

## CURRENT TRENDS AND THEIR IMPACT UPON POLICING

The paper on this topic was presented by Mr David A. Hunt QPM, Commissioner of Police in South Australia.

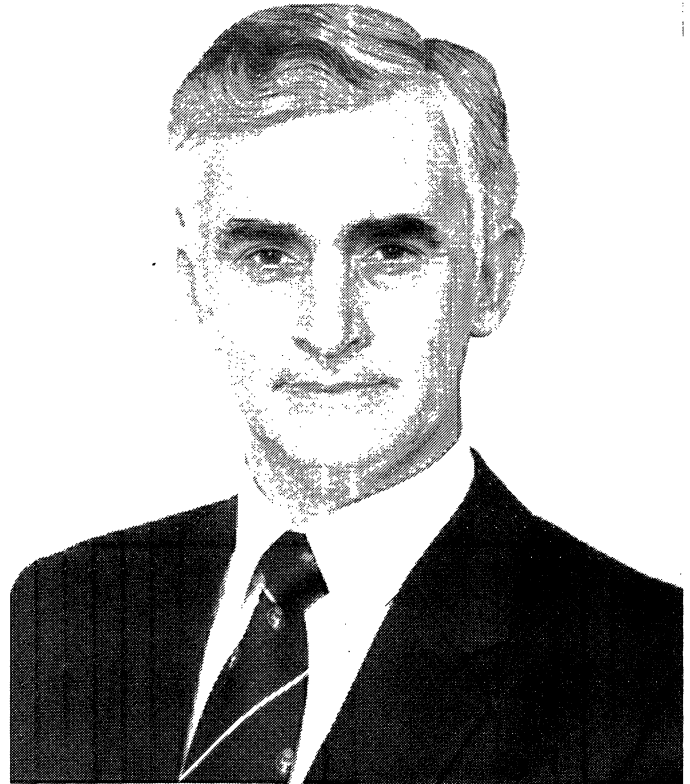
Mr Hunt has been a member of the South Australian Police Force since joining as a cadet in 1954. After an initial assignment to general duties, he spent 12 years in the Criminal Investigation Branch. He was appointed to commissioned rank in 1970 and held such diverse positions as officer in charge of a country division, second in charge of the Police Academy, Commissioner's Liaison Officer and officer in charge, Research and Development Group. He was appointed an Assistant Commissioner in 1980, Deputy Commissioner in 1982 and Commissioner in 1983.

Mr Hunt is chairman of the Board of Control of the Australian Bureau of Criminal Intelligence and a member of the Boards of the Australian Police College and the National Police Research Unit. He is also the State Co-ordinator of Disaster Plan.

His interests outside the police force include being president of the SA District of the St John Ambulance Brigade. He finds recreation — goodness knows how — in playing golf.

Mr Hunt is married with two adult children.

On reading his paper, which is reproduced here, you will understand why it was so well received by delegates at the conference.



**MR D. A. HUNT**  
*Commissioner of Police, South Australia*

### INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Over the last few decades, South Australia has experienced a series of high profile mysteries and murders. To this day, these cases continue to draw public and media interest. For example, since 1967 details of apparent breakthroughs in the disappearance of the three Beaumont children have persistently been covered by the media. Even now, it is evident that the public are still interested in the case. The Police Department often receives letters from people recalling events from the day the Beaumont children disappeared.

Public interest in the abduction of Kirsty Gordon and Joanne Ratcliffe from the Adelaide Oval has also endured, periodically, to this day.

Another well-known case in South Australia, is what has been dubbed, the "*Truro Murders*". Perhaps these murders are best known as the catalyst which established the Victims of Crime Service.

More recently, a series of male teenage abductions and murders has sparked renewed media and public interest in law and order issues.

The South Australian public has a genuine concern, not only for these cases, but also for law and order in

general. The public demands protection from the increasing level of crime and these demands continually put pressure on our police force to look for innovative policing strategies.

In 1984, the South Australia Police Department committed itself to a return to community policing and to the development of crime prevention strategies. Such a policing strategy is built upon the notion of Sir Robert Mark's cornerstones of excellence, namely policing by consent.

Already, there is evidence to suggest that crime prevention initiatives undertaken by the South Australia Police Department have had considerable success. In addition, the Police Department has recently undertaken to particularly address the needs of victims of crime. These initiatives, coupled with the continued interest our community shows for law and order issues, will play a major part in policing strategies towards the 21st Century.

