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**THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**

**GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE AND COMMUNITY
SAFETY – REPORT NO. 9 SEPTEMBER 2020 - INQUIRY IN THE FORM OF AN EVALUATION OF
CURRENT ACT POLICING ARRANGEMENTS**

**Presented by
Mr Mick Gentleman MLA
Minister for Police and Emergency Services**

Government Response to the Standing Committee on Justice and Community Safety – Report on the Inquiry in the Form of an Evaluation of Current ACT Policing Arrangements

| Recommendation | Government Response |
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| <p>Recommendation 1</p> <p>That prior to the next AFP Agreement being signed the government must urgently address the state of the buildings which house the AFP ACT Policing and set out a clear and considered plan of action for the rectification of the unworthy nature of the accommodation for the work which these personnel undertake.</p> | <p>Noted</p> <p>The Government is committed to ensuring that ACT Policing has appropriate facilities and infrastructure both now and into the future. The 2019-20 Budget provided \$9.2 million over four years to upgrade ACT Policing facilities and in April 2020, the ACT Government invested an additional \$370,000 to address urgent works required at the City Police Station and the Traffic Operation Centre through the Screwdriver Ready Stimulus Program. The 2020-21 Budget includes funding for relocating ACT Policing’s Traffic Operations Centre from its current site at Belconnen to a fit for purpose facility which will better meet the business and operational needs of ACT Policing</p> <p>In addition to addressing the most urgent works required on the current facilities, long term planning has been underway since 2017 to provide an evidence base to guide the Government’s long term investment in ACT Policing accommodation and infrastructure. The planning takes into account the growing Canberra population, community expectations and ACT Policing’s new Police Services Model. In the 2017-18 Budget, ACT Policing was provided \$2.1 million to undertake a review of its police services model and plan for its long-term accommodation needs.</p> <p>A Strategic Accommodation Framework has been developed and a Strategic Accommodation and Infrastructure Plan is currently being finalised. This work will provide an evidence-based to guide the Government’s investment in ACT Policing’s infrastructure requirements over the next 20 years. This will ensure ACT Policing facilities are fit for purpose, in the right locations, support mobility and enable a dynamic and effective response to the needs of and from the ACT community. The Traffic Operations Centre, the Gungahlin police presence and Winchester Police Centre have been identified as the key priorities. A feasibility study of the Traffic Operations Centre was completed, and an accommodation solution is being implemented. Feasibility studies are currently underway for the Gungahlin police presence and Winchester Police Centre and are due to be completed by the end of this financial year.</p> |

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| <p>Recommendation 2</p> <p>That the Gungahlin Police Station should immediately be altered in order that improved and/or expanded space and facilities be provided to include appropriate facilities for 'soft' interviews, additional 'on duty' cars, and a separate lunch and breakout area.</p> | <p>Noted</p> <p>Gungahlin is one of the key priorities under the Strategic Accommodation and Infrastructure Plan. A feasibility study and planning are underway for an upgraded police presence in Gungahlin to identify a fit for purpose solution. This will ensure ACT Policing can continue to operate at peak capacity and capability, meeting expectations of the Gungahlin community and enhancing implementation of the new Police Services Model.</p> |
| <p>Recommendation 3</p> <p>The negotiation process with the AFP must be proceeded by considered conversation with the ACT community asking for feedback and suggestions for what changes or improvements could be included in the next agreement.</p> | <p>Agree-in-principle</p> <p>Consultation with key stakeholders within the ACT is planned to inform the negotiations of the new Purchase Agreement. Feedback received from the community through this Inquiry will also inform the negotiations.</p> |
| <p>Recommendation 4</p> <p>That the Government prior to the next policing agreement release a plan for regions of the city currently a significant distance from current operational stations. These plans should include plans for Kippax and west Belconnen, Weston Creek and the Molonglo Valley which includes a future clear police presence and that the different regions addressed be engaged for more information about the crime they are experiencing.</p> | <p>Noted</p> <p>ACT Policing is intelligence-informed and uses information to prioritise and direct its workforce. ACT Policing deploys resources flexibly to ensure an appropriate police response to target and disrupt those seeking to cause harm in all suburbs in the Canberra community. ACT Policing is transitioning to a new model of police service that will enable it to better direct resources to where they are most effective, and focus more on crime prevention activities and community engagement.</p> <p>The Strategic Accommodation and Infrastructure Plan will ensure all areas of the ACT have sufficient police presence in fit-for-purpose facilities that support mobility and enable a dynamic and effective response to the needs of the community.</p> |

