



**AFPA**

Australian Federal  
Police Association

# Restore – Revitalise – Reform

## 2019

## A FORCE FOR THE FUTURE

Each year, 6,500 members of the Australian Federal Police (AFP) protect the Australian community from significant harm from terrorists, fraud, corruption, organised crime, drug activity, human trafficking and online threats including child pornography.

They do this by not only conducting their own operations, but through partnering with state-based police services and international organisations including the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation and Scotland Yard in the United Kingdom.

Both domestically and internationally, the AFP is a respected world leading law enforcement agency.

The AFP has a complex organisational structure and requires flexibility in bargaining to account for a range of distinct operational deployments, including national investigations, uniform policing in the ACT and aviation environments, international operations, along with a mixed cohort of sworn and unsworn employees who have specialist and generalist capabilities.

The AFPA takes pride in its bipartisan and politically impartial approach to industrial relations and other policy matters. We have a strong history of working with both parties in Government and Opposition and with the AFP to maintain an independent, effective and flexible workforce that can meet the complex law enforcement and security challenges Australia continues to face.

More than 4,000 of these hard working, dedicated members of the AFP are represented by the Australian Federal Police Association (AFPA), which protects their professional and industrial interests.

The AFPA believes that the changing world of crime requires the AFP to evolve to respond to these new challenges.

To respond to these fluid circumstances, we are calling on both major parties to deliver a well-resourced agency, with an improved culture that facilitates the effective response to both domestic and global threats.

### **The AFPA believes that three key areas must be addressed:**

- The restoration of the AFP as a stand-alone agency and of member numbers
- The support of officer wellbeing through the Aware and Alive Program
- The increased regulation of firearms

The AFPA takes pride in its members and their commitment to the safety and security of the Australian community.

We look forward to helping the Australian Federal Government strengthen that commitment.

**Angela Smith**  
*President*  
Australian Federal Police Association



# #OperationRestore

With **#operationrestore**, the AFPA is calling on the major political parties to commit to:

- Restoring AFP funding levels to those of 2013 and,
- Restoring the AFP as a stand-alone agency under the Attorney General.

Demands for AFP services are continuing to grow in volume. Recent AFP annual reports and other data sets have highlighted that areas such as narcotics, victim-based crime, counter-terrorism and national security threats have all experienced a growth in demand for resources.

The Australian Government has failed to meet the growing demand for successive budgets, forcing the AFP to attempt to meet the safety needs of the community with limited resources.

With its engagement in crime areas such as espionage, foreign interference and bribery, the AFP is required to operate with specialist skills and training.

However, the AFP is being starved to death in terms of capability. The current AFP budget is \$220 million behind 2013-14 levels.

*“In the last three years, we’ve seen referrals of drug matters... rise by nearly 300%. Our victim-based crime matters are on the rise, by 200%...The demand is increasing, there is no question on that.”*

—COMMISSIONER ANDREW COLVIN APM OAM

In 2017-18, the AFP’s national policing efforts returned \$16 for every dollar invested. As well as the restriction of resources and personnel, the AFP’s organisational independence has been weakened by its absorption into the Department of Home Affairs portfolio. To restore the AFP’s investigational integrity, it must be made a stand-alone agency once again, with its own cabinet minister.

*“AFP is required to do more with less, which is taking a toll on the wellbeing of officers, the types of operations that can be undertaken and future planning for the organisation.”*

AFPA PRESIDENT ANGELA SMITH

Only by building upon the existing capacity of the AFP can it meet the genuine safety and security needs of the Australian people.