### THE NEED TO RETHINK PAST POLICING STRATEGIES

Although crime prevention has always been a part of policing, over the years, our strategies in South Australia have, in response to needs, become essentially reactive. The

# CRIMINAL JUSTICE — *Towards the 21st Century*

Police Department does not lack the vision, desire or ability to provide a full provision of services. However, like all Police Departments they are only restricted by the ability of the community to pay for their expectations. Crime Prevention strategies have up until now taken a back seat, principally because their effectiveness was difficult to measure and they were comparatively unattractive because they were not seen as directly crime related. This was particularly pertinent in South Australia, where the "performance" of the police was continually under public scrutiny and so developed an emphasis towards greater professionalism.

This emphasis manifested itself in the application of science and technology to policing. It also led to the growth of new and specialised police functions. These innovations, however, tended to take priority over traditional, preventive policing strategies.

At first the change in emphasis was unobtrusive. But gradually, there was a realisation that a "high-tech" reactive style of policing was having adverse consequences for police and citizenry. The police and the public realised that the detection function of policing had been resourced at the expense of crime prevention. The police response came to be labelled as "fire brigade" policing, and the measurement was on response time, rather than on the quality of service to individuals and the community. As a result, a wedge was driven between the police and the public.

## **SOUTH AUSTRALIAN POLICE INITIATIVES TO REDRESS THIS IMBALANCE**

In 1984, the South Australia Police Department announced its intention to change its emphasis both in management and operational policing philosophy. The principal part of the corporate strategy was to elevate the importance of crime prevention and re-establish relationships between the police and the community. In 1984 Strategic Plan laid the foundation for community policing in South Australia.

The first major step the South Australia Police Department took towards establishing a strategy of community policing was the reorganisation of police resources in the Adelaide metropolitan area. The reorganisation decentralised police personnel into more local police stations with a view to encouraging improved relationships between the police and the community. Another aim was to induce a greater awareness among the community of the workings and presence of their local police.

The second major step was the implementation of crime prevention strategies. Perhaps the most familiar and visible community-based crime prevention programme set up by the Community Affairs and Crime Prevention Branch is the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme. The purpose of Neighbourhood Watch is to bring local residents to realise they have an individual and corporate capacity to intervene in those social and environmental factors which create a favourable climate for criminal activity.

Neighbourhood Watch in Adelaide has had considerable success. There is a high rate of interest among the community and there is strong evidence to suggest a decrease of crime in the defined Neighbourhood Watch areas. This success of the programme is directly dependent upon the combination of the Police Department's ability to

set up the programme effectively and public enthusiasm. The groundswell of community concern for law and order will continue to provide a solid base for future support of the Neighbourhood Watch Programme.

Other programmes established by the Community Affairs and Crime Prevention Branch have been the Schools Intervention Programme, Safety House Scheme and an extension of Blue Light Discos.

Although these programmes have been successful, the South Australia Police Department realises that crime prevention programmes cannot be planned effectively unless the extent of crime is known. Research has shown that in fact, two thirds of crimes are unreported. The ability of a community-based approach to policing "access" these unreported crimes, will be an important focus of the Police Department towards the 21st Century. We will aim to use the Community Policing Strategy to obtain an accurate picture of the extent of crime in our community. This will be important so that the actual cost of crime can be measured, and also the needs of victims of crime can be addressed.

The future success of crime prevention strategies will also be dependent upon the ability of police officers. Police officers in the future will need to be encouraged to perceive themselves not only as law enforcement officers, but also as crime prevention officers at the "grassroots" level.

We also appreciate our responsibility to educate the community about crime prevention strategies. We see it as the police role to disseminate information to create public awareness about self-protection. For example, reminders about basic household security, such as locking doors and windows, might serve to deter a potential housebreaker. Nonetheless, the community has the responsibility to act on this advice to protect itself both socially and physically.

## **ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF VICTIMS OF CRIME**

As discussed earlier, there is evidence to show that crime prevention strategies have been successful and there have been numerous examples of genuine efforts by operational police officers. The importance of crime prevention strategies cannot be understated. Through effective implementation of crime prevention programmes, it is possible to reduce the incidence of victimisation. In terms of trauma to a victim of crime, and the cost of providing post-event services, the importance of preventing the crime in the first place is paramount.

Into the next century, our crime prevention strategies can only be improved by consideration of victimology studies and continued examination of the victimisation process. Dangerous locations, situations and potential victims of crime will need to be identified by analysing times and places of victimisation. Information on the offenders' demographic characteristics and motivations will need to be collated and incorporated into crime prevention programmes. By identifying these crime causation factors, new and effective crime prevention strategies can be developed.

