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DEFENCE AND TRADE

**Reference: Watching brief on the war on terrorism**

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## **JOINT COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DEFENCE AND TRADE**

**Friday, 7 November 2003**

**Members:** Senator Ferguson (*Chair*), Mr Brereton (*Deputy Chair*), Senators Bolkus, Cook, Eggleston, Chris Evans, Harradine, Hutchins, Johnston, Sandy Macdonald, O'Brien, Payne and Stott Despoja and Mr Baird, Mr Baldwin, Mr Beazley, Mr Bevis, Mr Byrne, Mr Edwards, Mr Laurie Ferguson, Mrs Gash, Mr Hawker, Mr Jull, Mr Lindsay, Mrs Moylan, Mr Nairn, Mr Price, Mr Prosser, Mr Scott, Mr Snowden, Mr Somlyay and Mr Cameron Thompson

**Senators and members in attendance:** Mr Baird, Mr Bevis, Mr Jull and Mr Cameron Thompson

**Terms of reference for the inquiry:**

Watching brief on the war on terrorism.

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**Committee met at 8.58 a.m.**

**ATKINSON, Commissioner Robert, Commissioner of Police, Queensland Police Service**

**FITZGERALD, Dr Gerard Joseph, Chief Health Officer, Queensland Health**

**KELIHER, Dr Leo, Director-General, Department of the Premier and Cabinet**

**KINNANE, Mr Michael John, Director-General, Department of Emergency Services**

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**VIDGEN, Mr Patrick, Director, Security Planning and Coordination, Department of the Premier and Cabinet**

**ACTING CHAIR (Mr Jull)**—I declare open this public hearing of the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade on the watching brief on the war on terrorism. Firstly, I want to apologise for our colleagues from the Senate. As you know, the Senate has been recalled in Canberra today and will by now be sitting. The chairman of this committee, Senator Alan Ferguson, has asked me to extend his apologies to you all for not being here today.

The committee is pleased to welcome to the hearing representatives of the Queensland Department of the Premier and Cabinet, the Queensland Police Service, Queensland Health as well as the emergency, fire and ambulance services. The hearing is the fifth in a series of public hearings on Australia's preparedness to manage and respond to the consequences of a terrorist attack in Australia. The committee has heard from Commonwealth agencies about the existing policy and administrative frameworks for coordinating the responses to a terrorist attack. The committee has also heard from agencies in Western Australia, the Northern Territory and Victoria about managing the consequences of a terrorist incident in those jurisdictions.

Our hearing today is the next step in the committee's investigation into the response, structures and strategies existing in all states of Australia. The focus of our interest is the response and management capabilities of each jurisdiction, the capabilities that can be provided at short notice to supplement local resources and the nature and likely effectiveness of the mechanisms in place to ensure a swift and well-coordinated response. On behalf of the committee, I welcome every one of you here this morning. The format for today's hearing is a roundtable discussion, but I would ask that all comments be made through the chair.

**Dr Keliher**—Today I will be making a statement from a whole-of-government perspective as to our preparedness in the brief against the war on terrorism. This will be followed by Commissioner Bob Atkinson from the Queensland Police Service. The Director-General of the Department of Emergency Services, Michael Kinnane will then speak, and Dr Gerry Fitzgerald will give the perspective of Queensland Health. I would like to thank the committee for travelling to Queensland to discuss the state's counter-terrorism preparedness and the initiatives being undertaken to enhance our existing capabilities since the terrorist attacks on the United States and Bali.

**ACTING CHAIR**—I interrupt to advise you that the proceedings here today are legal proceedings of the parliament and warrant the same respect which proceedings in the respective houses of parliament demand. Although the committee does not require you to give evidence on oath, you should be aware that this does not alter the importance of the occasion. The deliberate misleading of the committee may be regarded as a contempt of parliament. The committee prefers that all evidence be given in public, but should you at any time wish to give any evidence in private, you may ask to do so and the committee will give consideration to your request. I now invite the representatives of each organisation to make brief opening statements—perhaps signalling your area of interest or responsibility—after which we will proceed to questions and discussions.

**Dr Keliher**—As you can see from the colleagues who join me today, the Queensland government is committed to a coordinated whole-of-government response to counter-terrorism. I would like to table for the committee a formal written submission outlining the Queensland arrangements in more detail. The Queensland government has always supported and participated in the national counter-terrorism arrangements since their inception following the bombing of the Sydney Hilton Hotel in the late 1970s. Following September 11 and subsequently the Bali bombings, the Queensland government, like other jurisdictions, invested significant time, energy and resources into the review processes for the national arrangements and the development of the intergovernmental agreement on national counter-terrorism arrangements, the National Counter-Terrorism Plan and the National Counter-Terrorism Plan handbook. Queensland will continue to contribute as an active member of the National Counter-Terrorism Committee to ensure that efforts and resourcing are maximised for the ongoing development of national and state counter-terrorism capabilities.

Queensland's capacity to contribute to national response arrangements was demonstrated during the state's response to the Bali bombings. Queensland agencies liaised with the Australian government agencies to ensure the seamless provision of medical care to those affected by this tragedy. In addition, Disaster Victim Identification Squad Queensland officers from the Queensland Police Service worked in conjunction with the Australian Federal Police in Bali in providing specialist skills. Subsequent to the Bali bombings and Queensland's participation in the review of the national arrangements through the National Counter-Terrorism Committee, on 17 February 2003 the Premier and Minister for Police announced a five-point counter-terrorism strategy for Queensland to reassure the community that Queensland is well prepared and equipped to respond to terrorism incidents.

The Queensland strategy builds on the response mechanisms developed during the preparations for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in 2002 and various Olympic Games soccer matches in 2000. Central to the Queensland government's response has



been the establishment of two new units—the Security Planning and Coordination Unit in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet and the Counter Terrorism Coordination Unit in the Queensland Police Service. The two units are responsible for coordinating a whole-of-government counter-terrorism response and for providing effective liaison with the Australian government, other state and territory governments, local government and the private sector.

Queenslanders put intensive efforts into raising awareness of preventive security measures throughout the state in the context of the current security environment. Integral to Queensland's strategy are four counter-terrorism projects. These projects are critical infrastructure, government agency preparedness, mass gatherings infrastructure and hazardous materials projects. It is worth noting that, while the critical infrastructure work is part of the national agenda, the other three projects represent a proactive stance by the Queensland government.

Through these projects the Department of the Premier and Cabinet and the Queensland Police Service, in conjunction with other relevant state government agencies—in particular, the Department of Emergency Services—have engaged multiple stakeholders, including local government and the private sector. This approach not only reflects multistakeholder and multijurisdictional issues, which encompass counter-terrorism preparedness, but also is indicative of the partnership approach the Queensland government is establishing in counter-terrorism planning throughout the state.

Queensland has undertaken a whole-of-government review of the robustness of the state's legislation relating to preventing, detecting, responding to, investigating and recovering from possible terrorist threats and incidents. The most pressing legislative matters have been addressed with other less pressing outcomes of the review still to be formally considered.

A major initiative of the Queensland government has been its desire to forge stronger ties with local government in the development of the counter-terrorism capabilities. Local government involvement has long been recognised in the state disaster management arrangements. However, its inclusion in other aspects of counter-terrorism arrangements has been progressed through initiatives such as membership of the steering committee for the state's critical infrastructure project and inclusion in the mass gatherings infrastructure project due to its links with the tourism industry, transport, licensed premises and public spaces such as malls, stadiums and shopping centres. There is also the sum of \$50,000 in state government sponsorship of the Local Government Association of Queensland for the development of a counter-terrorism risk management tool to be utilised by all local councils across the state.

The Queensland government commitment to partnership arrangements, which encounter the threat posed by the changed strategic conditions imposed by terrorism, extends to our relationship with the Australian government and other state and territory governments. In particular, we work closely with our interstate colleagues on critical infrastructure protection issues, including holding a discussion exercise for owners and operators of critical infrastructure in conjunction with the Attorney-General's Department of the Australian government. Queensland also recently conducted a national counter-terrorism exercise in conjunction with the Australian government which tested state and national capabilities to respond to, and manage the consequences of, a chemical, biological or radiological incident.

I have briefly touched upon the coordination and liaison role of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, through the establishment of the Security Planning and Coordination Unit. In addition to ensuring coordination and counter-terrorism planning, the Queensland government has invested considerable effort through training and equipment to improve Queensland's capacity to prevent, respond to and recover from a terrorist incident. To expand upon these initiatives I will now ask my colleagues to briefly outline for the committee the contribution of their agencies to Queensland's counter-terrorism preparedness. I reiterate that we look forward to discussing these initiatives with the committee.

**Commissioner Atkinson**—On behalf of the Queensland Police Service I would like to outline to the committee that the Police Service has maintained a sound capacity to respond to what could be regarded as traditional terrorist incidents since the inception of the original SACPAV in 1978. The commitment to arrangements to prevent, to respond to and to recover from a terrorist incident in the new security environment continues under the National Counter-Terrorism Committee structure. The QPS subscribes to the all-hazards approach to emergency management and is working towards strengthening relationships with Commonwealth and state government agencies and emergency services. Enhancement of the QPS counter-terrorism capability is a process of continuous improvement given impetus by recent world and regional events such as the Bali incident.

The service demonstrated its capacity to plan for protection from terrorism for major events during the 2000 Olympic torch relay and preliminary events, and the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting held at Coolumb in Queensland. Preparations for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting were interrupted, and later postponed, by the September 11 attacks, and the QPS, together with other agencies, subsequently provided security for the largest meeting of its type in the new security environment within a very compressed time frame. The planning operations were characterised throughout by a coordinated and cooperative approach involving the active participation of federal organisations such as ASIO, the AFP, the Australian Defence Force and state agencies. The lessons learned from planning for security at these events have been incorporated into service processes for other events, whether they be annual regional events, such as the Indy car race or schoolies on the Gold Coast, any of the larger Brisbane based events, such as *Riverfire* and the Livid Festival, or one-off international events, such as the Goodwill Games and the Rugby World Cup.

Residual equipment provided for CHOGM by the Commonwealth government, such as the refurbishment of the major incident room and digital radio communications equipment, has been incorporated into the service. Similarly, equipment procured under the Commonwealth's chemical, biological and radiological enhancement project has been brought into service for specialist sections, such as the special emergency response team, the explosive ordnance response team—that is, the bomb squad—and the forensic and technical services area.

State legislation has been developed to provide for police and emergency services to manage any of the anticipated acts of terrorism possible under the current security environment. The Public Safety Preservation Act 1986 provides special police powers for managing emergency situations. Whilst the existing powers were considered appropriate for managing most anticipated conventional terrorists incidents, the act has been amended to create a new category of emergency for CBR incidents. The wide-ranging powers required by police and emergency service responders to manage a CBR incident created by the amendments are tempered by

stringent safeguards and a very high level of authority being required to activate the special powers. The State Counter-Disaster Organisation Act 1975 has recently been reviewed and provides a legislative framework for the management of the consequences of a terrorist act.

In terms of coordination, as indicated by Dr Keliher, the Counter Terrorism Coordination Unit has been implemented to manage QPS support and involvement with joint projects, in particular with the Department of the Premier and Cabinet's Security Planning and Coordination Unit. These projects are government agency preparedness, critical infrastructure, mass gatherings and hazardous materials. The Queensland hazardous materials project is complementary to the Council of Australian Government's hazardous materials report. The Counter Terrorism Coordination Unit is also coordinating an analysis of our capability to ensure that the QPS is well positioned to prevent, respond to and recover from a terrorist threat or act.

Interoperability is a key aspect of the QPS approach to counter-terrorism. For example, QPS officers have been seconded to the Australian Federal Police joint counter-terrorism team. Arrangements with other agencies for specific categories of incident have been agreed and documented in plans, such as the multiagency response to a CBR incident plan. Consistency of specialist QPS counter-terrorism skills and tactics at a national level is maintained through participation in the capability development framework established by the NCTC as the continuance of the original SACPAV. Further, the opportunities for joint training provided through the NCTC exercise program have been used to improve preparedness for managing potential incidents in the new security environment. While exercises Noble Act and Noble Day in 2001 demonstrated a capacity to resolve traditional siege and hostage incidents, exercise August Noon in 2002 introduced response to a CBR threat in addition to the traditional siege-hostage scenario.

As Dr Keliher mentioned, Exercise Fast Ball, which has just concluded, this year focused on the investigation and consequence management of an actual and planned terrorist attack on critical infrastructure by non-conventional means. It was the first exercise of its type in that regard under the NCTC arrangements. It provided an opportunity to test relationships with the Commonwealth and state agencies at strategic and tactical levels and to conduct training activities with the Australian Defence Force's Incident Response Regiment and the state emergency services here in Queensland. The exercise highlighted the difficulty of practical application of management arrangements between agencies and demonstrated a need to further practise engagement with government agencies outside police and emergency services.

