

# PANSW

POLICE ASSOCIATION OF NSW

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# Police News



*Releasing  
the brakes on  
recruiting*

*Pages 6-7*



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## Cover

Goulburn Police Academy Recruits.  
 Photographer, Senior Constable Rose Guest  
 (Guest's work also features: pages 7, 8, 16-17)

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# Angus Longley Southern Regional 1

I attested in March 1999. Since beginning my policing career, I have been in General Duties apart from a brief stint as a detection dog handler from 2002 to 2004. I have performed General Duties jobs in Mascot, Lithgow, Bathurst and Orange police stations.

In May 2012, I became a General Duties team leader at Orange. In February 2013, I transferred to Albury Station as a General Duties team leader as part of a spousal transfer where I have been ever since. In 2020, I stepped up my level of commitment at my local branch and became the Chair. I developed a keen interest in all things related to the Association after watching the previous Branch Chair advocating on behalf of the staff at Albury and winning extra SAP spots. I soon learnt that if you don't ask for it, you won't receive it and that you need an effective branch to advocate on behalf of its members.

Since my time as a Branch Chair, I have been successful in renegotiating the first response agreement at Albury. I was also

fortunate to be elected as a Delegate to the PANSW Conference in 2022. I also completed a comprehensive staffing submission in July 2021, seeking further SAP spots in General Duties and Criminal Investigations. As a result of the submission, a further nine SAP spots were allocated to Albury.

I wanted to join the Executive to be able to have the ability to help shape and influence the decisions that are made for the betterment of all members. Being in this position allows me to gain real time awareness of current issues facing our police officers statewide.

Like all police forces across the nation, one of the biggest challenges is the recruiting and retaining of police officers. Through the PANSW, I hope we can encourage the Executive to make changes to recruitment to make the NSW Police Force the employer of choice when it comes to policing. The challenge of resolving the issues around the Concessional superannuation will continue to be a project the PANSW will

focus on and will require more lobbying and hopefully a commitment from the Government to resolve it.





Kevin Morton PANSW President

## Celebrate our achievements set sights on our 2024 goals

■ On Tuesday 24th May 2022, around 9 am at our Biennial Conference, I delivered my first speech after having the absolute honour of being elected as the President of the Police Association of New South Wales.

I spoke of my journey to get to the position and then outlaid the main issues that I, as the President, felt needed to be addressed to ensure that we had a strong, well-equipped, well-resourced Police Force.

One of those issues was recruitment and dealing with the dwindling numbers of people lining up to join our Police Force.

I stated then, "We need to once again recruit people with life experience. The only way to do this is to pay them as they learn. You shouldn't have to choose between paying a mortgage and supporting a young family or joining our job."

From that date on our Branches, delegates and Executive have pushed to make these comments a reality.

After 25 years of Police students paying their way, I was able to stand outside the iconic Sydney Police Centre on your behalf when the Premier, Police Minister and Commissioner of Police announced that students will now be paid during the 16 weeks that they attend the NSW Police Academy.

I couldn't help but be proud when I reflected on that moment in May 2022 when I asked you, as our membership, our Branches, and our networks that drive this organization known as the Police Association, to achieve something that, after 25 years, appeared near impossible.

Recruiting is one issue, but retention is another.

On page 12 of this edition of the Police News is the article, 'The Path Leading to Award 2024'. I urge you to read it as it sets the platform as we commence



NEWLY ELECTED, GIVING THE FIRST SPEECH IN WOLLONGONG

negotiations with the NSWPF and Government for our new Award that commences in June 2024.

The PANSW's Award claim is for police officers in NSW to be shown respect with a fair and decent pay rise in 2024 to keep them in the job they love. The members' position is that Police officers in NSW should be the highest paid in the country, and I wholeheartedly agree with them.

Pay is a mark of respect and will go a long way to retaining our hard-working men and women in the NSW Police Force. It will then be a point of bargaining with the NSW Government and NSWPF on the exact quantum. Still, under the Labor Government, with the wages cap removed, we are pressing for respect to be shown to police officers in NSW. We expect this to reflect the recent wage rises offered to other agencies, including the teachers, and the productivity being delivered by our members managing an immense workload that more than

17,000 officers should be covering.

Retention is multi-layered, and through a suite of measures, including looking at pay pinch points, it remains a strong part of our Award negotiations.

Along with this, we continue the push for change in other areas, including our ongoing Blue Tape project and our focus on the health and wellbeing of our members. These are ongoing measures outside of the Award negotiations to temper your workload during these challenging times.

Improvements in technology and Policy and how we value and treat our colleagues when they are sick and injured are just as vital when we speak of retention and ensuring that our members have a rewarding and long-standing career.

Through Conference, which provides the decision-making agenda for the Police Association, recruitment and retention were the major directives from the membership. We have ticked the box on one. I now focus through Award 2024 on achieving for the membership the means to retain and again make the NSWPF's pay and conditions the envy of all other states.

As the year draws to a close, thank you for the tireless work ethic, dedication, and compassion you have shown to your fellow officers and during your duties over the past year. While families around the state celebrate during the festive season and holidays at this time, you will stand watch and ensure that others remain safe while partaking in their celebrations. I wish you, your colleagues, and your families a wonderful Christmas and New Year, and thank you for your service to our communities. When your roster allows, I hope you have the opportunity to spend time with loved ones and reflect on the year that was in your own way.



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# Industrial Update

## Southern Region Forum

Southern Region Organiser Marty Evans and Industrial Officer Trelawney McGregor hosted a Southern Forum in Wagga Wagga on Wednesday, 25 October 2023. Members came from across the region to hear updates from the PANSW team and the Region Commander.

PANSW President Kevin Morton opened the Forum, touching on key items such as recruitment and the retention of police officers already working for the organisation which is a multi-layered issue. This includes good pay and conditions along with addressing work intensity and load which incorporates the work being undertaken by police for other government agencies such as mental health and offender management. The reduction of Blue tape and pressures placed on all of those layers filters into retraining members.

Headway has been made with the Commissioner announcing that calls for assistance are the priority and Region Commanders are to reduce staffing pressures regarding operations that are not part of the Commissioner's priorities.

Assistant Commissioner Peter Cotter addressed the group most notably in relation to prisoner transportation and the impending signature on the MOU between NSWPF and Corrective Services NSW which cements many of the handshake practices that have existed for years which are now set in stone. The improvement and advancement of prisoner transport remains a work in progress.

Other updates presented at the Forum included the Concessional Cap campaign, industrial related policy updates regarding the relief pool, capability development and rotation policy and acting appointments. An update on uniform, vehicles and police stations was also delivered to the group.

The Blue tape feedback from Conference 2022 was discussed with updates provided by PANSW Lead Organiser Jon Goddard on progress that is being made regarding tech upgrades, policy changes and changes to SOP's, all designed to make life easier for cops on

the street when they come to work.

The most important session of the day is focused on hearing from the branch members about their current issues, workshopping these around and networking with other members who may have experienced similar issues in their workplaces.

We thank all the Branch Delegates who attended the Forum and look forward to the next one.



## Senior Sergeants pay and increment on promotion

The Police Association of NSW is currently engaged in a dispute with NSW Police regarding the pay and increment afforded to Senior Sergeants on promotion who previously held the top increment of Sergeant's rank.

From the inception of positional appointments of Senior Sergeants after April 2014, the PANSW secured that the previous increment the promoted Sgt held would be considered in determining the increment when appointed to Senior Sergeant positions (i.e. those who held top level Sergeant increment would commence at the Senior Sergeant Level 3 increment and maintaining the same salary). The same applied to Prosecutor and Detective Senior Sergeant

appointments at the equivalent being Level 2. This has applied continuously as a custom and practice until the PANSW became aware late in 2022 that NSW Police Force had begun to appoint Sergeants from their top increment at Senior Sergeant, Level 1 unilaterally and without notice or consultation. In doing so, NSW Police Force have breached the terms of the Crown Employees (Police Officers – 2021) Award. This results in a pay reduction for those officers who are appointed to a position of Senior Sergeant, not the rank (as per the 2014 amendments).

In October 2022, the PANSW raised representations on behalf of several affected members who had contacted the Association for assistance. The PANSW took up the issue with NSW Police on the basis that our members were aggrieved by having incurred a pay cut and delay to their incremental progression in violation of the existing custom and practice. We were successful in having the correct 3rd Year increment and equivalents afforded to those members who were promoted up to April 2023, which has been paid and recognised from their dates of appointment including back pay.

The PANSW is now engaged in a broader collective policy dispute to defend and restore the custom and practice on behalf of our members appointed to Senior Sergeant positions after April 2023. Members already at the rank and grade of Senior Sergeant may have seen correspondence regarding our survey of members to inform our position in the dispute.

