



# Platypus

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## Bravery award for officer in PNG

An Australian Federal Police Constable, virtually unarmed and badly cut about the head, faced a group of armed Papua New Guineans to save a young Australian diplomat and his wife from serious injury and possible kidnapping.

The officer is protective service component member Steve Dawes, who is stationed at the Australian High Commission in Port Moresby.

His brave action has earned him the Commissioner's Certificate of Commendation.

The award was presented recently, on the Commissioner's behalf, by the Australian High Commissioner in Papua New Guinea, Mr R.N. Birch.

The incident which led to the recognition of bravery occurred in the grounds of the Australian High Commission late at night.

Constable Dawes received severe head wounds in the attack and the diplomat and his wife were badly shaken.

## Diplomat, wife saved in attack

After the incident, Constable Dawes sought to play down his bravery and to pass it off as being "all in the line of duty".

However, his senior officers thought differently. Sergeant R.G. (Jock) Alcock took up the matter with Canberra and strongly urged formal recognition.

After the attack the diplomat and his wife were repatriated to Australia.

They told police that had it not been for Constable Dawes' intervention, their lives could have been in jeopardy.

The incident began late at night when the young couple returned to the High Commission to collect their car which was parked in the official carpark at the rear of the building.

The diplomat pressed the night security bell at the front of the building while his wife walked around to the rear to get into the car.

There she was confronted by a group of men.

She ran to the car, got in and locked the door.

Hearing her screams, the diplomat ran to the rear of the building while Constable Dawes dashed through the building to the rear door.

"I heard screams," Constable Dawes said, "and saw through the rear door spyhole the diplomat and a few nationals in the yard. I then opened the door and saw about 10 men armed with axes, iron bars and large knives."

Constable Dawes tends to



• Constable Steve Dawes ... sought to play down his bravery.

shrug off the remaining action in his own report of the incident, despite the fact that his only weapon was his police baton, and a workman's claw hammer he picked up to provide additional protection.

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## AFP survey on self-rule

The Australian Federal Police is to conduct a survey of many of its members on the implications that self-government could have for the future of the force.

The nature of the survey and who will be involved are matters under active consideration by management.

For those members scattered around Australia and overseas who know little of the self-government debate, it is Labor Party policy to grant self-government to the ACT. A special task force has been established to investigate the issue that is now one of Canberra's biggest talking points.

Such a survey should be able to provide the AFP with information on the attitudes of its members to the various options that may be

canvassed with the Federal Government.

The options themselves are still being developed but three possibilities are:

- retention of the status quo;
- splitting the force and reintroducing a separate ACT Police Force;
- a contract policing system, possibly along Canadian lines.

Discussion on all options is, as yet, at an early stage, although detailed consideration is under way in various policy areas of the AFP and other relevant Departments and authorities.

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## CSM FAREWELLED

The Australian Federal Police was well represented at a recent farewell evening for ACT Chief Stipendary Magistrate Mr Clarrie Hermes, who has retired after more than 20 years on the Bench.

The farewell was organised by the Canberra Court of Petty Sessions staff at the Canberra Club.

Many AFP members have come to know Mr Hermes over the years.

He was first appointed to the Bench in South Australian in 1961, moving to the ACT in 1966.

He was appointed Chief Stipendary Magistrate in 1980.

The Clerk of Petty Sessions, Mr Phil Thompson, presented Mr Hermes with a gold watch.

• ABOVE: Mr Hermes, centre, chats with AFP members, from left, Detective Sergeant Rick Ninness, Detective Senior Sergeant Brian Lockwood, Coroner's Officer Sergeant John Nolan (background), Chief Inspector Geoff Fry, Assistant Commissioner (General Policing) Val McConaghy, and former ACT Police Commissioner Mr Reg Kennedy.

Motto for AFP?

Platypus 3 will seek your views.

# While Dusty lands sea duty...



## ... Dena bombs out

At sea or ashore, there's no limit to the tricks a young dog can pick up.

But when it's in the line of duty, PCK9 is a very capable addition to the Force.

Take Probationary Constable Dusty, for instance. Dusty (pictured above) is a new recruit to the water police section of the AFP in Canberra.

At 28 weeks, he's busy learning his job of keeping the Yarralumla Bay wharf clean by chasing away visiting black cormorants and sea-gulls, and guarding the building, boats and police equipment.

Dusty, a red heeler and kelpie cross, has an ideal breeding background for the on-the-job training he's getting from his boss, Sergeant David Ashurst. But Dusty has learnt that it's much more fun — and rather more elite — to be a crew member of the police launch. He climbs aboard at every opportunity and will gladly forego the thrill of a bird chase for a patrol of Yarralumla Bay.

Dusty has a lot to live up to. His predecessor was Senior Constable Blue Dog, who died last December from arthritis and old age after some years of patrolling the water police foreshore establishment.

A dog of a different colour is Dena, pictured right. Dena, at 5, is one of the most popular identities seen regularly around Sydney's Kingsford-Smith Airport. She is one of four "bomb dogs" attached to the AFP.

Dena and her handler, First Constable Lewis Hutchinson, were photographed during a recent training session on the airport perimeter.

Bomb dogs, unlike police attack dogs, are specifically trained to detect explosives such as gelignite, TNT or gunpowder. For reasons of temperament, they are always female.

Dena's male counterparts are used for general duties such as searches for lost property and tracking work.



## CSM FAREWELLED

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Within seconds of walking into the open he was pelted with rocks, one of which split open his head. An iron bar broke the hammer's handle.

Left with only his baton, and although injured, he still managed to rescue both the diplomat and his wife.

The wife, by this time, was in what was described as an "attempt rape" situation, two men having smashed their way

into the locked car with iron bars.

The attackers escaped in a stolen four-wheel drive High Commission vehicle.

Constable Dawes was treated for his injuries and the diplomat's wife for shock.

Constable Dawes spent several days off work recuperating from his ordeal.

Despite the incident, he requested — and was granted — an extension to his tour of duty in Papua New Guinea.

# Pat sets Perth record straight — in verse

When Perth-based Senior Constable Pat McCarthy has his head down writing busily at his desk, he might not be working on a report.

Instead, he could be penning another stinging verse about some unfortunate colleague who has somehow come unstuck in the course of his duties.

For Pat has an unusual hobby: writing off-the-cuff poems. And he writes about people and events around him finding inspiration in those embarrassing moments when things go horribly wrong.

For example, there was the time an AFP man was stopped by a traffic patrolman for not wearing a seat belt while driving. His official identity made no impression on the State officer. Minutes later our man compounded the offence by driving through a red light — no doubt distracted by the first incident.

Pat found out about this later at a chance meeting with the State officer during a joint State-AFP raid, and promptly got out his barbed pen and paper to immortalise the event.

On another occasion, an officer stationed at Perth Airport proudly made his first arrest, but moments later found himself in the middle of a melee started by those he nabbed. "I wrote a long piece about that," recalled Pat.

Pat has been writing his poems for many years. He has been based in Perth since 1974 and is currently in charge of the Warrant and Summons section.

Here is one of his efforts:

### QUOTE OF THE WEEK

Red is for stop  
Green is for go  
If you go through the red one  
You'll go for a row.  
Very important you may be  
The fuzz will still get a grip of thee.  
Cameras hidden everywhere  
Taking pictures of you there.  
And as you rent and pull your hair  
A large fine you'll have to bear.  
So fasten seat belts as you go  
And you won't have this tale of woe.



• Senior Constable Pat McCarthy.