In addition to joint training, the QPS maintains an internal training program aimed at improving awareness of threats and response arrangements. CBR awareness training is provided in police and recruit training, at the district duty officer level and for potential incident coordinators as part of the joint emergency service training course. The QPS incident command system course for incident management has been developed to complement arrangements in place for the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service and the Queensland Ambulance Service, and is currently being delivered to all commissioned officers of the Queensland Police Service and will ultimately be taught to sergeants and senior sergeants as well, as part of normal training and development programs.

The National Counter-Terrorism Committee—the continuation of the former SACPAV—is regarded by us as extremely important. Its continued support for the framework, coordinated

through the Protective Security Coordination Centre in Canberra—especially in the areas of equipment, training and exercises—is acknowledged and endorsed, and there may be an opportunity to expand on that later in the hearing. The QPS recognises the importance of strong, cooperative, coordinated and consultative principles underpinning the framework. They are essential to effective counter-terrorism arrangements at a state and national level. The service will of course continue to play an active role in those arrangements.

Finally, in terms of future directions it is important to state that, whilst acknowledging that the state has sound counter-terrorism arrangements, it is essential that complacency be avoided at all costs and that there be a mind-set of continuous improvement. That is what we are trying to inculcate in the organisational ethos and culture of the Queensland Police Service. We will strive to further develop and strengthen our prevention response and consequence management arrangements in that context. Our capability will continue to contribute to coordination and preparation arrangements across all levels of government, whether it be local, state or Commonwealth, in promoting a safer and more robust security environment. Thank you.

**Dr Keliher**—Chair, I ask to be excused. I have another appointment. My acting deputy director-general, Catherine Taylor, can respond on my behalf. Thanks.

**ACTING CHAIR**—Mr Kinnane, would you like to make an opening statement?

**Mr Kinnane**—In Queensland the Department of Emergency Services provides coordinated and integrated fire, ambulance, counter-disaster and rescue services, covering all phases of emergency and disaster management. Over the past three years Queensland has reviewed its arrangements and put in place a range of measures to enable it to effectively manage the consequences of a large-scale emergency, including responses to chemical, biological, radiological, incendiary or explosive—CBRIE—incidents. We are continually improving our systems to ensure we have the most appropriate response and recovery capability across Queensland.

In this presentation I would like to highlight some of the more strategic measures that we have implemented. Last week the Minister for Emergency Services, the Hon. Mike Reynolds MP, introduced the Disaster Management Bill 2003 into the Queensland Legislative Assembly. This legislation updates 28-year-old legislation, called the State Counter-Disaster Organisation Act, to provide Queensland with the most modern disaster management legislation anywhere in Australia. The bill will provide a clearer framework for the structures, functions and powers supporting the all-hazards disaster management system in Queensland.

The legislation incorporates mitigation elements for the first time and specifically addresses conclusions of the recent Council of Australian Governments review of natural disaster relief and mitigation arrangements. Importantly, this legislation recognises the changed security environment and allows for greater integration of the state's crisis and consequence management arrangements, and will ensure that Queensland has contemporary arrangements in place to manage the consequences of any event, including a terrorist attack.

The legislation recognises the partnership arrangements fundamental to effective disaster management, both across government at state level and between the three tiers of government at Commonwealth, state and local level. The legislation streamlines the existing arrangements at

state level and establishes a single peak disaster management policy and decision-making body called the State Disaster Management Group. This group, which comprises CEOs from a range of government departments and is chaired by the Director-General of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, would have a pre-eminent role in managing the consequences of any event, including a terrorist related event.

The legislation I have referred to includes provisions for a robust and integrated disaster management planning framework at state, district and local government level. The plans at all levels will be comprehensive and will incorporate all elements of disaster management: mitigation, prevention, preparedness, response and recovery. Guidelines to assist the planning processes are currently being prepared by my department to ensure that a consistent standard is achieved across the state. As a consequence of the new disaster management legislation, the state's existing counter-disaster plan is also being reviewed. Amongst other things, the revised plan will describe the relationship between the state's consequence and crisis management arrangements and make explicit references to other important plans, such as the state's CBR plan.

Early in 2000, a CBR steering committee was established for enhanced multiservice collaboration and cooperation between agencies responsible for responding to CBR incidents, with representation from the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, the Queensland Police Service, Queensland Health, the Department of Primary Industries and the Department of Emergency Services. Effective working relationships have been established with all major agencies. The CBR steering committee also ensures that close links are maintained between the National Counter-Terrorism Plan and the disaster management system in Queensland.

To facilitate improved coordination in our ability to respond to CBRIE incidents, a Special Operations Unit was established earlier this year within the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service and the department. The Special Operations Unit includes the Hazardous Materials—HazMat—and Safety Equipment Unit, the Technical Rescue Unit, response vehicles and the state supplies of equipment for urban search and rescue, CBR and HazMat. This unit is to be located in a special operations facility representing all the emergency services and is to be constructed in Brisbane next year—2004. The Queensland Ambulance Service's Major Events and Mass Casualties Planning Unit is co-located with the Special Operations Unit of fire to maximise multiservice planning and collaboration.

The ability of emergency services officers to operate with certainty in extreme circumstances has been clarified with the enactment of the Chemical, Biological and Radiological Emergency Powers Amendment Act 2003. The act allows for the power to detain and treat people against their will, to decontaminate affected persons and to prevent the spread of a CBR substance. The use of the emergency powers is subject to stringent controls and safeguards to ensure that fundamental liberties of citizens are adequately protected.

As the police commissioner has mentioned, over the past few years there has been a greater emphasis on multiservice exercises, desktop scenarios and training. Joint emergency service training courses—we call them JEST courses—have been conducted across the state and have involved senior emergency services personnel from police, fire, ambulance, the SES, the Chemical Hazards and Emergency Management Unit of my department, the health department, primary industries, and, importantly, the Australian Defence Force. The course examines the

command and control functions of agencies attending major incidents, including CBR incidents, with a view to improving agency incident response management, planning and interactions. To date, in excess of 400 senior officers from the various emergency and other government agencies have completed this training in Brisbane, the Gold Coast, the North Coast, Townsville, Cairns, Rockhampton and Toowoomba. Attendance at these courses has now been expanded to include emergency managers from other government departments and from selected private organisations—such as Queensland Rail, the Port of Brisbane Authority and Australia Post—to enhance the whole-of-state approach to CBR management.

At the end of 2001, a \$13.2 million, state-of-the-art training facility was opened at Whyte Island here in Brisbane. The construction of an urban search and rescue facility at the training academy was finalised in August 2002. This academy enables the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service to provide its officers with world-class training using state-of-the-art facilities. Queensland has hosted a number of operational exercises at the Whyte Island academy, such as a 72-hour technical rescue field exercise involving a multi-agency response to a building collapse. Fire services, personnel and some other services from Victoria, New South Wales, Western Australia, South Australia and the ACT participated in the exercise along with Queensland. In summary, Queensland's arrangements are based on a coordinated multiservice and multiagency approach to all phases of emergency management, as well as an all-hazards approach. This allows strong links to exist between the states' crisis management and consequence management arrangements. Thank you.

**Dr Fitzgerald**—Queensland's emergency health system is advised by a joint interdepartmental committee, called the Queensland Emergency Medical System Advisory Committee, QEMSAC. This committee reports to the director-general and the ministers for both the Department of Health and the Department of Emergency Services. The scope of the committee's activities is to achieve a whole-of-government approach to emergency health care. Queensland's emergency health plan is a subplan of the state's disaster plan and in turn of course there are subplans for various elements of the health, including mental health, public health et cetera. Queensland takes an all-hazards and all-agency approach to emergency health care built on existing resources and everyday practice. Our health response to a terrorism incident would thus be based on this all-hazards approach, although taking into consideration security aspects.

Queensland has been an active participant in a number of national initiatives, including the Australian Disaster Medicine Group and its successor, the Australian Health Disaster Management Policy Committee, as well as the various Australian health ministers' advisory committee subcommittees and working parties. We also provide instructive support to the Australian Emergency Management Institute in the delivery of chemical, biological and radiological courses and disaster medicine courses. Our health plans are regularly exercised through both institutional exercises as well as community wide exercises, such as the airport disaster exercise. In addition, these plans are tested in a real environment of natural and transport disasters and major incident responses, such as CHOGM, Indy, Rugby World Cup and the SARS pandemic. Queensland Health is a single statewide service divided into three zones, each based on a tertiary teaching hospital, and further into 39 districts. There are over 215 public hospitals and 55 private hospitals in Queensland with a total about 16,000 beds of which 10,000 are in public hospitals. These hospitals have 270 intensive care beds, 20 specialty burns beds and over 300 isolation beds. However, most of our hospitals are based in small rural towns and only 40 of the hospitals have 24-hour on-site medical coverage.

Queensland Health also continues to provide a small number of ambulance services in small remote areas. Queensland Health pathology and scientific services is a statewide service, which includes forensic services and appropriate laboratories with the principal laboratories based at Coopers Plains which are integrated into the national Public Health Laboratory Network. Queensland Health also participates in the joint multiagency threat assessment team that I think has been mentioned and provides operational support to the chem unit. Public health services are provided on a statewide basis. There are 13 locally based public health surveillance units. Public health monitoring occurs within laboratories and reports on positive tests which are provided for public health units to follow-up.

The cornerstone of Queensland Health's emergency health arrangements is of course the emergency departments of our major metropolitan and provincial hospitals. In addition, these hospitals supply medical outreach services, known as the medivac program, whereby medical and, at times, nursing staff may respond to prehospital incidents in support of the ambulance service and manage the transfer and retrieval of critically ill patients from smaller institutions. These outreach services can be provided from up to 70 hospitals around the state. A network of senior doctors, known as clinical coordinators, supervises the medivac and retrieval service. Queensland Health has been active in promoting national educational strategies, as we have mentioned, including the EMA disaster medicine course and it currently holds the right to a prehospital trauma life support course, which is delivered now throughout Australia. There is also a large fleet of aeromedically configured aircraft available to support major health incidents. This includes 10 fixed-wing aircraft which are operated by the Royal Flying Doctor Service and 12 helicopters which are operated by both government and community providers that are configured for the treatment and transport of patients.

In respect of CBR, our major hospitals have a limited number of protective suits and other protective equipment. Two major hospitals in Brisbane have made arrangements regarding their own decontamination facilities for local use, while most hospitals, of course, have a minimum capacity for decontamination of a small number of patients. However, in terms of continuous improvement, we are continuing to monitor and improve our capacity to respond to major incidents. The clinical coordination system across the state is being upgraded, with the introduction of a centralised clinical coordination centre. A review of all health disaster plans will occur early next year, and our medivac and inter-facility transfer arrangements are currently being reviewed.

The key question of whether we have the capacity to respond is difficult to answer. The capacity of the Queensland health system to cope with any major incident obviously depends on the location and extent of the incident and the number and severity of casualties. Whilst we have considerable capacity across the state, generally it is largely committed. The capacity will be and may be extended in any major incident by a range of strategies, including the cessation of non-elective surgery et cetera, the support of private facilities, the utilisation of other accommodation and, of course, the use of interstate assistance as required.

**ACTING CHAIR**—Thank you very much indeed. We might move now to questions. Commissioner Atkinson and Mr Kinnane, you have probably both given me an angle to start on. Has Queensland done any assessment in terms of any shortfall from the Commonwealth, in policy or in operations, that you would like to see addressed?

**Commissioner Atkinson**—In my view, this is an ongoing issue. It is very much my view that, in terms of our description of our circumstances—and I am speaking on behalf of the police department—we are in a sound position and our capability is adequate. But we should never think there is a finishing line. With the greatest respect, when we talk about gaps, in terms of capacity, this should be an ongoing process, and I compliment the committee for holding these hearings, because I think it is an important part of the ongoing process. There is no finishing line with this. That is why I made the comment before that, even though I believe our arrangements within the police department are sound and adequate, we are trying to inculcate in the organisation a mind-set of continuous improvement and the avoidance of complacency. In a broader context, this is an ongoing issue. I do not think there are significant gaps, in terms of Commonwealth assistance or policy, but I do think we need to have an ongoing review, almost, of our capability and capacity. I hope that answers your question. I do not think I can take it beyond that at this time.