The PANSW is currently in discussions with the People and Capability Command (HR) in an attempt to resolve this in good faith. We will progress this matter vigorously in the interests of our members and the principle that our Award and established custom and practice arrangements are to be honoured.

If you are a Senior Sergeant member who was previously at the top of your Sergeants increment scale and you believe you may be affected by this dispute, please contact the PANSW team on 9265 6777 or [info@pansw.org.au](mailto:info@pansw.org.au)



# Recruiting to fix vacancies & workload

■ In May 2022, and the PANSW Conference, President Kevin Morton stood in front of the (at the time) Leader of the Opposition Chris Minns, then Minister for Police Paul Toole, and at Commissioner of Police Karen Webb APM. President Morton warned the Government of a looming recruitment crisis. Without action, the recruitment pool would run low, vacancies would run high, and the workload pressure on the police of today would increase. He urged the NSW Government to respect the value of police and provide sufficient recruitment opportunities for the police of tomorrow.

## PANSW secures big incentive to attract the police of tomorrow

In October, the PANSW achieved that recruitment objective. The PANSW, working with now Premier Chris Minns and Minister for Police Yasmin Catley, have delivered on “pay to train” for police recruits in NSW. The NSW Government and PANSW announced Student Police Officers at the Goulburn Police Academy will be paid approximately \$30,000 during the 16-week study period.

While the former Government was not prepared to put its money where its mouth was, it is hugely encouraging that Premier Minns and Minister Catley have worked so constructively with the PANSW. Especially as we are leading into Award 2024 next year.

## What this means for the police of tomorrow

It takes a special kind of person to want to be a police officer; putting themselves in danger to protect their community, encountering people on their worst days, working weekends, nights and public holidays while others enjoy time with their friends and families.

The type of person drawn to being a police officer is willing to make those sacrifices. But with today’s cost of living challenges, not many of us, whether we want to or not, can afford to forgo 16 weeks of income, and fork out thousands of dollars to apply and train for a specific job. But that is what NSW required the

police of tomorrow to do. Until now.

Now people that want to be a police officer can earn a reasonable wage while they learn. They do not need to choose between looking after their family, paying their living expenses, or becoming a police officer in NSW.



RECRUIT PHOTOGRAPHS by SENIOR CONSTABLE ROSE GUEST

## What this means for the police of today

The Police Association has been working to alleviate the pressures on members caused by vacancies and workload increases on multiple fronts.

We are pursuing over 86 items on reducing ‘Blue tape’ for cops to make doing the job easier with less duplication and improved technology.

We successfully advocated for a NSWPF relief pool, which is currently in trial phase 2.

We are advocating for the implementation of Full Time Equivalent resource allocation, to maximise the use of police resources.

These are incredibly important and beneficial initiatives to make sure your workload is fair and safe. But there is only so much that can be done without extra police officers. And at the moment, there are not enough boots on the ground.

When you are at work, we want your new colleague standing alongside you to

be the best and brightest. We don’t want a vacant position, we don’t want what some other jurisdictions have done to address recruitment challenges; lower standards.

That is why proper pay and incentives for the police of tomorrow means something for all of us today.

## Fair reward for the police of today

Throughout it all, the PANSW has never stopped advocating for fair pay rises and retention incentives, not just recruitment incentives.

The NSW Government must make police pay and incentives attractive for a rewarding career in the NSW Police Force.

With the recruitment objective from Conference 2022 achieved, we are now leading into Award 2024. This is the centrepiece of the strategy to provide current police with the pay and conditions you deserve.

Your PANSW has already secured improvements to reward and retain police, including:

- *Gaining additional pay increases during the term of the Award including 4.03% in 2023*
- *Securing 16 weeks paid parental leave entitlements for all parents of a child*
- *Regional incentives secured for remote and special remote locations providing up to \$36k over 5 years which was previously only a \$5k one off incentive.*

With the wages cap scrapped and the PANSW participating in the Industrial Relations Taskforce with the NSW Government, Award 2024 is our turn for respect to be shown and places us in a great position to build on what we have already secured.

A decent pay rise in Award 2024 is a must for the Government to retain the hard-working men and women in blue.

You can read more on pages 12-13 of this edition of PPN

The PANSW will be keeping members updated in the near future about Award 2024 progress.

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MAYOR JAMIE CHAFFEY HANDS THE CMA (COUNTRY MAYORS ASSOCIATION) REPORT TO PANSW PRESIDENT KEVIN MORTON

## Police Association teams up with NSW Country Mayors

### Farmers & Regional communities calling out for more cops

Jamie Chaffey knows a thing or two about life in the country and what people in his community want. He is the Mayor of Gunnedah Shire Council, and the Chairman of the New South Wales Country Mayors Association. And in October, Mayor Chaffey stood alongside PANSW President Kevin Morton and told NSW Parliament in no uncertain terms, that his communities want more police officers, with more support. "We're really frightened for those police that are out there every single day doing the best they can to defend our communities when there simply isn't enough," said Mayor Chaffey. "They're expected to do exorbitant hours and then the phone rings in the middle of the night, they may have just worked a 12 hour shift and they're expected to get up and go out and defend our communities again."

Regional policing has many unique challenges. There are just over 5,000 police officers in the Police Districts of

the Southern, Northern and Western Regions of NSW. Those Police Districts cover around 789,939 square kilometres; 99% of the land mass of NSW.

That is a lot of communities to serve, and a lot of ground to cover. Our regional police are spread thinner and are travelling longer distances for every task. The communities they protect have less access to other government services, so police, already the universal 24/7 problem solvers, have even more gaps to plug.

"Our police in those regional communities do a fantastic job, but they clearly need more resources and more staff," said PANSW President Kevin Morton. "The outdated model of rostering police officers based on one car per job per hour needs to be updated. This model doesn't reflect the distance travelled and the time it takes to deal with the matter."

### Statewide attention is needed

"Our communities desperately need our politicians to listen to us to affect change" said Jamie Chaffey, Chairman

of New South Wales Country Mayors Association.

On 19 October, President Morton and Mayor Chaffey told NSW Parliament that a Parliamentary Inquiry into Regional Policing is necessary to solve these issues. Crucially, the NSW Government needs to address:

- The *high number of vacancies.*
- *Outdated formulas used to establish First Response Policing Agreements, and ...*
- *The huge amount of time police spend doing the work of other agencies, like responding to mental health incidents, or transporting prisoners.*

Last year, NSW Parliament conducted an inquiry into access to health services in rural, regional and remote New South Wales.

The Inquiry held 15 public hearings across NSW, and made 22 findings and 44 recommendations. We need the same bold, hard look at resourcing for police in regional NSW. We need a way forward.

Kirsty Membreno PANSW Assistant Secretary - Industrial

# Capability Development and Rotation Policy Changes

■ Since the introduction of the *Capability Development and Rotation Policy* in 2022 members who have served five years at their current location/duty type are required to participate in a capability development rotation opportunity when the time is identified.

The PANSW recognises that it is healthy for officers to move around and experience new roles/duty types and locations. This is important for officers' mental health, refresh and exposure to new work types, workloads and colleagues to work alongside. It is also of benefit for those officers who are seeking examples for their CV for promotional or mobility opportunities that may arise.

In the current climate, members have expressed to the PANSW concerns in relation to staffing shortages, workload and work intensity pressures and the inability or desire to rotate at a time such as now. Furthermore, many members are not seeing the benefit of a rotation when their teams are short staffed and feeling under pressure.

The PANSW raised these concerns with the NSWPF seeking amendments to the *Capability Development and Rotation Policy* to provide Commanders with greater flexibility and discretion in determining if and when officers should be required to rotate.

NSWPF have expressed positive examples to the PANSW regarding officers having a refresh, broadening their career options and also giving some officers respite away from their usual duties. Some police officers have successfully secured transfers to other locations following a successful rotation period.

Notwithstanding some of the positive outcomes this policy has achieved, the PANSW were still concerned with comments from many members where



EVERYTHING CHANGES, NOTHING REMAINS STILL; YOU CANNOT STEP TWICE INTO THE SAME STREAM - HERACLITUS

they were simply being moved from one Command to another in the same General Duties duty type. The perception is that this does not build that officer's capability or provide them with a refresh but is more of a box-ticking exercise and burden on both Commands and their teams.

