

**JOINT COMMITTEE OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS AND AUDIT  
AUGUST 2018**

**Australian Federal Police**

**Inquiry into any items, matters or circumstances connected with the following  
Auditor-General report:**

**No. 31 (2017-18) Managing Mental Health in the Australian Federal Police**

**Question number and title: Costs of Enterprise Agreement and Increased  
Investment in Mental Health**

**Mr HILL:** The AFP, at estimates, set the cost of the new enterprise agreement at \$120.5 million. But, in the papers, there seems to be a \$55 million cut to employee benefits over the forward estimates in the 2018-19 budget. So three questions arise. Can you guarantee there will be no cuts to pay or conditions given that, as you said, the impact on morale flows into mental health? Can you guarantee no cuts to staff? And can you give us some further details about the increased investment, or changes to investment, in mental health?

**Mr Gaughan:** I thought we answered those questions during Senate estimates. I might have to take that on notice. I was the lead negotiator for the enterprise agreement—

**Mr HILL:** And you are still standing?

**Mr Gaughan:** I am still standing! I was the lead negotiator for the enterprise agreement, so I have a little bit of knowledge of it. There were certainly some efficiencies that needed to be found in the workforce to afford those pay increases. But I didn't realise we were going to be asked questions on the budget, so I'll have to take those questions on notice. Philippa, do you know the figures?

**Ms Crome:** Not off the top of my head.

*Answer:*

As outlined at the 2018-19 Budget Estimates hearing, the Australian Federal Police will primarily look to fund the cost of the new enterprise agreement through a range of efficiency measures.

During the 2017-18 financial year, the AFP spent approximately \$8.3 million on employee costs and \$17.1 million on suppliers to support health related outcomes and it is anticipated that a similar spend will occur in the 2018-19 financial year.

The AFP has committed to implement the outcomes of the Phoenix review and all recommendations and the associated implementation plan have been reflected in the AFP's Health and Wellbeing Strategy. Across the AFP, health and wellbeing focuses on a combination of the four pillars of health including physical, psychological, organisational and social health noting the inter-relationship between these pillars.

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**Question title: Psychological injury Comcare claims**

Mr HILL: Perhaps you could take on notice some of the financials just so that we can get a sense of it. The Auditor-General found that there was a lack of clarity in how the investments flowed across the regions. Could you also take on notice whether it is expected that these changes will lead to a decrease in the number of Comcare claims for psychological injury. The Auditor-General's opening statement notes clearly that since 2012 there has been a steady increase in the number of Comcare claims for psychological industry and in the cost claimed by employees related to psychological injury.

Ms Crome: Yes.

*Answer:*

Please refer to previous response provided to the Committee regarding expenditure.

In relation to the Comcare claims, the high risk nature of the operational work undertaken by AFP employees carries an inherent risk of psychological harm and/or injury. The health and wellbeing strategy seeks to put in place support to minimise injury.

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**Question title: Recruitment of psychologists**

**Senator PATRICK:** Can I go back to the difficulties in terms of getting psychologists on board? I seem to recall that the Megan Palin stories were in late 2016, and the commissioner was on top of that. Here we are in 2018. Can you provide to the committee the dates on which you first sought placements for psychologists so that we can get an understanding of this? If you're building an organisational structure but you're not getting people, that is very problematic.

Ms Crome: It's not that we're not getting people. We're very happy to take that on notice, to break down the dates. Part of it is continuous recruitment, which is what we've always done. The other part of it is the fact that we have agreed, on the back of the Phoenix recommendations, to grow our FTE footprint in the space. We are actually increasing numbers. We are very careful about who we select to bring in. One thing we want them to have an understanding of is law enforcement. It's not just, 'Go and grab a psychologist off the street.' We need them to have a strong appreciation of law enforcement, and of the challenges and the unique nature of what that means so that they're well positioned to provide the support. They don't exist in vast numbers, is the honest answer.

**Senator PATRICK:** Could you provide the date you first sought to employ the various positions, as you were expanding them, and how long it has taken to fill those positions? And, indeed, how long has it taken to get security clearance?

*Answer:*

<b>Name</b>	<b>Vacancy Advertised</b>	<b>Applicant Identified</b>	<b>Security clearance granted</b>	<b>Candidate commenced</b>
Psychologist	9/3/17	n/a	18/8/17	7/9/17
Psychologist	n/a	5/3/18	20/07/2018	1/10/2018
Psychologist	n/a	21/8/18	Processing	NA
Psychologist	n/a	24/3/18	4/07/2018	13/08/2018
Psychologist	n/a	26/3/18	10/07/2018	4/09/2018

Further to the above, a recruitment process to enable the recruitment of five additional psychologists was advertised on 3 May 2018 and finalised on 13 September 2018. Successful candidates will now progress through the onboarding gateways.

A separate recruitment process to identify a chief psychologist was advertised on 20 July 2018 and closed on 9 August 2018. The selection process is underway.