**Mr Kinnane**—Complementing the comments made by the police commissioner, I would comment, from an Emergency Services perspective, that the coordinated arrangements at all three levels of government—but particularly, given your question, between the Commonwealth and the states—are absolutely vital. The more that the security agencies and agencies such as Emergency Management Australia, which is part of the Attorney-General's Department, work closely with state police and emergency management agencies the better we will be. In the last few years in particular, we have seen much greater collaboration and coordination between the two levels of government than we have ever seen before. That is something that Emergency Services strongly supports. As you know, we are involved with the Commonwealth's arrangements in relation to the Chemical, Biological and Radiological Enhancement Program. There are possibly some issues there, in relation to urban search and rescue, that need some further enhancement. But a recently completed national state exercise called Fast Ball, which was carried out in Brisbane in September and October, was very effective from our point of view. We believe that the more we can undertake those sorts of joint exercises involving different levels of government the better we will be.

**ACTING CHAIR**—To what extent has the private sector been involved in particular places like accommodation houses? Things like the Lexmark Indy 300 and other major events have been mentioned. Is there any coordination with the major hotels and major accommodation venues as to what they may be able to do to assist or what they may be able to do in the case of a terrorist incident? What cooperation have you had with the media, specifically with radio, to try to get them to realise the importance of having a capacity to broadcast emergency information and directions in case of an attack? The reason I raise radio is the trend to go to computerisation and to go to relays. In Brisbane on a Saturday night I think there is one radio station that is live to air; the rest of them are on relay, including the ABC.

**Commissioner Atkinson**—The Queensland Police Service and the Queensland government are engaging business. There is always a balance there in terms of what private enterprise can be expected to contribute. Part of our approach has been to ask business to take responsibility for security arrangements; that is not saying that we are abrogating responsibility ourselves, but certainly business and private enterprise have a responsibility to effect their own arrangements. We assist in enabling them to facilitate those arrangements. To touch on Michael Kinnane's comments, the way forward is clearly a cooperative approach, and that is across all areas of the



community—whether it is business, the media or local government, it is truly a cooperative approach. Business have a key role there.

In relation to the media, our experience has been—particularly post Bali—that we have had tremendous cooperation from the media. In my experience, the media have been responsible. There is a thirst for information that they can communicate to their listeners in terms of radio in the event of an incident. Certainly post Bali I found the media were extremely helpful. Probably one of the challenges for emergency services agencies in a developing incident is to coordinate the media response. Depending on the extent of the incident, that challenge is enhanced by the fact that overseas media operate in different time zones. So our people here—unless we have planned ahead and are well prepared, and this is something we are mindful of—simply cannot shut down at 10 p.m. or 11 p.m. because that is when the international media are running through the day. I know that is a simplistic point, but nonetheless it is very relevant. So there is a need for sustained capacity.

My experience has been that the media are extremely helpful and more than willing to convey information to the public. The specific detail of your question about the national networking of most radio outlets is certainly an interesting point and a valid one, but I think that there would be so much interest in a terrorist incident at a national level that the shortcomings in terms of local network capability would be overcome by the national interest—I would hope so anyway.

**ACTING CHAIR**—The ABC can pull the plug and go to air because they have got a newsroom here—and do it fairly quickly. From the people I have spoken to, really only 4KQ 97.3 group have the capacity to get to air in 10 minutes. I must say that there is a certain arrogance with the rest of them, particularly the FM stations—which, quite frankly, have got the largest audience. I just wonder what would happen if somebody let off some VX gas in Mary Street on Saturday night at 11 o'clock. How the devil do you get the message out not to come into the city? The audience listening to the ABC at 11 o'clock on a Saturday night is probably not the lot you are trying to reach; it is the nightclub brigade. I just think the likes of 105 and Triple M are abrogating their responsibilities. They probably do not even have a person in the station, let alone somebody who has the capacity to be able to get out there and broadcast a message. It is just something that, in a personal sense, I am trying to follow up and get something done about.

**Commissioner Atkinson**—As I tried to indicate earlier, I think it is important that we have a mind-set of no finishing line and continuous improvement. I am certainly happy to take that point on notice and respond later on the specific detail of the local radio arrangements here. To answer the hypothetical proposition of such an incident, we would and do work very closely with Emergency Services. There would be a two-part response immediately to secure and contain the area through road blocks to prevent people from moving into the area and obviously through the radio and television network to inform the public as fulsomely and as quickly as possible. Quite often one of the difficulties with these situations is that in the early stages, in the first few hours particularly, there is a degree of understandable confusion. So sometimes the information that can be provided to the public can of necessity be limited. I think it is far more important to provide accurate, limited information than it is to speculate about what might be the particular problem that exists at the time.

**Mr Kinnane**—Mr Acting Chair, your question has a particular focus, but I wonder whether it would be of assurance to you and the committee to confirm that in Queensland close working relationships exist between police, emergency services and just about all media outlets. Each year a hundred or so media operational people are trained by people from Emergency Services and the police. I think that is something that we have got to continue. The more that we can expose the journalists and media people to how the system operates, the more effectively the system will operate.

Can I also assure the committee that, in respect of the experience that we have all had with natural disasters, the use of radio for emergency messages to people has been very effective. I note that of course it is a variation on the case that you are talking about, but still the principle might be of assistance.

With respect to cooperation with the private sector, police, emergency services and other agencies have had experience, sadly, with a number of major events here—the recent helicopter crash in Mackay and a few years ago the Childers backpacker fire. You will find in the planning arrangements, including even local government disaster plans, that the requirement for cooperation and a close working relationship with private sector outlets is absolutely explicit. With the involvement of local government, those issues are normally delivered.

**Mr BEVIS**—I am interested in your comments about the interoperability at a tactical and operational level from the exercises that you mentioned at Whyte Island—as I understand, the first of those involving other states and territories and the second involving Australian defence forces. What was the interoperability like not so much at a policy, bureaucratic level but at a tactical and operational level of delivery of services on the ground, and what are we doing about plugging the holes?

**Commissioner Atkinson**—Perhaps Mr Kinnane could respond in terms of Emergency Services, and I could comment from a policing perspective.

**Mr Kinnane**—The question relates to on-the-ground issues. I will introduce the matter, and if further detailed operational information is required, I will ask Mr Pagano, the Deputy Commissioner, Queensland Fire and Rescue Service, to comment. A key point is that, with the construction of the practical hot fire training facility at Whyte Island—that is, the Caltex land at the Port of Brisbane Authority—we now have a state-of-the-art facility in the country. That is not just rhetoric; it is recognised by all emergency services and other authorities around the country.

In the couple of years since the facility was opened, we have extended it to provide for what we call a technical training facility, particularly for confined space rescue. We have literally constructed a collapsed building site. A point on which I would like to assure Mr Bevis is that, through a number of practical exercises involving police, all the emergency services—and that is the benefit of having this coordinated approach to emergency management in the state—as well as the ADF, we have been able to practise rescue and recovery roles at that training facility.

We have received feedback from, for example, fire services and other jurisdictions that Queensland is now a leading agency in the provision of this type of training. As for other aspects of interoperability, Queensland is represented on a national working party chaired by Emergency Management Australia in respect of urban search and rescue as well as CBR. We are involved

very much, and the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service coordinates this in the Commonwealth's CBR Enhancement Program. We are currently testing the cache of equipment that was delivered to Queensland last month and we are conducting, along with police and a range of other services, joint emergency service training programs. With your consent, I am happy to ask Mr Pagano to add comments on the purely operational aspects.

**Mr Pagano**—In relation to the question regarding interoperability, at a tactical and operational level, as has been mentioned previously by the police commissioner and the director-general, Queensland is very well placed for a number of reasons to do very well in this area. Firstly from a departmental perspective, the department provides an excellent environment in the coordination of Queensland Ambulance, Counter Disaster and Rescue Services and obviously Queensland Fire and Rescue Service. All of our operations from a departmental level are designed from the outset to ensure that we have full integration of operations, policies and legislation and also in relation to the planning aspects particularly.

In relation to the Whyte Island training academy particularly, as the director-general has mentioned with the investment that Queensland has made in that academy particularly of recent times in relation to the urban search and rescue cell, my understanding is that that cell is not duplicated anywhere within Australia and the feedback, as the director-general has mentioned, is phenomenal. As recently as last week beings in fact, we continued to train our people in level 2 urban search and rescue, particularly Queensland fire and rescue but also integrating within our teams a paramedic from Queensland Ambulance Service on all of our courses; we see that as vital in our training.

As mentioned earlier, the academy has been used also in relation to the joint emergency services training and that has provided excellent coordination at a management level at incidents and incident command. The other point I would mention in relation to tactical operations is a recent initiative by the department in conjunction with the Queensland Police Service and that is our sampling techniques kit—very important—and that was a response to the number of white powder incidents some two years ago now. That was developed deliberately to ensure that the techniques used by firefighters, with RACE advice from our emergency chemicals unit, ensure the safety of our people on the ground but also ensure that there is a chain of evidence available to the Queensland Police Service regarding convictions if one is capable.

**Mr BEVIS**—I appreciate the interoperability and the way in which the Queensland services work together commendably. I wonder if an incident occurs in which Queensland is involved with other states or territories or with the ADF, what is the interoperability between the Queensland combined services or the parts thereof and those other agencies from interstate or the Commonwealth? I guess there could be an incident here that requires their participation or the real life example where our firefighters—you can tell I am a Queensland—where the Queensland firefighting services went to Canberra during the fires in Canberra. At an operational level, do we have the same communications systems? Are the protocols similar enough? Is the hardware similar enough to be interoperable? With all of those things that go to make up an integrated unit when an incident occurs that requires recourse from outside the state, how well does that interoperability function? I invite your comments on that aspect.

**Mr Kinnane**—Mr Acting Chairman, I would like to lead with these comments. Mr Bevis accurately refers to the example of the fires interstate. I do not think there could be a better

example of where we do have, overall, very good interoperability as well as good coordination than Queensland's response—along with that of other states, of course—to fires in the ACT, New South Wales and Victoria in the last two years. In the case of emergency services, for example, Queensland sent no less than about 400 operational officers from each of the services, along with operational logistical people to provide support to the other fire and rescue services there. It simply meant that we had a capability to operate as a coordinated team of people, so there were no operational restrictions placed on them whatsoever.

Secondly, the importance of the exercises at Whyte Island, to which we have referred, where we had involvement by other interstate services, is absolutely critical. For example, the urban search and rescue work of the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service meets not only national standards but international standards. We regard the importance of testing those protocols and procedures as being absolutely critical.

Thirdly, at more of a policy level, as the committee would be aware, in more recent years there has been further dialogue and liaison between ministers responsible for emergency management at the Commonwealth level—in particular at the state and territory levels. I am pleased to say to you that Queensland hosted the first meeting of emergency management ministers last year—the first one since about 1994. Victoria followed that up with one in April this year. On the agenda for those ministers are this very question and the importance of sharing protocols and interoperability. So Queensland is in a very important position in that area.

**Commissioner Atkinson**—From a policing perspective, there are a number of dimensions to this. I do not want to labour it too long, but there are some things I would like to touch on. Post the Hilton Hotel bombing in 1978 and the establishment of the Standing Advisory Committee on Commonwealth-State Cooperation for Protection Against Violence, or SACPAV, which has now been replaced by the NCTC, I think that in terms of interoperability between police agencies the CT area led the way. There is a range of activities between the police jurisdictions in Australia to develop common policing practice, whether that is through national traffic legislation or in the area of crime scene analysis or in the area of common policy for police pursuits and emergency response. The counterterrorist area has truly led the way.

The SACPAV and now the NCTC support the police jurisdictions in the states in three ways—and this is for the emergency response teams, which have different titles from state to state; here it is the Special Emergency Response Team or SERT. They are essentially the same units throughout Australia, but they have different titles. Firstly, they support the police jurisdictions through the provision of common equipment. Secondly, there are national standard training programs, so that if a person within an emergency response team is the commander of a group, there is a common national standard of training for the role of commander. If a person is engaged in other areas—the bomb squad, for example—there are common standards for that. So it has actually led the way. The other area is the exercises, which have been fundamental in developing that.

The point you made is extremely valid. In any training exercise that has been conducted, it has been my experience that at the end of it two things always stand out as needing further work: coordination and communication. The specifics of communication in terms of interoperability, in terms of police radio communication, is something that probably could do with some more work. The Commonwealth clearly has an important role to play in that. One of those roles, potentially,

is to ensure that there are sufficient radio channels available. I think that is where the Australian Communications Authority clearly has a role as well, so that there are sufficient radio channels available for all the police emergency response units to utilise in the event of the necessity for a national response in terms of those various units coming together.

It would depend, of course, on the nature of the incident. If there were multiple terrorist incidents on the east coast then it might well be that the jurisdictions would have to remain within their own areas and would not have the capacity to provide assistance to another agency. But I feel confident from my observations that if there were a singular incident that required the assistance of emergency response teams throughout Australia that assistance would be both forthcoming and effective.