The negotiations between the PANSW and the NSWPF in relation to the Policy resulted in the following amendments:

- *The introduction of a discussion between the Commander and the officer prior to consideration of a rotation occurring which is designed to ensure there's a conversation had to properly consider each officer's current status within the Command, the staffing needs of the Command, where the officer might be at in terms of their capability and resilience. The Command can then weigh up their staffing needs and may determine it is not appropriate to rotate an officer at that point. Only after a discussion*

*should the officer and the Commander jointly discuss the need for a rotation. Commanders still have the discretion to require an officer to undertake a rotation. Officers still have the right to seek a review of any such decision.*

- *Giving discretion to the Commander to extend the period if needed for operational reasons (i.e. staffing shortages meaning officers cannot rotate)*
- *Officers' current contribution to the Command and their team to be taken into account (i.e. the only substantive Sargeant at a Command may be required not to rotate for stability purposes).*

As a result, several Policy Changes (highlighted in bold) have been made including:

## 4. Participation

d) Officer required after five (5) years tenure: officers who have been attached to the same Command/Specialist Unit for five (5) years performing similar functions / duties will be required to participate in a capability development and rotation opportunity within the following twelve (12) month period (**where appropriate, Commands may extend this period to meet Command and or/operational needs**). **Prior to considering any rotation opportunity, Commander/Managers and Officers are required to discuss capability/career development, capability uplift, opportunities for growth, current performance and contribution to the Command, and officer wellbeing considerations.**

The Commander/Manager **following the discussion**, in consultation with the officer will then identify (if required) a capability and development opportunity having regard for the officer's development and individual needs.

- Members also expressed that previous opportunities they have engaged in were not being taken into consideration by the Commander when determining if a rotation was necessary. We negotiated for expansion of what could be considered and included in a previous capability opportunity including acting appointments, secondments etc. The policy change enables Commanders to consider all development opportunities an officer may have engaged in to determine if a rotation is necessary e.g. acting appointments over several periods. The actual rotation itself may not be required to be at a different location.
- Permitting a rotation to occur at the same location e.g. change in duty type or acting in higher duties

Policy Changes:

## 6.1 Participation

e) Commander/Managers may review collective career/capability development opportunities that an officer may have participated in when determining if an officer has met the requirements of the policy (separate to the transitional arrangements from section 5 above) on an ongoing basis. For example: if an officer has participated in three (3) six (6) week Acting Appointments in recent years and is actively engaged in their role, the Commander/Manager may certify that the officer has met the requirements of this policy and not require a further Capability Development and Rotation Opportunity should the officer progress past five (5) years tenure. Commander/Managers are provided with a broad scope of determining locally what is necessary in consultation with the officer which includes the Command and/or operational needs and the officer's contribution to the



THINGS DON'T HAVE TO CHANGE THE WORLD  
TO BE IMPORTANT - STEVE JOBS

**Command.** A rotation opportunity may not require a change in location in circumstances where the aim of the rotation opportunity can otherwise be met locally.

- Giving greater consideration to locations nominated by officers, reference is now made to reasonable consideration of nominated locations from officers.

Some further points for consideration of the Commander have been added and are to be taken into account:

## 8.2 Commander/Manager (or delegate)

- a) Consult and negotiate Capability Development and Rotation Opportunities with officers having regard for their:
  - Capability and development needs (including capability uplift, opportunities for growth, current performance, role within the Command and officer wellbeing considerations)

- Individual circumstances including usual travel time to substantive place of attachment, FWAs, career goals and progression etc
- Options sought by the officer and the proposed timing for rotation, if an officer has nominated a location, reasonable consideration must be given to enabling this before any other location is considered, provided it meets the intent of this policy
- Previous rotations and/or other career/capability development opportunities undertaken by the officers either in another duty type or location

While we always encourage the development and increased capability of police officers across NSW, we are striving for there to be a balance between the current operational concerns and workload against the personal circumstances of officers. Any member who is having difficulty in relation to the Capability Development and Rotation policy should make contact with their PANSW Branch Official or the PANSW office on 9265 6777 or [info@pansw.org.au](mailto:info@pansw.org.au)

# The path leading to Award 2024

■ The PANSW exists to fight for financial security, health, safety and fairness for police officers and their families. The commitment of every one of you to your colleagues, to the policing family, is crucial to this, as is the expertise and professionalism of PANSW staff.

The Award is one of the centre pieces of this – your yearly pay rise is one of the major priorities each year.

But the Award is also so much more than a single number: rostering, penalty rates, workers compensation, death and disability insurance; all of this as we know it is protected by the MOU linked with the Award the PANSW negotiates every 1-3 years.

In 2024, the Award is once again up for renewal.

The significant achievements of our industrial and legal team during a very challenging period over the past four years paves the way for great opportunities in 2024.

## A pay freeze thwarted

In 2020 the Government of the day attempted to legislate a public sector pay freeze – by law, public sector workers would get a 0% pay rise.

Pay rises are like interest in that it compounds. The flip side is, miss one pay rise and the subsequent years are playing catch up.

That was one reason why it was so crucial not to allow the government to freeze police pay.

PANSW's strong relationship with all sides of politics in NSW Parliament once again proved vital.

The PANSW mobilised supporters of police in NSW Parliament to help disallow the regulation that would have enforced the pay freeze.

The expertise and status of the PANSW advocacy team in NSW Parliament was important to achieve this.

## Showdown at the Industrial Relations Commission

Without the backing of a regulation, the Government could still try to implement its pay freeze in practice, but the

unions could fight them in arbitration: a wage case in the Industrial Relations Commission

The PANSW industrial and legal teams are amongst the most professional and respected in public sector unions and this was on full display in 2020.

The Government's attempted pay freeze applied to the entire NSW public sector: police, nurses, paramedics, fire fighters many of the public sector who most stepped up to get NSW through COVID were rewarded with a pay freeze.

PANSW will  
be going to  
the well,  
holding the  
government to  
its promises to  
show respect  
through pay

The public sector ran a wage case as a whole. The PANSW secured a carve out from the broad public sector case to enable us to run our own case for police officers. While the rest of the public sector received a 0.3% increase, the PANSW secured 1.75%.

This is a testament to the exceptional standard of expertise in the PANSW industrial and legal team.

"This is an extremely positive result. I'd especially like to thank the 31 members who gave evidence to support this outcome, and our team at the Association who have worked tirelessly to achieve this result for you, the members." PANSW President Kevin Morton

## Security and opportunity

The next Award in 2021 was a negotiated outcome, covering 3 years.

With the economic outlook still affected by COVID, the PANSW prioritised securing the maximum available pay rise under the then 2.5% wages cap.

This achieved solid, reliable pay rises: no gaps between awards, no loss of leverage in trying to negotiate back pay.

It also secured:

- *The police Death & Disability scheme (PBRI),*
- *The superior workers compensations scheme available to police,*
- *Payment of shift penalties when work related injury causes the shift to be terminated, and ...*
- *A protection to ensure police are not rostered on afternoon or night shift the day before leave.*

The strategy of locking in solid, reliable pay rises worked: from that secure negotiating position, the PANSW went on to secure additional pay increases in each subsequent year of the Award: upping the pay rise to 3% in 2022 and 4.5% in 2023 (both inclusive of consecutive 0.5% superannuation increases).

The additional pay increases are "testament to the collaboration between the NSW Police Force executive and the Police Association of NSW and their continued efforts to look after the wellbeing and remuneration of officers." then Minister for Police, the Hon. Paul Toole

The achievements of our advocacy and industrial team, to negotiate increases during the term of an Award, was once again only possible due to the respect held for them in Government.

These increases are very important to set us up for a strong pay strategy for 2024.

## A new sheriff in town

Since Award 2021, we have had a change in Government: with Chris Minns' Labor Party winning the 2023



CHRIS MINNS (R) AND KEVIN MORTON (L) AT 2022 PRESS CALL, SURRY HILLS POLICE STATION, WHERE THE PREMIER COMMITTED SUPPORT FOR NSW POLICE ACROSS A RANGE OF ISSUES

NSW Election. The Labor Party came into office on promise to prioritise public sector wages.

“We have a clear mandate from the people of NSW to rebuild our essential services, to invest in the people who look after us – our nurses, teachers, paramedics, firefighters and police officers.” NSW Premier, the Hon Chris Minns.

The Labor Government commenced an Industrial Relations Taskforce “to reform the industrial relations framework that can attract and retain public sectors workers and deliver real-wage growth

over the long-term by reinvesting productivity improvements into both better public services and the wages and conditions of public sector workers.”

The PANSW is working with Government on this reform of the Industrial Relations framework. Members have noticed the pay rises received by other public sectors like teachers and health workers in 2023.

“Pay is a mark of respect ...Striking this deal was vitally important, so our hardworking teachers can see they are respected by their government, and being paid adequately for the hard work

they are doing to educate the state’s students.” Deputy Premier and Minister for Education and Early Learning Prue Car.