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| <p>Recommendation 5</p> <p>That ACT Policing get to know local community leaders in the faith and cultural communities. Not just via attendance at the multicultural festival to host a display, but via deeper and more meaningful relationship building.</p> | <p>Noted</p> <p>ACT Policing works with the multicultural community to create positive relationships with police, break down barriers and learn, understand and appreciate the needs of cultural groups in Canberra. ACT Policing extensively engages and maintains relationships with a variety of community and cultural groups including Multicultural Youth Services, Canberra Multicultural Community Forum and the Ethnic Disability Advocacy Association.</p> <p>ACT Policing has strong relationships outside of attendance at the Multicultural Festival and actively works to maintain those relationships through a range of engagement activities including meetings, forums and other community events. This is an ongoing process and ACT Policing, especially through the Community Engagement Team, strives to be in contact with the faith and cultural communities to ensure continual improvement in its interactions and relationships. ACT Policing will continue to explore options to improve engagement with the multicultural community.</p> <p>ACT Policing has worked closely with the Office for Multicultural Affairs on the establishment and implementation of the Community Services Directorate funded 'Welcome to Canberra Support Service' program. The program reaches out and connects new migrants arriving in Canberra with support services, including legal and policing services and support. This work is continuing with ACT Policing working directly on an ongoing basis with a number of community support organisations including Multicultural Hub through the Multicultural Youth Program.</p> <p>As part of the ACT Government's commitment to community safety, the Office for Multicultural Affairs worked with ACT Policing to support the hosting of a Crowded Places Forum on Wednesday, 10 July 2019 for the protection, safety and security of Places of Worship. The Forum informed participants of the terrorism threat to Places of Worship as crowded places within Australia and what the Police response would look like in the event of a terrorist attack. It provided participants the opportunity to share strategies and ideas on protecting</p> |
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| | <p>their Place of Worship to mitigate such an incident, and how they intend to manage their Place of Worship in the event of an incident.</p> <p>ACT Policing promotes and maintains relationships with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community through open communication, mutual understanding, respect, tolerance and trust. ACT Policing is committed to continuously improving its engagement with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, with the following work undertaken in 2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducted a community forum, in collaboration with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body in February 2020. • The Chief Police Officer held an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Board meeting in August 2020. • ACT Policing attended monthly liaison meetings with the Aboriginal Legal Service. • ACT Policing attended quarterly meetings with Winnunga Nimmityjah. • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Liaison Officer's (ALO) continued involvement in various JACS forums and meeting with the Childrens Court ALO and the Circle Sentencing Courts. • An online community forum held in early November 2020 led by the Chief Police Officer. |
| <p>Recommendation 6 That these better and deeper relationships be developed in order to break down cultural barriers to engagement with and reporting to police which some CALD and Aboriginal community members experience.</p> | <p>Noted ACT Policing works with the multicultural community to create positive relationships with police, break down barriers and learn, understand and appreciate the needs of cultural groups in Canberra. ACT Policing acknowledges there are cultural barriers in these relationships with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and with culturally and linguistically diverse people, and actively seeks ways to improve engagement.</p> <p>ACT Policing members receive comprehensive training on working with multicultural and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities as outlined in the responses to Recommendation 21.</p> <p>ACT Policing has had dedicated Multicultural and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Liaison Officers employed for a number of years who build and maintain these deeper relationships with the multicultural and Aboriginal and Torres Strait</p> |

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| | <p>Islander communities. Through the Liaison Officer roles, ACT Policing has the increased ability to identify and engage with families at risk, build trust and refer them to relevant support and educational services. ACT Policing, especially through the Community Engagement Team, has continued participation in a number of community events, meetings and forums to strengthen the relationship with the community.</p> <p>The Office for Multicultural Affairs has worked with ACT Policing to build a strong relationship with Canberra’s Muslim leaders and specifically the Imam’s of each mosque.</p> <p>In line with the Ministerial Direction, ACT Policing is continuing to explore ways to improve responses to vulnerable groups, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and culturally and linguistically diverse people.</p> |
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| <p>Recommendation 7 That ACT Policing include and demonstrate improvement in cultural diversity in recruitment for ACT police, and that this aim should include both the ATSI and multicultural sections of our community.</p> | <p>Agreed In accordance with the <i>AFP Reconciliation Plan 2018-2020</i> and the <i>AFP Cultural Reform: Diversion and Inclusion Strategy 2016-2026</i>, ACT Policing is committed to achieving greater workforce diversity to reflect the community it serves and to build and maintain community trust. ACT Policing is seeing positive results, with an increase in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation in the workforce, with 3.38 per cent of the ACT Policing workforce identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander in 2019-20. This is an increase from 2.48 per cent in 2018-19, and 2.24 per cent in 2017-18. ACT Policing also saw a slight increase in members who identified as Culturally and Linguistically Diverse with 20.37 per cent in 2019-20, compared to 20.28 per cent in 2018-19.</p> <p>ACT Policing will continue to report on the diversity of its workforce in its Annual Report which is tabled in the Legislative Assembly.</p> |
| <p>Recommendation 8 That the HRC be able to give an option for the confidential resolution of HRC complaints against police, enhancing the current conciliation process.</p> | <p>Noted ACT Policing has agreed to voluntarily participate in the Human Rights Commission conciliation process established for complaints against the Charter of Rights for Victims of Crime, which commenced on 1 January 2021. The conciliation of complaints works harmoniously with the AFP’s existing complaints management framework.</p> |

