



*The ICPO-Interpol headquarters building*

## Technology links the Enforcers

**Y**OU cannot help being impressed by the Headquarters of the Federal Criminal Police in Wiesbaden, Germany.

Within its area are training centres, forensic sciences, technical services, ADP, administration and excellent staff accommodation.

The entire complex is set in postcard like surroundings on the outskirts of the city.

I made the comment to my host, Johann Dittmar, the Operations Manager of the Regional National Central Bureau of ICPO-Interpol, that it appeared nothing had been forgotten in the design of the complex.

The only problem, he replied, was parking! That's a problem we can relate to in Australia.

My visit to Wiesbaden followed the 10th Interpol Telecommunications Conference at St. Cloud, just outside Paris. It was exactly 12 months after Interpol Headquarters was bombed in 1986. The front security office and the basement still show signs of the damage.

Security around the Headquarters was very visible and very tight with French Security Police, armed with automatic weapons and wearing flak jackets, patrolling the outside of the building. An armoured control vehicle took up virtually all the front entrance.

To get to the front door of Headquarters it was necessary to squeeze past the control vehicle, at the same time produc-

ing identification. Further identification was required at the front security office. Brief cases were searched and visitors' passports were retained until they left the building. Interpol is undergoing major changes. The Headquarters is about to move to Lyon, in central France, where a new communication system is being

*Superintendent Peter Brittliff attended the most recent Interpol conference at Interpol Headquarters in St. Cloud, France, from 11-15 May 1987 as the AFP representative. Before returning, he visited police in Germany, United Kingdom and Hong Kong. Here he tells about new technology he found being used in police work.*

established in conjunction with the installation of an automatic message switching system (AMSS) designed to handle different communication modes and eventually offer an information access service. Eventually, for example, a radio message received from Tokyo could be matched against data held in the AMSS. The message could be transmitted to some other country by telex or teletex (high speed data) containing appropriate references to the data held in the AMSS.

The Interpol conference covered a variety of international communication problems with considerable time spent discussing the Caribbean Project. This project, funded by the United Nations, will provide an extremely reliable line communication network around the islands in the Caribbean linked to a regional control centre in Puerto Rico. From Puerto Rico information can be transmitted directly to Washington. The system is intended to assist in the prevention of illegal drugs coming into Florida.

Interpol has adopted a policy of regionalising its communication networks with the object of limiting network links to seven or perhaps eight regional control stations around the world. Communicating with National Central Bureaus would become the responsibility of the Regional Control Centre. Australia at present is in the Asian Region. Interpol has requested Australia to consider the possibility of some form of sub-regional control in the South Pacific.

Towards the end of the conference a number of manufacturers demonstrated the latest in communication and radio

security equipment. The most impressive was the new generation of encrypted facsimile machines. Over the years facsimile has generally been considered service prone, reliant on the quality of telephone lines and often producing poor copies. This particular demonstration of the Cryptofax facsimile was exceptional. Two machines side-by-side were connected by a line simulating many thousands of kilometres. The received message was a near perfect copy and 'down the line' encryption allowed for the one coding function originating from the master machine. In a working situation, a facsimile in AFP headquarters in Canberra could encrypt all AFP facsimile equipment, simultaneously at the push of a button.

#### **Wiesbaden**

A visit to Wiesbaden gave me the opportunity to see a large Regional Control Centre and some of the equipment available to the German Federal Police. The Control Centre turned out to be an expanded version of our own National Central Bureau with telex, teletex facsimile, photographic reproduction equipment and an extensive high frequency radio back-up system.

Wiesbaden provides a regional service for the European countries with the capacity to handle a large volume of message traffic.

There is an interesting feature in the telephone system in the Federal Police Headquarters. In each office and in various points around the building there are visual indicators showing the called number and the number calling when an extension is answered. The system can be operated by the person initiating the call and provides a positive means of informing staff of an urgent telephone inquiry.