2024 is police officers’ turn – the PANSW will be going to the well, holding the government to its promises to show respect through pay. The 2022 PANSW Biennial Conference provided direction from the Delegates on the key priorities for the next Award. Members will see our pay campaign commence soon, and you will be kept up to date throughout negotiations.

# Xmas Messages to NSW Police Officers



**Karen Webb APM**  
**Commissioner of Police**

■ As 2023 draws to an end I'd like to send a heartfelt thank you to you all for your dedication, service and commitment this year. It's been a big year and a demanding year for you all.

Whether it has been our response to public place shootings and other crimes, our work in overhauling our response to family and domestic violence, or the day-to-day role of policing in our communities, the work you have performed this year shows why this organisation continues to be a world-class police force.

This year we have continued our focus of putting People First – to attract new recruits and build the workforce of the future and to give you the best opportunity in your role and future career.

We engaged with the NSW Government and PANSW to deliver an enhanced regional incentive scheme with a modernised allowance structure to attract and retain officers in regional settings.

As someone who grew up in a small country town and has performed multiple policing roles in regional locations, I know how rewarding the

work can be and I encourage this opportunity.

We have also focused on supporting the wellbeing of our people through the PULSE program with additional mental health clinicians embedded at the local level. Trials were carried out at several PACs and the feedback I've received from staff who took part is overwhelmingly positive. It's rewarding to see staff embrace the changes PULSE has brought.

The new Capability Development and Rotation policy was introduced as part of my vision to enable a connected workforce. Aligning with our capability-based promotions system, it provides opportunity to develop skills and knowledge in a variety of roles.

Similarly, the relief pool concept has been trialled across some regions, providing greater flexibility for our officers. Officers, for example, who are on parental leave, leave without pay and extended leave may undertake shifts at times and locations suitable to them to stay connected with the workforce.

At the heart of our organisation is our people and our culture – what we stand for, and what we expect. This year we launched our Culture Strategy built around the key themes of Respect, Pride and Trust, and we'll keep working to embed this across the NSWPF.

Whether on the front line, or behind the scenes, we've achieved a lot this year and everyone should be proud of the work you've accomplished.

While the festive season is for many, a time to relax and recharge, and spend time with friends and family, I urge you to check in with your colleagues who are spending their time on duty or away from loved ones.

I wish you and your loved ones all the best over the Christmas and New Year period and I'm looking forward to what we can all achieve together in 2024. ■



**Yasmin Catley MP**  
**Minister for Police and Counterterrorism**

■ As 2023 draws to a close, the holiday period is a time to reflect on the year's challenges and successes.

This year has been a busy one for our police. From the tragic Hunter Valley bus crash to public place shootings across Sydney – you're there to protect the safety of our communities.

A highlight of my role is meeting police from across NSW. Since my appointment earlier this year, I've been privileged to travel to the state's North, Central West, Hunter, South Coast, Blue Mountains and many parts of metropolitan Sydney to meet many officers from what I firmly believe is the best police force in the country, if not the world.

I am in awe of the work you do, I thank you for it and I am proud to be your Minister. My job is to support you in your job and I look forward to meeting more of you in 2024.

I am constantly impressed by the dedication and professionalism of the officers I encounter. You sacrifice so much, including, too often, your own safety and time with your families, to keep our community safe.

And for all that effort, our police are too

frequently the target of demoralising and unfair criticism. I won't stand for that. If police make mistakes we'll acknowledge it honestly.

But if police are unfairly attacked you will quickly see that you've never had a Minister more determined to defend you, more vigorous in responding to armchair critics or more on your side as serving members of the NSWPF.

On that score, you are ably represented by the PANSW who are your tireless champions. I have been deeply gratified to have had the Association's invaluable public support this year as we navigated a number of public controversies.

I've been heartened to hear stories of officers who not only dedicate themselves to the community through policing, but who give up so much more of their off-duty time through activities like volunteering at the PCYC and other programs.

This is what policing is all about – dedication to community safety and passion for the job. From what I've seen so far, it's unrivalled.

I'm here to tell you the new Minns Government supports the NSW Police Force to the hilt.

To all members of the NSW Police Force – thank you for all that you do.

I wish you a wonderful festive season and a happy and safe New Year. I hope you get to spend some much-deserved down time with your family and friends though I know many of you will be working while the rest of NSW is on holidays. ■



**Paul Toole MP**  
**Shadow Minister for Police**

■ What a year 2023 has been. Many trials and tribulations have faced the NSW Police Force but your commitment to ensuring our safety and well-being has not wavered nor gone unnoticed.

I have done my utmost to stand with you, support you and fight for your needs within the walls of NSW Parliament this year beginning as the Minister for Police and followed by my current role as Shadow Minister for Police because that is what you, as a member for the NSW Police Force, deserve.

Your bravery and selflessness inspire us all. You face risks and challenges daily, yet you continue to protect and serve with unwavering determination. Your professionalism and compassion during difficult situations demonstrate the true essence of this noble profession.

When you hang your belt and boots up after a long day's work, I hope you go home knowing you have made our state a better place to live in today and every day. You are the guardians of our community that our society would not function without.

Thank you for your sacrifices, for the long hours you put in, and for the challenges you face head-on. Thank

you for upholding the law, maintaining peace, and being a beacon of hope in our society. Your dedication makes our community a safer and better place for everyone.

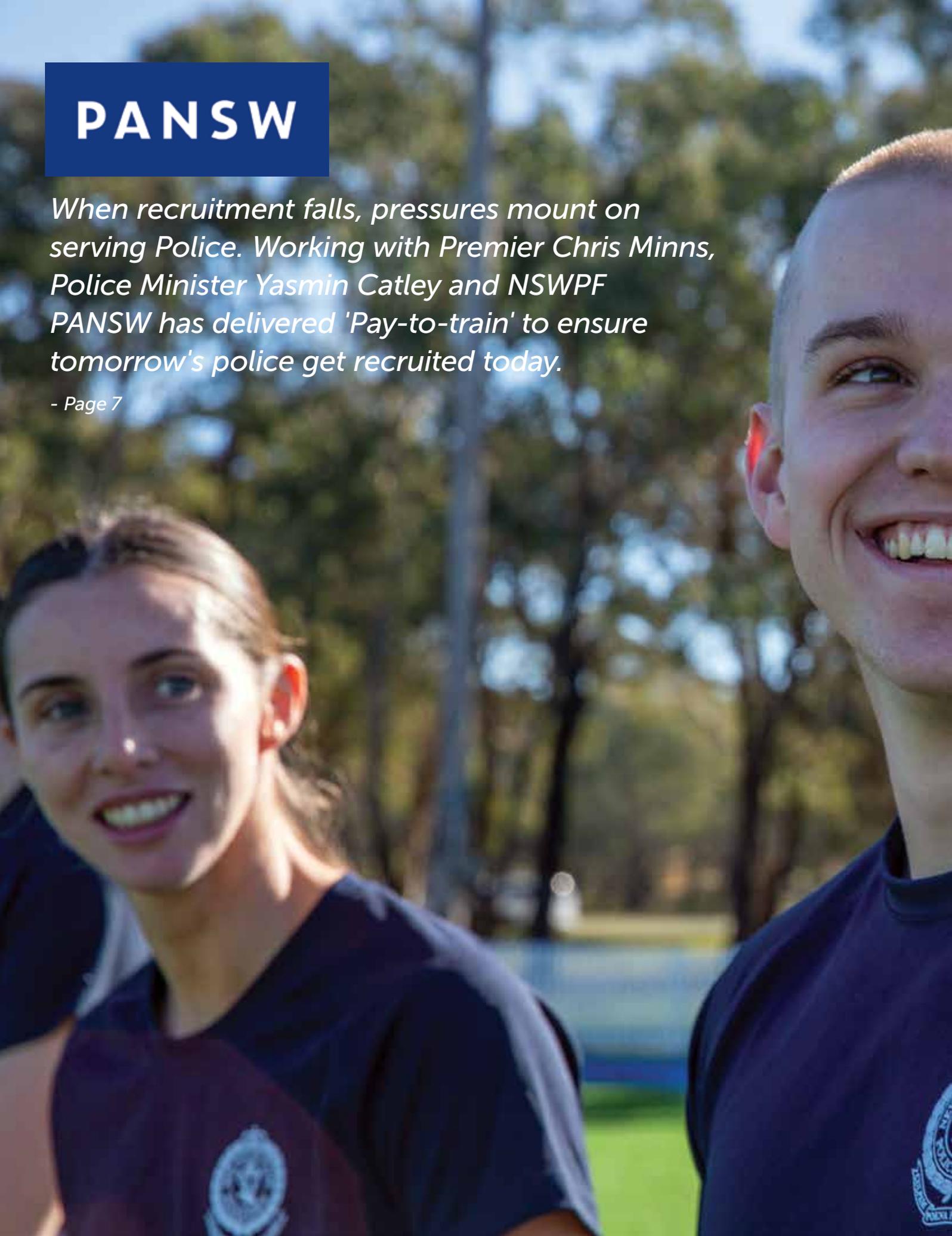
Whilst the festive season for most means a time of rest, relaxation and family gatherings, I am acutely aware this does not mean the same for the police force. While many of us gather with our families, you stand watch, ensuring that we can celebrate in peace. Your courage, resilience, and compassion embody the true spirit of this season. I hope some of the holiday joy is felt by those still working and everyone finds a moment or two of rest and joy amidst your challenging duties.