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| <p>Recommendation 9</p> <p>That the Minister take carriage and provide to the assembly improved data collection on contact information with cultural and disability groups and their interaction with the police. This should include the types of people police are dealing with to enhance Human Rights protection.</p> | <p>Agree-in-principle</p> <p>The Minister for Policing and Emergency Services will work with ACT Policing to improve the level of reporting around the interaction police have with vulnerable population groups. However, due to the way the current Police Records Online Management Information System is configured, there are challenges and limitations to updating the system to allow for additional information to be recorded in a searchable format.</p> |
| <p>Recommendation 10</p> <p>That the Minister for Police take carriage of and provide to the Assembly the number and frequency of requests for and the provision of interpreters and translators.</p> | <p>Agreed</p> <p>ACT Policing will report on its use of interpreters and translators in its Annual Report from 2020-21, which is tabled in the ACT Legislative Assembly. This obligation will be reflected in the next Purchase Agreement.</p> |
| <p>Recommendation 11</p> <p>That the next AFP agreement includes a report to the ACT Assembly each year of what ACT policing has done to improve trust with culturally, faith and linguistically diverse groups including demonstration of how trust has been enhanced.</p> | <p>Agree-in-principle</p> <p>ACT Policing currently reports on community engagement with diverse groups in its Annual Report, which is tabled in the ACT Legislative Assembly. The negotiations for the next Purchase Agreement will consider how this reporting can be enhanced.</p> |
| <p>Recommendation 12</p> <p>That the Minister for Policing report to the assembly annually the changes and adjustments to policing interaction with those living with a disability or who are neurologically a-typical and demonstrate how this has improved trust of police from these people in our community.</p> | <p>Agree-in-principle</p> <p>ACT Policing has a number of training programs aimed at enhancing interactions with all members of the community, including those with a disability or who are neurologically a-typical, as outlined in the response to Recommendation 21.</p> <p>The negotiations for the next Purchase Agreement will consider appropriate annual reporting obligations to provide the community with assurance that ACT Policing is improving its knowledge and interactions with people living with a disability or who are neurologically a-typical.</p> |
| <p>Recommendation 13</p> <p>That the minister for police report to the Assembly annually on improvements that have been made to ACT policing and in their work with children and young people which addresses challenges they face participating in the criminal justice system.</p> | <p>Agree-in-principle</p> <p>The <i>Victims Rights Legislation Amendment Act 2020</i> that commenced in January 2021 establishes the requirement for respectful engagement with child victims and provides victims with a clearer understanding of their rights in the criminal justice system.</p> |

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| | <p>The ACT Government Intermediary Program commenced in January 2020 and is actively providing intermediaries to assist police and courts' engagement with vulnerable witnesses, in criminal matters. Intermediaries effectively facilitate communication between witnesses with language delays, learning disabilities, cognitive issues, autism, ADHD, age related trauma and other types of communication difficulties.</p> <p>The AFP also have various pieces of governance which provide guidance on the management of 'Evidence in Chief' interviews with young people or vulnerable witnesses (including those with an intellectual impairment), conducted by appointees who have completed the Interviewing Vulnerable Witness Program.</p> <p>ACT Policing will report on its work with children and young people in its Annual Report from 2020-21, which is tabled in the ACT Legislative Assembly. The work with children and young people also includes addressing the challenges faced when they are accused of crimes. This obligation will be reflected in the next Purchase Agreement.</p> |
| <p>Recommendation 14 That the Minister for policing report to the Assembly annually on measurable improvements to the lack of awareness of the justice system, including laws and legal procedure achieved via ACT Policing outreach.</p> | <p>Not agreed ACT Policing is committed to raising awareness and community safety through active engagement with the entire community and the delivery of effective safety messaging. Through the efforts of ACT Policing's Media and Public Engagement team, ACT Policing conducts ongoing social media messaging, and updates the ACT Policing website to educate and raise awareness on key issues affecting the ACT community. The ACT Policing website offers a range of information to educate the community about the work ACT Policing does. There is detailed information around support services, infringements, specific crime types, including how to report a collision and processes around making a complaint.</p> <p>However, awareness of the justice system is a shared responsibility. Importantly, other agencies such as youth organisations and legal centres, play a key role in providing information and advice on laws, rights and justice procedures.</p> <p>Improving information for victims of crime is a priority for the Government with the <i>Victims Rights Legislation Amendment Act 2020</i> commencing in January 2021 which includes obligations for justice agencies, including ACT Policing, to provide</p> |

