

Operation Alliance exhibition moves on

[Terry Browne, Marketing and Communications]

On Anzac Day, the Australian Federal Police Museum concluded its exhibition season at Old Parliament House and closed the five-month exhibition on the investigation that followed the bomb blasts in Bali on 12 October 2002.

Launched in October last year, the exhibition generated an unusually high response rate through a visitor opinion survey. Responses were positive and very supportive of the AFP's role in Bali with many visitors expressing surprise about how little they had heard of the AFP's role in the investigation.

Titled *When the Roof Became Stars*, panels and objects on display emphasised the high level of cooperation between the Indonesian National Police and the AFP which in turn was greatly assisted by other federal agencies, Australian State police services and a number of international agencies.

Out of respect, no images of victims or survivors were included in the exhibition, except for a framed team presentation photo from the Kingsley's Football Club presented to the AFP investigators in gratitude for their efforts.

AFP Museum curator, Christine Cranston said, "From the time we first heard AFP personnel were headed to Bali in the wake of the explosions we began to formulate a plan to capture all the relevant information, photographs and objects that would help tell the story from the AFP point of view.

"We were convinced that there would be no one better placed to tell the story of the AFP's involvement in the investigation than the AFP itself. From the start we had a high level of support from everyone

connected with the investigation to gather what we needed for an exhibition."

She said the *Operation Alliance* exhibition was extremely fortunate to be included on the Old Parliament House schedule at extremely short notice. Ironically, the heightened levels of security at all AFP facilities due to its involvement in the investigation also meant that the AFP Museum had to close its doors to the public.

"While this enabled the museum team to concentrate on the exhibition preparation, it was serendipity that our enquiries with Old Parliament House eventually proved successful," she said

"I think in the end, the importance of the investigation relating to such a significant event in modern Australian history convinced Old Parliament House management that this was an exhibition they had to stage."

A modified version of the exhibition is available for viewing at the AFP Museum at the Weston complex in the ACT, however due to ongoing security concerns the museum is accessible to AFP employees only. The possibility of further public exhibitions at other institutions around Australia is being investigated.

Clockwise from top: 1. Alison Bartlett opens the exhibition 2. Margaret Tyrie talks to visitors 3. Visitors discuss exhibition highlights 4. Margaret Tyrie, Terry Browne and Chris Cranston—the Museum team (photo 1 by Garry Raffaele, photos 2,3 & 4 by Brian Hartigan)

