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Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs,  
Defence & Trade

Inquiry into the administration, management and  
objectives of Australia's overseas development  
program in Afghanistan in the context of the  
'Transition Decade'

AFP Submission

September 2012

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The Australian Federal Police (AFP) welcomes the opportunity to make a submission to the Committee's inquiry into the management of Australia's overseas development programs in Afghanistan.

This submission gives context to the AFP's deployment of personnel to Afghanistan, outlines the roles and challenges confronting the mission into the future, and explains how the AFP contributes to a whole-of-government approach.

### Background on the AFP

The role of the AFP is to enforce Commonwealth criminal law, to contribute to combating organised crime and to protect Commonwealth and national interests from criminal activity in Australia and overseas. The AFP is also Australia's international law enforcement and policing representative and the Australian Government's chief source of advice on policing issues. The functions of the AFP are:

- the provision of police services in relation to the laws of the Commonwealth, the property of the Commonwealth (including Commonwealth places) and property of authorities of the Commonwealth;
- the safeguarding of Commonwealth interests and anything else that is incidental or conducive to the provision of these services;
- the provision of police services in relation to the Australian Capital Territory and Australia's external territories;
- protective and custodial functions as directed by the Minister;
- the provision of police services and police support services to assist or cooperate with an Australian or foreign law enforcement agency, intelligence or security agency or government regulatory agency; and
- the provision of police services and police support services to establish, develop and monitor peace, stability and security in foreign countries.

In collaboration with its domestic and regional law enforcement partners, the AFP is currently focused on:

- countering the threat of terrorism to Australians and Australian interests, both nationally and internationally;
- providing assistance to the Pacific region and to other areas of national interest such as Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste and Afghanistan to strengthen order and their rule of law;
- preventing and investigating organised and serious criminal activity affecting Australians and Australian interests; and
- countering the threat posed by high-tech crime and cybercrime.

As at 30 June 2012 the AFP had in excess of 6500 staff serving domestically and internationally.

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### AFP presence outside of Australia

The AFP's International Network, as at end August 2012, had 93 staff at 29 posts in 30 countries, undertaking law enforcement liaison and coordination duties on behalf of the Australian Government. These members are also the first point of contact for overseas law enforcement inquiries.

In 2004 the Australian Government established the AFP International Deployment Group (IDG) in response to the demands of managing programs and short-term missions offshore, such as Timor Leste, Solomon Islands and PNG. The breadth of law enforcement activity and the nature of deployments have since evolved to meet the Government's objectives, with a gradual change in emphasis more on long-term capacity building than on crisis response. It was in this context that the AFP sent its first officers to Afghanistan in 2007 and began a program of in-country mentoring and training assistance that continues to the present.

The IDG is currently funded for approximately 730 members, comprising approximately 480 Mission Component members able to be deployed overseas, 116 Australia based members providing administrative and Executive support and 134 Specialist Response Group members who provide operational specialist response capabilities both domestically and internationally.

### The AFP's role in delivering aid

The AFP works closely with agencies such as the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), the Australian Defence Force (ADF) and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) to ensure a coordinated delivery of aid programs in the Pacific, Afghanistan and Timor Leste. The AFP, through the IDG, has liaison officers embedded at the ADF's Joint Operations Command and with AusAID to ensure appropriate representation and input to whole of government aid programs. The AFP's skills in law and order capacity building are well regarded and contribute to the overall goals of Australia's aid policy.

The AFP is the second largest provider of Official Development Assistance (ODA) on behalf of the Australian Government, with \$192.1m in funding for 2012-13. The majority of this funding provides for capacity building programs in Timor Leste, Solomon Islands, Indonesia, Malaysia, Tonga, Vanuatu, Samoa, Nauru, Papua New Guinea and Afghanistan.

In delivering aid and assistance in Afghanistan, the AFP supports the achievement of Australian Aid Program goals and objectives, through the enhancement of community safety, stability and security. This is in alignment with the Government's response to the Independent Review – the Comprehensive Aid Policy Framework.

AFP operations in Afghanistan also align with the criteria regarding the allocation of aid as specified in the Australian Government's response to the Independent Review of Aid Effectiveness, which mandated poverty reduction, effective aid, Australia's capacity to make a difference and Australia's national interest, as being key considerations in the provision of Australian aid.

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### Policing in Afghanistan

The Afghan National Police (ANP) is responsible for policing services throughout Afghanistan. The ANP is in a nascent state and is constituted by a number of subset agencies, most of who are structured to primarily conduct counter insurgency operations.

The ANP was formed after 2001 and encompasses several agencies, each with a specific roll – often overlapping with other agencies.

The ANP is under the control and direction of the Ministry of Interior (MOI). The MOI, and the Minister, have a far more direct role in the administration and operations of the ANP than is the experience in western nations such as Australia.