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| | <p>information to victims. ACT Policing is providing information to the public via the ACT Policing website to educate the public on their rights under this Act.</p> <p>Reporting on measurable improvements to the lack of awareness of the justice system would be impracticable given the nature of this responsibility, however ACT Policing will continue its proactive engagement and awareness raising within the community.</p> |
| <p>Recommendation 15 That an audit be done to achieve recommendations in the streamlining of data and information to limit ‘churn’ and duplication between ACT and Federal AFP elements.</p> | <p>Noted The report does not provide any detail of which data and information the Committee is recommending be audited, or which ACT and AFP elements it is referring to. More detail and clarification would be required in order to agree to this recommendation.</p> |
| <p>Recommendation 16 That the Minister for Police in the next agreement with the AFP include such changes to the information systems used by police so that data from police activities is in a searchable format in all cases, including sexual assault.</p> | <p>Agree-in-principle The Minister for Police and Emergency Services will work with ACT Policing to improve the level of reporting around victims of serious personal offences, including sexual assault. However, due to the way the current Police Records Online Management Information System is configured, there are challenges and limitations to updating the system to allow for additional information to be recorded in a searchable format.</p> |
| <p>Recommendation 17 That Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity (ACLEI) reports regularly to the ACT Minister for Police and that that report be tabled in the ACT Legislative Assembly.</p> | <p>Agreed The Australian Law Enforcement Integrity Commissioner has provided 2019-20 data on ACT Policing matters to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services (MPES) and given permission for this to be tabled in the ACT Legislative Assembly. In February 2021, for the first time, MPES tabled a report in the Legislative Assembly on complaints made to ACLEI related to ACT Policing personnel along with the 2019-20 Annual Reports. MPES will seek to formalise these arrangements with the Commissioner to ensure reporting on ACT Policing related matters can continue be tabled in the ACT Legislative Assembly.</p> |
| <p>Recommendation 18 That referrals made internally regarding police matters to the ACLEI and/or to the ACT Integrity Commission be subject of advice by each body to the other, to the extent permitted by statute.</p> | <p>Noted The Government acknowledges that during the inquiry the Ombudsman commented on the benefits of having dual roles as ACT Ombudsman and Commonwealth Ombudsman and the oversight that provides. However, there are limitations on the extent that comparable situations can apply to the ACT</p> |

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| | <p>Integrity Commission and the ACT Integrity Commission does not have any jurisdiction over ACT Policing. However, the ACT Government will continue to seek Commonwealth Government support to make changes allowing for a greater level of collaboration between the federal and local levels of oversight within the ACT.</p> |
| <p>Recommendation 19 That detailed data in relation to cultural and/or language barriers arising as part of ACLEI investigations of police should be particularly highlighted in such a report and that the Minister for police report annually to the Assembly about how these barriers have been addressed in the systems and culture of ACT Policing.</p> | <p>Noted The Law Enforcement Integrity Commissioner maintains control over what data is made available to the ACT Government. However, ACLEI has a high threshold for investigating corruption and cultural and/or language barriers are not likely to be linked to a corruption issue.</p> |
| <p>Recommendation 20 That the ACT government continue to work with the Federal Government to include ACT Police in the scope of the ACT Integrity Commission.</p> | <p>Agreed-in-principle In 2018 the Chief Minister requested that the Commonwealth Government amend the <i>Australian Capital Territory (Self-Government) Act 1988</i> to allow the ACT Integrity Commission to have jurisdiction over ACT Policing. However, in February 2019, the Prime Minister Scott Morrison rejected this request. The ACT Government will seek to revisit this issue should there be a change of Commonwealth Government in the future.</p> |
| <p>Recommendation 21 The Committee recommends all active police receive training which addresses comprehensively all elements of cultural and ethnic awareness training and disability inclusion.</p> | <p>Noted ACT Policing has a number of training programs aimed at enhancing interactions with the community. All ACT Policing frontline officers undertake mandatory Enhanced Mental Health Training which is delivered by Canberra Health Services. This training program aims to better skill police officers in the management of operational responses to mental health incidents through a broad awareness of mental health illnesses and disorders. This training also encompasses an intellectual disability presentation in the community and provides information regarding Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) prevalence and guidance on management by police. Whilst the program is comprehensive and covers a range of issues, it is not designed to make police quasi health professionals. In December 2019, the Police, Ambulance and Clinician Early Response (PACER) initiative was launched which is a tri-service response to mental health incidents. General duties members receive training from PACER members regarding the role of the service.</p> |