## Crime is rising and we are doing more with less.

We know that there has been a:

↑ **417%** **INCREASE** in online **CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE** imagery between 2013–15

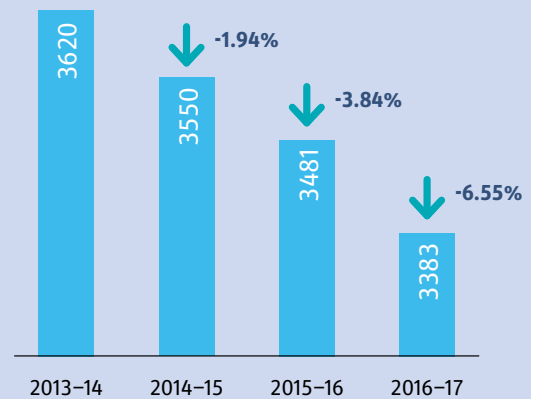
↑ **96%** **INCREASE** in **ILLICIT DRUG** arrests since 2007/08.

↑ **30%** **INCREASE** in **FRAUD AND DECEPTION** offences since 2011/12

↑ **35%** **INCREASE** in **PROHIBITED WEAPON** offences since 2008/09

Australian Bureau of Statistics, Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission

## Police personnel numbers have been declining



## CALL TO ACTION

The AFPA calls on the major parties to provide an **appropriate level of resourcing** to the AFP, to meet the safety and security needs of the Australian community.

Funding must be restored to 2013-14 levels, which means the allocation of approximately an additional **\$440 million**.

AFP funding must remain **aligned with inflation** and be adjusted alongside population growth.

The AFP must be restored as a **stand-alone agency** to protect its organisational **independence**.

# AFP – Aware and Alive

The AFPA is calling on both major political parties to commit to a comprehensive mental health package that focuses on early intervention, known as AFP Aware and Alive Program.

The Aware and Alive Program will involve the delivery of an early intervention program to improve the mental health and resilience of AFP members and reduce the risk of mental illness and suicide.

The program would comprise of practical supports as a complementary but necessary enhancement to the established AFP Mental Health Strategy.

Aware and Alive focuses on five key areas:

1. Health assessments for all members.
2. Specific education and information focused on risk factors and prevention.
3. Establishment of trauma program to assist members to navigate through trauma, transition and internal investigation.
4. Emergency Assistance Program incorporating access to psychologists and counsellors specialising in the specific AFP workplace and emergency services demographic.
5. The establishment of a baseline data set on the health and wellbeing of the AFP workforce that will measure the above measures and other programs being run by the AFP.

*“Our members need access to confidential independent services that they are comfortable accessing. The people protecting the community from the worst types of criminals need access to appropriate and timely support.”*

**AFPA PRESIDENT ANGELA SMITH**

According to Safe Work Australia, occupations most at risk of work-related mental health conditions:



9%

OF ALL DEFENCE FORCE, FIRE FIGHTERS AND POLICE



8%

OF ALL SCHOOL TEACHERS



6%

OF ALL HEALTH AND WELFARE SUPPORT

The 2017 Phoenix Report included an AFP-wide survey, which showed:

23%

of respondents with **MODERATE-HIGH** levels of psychological distress

14%

of respondents with symptoms consistent with **DEPRESSION**

9%

of respondents with symptoms consistent with **POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS** disorder



According to Safe Work Australia, police are among the most at-risk occupation of work-related mental health conditions. The AFPA has enlisted the support of the OzHelp Foundation, which has designed a customised mental health early intervention program in consultation with AFPA members and suicide prevention experts. Trust and confidence in health services is a vital factor for AFP members to get the help that they need. The program will allow AFPA members to access trusted external support specializing in the specific issues facing the AFP workplace, and include holistic health assessments, education measures, an in-group mentoring program, an emergency assistance program and a baseline data set on health and wellbeing in the AFP.

OzHelp is been recognised by the Federal Government and other state and territory governments for its expertise in mental health and suicide prevention and is currently funded under the National Suicide Prevention and Leadership Support Program.

## CALL TO ACTION

The AFPA calls on the major parties to support **The Aware and Alive Program** for better mental health within the AFP.

AFP employees are responsible for **protecting the Australian community** from serious crimes, and as such have experiences that are traumatic.