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**Question title: Discussions with Ministers about Sydney Office resourcing**

**Mr HART:** I have two brief lines of inquiry that I'd like to pursue. Mrs Marino asked a question regarding resourcing, and you gave some evidence earlier regarding the question of resourcing. Last year there were reports by ABC News about resourcing shortages in the Sydney office of the AFP, and of course, the commissioner gave evidence at estimates where he said:  
*... our Sydney office is under a lot of pressure ... Would I like to have more officers in the Sydney office? Yes, I would. There is no doubt that my officers in Sydney would feel under pressure and underresourced.*

Did the AFP discuss those particular concerns, as expressed by the commissioner, with the minister?

Mr Gaughan: I don't know. I'll have to take it on notice.

*Answer:*

The AFP regularly discusses its operational demands and resourcing considerations with Government, including its regional footprint.

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**Question number and title: Increased resources in Sydney**

Mr HART: In response to that demand for resources in Sydney, are you able to say whether you have in fact increased the resources in Sydney?

Mr Gaughan: I'd have to take it on notice, Mr Hart.

*Answer:*

The AFP's FTE for New South Wales is 932 (as at 30 June 2018).

New South Wales is expected to gain an additional 29 FTE (phased over four years) through the following measures.

Measure 1: Enhanced CTFR/Protection Operations Report Team (PORT) Capability

- 25 FTE (Airport Operations)

Measure 4: Aviation Protection Assessment Team (Intelligence)

- 3 FTE (Intelligence)
- 1 FTE (Member embedded at Qantas HQ Sydney).

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**Question title: Status of reviews underway in the AFP**

CHAIR: The Auditor-General said at page 26 of our material:

*... the AFP has not established a clear governance structure for decision-making, information sharing and oversight in relation to employee mental health arrangements. This includes both organisational and committee arrangements.*

So can you provide an update to the committee now about what you have done to improve those governance structures for decision-making, information sharing and oversight?

Ms Crome: The AFP—again, I think it was at the time the audit was being undertaken—had KPMG looking at the organisation's governance structures holistically, not just governance structures around employee health. That KPMG piece of research around our governance framework rightly highlighted that we had complexity and, as the Auditor-General said, we had many different committees involved in many different parts of employee wellbeing, which could contribute to confusion or a lack of clear decision authority. The Auditor-General brought that out. That work in relation to the governance structures holistically, which has an impact on governance structures associated with employee wellbeing, has now concluded, and we are now in the process of transitioning into a new, simplified governance structure which reduces the number of committees. We now have a people committee that will look at the strategic people issues, including health and wellbeing, and we are still working through what that means for the other committees that used to exist within our structure to make sure that decision points are clearly defined, which was what the Auditor-General was getting to in the report about clarity of decision points. I would anticipate that between now and November we will be mapping out existing actions and decision points and making sure that, as we deactivate particular committees, we're doing it in a conscious way that can articulate where the residual work of that committee is going to be managed and led from and who or what is responsible for it.

CHAIR: Does the people committee have a chairman?

Ms Crome: Yes.

CHAIR: How many people are on the people committee?



Ms Crome: I think it's eight.

CHAIR: Who does the people committee report to, or what does it report to?

Ms Crome: It reports to the executive board, which is chaired by the commissioner.

CHAIR: One of the questions you will be asked on notice is to provide us with an update in terms of what reviews are still underway and which ones have been completed, because there have been a lot of different sorts of reviews undertaken, so it would clear it up for us, in terms of where those particular reviews are up to.

*Answer:*

The AFP engaged KPMG to deliver an independent review of AFP governance and decision-making in November 2017. The review provided advice on implementing a contemporary governance and decision-making framework, with a view to allow senior leaders of the executive in the AFP to prioritise and focus on strategic decision-making.

In early 2018, the AFP seconded experienced officers from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet to assist with the implementation of the recommendations surrounding governance and build on the best-practice framework and principles outlined in the KPMG report.

Commencing in July 2018, a realigned three-tier committee framework is being progressively implemented over a four-month period which includes provision for a dedicated People Committee. The People Committee reports to the AFP Executive Board and is charged with providing advice and assurance to the Commissioner and the Executive Board on the management of people matters relevant to the AFP and compliance with internal and external requirements, including the Health and Wellbeing Strategy (including mental health) and associated policy framework.

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**Question title: AGSVA positive security vetting**

Ms BRODTMANN: We heard from AGSVA the other day about another audit report in regard to insider threats and mitigating them. Do you have assurance from AGSVA that they are doing those positive vets in-house? In some parts they've outsourced it to 14 other organisations, so do you have assurance and do you know that AGSVA is doing those in-house?

Ms Crome: I would have to take that one on notice. I don't have that level of detail with me to give you a definitive answer.

Ms BRODTMANN: If you could. So the question is: Is AGSVA conducting all your positive vets in-house? If not, how many are being outsourced and to whom?

Mr Gaughan: We don't have a large number, as you can appreciate, with our work, but we'll take it on notice.

*Answer:*

The AFP has no detailed information about how AGSVA conducts PV assessments for the AFP. Questions regarding AGSVA's assessment process, should be referred to AGSVA.