ACT Policing recognises the importance of training members to understand and identify the effects that cultural differences can have upon the police-community relationship. Cultural awareness training is delivered through the AFP online training portal which is open to all AFP members and provided during the recruit training undertaken at the AFP College. This training is delivered by members of AFP Malunggang Indigenous Officers Network. ACT Policing members also have access to Cultural Connections Training, which was developed by ACT Policing's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Liaison Officers. This training includes how to achieve effective communication with community, and the importance of using appropriate terminology. Cultural Connections Training has been delivered to 180 ACT Policing frontline members so far (as at 17 January 2020). This training will be delivered on a yearly basis and will continue to be updated to ensure community relevance.

ACT Policing will continue to strengthen relationships with diverse groups in the ACT community and is open to advice about how to improve training around cultural awareness and inclusion.

The AFP has a cultural awareness and diversity education and training program that is delivered across the organisation, as well as a Respectful Workplace workshop training package. Initial training is available to AFP members who are progressing through recruit gateways with the aim of preparing them for community policing. This is supplemented by online training offered through the AFP's internal training framework, which includes training modules in autism awareness, interviewing vulnerable witnesses, cultural awareness training and the ACT human rights legislation.

The AFP also have various pieces of governance which provide guidance on the management of 'Evidence in Chief' interviews with young people or vulnerable witnesses (including those with an intellectual impairment), conducted by appointees who have completed the Interviewing Vulnerable Witness Program. This program was developed for AFP officers and includes a session about 'Disability and Capacity', which was designed to examine mental illness and intellectual disabilities and their impact on witnesses, and explain how to

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| | <p>develop an interview plan that caters for the individual's needs and their specific disability.</p> <p>One of the actions in the First Action Plan of the Disability Justice Strategy (Action 2.1 – Justice Sector Education and Guidance) is to develop disability training and resources for the ACT justice system and for justice organisations to undertake the training and utilise the resources. The training is currently in development and will be available in the first half of 2021. ACT Policing has committed to this action. ACT Policing has also committed to Action 2.2 of the Disability Justice Strategy, development of a Best Practice Guide to assist ACT Policing in interacting with people with disability. Initial work is currently being undertaken to commence the process of development of the guide.</p> |
| <p>Recommendation 22 That the government develop a wallet card allowing individuals to self-identify as a person with a disability should they wish to carry one.</p> | <p>Agreed The Justice and Community Safety Directorate and Community Services Directorate are working with Advocacy For Inclusion through the Disability Justice Strategy to develop a wallet card that will allow people with a disability to self-identify as a person with a disability. The card is expected to be ready for use in 2021.</p> |
| <p>Recommendation 23 That police cadet training includes all elements of cultural and ethnic awareness training and disability inclusion.</p> | <p>Noted As noted in the response above to Recommendation 21, the AFP and ACT Policing offer a multitude of training programs addressing a variety of ways to support vulnerable people, including culturally and linguistically diverse people and those with mental health issues or an intellectual disability/ impairment. The AFP has a cultural awareness and diversity education and training program that is delivered across the organisation, as well as a Respectful Workplace workshop training package. Initial training is available to AFP members who are progressing through recruit gateways with the aim of preparing them for community policing. This is supplemented by online training offered through the AFP's internal training framework, which includes training modules in autism awareness, interviewing vulnerable witnesses, cultural awareness training and the ACT human rights legislation.</p> <p>As also noted in Recommendation 21, one of the actions in the First Action Plan of the Disability Justice Strategy (Action 2.1 – Justice Sector Education and Guidance) is to develop disability training and resources for the ACT justice</p> |

