



VICTORIA POLICE

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Senator Steve Hutchins
Committee Chair
Parliamentary Joint Committee on the
Australian Crime Commission

Dear Senator Hutchins,

Australian Crime Commission's Parliamentary Joint Committee Inquiry into the adequacy of aviation and maritime security measures to combat serious and organised crime.

Thank you for your letter dated 16 September 2009 where you invite Victoria Police to provide a submission to your Committee's Inquiry on the adequacy of aviation and maritime security measures to combat serious and organised crime.

Victoria Police is not in a position to contribute to all aspects of the inquiry as we are not the lead agency in responding to organised crime in the aviation and maritime sector. However, Victoria Police offer the following with respect to reference (d) which relates to current administrative and information and intelligence sharing arrangements. Our response is limited to our experience in Victoria.

Within Victoria there are a number of airports and ports that Victoria Police has joint responsibilities with other law enforcement agencies to maintain border security, law enforcement and information/intelligence sharing into serious and organised crime. The major aviation and maritime ports are:

- Melbourne Airport, Essendon Airport and Avalon Airport; and
- Port of Melbourne, Geelong, Portland, Hastings and Welshpool ports.

The following highlights current administrative and law enforcement arrangements that Victoria Police currently have in place within these areas.

Current Procedures/Memorandum of Understanding and Partnerships for Maritime and Aviation Crime/Security Issues

Police have the responsibility of performing community policing tasks such as responding to reports of crime at both airports and ports specific to their area of policing. Victoria Police effort complements and supports the primary investigative and response roles of the Australian Federal Police, Australian Federal Police Protection

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Service, Australian Customs Service and where relevant the Australian Crime Commission.

Victoria Police has entered into MOU's with our partner agencies that outline procedures with respect to agency responsibilities, responding to crime, intelligence sharing and training. It is our experience that procedures at all airports and ports throughout Victoria are yet to be standardised. We look forward to continuing to work with our partners to resolve the inconsistencies.

The Australian Federal Police and Victoria Police, under the current Melbourne Airport MOU, have dedicated two teams to the security of Melbourne Airport that is referred to as the Joint Airport Investigation Team (JAIT). The JAIT investigates serious and organised crime in the aviation sector. The JAIT is supported by the Joint Airport Intelligence Group which provides a joint law enforcement intelligence capacity to support security and policing operations at designated airports, one being Melbourne.

It is our experience that the level of cooperation between agencies can fluctuate and this will depend on the type of work that is being conducted, access to information sources and sharing of information to meet each agency's legislative and policy obligations.

Victoria Police continues to participate in relevant committees/forums with regards to security at airports and ports.

Frequency of Maritime/Aviation Security and Crime Issues

Frequency of reporting is intermittent and is mainly directed to specialist areas within Victoria Police, in particular the Security Intelligence Group and Water Police. Victoria Police receive limited information in relation to organised crime at Victoria's airports and ports. Some of this information relates to people smuggling, cargo theft and firearms trafficking. However, most of this information is of intelligence value and does not contain sufficient information to support a full investigation. Victoria Police regularly share this information with appropriate lead agencies to investigate.

Joint Operations with Law Enforcement Agencies

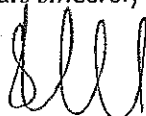
Victoria Police has and will continue to work cooperatively with its partner agencies, in particular on joint investigations. Victoria Police is dedicated to strengthening its relationship with our partners in all aspects of our business.

Deficiencies Identified in Intelligence Sharing and Collection

Intelligence is vital to informing decisions with respect to response options to organised crime in Australia's airports and ports. Improvements can be made in relevant agencies capacity and capability to collect timely and relevant intelligence with respect to airports and ports. This would include greater collaboration, interoperability between intelligence systems (where appropriate), better coordination of resources against agreed priorities, broadening the scope of intelligence and information collection and enhancing analytical capability. These enhancements need to be considered within current State and Commonwealth legislative obligations. Consequently, some law reform with respect to privacy and information sharing may need to be considered. Moreover, existing MOUs may need review.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission. I look forward to the outcomes of the Inquiry and can provide more information in camera if required.

Yours sincerely



Simon Overland APM
Chief Commissioner

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