



AUSTCIVPOL IN ACTION

Cyprus: Important overseas role for Australian police

by the Editor

Since 1964 over 500 Australian Police have served with the United Nations Peace Keeping Force (UNFICYP) in Cyprus.

This troubled island has seen much inter-community conflict since becoming a Republic in 1960 and it has only been through the efforts of the UN that the present uneasy calm prevails.

The situation has by no means been resolved, much negotiating still remains to be done to get the island back to normality from the present bi-zonal split of its two major ethnic communities.

The operational roles of AUSTCIVPOL are mainly patrols in the UN buffer zone, investigating non-military breaches of the Status Quo agreements and obtaining information on humanitarian and economic problems.

AUSTCIVPOL does not initiate inquiries or investigations, generally inquiries come from outside agencies who request independent media-

tion/investigation to ensure that justice is seen to be done.

On call 24 hours per day, members' tasks are many and varied, much of which is outside the normal law enforcement agency scope and includes transgressions by either side into the buffer zone, escorts of civilians, payment of pensions and other humanitarian roles.

Make-up of Police Contingents until 1976 saw police drawn from all State Forces, since then the total contingent make-up has been from Compol.

At present the 16th Contingent under the command of Chief Superintendent E. T. Davis has its headquarters at Kokkino Trimithia some seven miles west of Nicosia.

There is a sub-station at Ledra Palaca Hotel, Nicosia, where members work together with Canadian military personnel in overseeing all traffic/movement through the main checkpoint between North and South communities.

On patrol in the buffer zone (which varies in width from three miles to a few yards) and adjacent roads, members in their "Skippy" landrovers are well known to the locals.