**Mr BEVIS**—Are those communications systems interoperable between the Queensland Police, for example, and the ADF?

**Commissioner Atkinson**—They can be; there is generally a capacity in that regard. However, it is not holistic. My understanding is that the ADF have their own capacity in that regard, and Queensland has a mix of communications—

**Mr BEVIS**—That is actually why I was wondering. I am aware that Defence have their own communications protocols and I was wondering how they would plug in to an incident where their services were required.

**Commissioner Atkinson**—There is a capacity for that, but my understanding also is that there are not completely common systems across Australia between the police jurisdictions or completely common systems and compatibility with the ADF, and nor I do think anyone would expect there to be. But our experience in CHOGM was certainly very encouraging. In Queensland, the CHOGM planning process went for two years, so the relationships we built there with the ADF and the effectiveness of the CHOGM arrangements, which were a combination of the Queensland Police Service, the Australian Federal Police, ASIO and the ADF together with many other agencies, were very reassuring in terms of how that works.

**Mr BEVIS**—Thank you.

**Mr BAIRD**—I would like to concentrate on the practical aspects of an incident. It would be likely to be of the type that we have not experienced before in Australia. I am interested in issues such as our preparedness for burns. I think I heard you say there were 20 burns places—would these sufficient, if you look at the numbers in Bali, for example? What would be the coordination with other states on that? I am also interested in issues such as your ability to move structural engineers into place and your ability to undertake decontamination of different areas as well as your ability to separate out areas quickly—I am sure that in terms of your police response that is probably one of the easier aspects of it that you would be able to put in place. I would like to start, firstly, on the burns units and the medical area. The review you gave was terrific and comprehensive, but I would like to ask about the practical issues. How are we going to cope with only 20 burns places in Queensland when, if we have a similar incidents to those we have seen in other places in the world, there are obviously going to be patients in excess of that?

**Dr Fitzgerald**—I would like to start on the clinical issues of managing a number of cases of burns. The difficulty with responding to these hypothetical situations is that it always depends on where they are, the nature and severity of the burns cases, where the patients are in relation to—

**Mr BAIRD**—But on the presumption that we face a Bali bomb-type situation, with multiple—

**Dr Fitzgerald**—In Australia?

**Mr BAIRD**—Yes.

**Dr Fitzgerald**—Say there was an incident in Brisbane which involved multiple burns cases. Obviously, the first response would involve the resuscitation of those patients. So those patients would be distributed amongst the major hospitals and emergency departments around Brisbane from the scene. From there, depending on their particular needs, we would then seek inpatient care for those patients. While we do have 20 dedicated burns beds in two units, obviously not all burns patients are treated in those units. If there was a moderately severely burnt patient in Townsville they would be treated in Townsville, as they would be in Cairns et cetera. Similarly, at times, those beds are not fixed. For example, in terms of the burns unit, if it had 22 patients at a time we would obviously have them nursed in outside wards or in other surgical boards. So the capacity and flexibility to be able to respond—

**Mr BAIRD**—I suppose the bottom line is whether you are concerned. You yourself mentioned that there were only 20 burns beds—is that enough, given our experience overseas with terrorist-type situations?

**Dr Fitzgerald**—It is enough for the normal activity. The problem is of course what happens when the exceptional happens and you get a large number of cases. What we would do, obviously, is use the alternative resources that are available. Say there was a Bali type bombing in Brisbane, we would distribute those patients nationally, quickly working through the arrangements that have been set in place following Bali to teleconference the various key people in all of the states and start working out how those patients would be distributed to various burns units around the country. We would absorb many of them into existing facilities that are not specialist burns beds, but still those patients that remain in Queensland would be treated by the burns teams on an advisory arrangement. We would see them being distributed amongst the hospitals in Brisbane initially for resuscitation purposes and then transferred out to specialist facilities. There would be extremes—from very minor to very severe burns. Those that required the specialist burns facilities would be transferred to other burns centres around the country as required. At some stage you would saturate those too if you had a large number of cases, in which case you would start winding up the general resources and making surgical wards into burns units, if you know what I mean.

**Mr BAIRD**—Is it in your area that we should be looking at the question of the degree to which you have appropriate resources to bring in structural engineers quickly, and also at the question of decontamination of sites?

**Mr Kinnane**—Certainly the emergency services play a key role, along with the police, the Department of Health and other agencies. Indeed even the Department of Public Works would

play a key role. The increased capability—as I have referred to—of the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service, particularly in the last five years in the area of building collapse, urban search and rescue and so on, means that we are much more capable of handling those sorts of incidents than ever before. The ability of the Queensland Ambulance Service to triage patients—

**Mr BAIRD**—Let us come back to the first issue, which is the ready availability of structural engineers to move onto a site. Is that in place?

**Mr Pagano**—Our urban search and rescue capability does meet United Nations standards through the INSARAG organisation. It is important to note that all the training in relation to urban search and rescue actually uses local resources in relation to engineering. They may be from local government as well as from state government in relation to public works. So structural engineers specifically do not exist within the fire service, though I must point out that level 2 firefighters, trained in USAR, are trained in relation to structural collapse, shoring, and all those initial operational aspects. The engineering side would be provided by the state, in government or wherever the location may be.

**Mr BAIRD**—So, if a building like this were suddenly hit, you would hit the button and suddenly you would have a whole range of people who could be here within a matter of minutes to come in and give advice as to what should happen.

**Mr Pagano**—That is the case, yes. We would have immediate response people from the emergency services, as well as immediate coordination of structural engineers. That is an operational protocol.

**Mr BAIRD**—What about decontamination of sites?

**Mr Pagano**—That is a little more difficult, because it depends what the material is—whether we are talking about a biological material or a chemical. If it is a building site, again we need a very thorough analysis of what the material may be. There are some materials—anthrax particularly—that, to this day, nowhere in the world has the capacity to actually decontaminate. So it would depend on the material. However, Queensland is well placed in relation to its capacity to decontaminate, regarding decontamination facilities, decontamination tents.

**Mr Kinnane**—If I could add to that for Mr Baird. Further to the decontamination issue, in Queensland we have a fairly unique service called Response Advice for Chemical Emergencies, RACE. It is a 24-hour seven day a week response service and is centred in the Chemical Hazards Emergency Management Unit of my department. They provide on-scene advice by scientific specialists to the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service and the Queensland Police Service, depending upon the nature of the chemical substance. We not only have those specialists located mainly in Brisbane, as you would expect, but we have a series of specialist expert advisers who are employed by both local government and the private sector and are located in over 20 centres around the state to provide that backup support as well. That service assists with the entire response process.

**Mr BAIRD**—If there was a simultaneous attack in Brisbane, Townsville, Cairns and Rockhampton, do you have people in place in all of those centres?

**Mr Kinnane**—We have. Our operational protocols, particularly with the QFRS, provide for simultaneous calling out to that sort of fire incident, as well as the response advice from the chemical emergencies people. That capability is then backed up, as the chief health officer has mentioned, by a wide network of aeromedical and rescue facilities through both fixed wing and helicopter resources around the state.

**Mr BAIRD**—Is the quick isolation of areas part of your normal capabilities?

**Commissioner Atkinson**—Yes, that is the desirable scenario. I think, in all these things of course, there has to be a pragmatic appreciation of what can happen in a given circumstance. One of the inevitable consequences of an incident could be, particularly if it was to be at a sporting venue, that there is a limit to what can realistically be achieved in terms of the containment of a large number of people. Inevitably, people will make their own way to hospital facilities, as occurred in Bali where not everyone was transported by the emergency services. In all of the planning and the arrangements that are in place, I think there is always a need to balance that with the inevitable pragmatic aspects of how things will unfold in a real situation.

**ACTING CHAIR**—In terms of the emergency services, has any thought been given to utilising volunteers? I know there is a huge volunteer brigade within emergency services. If you had a Bali situation on the Gold Coast one night, is there a capacity to bring in people like St Johns Ambulance or anybody else to support the emergency services?

**Commissioner Atkinson**—Post Bali, in fact on the day of 12 October, we felt it was necessary to get on the front foot here in Queensland and we coordinated a response across government. We actually opened our major incident room at police headquarters. Whilst the incident of course did not occur here, we felt it was so significant that public confidence would be enhanced if we did that. In answer to the specific question, one of the things we did in that instance was to bring into operation an 1800 number which was staffed by Red Cross volunteers. The purpose was to provide what information could be provided. For people who had concerns about relatives overseas, even though through the Red Cross volunteers we could not give them a definitive answer immediately as to the safety or wellbeing of their particular relative who was in Bali, we got their details and particulars and undertook to get back to them as soon as possible. So the answer to the question is yes. We greatly value the support from agencies such as St Johns Ambulance, the Red Cross and other volunteer groups.

**Dr Fitzgerald**—I want to make a brief point. Most of our disaster plans are based on using those agencies and that support as required, particularly St Johns Ambulance and the other first aid organisations. I think they are already in there.

**Proceedings suspended from 10.09 a.m. to 10.27 a.m.**



**ACTING CHAIR**—Having resumed our hearing, I will pass the questioning over to Mr Cameron Thompson.

**Mr CAMERON THOMPSON**—I want to look specifically at terrorism type issues, as opposed to pure disaster management type issues. I wish to go through the National Counter-Terrorism Plan and its various sections. Let us take, for example, siege management. Is there full understanding among the police and other authorities here of all the possible techniques that the military, for example, may use if they are called in to be involved in a siege situation?

**Commissioner Atkinson**—I believe so, absolutely. That is a well rehearsed area. It is well rehearsed in the operational context but also in the policy context. Clearly, within police departments and within communities the police and emergency services are obviously the first response to an incident. Within the police department, if it is a terrorism incident then clearly our emergency response team is our last point of resource in terms of dealing with the incident. Beyond that, if the incident escalates beyond the capacity of the emergency response team and the jurisdiction or jurisdictions, it is the responsibility of the ADF, and ADF assistance is sought. There is a very clearly established process for that and I feel very confident that all of the emergency services and police units throughout Australia—not just Queensland's—are well across that. That is something that is frequently rehearsed in the exercise scenarios that are conducted on a regular basis: the involvement of the ADF, the policy parameters by which the ADF can and do become involved. There are formal structures in place for a formal handover to the ADF, to take control of the incident, and then a formal hand-back procedure.

**Mr CAMERON THOMPSON**—This is an interoperability type thing, but I am talking purely about the techniques. The example that comes to mind is the case in Russia with the storming of the theatre and the use of gas. Obviously no-one other than the military knew what the gas was. They did not know anything about that. Are all the techniques that the military might use in a case like that in Australia fully understood and documented?

**Commissioner Atkinson**—No, not at all. Understandably, there are some capacities that the Australian Defence Force, for security reasons, retain to themselves, but all that is necessary in my view is shared. The management of an incident would occur at two levels. The first is that a major incident room would be operating, and certainly here Queensland, when that is established, there is an immediate capacity for the ADF to be represented. There are desks and space for ADF personnel to immediately take up a position in a major incident room. The overall command of the incident is coordinated with ADF, Australian Federal Police and ASIO representatives all in the one major incident room, together with the emergency services people. They are all aware of what is happening. At the forward command, where the actual incident is occurring, again there would be cooperation between the ADF, the police emergency response teams and the police department. Probably the only distinction is that—and this is theoretically because it has never actually happened in practice—once the management for an incident is formally handed over to the ADF, they have responsibility for it and the police agencies would only assist them.

**Mr CAMERON THOMPSON**—If a technique like gas were used, as in the Russian incident—I am still using that example, although I am not trying to highlight the possibility of

gas being used or anything like that—would the police still be able to communicate with the health and ambulance people or would they be handing over to the military ambulance and doctors?

**Commissioner Atkinson**—No. I think that that information in terms of the nature of the substance would and should be made available to everyone. The particular tactic that is to be employed should and would be made available to everyone. Essentially, our policy from a policing response here in Queensland is to contain the scene and negotiate a response using the least possible amount of force. Our ideal scenario is to contain the scene to protect the public and then negotiate a response rather than use force. If we do need to use force, we endeavour to use the minimal amount of force—that is the policing response. The ADF would generally only become involved—and this is theoretically—when the negotiation option had run out and when the use of force or the circumstances were beyond the capability of the state police jurisdictions; that is when the SAS would become involved. At that point, the situation—and it is a significant situation—has obviously deteriorated to where it has reached that stage. There is a sequence of stages that would develop before the ADF would become involved to the extent.