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| | <p>system and for justice organisations to undertake the training and utilise the resources. The training is currently in development and will be available in the first half of 2021. ACT Policing has committed to this action. ACT Policing has also committed to Action 2.2 of the Disability Justice Strategy, development of a Best Practice Guide to assist ACT Policing in interacting with people with disability. Initial work is currently being undertaken to commence the process of development of the guide.</p> |
| <p>Recommendation 24 That police liaison officers and ACT policing should ensure a regular and routine consultation with the ASD and neuro atypical representative groups so that strong engagement is established as permanent means of policy as well as community engagement and learning.</p> | <p>Agree-in-principle ACT Policing is supportive of liaising with the relevant representatives for ASD and neuro atypical groups in the ACT, including Speaking Out for Autism Spectrum Disorder, to inform current training ACT Policing members receive, including the Enhanced Mental Health Training and Autism Awareness Training.</p> <p>ACT Policing now has dedicated face-to-face Police, Ambulance and Clinician Early Response (PACER) training and an online Autism Awareness iAspire training course that is developing ACT Policing’s understanding of ASD and neuro-atypical conditions.</p> <p>In 2011 ACT Policing, together with the ACT Ambulance Service, ACT Mental Health, Canberra Hospital and Calvary Public Hospital Bruce launched the Mental Health Community Policing Initiative (MHCPI) with a focus on police and mental health professionals working together to achieve better outcomes for people living with a mental illness or disorder. The MHCPI has established the Police, PACER Proof-of-Concept Community Working Group which brings in members from the primary community advocacy bodies in the ACT, including Carers ACT and the ACT Mental Health Consumers Network. The PACER Community Working Group provides practical support, advice and direction for the development of PACER Proof-of-Concept and the future development of PACER to the PACER Project Officers. This specific PACER Working Group can provide a forum for engagement on Autism Spectrum Disorder and neuro atypical conditions.</p> <p>In the 2020-21 Budget, the Government announced \$14.1 million to continue the seven-day-a-week operation of the PACER program through until 2024. The PACER model reduces demand on policing, paramedics, emergency departments and inpatient services. During 2020, PACER teams responded to 1249 mental</p> |

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| | <p>health callouts that resulted in 963 Canberrans receiving care in their home, remaining in the community rather than being hospitalised.</p> <p>ACT Policing has been funded since April 2020 for a disability justice liaison officer as part of Action 1.1 to establish the Community of Practice in key agencies across the justice system under the Disability Justice Strategy.</p> |
| <p>Recommendation 25 That the current training regarding interactions with the ASD and neuro atypical members of the community be reviewed by the organisations representing them in our community to ensure it is contemporary and workable in the ACT context.</p> | <p>Agreed All ACT Policing operational members were required to undertake mandatory Autism Awareness training on iAspire in the first half of 2020. This training was developed and delivered by AFP Organisational Health, who consulted with Autism Spectrum Australia .</p> <p>ACT Policing will seek to engage with representatives for ASD and neuro atypical groups in the ACT, including Speaking Out for Autism Spectrum Disorder to inform current training ACT Policing members receive, including the Enhanced Mental Health Training and Autism Awareness Training.</p> |
| <p>Recommendation 26 That PTSI arrangements in ACT Policing include presumptive legislation for traumatic Psychological Injury.</p> | <p>Noted ACT Policing has advised that the AFP is currently exploring presumptive legislation as one option under the current compensation scheme.</p> |
| <p>Recommendation 27 That in tandem with such legislative change, cultural change be undertaken to change any workplace cultural practices which treat a police member as being unreliable or a risk while they are engaged in proactive mental health management so that affected officers will be prepared to notify injuries or mental health effects at the time of their initial injuries and before they become critical.</p> | <p>Noted ACT Policing has advised that the AFP has engaged in a number of initiatives to destigmatise mental illness and to promote member’s proactive engagement with AFP mental health services. One of these initiatives is the Road to Mental Readiness (R2MR) training. R2MR is an education-based program designed to address and promote mental health and reduce the stigma of mental health in a first responder setting.</p> <p>The AFP recently received \$65 million dollars over 4 years from the Federal Government, for the delivery of SHIELD. SHIELD will embed health and wellbeing services into the day-to-day operations of AFP, at their local command.</p> <p>SHIELD will include dedicated teams of clinical resources focused on building trust with staff, early intervention, preventing injuries and improving operational</p> |

