

## Commissioner's message

# Looking back in order

## *to look forward*



*Mick Keelty APM  
AFP Commissioner*

*While it has been a big year for the AFP with a number of operational and corporate successes, I hope everyone has had a chance to take time out to enjoy the variety of 25th anniversary events staged throughout Australia and around the world to mark this significant milestone in our history.*

This edition of *Platypus Magazine* features photographs of 25th anniversary activities ranging from a dinner in Islamabad to sharing cake in the Solomon Islands; and the fact that people chose their own specific way of celebrating the anniversary was very appropriate.

While a couple of the larger functions happened in Canberra, it was great to see that all the State offices created their own particular brand of celebration with several of them opening their doors for family and friends days – something good to see in the year that the AFP won significant worklife diversity awards.

Our operational successes this year have been numerous and have been a mix of our own initiatives and those in cooperation with a number of allied agencies. National, regional and international law enforcement continues to grow as the effectiveness of “working together” starts to become a corollary for law enforcement success.

Good work done in the past has also received recognition. Only recently, independent studies confirmed the AFP's efforts and those of its law enforcement allies in significantly reducing heroin availability in Australia.

On the corporate front, we were acknowledged by the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry worklife diversity awards for 2004, and our annual report to Parliament won acclaim. The results of our Client Satisfaction Survey (covered in this edition) indicate that we are maintaining a very high standard of corporate governance.

Apart from corporate achievements, there are also individuals in the AFP who maintain very high standards and, throughout the year, these people have been recognised with the introduction of a new range of honours and awards. This is an ongoing program of recognition introduced this year and I encourage everyone give thought to future nominations. It is becoming clear to me that we are an organisation where high standards are the norm and sometimes

it is easy to overlook outstanding simply work because it appears that's the way it is always done.

July saw the first anniversary of our deployment to the Solomon Islands which was another significant milestone. The turnaround in the troubles of the Solomon Islands community through the collaborative efforts of those agencies contributing to the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI) is something of which we can all be proud. This is an outcome the AFP wishes to repeat through our work with the Royal PNG Constabulary.

As a police officer, I have learned not to be surprised by the direction in which criminal enterprise can take, but I think we all must admit that *Operation Auxin* shows a most disturbing development in organised crime. The exploitation of children must rate amongst the worst crimes that our police will encounter.

Thankfully we appear to be making significant inroads into this area of criminality. Federal Agent Grant Edwards provided what I thought was a definitive answer when put on the spot about his past strong-man exploits and his current work by Andrew Denton at the Parliament House dinner. He replied: "I think the work I am doing now needs a different kind of strength, its a moral strength, an inner strength, and I am proud to be working with people who possess a great deal of it."

It has been those sorts of moments in this 25th anniversary year that have hopefully reinforced everyone's understanding about why we do the sort of work we do. Hopefully people have taken the time to reflect on the AFP's achievements and their own career highlights during this time. In short, it does everyone a bit of good to look back once in a while if only to get your bearings in order to move forward.

With the coming festive season it is also a time to take pleasure in the simple things of catching up with family and friends. After all, the foundation of all police work is the desire to make the world a safer place.

I wish you all the best for festive season and for 2005 and thank you for your efforts in making 2004 a successful one for the AFP.