Wishing you and your colleagues a Merry Christmas filled with peace, love, and gratitude. May the New Year bring you strength, good health, and the continued support of a thankful community. ■

# PANSW

*When recruitment falls, pressures mount on serving Police. Working with Premier Chris Minns, Police Minister Yasmin Catley and NSWPF PANSW has delivered 'Pay-to-train' to ensure tomorrow's police get recruited today.*

*- Page 7*





Elyssa King PANSW Media & Communications Officer

# A police recruit's journey

■ When preparing to enter a career in law enforcement, the significance of life experience is often discussed. While every recruit brings their perspective and outlook, depth and diversity in background add to the complexity of the individual character that emerges from behind the uniform.

As a child, Zac Chaker fled from the civil conflict in his homeland Iraq to Syria. As refugees, the family was forced to escape from the war that erupted three years later. Describing the journey as 'not easy,' Zac arrived in Australia as a 13-year-old.

He hadn't had much interaction with police in his life up until that point, but the call to serve was strong. He was inquisitive and determined to make a difference in his chosen field. For a country that had given those closest to him the opportunity to start over, he knew he wanted to give back.

"Becoming a police officer was always my dream," Zac recalls.

"My parents initially were worried. It is a risky job, and no one in my family was in this line of work. But they have come to terms with it now."

He was accepted into the Bachelor of Policing Program at Western Sydney University. Pursuing secondary education allowed him to study and begin to understand the policing landscape while continuing to develop in other areas of his life. Working in security was an initiation into the rigors of shift work and conflict resolution in real-time. Jobs in retail polished his problem-solving and customer service skills.

"If you think you're ready and can pass the physical testing, you should do it. Don't delay it." He says, "When I left high school, I didn't think I was ready then, so I took a few years to gain life experience and work more."

As one of the top 20 WSU policing students, Zac was accepted into the Policing Leaders Internship and was allocated a placement with the Police Association of NSW.

During his internship, Dr. Kate Linklater (PANSW Research Officer and a Lecturer at Western Sydney University) says that Zac was 'a self-starter who asked insight-



MATES GRADUATING TOGETHER

ful questions.'

Having observed him as a lecturer at WSU and during his internship, she had no doubts he would be suited to the profession – describing him as thoughtful, humble and personable.

"He has the ability to put himself into someone else's shoes and look at situations from a variety of different viewpoints, which will lend him well to the job," She says.

"Zac has had such a unique life experience from everything he has been through."

Over 12 weeks during the August Covid lockdown in 2021, Zac completed a project compiling the existing literature on wellbeing and psychological injuries related to the NSWPF. He compiled a report stating the research recommendations made over a number of years to improve policing wellbeing in NSW. The internship developed his time management, planning and critical thinking skills. The experience also gave him a greater insight into the workings of the PANSW.

"I enjoyed learning about the PANSW, its cause and the great work that the organisation does to ensure that police officers are protected and their wellbeing is looked after."

In preparation for the obstacles to be faced in the years ahead, training at the NSWPF Police Academy in Goulburn presents individual trials for each recruit to overcome as part of their journey.

Beginning his training in April this year, Zac found he was well equipped for the intense study required, having recently completed his degree. The running required didn't come naturally, but he trained hard to get into the Academy and didn't struggle with the physical requirements.

His most formidable challenge was adapting to being separated from his central source of support.

"Living away from home was hard. I've always lived with family and never been away for that long."

What would get him through would be a newfound camaraderie with his classmates. He leaned into the spirit of teamwork that would become a necessary component of his professional life.

"I enjoyed having everyone else's company. We all share the same purpose and goal, so everyone helps each other out with whatever they struggle with."

"It's important for the job... working in teams and consulting with each other in terms of what decision you were going to make."

It is difficult to describe the attestation experience, but he manages to settle on one word: 'proud.' Throwing his hat up in the air with his classmate Kyle, whom he met during his studies at WSU and went through the Academy with, only made the moment more memorable.

"All that hard work paid off, and getting to walk on the parade ground, it's special. Walking out with my mate was magnificent."

I'm catching up with the Probationary Constable only weeks into his new career, and he says starting at Campsie has been an exciting adjustment.

Zac enjoys General Duties, interacting with a diverse range of people at different jobs where every day presents a new chance to learn.

"I'm getting used to the workload."



PROBATIONARY CONSTABLE ZAC CHAKER IN CAMPSIE'S MUSTER ROOM, FLANKED BY CAMPSIE COMMANDER, SUPERINTENDENT SHERIDAN WALDAU (right) AND SERGEANT DAVE FARGG (left)

What you are taught at the Academy... it's so different when you go out on the street and see what plays out in real life. Even on the challenging and very busy days, you finish and say, 'That was hell,' but you reflect on it and think, 'That was interesting and well worth it.'

The probing parts of his mind that attracted him to policing as a young kid

light up when he gets to fix a problem for a community member.

"That relief you see on their face when you do something for them or solve something for them is the most satisfying part. You think, 'I am doing something here, helping someone out, and my presence is making a difference, even if it's small.'

Though he hasn't ruled out pursuing his interests in investigations in the future, he suspects even that might change as everything else has now that he's a police officer.

The only certainty is that nothing is certain. And in my opinion, as an outsider looking in, if anyone can handle that, it's Zac.

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- Bob

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# Protecting police officers exposed to bodily fluid

## Mandatory Disease Testing (MDT) under review

■ Police receive a call from concerned neighbours; they can hear what sounds like a domestic assault occurring in an apartment in their building.

Two officers arrive and ascend to the 10th floor where the apartment is located. The officers can hear a fight inside and are sufficiently concerned to break through the door. By the time they enter, a woman who appears heavily affected by illegal drugs, has locked herself on the balcony.

She threatens officers with a tool. They use de-escalation techniques to calm her down, but she begins to climb the balcony intending to leap off the building. The officers break through

the balcony door and catch the woman as she goes over, saving her life. Despite the officer's grip being the only thing preventing the woman from falling, she begins to cut their arms with her fingernails, teeth, and the tool. She's covered in her own blood, and so now are both police officers.

They pull the woman to safety and take her to an ambulance. The incident has left them with multiple wounds, and covered in the woman's blood.

They're advised by the treating medics they should consider medication and testing, to reduce the risk of contracting communicable diseases such as HIV or hepatitis.

Every year, thousands of emergency service workers are exposed to bodily fluids, often as a result of disgusting and intentional acts by people seeking to cause harm to police just for doing their jobs.

Offenders smear or spit blood all over police officers or correctional officers they have assaulted and caused open wounds. They use syringes as weapons, or hide them on their person during arrests or searches. Patients fling bodily fluid at nurses trying to help them in hospital, or assault paramedics who are trying to save their lives.

We suffer significant harm from these degrading and disgusting acts, the physical violence, psychological trauma, and fear of contracting a disease.

Some of these incidents can give rise to a risk of an emergency service worker contacting a communicable disease.

Many emergency service workers who suffer these incidents are advised by their treating medical practitioner that the nature of the exposure they have suffered carries a sufficient risk of transmission of a disease to require the emergency service worker to:

Complete long treatment plans to reduce the risk of contracting a disease. The side effects of this treatment can make emergency service workers very ill, causing them debilitating symptoms and time off work.

Undergo 3-6 months of their own testing plan to find out if they have contracted a disease. During this time they suffer considerable anxiety and fear while they await their test results.

Alter their behaviour. Fearing they may have contracted a disease, during the testing period the emergency service worker may have to alter their behaviour to ensure they do not transmit any diseases they might have contracted, for example delaying trying to start a family.

For many years, the PANSW advocated for members to have access to a mandatory disease testing scheme. This would require a person who commits these harmful acts to provide a sample to be tested for communicable diseases, and then the test results provided to the treating doctor of the affected police officer.