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| | <p>performance. A primary focus of SHIELD will be to change AFP culture with regard to seeking assistance when early warning signs are observed so the member can remain on active duty, and a management plan can be implemented before the health concerns become critical.</p> <p>As employees of the AFP, ACT Policing will have access to these services.</p> <p>This builds on the support provided by the ACT Government which includes to dedicated psychologists who provide proactive and response support to ACT Policing Members. This is in addition to Welfare Officers who provide peer support to members, families and former members.</p> |
| <p>Recommendation 28 That a peer support employment assistance program available 24 hours a day, be fully culturally aware, clinically supervised, and within that supervision be confidential.</p> | <p>Noted ACT Policing has three dedicated police officers performing Welfare Officer roles. These Welfare Officers provide support to members for a range of matters including critical incidents, work-place matters, personal matters, and as an initial support contact for the provision of further assistance. These members are available 24/7.</p> <p>The broader AFP also offers 24 hour support to members through the WON, Psychological Services, Medical Services and the Benestar specialist trauma response service. Between the hours of 4:00 pm and 8:00 am the services from the AFP WON, Psychological Services and Medical Services are provided by on-call staff members.</p> <p>The WON consists of dedicated sworn and professional members who receive mental health training and provide peer support to other members. The WON members receive supervision and clinical support and oversight from their dedicated clinical director, who is a mental health clinician. The WON is available 24 hours a day, 7 days per week. The AFP also contracted an external Employee Assistance Program, provided by Benestar, which is a confidential counselling service available to all personnel, former members and their families.</p> <p>As employees of the AFP, ACT Policing has access to these services, included dedicated ACT Policing Welfare Officers.</p> |

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| <p>Recommendation 29 That mental health services and support put a greater focus on building trust between with the frontline personnel client through complete cultural awareness and confidentiality</p> | <p>Noted ACT Policing has advised that a central pillar of the AFP’s SHIELD (outlined in Recommendation 27) involves embedding health staff within frontline operations to build trust and increase engagement with members. AFP WON and Psychological Services already operate on a model that recognises the value of embedding staff in workplaces to establish rapport, build trust and remove barriers to care. AFP recently commissioned a body of work developing AFP health information principles. This is to improve transparency with regards to how clinical information is managed and stored. The AFP has also revisited its consent processes to ensure all parties share a mutual understanding regarding the use of confidential information.</p> |
| <p>Recommendation 30 That those with lived experience have a pathway to be trained in providing peer-to-peer and mental health support either while still serving or as a second career to provide a stream of culturally aware professionals available to the first responders.</p> | <p>Noted ACT Policing has advised that the AFP is interested in further exploring how best to make use of the lived experience of mental illness. In 2019, an AFP delegate attended the HEROES program in the United States where veterans with Post Traumatic Stress Injury are engaged in specific roles within law enforcement bodies. That particular program proved unviable for the AFP, but the AFP remains open to the opportunity of better engaging members and ex-members with lived experience.</p> <p>One aspect of SHIELD will be the establishment of a Centre of Excellence. The Centre of Excellence will be tasked with producing research and insights to guide AFP health and wellbeing services. It will also be able to review and develop innovative approaches to service design and to measure the effectiveness of these programs. The Centre of Excellence will also be able to develop educational packages to help shape a positive culture with regards to health and wellbeing.</p> |
| <p>Recommendation 31 Engage with mental health professionals (such as Ester McKay and Carmel O’Sullivan) in the development, implementation and review of mental health and peer-to-peer support services.</p> | <p>Noted ACT Policing has advised that in the past 18 months the AFP has partnered with Phoenix Australia and Beyond Blue in developing and tailoring health and well-being services. The SHIELD Centre of Excellence will also be responsible for partnering with private practitioners, tertiary institutions and industry leaders to ensure that best practice interventions are available to AFP members. SHIELD has advertised to establish a panel of experts to help develop and validate the service catalogue to AFP members. Under SHIELD, the AFP will partner with community</p> |

