



Detective Superintendent Dennis Witt

March is debilitating and the humidity can often rest well above 90 per cent. It is a tropical region that attracts exotic diseases such as Ross River Fever and Dengue Fever. These factors have to be taken into account during operations.

"Communication can be difficult also. At times we may be only 5km from the PNG border, but to communicate formally with the PNG authorities, we work through International Division in Canberra.

The Townsville Station is located in its own building at the airport. Detective Sergeant Barry Turner is the member in charge of the seven member Townsville Crime Section and has been there about 10 months. He has been with the AFP and the Commonwealth Police for 14 years.

About 50 per cent of their work dealt with drug investigation in which they worked closely with the other Federal and State authorities. There are a number of seaports in the Townsville area, which includes a main sea link to a number of overseas countries. This requires a continuing need for close attention by law enforcement authorities. Fraud investigations and referrals from other Government agencies formed the other main workload.

Townsville is an administrative centre and has a population of more than 250,000. The Branch's area includes other major centres such as Mackay, 70,000; Mount Isa 50,000 and the Whitsunday area which has in excess of 35,000 people. In addition the area is a prime tourist destination and attracted a transient working population.

Sergeant Turner said the staff were multi-skilled and quickly adapted to the nature of each inquiry. It is anticipated that in the near future the AFP office would be relocated in the city much closer to other government departments and the main business district.

Gold Coast Branch Integrated approach works on Gold Coast

THE Gold Coast area attracts a large number of people, tourists and new settlers from throughout Australia and overseas.

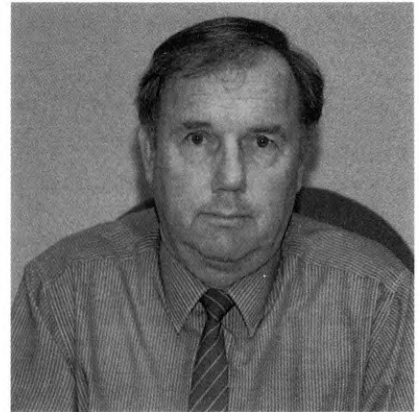
It has a life style and climate which also attracts its share of criminals. Some of these see the area as a place to settle and to continue their activities.

The AFP's Gold Coast Branch is located at Coolangatta on the Queensland side of the border with NSW.

The OIC of the Branch since June this year is Detective Superintendent Ken Curnow. He has been in law enforcement for thirty-five years in Australia and in the UK, including a two-year posting to Christmas Island.

Superintendent Curnow said recently, "I think I am typical of many in the AFP where I have had a wide range of experience from other police forces and other Regions within the AFP and can use these skills here.

"Because the Gold Coast Branch is a smaller group, there is a need to adopt an integrated approach to operations and from time to time we draw resources from other areas. There is a diversity of work ranging from the complex fraud to drug importations, intelligence gathering and the problems of han-



Detective Superintendent Ken Curnow

dling sensitive family law matters which regularly occur.

The Branch's ability to liaise with other law enforcement agencies was highlighted recently in court.

Judge Pratt of the Queensland District Court said, "I must say I cannot recall such a case which has demonstrated such co-operation among law enforcement agencies and such efficiency.

"For the Federal Police, the State Police and the CJC to have mounted such a long and detailed campaign is remarkable. The organisation behind it must have been excellent. All involved in the investigation and presentation of this matter should be commended by the Court and I do so now."



Some members and staff of the Gold Coast Branch