one of his mates who saw him the night before he was killed and recalled quite clearly how Adam had asked him if he was right for money. That, I think, is the mark of that young man. We will not be intimidated by thugs or anyone who wants to use violence to attempt to deter us from doing the work that we must see through to completion in the Solomon Islands. Adam and those like him have helped reclaim the towns and villages of the Solomon Islands for the people. There have been over 5,000 arrests, over 3,700 weapons have been seized and the lawlessness which once threatened the viability of the Solomon Islands has been curtailed. Schools which were once closed have now been reopened, women and children are now free to walk the streets and a normal life can be resumed by the villagers on those islands.*”**

The tragedy that occurred on 22 December last year was not in vain. Adam Dunning died for perhaps one of the highest goals—that is, to achieve law and order in a society so that people can live freely. That is precisely what he was and what his fellow officers are endeavouring to achieve in the Solomon Islands. It was a service to the people of the Solomon Islands, the region and also Australia. I want to place on record the government’s deep appreciation of the efforts of the men and women

who are in the Solomon Islands carrying out what is a very important mission. I also place on record the government’s deep appreciation of the efforts of Adam Dunning, Australian Federal Police protective service officer.”

Senator for the ACT the Honourable Gary Humphries shared some more accounts of Adam:

“What type of man was Adam Dunning? At a memorial service at the Royal Military College chapel in Duntroon, his mother Christine said, ‘We were always proud of Adam.’ His girlfriend Elise told the service that Adam had made her feel ‘safe, secure and loved’. Paul Stewart, who joined the RAAF at the same time as Adam, said that Adam was the kind of person who would give you the shirt off his back if you asked him. Fellow Protective Service Officer Beau Tennant, who served with Adam in the Solomons, said, ‘It didn’t matter if you’d only met Adam briefly or if you’d known him for years, you’d never forget him.’”

Shortly after Adam’s funeral was held in Canberra with full military and police honours, two men (31 and 29 years old) in Honiara were charged in relation to his murder. We have chosen not to name them.

Adam was destined to be a peacekeeper as he was brought up within a family of high integrity, morality, fairness and consideration for others less fortunate than themselves.

Large left: Commissioner Kershaw and Adam’s family lay flowers for Adam at the Pond of Remembrance at the AFP College

Top right: The funeral for Adam was with full police and military honours

Bottom right: Commissioner Kershaw presents medals to Adam’s family



The main road at the Majura training complex in Canberra was named in his honour.

We would like to thank the AFP for their kind assistance in preparing this article. All images used in the article were provided by them, and we have used them with their express permission.

Out of respect for Adam's family, the Association has had their privacy and welfare at the forefront of our minds when writing this article. Any members who feel that they may need help or support after reflecting on this article are urged to contact their medical practitioner in the first instance, with additional support from the AFP's wellness services as is necessary. The AFPA's Membership Services Team can be contacted during business hours on (02) 62851677 to provide additional assistance where possible.

In the spirit of helping fellow members of the AFP in times of need, the AFPA established AUSPOL – a registered charitable organisation. AUSPOL is a non-profit charity, distributing 100% of the funds it receives through donations to those members and their families going through difficult circumstances. Whether it be money, household goods or services, AUSPOL seeks to make life a little easier when people are doing it tough through illness or financial hardship. Please consider either making a one-off donation or a recurring contribution. All contributions over \$2 are tax-deductible. For more information, please contact the AFPA on (02) 62851677 or go to www.afpa.org.au/auspol/. ◀



PROTECTIVE SERVICE OFFICER GRADE ONE

Adam Dunning

Honours & Awards History

ALL AWARDS

- Australian Active Service Medal with Clasp 'EAST TIMOR'
- Police Overseas Service Medal with Clasp 'RAMSI'
- Commissioner's Commendation for Conspicuous Conduct
- Conferred in the Commissioner's Honours List 2005
- Citation – On the 18th of November 2004, he displayed tremendous professional conduct when dealing with an armed suspect whilst service in the Solomon Islands.
- Australian Federal Police Service Medal
- Australian Federal Police Protection Medal
- Meritorious Unit Citation
- Awarded to - No. 2 Airfield Defence Squadron
- Operation WARDEN-STABILISE (East Timor)
- Granted 25th of March 2000
- Citation – For sustained outstanding service in warlike operations in support of the International Force East Timor on Operations WARDEN and STABILISE
- International Force East Timor Medal
- Royal Solomon Islands Police Force Commissioner's Medal for Excellence
- Royal Solomon Islands Police Force International Law Enforcement Cooperation Medal