**Mr CAMERON THOMPSON**—Moving away from the ADF and on to other federal agencies, would there be a full understanding of all the techniques and nuances that may become involved, for example, when you are liaising with air traffic controllers in a hijack type situation or something like that? I know that their technology moves on dramatically all the time and that the types of things that are available on aircraft and the types of communication systems that are used are constantly marching forward. Is there a complete understanding of the potential opportunities there so that you understand fully what is going on in relation to the initiatives that they can take?

**Commissioner Atkinson**—I certainly expect so, yes. As I mentioned earlier, in every training exercise that is ever conducted, inevitably the lessons that come from that are in the areas where potentially coordination and communication can be improved. I think that is probably a positive thing. It would be pointless to hold a training exercise and for there not to be some lessons learnt and benefits gained. In terms of interoperability, you are quite right: communication is absolutely fundamental and in the police department and the ADF similar terms are used. So, for example, if people talk about the JIG—that is the Joint Intelligence Group—and there is a common understanding of such terminology.

In my view, you are also correct about identifying strategies and tactics. For example, if it is determined that to gain entry to a premises, it is necessary to use what is called dynamic breaching or explosive entry—in other words, to attach an explosive charge to a roller door or a similar point of entry to a building—the procedures and training for that are to a common standard across Australia. Even when describing the four sides of a building—the front, the two sides and the back of a building—common terminology is used so that there is no misunderstanding about what is being said and what is going to happen. The area of air traffic controllers is something that I would probably need to take on notice, but my clear understanding is that in the arrangements we have and the training we do, there is a capacity for police and emergency response personnel to actually be in the air traffic control tower as an incident unfolds.

**Mr CAMERON THOMPSON**—I understand that but I am talking about, for example, the old transponders they used to give advice about a hijack, where a pilot did not have to do anything apart from press a button to say there was a hijack taking place. I am sure they have other elements and things that they use now. Is there a full understanding within the police and the people who are negotiating of the things they can use within the air traffic control network to achieve an outcome?

**Commissioner Atkinson**—In my view there is, and there is excellent cooperation between the airline companies, the civil aviation authorities and the management of airports. There is very good capacity to quickly identify the information needed to be of assistance. An example in relatively recent times was the extortion ransom attempt in Sydney about five or six years ago where it was claimed that there was a bomb on a Qantas aircraft—it was going via Darwin to Hong Kong, I think. I thought that the response from all of the agencies demonstrated a very sound capacity in that regard. As it turned out, it was an extortion hoax. The amount of money was in the order of half a million dollars, but the capacity to respond to that was reassuring at the time.

**Mr CAMERON THOMPSON**—Following on from that, we have had security upgrades at airports. In your view, in determining the level of those security upgrades with terrorism in mind, has the liaison between the agencies conducting the upgrades and the people at the state level been satisfactory? Have any holes or problems emerged as a result of that?

**Commissioner Atkinson**—I believe it has been satisfactory. In the many areas of critical infrastructure and potential threats, airports are a major focus. In Queensland we have three major international airports—Cairns, Brisbane and on the Gold Coast—let alone all the other airports that exist throughout this state. I think it has been satisfactory. The ultimate test would be an incident, and none of us wants that to occur. One of our key focuses is on prevention rather than having to respond to an incident. I believe there is a very good level of cooperation between the federal agencies, the state agencies and the private sector such as the Brisbane Airport Corporation.

**Mr BAIRD**—Following on from my colleague's comment about intelligence sharing, do you feel that that is adequate?

**Commissioner Atkinson**—I do. I think it is critical, and I can only speak for the Queensland environment. For me, it is probably one of the most fundamentally important issues. Clearly, our goal should be to try and prevent something happening rather than having to respond to it. We are well placed in Australia—hopefully, in one sense—in that we are a relatively small country compared to the United States. I would be hopeful that the communication that has gone out to the public to be alert but not alarmed and to communicate any information you have to the authorities would put us in a good position.

**Mr BAIRD**—So you are regularly being updated on intelligence information regarding terrorism. You do not see any problems or lack of information from federal agencies in doing so?

**Commissioner Atkinson**—No, but again—and I am not trying in any way to escape the question—the proof of this will only be known in the fullness of time. We have a daily liaison here with the Australian Federal Police and with ASIO. The cooperation between the state and

federal authorities is excellent. That was underpinned in terms of the training and preparation that went into the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, and it has continued. So I am very comfortable with the arrangements. Having said that, information comes from a variety of sources and what is critical is our processes to ensure that the information is progressed—in other words, passed to the right people—and is correctly analysed and acted on. They are the fundamental things in terms of intelligence gathering.

**Mr BAIRD**—The committee wants to ensure that we do not have any glitches in between. Ms Taylor, do you feel that it is also appropriate from an overall Queensland government viewpoint that that briefing on intelligence matters is coming through right across the board from Commonwealth agencies?

**Ms Taylor**—Yes, I am confident. We work within the national counter-terrorism framework. We have our two Queensland government representatives on the National Counter-Terrorism Committee: the Deputy Commissioner, Dick Conder, and the Deputy Director-General of the Premier's department. We have established communication protocols between us and the PSCC and, through that arrangement, through the Queensland Police, with ASIO and so on. Working from there, we have a high-level working group with a key person representing each Queensland government agency. They then have key contacts in the industry sectors that their portfolio relates to. So we have communication coming through from our industry partners. They know to whom to feed any information that they are aware of—either to the Queensland government or through the local police. There is a number of ways it can be captured.

**Mr BAIRD**—In the Premier's department, are you involved in any way in gap analysis—that is, whether there are gaps that are likely to occur and what they would be, particularly in this area?

**Ms Taylor**—I think I would go back to the police commissioner's point about gap analysis. It is not as if there is a definitive, perfect arrangement and if you can identify the gaps and fill them in then you will have a perfect arrangement. Terrorism and counter-terrorism do not work that way. Our approach is to be more proactive, working with our partners. In a state like Queensland, we are very widely dispersed. We have big provincial cities all up the coast. We have three international airports and eight port authorities. We have a very strong local government sector and there are the private sector critical infrastructure owners and operators. We are working with all those people, providing briefing sessions and providing tools where they can look at their own responsibilities to protect their infrastructure and do their risk identification, risk assessment and all their business continuity planning and recovery planning for if they had an incident. It is a matter of broader education with all our partners and all working closely together.

**Mr BAIRD**—Dr Fitzgerald, does it occur in the health area as well that you have effective coordination with the Commonwealth health department on this issue?

**Dr Fitzgerald**—Yes, it does. We have been meeting quite regularly with the Commonwealth health department and all of the states to try to look at not only our capacity to respond but also our protection of our facilities. We are also working within the state environment in terms of identifying what our critical infrastructure is, how we can protect it and how we can keep the business going if that infrastructure were to be subject to some sort of event.

**ACTING CHAIR**—Do you have your own risk management analysis of the intelligence that you get?

**Commissioner Atkinson**—There is regular review, through risk management processes, of how we do things. Again, complacency is what we have to avoid at all costs. It is very important, I think—and certainly civic leaders in the community have this responsibility—to keep reassuring and informing the public to contact the authorities if they see anything suspicious, and to have a capacity for them to do that and to reassure them that people will not think that they are being ridiculous if they do so. It is far better to have the information than to not have it at all.

Having said that, we have to have processes in place where the information is evaluated and shared, and that is the area of risk management where the information coming in is being effectively and properly assessed in a timely, appropriate way and is being passed on. What we endeavour to do in the Queensland Police Service is to err on the side of caution. Rather than make a judgment we would rather pass the information on, regardless of how tenuous or irrelevant it might seem, than not pass it on. There is daily liaison here between the three key agencies—the Queensland Police, ASIO and the AFP. That is enhanced by higher level arrangements.

One of the things that makes systems work well is when people know each other. One of the benefits of the NCTC and former SACPAV is that, in those twice yearly meetings where there is a representative from the premier's department from each state and jurisdiction and the deputy commissioner from each state—Deputy Commissioner Conder is here today as well—there is a capacity for people to get to know each other. The key people at the Protective Security Coordination Centre meet twice a year, at least, with the deputy commissioner, so I think that is important as well.

**Mr BAIRD**—Would you mind explaining those acronyms—SACPAV and the other one? I asked my colleague and he did not know either.

**Commissioner Atkinson**—The National Counter-Terrorism Committee is the continuation of the former SACPAV, which is the Standing Advisory Committee for Protection Against Violence. The body in Canberra that provides the administrative support to the NCTC is the Protective Security Coordination Centre, which is now operating on a 24-hour capacity. My point essentially is that one of the ways to minimise gaps and to minimise risk is to have people who actually know each other and interact on a regular basis. I think that builds up a lot of confidence and it enhances communication.

**ACTING CHAIR**—That leads me to one more question in this regard, and I do not want to throw a dead cat onto the table or infer that I am being a smart Alec: it is no state secret that relationships between federal bodies and state bodies have sometimes gone through certain strains. It would seem to me that if there is not absolute trust between the state bodies and the Commonwealth bodies, we are behind the eight ball, for a start. I know a lot of that has been on a competitive basis, and I think in some cases there has been a lack of general trust, working both ways. Are you happy that the relationships are in fact as close as they can be, or is there room to move to improve them?

**Commissioner Atkinson**—Yes, I am happy here in Queensland that the relationships are very sound and effective. I think there is always room to improve. At the risk of being repetitive, one of the fundamental aspects in our approach to this should be that there is no finishing line. We never get to a point where we have bridged any gap that might exist and where we say, ‘Okay, we have now completed all we need to do in this area.’ I think we have to have a mind-set that says, ‘No, we will never reach the finishing line with this and we need to have a mind-set of continuous review and continuous improvement.’ Again, if you do not mind my saying so, I think that the role of committees such as yours is quite important in that regard.

This does sound self-serving, I know, but with the CHOGM preparation and the ongoing arrangements here, I feel very confident that we are in good shape here in Queensland, and your point is well taken. There is always a risk of interagency ambition, and there is always a risk of a lack of cooperation. But I am not seeing that here in Queensland. What I am seeing is a mind-set that transcends that and works together for the common good. We need to maintain that.

**Mr BAIRD**—As a side question on that—and it is only partially relevant: do you think the new Australian Crime Commission has helped to better coordinate issues related to criminal intelligence on a national basis?

**Commissioner Atkinson**—Yes. The new Australian Crime Commission has absorbed the former Australian Bureau of Criminal Intelligence, which was previously a separate entity. I think, quite frankly, that is too early to call; and I do not say that from any negative context at all. I think the potentiality is there for that to happen.

**Mr BAIRD**—Yes; now that you have got the police commissioners coming together on one board from the various states.

**Commissioner Atkinson**—Yes, the potential for that to occur is there, in my view.

**Mr Kinnane**—I wonder whether I could comment further on your question, just from an emergency services perspective and to complement what the police commissioner has said. The cooperation between emergency services at the state level and the Commonwealth level has never been better and the partnership that exists between emergency services and, for example, the Police Service in the state is extremely strong. They are strong relationships at the professional level, built on a foundation of frequent, coordinated desktop exercises and practical exercises. May I offer your committee a further comment in that we think it is a very positive move that Emergency Management Australia, now part of the Attorney-General’s Department, is now included on the National Counter-Terrorism Committee—it was not included before. We now have a National Counter-Terrorism Plan which incorporates consequence management considerations as well as crisis management. Obviously all jurisdictions need to be focused on preventing a crime from happening but, in the sad case that it does happen, we need to ensure that whole-of-government arrangements are in place. There are very good coordinated arrangements built on good relationships at that level as well.

**Ms Taylor**—Could I give you an example of our good working relationship. We recently held a jointly sponsored Australian government and Queensland government desktop exercise, looking at our critical infrastructure. It was facilitated by Mr Ed Tyrie from the PSCC and we had representation from ASIO with us there. We had over 100 people from various industry

sectors—the 10 key sectors we have identified in our planning, which include power, water, transport, ICT, health et cetera. We also had observers from other states, who were very pleased to be part of it. It was a very well-organised, well-run and well-received exercise and we all learnt a lot from it. So we appreciate the assistance and partnership we have with the Australian government.

**Mr BAIRD**—This is all good news.

**Mr CAMERON THOMPSON**—I understand that the state and territory governments, according to this, are responsible for identifying the critical infrastructure or, I suppose, points of vulnerability. I wonder if you could comment on the capacity or the preparedness of the states to be able to assess risk or the potential for risk in the area of ICT—computers, Internet, hacking. These things are way beyond me. We can all see the threat of a fire or something like that, but do we have the capacity at that level to properly go through and vet these things and identify where the problems and the weak points in the infrastructure may be?

