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AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL POLICE ASSOCIATION MEDIA RELEASE

ACT POLICING MEMBERS AND COMMUNITY ENDANGERED BY SUMMERNATS

The Australian Federal Police Association (AFPA) condemns the actions of Summernats organisers which placed ACT Policing and community members at significant risk.

AFPA President Alex Caruana said poor security-related decisions needed to be addressed before planning future events, with a repeat of Summernats 35 not being tenable.

"The organisers need to do much better when it comes to security and stop pushing their problems and poor management onto ACT Policing and the community.

"ACT Policing resources had to be pulled from other frontline activities to assist on the ground in managing people displaced by the actions of Summernats organisers.

"Our information is that many security guards walked off the job due to safety concerns. I stress that this isn't the fault of the security guards, but rather the organisers for not properly resourcing the security arrangements of the event," Mr Caruana said.

The AFPA is calling on the ACT Government to independently audit the security arrangements behind Summernats 35 and seek reassurances and commitments from the organisers for future events.

"The ACT Government must look at the logistical arrangements for Summernats, including the security plans. Gross negligence has resulted in ACT Policing being left to clean up the mess of others.

"The organisers' solution to de-escalate the situation and stop the event was to simply push the problem onto ACT Policing and the wider community.

"While managing the issues created by a number of Summernats participants and organisers, ACT Policing members also had to maintain their presence across the territory doing the job they are paid to do.

"It's only by dumb luck that a life-or-death incident didn't occur during this time; police resources would have been significantly delayed due to the problems selfishly caused by Summernats participants and organisers.

"The ACT Government needs a commitment to providing adequate security inside EPIC for future events from the Summernats organisers, and not relying on ACT Policing to solve their problems for them." Mr Caruana said.

For comments:

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