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| | <p>providers to ensure those clinicians have a solid understand of the AFP, its personnel and its operating environment.</p> |
| <p>Recommendation 32 That 24-hour support services be geared to deal with peak demand after work hours (i.e. 69pm) and on weekends.</p> | <p>Noted ACT Policing has three dedicated police officers performing Welfare Officer roles. These Welfare Officers provide support to members for a range of matters including critical incidents, work-place matters, personal matters, and as an initial support contact for the provision of further assistance. These members are available 24/7.</p> <p>The broader AFP also offers 24 hour support to members through the WON, Psychological Services, Medical Services and the Benestar specialist trauma response service. Between the hours of 4:00 pm and 8:00 am the services from the AFP WON, Psychological Services and Medical Services are provided by on-call staff members. The AFP does not currently possess data that indicates a higher demand for service between 6:00 pm and 9:00 pm or on weekends. Under SHIELD, the AFP is improving its data holdings and reporting ability. This improved ability will equip the AFP with a better understanding of demand and help shape the delivery of services in alignment with that demand.</p> |
| <p>Recommendation 33 That trained clinicians be used for these services who are culturally aware or former personnel are trained and supervised by clinicians rather than volunteer-based services without such training and support.</p> | <p>Noted ACT Policing has advised that the after-hours services from AFP Psychological Services and Medical Services are provided by registered, experienced clinicians with a sound understanding of police culture. The Benestar specialist trauma response is provided by trained clinicians with a high degree of specialist knowledge in the area of trauma response. The members of the WON receive supervision from a clinician with extensive experiencing operating in the AFP environment. Under SHIELD, the AFP is significantly increasing the numbers of mental health clinicians available across the country to respond to members experiencing acute mental health concerns.</p> |
| <p>Recommendation 34 Recognised that those who have PTSI have lived experience and are often highly capable and valuable in crisis and traumatic situations and that when recovering from such events may require further support and time for processing their experiences after the event.</p> | <p>Noted ACT Policing has advised that the AFP recognises that members with PTSI are often highly capable and their lived experience can be valuable in the development of services. However, the AFP does not currently have a formal model for capitalising on that experience. One task for the SHIELD Centre of Excellence would be to evaluate the models in place in other organisational settings that make good use of members with PTSI in designing and</p> |

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| | <p>implementing services. The AFP also recognises that members with PTSI may require support and time for processing. AFP Mental Health clinicians are trained in Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing and trauma informed Cognitive Behaviour Therapy which are recognised as gold standard treatments for PTSI. The AFP has facilitated in-house training to ensure clinicians have the required skill set for this work. The AFP model of care also includes timely referral to specialist external service providers for management and rehabilitation of members with PTSI.</p> |
| <p>Recommendation 35 Recognise that those with PTSI often have wealth of experience, and efforts should be made to keep them employed wherever possible to maintain corporate knowledge and experience.</p> | <p>Noted ACT Policing has advised that wherever possible the AFP seeks to retain members with PTSI and to identify suitable duties when injured members are unable to be operationally deployed. AFP has a firm belief in recovery from mental illness and recognises that with the correct treatment the prognosis for PTSI is good.</p> |
| <p>Recommendation 36 That pathways for post-service personnel who are post-trauma be established to contributing to the frontline through organisations which support current and former members in various capacities.</p> | <p>Noted ACT Policing has advised that the AFP has recently established an AFP Reserve function. This function provides a potential avenue for former AFP members to contribute to the AFP after their retirement. The AFP and the non-profit organisation Fortem have partnered to provide activities for former members to be socially engaged with current members. A key priority for SHIELD is to provide transition support, providing services to assist members in their pre and post retirement adjustment.</p> |
| <p>Recommendation 37 That staff be provided with the training and understanding to best manage their mental health while in a state of need or crisis – if and when culturally aware, trusted and clinically supervised services are not available.</p> | <p>Noted ACT Policing has advised that the AFP has developed a health education framework to rationalise the approach taken in equipping AFP members with health information, including how to manage their mental health during crisis situations. The health education framework includes the delivery of several mental health related modules to AFP recruitments during their initial period of training at the college.</p> <p>This framework also includes the Road to Mental Readiness education-based program designed to address and promote mental health and reduce the stigma of mental health in a first responder setting. The course provides a set of</p> |

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| | <p>cognitive behavioural therapy techniques that help members cope with stress and improve mental health and resiliency.</p> <p>Under SHIELD, the Centre for Excellence will significantly increase the AFP's ability to design and deliver health related educational packages, including on how members can manage their mental health and how to access appropriate care when required.</p> <p>In 2020, ACT Policing also employed a second dedicated psychologist to provide proactive and responsive support and services to members. This supplements the services provided by the three dedicated Welfare Officers for ACT Policing members, as well as the broader AFP services available to all members.</p> |
| <p>Recommendation 38 That EBA negotiations include the option of part time work options be included as a standard response for those managing traumatic psychological injury.</p> | <p>Noted ACT Policing has advised that the AFP offers all members who are dealing with an injury, graduated return to work arrangements (including part time work), this is embedded in existing National Guidelines and other governance, and it is not necessary to embed this into Enterprise Agreements.</p> <p>The AFP has advised it recognises its responsibility as an employer to provide a safe and healthy workplace and there are a range of governance instruments in place to deal with the work, health, safety and rehabilitation of employees. This involves strategies for the prevention of injury or illness through education, principles and guidelines, as well as managing the occupational rehabilitation and return to work of all injured employees. Furthermore, any AFP employee can request a flexible work arrangement for any reason, regardless of whether they are sworn or unsworn. These practices are embedded within existing AFP governance.</p> |