**Commissioner Atkinson**—I share your view in that it is a rapidly changing and emerging field and there would never be a capacity to be complacent. I think we are heading in the right direction with it. Under the auspices of the Australian Federal Police and with the support of the jurisdictions, the Australian High Tech Crime Centre has been established. It is based in Canberra and all jurisdictions are contributing to that. Certainly my understanding is that there is again good cooperation between the federal agencies more broadly and the state agencies in terms of national information technology infrastructure protection. Clearly that area, together with areas such as power and transport, is a key factor in terms of essential infrastructure. Much work in this area has been done in the United States and in other jurisdictions as well, outside of Australia, and it is my understanding that there is very healthy sharing of information in that regard. It is probably fair to say—and I think you have indicated this—that it is perhaps the most sensitive and vulnerable of all areas in the security environment because the consequences of damage to the information technology infrastructure throughout Australia are quite significant. Of course, business has a key role in that as well.

I think the current activity is appropriate and sound. However, it is indeed an area where I think one cannot predict with certainty. I guess I am trying to say that it is very much an ongoing area and one where in the short term at least, and possibly in the long term or medium term, there will be no definitive conclusion. If, for example, you want to put security around an area of essential infrastructure, in the normal course of events you can guard it; if it is a fuel facility, a power facility or an airport you can put guards and screening there. But information technology is an entirely different context and in that sense it is probably our most challenging area.

**Mr CAMERON THOMPSON**—In relation to commercial entities, are you satisfied that, when there are threats or concerns arising in relation to their computer security or hacking or the treatment of it, they are adequately passing on developments in that area, or is it an area in which we tend to get too much of people sweeping things under the carpet?

**Commissioner Atkinson**—While this is not directly related to counter-terrorism, there is a view—and it is not necessarily my view—that sometimes financial institutions do not want to make breaches of their systems public, and if that is in fact the case, it is understandable. I do not have any direct evidence of it; I am only expressing it as a view. It would also be understandable

that perhaps people engaged in business enterprises generally would not want to make public the shortcomings that they have identified. I think it is important, if it is possible within the security framework, that there be encouragement for private enterprise to share information with government. I am hopeful that the Australian High Tech Crime Centre will be a catalyst to facilitate that sort of thing. Again, as the acting chair mentioned a moment ago, there is I suppose a need to put aside individual issues for the common good in this area, and I hope that that could be encouraged. But I do not know that it is necessarily a perfect world in that regard currently.

**Mr BAIRD**—The Australian High Tech Crime Centre in the AFP have not been operating long, but have you found them effective so far?

**Commissioner Atkinson**—Yes, I think there are some really promising signs. One of the many challenges in this area is, of course, that it is borderless. An activity can go across many countries internationally before it gets to Australia. But certainly the initial signs are extremely encouraging.

**Mr BAIRD**—Yes, especially in the cybercrime area, where there are vulnerabilities as well.

**Commissioner Atkinson**—Yes.

**Mr BEVIS**—I noticed in the paper that Dr Keliher distributed earlier that Queensland has recently received some equipment for monitoring and responding to CBR incidents. Is that the standard equipment that all of the relevant agencies in the country are planning to acquire, or is it Queensland identified? I also noted that some training of trainers has recently been conducted by EMA, and I would be interested in your feedback on the appropriateness and effectiveness of that training and how it has subsequently been disseminated from the ‘training the trainers’ program.

**Mr Kinnane**—As you are aware, the Commonwealth has funded the Chemical, Biological and Radiological Enhancement Program, which has been designed to provide each Australian jurisdiction with the same base level of detection and personal protective clothing capability. The program is funded entirely by the Commonwealth. It is estimated that \$1.7 million worth of equipment will be allocated to the area over the next two financial years. The Queensland Fire and Rescue Service received the equipment early last month and is currently testing that equipment. A further \$30,000 from the Commonwealth will be allocated for maintenance of the equipment until the end of the 2004-05 financial year. The equipment—and we have an extensive list of it if the committee would like that information—has been allocated on the base of risk and need not only to the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service but also to the Queensland Ambulance Service, the Queensland Police Service and Queensland Health. I will now ask Mr Pagano to add to that.

**Mr Pagano**—In response to the question in relation to the standardisation of equipment, EMA are now reporting through Attorney-General’s and were successful in procuring that money from the Commonwealth. The purchase of that equipment and the specifications were in fact coordinated through the national CBR working group, of which I am the state representative. The \$1.7 million of equipment that Queensland has in a cache is in fact the exact equipment that is duplicated in every other state. That was one of the fundamental issues that we needed to comply with. The advantage of that obviously is that the states then do have a true



interoperability. Their operations are the same: the equipment and training in the use of that equipment is identical. One foundation of the arrangement was that if the equipment was required in another state, each state would transport 10 per cent of its cache to that state.

**Mr BEVIS**—Did Queensland have any say in selecting the type of equipment that would be required? Was that part of a national framework?

**Mr Pagano**—Yes we did, at a national CBR working level. All states had a say in the type of equipment. In fact, Queensland had input at a technical level through our RACE scientific person, Dr Mike Logan, who provided that advice nationally. Not only did he provide advice in relation to personal protective equipment, but he also provided advice nationally in relation to detection equipment.

**Mr BEVIS**—What about training and train the trainer?

**Mr Pagano**—In relation to acquiring a portion of the federal cache, EMA had to provide consistent training in the use of the equipment. They have coordinated that, and that training commenced some two months ago. Again, there are representatives from each state so there is commonality in the training and use of the equipment.

**Mr BAIRD**—What about heavy lifting equipment?

**Mr Pagano**—Heavy lifting equipment is not part of the CBREP equipment initiative; that is more a part of our urban search and rescue cache. There is a standard cache of equipment required for urban search and rescue. We also have access on a contract basis to heavy lifting equipment—cranes and so forth.

**Mr BAIRD**—Does that happen on an automatic basis? How long would it take you to put that in place?

**Mr Pagano**—Again, that would depend on the location. I have a list of contractors for Queensland that we have standing arrangements with, but that would depend on the location.

**Mr CAMERON THOMPSON**—Somewhere along the line someone told me about the problems with hose or hydrant connections being different around the states. I think I picked this up from one of the rural fire brigades that went to Canberra. Is that a true situation? Is that something where there is a problem in relation to interoperability? What sorts of steps are being taken, if it exists, to address it?

**Mr Pagano**—In relation to the hoses, different states do have different couplings. From a bush firefighting perspective, that certainly creates some challenges. Queensland is kitting out its appliances with adapters so that we have interoperability with other states. From a CBR perspective, that is less important because the resourcing in relation to firefighting and hoses, in my view, would not be an issue.

**Mr BAIRD**—Tourism of course is probably more important to this state than it is to any other and there are significant numbers of international visitors. Given the Bali situation—the nightclub in a tourist locale—and the Marriott Hotel in Jakarta, obviously tourism centres are

areas of high vulnerability. What dialogue do you have with the tourism industry, and do you have regular meetings with tourism leaders and hotel managers to coordinate your tourism task force activities?

**Ms Taylor**—Yes, we do. In Queensland, alongside our project of looking at critical infrastructure, we have a subset of critical infrastructure where mass gatherings occur. That would include our key tourism sites—the big theme parks, our big stadia et cetera. We are working with the owners and operators of those and with the relevant tourism organisations regionally as well as on a state-wide basis, providing briefings and material for them to consider in how they would meet their responsibilities to have the maximum protection of their areas.

**Mr BAIRD**—Are these training sessions? Is this a briefing or a piece of paper or what?

**Ms Taylor**—There are various levels of briefing—the more educative level at the tourism organisation level. But then there are specific briefings, and planned exercises, at a more local level. Frank, did you want to talk about the one you mentioned before?

**Mr Pagano**—At a local level in relation to large events, particularly tourism, there are some very good examples, particularly from the fire service perspective. I am not talking for the Queensland Police Service. We have got great examples in relation to the events organisation at Indy, for one; schoolies week would be another one that I would cite. Queensland has got vast experience in relation to working with that industry.

**ACTING CHAIR**—With regard to border controls, if there is a Bali type of attack or another type of attack, what is the capacity of Queensland to control the exit and entry of people? Do you have any provisions in a case like that to restrict people's travel? Are there any controls on domestic transportation—airports, trains and roads? Are there special security provisions for VIPs who might be in the vicinity at the time of such an attack? Is there an ongoing review of situations and high-value targets or likely targets, such as the tourism entities we have mentioned?

**Commissioner Atkinson**—Certainly the issue of border protection and control is a key one for us here in Queensland because we have a very long coastline and we are the only state in Australia that truly has an international border—with Papua New Guinea in the Torres Strait. There are a range of localised issues which, if you wish me to, I can go into in some more detail in terms of what happens in the Torres Strait.

In terms of the specific question if there were an incident—that is, how do we screen people leaving the country—primarily we could effectively only do that in one of two ways. That would be with the cooperation of the Commonwealth authorities through the Customs and Immigration processes, which I think are pretty sound. There is a capacity for the national alert systems to be put in place. That is only with people whose identity we know, of course. The other area, which is the more problematic one, is of departure points. I would see those as not being through aircraft but through vessels. Of course we have many ports, not just in Queensland but in Australia, where people could perhaps depart by boat. Certainly that would be more problematic than air travel.

In terms of the protection of individuals we have quite a comprehensive capacity at the moment, which is based essentially on, firstly, where the person is from. Clearly at the present time if there were a VIP from the United States they would automatically attract a level of security protection in this state and, as I understand it, elsewhere in Australia simply because of the nationality issue. There are a range of categories of persons who automatically attract close personal protection arrangements, including dignitaries and royalty. Secondly there is the issue of specific intelligence or information about a particular person, event or entity which would warrant a level of security response. It is in stages and it depends on the individual or, alternatively, the extent of the threat or information that is available.

**Mr BAIRD**—In terms of legislative backup that you have for terrorism, could you outline—I do not know if you are the appropriate one to do this, Ms Taylor—what you have implemented in terms of legislation in Queensland to complement the Commonwealth terrorism legislation and whether there is additional legislation proposed?

**ACTING CHAIR**—It is also a situation with legislation that was supposed to be in place by October.

**Mr BAIRD**—Yes.

**ACTING CHAIR**—I am just wondering how close the Queensland government is to getting all of that in place, because I do not think that any other states have met the deadline yet.

**Ms Pink**—This is talking about the COAG review of legislation to ensure that it is sufficiently strong. We in Queensland commenced our review in December of last year and we have a number of pieces of legislation already in place. There are the special events powers which are in the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act. The Chemical, Biological and Radiological Emergency Powers Amendment Act was also passed earlier this year. Queensland Police actually have access to the powers of the Crime and Misconduct Commission, which enable them to be able to access coercive powers if they need to if, working through their federal counterparts, there is still a requirement to seek further information. Obviously, the state has supported the new Commonwealth terrorism offences legislation through the reference of power. We have made small changes, for example, to ensure that the state DPP can prosecute federal offences, including terrorism offences. There are some more reforms which are still under way and which we anticipate will come to fruition in due course.

**ACTING CHAIR**—Do you think that you have 80 per cent of the requirement in place?

**Ms Pink**—A large proportion; there are not a great many outstanding.

**Commissioner Atkinson**—I do not know that we could quantify it to that extent. What is always important to recognise is that ultimately terrorism is a criminal offence. Generally, that would be in the form of murder, and there is already existing legislation. We would fall back essentially on a lot of our existing legislation and on our capacity, which I think is quite sound. Again, this is an area, as Louisa Pink has indicated, in which there are still some things that are under consideration but I think our current legislative capacity is actually quite sound.

**Mr BAIRD**—What are your powers of investigation and interrogation?

**Commissioner Atkinson**—There is nothing to stop us here. If there were to be a terrorist incident, I would suspect that we would have absolutely strong support from the Commonwealth and that all Commonwealth powers could be applied here in Queensland; I do not think there would be any difficulty with that at all. So the combination of Commonwealth powers together with the state powers that have been outlined would be satisfactory, in my view. I do not want to seem in any sense to be diminishing the issue of powers, but investigation and interrogation always rely on a capacity for investigation. Investigation often is heavily dependent on information from the public. Interrogation depends on the capacity of the individual being interrogated to actually answer the questions. So there is no perfect model with this that will guarantee results. I think we have good systems in place, as has been mentioned, within the CMC here. The government have extended to the CMC the capacity to conduct coercive hearings—they have taken away people's normal rights—to get them to answer questions, to force them to answer questions. But at the end of the day, as good as those things are and as important as they are, they do not provide an absolute guarantee that people are going to necessarily confess to everything they want known.