These test results, while not conclusive, would be valuable for the treating medical practitioners of the police officer, informing their risk assessments and advice provided to the officer.

There were many opponents to the PANSW proposal, on both sides of politics and in the community.

But in 2021, after years of advocacy and submissions to reviews and Parliamentary Inquiries, the PANSW succeeded in negotiating a Bill to implement mandatory disease testing and securing bipartisan support in NSW Parliament.

The NSW Police Force then achieved the implementation of the application and testing procedures, and police finally had the ability to obtain test results of people who exposed them to bodily fluids.

This was an important achievement for many police officers, correctional officers, nurses, paramedics and other

emergency service workers who had suffered terrible harm in these types of incidents.

The Mandatory Disease Testing scheme (MDT) is now under review. The NSW Ombudsman monitors the implementation of MDT, and is currently preparing a report that will be provided to NSW Parliament.

After that report is complete, the NSW Minister for Police will conduct a ministerial review "to determine whether the policy objectives of the Act remain valid and whether the terms of the Act remain appropriate for securing the objectives."

Retaining the MDT scheme to protect members is one of the top priorities of the PANSW, and we will advocate strongly to Government and Parliament to retain the scheme, just as we did to create it in the first place. Members were also invited to provide your feedback so your voice is heard by the NSW Government, which the PANSW received and has used to inform our evidence (de-identified).

Test results obtained through the mandatory disease testing process are valuable information to inform the risk assessments of an officer's treating medical practitioners. But the test results are NOT conclusive. Make sure you consult with your treating medical practitioners and consider their advice regarding the risk of contracting a communicable disease and the recommended treatment and testing procedures you undertake.

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Detective Inspector Paul Quigg

## A win to crow about

■ The Sydney Roosters continue their partnership in supporting regional kids through the Bush to Posts program. This program guides Aboriginal and Indigenous youth in outback and remote communities to achieve their dreams.

In 2020, Sergeant Mark Pitt (formerly from Brewarrina Police Station), Senior Constable Therese Carroll (from Youth Command in the Western Region) and I commenced the Bush to Posts program to provide youth in remote outback, Aboriginal and Indigenous communities a chance to travel to Sydney to watch a live NRL game. The aim of the program was to encourage the kids to attend school through their love of rugby league.

The Sydney Roosters became the sponsors this program after I touched base with a contact at the Club. I had an association with former fullback and club ambassador Anthony Minichiello during my time as a trainer with the Italian Rugby League team. Together, we came up with the idea of forming a partnership between the Central North Police District and the Sydney Roosters.

On 26 August 2023, students from Lightning Ridge Central School and Walgett PCYC were rewarded for their efforts throughout the semester both in

and away from the classroom. They were selected to travel to Allianz Stadium in Sydney as guests of the Sydney Roosters for the NRL game between the Tricolours and the Wests Tigers, which the Sydney Roosters won 32 to 8.

The Bush to Posts program gives these kids who originate from outback, remote Aboriginal and Indigenous communities the opportunity to come down to a game while teaching them the benefits of school attendance and the importance of making the right decisions in life. These kids do it tough, with many of them dealing with challenges in their personal lives.

The program allows staff involved to mentor these students to build brighter futures and guide them to finish high school. The results so far have been overwhelmingly positive. The program's success was evident in the two buses full of excited kids who travelled from the Lightning Ridge and Walgett communities to Sydney.

An issue identified by the Bush to Posts organisers was that many of the kids didn't enjoy going to school and doing their schoolwork. The program was created with this in mind: giving the kids something to strive towards and utilising their love of footy to ensure they meet

the academic milestones required to progress their education.

Due to the lack of schoolteachers in these remote outback and Aboriginal communities, many classes are combined, so it can be exceedingly difficult for these children to receive a well-rounded education.

The benefits of this program have been overwhelming, with kids who were previously unengaged completing their homework and attending their classes. Since the program commenced in 2020, it has been reported that the kids' attitudes, manners and interactions with their schoolteachers have come ahead in leaps and bounds.

The organisers of the Bush to Posts program would like to thank Claire Reed, Community Coordinator with the Sydney Roosters, Amanda Harrison from the Walgett PCYC for providing the buses to transport the kids to Sydney, as well as Dominic Teakle and Marie Sloane from the PCYC for organising the accommodation for the kids.

The Sydney Rooster Rugby League Football Club has kindly offered to sponsor the Bush to Posts program in 2024.



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# Blue RIBBON Ball

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HARRIS LANDGRAF (LEFT) WITH OTHER YOUNG AUSTRALIAN POLICE LEGATEES AT THE BOMANA WAR CEMETERY AFTER COMPLETING THE KOKODA TREK IN 2019

## Plumbing for Policing: a good trade

Tim Sinclair NSW Police Legacy Marketing & Communications Manager

"So you don't miss being a plumber, then?" I ask.

"Three metres deep in the ground, covered in someone's turds? Nah."

Harris Landgraf is a country boy, embodying the very best of the open, friendly, and occasionally earthy outlook that entails. Approaching the end of his first year as a NSW Police Force Probationary Constable, his cheery demeanour has served him well in his chosen profession. But how did he get to this point? Let's go back a little.

Like a lot of kids in his situation, the first that Harris knew about NSW Police Legacy was when they became a sudden presence in his life after tragedy. When Harris was just nine, his stepmother, Senior Constable Renea Landgraf, passed away. At her funeral, he had his first real experience of the love and community of the Police Family.

"There were hundreds of cops... Dad's best mate Bushy took us there in his highway patrol car. The church was just filled with police officers. Hugs all round. It was pretty emotional." To the young boy, it made a huge impression. "That's when I knew the police were going to be a big part of my family."

Harris's father was also a police officer, but Harris didn't initially enter the force,

signing up at age sixteen to do a plumbing apprenticeship instead. At the encouragement of our Community Support Manager Leisa Doherty, he applied for, and received, the Kerlake Scholarship – an award given to fund technical education. He was thrilled at the support. "You know, being a young fella, you get five grand put into your account and all I wanted was that big drill set!"

His next big involvement with Police Legacy came through doing the Kokoda Trek in 2019. It was a transformative experience. He loved sitting around at the end of the day with all of these people who shared a similar story. "You've always got someone in your corner understanding where you're coming from"

Another person on the trek that year was then-Commissioner Mick Fuller, who was hugely encouraging of Harris's desire to become a police officer. On returning to Australia, Harris asked for, and was given "huge amounts" of support from Leisa and then-Chair Detective Superintendent Gary Merryweather, who helped him get into the Police Academy. Leisa also put him in touch with Cain Anderson, another Police Legatee, who was going through in the class above him. The Police Family really swung into action.

Since attesting in December last year, he's had a wide variety of experiences, and he can't imagine now wanting to do anything else. "It's more than just a job; it's a passion," he says. His Dad, now retired, has been incredibly supportive. "I'm living his dream," says Harris. Dad calls every few days to hear the stories, and check in with how Harris is coping with it all. Things are very different to when his Dad was on the job, with police counsellors and all kinds of support services available. And Harris often finds himself checking in with his colleagues, helping them decompress from tough days.

As passionate as he is about his new-found career, he is equally passionate about Police Legacy. With the support of his Inspector, he recently organised a tri-state golf day in the region where he's stationed, bringing together police officers from VIC, SA, and NSW, and raising more than \$9,000 for NSW Police Legacy – a phenomenal feat. And apart from the money, he loves that he's helped to share the story of why this organisation matters. "People say 'I give money to Legacy each pay, and what do they do?...' but when I tell my story, and what I've been through... people say 'look at what they've done!'"



Elyssa King PANSW Media & Communications Officer

# Heart to Heart

Former police officer finds himself again on adventure of a lifetime

■ Matt U'Brien joined the NSWPF in 1995 and graduated in 1996. He was stationed predominantly in Western Sydney and the Blue Mountains. He was a lock-up keeper at Blackheath, spent time in the Blue Mountains Police Rescue Squad and was part-time OSG from 1998 – 2008.

During a career that spanned over 25 years of frontline service, Sergeant U'Brien worked in various areas, including police rescue and bomb disposal, operational support group and general duties. He left the NSWPF in 2013 but remained connected with the emergency services as a retained firefighter with Fire and Rescue NSW. He specialized in rescue operations across both services.

In 2021, he experienced an acute mental health event.

"My world came crumbling down. I'd been struggling with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) for a while, not knowing what was happening." He said.

While navigating a complex workers' compensation process, Matt and his wife Sarah were researching PTSD to equip their family with the information and skills they needed to support each other when they came across the Heart 2 Heart Walk.