The establishment of new and improved crime prevention programmes will need to be introduced on a local, State and national basis.

On a local level, "grassroots" community policing will be an integral factor in the success of these programmes. It will be necessary to address unique, local problems, and

# CRIMINAL JUSTICE — Towards the 21st Century

utilise resources in the most efficient way to obliterate these problems. Once again, the ability of police officers will play a major role in both identifying local needs and taking the initiative to develop locally-based programmes.

On a State level, the success of crime prevention strategies will be dependent on the initiatives of the whole Criminal Justice System. Co-operation from all criminal justice agencies will be sought to establish a co-ordinated approach to the prevention of victimisation. Since the Police Department is an integral part of the Criminal Justice System, it will be the responsibility of the police to take the initiative to ensure crime prevention policies are incorporated into the programmes of each Department. South Australia Criminal Justice agencies appear to be on the right track with the recent establishment of a Chief Executives Committee to advise Government on such policy issues. Future liaison through this forum will be essential for the improved co-ordination of crime prevention strategies.

On a national level, practice and policy on crime prevention issues will be important to the future of policing in Australia. Last month at the Police Commissioners' Conference of the Australasia and South West Pacific Region, a resolution was adopted to provide a national policy on crime prevention. The Commissioners of Police resolved to draw to the attention of the Australian Police Ministers' Council, their united concern about the plight of victims of crime. The conference further resolved that South Australia would be responsible for producing a policy document on the plight of victims of crime in the Australasia and South West Pacific Region. From a national perspective, such a united policy on the issue of crime prevention will be important to the development of policing strategies towards the 21st Century.

Full implementation of local, State and National policies on crime prevention strategies will see the fulfillment of the South Australia Police Department's commitment in 1984 to the operational philosophy of community policing. Perhaps it will be said that, by 1988, four years after the conceptualisation of this modern day community policing approach, we could provide a functional example of this type of policing.

In the interim period the South Australia Police Department is committed to improving and developing new programmes to assist victims of crime.

As I have said previously, there is a climate of intense public interest in law and order issues in South Australia. In response, the Police Department realises the high expectations victims of crime have of the Criminal Justice System in general, and police officers specifically. Towards the 21st Century, we will need to be flexible enough to meet the challenge of crime, corruption and social disorder.

In the past there have been less than complete guidelines set for police treatment of victims. This has naturally led to police officers responding to the needs of victims, motivated by a desire to ensure that the victim would happily assist as a prosecution witness. Lack of guidelines meant investigating officers took a rather *ad hoc* approach to addressing victims' needs and providing appropriate services. The fulfillment of victims' needs has been dependent

upon the ability and personality of the police officer and/or the type of offence committed.

The aim for future policing is to induce a more uniform, structured and consistent approach to addressing the needs of victims of crime in the immediate and long-term timeframes, whilst at the same time developing policies and strategies to minimise the risks of victimisation.

Once again, this requires the development of police so they are equipped with the necessary skills to assist victims of crime. The movement towards greater professionalism in police service delivery will be an important factor into the next century.

For Complete Haircare

## ORMOND BEAUTY SALON

Ladies and Men's Hairdressing

23 Ormond Road, East Geelong, Vic, 3219  
Telephone: (052) 9 5226

## THE MEADOW INN HOTEL

CNR HUME HIGHWAY AND CAMP ROAD  
CAMPBELLFIELD, VIC, 3061

Telephone: (03) 359 1666

## MAINLINE MOTOR WRECKERS

HOLDEN — FORD — VALIANT

Open 7 days a week

Grieve Parade and Buchanan Road  
Altona North, Vic, 3025  
Phone: (03) 314 2323 or (03) 314 1303

Kindly sponsored in the interest of crime prevention

## Kevan R. Lowe

Heavy Transport Contractor

185 Henry Street, Greensborough, Vic, 3088  
TELEPHONE: (03) 435 3726

Sponsored in support of the Australian Crime Prevention Council by

## Beko Leather Co

Specialists in Ladies and Gents Leather Garments  
(Factory Prices) — Lay Bys Welcome

84 CHARLES STREET, FOOTSCRAY, VIC, 3011  
PHONE: (03) 689 8568

## Syprus Print

Specialising in Greek Printing

Taking on all kinds of Printing

- Invitations for Weddings, Christenings, Engagements
- Also the Printing of Books and Calendars.