POLICING AWARDS

- Police Overseas Service Medal with Clasp 'RAMSI'
- Commissioner's Commendation for Conspicuous Conduct
- Conferred in the Commissioner's Honours List 2005
- Citation – On the 18th of November 2004, he displayed tremendous professional conduct when dealing with an armed suspect whilst service in the Solomon Islands.
- Australian Federal Police Service Medal
- Australian Federal Police Protection Medal
- Royal Solomon Islands Police Force Commissioner's Medal for Excellence
- Royal Solomon Islands Police Force International Law Enforcement Cooperation Medal

2022 Australia Day APM and PSM recipients

This year, several serving members of the Australian Federal Police were recognised in the Australia Day Honours List. Two AFPA members were conferred with the Australian Police Medal (APM), and one was conferred with the Public Service Medal (PSM).

▶ These medals represent perhaps the highest Australian honour recognising a single act or project in a police member or public servant's career. The type of members who receive these have historically been selfless, resolute, wily and kind. The people recognised this year very much continue this tradition; the ways in which they have helped Australia and Australians are tangible and far-reaching.

I am very proud of and humbled by them all, as I am sure the rest of our membership is.

I would also like to acknowledge former AFP Commissioner, Mr Andrew Colvin AO APM. Mr Colvin led the AFP for five years, and during his tenure was a firm supporter of the Association. Having earlier received the APM and OAM (Medal of the Order of Australia)

during his police career, Mr Colvin was this year upgraded to an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) for his services to Australia in law enforcement, counterterrorism, and bushfire recovery programs

Well done Andrew.

Alex Caruana
President ◀

Kim Crimmins PSM

▶ **In recognition of outstanding service**, particularly in the area of victim liaison in both a domestic and international setting.



Ms Kim Crimmins began her career with the AFP in August 2002 in ACT Policing North Criminal Investigation Team, providing investigative support in the investigation of serious crimes against people.

Ms Crimmins was integral in the creation and development of the ACT Victim Liaison Officer (VLO) program, assisting victims of crime through the

investigation and court processes, and enhancing how police respond to their legislative requirements under the Victims of Crime Act 1994.

In July 2014, Ms Crimmins was identified to assist the AFP Family Investigative Liaison Officer (FILO) response to the 41 deceased victims' families as a result of the downing of MH17 in Ukraine (Operation AREW). Following her first deployment to Ukraine, and as a result of her exceptional efforts, Ms Crimmins was requested to remain a full-time member of the FILO team.

Since this time, Ms Crimmins has deployed, led or engaged with AFP FILOs in response to various critical incidents, providing guidance to hundreds of victims through exceptional and deeply

traumatic circumstances to ultimately lessen the impact of the offences committed against them.

In doing so she not only had a positive impact on their lives individually, but ensures the positive reputation of the AFP both in Australia and internationally.

This has included the Christchurch (New Zealand) terrorist attack in March 2019 (where she also worked with the Disaster Victim Identification team to assist in the identification of the 51 deceased victims), and the New Zealand White Island Volcano eruption where Ms Crimmins supported the response to 28 Australian victims. This included providing assistance and coordination of processes to support the identification and repatriation of deceased and injured Australians, and ongoing liaison with families and victims regarding subsequent investigation and coronial processes.

For her service Ms Crimmins has been awarded the AFP Operations Medal, four AFP Commissioner's Group Citations for Conspicuous Conduct, the AFP Service Medal and the AFP 40th Anniversary Citation. In 2021 she was also announced as the Most Outstanding Female Practitioner as part of the Australian Council for Women and Policing 22nd Excellence in Policing Awards.

Detective Superintendent David NELSON APM

▶ **For distinguished service to the community** particularly in the area of combatting transnational and serious organised crime.



Detective Superintendent (D/Supt) David Nelson joined the AFP in October 1990, and after completing recruit training, was posted to Eastern Command (Sydney). D/Supt Nelson worked in Operations teams and Avian Strike teams, as well as deploying on two occasions to East Timor as part of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor.

In June 2019, after five years of intensive and diligent investigative effort, the four pro-Russian separatists operating in eastern Ukraine were indicted for their alleged involvement.

D/Supt Nelson has selflessly served the community and represented the AFP with distinction over an extended period of time. He is a resilient leader who seizes responsibility and sets his team on a positive trajectory.