The MOI is in the process of reorganising and reforming the ANP to improve police training, education and overall effectiveness. The four main pillars of the ANP currently are:

- Afghan Uniform Police (AUP)  
[the main body of civilian police undertaking uniformed policing roles, along with traffic policing and fire/rescue services in cities]
- Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP)  
[Lead in police counter-insurgency operations]
- Afghan Border Police (ABP)  
[Border patrolling and policing responsibilities within designated border regions and airport locations]
- Afghan Anti-Crime Police (AACP)  
[includes a number of specialist investigative units and forensics]

In addition to the above, the following agencies/groups are expected to be formally acknowledged as additional pillars of the ANP:

- Enabling Forces  
[incl. logistics; medical; administrative & personnel; training; recruitment]
- Afghan Public Protection Force (APPF)
- Judiciary Police (JSU)
- Afghan Local Police (ALP)  
[ALP personnel stay in their areas supported by ANP, Afghan National Army and the International Security Assistance Force forces. The ALP do not have a police mandate to investigate crime or arrest suspects.]

In addition, the Afghan Customs Police are a developing body that primarily undertake Customs functions, albeit with law enforcement powers.

### The AFP's role in Afghanistan (2007 – 2012)

The AFP works closely with AusAID, the ADF and DFAT in developing and implementing a whole-of-government approach to Australia's commitment to Afghanistan. This is in keeping with the requirements of strategic documents such as the *Afghan National Development Strategy* (ANDS).

The AFP seeks experienced employees who bring with them extensive skills in policing, investigations, training, mentoring and/or support, which are used in mission on a daily basis. Most members have either previously undertaken other international peacekeeping or stability operations, or have extensive domestic policing experience.

In August 2007 a bilateral agreement was signed by the governments of Australia and Afghanistan. The AFP initially deployed four members to Afghanistan in October 2007. Two members conducted training duties with the Counter Narcotic Police of Afghanistan

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(CNPA) in Jalalabad and two members were advisers attached to the Combined Security Transition Command – Afghanistan in Kabul.

In October 2008, the AFP deployed an additional eight members under *Operation Contego*. AFP members deployed to Kabul, Kandahar and Tarin Kowt and were engaged at a strategic intelligence level in a counter narcotics capacity. The mission objective was to support the international stabilisation operations in Afghanistan through the deployment of policing expertise to Australian whole-of-government activities in Southern Afghanistan and other international efforts in Kabul, as well as supporting the Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan (CSTC-A) with their efforts to rebuild the Afghan National Police, based in Kabul.

By November 2009, the AFP deployed a total of 22 members to Afghanistan. In addition to the counter-narcotics focus of *Operation Contego*, an additional ten AFP members deployed to Afghanistan as training advisors to the Provincial Training Centre (PTC) at Tarin Kowt in Uruzgan Province. This operation was known as *Operation Synergy*.

In December 2009, in accordance with Government direction, the AFP reviewed and consolidated its Afghanistan commitment. In July 2010 *Operations Synergy* and *Contego* were amalgamated into *Operation Illuminate*, a deployment of 28 members which continues to this day. The primary objective of *Operation Illuminate* is to train, develop and mentor Afghan National Police (ANP), in conjunction with Afghan and coalition efforts.

From 2010 to mid-2012, 21 members of *Operation Illuminate* personnel were based at the Provincial level. These personnel undertook train-the-trainer and mentor duties at the PTC, which was located inside the Multi-National Base Tarin Kowt (MNBTK) in Uruzgan province. This was in support of a broader, nation-wide program administered by the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation's (NATO) Training Mission Afghanistan (NTM-A). NTM-A is tasked with coordinating institutional training and support for the ANP throughout Afghanistan.

AFP experience is that ANP instructors at the PTC were able to quickly develop training skills. The Tarin Kowt PTC was one of the first centres where Afghans were able to fully assume responsibility for training recruits. As a consequence, AFP members focussed on mentoring the ANP instructors, as well as a range of liaison duties within MNBTK.

Since late 2011, the AFP has also provided assistance to the ADF by providing evidence collection training to members of the ANP's Uruzgan Provincial Response Company (PRC). The ADF partners the PRC and all AFP training is done within the confines of the MNBTK. The training has increased the capacity of the PRC to conduct its operational duties.

During this period AFP members have continued to assist ANP national capacity development through occupying various Kabul-based policy and planning positions within NTM-A, which in turn works closely with the MOI to increase the capacity and capabilities of the ANP.

As approved in the May 2012 Budget, the AFP is in the process of progressively transitioning capacity development efforts away from provincial level training in Uruzgan, to national training and the higher level strategic development of the ANP at the national level in Kabul. Fifteen members are deployed in Kabul, ten are based at the MNBTK and three at Kandahar Airfield.

This approach has been assessed as being the best way for the AFP to provide long-term capacity development that will have fundamental impact on ANP operations and organisational development through the strategic influencing of more senior ANP officers.