What captured Matt's attention immediately was that it was starting in Central Australia. The ultra-long distance walk stretches from Lamberts Centre of Australia in the Northern Territory (the Heart of the Country) to Canberra (the Heart of the Nation). The synchronicity in the healing power of being in the wilderness wasn't lost on his family.

"When he was very unwell and struggling, he would often say, 'If you can get me to the desert, I can get well.'" Sarah says.

The journey itself and the purpose of it spoke exactly to where the former NSW police officer was in life. The walk's primary purpose is to raise awareness about first responder mental health and wellbeing, including suicide, PTSD and premature mortality. The organisers are seeking an update and commitment from the Federal Government to implement all of the 14 recommendations from the 2019 Senate Inquiry: 'The people behind 000:

mental health of our first responders', specifically into First Responder suicide, PTSD and premature mortality.

While you might expect that preparing physically for the trek would be the biggest challenge, the psychological implications weighed equally as heavily. Matt worked closely with his psychologist to prepare for being away from treatment, his regular environment, and his biggest supporters - his family - for an extended period.



MATT (LEFT) ENDING A LONG DAY UNDER A BIG SKY

"It was a lot about mindset and changing my way of managing myself to do it on my own and in isolation." He said.

The logistics of packing up to live remotely for three months was enormous. The preparations also involved planning to hit the road with a creative project that had been a significant part of Matt's journey towards healing.

During the period when he was very unwell, Sarah and his daughters Lillian and Georgina purchased an old 1960s caravan. Affectionately known as 'Dolly', the van became a creative outlet for Matt, who had found validation and connection while listening to podcasts.

"Listening to other people's stories of their struggles and how they had gotten through it in podcasts was beneficial to me before the walk. I always had it in my head that if there was a way of filling the gap of not having a lot of first responder

stories in the mix of podcasts, which are predominantly military stories, I wanted to fix that. That's how I came to host a podcast."

The podcast episodes were recorded in the lead-up to, during and after the walk in 'Dolly', which was converted into a mobile recording studio.

In July 2023, the walkers set off from Lamberts Centre of Australia, located near the small Aboriginal settlement of Finke near the Northern Territory-South Australia border. The first 800 km involves walking along rough dirt roads, passing only a few small settlements and roadhouses. From Finke, in the direction of travel, the closest centre with medical and resupply facilities is approximately 600 km to Coober Pedy.

The walkers, consisting of both current and former members of various Australian Police and Emergency Services groups, covered an incredible 2,400 km during their journey. Along the way, Matt was fortunate to be joined by former NSW police officers Paul Batista APM and Stephen Hopkin, making up three of only four walkers to complete the entire journey. While covering roughly 40kms a day before camping for the evening, the trio developed a camaraderie that they hadn't experienced since their time in uniform.

"We all talked about that thing that you miss when you leave the police and other emergency services...you have that tight-knit and familiar group around you. When you leave, that gets torn away. I don't know anyone who has transitioned out after any length of service that that loss hasn't hit. There is a big chunk of you that gets left behind." Matt says.

One moment that stood out during their adventure was taking a picture of a picturesque set of ruins and sharing it with the group. To Matt, the geographic landmark perfectly reflected the oncelost travelers who determinedly passed it on their way to their new destination.

"I said, 'This reminds me of us. We all look old, a bit broken but still bloody beautiful,' and everyone loved it." He says. (CONTINUED OVER PAGE)



(FROM PREVIOUS PAGE)

For different legs of the journey, the walkers were joined by other first responders from fire and rescue, police, ambulance and other agencies.

Their families' joining was the ultimate reflection of how far they have come collectively. For many kids, it was the first time they met another child outside their family with a parent who worked in emergency services.

On one of the last days, walking out of the Brindabella Range into Canberra, a group of kids approached the adults. They said they wanted their own walk, just for them, walking together for all the kids who are never seen and impacted by their frontline worker parents' workplace injuries. The response from the parents was as emotional as it was supportive.

"It was extraordinarily healing for them because they had felt misunderstood, alone and isolated in their experiences, and then they were suddenly with other young people," Sarah says. "The girls said they didn't need to talk about it; just be-

ing together and knowing was enough."

The walkers arrived in Canberra on Thursday, 28 September, the day before National Police Remembrance Day. The last three kilometres from the National Emergency Services Memorial along the footpath around Lake Burley Griffin to Parliament House saw other first responders and their families from all around Australia join the weary travellers for their final steps.

Matt was shocked to meet many people who had listened to his podcast. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with many saying that listening to the stories shared helped them to understand their own experiences and to reach out for assistance while they were struggling.

At Government House on the last day, all the walkers, including the kids, received bravery coins from the Governor-General. Sarah's youngest, Georgina, came to her mum and said that she couldn't believe she was being recognized for her bravery and now had a

medal, just like her Dad did.

For the U'Briens, the significance of completing the walk was a symbolic reminder of the inherent strength and self-worth of all first responders living with PTSD or struggling with their mental health.

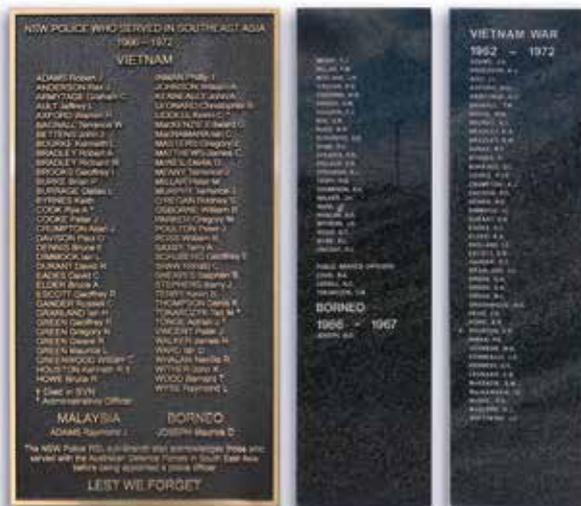
"Just because you have a psychological workplace injury does not take away your capacity, tenacity or phenomenal abilities to give to the broader community. You are still an incredibly powerful, worthwhile and amazing human." Sarah says.

Now that the walk has been completed, the podcast will be rebranded and continue focusing on sharing the stories of first responders. In a police-style debrief, Matt unpacks the guest's careers, uncovering what worked, what didn't and what advice they would give their younger selves if they had their time again.

You can listen to Matt's podcast at <https://linktr.ee/h2hwalk> or by searching Heart 2 Heart Podcast on Spotify, Apple Podcasts or Google Podcasts.

Mick Timms PANSW Police News Writer

# PANSW Salutes our Vietnam Veterans



■ Friday 18 August was Vietnam Veterans Day. In 2023, the day had added significance as 50 years have now passed since the end of Australia’s involvement in the Vietnam War.

For police who served during that period, the Vietnam War invokes memories of demonstrations and public order incidents such as the visit of US President Lyndon Johnson in 1966. This led to adverse reporting of police actions in the media.

By 1971, relations with the media had deteriorated to such an extent that, according to Unity and Strength PANSW 1920-2020, the PANSW Executive debated whether police should remove their identification badges during anti-Vietnam War protests and Springbok Rugby Union matches.

Police also had to deal with issues arising from “an influx of American (and Australian) soldiers on rest and recreation leave...between 1967 and 1971, more than 280,000 servicemen visited Sydney” (True Blue – 150 Years of the NSW Police Force). Most 20-year-old Australian men had to register for national service between 1965 and 1972. This included members of the New South Wales Police Force and other Australian police forces.

The names of over 60 NSW Police officers who served in Southeast Asia and other theatres are listed on a plaque located in the Sydney Police Centre, including the name of Kenneth P Houston, who died in South Vietnam.

Another memorial can be found at the NSW Police Chapel, Police Academy in Goulburn. Neither plaque is readily accessible to associate members as they are located in secure areas of police premises.

PANSW President Kevin Morton paid tribute to police who served in the Vietnam War. “In World War II, policing was considered an essential industry and was exempt from conscription,” Mr Morton said. “But for Vietnam, National Service involved a random ballot, and serving police officers were called up.

Mr Morton described how junior police officers like then Constable Allan Crumpton, had not long finished their probationary period when they were conscripted into the Army. “These police were deployed to a war zone overseas, and, on their return to Australia, had to resume their policing careers,” Mr Morton said. “South Vietnam was a world away from Sydney.

“It is little wonder why there is such a bond among these, now retired, police and why they turn out every year as part of the NSW Police RSL Sub-Branch contingent in the ANZAC Day March. The requirement to register for national service also ceased 50 years ago.

