

15 March 2019



Australian Federal Police Association

MEDIA STATEMENT

#OPERATIONRESTORE

The Australian Federal Police Association (AFPA) today launched #OPERATIONRESTORE, a campaign calling on the major political parties to commit to restoring:

- Australian Federal Police (AFP) police numbers back to the 2013-2014 number of 3,620 and,
- the AFP as a stand-alone agency.

AFPA President Angela Smith said the campaign was designed to increase community safety, improve police wellbeing and future proof the force.

“As crime increases, police numbers are going backwards and we are expected to do more with less.

“In 2013-2014 there were 3,620 police, where as in 2016-2017 there were only 3,383, a 6.55 per cent drop.

As police numbers have dropped, crime has increased and is becoming more complex. Between 2013 and 2015, there was a 417 per cent increase in online child sexual abuse imagery.

The reduction in police numbers is taking a toll on the wellbeing of officers, the types of operations being undertaken as well as affecting workforce and future planning.

“We are urging both major parties to commit to #operationrestore and show the community that they are committed to boosting police numbers to address these growing changes.

In addition we want to stop the politicisation of the police force. We must be a stand alone agency reporting through the Attorney General with our own cabinet minister.



“The AFP within the Home Affairs portfolio has been dragged down and had its reputation damaged. AFP had little to do with the Hakeem al-Araibi incident and was extensively put under the microscope for its role in the matter during the recent Estimates.

“In relation to the AWU raid leak, the AFP compiled a brief of evidence, and again, its reputation was put under the spot light due to a decision from another organisation. The AFP did its job, like it always does, and was not supported publicly after doing everything in its power to investigate the matter” AFPA President Angela Smith said.

“In simple terms, in the last three years we’ve seen referrals of drug matters, for instance, rise by nearly 300 per cent. Our victim-based crime matters are on the significant rise, 200 per cent. Our cyber investigations are on the rise. The crime environment is changing and we are having to make priority decisions, not unreasonably, about where we can best direct our effort—like every police officer does and every police commissioner—where we can best direct our effort to get maximum impact. The demand side is increasing, there’s no question on that.

Commissioner Colvin 23 May 2018 - *Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation Committee*



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