The Federal Border Guard under the control of the German Federal Police use hand-held data terminal transceiving units. These provide direct access from the police officer in the field to the central data base. In a practical demonstration, the operator keyed in a name and within a few seconds received information displayed on a screen providing all the particulars on the accessed name.

#### **Mainz**

From Wiesbaden it is a short drive to Mainz, a city in some respects very similar to Canberra with about the same population. The police radio network there has a fully computer aided dispatch system. My first impression was the silence in the radio room; messages were received, recorded and dispatched by computer control. The control operators were able to view both large and sectional areas of the city by 'back lit' colour photographs.

This provides the operational staff with the opportunity to view the locality of an incident. During the operation that was in progress while I was there this facility seemed very effective.

The police in Mainz have the power to break into all the local commercial radio broadcast networks and they maintain a specially equipped room for this purpose. This is used to give serious traffic alerts, information on escapers and serious crimes, and similar matters. One police officer is rostered on this control 24 hours a day and on the day I visited he had broadcast a number of radio messages. Normally the office would alert the station and request an appropriate time. He can override instantly. In a nearby room a supervising control officer periodically monitors all police radio channels in a random check of radio procedures and operational techniques, bringing transgressors under notice. The entire headquarters is serviced by pressure tubes carrying messages to common points throughout the building.

#### **New Scotland Yard**

After Germany I visited the Technical Unit in New Scotland Yard, London. The Yard maintains a field technical unit similar to the Police Technical Unit being developed within the AFP. The charter of the New Scotland Yard Unit and the AFP Unit is basically the same. After a day discussing procedures and equipment it was obvious that the problems experienced by both units are similar and that it is apparent that there has been a definite increase in counter-measure technology and counter-measure practices adopted by criminals. Coupled with this problem is the fact that the danger has become real. Two years ago a member of the New Scotland Yard Police Technical Unit was killed while engaged in a full operation.

#### **Hong Kong**

On my return from London I stopped off in Hong Kong and visited the techn-

ical unit associated with the Royal Hong Kong Police Force. This unit has a reputation as one of the best equipped and operationally competent units in the world. The unit consists of a highly-trained police component supported by civilian technical personnel. I took the opportunity to view much of the technology maintained by the unit. Over the years there has been a strong liaison between it and members of the AFP. Advice and information received from the Hong Kong Unit has served to establish many of the standards and procedures maintained by the AFP Technical Unit.

I was particularly interested in the tape enhancement equipment held by the Hong Kong Technical Unit. This equipment is the next generation to the equipment currently in use in the Electronic and Technical Services Division in the AFP. The enhancement equipment was under the control of an engineer and a demonstration proved that noise is still difficult to remove from a tape recording especially if the quality of the original recording was poor.

I found a high degree of similarity in the operational problems, whether in Germany, UK or Hong Kong. Throughout the world there is a technology overload with no police force able to support the personnel resources required to completely survey the market and fully evaluate all forms of equipment currently available to law enforcement. The exchange of knowledge and ideas on a world-wide basis may at least provide some of the answers.

The AFP is very comparable in its surveillance equipment to those police forces I observed. At this state of its development, the AFP is well based to take advantage of new technology without being held back by superceded equipment.

## **FILM TO EXPLAIN THE AFP**

The Information Office has just received from Film Australia a 10 minute film showing the work, role and functions of the AFP. It is an updated version of the much longer film "According to Law". It is a short, to the point, lively, film which is ideal for use in training, recruitment and for community groups. It is available on VHS and can be obtained from the Information Office provided a blank VHS cassette is supplied in exchange. Copies will be sent to all the regions.

## **Announcements**

*Platypus* is happy to print announcements of forthcoming competitions, events, and games, however, some notices arrive too late for inclusion.

If your activity group plans some competition or event of interest to readers, let us know in plenty of time. Do not worry if you have not finalised the details. We can print an address and telephone number so that readers can contact you.