**Mr CAMERON THOMPSON**—If you are relying on relayed powers, isn't there a risk of a time delay that might apply in getting those into place for you to be able to act, particularly if there were a real time-critical incident? Obviously, these are the kinds of things that have come up.

**Commissioner Atkinson**—I did not mean to say—and I did not think I said—that we rely on Commonwealth powers. What I thought I said and certainly meant to say was that if there were a terrorist incident I would expect that there would be unhesitating cooperation between all jurisdictions and the federal and state governments and that the availability of Commonwealth powers would be there as a given.

**Mr CAMERON THOMPSON**—On a different subject, I want to ask about the occurrence or prevalence of hoaxes. We went through all those hoaxes over white powder everywhere. It must have been tremendously draining for the resources of the emergency services. I just wonder what has been happening. I noticed a report about something that happened very close to my patch. I do not know if it falls into the category of a hoax, but there was that issue about Wivenhoe Dam and diagrams and things found in a bucket. What has been the prevalence of hoaxes? Is there any trend in terms of the number of hoaxes increasing or declining in any particular areas? Are risks being posed by those things and are we addressing that issue in the way that we should be?

**Commissioner Atkinson**—Thank you for the question. It is certainly one that is fundamental to both the emergency services and the police. It is a very important issue. Sadly, the experience following the bombing in Centennial Park, Atlanta, during the Olympics in the United States was that police and emergency services agencies were inundated with hundreds of hoax phone calls. There is a small minority of people in any community who are totally irresponsible. The anthrax scare here in Australia recently was underpinned by numerous hoaxes. I forget the precise number, but there were hundreds of reports. Of course not one was a true anthrax situation, but each of them had to be addressed.

Ongoing bomb hoaxes are probably one of our most disturbing areas of concern. To highlight a recent example, whoever was responsible for the bomb hoax—which was theoretically a bomb in a shoe box—had gone to the trouble of putting inside the shoe box apparatus that resembled a

bomb. The first response of our emergency ordnance response team or bomb squad is to X-ray the device. The X-ray in this situation was not able to disclose whether or not it was in fact a real device. That indicated a level of hoax awareness and planning that really is quite a concern.

We have to respond to each complaint. As you would expect, hoaxes tend to go up during school holiday periods as well. We have to respond, but we have to also temper the response with a pragmatic capacity so as not to have our resources wasted. There will be times when the initial response will have to be balanced in terms of other considerations. If there are multiple hoax incidents occurring, there will need to be a prioritisation and a screening process in terms of attaching to the particular hoax a rating, if you like, of just how credible it is and what the response needs to be. On balance, we err on the side of caution always. We never take things cheaply. Whilst it is an enormous impost on resources, we endeavour to provide a complete response to every call that is made or every piece of information that is provided to us.

**Mr BAIRD**—On that basis, did you find there was a significant increase in the number of people calling following the Commonwealth distribution of literature in the ‘be alert but not alarmed’ campaign?

**Commissioner Atkinson**—Not to my recollection. I might just ask the deputy commissioner to advise on that particularly. My recollection was that, following the Commonwealth advice and the opening of the hotline number, there was not an increase in hoaxes but there was an initial supply of information that, somewhat expectedly, has tapered off now. There is a steady information flow rather than a high-level information flow.

**Mr BAIRD**—Have the phone calls been useful?

**Commissioner Atkinson**—Absolutely. It is really critical that we encourage members of the public. One of our greatest strengths here in Australia is that we are relatively small enough and have enough local community perspective to encourage people to say, ‘If you see something that’s strange or is out of kilter with your normal environment, phone up and report it.’ I think that that provides one of our greatest defence capabilities. One snippet or piece of information could link to something else and could help in preventing an incident. I think we have to constantly reassure people that that is important.

Police agencies have an important role to play in this too, so that when people do contact us we provide a very professional, courteous response that thanks them for what they have done and so that members of the public are encouraged to bring that information forward. We have to break away from an earlier mind-set, from before September 11, which would have perhaps made somebody feel as though they were a busybody. We have to get right away from that and encourage people now to say: ‘This is different; it is odd. Something is unusual here; I will ring up and report it.’ To my mind, that is one of our greatest potential strengths.

**Mr Kinnane**—I would like to offer some additional points in answer to Mr Baird’s question. There are two or three points that may be of interest to the committee. Since the white powder incidents of 2001 we have strengthened our relationship with Australia Post. As you are aware, we had a number of white powder incidents, and still do, with mail exchanges throughout the state. So we had discussions with the state manager of Australia Post and their operational people—not only those from Brisbane but also those from the provincial centres, because we

have had this experience in at least Townsville and Cairns. We did this to ensure that Australia Post personnel were also aware of roles and responsibilities and what would happen in the event of a white powder scare. I think that has worked extremely well, and we have developed a very strong partnership with Australia Post in that respect. A further example of that is that we now involve Australia Post senior representatives in our joint emergency services training programs. It is not just police, emergency services and ADF personnel—that is a good example of partnership.

Secondly, I make the point that in emergency services, with police and Queensland Health, we have improved our detection and sampling capability in the state. We have actually acquired some additional, quite expensive, equipment to assist. That lessens the load and pressure on a number of agencies, especially Queensland Health. Thirdly, as part of our statewide arrangements and particularly the major incident room at police headquarters that the Commissioner has referred to, we have a threat assessment team that is established in the event of an issue like this coming up. That group is made up of specialists from a whole range of different agencies, including the ones here at the table and other agencies as well, who can actually provide some assessment of and advice about the nature of the substance. All those things combined are working well in helping the pressure on police, emergency services and the health system in the state.

**Mr BAIRD**—There is another thing that concerns me. I met someone recently who stayed at the Marriot Hotel in Jakarta a couple of weeks before the bombing. They said that there were cars lined up in the driveway and that no-one thought about the vulnerability of them. In Queensland are you looking at key infrastructure such as hotels, nightclubs and sporting venues where there is vulnerability in terms of driveway access et cetera?

**Commissioner Atkinson**—That is a fundamentally key issue. There is a balance here that we have to apply. We have been blessed in this country in that, apart from the Hilton Hotel bombing, there has not been—

**Mr BAIRD**—We do not have quite the Jemaah Islamiah operatives in this area, we hope.

**Commissioner Atkinson**—That is correct, and we have not been through what people who lived in London went through with the IRA terrorist activity and bombings. It is a balance between getting on with life and our quality of life and being alert and aware. We have to continually try and find the right balance. I do not think we could have a situation here where every time someone sees a white van without side windows parked somewhere they become terrified that that van could contain a bomb. But if there were something about the driver of that van or where the van was parked we would encourage people to call us. It is about a balance between quality of life issues and being alert and aware. That is in the broad sense.

Specifically, of course—and this was mentioned earlier—if there were an event at a hotel, clearly we would want to see that an appropriate security threat assessment for that event was carried out and that the necessary measures were put into place. I probably cannot take it much further than that at this stage. But it is also true—as the Marriott probably indicated—that, despite our proper concern and preparation for chemical, biological and radiological incidents, one of the greatest threats that still remains is the use of bombs or explosive devices and the

targeting of what are relatively soft targets, such as hotels. We cannot exclude either of those things from our considerations.

**Mr BAIRD**—I understand it is a different environment. Nevertheless, I just wondered whether an audit had been done of the—

**Commissioner Atkinson**—Yes. Again, we see it as a major issue. Certainly if there is specific information or intelligence or a specific event, clearly you can have a capacity. But, in a broad sense, without information, I think we can only ask people to be alert and aware. I think over time what will happen is that, as premises are built and constructed, considerations that would never have been necessary or even dreamt of once will be taken into consideration—for example, security bollards that might be able to be established to prevent entry of vehicles into driveways, if need be.

**Mr BAIRD**—How does that translate in that it is really a planning and council approval issue? Do the councils get involved in the security aspect? For example, if you are building a hotel in the city, who gets involved in questioning the security aspects of it?

**Commissioner Atkinson**—Certainly councils would provide planning approvals. It is an assumption, but one would not assume that councils would object to security arrangements in that context. Certainly, as part of our arrangements, from a government perspective, we are very supportive of industry taking these things on board and we provide whatever assistance we can. I have some colleagues with me here today who, if you wanted to explore that in further detail, could expand on that.

**Mr BAIRD**—You mentioned that, when you are planning new facilities, that is looked at. I am just interested as to how that happens in reality. Is it just advice—that is, ‘We’re here if you need assistance’—or is it now on a formalised basis that you look at that with major infrastructure? I can understand that with government-built stadiums it might be the case but it might be a different case with private sector hotels.

**Commissioner Atkinson**—Yes, indeed. It has been an issue for some time; in fact, there is an entity called CPTED—which stands for Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design—which I think is to have a conference here in Brisbane next year. It is an international organisation. That is where crime prevention planning has been inculcated into communities, new suburbs, roads, parks, buildings and structures. This is an extension well beyond that, of course, in terms of the counter-terrorism perspective. That would relate to enabling better security both in approaches and internally—perhaps better quality glass in windows. There is a whole range of considerations that would never have been dreamt of as being necessary at an earlier time.

**Mr CAMERON THOMPSON**—The development of forensic and DNA type technology is advancing pretty rapidly. Do you have any comments in relation to the rate of that advancement and the capacity that we currently have at the state level and its coordination nationally? We have a DNA database being developed. Is that happening at a fast enough rate that we need to look at some elements of that that need to be adjusted?

**Commissioner Atkinson**—The DNA database is the CrimTrac model. That has met some challenges in terms of the original Commonwealth standard model. Some states have taken some time to come to terms with that. The essential difficulty is that in some states it is possible to take a DNA sample for what is regarded in other states as a very trivial offence. In other words, in some jurisdictions it is possible to take a DNA sample from a juvenile who commits a very minor offence of theft, while in other states they have raised the bar beyond that and said, ‘No, you can only take a DNA sample in this state for a more serious criminal offence.’ The difficulty that has arisen from that is the matching, so that, where they are in the national database, people from the state where the bar has been raised can access the state where the bar is at a very low level, if that makes sense. So the problem for CrimTrac has been the national matching arrangements, because jurisdictions enable their police departments to take DNA samples for a differing range of circumstances. That is ongoing, but it is very close to being resolved.

From the aspect of counter-terrorism, certainly forensic technology is fundamental and critical. Of course, that implies—sadly—that we are responding to an incident rather than preventing it. But certainly we need that response capacity. In terms of the technical aspects of bomb scene analysis we need to progress, and I believe we are progressing well with that. In other words, if there is an incident, we have a capacity to go to the incident and retrieve the evidence. I think the AFP response in Bali was quite outstanding in that regard and in what was achieved there. The AFP was strongly supported by the state jurisdictions in that regard. The other obvious example is the use of DNA to identify victims. That has become an enormously valuable tool, because the traditional identification methods related to things such as clothing, tattoos, fingerprints and jewellery. DNA has taken that to a whole new level in terms of our capacity to identify body parts and victims.

**Mr BAIRD**—In my own electorate there were six young women who were killed. That brings it back to you personally. The worst aspect of it for our office was the first few days, when there was a range of phone calls from parents who could not track down their daughters anywhere. There was a rush—people said they had seen them here and seen them there. They said, ‘We thought we saw them in hospital,’ and, ‘Could you check?’ and so on, backwards and forwards. In terms of your area here, have you got plans for one central place where someone can take on board those issues; somewhere parents are able to ring instead of simply an emergency number—a central coordinated plan for relatives where they do not get the run-around? There were all kinds of people who were saying, ‘I think I saw your daughter here,’ or, ‘I saw her there.’ That part of it was just awful.

**Mr Kinnane**—Certainly those arrangements would be in place with an incident or an event of that size. What would happen in practice would be that the state crisis centre would be activated and—along with the involvement of Queensland Health and a range of other agencies—the call centre facility would be activated to assist those families so that what we would have in Queensland would be that whole-of-government coordinated approach. If you would like any more detail—

**Mr BAIRD**—To me that was a real problem first of all, because no-one was sure where to go and there were different people. There needs to be a central place—one spot. To follow up on that topic, we tend to concentrate on the security aspect of airports for obvious reasons—because of September 11. What about the shipping security issue with containers in the ports and the potential there? I know that there has been some federal legislation in terms of the X-raying and



scanning of containers, but in terms of the shipping precincts are you paying particular attention to those areas because of the size of the ships that are coming in et cetera?

**Commissioner Atkinson**—I can make some comment in relation to that, but we do have someone here from the Queensland Department of Transport. If it is all right with the chair we might invite that person to respond.

**Ms Taylor**—Do you want to make some comments first?

**Commissioner Atkinson**—Could I make my comments after the Queensland Department of Transport? Because of our liaison with the federal authorities we may be able to add to the Queensland Department of Transport perspective.