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The AFP is employing a 'four pillars' strategy that contributes towards ANP and NTM-A objectives, recognising the operational and security challenges confronting all parties. The four pillars are:

- facilitating a coordinated approach
- influencing and shaping the policing environment
- building and developing the ANP in Afghanistan
- contributing to the targeting of serious criminality through capacity development efforts.

To assist in achieving this, AFP personnel continue to occupy NTM-A positions, working alongside police and military personnel from various coalition nations, as well as with ANP personnel.

The AFP has recently deployed two personnel to the International Police Coordination Board (IPCB), one of whom (an SES level Commander) now occupies the position of Head of ANP Development, the most senior police position with the IPCB. The IPCB's mandate is to be the coordination point for all institutional and police reform within the wider context of rule of law within Afghanistan. The Board is chaired by the Afghan Minister of the Interior, and it directs, prioritises and coordinates international effort in institutional and police reform, including those efforts which strengthen the justice sector.

Following the 25<sup>th</sup> NATO Summit held in Chicago in May 2012, the Chicago Summit Declaration on Afghanistan was promulgated. The Declaration is a formal summary of the outcomes from the Conference and indicates the IPCB will play a greater role in developing the ANP plan to provide a civilian law enforcement service responsible for domestic security. It is anticipated, the IPCB will also coordinate the police training function across Afghanistan once NTM-A draws down post-transition.

The AFP's participation with the IPCB is designed to support, influence and contribute to a more effective coordination of police aid projects and initiatives throughout Afghanistan and reflects the AFP's expertise and high standing in this area. This in turn will obviously benefit the capacity and development of the ANP.

In addition to the above, AFP trainers based in Kabul are currently assisting the European Union Police Mission in Afghanistan (EUPol), at the latter's Kabul Police Training College. The EUPol College focuses on providing management and leadership training to mid and senior level ANP staff.

These efforts enable the AFP to directly support the first three elements of the priorities set by the Afghan Government in its Afghanistan National Police Strategy, being:

- training and education
- develop police leadership
- eliminate corruption.

The success of the AFP's capacity building efforts is reflected by the fact that training of ANP members at the PTC is now conducted by ANP officers with only minimal mentoring by AFP advisors.

As at 2 August 2012 the AFP has:

- trained 2194 ANP personnel in the Afghan Uniform Patrolman's (AUP) Course at the MNBTK Training Centre, Uruzgan

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- trained 212 ANP personnel in investigations courses at the Afghan Major Crimes Taskforce in Kabul
  - trained 65 ANP personnel trained in surveillance courses at the Afghan Major Crimes Taskforce in Kabul
  - trained 39 ANP senior officers have completed leadership programs with AFP instruction at the Police Staff College in Kabul
  - facilitated Non-Commissioned Officers training for 188 ANP members at the MNBTK Training Centre
  - in conjunction with the European Union Police Mission, trained ANP members in the train-the-trainer program who are now trainers at the MNBTK Provincial Training Centre
  - trained 38 Provincial Response Company (PRC) members in evidence collection training in Tarin Kowt. There will also be an ongoing program of mentoring and training for the 98 member strong PRC
  - sponsored a project to build a number of semi-permanent office and utility rooms located within the MNBTK Training Centre for the purpose of improved training delivery.

### Security and safety

The AFP takes the safety of its officers deployed to Afghanistan very seriously. In December 2011, the AFP conducted a security assessment into its role in Afghanistan. This assessment supports the findings of previous assessments, that the risk to AFP operations in Afghanistan remains very high. AFP personnel are operating in an active war zone where the ANP is a priority target of the insurgency. To date, AFP personnel have remained safe with no major security incidents occurring.

All AFP members who deploy to Afghanistan have explicitly volunteered for the mission and have been selected through a highly competitive application and training process. The AFP seeks experienced employees who bring with them extensive skills in policing, investigations, training, mentoring and/or support, which are used in mission on a daily basis. Most members have either previously undertaken other international peacekeeping or stability operations, or have extensive domestic policing experience.

Protective security measures in place include:

- private contract arrangements for security, protected accommodation, and other life support requirements in Kabul
- force protection and logistic support through ADF and coalition partners outside of Kabul, namely in Kandahar and Tarin Kowt. So called 'outside the wire' movement for AFP personnel is strictly limited and carefully managed
- use of ballistic protective equipment and the requirement to carry firearms;
- Adherence to military policies and practices in regards to safety, whilst ever AFP members are housed/located at military bases.

AFP officers based at Tarin Kowt are confined to the base as the AFP does not consider the security environment in Uruzgan to be permissive enough for civilian police mentoring given the fact that the ANP is a primary target of the insurgency. The AFP also

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considers its focus on training to be the most effective way of contributing to police development in Uruzgan.

