



AFPA BULLETIN:

AFPA Supports New Organised Crime Legislation in the ACT

26 February 2010

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The AFPA is pleased to inform members that new serious and organised crime legislation has been introduced into the ACT Legislative Assembly this week. These vital reforms have been implemented as a direct result of advice provided by the AFPA to key stakeholders including the Police Minister and Attorney-General, Simon Corbell MLA, the Shadow Minister for Police, Jeremy Hanson MLA, and the ACT Department of Justice and Community Safety.

Over the course of a number of meetings held last year, AFPA National President Jon Hunt-Sharman, and AFPA Vice-President for Community Policing, Dennis Gellatly, identified a number of deficiencies in current ACT legislation with respect to organised crime. The AFPA's concerns were validated by an ACT Government Report tabled in the Legislative Assembly later in the year that supported legislative reform in the area of serious and organised crime. The Bill that has been introduced into the Assembly today signals the successful culmination of a process that was initiated by the AFPA nearly 12 months ago.

The *Crimes (Serious Organised Crime) Amendment Bill 2010*, which has been passed this week with bipartisan support, introduces a number of new offences that will better equip Police in the ACT to confront the challenges posed by criminal syndicates. These offences include affray, participation in a criminal group and recruiting persons to participate in criminal activity. The Bill also extends the notion of criminal responsibility by introducing the concept of joint criminal enterprise into the ACT.

These latest reforms will significantly strengthen the ACT's ability to deal with organised crime groups whilst concurrently bringing the Territory's laws into line with those established in other jurisdictions.

The decision to accompany the *Serious and Organised Crimes Bill* with the *Crimes (Surveillance Devices) Bill* is another positive bipartisan move that will allow the ACT to stay at the forefront of crime-fighting efforts around the country. The AFPA welcomes specific ACT legislation targeted at serious and organised crime and is proud to have once again significantly contributed to important law enforcement reform.

Although the new legislation incorporates many of the reforms recommended by the AFPA in its meetings with decision-makers, the AFPA believes that there is still a gap in the ACT's criminal law due the absence of 'Unexplained Wealth' Provisions. The AFPA believes that incorporating these provisions into the Territory's *Confiscation of Criminal Assets Act 2003* will signal another major step forward in the fight against crime.

If you have any comments on this bulletin or any other queries please contact your local representatives or the AFPA National Office on afpa.office@afpa.org.au.

Authorised by

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