

A shift in power - from AC to DC

The rapid growth of the AFP in recent years and a greater focus on national and international operations has created new challenges for the AFP executive and their support personnel.

As a result of recommendations made in the Beale Review, the AFP has appointed a third Deputy Commissioner to the executive. The new organisational structure focuses on the AFP's main operational areas and provides a higher level of national coordination and support to these areas.

The two existing Deputy Commissioner roles were left vacant when John Lawler left the AFP to head up the Australian Crime Commission and Tony Negus was promoted to the role of AFP Commissioner. After the creation of the extra position and an extremely competitive selection process, three former Assistant Commissioners have now been promoted. Peter Drennan has been appointed as Deputy Commissioner National Security, Andrew Colvin is now Deputy Commissioner Operations, and Michael Phelan has taken up the newly created position of Deputy Commissioner Close Operations Support.

A career police officer, Peter Drennan joined the AFP in 1979 as a uniformed constable in Canberra. Over the years he has worked across all areas of

the AFP, including national and international operations and community policing. During this time his roles have included managing the Sydney office and AFP activities in NSW, National Manager Border and International, National Manager Economic and Special Operations and National Manager Counter Terrorism.

Deputy Commissioner Drennan has undertaken studies at a postgraduate level in human resources management, police executive leadership programs with the Australian Institute of Police Management and external programs with the Australian Graduate School of Management and the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

But he says some of the best moments of his career have been during periods when he was actively involved in operational activities, particularly during his time in Hong Kong as the AFP's Senior Liaison Officer. During this period he was responsible for AFP operations, criminal intelligence and relationships in Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan, Japan and Korea. He was also responsible for overall

coordination of AFP activities throughout East Asia at a time when the AFP experienced unprecedented success in narcotic seizures and disruption of transnational criminal activity.

His new role includes responsibility for Counter Terrorism, both domestic and international, Aviation, Protection, and the International Deployment Group.

"The challenge is the complexity of the role, and where it sits within the framework of what the AFP does," Deputy Commissioner Drennan said.

"While each portfolio is very different, there is interconnectivity between the functions and how they fit in with the Government's priorities."

Deputy Commissioner Drennan believes the implementation of the third Deputy Commissioner role recognises the growth of the AFP and the increasing complexity of the environment in which it operates. He also says the changes to the AFP's funding structure are an evolution and a revolution – one that will allow the AFP the flexibility to directly fund its priority areas.



Deputy Commissioner Drennan



Deputy Commissioner Colvin



Deputy Commissioner Phelan

When he's not in the office Deputy Commissioner Drennan pursues his two passions: photography and mountain trekking. He has trekked in the Himalayas, the Andes, New Zealand, Canada, Alaska and Tanzania.

"But it's the challenge of what I do and making a real difference that makes me want to come to work each day," he said.

"The work we do every day actually saves people's lives. You can't get any more rewarding than that."

His passion for policing is shared by his fellow Deputies. Andrew Colvin will take up the role in June, after completing a Masters Degree in Public Administration at Harvard University in the United States. He is an advocate for creating development opportunities for members both within the AFP and externally.

"When I return I look forward to reconnecting with members across all of our locations and hearing from them about their work, their challenges and what more we can do to continue to improve the AFP."

Deputy Commissioner Colvin's new role includes responsibility for Serious and Organised Crime, Crime Operations, the Asia Pacific Group on Money Laundering, and the AFP regional offices in Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, Perth and Brisbane.

"We are also constantly seeking to improve our effectiveness, and the new Serious and Organised Crime and Crime Operations portfolios are developments that I will enjoy leading."

Deputy Commissioner Colvin has been a member of the AFP since 1990. His recent roles include National Manager of High Tech Crime Operations, Chief of Staff and advising on the Street Review. His current study in the United States has enabled him to work with senior executives and experienced public officials from a range of government, military, non-government and private sector organisations.

"My family and I have really enjoyed this opportunity to live and work overseas, and being here is not only a privilege and honour, but also a chance for the AFP to be represented on

a platform that is unlike any other," Deputy Commissioner Colvin said.

"A significant proportion of the students at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government have an international background, so the reach of this school beyond the USA is enormous. Out of approximately 900 students, only six are police officers, so it is a great chance to showcase the work of the AFP.

"I will take away many new skills and ideas from my time here that will help me in the new role, both personally and professionally. Harvard has a wealth of ideas and innovation, particularly within government, and many of these end up being adopted as best practice across the world. The opportunity to tap into this knowledge and build relationships for the future is important."

For Deputy Commissioner Michael Phelan, finding innovative ways to boost resourcing for the AFP's investigative and operational activities is a key priority. In supporting the Commissioner's



01: Assistant Commissioner Roman Quaadvlieg, Commissioner Negus and Deputy Commissioner Phelan at a function with AFP stakeholders.

vision to reinvigorate the amount of operational activity the AFP undertakes, Deputy Commissioner Phelan says he will need to find synergies between his areas of responsibility, and bring them together with a focus on supporting operational areas and streamlining processes to ensure resources get to where they are most needed.

As a fourth-generation police officer, he understands the importance of having the right tools and people for the job. Deputy Commissioner Phelan has been a member of the AFP since 1985 and has worked in a variety of fields, including community policing, national drug operations and fraud. In 2000 he was posted to Manila as Senior Liaison Officer for two years, and was promoted to the Senior Executive Service on his return as Director Operations Support in the AFP's Brisbane Office.

In 2003 he was appointed Director for Outcome Service Delivery, responsible for managing the systems needed to record the AFP's performance and core business outcomes, as well as managing operational client relationships. In 2004

he was appointed Director of the Australian High Tech Crime Centre, and was then promoted to National Manager Border and International Network, responsible for managing the AFP's extensive overseas network.

In 2007 Deputy Commissioner Phelan helped to negotiate a new Collective Agreement for the AFP, which meant that for the first time all AFP employees were covered under a single agreement. In September, he was appointed as ACT Chief Police Officer.

He holds an Honours Degree in Law, a Degree in Commerce and has just completed a Masters in Business Administration. He is also a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

In his spare time, Deputy Commissioner Phelan enjoys spending time with his family and playing golf. He is also a dedicated supporter of the Sydney Swans AFL football team.

His new role includes responsibility for Operations Support, including the Spectrum Program, the

Intelligence Strategic Program, Media and Marketing, Intelligence, Forensic and Data Centres, and High Tech Crime Operations.

He says bringing all these functions together under a single Deputy Commissioner will help to build a culture of support within the organisation.

"The recommendations in the Beale Review will help the AFP to be more effective in meeting its obligations," he said.

"This will allow the AFP executive to concentrate on strategic issues and enable Assistant Commissioners to concentrate on managing their day-to-day business. This means that even when we are facing new and unexpected challenges, we will have the tools we need to help keep Australia safe. The new phase we are entering will be a challenging but exciting time for the AFP and I'm looking forward to being a part of it."