

First conference of Australasian women police

By Helen McDermott

The role of women in Australian policing will be the topic of a conference being organised by the Australian Institute of Criminology next July.

This follows the AFP Women's Forum held last November and the imminent implementation of the recommendations stemming from that forum.

Events such as this are increasingly highlighting the value that women bring to the law-enforcement environment.

The Federal Government has provided a grant to stage the 'First Conference of Australasian Women Police' in Sydney from July 29 to 31 of this year.

Owing to the international scope of the conference, the Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) will organise the conference which aims to inform policy makers and police personnel of the issues relating to the optimum use of female police.

On January 22, Commissioner Mick Palmer formally presented a cheque for \$80,000 to the AIC's Director, Adam Graycar. The funds were made available from the Confiscated Assets Trust Fund.

Women from all Australian and New Zealand jurisdictions are invited to take part in the conference.

Commissioner Palmer said that he was enthusiastic about the conference and saw it as "an important event that will not only provide a positive opportunity for women in policing to discuss issues of importance to the development of policing itself, but will allow us as commissioners to demonstrate our commitment to equal employment opportunity and the further development of women in policing".

"Policing agencies in the 1990s cannot afford to overlook the skills, experience and abilities of our women police.

"The planned conference will provide an opportunity to canvass initiatives in various jurisdictions and to explore the challenges and avenues through which



Director of the Australian Institute of Criminology, Adam Graycar

police leaders may best harness and utilise our workforce and to appreciate and take advantage of its diversity.

"While the conference will be designed to include the interests of all women in law enforcement and have a wide participation from a variety of law-enforcement agencies, the focus will remain on the issues faced by women in police agencies and how those organisations can optimise their female personnel," Mr Palmer said.

The AIC will be calling for papers which will have to be submitted by the end of March 1996. Specific details on the conference can be obtained from:

Conference Administration
Australian Institute of Criminology
GPO Box 2944
Canberra, ACT, 2601
Facsimile (06) 260 9201 □