

4 April 2024



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AFPA WELCOMES NEW ACT CHIEF POLICE OFFICER

The Australian Federal Police Association (AFPA) welcomes Deputy Commissioner Scott Lee's appointment as the new Chief Police Officer (CPO) for the ACT following the retirement of Deputy Commissioner Neil Gaughan.

AFPA President Alex Caruana said that he looked forward to working with Deputy Commissioner Lee to strengthen ACT Policing, and would be focusing heavily on issues such as recruitment, retention and accommodation in his representations to the new CPO.

“Former Chief Police Officer Gaughan and I had an excellent relationship, and I see no reason why this relationship can’t continue with Deputy Commissioner Lee.

“We’ll need to tackle several issues as a priority, notably the accommodation issues facing ACT Policing. City Station, the Watch House, Gungahlin Station, the Winchester Police Centre, and the rapidly expanding Molonglo Valley region all represent areas of concern.

“Police numbers will always be an area of focus for the AFPA, especially while the ACT remains the region with the lowest per capita number of police in Australia. The population of the ACT has grown significantly over the last few years, along with service calls for ACT Policing. Unfortunately, the number of police hasn’t grown commensurate with this increase in population.

Another concern for the AFPA is the collective level of experience held by ACT Policing members. The AFPA believes the ACT Government must explore avenues and initiatives to attract and retain staff, both new recruits and lateral transfers from other jurisdictions.

“Retention is a difficult environment for ACT Policing, as many experienced police officers transfer to AFP National or other jurisdictions. We need that experience to remain in ACT Policing and assist in mentoring and developing a relatively junior workforce.

“As part of the upcoming ACT election, the AFPA will be asking political parties to consider what they can do to assist the retention of experience in ACT Policing.

“I welcome Chief Police Officer Lee to the ACT, and I plan on meeting with him shortly to discuss how we can progress our common goals,” Mr Caruana said.

For comments: AFPA Media and Government Relations Manager – Mr Troy Roberts – media@afpa.org.au