**23% of respondents** to an AFP-wide survey displayed moderate-high levels of psychological distress.

The AFPA needs an investment of **\$5 million over three years** in evidence-based suicide prevention, physical and mental health workplace training and support programs.

# Firearms Reform

The AFPA is calling on both major political parties to commit to wide-ranging firearms reform in Australia, including:

- The introduction of a national firearms registry, to be made a standing item on the COAG agenda,
- The creation of legislation that ensures people with firearms licenses can only buy ammunition for the firearm they are licensed to hold.

According to Crime Statistics Australia, firearms still contribute to 17% of homicides and related offences.

AFPA President Angela Smith has said that Australia's disjointed and inconsistent approach to firearms legislation is a public safety issue, and one that must be addressed.

*"It is a national disgrace that with twenty-two years since Port Arthur, we still don't have a national firearms registry. Currently, people can buy ammunition for weapons that they do not own, and ammunition can be imported for weapons that are illegal. The woeful legislation is making it very easy for dangerous weapons to fall into the hands of criminals. It must be stopped."*

The AFPA suggests that Section 65A of the NSW Firearms Act 1996 be incorporated into Federal law. This act stipulates that:

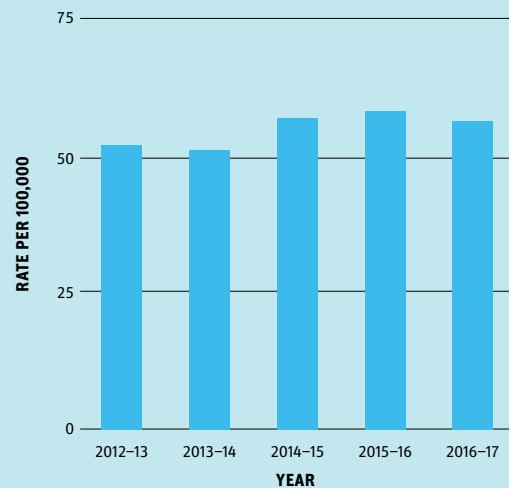
*'A licensed firearms dealer must not supply ammunition for any firearm to a person who is a holder of a license or permit for the firearm unless:*

*A firearm that takes the ammunition is registered in the name of the person or the person is authorised by a permit to acquire a firearm that takes the ammunition, and*

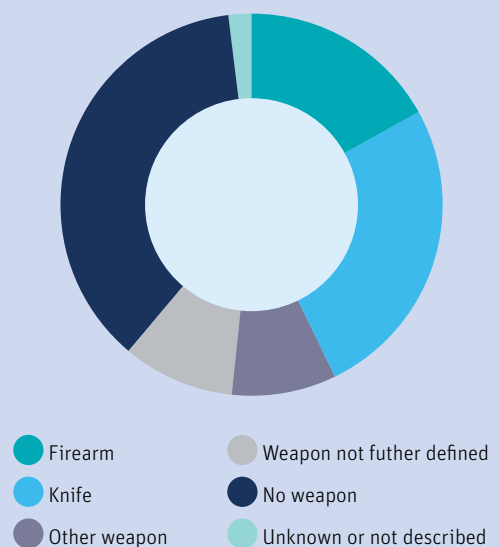
*The dealer has seen the current notice of registration issued for the firearm or the permit to acquire the firearm.'*

It is clear that, for the safety of AFP officers and of the wider community, firearm regulation must be reassessed and reformed to form a more holistic safety net.

**ABS Recorded Crime**  
Prohibited/Regulated Weapons Offence



**Homicide and related offences**  
2017



## CALL TO ACTION

The AFPA calls on the major parties to introduce a **national firearms registry**.

Further, individuals must only be able to buy ammunition for firearms **they are licensed to use**.

The **import of ammunition** for weapons that are illegal in Australia must be stopped.

With **27,000 firearms stolen** between 2007-2010, Australia's inconsistent approach to firearms regulation must be addressed.