The AFP is performing current roles in accordance with Australian Government Policy, focused on police reform and development within the confines of the Multinational Base Tarin Kowt Training Centre.

Safety measures are regularly reviewed and adapted to reflect contemporary security developments. Whilst the AFP and its members strongly embrace a 'safety first' approach to duties in Afghanistan, it is readily acknowledged that a residual risk remains.

The risk for any aid worker or Coalition member is dramatically heightened when they undertake 'outside the wire' travel – that is, when staff leave a military base and interact with Afghans or others in the village or city environment. For this reason, the AFP avoids 'outside the wire' travel in Uruzgan.

An increase in the number of 'Insider Threat' attacks is at the forefront of most security briefings in mission. Insider attacks this year have not occurred within major bases such as MNBTK or Kandahar Airfield where AFP members are located. As a result of the emerging 'Insider Threat', generic and specific mitigation strategies are employed by AFP in-mission.

#### Issues challenging ANP development

It is estimated that up to 70% of ANP base level recruits are illiterate. Literacy rates among commissioned officers is higher but not all commissioned officers are literate. This particularly impacts the development of the ANP in that its officers have generally been unable to read and understand the laws they are required to police with professionalism and discretion. Considerable effort is being expended on incorporating rudimentary literacy training into all recruit training courses, however the rapid increase in ANP numbers in previous years impacted on the quality of base recruitment.

Historic levels of corruption and malpractice within the ANP are also a hindrance for the development of the force into a professional organisation. Corrupt practices (or practices culturally discordant with a modern western policing perspective) have tarnished the ANP's image in the broader Afghan community. As with the issue of literacy, authorities are focusing on eliminating corrupt practices as well as tackling associated issues that foster corruption, such as ensuring that ANP officers are paid regularly.

#### The future

Success in regards to assisting the development of the ANP as a professional civilian police force is a long-term proposition. As outlined above, a variety of factors have combined to create a situation where it is unlikely that the development goals for the ANP will be achieved in under a decade.

Despite this, achievements over the next two years (leading into full transition for authority of security in Afghanistan) are likely to be extremely important even though they may appear limited in scope. The aim of the AFP is to ensure that it effectively contributes, alongside partner agencies, in providing assistance that consolidates a strong foundation which protects existing gains and ensure the continued professional growth of the ANP.

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Within the foreseeable future it is expected that the ANP will be able to achieve minimum standards of basic and specialist training, acknowledging that the organisation will still be predominantly undertaking paramilitary operations. Middle and senior leadership will continue to professionalise, as will various specialist policing and investigative units.

#### *The role of the AFP to 2014 and beyond*

In line with Australian Government direction, the AFP will continually review the degree and capabilities of its commitment to Afghanistan. It is readily acknowledged that a standing contingent of 28, operating in the current security environment, is limited in its ability to provide widespread support and change. The AFP's strength is ensuring roles the AFP hold are relevant to influencing the direction of the development of the ANP, providing assistance in specialist areas such as strategic planning, training, mentoring and policy development, in cooperation with Afghan and other Coalition partners.

At this stage, a continuation of an AFP presence beyond 2014 in aid terms, will likely focus on consolidating gains made thus far – in a fashion consistent with government Official Development Assistance (ODA) funding. Efforts will be focussed on providing training and (where possible) mentoring, to executive and senior level personnel, providing liaison, policy and strategic planning support, as well as assisting in strategic efforts to maximise the evolution of the ANP.

The degree and nature of continued AFP deployments will be guided by ongoing security assessments and consideration of factors such as the ability of the ADF or others to provide vital logistics and force protection support.

#### *Conclusion*

This submission outlines the AFP's role in Afghanistan and how it fits within the broader aid program, and the type of experience and role that the AFP brings in delivering aid.

The AFP is an effective partner in Australia's aid effort, noting the challenges that face the ANP and broader donor operations in a country beset by a vicious insurgent campaign. The AFP would not be able to successfully undertake its business without the assistance and partnership of agencies such as AusAID, ADF, DFAT, NTM-A, EUPol, IPCB and of course, the ANP.

In any endeavour as complex as the international aid program in Afghanistan, there will be issues and challenges arising in regards to coordination and cooperation of international agencies, governments and initiatives. The AFP is pleased with the discussion and efforts that are underway to maximise effectiveness in this area (as highlighted earlier with the role of the IPCB in coordinating police aid). The AFP remains fully involved with its Australian partners to ensure that a whole-of-government approach is maintained.

Due to the security situation in Afghanistan, the presence and operations of personnel such as the AFP and other agencies (both government and non-government) occur with a significant risk which can at best be mitigated, but not entirely eliminated. Mitigation requires the extensive use of military or private provider security arrangements.

The AFP will continue to deliver on the expectations set by the Australian Government in regards to the provision of capacity development support to the ANP.