Mr Morton also acknowledged Australian Defence Force (ADF) members who went on to join NSWPF and other police forces, such as Richard Norden DCM. Constable Richard Norden joined the ACT Police in February 1970. Prior

to his policing career, Private Norden was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal as a result of his actions in Vietnam. Sadly, Constable Norden was killed in an on-duty police motorcycle crash in Canberra in 1972 (source: npm.org.au). Official efforts are currently being made to elevate Private Norden’s award to the Victoria Cross for Australia.

The NSW Police RSL sub-branch was formed over 80 years ago to represent NSW Police who saw active service in the Great War.

In previous editions, *PANSW Police News* has spoken to Mr Bruce Howe, Secretary-Treasurer of the NSW Police RSL sub-Branch for insights into national service and sub-branch activities. Mr Howe was the Legal Secretary of PANSW in the 1970’s.

Originally founded in 1938 the NSW Police RSL sub-Branch was set up to represent NSWPF members who had seen active military service in the Great War (1914-1918).

Membership of the sub-Branch is open to a range of all current and former NSWPF members and/or Police Forces of other Nations with ADF or peace keeping service. The sub-Branch can be emailed at NSW-PoliceSB@rslnsw.org.au

PICTURES / LEFT: ANZAC DAY 2021 LUNCH, POLICE NATIONAL SERVICEMEN WHO SERVED AS MILITARY POLICE IN VUNG TAU PROVINCE DURING THE VIETNAM WAR.

RIGHT: NSW POLICE WHO SERVED IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, SYDNEY POLICE CENTRE, WALL OF REMEMBRANCE, NSW POLICE ACADEMY, GOULBURN.

Mick Timms PANSW Police News Writer

# Something to be proud of: Allan Crumpton's life of service

Allan Crumpton is the Chair of the PANSW Northern Associates Branch. He was one of the NSW Police Officers conscripted during the Vietnam War. Sixty 60 years ago, Allan Crumpton from Coffs Harbour joined NSWPF as a Cadet. In March 1965, he attested as a Probationary Constable and was stationed at No. 4 Division (Phillip Street). Like many other police, Allan was deployed to anti-Vietnam War protests. Twelve months later and confirmed to the rank of Constable, he was to be transferred to Bourke. Prior to the move, Allan headed home for what he thought would be some well-earned annual leave.

"But the day after I arrived, I received a letter from the Australian Government.

"The Country Superintendent might have wanted me to go to Bourke, but Malcolm Fraser had other ideas.

Before he became Prime Minister of Australia, Mr Malcolm Fraser MP was Minister for the Army. For the next two years, Constable Allan Crumpton became Private Allan Crumpton.

On 28 September 1966, just weeks after the Battle of Long Tan was fought, Allan reported to an Army facility in Marrickville. His training took him to Kapooka, Puckapunyal, and Enogorah.

"I asked about going into the Military Police, but I was told they were full," Allan said. As a young police officer, Allan had typing skills and trained as a clerk.

At this time, another soldier who was to be sent to Vietnam received a compas-

sionate transfer to Sydney. A replacement was needed.

"I was called into the office and told to get ready to go to Vietnam," Allan said. After three weeks jungle training at Wacol, newly promoted Corporal Crumpton was off to Vietnam.

Allan was assigned to the Legal Officer in Saigon to work as a Courts reporter. He assisted in legal proceedings or Courts Martials involving Australian military personnel.

Allan spoke about Australian Government policy during the war where compensation would be paid for damage or injury caused to civilians outside of military engagements.

"Damages caused from matters such as motor vehicle collisions, theft, and



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PHOTO LEFT PAGE: SUPERINTENDENT ALLAN CRUMPTON BELOW: ALLAN AND MARGARET CRUMPTON AT SINGLETON ARMY MUSEUM LEFT (THIS PAGE): ALLAN AND OTHER HUNTER RETIRED POLICE VISITING A LOCAL WINERY



assaults attracted compensation," Allan said. "I was the Loss Assessor for the Australian Government, travelling with a Vietnamese interpreter to places including Nui Dat and Vung Tau - anywhere soldiers had misbehaved.

Also, during his tour of duty, Allan was assigned to assist a Barrister flown in to represent a Private accused of murder.

Allan spent 12 months in Vietnam. On his return to Australia, he took six weeks leave and married Margaret, the girl he left behind. They are still happily married 55 years later.

Allan saw out his final three months of national service at the personnel depot and went to see the Country Superintendent about his policing future. Taree, a reasonable distance from his family and wife Margaret's, was selected from the list of vacancies.

"I came back after two years away, received a new uniform, and was sent back onto the streets which was challenging," Allan said.

"Also, when I was away, I couldn't sit for my Constable First Class exam. I

had a short time to qualify when I came back, or my promotion would have been delayed.

For the next 33 years, Allan's policing career took him to Taree, where the couple's two children were born, and locations throughout the state. He gave his time to local communities coaching rugby league, cricket, and tennis. Allan was a member of community service clubs and was the Taree PANSW Branch Secretary (Administrator).

Promoted several times along the way, Allan finished his career in 2001 as the Shoalhaven Local Area Commander at the rank of Superintendent.

*PANSW Police News* asked Allan if his military service changed the way he went about policing, particularly has he gained higher rank.

"Yes - the army and my service in Vietnam gave me insight into aspects of life outside of policing," Allan said.

What would he say to the next Academy class if he was invited to speak to them?

"I would say congratulations on the

first part of your learning curve in the Police Force. A valued member of the NSW Police Force always maintains the highest ethical standards, they have respect, firstly for themselves and then their colleagues and the public their morals are of a high standard, and they use common sense in applying the law.

Committed to the support of police and military veterans and their families, Allan is involved with PANSW Northern Region Associates, the Retired and Former Police Association's Hunter branch, and a number of Hunter district RSL branches.

Allan spoke of a conversation he had in August following a chance meeting in Scone, one of the places he had worked in. "I was there at the races with the RSL when a lady came up to speak with me," Allan said. "It turns out she was one of the kids I coached at tennis in Coolah. She now lives in nearby Cassilis and she is now coaching kids at tennis.

"She still tells people that she was taught to play tennis by Allan Crumpton. "That's something to be proud of."

# Verbatim Parliament

Should NSW Police be tasked as mental health workers?



PANSW PRESIDENT KEVIN MORTON AND TONY BEAR SPEAKING AT NSW PARLIAMENT'S PUBLIC HEARING ON - DELIVERY OF OUTPATIENT AND COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH CARE IN NSW, 30/10/23

**The Hon. Emily Jane SUVAAL, Member of the Legislative Council:** What are the alternatives, in an ideal world?

**Kevin Morton:** It starts at the very beginning with the patient able to get sufficient care, being able to call up and get that opportunity to speak to their treating practitioner. We have decided as a collective to put these people back into society because quite often that is what they need to be to get that care. Sometimes they will require medication and be put under a community treatment order. That requires them to attend the local pharmacy and pick up their medication for the week. Now should that person not attend, the chemist makes a call to the doctor and says "Kevin Morton hasn't turned up to pick up his meds." The doctor calls the police. That is not a police matter. But we are getting involved in that lower level of interaction with mental health patients. That's what we are saying: that is not our job.

**Emily Suvaal:** So police will be called if

someone has breached a CTO?

**Kevin Morton:** Police will be called.

**Emily Suvaal:** Now who should be called, from your perspective?

**Kevin Morton:** Some other resource, other than a police officer.

**Tony Bear:** It's a health matter. Someone's not taking their pills, it's a health matter. Our members are burning out, our members are upset, traumatized, by putting people into police cars ... we don't want it, nor do we want the fall out when things ultimately go pear shaped. Mental health is an epidemic problem ... its gotta be dealt with. You are asking the wrong people to deal with, because it's simply easy to pass it down to police who are there 24/7, who are there to pick up kids that need to be picked out of places for the Department of Community Services, for transporting of prisoners when there's no corrective services, and for scheduling or going to mental health incidents.

Quite frankly our members are stretched.

Our Members are stressed. And they need other agencies to be funded to do what is not police's job.

-

**The Hon. (Wes) Wesley Joseph FANG, Member of the Legislative Council:** What has the government said to you about how they're viewing the concerns that your raising?

**Kevin Morton:** We made quite an issue of this several weeks ago. I applaud the premier: it was the first time that I ever saw anyone act so swiftly. I believe this Government is listening to our concerns.

**Tony Bear:** Listening is one thing, what we do, is see what the outcomes are. Let's give them the time to see how those actions take place.

TO WATCH PANSW'S FULL TESTIMONY SCAN THE QR CODE AND TO GO TO PARLIAMENT'S YOUTUBE POSTING OF THE SESSION.





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