Factory 8

599 Chandler Road, Keysborough, Vic, 3173  
Phone: (03) 798 7350 AH: (03) 798 8937

# CRIMINAL JUSTICE — *Towards the 21st Century*

In addressing this need, we have recently formed a Victims of Crime Branch. Although still in embryonic stage, this branch is developing strategies to meet the needs of the victim. In the short term the Branch will establish programmes to provide basic and essential services. The focus will be on two major issues. First, strategies will be developed to put child sexual abuse reforms into practice; second, the Branch will ensure South Australia's commitment to the United Nations' Declaration of the Rights of Victims of Crime will be carried through.

In the long term, the Victims of Crime Branch will co-ordinate police services with respect to training personnel, researching the needs of victims, evaluating programmes, liaising with other service providers, maintaining an awareness of trends nationally and internationally and advising the Commissioner on appropriate strategies to assist victims.

Planning of the Branch "today", figuratively speaking, will determine the assistance to victims of crime into the 21st Century.

At a State level, implementation of the United Nations' 17 principles on the rights of victims of crime, will be necessary to ensure the status of the victim of crime is elevated within the Criminal Justice System. Through the efforts of the Victims of Crime Branch, implementation of these 17 principles will be a high priority for the South Australia Police Department in the next six months.

Other State initiatives, such as compensation and the

implementation of victim impact statements, will also be important for victims of crime towards the next century.

Nonetheless, the South Australia Police Department insists that concentration on post-event services to victims of crime is not enough. To prevent the crime in the first place is essential. The future of community confidence in Government and the system of Justice as we know it, and for policing in this State, will be dependent upon effective implementation of crime protection programmes on a local and State level.

## FINAL COMMENTS

In drawing to a close, I would like to take this opportunity to recapitulate the main themes I have presented: Law and Order is a major issue in South Australia. The mass media places a strong emphasis on the importance of crime incidents and crime trends. This has continually placed demands on the Police Department to live up to expectations and ensure public safety in our modern, democratic society. In recent years, this has necessitated the South Australia Police Department to rethink past policing strategies and return to a community-based style of policing. From conceptualisation in 1984, the South Australia Police Department has, over the last four years, endeavoured to be a functional example of modern community policing. Nonetheless, towards the 21st Century, the success of community policing will be dependent upon the development and implementation of crime prevention programmes at a local, State and National level.

### *Our Lunch Box*

Take Away Foods  
Freshly cut sandwiches with 20 different fillings, variety of hot foods  
2000 different flavoured ice creams and milk shakes  
Lunch Orders especially catered for  
650 Sydney Road, Brunswick, Vic, 3056  
Phone: (03) 386 2514

Kindly sponsored in the interest of crime prevention

### **LANE KELLY'S CURTAINS AND BLINDS**

64 Little Malop Street, Geelong, Vic, 3220  
Opp CIVIC CENTRE CAR PARK  
TELEPHONE: (052) 21 1166

### **ANDRINA PRIVATE NURSING HOME**

Approved for Commonwealth Benefits  
Trained Staff on Duty at all Times  
360 NEW STREET, BRIGHTON, VIC, 3186  
TELEPHONE: (03) 596 3071

### **MILDURA CHILD MINDING CENTRE**

Monday-Friday 8am-6pm Bus Service Kinder Pick-Up  
CNR 14TH STREET & TEAL DRIVE  
MILDURA, 3500, VIC  
Telephone: (050) 23 7657  
After Hours: (050) 23 6063

### **The Furniture Hospital**

Antique and General Furniture Repairs and  
Renovations/French Polishing a speciality  
Choice of Finishes Available  
FACTORY 10  
1 Bricker Street, Moorabbin, Victoria, 3189  
Telephone: (03) 553 3318

### **LY VUONG TAILOR'S SUPPLIES**

Wholesale and Retail  
• Zips • Buttons • Elastics • Sewing Threads  
• We carry Spare Parts for Industrial Sewing Machines  
86 VICTORIA STREET, RICHMOND, VIC, 3121  
Phone: (03) 429 4261

### **Rabbit Express**

One Hour Photo Service Available  
Passport Photos — Enlargements etc  
236 Lonsdale Street, Dandenong, Vic, 3175  
Telephone: (03) 793 1035

### **THE OLD MILL MARKET**

Wide Variety of Choice Fruit and Vegetables  
Always Available  
c/- Howitt and Doveton Streets  
Ballarat North, 3350  
TELEPHONE: (053) 32 8022