



WESTERN AUSTRALIA POLICE

OFFICE OF COMMISSIONER OF POLICE

POLICE HEADQUARTERS

6TH FLOOR

2 ADELAIDE TERRACE, EAST PERTH

WESTERN AUSTRALIA 6004

TELEPHONE : (08) 9222 1256

FACSIMILE : (08) 9222 1717

Your Ref:
Our Ref:
Inquiries:

eA845889

Inquiry into the Adequacy of Aviation and Maritime Security Measures to Combat Serious and Organised Crime

This information is provided by the Western Australia Police (WAPOL) Serious and Organised Crime Division.

From an operational perspective, WAPOL's Serious and Organised Crime investigators share information with the Australian Federal Police (AFP), Australian Customs and Border Protection Service (ACBPS) and the Australian Crime Commission (ACC). There are a number of task force operations in place involving the co-location of multi-agencies, aimed at disrupting and apprehending members of established criminal networks operating nationally and internationally. Of more recent times, less interoperability with the ACC has occurred due to their reduced resources in Western Australia.

The Joint Operations Management Group (JOMG) meets bi-monthly and provides for mutual assistance arrangements between State and Federal Agencies. With approval from the JOMG, WAPOL's Serious and Organised Crime investigators:

- ❖ forge joint approaches with ACBPS, ACC and AFP to combat established criminal networks operating across borders and facilitating importations, for example:
 - Operation Flytrap 2008 - ACC and WAPOL
 - Operation Interstice 2008 - ACBPS, ACC, AFP and WAPOL
 - Operation Huxford 2009 - ACC, AFP, Australian Tax Office (ATO) and WAPOL.
- ❖ offer resources and provide intelligence to ACBPS and AFP to detect illegal activity at borders and Perth International Airport.
- ❖ engage in mutual assistance arrangements with the AFP positioned at Perth International Airport including the provision of two senior WAPOL officers on secondment, to complement law enforcement efforts associated with cross-border drug trafficking.

Interoperability

Interoperability between State and Federal law enforcement agencies in Western Australia is adequate with intelligence and technical sharing available on a consistent basis. Of recent times, diminished resources on the part of the ACC and AFP in Western Australia has left WAPOL in a better position to contribute human resources.

The process of intelligence sharing from State to Federal remains simple and unhindered by process.

In reverse, however, the flow of intelligence remains cumbersome and administratively slow.

On occasions, the processes involved are an impediment to dynamic and spontaneous operational environments. The ACC Act does enable direct dissemination under critical circumstances but these provisions are rarely utilised. All agencies operate intelligence databases in isolation, uploading to ACID and ALEIN as central databases.

Cross-border activity involving established criminal networks is now common place. Members of high-risk crime groups entering Western Australia to commit offences are often detected by State law enforcement officers.

A streamlined, accountable process of accessing National intelligence holdings would further benefit frontline serious and organised crime investigators.

Cross Border Trafficking

Evidence suggests that, per annum, increasing quantities of illicit material pass our State and National borders. High-level established criminal networks appear undeterred from trafficking illegal commodities across State borders by air and road, irrespective of current border measures.

Interviews between Serious and Organised Crime investigators and arrested persons on drug trafficking charges often reveal that drugs are transported interstate by air, carried by a number of individuals on behalf of an authoritarian trafficker. Perth's domestic security barriers rarely detect these offenders. Even more so, reports of large quantities of illicit material transported by road and through regional air and maritime ports are common.

During March 2008, Organised Crime detectives searched a light aircraft following its arrival at Perth's Jandakot airport. The aircraft travelled from NSW stopping numerous times at regional refuelling stations. This aircraft was found to convey 22 kilograms of methylamphetamines and over 30,000 MDMA tablets. Retrospective checks revealed the aircraft had travelled the same route many times without detection. This type of activity is reported regularly across all regional airports and airstrips. The State's vulnerability with respect to regional and remote airfields and maritime ports is significant.

This submission is not considered *confidential* and may, subject to the approval of the Committee, be published on the internet.

Yours sincerely

KARL J O'CALLAGHAN APM
COMMISSIONER OF POLICE

October 2009