





# Spotlight on security at APEC 2018

For one critically busy week in November, the eyes of the world were watching as Port Moresby put its law enforcement practice into action, welcoming leaders from 21 nations to PNG for the 2018 Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) meeting.

While the meeting of world leaders was the focus, behind the scenes the Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary (RPNGC) had prepared for their biggest operational security test in history.

The scale of the policing response was unprecedented for the RPNGC. More than 4,000 members were on duty across peak times of APEC Leaders Week, performing roles varying from bomb searches and coordinating motorcades through the streets of the city, to providing personal security for dignitaries.

At the request of the RPNGC, Australian Federal Police advisors were on hand to provide assistance

and advice in pursuit of the aims of the PNG-Australia Policing Partnership (PNG-APP) – the capacity building foundation that ties Australia with PNG.

Leaders from around the world, including Australia's Prime Minister Scott Morrison, Chinese President Xi Jinping, and United States Vice President Mike Pence, all descended on Port Moresby.

It was a significant example of RPNGC planning and preparation for their largest critical event to date. With each leader came heightened security requirements for the venues – including APEC Haus - and the hotels they would be using. And with an influx of an estimated 9,000 delegates, a thorough training schedule was put to the test to ensure a safe and secure city.

**Left: The Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary canine unit contributed to motorcade security for visiting international leaders in Port Moresby.**



A Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary water policing vessel keeps APEC Haus secure from the sea.



The complex task of multiple plane arrivals at Port Moresby's Jacksons International Airport was a key focus during APEC Leaders Week.



A PNG-Australia Policing Partnership advisor with Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary members during APEC.

### The road to APEC

In the months leading up to APEC, the need for diverse skills among sworn officers in the RPNGC spiked dramatically, opening up a suite of traditionally male-dominated areas within the force.

The PNG-APP provided a range of capacity building measures to ensure members were ready to provide a suitably proportionate response to the demands of the event. As a result, RPNGC members landed new roles as bomb appraisal and close personal protection officers, traffic and motorcade members, and as canine, water police and event security specialists.

Only 15 members-strong before APEC, the RPNGC Traffic Branch built sufficient capacity to coordinate the movements of APEC delegates, comprising more than 20 simultaneous motorcades during Leaders Week. APEC preparations saw their ranks swell to more than 80, with many female officers taking up the challenge to fill previously unavailable opportunities.

RPNGC First Constables Delma Daki and Esther Kende were the first to complete the motorcade skills enhancement training program on Yamaha XJ6SAP motorcycles, with their counterparts following close behind.

First Constable Kende said the ability and desire to ride and be part of the APEC experience was all a matter of attitude.

"Women can achieve whatever they believe they can achieve...even the more physically challenging roles such as the motorbikes," she said.

In the days leading up to APEC proper, PNG-APP advisors coordinated a number of complex exercises for RPNGC Traffic Branch to ensure things would flow smoothly at the peak of the event.

Practice motorcades were front and centre in the preparations, with practice exercises including 'Wok Wantaim Wednesday' and 'Super Sunday' the impetus to engage all capabilities in real-time practice ahead of delegate arrivals and critical international meetings.

### Traffic in the skies

It wasn't only the traffic in the streets of Port Moresby which required a major coordination effort. Across at PNG's major airport, Jacksons International, the planned record number of aircraft arrivals and movements required a new way of thinking.

With 21 APEC leaders and the thousands of delegates, staff and media descending on the city, constantly refining plans was the order of the day.



Australian Federal Police advisors worked closely with motorcycle police officers from the Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary to prepare for the arrival of APEC leaders in Port Moresby.

PNG-APP advisors were key in assisting their RPGNC Airport Operations counterparts prepare for the increased influx of aircraft – mapping out arrival times for leaders, adjusting the necessary policing presence, and coordinating police motorcades to meet each aircraft on arrival.

At the busiest time of leader’s weekend, the Joint Airport Coordination Centre, supported by PNG-APP advisors, became the “trusted point” of coordination for visiting world economies. It became a hub for the delivery of RPGNC Close Personal Protection and traffic resources – a vital backbone of cross-disciplinary communication.

### Support on the home front

While PNG was in the spotlight during APEC, back in Australia additional AFP members were deployed domestically to provide security for transiting leaders who were passing through on their way to the leader’s summit.

Only one hour by plane from Port Moresby, Cairns became an offshoot site for the transit of leaders and the parking of additional aircraft.

In response, AFP Airport Operations members from Brisbane, Gold Coast, Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth deployed to join the team at AFP Cairns Office, to meet the increased demand on aviation operations and

patrols, including a higher volume of bomb appraisals and canine screening of luggage and aircraft.

It was a steady stream of high profile visitors through Cairns, including the US Vice President and the Sultan of Brunei. On the ground in far north Queensland, Close Personal Protection members provided added security to visiting leaders, with the Vice President of the United States motorcade – complete with his secure vehicle, ‘The Beast’ – ready and waiting on arrival as he touched down in Cairns.

Members from a number of AFP portfolios also deployed to Darwin to support the Japanese Prime Minister visit, with Brisbane Office assisting delegates from the Pacific Islands. A multi-disciplinary APEC Coordination Centre was also stood up in Canberra during the event.

The AFP’s support for PNG’s APEC was just one piece in the multi-layered puzzle of Australian government support to ensure our closest neighbour had the tools and training to successfully showcase their nation to the rest of the world.

In transit: AFP Bomb Appraisal Officers in Cairns on the tarmac ready for the Vice President of the United States to pass through far north Queensland on his way to APEC.

“Women can achieve whatever they believe they can achieve...even the more physically challenging roles such as the motorbikes”  
– First Constable Esther Kende