From July 2004 to June 2007, D/Supt Nelson was deployed to Thailand as the Bangkok Liaison Officer. Upon his return to Australia, D/Supt Nelson commenced as the National Coordinator of the Identity Security Strike Teams and continued in this role until his posting to Bogota, Colombia from 2009 to 2013.

Since November 2016, D/Supt Nelson has led the AFP contribution to the joint team investigating the downing of Malaysia Airlines (MH17) over Ukraine on 17 July 2014, known as Operation AREW.

D/Supt Nelson is a driven, motivated and values-based person who is committed to undertaking a strong leadership and management role in the AFP.

For his service to the AFP, D/Supt Nelson has received the Police Overseas Service Medal with East Timor clasp, the National Police Service Medal, the National Medal, an AFP Commissioner's Group Citation for Conspicuous Conduct, the AFP Service Medal, an AFP Commissioner's Certificate, and the AFP 40th Anniversary Citation.

Detective Superintendent Anita VAN HILST APM

▶ **For distinguished service to the community** in the areas of international policing and counter terrorism.



Detective Superintendent (D/Supt) Anita Van Hilst joined the AFP in September 1998, beginning her career in ACT Policing, City Station. In 2000, D/Supt Van Hilst moved to Criminal Investigations followed by ACT Policing's legal team.

In 2002, D/Supt Van Hilst transferred to National Investigations and served in

Economic and Special Operations, and deployed to New Zealand in 2006. On returning to Australia, D/Supt Van Hilst undertook the role of Coordinator Asia in International Command before posting to Thailand in 2011.

In 2014, D/Supt Van Hilst joined Counter Terrorism and deployed to Jordan in 2017 where she oversaw an increase in operational tempo due to the Syrian Civil War. In a challenging operational environment, she forged stronger partnerships with international agencies and increased multi-agency cooperation in the pursuit of terrorists, being instrumental in establishing AFP engagement as part of Operation GALLANT PHOENIX in Jordan.

D/Supt Van Hilst demonstrated excellence in her contribution to creating global capability in the management of foreign terrorist fighters. D/Supt Van Hilst has worked in the Counter Terrorism and Special Investigations Command in Canberra since February 2020 where her outstanding service continues to improve the AFP's capability.

Throughout her career, D/Supt Van Hilst has shown tenacity, drive and innovation in her investigations, while enhancing the AFP's reputation offshore.

Her achievements reflect the AFP's core values and continue to benefit the AFP in its fight against crime.

For her service, D/Supt Van Hilst received the National Police Service Medal, the National Medal, the AFP Commissioner's Medal for Excellence, two AFP Commissioner's Group Citations for Conspicuous Conduct, the AFP Commissioner's Group Citation for Excellence in Overseas Service, the AFP Service Medal, a Commissioner's Certificate, an Australia Day Achievement Medallion, and the AFP 40th Anniversary Citation.

Operation Recognition

Operation Recognition is the central focus of the AFPA in the lead up to the 2022 federal election – seeking commitments that will improve the AFP, its workforce and you.

▶ Behind the scenes, much work has gone into preparing for this election campaign cycle, and you will start to see the results enter the public domain shortly. For over 12 months now, the AFPA has been meeting with sitting parliamentarians from both sides of government to talk about Operation Recognition and the AFPA's strategic objectives.

In short, we want the government (whoever that may be after the election) to undertake a serious commitment to the AFP - treating it like a proper police force and not a public service department. This also includes looking after the people that work tirelessly to protect Australia and Australians – **you**.

Through Operation Recognition, the AFPA's core goals are for the Commonwealth to:

RECOGNISE THOSE WHO SERVE

- The Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988 (Cth) is amended to include a presumption that AFP employees diagnosed with PTSD or other psychological conditions are suffering as a result of their employment with the AFP.
- The Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988 (Cth) is amended, in conjunction with the introduction of presumptive legislation, to require the insurer to make provisional payments for AFP employees diagnosed with PTSD or another psychological condition if the insurer seeks to challenge that the injury is work-related.
- The Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988 (Cth) is amended to reduce incapacity payments for AFP employees after 45 weeks.
- Introduction of a 'Blue Card' for members of the AFP, similar to the veteran healthcare cards provided to members of the Australian Defence Force by the Department of Veterans' Affairs.
- The establishment of a National Commissioner for First Responder Mental Health & Suicide, akin to the National Commissioner for Defence and Veteran Suicide. In the alternative, the National Commissioner for Defence and Veteran Suicide remit be expanded to include oversight of law enforcement and first responders.