**Mr Quirk**—In the maritime and shipping sector there is a multilayered approach to security. You are correct that Customs is instigating a new container screening program. It is not as extensive as the United States program, but it is fairly extensive for Australia's purposes. There are X-ray machines at major ports, and an X-ray facility was established at the port of Brisbane in the last six to nine months, which is now being used for both counter-terrorism and other aspects of detecting illegal imports.

On the shipping and port sector, 1½ years ago the International Maritime Organisation agreed to a new international code for security. That is to be implemented by July next year through proposed Commonwealth legislation. That legislation is currently in the Senate. The Queensland port network is working with the Commonwealth and with the Queensland Department of Transport to be well positioned to have it in place before July next year.

On the shipping side, there are two stages to that. For Australian flag shipping—and the majority of ships in Australia are overseas flagships, as you are aware—there is a program under the code for those ships to go through a security screening process. For foreign ships coming to Australia or trading on our coast, the Department of Transport and Regional Services in Canberra is establishing protocols for those ships in close liaison with Customs and the AFP in terms of having border controls in place to assist in ensuring that, before they reach our shores, ships have gone through a vetting process in terms of both cargo and crew.

**Mr BAIRD**—For a major cruise ship sitting at the port here in Brisbane, is there any special checking? Do you have divers checking in any way for security or is that seen as taking it too far?

**Mr Quirk**—It is not taking it too far at all. Since September 11, all major ports in Australia have worked closely with the local police in instigating locally based security arrangements. For selected cruise ships here in Brisbane, there is very close liaison with the water police and, on some ships, they have a permanent water police presence around the ship as well as police patrolling the shore precincts. Under the new code arrangements, that will need to be formalised in terms of the port security plan. Also, as part of the code, there are requirements for the screening of passengers and visitors to those ships before they walk on board. The screening is taking place now on some cruise ships, but, under the new code and Commonwealth legislation, that will be a requirement for all cruise ships in Australia.

**Mr BAIRD**—Some of these megaships are 120,000 tonnes, so they are quite huge.

**Mr Quirk**—It certainly presents quite a challenge in terms of logistics and a quick turnaround.

**Commissioner Atkinson**—The only thing I could add is that, clearly, the issue of shipping, not only commercial ships but also smaller vessels, is one of our challenges, given the size of our coastline and the number of entry ports that are available.

**ACTING CHAIR**—Do you have any particular feelings about the establishment by the ADF of a tactical response group on the east coast? Is it useful?

**Commissioner Atkinson**—Yes, absolutely. Previously, of course, while there was always a commando unit in Sydney, the primary response unit was in Perth. So that is a welcome addition to the ADF's capability and potential assistance to the policing jurisdictions.

**Mr CAMERON THOMPSON**—Can I move to the area of antidotes, antibiotics, vaccines and treatments. There is a statement about those being distributed among the states by the Commonwealth. I just wanted to find out how cooperation was going in relation to determining what is an appropriate level of stocking. Are you satisfied with the way that arrangement works in Queensland in terms of the stocks that you are provided with and the types of things that you can deal with under the counter-terrorism plan?

**Dr Fitzgerald**—Certainly. I would suggest that these things that we are talking about could be considered under two or three broad areas. There are obviously specific antidotes, but there are also antibiotics in the case of a major infectious disease outbreak. The relationship between the Commonwealth and the various states on the distribution has been, as we have indicated I think, genuinely very supportive and very cooperative, and certainly stockpiles of the agents have been distributed. The challenge in Queensland of course is always our geography—exactly where do we place those stockpiles and how do we get them around the state without dissipating the value of the size of the stockpile. At the moment most of the antidotes that we have been provided with are in safe storage in Brisbane, which means that it would be a challenge to get those to other locations as required.

But, equally, the arrangements with the Commonwealth are that if there is a major event in any particular location we would draw on the stockpiles of the various other states anyway and get those agents to the appropriate location where we could. We do not have a particular stockpile of antibiotics but we do have the advantage of a centralised store system for our health system, so we actually have fairly significant stockpiles of agents that are present here anyway, apart from those stockpiles of antibiotics that would be held in various hospitals and pharmacies across the state. So I suppose what would happen there is that we would draw down on those while we instigated arrangements to draw on the stockpiles held nationally, in other states and from suppliers as well, as required.

**Mr CAMERON THOMPSON**—I think there has been some comment about smallpox vaccines in the US. Are you provided with that kind of vaccine now? Is there a need for it? And, if so, is there a level of provision that needs to be met and is it being met?

**Dr Fitzgerald**—We are not routinely vaccinating people anymore against smallpox. The risk of smallpox is probably now limited to the potential for somebody to artificially create it and create an epidemic. I cannot answer the specific question about whether we have stockpiles of inoculate available in Australia at this stage, but we certainly do not have those stockpiles in Queensland. It is difficult, I think, to respond by taking a proactive stance. I do not think it is wise at this stage, because of the downside of inoculation against smallpox; there is quite an incidence of reaction to the inoculation. Therefore, if the risk remained relatively small then we would be placing more people at risk because of the reactions to the vaccination than could possibly benefit from it.

My colleague has just informed me that there is a small national stockpile of smallpox vaccine available. I think what would happen is that, depending on the nature of the risk and on the information available, if the risk were raised to a level where it would be valuable to start vaccinating people then I think we would have to start drawing back some vaccines from wherever they were available, both nationally and of course internationally if required.

**Mr CAMERON THOMPSON**—If you had to rate what potential threats there might be or areas in which you might need to prepare, what things would be at the top of the tree? We are talking in a counter-terrorism sense, of course.

**Dr Fitzgerald**—Again, I need to perhaps put in the rider that I have an emergency medicine background, not a public health background, so I am probably stepping a little out of my depth. But could I suggest to you that the greatest risk is probably the manipulation of existing viruses to make them more productive; that is, more lethal. We saw what happened with a community based manipulation—although not a deliberate manipulation of a virus—with SARS, and how suddenly and unexpectedly we can have a virus that is potentially lethal. So I think it is more in that sort of area. The traditional agents, whether smallpox, anthrax or things that we expect, are fairly difficult to generate and fairly difficult to manufacture. It would seem that the most likely area of risk is in the manipulation of viruses, I would suspect.

**Mr CAMERON THOMPSON**—Is that subject to some ongoing risk assessment to determine whether, basically, our preparedness is up to scratch?

**Dr Fitzgerald**—Certainly there is quite a lot of effort going on nationally in terms of the Communicable Disease Network Australia, which is the public health physicians from around Australia, who get together. They monitor not only the routine, naturally driven infectious disease outbreaks but also the risks that are around. I think we would rely on their advice as to the evolution of any higher-level risks in terms of infectious diseases and, particularly, manufactured diseases.

**Mr CAMERON THOMPSON**—You are relying on their advice. Are they actually proactively advising you as to what their view is on that?

**Dr Fitzgerald**—They are proactively advising through the Commonwealth arrangements and through the Australian Health Disaster Management Policy Committee, which I mentioned before.

**Mr BEVIS**—All of these matters have to be dealt with under a risk assessment framework. We can easily get carried away with all sorts of scenarios that may or may not have greater probability. Without trying to tempt fate, I would be interested to know what Queensland does about two aspects of its critical infrastructure—the water supply and the power supply. I have two examples of serious incidents that were not terrorist attacks but which nonetheless caused serious public dislocation. With the Sydney water supply two or three years ago, there was a problem with the giardia germ. It was not an act of terror. One wonders what might occur if someone actually did have malicious intent. The other example is the power supply in New Zealand. I cannot remember now whether it was Auckland or Wellington—

**Mr Kinnane**—Auckland.

**Mr BEVIS**—where, through no act of terror, the city was blacked out for about seven or eight days. It brings to mind what might happen to if someone were actually fair dinkum about wanting to cause harm if those things can happen without the intent of harm. I would be interested in what you might be able to tell us about the mechanisms in place to guard those critical infrastructures against problems. Secondly, were there to be a problem, what redundancy exists in the systems to accommodate, as best you can, normal society?

**Commissioner Atkinson**—That is absolutely correct: in terms of critical infrastructure, water and power are fundamentals. They have been incorporated within the ongoing review and there are steps in place and things in train to ensure that, in a generic sense, water and power supplies are taking on board—as are other areas of critical infrastructure and, we would hope, the business community—a consideration of security. Secondly, we have to encourage—but not rely on, by any means—the public to report matters. We need to encourage them to report it if they see someone near a power station facility or they see someone near a water reserve facility and they are acting suspiciously. Thirdly, the current security threat level in Australia is at medium. If there were an increase broadly in the threat level, there would be an alertness on the part of the police and the relevant authorities, and an awareness of the importance of water supply facilities and the electricity, so there would be an overall increase in security patrols broadly. Finally, the fourth area would be that, if there is any specific intelligence or information or threat in either of those areas or for that matter any other area of critical infrastructure, clearly we have appropriate responses in place.

**Mr BEVIS**—On the prevention side, I suspect Mr Kinnane has some comments about post-incident stuff. What we do about actually monitoring water quality as a routine? As a Brisbane resident, I have a bit of an interest in this and I have absolutely no idea what the answer is. Do we just take it on faith?

**Commissioner Atkinson**—My understanding is that it occurs on a regular basis and has for some time.

**Mr BEVIS**—It is a local government responsibility. Is there any sort of state interest in overview or in verifying that mechanisms are in place around this?

**Commissioner Atkinson**—From my perspective, I would have to take that question on notice and get back to you with that detail.

**Mr Kinnane**—My understanding is that it is the responsibility of local government and the water board, where a water board exists. There would be regular testing but, as the commissioner has said, if you are looking for more information we would have to come back to you.

**Mr BEVIS**—I would be interested to know the answer because, when the incident occurred in Sydney, it struck me that if we could have that problem in Sydney then it could certainly happen in any other capital.

**Mr BAIRD**—Plus there are the events in New York and Italy; it has gone on since then.

**Ms Taylor**—I would like to ask Mr Pat Vidgen, the director of our security planning area, to give you a quick briefing on our work with the owners of critical infrastructure.

**Mr Vidgen**—The critical infrastructure project that the state is running is under the auspices of the national framework. We have been conducting briefing sessions with 10 industry sectors, including the water sector. Through the Department of Natural Resources and Mines we have conducted an independent assessment of water infrastructure within the state and, under the auspices of the project, we are working with the key water infrastructure owners to ensure that these issues are being dealt with. In particular, they are looking at the risk assessment process in terms of security planning, on-site emergency planning and response planning. Those issues are being captured at the moment.

**ACTING CHAIR**—I guess this is your last chance for a free kick. Are there any messages you want us to take back to Canberra, as part of this report, on the way things may be improved?

**Mr BEVIS**—Other than more money!

**Commissioner Atkinson**—I would like to respond from the police department's perspective. I would like to make an additional comment about your initial question on communicating to the public. One thing we did not mention is that we have good liaison with the Brisbane City Council. We have a web site and a single number capacity. An 1800 number could be set up and there is also web site information. I can confirm for Mr Baird that the deputy commissioner has advised me that, following the introduction of the 1800 terrorism information number from Canberra, there was no increase here in hoaxes, but certainly there was a flow of information.

**Mr BAIRD**—Was there any increase in hits—an increase in phone calls alerting you to problems?

**Commissioner Atkinson**—There was an increase in information but not an increase in hoaxes. Finally, going back to the National Counter-terrorism Committee arrangements in terms of the three areas of exercises, training and equipment, from a police service perspective the exercises have been very strongly progressed but we do feel there is a need to ensure that the equipment and training for the specialist units are maintained or enhanced. One thing we would ask you to consider, but not necessarily give any agreement or commitment to, is that the current model for equipment is based on an equity model. All the policing jurisdictions receive the same amount equipment. For example, with ammunition, a smaller jurisdiction receives the same amount of ammunition as New South Wales. We think that should be reconsidered and the

equipment allocated, to some extent, on the basis of the size of the jurisdiction. If you could take that on board I would be grateful.

**ACTING CHAIR**—I thank you all very much for your attendance today and for your participation in this most useful roundtable discussion. We will send you a copy of the transcript of your evidence to which you can make corrections of grammar and fact. There being no objection, it is ordered that the committee receives as evidence and authorises for publication submission No. 14 from the Queensland government. There being no further business I will adjourn the committee. Thank you most sincerely. It has been a most productive morning

Resolved (on motion by **Mr Thompson**, seconded by **Mr Baird**):

That, pursuant to the power conferred by section 2(2) of the Parliamentary Papers Act 1908, this committee authorises publication of the evidence given before it and submissions presented at the public hearing this day.

**Committee adjourned at 11.53 a.m.**