RECOGNISE THE NEED TO FUTURE-PROOF THE AFP

- AFP to have a baseline of 8,500 employees by 2025, which are fully funded for the entire length of employment.

- Removal of the efficiency dividend being imposed on the AFP.
- An independent review of all AFP equipment and technology to ensure that members have modern and world-leading capabilities, as well as a commitment to fund any investment towards new equipment and technology.
- An independent review of all AFP facilities and accommodation to ensure fit-for-purpose, modern and safe workplaces, as well as a commitment to fund any investment towards new facilities or renovations to existing facilities.

RECOGNISE THE HARD WORK OF THE AFP

- The AFP is exempted from the Public Sector Workplace Relations Policy.
- Establishment of a Review Panel under regulation 61 of the Australian Federal Police Regulations 2018 for employment decisions excluded from review by section 69B of the Australian Federal Police Act 1979.
- The composition of the Review Panel to include AFPA representation.
- In the alternative to the above, extending the jurisdiction of the Merit Protection Commissioner to allow for review of AFP employment and promotion decisions.

RECOGNISING COMMUNITY SAFETY

- AFP to have a baseline of 8,500 employees by 2025, which are fully funded for the entire length of employment.
- Introduction of a National Firearms Registry to monitor the sale, supply, and move-ment of firearms across Australia.
- Enactment of Federal legislation which only allows individuals to purchase ammunition for a firearm/s they are legally licenced to possess.
- Cessation of importation of ammunition for weapons which are illegal to privately own in Australia.
- Retention of Protective Service Officers at all current Commonwealth facilities.
- Amendments to the existing framework to expand on the capabilities of law enforcement to respond to child exploitation.

RECOGNISE INTEGRITY

- The introduction of a Commonwealth Integrity/Anti-Corruption Commission which provides the same level of oversight and standard of conduct to both parliamentarians and AFP employees.



We will endeavour to speak to every candidate through the campaign trail to improve the AFP and your workplace conditions.

- Ensure any Commonwealth Integrity/Anti-Corruption Commission is appropriately funded, resourced, and staffed to ensure fair, just, and quick investigations.
- A review conducted by Senate Legal and Constitutional Legislation Committee into Part V of the Australian Federal Police Act 1979 and the Professional Standards unit.
- Amending the Australian Federal Police Act 1979 to clarify the definition of “serious misconduct”.

The AFPA believes that we can achieve all of the above during the 2022 Federal Election campaign. Over the next three to four months, parliamentarians (current and future) from all sides of the political landscape will be jockeying over commitments and your vote; we plan to be a “player” in this environment and have been making inroads.

We are asking you to help us deliver the above commitments. Of course, we can (and will) talk to as many key candidates as possible in the lead-up to the election. However, we also need you to support us, and if the opportunity arises, to talk to your electoral candidates and tell them your personal stories. We know the stories, but they are always better said by the people that lived them.

We have seen how effective letter writing to parliamentarians is via our Public Sector Workplace Relations Policy discussions. The letters you sent to parliamentarians opened doors for us, and we plan on a similar strategy for the upcoming election. We would encourage everyone to use the tool found on our website to engage with parliamentarians and candidates.

We have also approached the AFP to see if Operation Recognition material (posters and flyers) can be placed within AFP workplaces. This will provide you with a quick overview of our commitments along with additional information (such as talking points) for you to use if you meet with a parliamentarian or candidate.

While we have worked hard on this campaign so far, the really hard yards will continue up until election day. We will endeavour to speak to every candidate through the campaign trail to improve the AFP and your workplace conditions.

In return, we ask that you support the AFPA by engaging with candidates, telling your story, and encouraging them to speak to the AFPA. ◀

Lowy Institute conversations: challenges and threats posed by organised crime to national security

Operation Ironside, led by the Australian Federal Police (AFP) between 2018 and 2021, brought together law enforcement agencies from across Australia and around the world to make a significant dent in global organised crime.

▶ Media coverage of the endgame of Operation Ironside was intense, with much emphasis placed on the sophistication and inter-agency synergy (at a local, national and international level).

The upper echelons of the AFP were quick to assert that these kinds of long-game, and ultimately successful, operations would continue to be a central focus for the AFP and international law enforcement agencies.

As a result, more than 224 arrests were made, 3.7 tonnes of drugs and almost \$45 million in cash and assets were seized. An ingenious encrypted app called Anom gave law enforcement agencies a remarkable insight into the global and insidious threat posed by organised crime.

Warwick Jones, AFP Visiting Fellow at the Lowy Institute, talks with Assistant Commissioner Nigel Ryan, the AFP's commander of Operation Ironside, about the challenges and threats posed to national security by organised crime and how an operation like this is conducted. ◀



To access the podcast, scan the QR code, or go to shorturl.at/wDT56



Podcast length: 28:55 / **Genre:** Law enforcement, non-fiction, politics, true crime
Platform: Browser/Soundcloud (no account required for browser viewing)

Other news and features

Crime, Interrupted

The Australian Federal Police (AFP) has partnered with Casefile to bring you the *Crime Interrupted* podcast series.



▶ The AFP has provided exclusive access to its case vault and this podcast series provides a detailed insight into how this national policing organisation interrupts the most serious of crimes.

Hosted by Casefile's narrator and featuring interviews with the AFP officers and personnel from other domestic and international partners who investigated these crimes, the six-episode series covers cases of human trafficking, counter-terrorism operations, international kidnappings and more.

EPISODE 1: OPERATION KITRINO

In Operation Kitrino, the AFP investigated a well-established human trafficking syndicate operating within the brothel industry in Melbourne. It took months to locate the syndicate head who was targeting mostly Korean women who found themselves quickly trapped in debt bondage and had no escape. Lured by the opportunity to clear their debt... but at what cost?

EPISODE 2: OPERATION BOONE

It all started with a group of school kids talking in the playground about getting cheap Netflix. It ended with the largest forfeiture of cryptocurrency at the Commonwealth level to date. Find out how a young man in the Northern Beaches of Sydney used account generator websites to sell usernames and passwords.

EPISODE 3: OPERATION STREAMBANK

When South Australian farmer Des fell in love with 'Natacha' as part of an online romance scam, he travelled more than 8,000 kms to West Africa. From the moment he got off the plane, he was in the hands of dangerous kidnappers. In Operation Streambank we find out how the AFP worked with national and international partners to scam the scammers and get Des away from his kidnappers and back to Australia safely.

EPISODE 4: OPERATION ASCALON

When a father reported to the AFP that his 13-year-old son had been the victim of

online sexual abuse, investigators quickly discovered hundreds of other boys had been targeted by the same offender, both in Australia and overseas. The investigators uncovered disturbing patterns of behaviour the offender used to garner trust from his victims. Find out how the AFP brought him to justice as part of Operation Ascalon.

EPISODE 5: OPERATION MIDDLEHAM

An SUV, a boat and a road trip from Melbourne to North Queensland. In Operation Middleham, we learn about the plans of a group of radicalised men preparing to travel overseas to engage in hostile activities to overthrow a government. Find out how quickly the situation escalated and how it all came undone for the offenders.

EPISODE 6: OPERATION OKESI

In Operation Okesi we find out about an international multi-agency effort that seized cocaine with an estimated street value of \$360 million and 15 men charged with serious drug importation offences. A great outcome that took more than two and a half years, a boat intercept and numerous arrests across the country to interrupt this drug trafficking syndicate. ◀



To access the podcast, scan the QR code, or go to shorturl.at/qFQV7



“I’m fortunate to have the most amazing conversations every day. As a Protective Services Officer working on Melbourne’s rail network, I see my job as a positive community role, not one of enforcement. Unfortunately, my health issues have impacted my ability to serve.”

Nigel Edgar, Victorian Protective Services Officer

Since joining in 2016, Nigel has received more than \$76k in benefits from his Police Health cover.

"In 2016, I first realised I had arthritis. It started as a hip issue, which I had an operation for. I returned to work, assuming everything was okay, but my health started to deteriorate. This led me on a journey of countless appointments with osteopaths, physiotherapists, and all sorts of specialists trying to work out what was going on.

"All these extras were covered by Police Health, which was a godsend.

"A neurosurgeon informed me it was a lower back, lumbosacral issue. I underwent a spinal fusion and disk replacement, which I was told would fix the problem (and that I'd be back on the railway platform within two months). The pain didn't stop, but I was patient, as fusing the spine was a major procedure. The leg pain continued, months later.

"I dedicated over three years of time, effort, and finances to strength-based physiotherapy. Being a Police Health member, I got to select this expensive treatment that was completely covered.

Unfortunately, after much distress, I was told that my pain was caused by a weakness from the past operation.

"I was diagnosed with further nerve impingements – an issue that should've been rectified with that initial surgery. Right now, I'm facing another surgery, which is extremely frustrating given all I've been through. I'm disillusioned with the medical establishment, but Police Health has been my saving grace."

Since joining in 2016, Nigel has received more than \$76k in benefits from his Police Health cover.

"I couldn't be more complementary of Police Health. The prices are so reasonable given what I get. My major operation was fully funded, with only a \$500 out of pocket cost. That's incredible value.

"Because I've used up my long service leave and now most of my sick pay, knowing that I have Police Health support me financially through this has been a saviour.

"There aren't many careers that make you feel part of a larger community, that gives you lifelong friends and advocates for your wellbeing. The force, and Police Health, is a rarity.

"Maintaining good health allows me to do my job. I've worked as part of the response at the quarantine hotels and doing admin work at a suburban station, while I wait for my next operation. I can't wait to be back out on the platform, in the community. People are the reason I was drawn to the force in the first place.

"But I need my health back. After enjoying a life full of fitness and adventure, this is non-negotiable. Police Health will help me reach my peak again.

"To anyone going through health troubles, question everything. Don't take a specialist's word for gospel. Always seek a second opinion because I didn't. And most importantly, make sure you have private health insurance.

"Police Health set my podium so high, I could never go anywhere else."

To join more than 65,000 other members of Australia's police community already enjoying peace-of-mind from Police Health's gold-tier insurance, **call 1800 603 603** or visit **policehealth.com.au**.

Please note: some information in this article has been compiled from material obtained externally. Although we make every effort to ensure information is correct at the time of publication, we accept no responsibility for its accuracy. Health-related articles are intended for general information only and should not be interpreted as medical advice. Please consult your doctor. The views expressed in articles are not necessarily those of Police Health.



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

COVER LIKE NO OTHER

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 (Cost \$20 incl. GST for max 5kg) <input type="checkbox"/> Hold for Collection	

SECTION 2: ORDER DETAILS

Item	Cost inc. GST (\$ incl. GST)	Qty	Total (\$ incl. GST)
AFP Coloured Shield Plaque	\$70		
AFP Australia Plaque	\$70		
AFP Plaque (Glass)	\$70		
AFP Plaque (Pewter)	\$70		
AFP Coaster Set	\$40		
AFP Cuff Links	\$25		
AFP Gloss Mug	\$15		
AFP Pen	\$20		
AFP Key Ring	\$18		
AFP Stubby Holder	\$10		
AFP Tie Tac (coloured, silver, gold)	\$10		
PWF Plaque (Glass)	\$85		
AFPA Tie	\$25		
AFPA Tie Bar	\$12		
AFPA Lapel Pin	\$7		
AFPA Stubby Holder	\$7		
		Subtotal (\$):	
		Express Post (\$):	
		Total (\$):	

SECTION 3: PAYMENT DETAILS

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

OFFICE USE | Processed by

Name:

Date:

Invoice Number:

Please return completed order forms to the AFPA by email: afpa@afpa.org.au

Catalogue 2019

▶ AFP/AFPA MERCHANDISE



AFP Merchandise items



Coloured Shield Plaque | \$70.00



Australia Plaque | \$70.00



AFP Plaque (Glass) | \$70.00



AFP Plaque (Pewter) | \$70.00



Coaster Set | \$40.00



Cuff Links | \$25.00



Gloss Mug | \$15.00



Pen | \$20.00



Key Ring | \$18.00



Stubby Holder | \$10.00



Tie Tac (coloured, silver, gold) | \$10.00

AFPA Merchandise items



AFPA Pen | \$10.00 each



AFPA Silk Woven Tie | \$25.00



AFPA Tie Bar | \$12.00



AFPA Lapel Pin | \$7.00



AFPA Stubby Holder | \$7.00



AFPA Plaque (Glass) | \$85.00

See over the page for the Merchandise order form



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Bank.

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www.policebank.com.au/refinance

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*To be eligible for the Police Bank Cashback offer, applicants must refinance an existing Owner Occupied or Investment home loan of \$250,000 or more from another financial institution to Police Bank. The Offer is only available to applicants who apply and are approved from 19/08/21 – 30/06/22 and funded by 31/08/22. Cashback is only available once to each individual or joint application per property refinanced. The \$1,500 cashback will be credited to either the primary transaction account for single borrowers or a joint account with the primary borrower for joint borrowers within 1 month of settlement. This offer is not available for new purchase home loans or in conjunction with any other offer, bonus or discount. We reserve the right to withdraw this offer at any time. Police Bank Ltd. ABN 95 087 650 799. AFSL/ACL No. 240018. 25 Pelican Street, Surry Hills NSW 2010.