

Program 6

Maintenance of Law, Order and Security _____

Program objective

To contribute to the maintenance of law and order, to combat crime and to respond effectively to acts of politically motivated violence.

To maintain effective measures against espionage and subversive activities and against attacks directed at individuals, information and assets.

Sub-program 6.4

Common Police Services

Sub-program objective

To manage and further develop for the Australian police forces common police services such as criminal intelligence, police research, exchange of police information and management training for very senior police officers.

Component 6.4.4

Office of the Narcotics Control Board, Thailand, Computer Project

Component objective

To enhance regional participation in the international effort to combat crime.

Performance measure

Participation as a member of the Joint Management Committee of the Thai Office of the Narcotics Control Board.

Performance outcome

Information Technology staff continued to provide technical and operational support to the Thai-Australian computer project in the Office of the Narcotics Control Board in Thailand, including attendance at the Annual Joint Management Committee meeting.

Performance measure

Contributing to the creation of an environment conducive to the effective enforcement of criminal laws.

Performance outcome

During the year the hardware and software for the Office of the Narcotics Control Board mainframe computer system installed in Bangkok was upgraded. The mainframe computer is used to automate drug intelligence and related information-gathering functions for the Office of the Narcotics Control Board. A number of passport reader units were installed at Don Muang International Airport in Bangkok to improve the efficiency and accuracy of data collection.

Resources Summary—6.4.4
Office of the Narcotics Control Board, Thailand

FINANCIAL	1995–96	1996–97	1996–97
	Actual	Estimate	Actual
	\$(‘000)	\$(‘000)	\$(‘000)
Appropriation Bill No. 1			
Running Costs			
• Salaries (120–1) (p)	219	183	190
• Other (120–1) (p)	129	171	123
TOTAL APPROPRIATIONS	348	354	313
Adjustments affecting Outlays			
• Trust Account Transactions—Law Enforcement			
– Receipts	–	–	–
– Expenditure	163	59	59
• Section 35 (Audit Act) Receipts	15	12	12
TOTAL OUTLAYS	496	401	360
STAFFING			
Staff Years	2.0	1.0	1.5

(p) *indicates that the amount shown against an appropriation item is only part of the amount appropriated under that item.*

Specific accrual accounting information can be found in the accompanying audited Financial Statements.

Sub-program 6.5

Community Protection

Sub-program objective

To assess, enhance and protect the security of the Australian community; to assist in safeguarding Australia's interests and resources from actual and potential threats and maintain effective prevention and response measures.

Component 6.5.3

Australian Protective Service

Component objective:

To be recognised as a world class provider of protective security services and be economically viable.

Role

In response to a National Commission of Audit Report, the Australian Protective Service underwent a review which focused on its role, functions, structure and funding arrangements. As a result the APS now has two distinct areas of operations. These are line-managed by function from the National Headquarters in Canberra, and divided into core and contestable functions. Core clients are those who are required by the Government to continue to use the APS to meet their security needs. Contestable clients are those who now have the option of seeking an alternative service provider via the tender process. The APS will continue to tender for such work and is examining ways of becoming a more competitive option.

The APS will continue to provide a range of services on a cost recovery basis. The core areas will include guarding buildings and establishments occupied by many Commonwealth agencies throughout Australia, including sensitive defence establishments such as those at North-West Cape, Pine Gap and Nurrungar; the residences of the Prime Minister and the Governor-General; the external precincts and ministerial wing of Parliament House; and the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation's research facility at Lucas Heights, Sydney. The APS also provides diplomatic and consular security at more than 400 locations throughout Australia. Subject to the review of the counter-terrorist first-response function, security of designated airports may remain as a core function.

The contestable area of operations includes custodial and escort duties for the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs at its reception, processing and detention centres in locations as varied as Villawood in Sydney and Port Hedland in Western Australia, and guarding functions for the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, the NCA and Department of Defence research establishments.

The APS operates in all States and Territories and its National Headquarters is located in Canberra.

Strategy

Through an effective marketing strategy maintain our core business in the Government, and diversify into strategic protective security law enforcement within the authority of the *Australian Protective Service Act 1987*.

Performance measure

Achievement of business plan projections for profits, return on assets and return on investment.

Performance outcome

The 1996–98 business plan forecast an operating profit of \$1.3 million for 1996–97. The APS has recorded an operating loss before abnormals of \$1.2 million. The result does not include \$2.95 million being potential revenue which remains in dispute with a client. If this amount were to be recognised the operating profit would be \$1.75 million in lieu of the \$1.2 million loss recorded.

Strategy

Promote a culture in which client focus and quality are entrenched characteristics.

Performance measure

High level of client satisfaction with operational quality and responsiveness.

Performance outcome

In a survey of stakeholder perceptions undertaken on behalf of the APS by the consultancy firm Stanton Partners in February 1997, utilising a sliding scale from ‘poor’ to ‘excellent,’ on average clients considered that their relationship with the APS was ‘good.’ Police services around Australia and key agencies in the Commonwealth protective security network rated the APS as ‘very good.’ No client rated the APS below ‘average.’

The APS examined the key service delivery issues outlined in the report in detail, and took steps to rectify problems where identified.

Performance measure

Progress toward implementation of a quality assurance program nationally.

Performance outcome

All APS stations throughout Australia have achieved certification as quality endorsed companies, and hold relevant licences as having complied with the requirements of ISO 9001/9002. The APS is the first security organisation in the world to have achieved registration in both its administrative and operational areas.

Strategy

Through a process of continuous improvement, develop efficient and effective business and operational systems.

Performance measure

To have in place a responsive and reliable financial information reporting system and effective account management practices.

Performance outcome

Due to the review into the APS the acquisition of an effective financial management information system was postponed. It was to be pursued as a matter of priority during 1997–98.

The APS reviewed account management practices and implemented a number of changes designed to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of its account management operations. Specifically, it closed its regional offices and transferred line authority to client managers with authority nationally to respond to client needs.

Performance measure

Progress towards achievement of best practice.

Performance outcome

The APS reviewed a wide range of security organisations in the private sector, as well as surveying clients of its services. A number of service quality issues were identified and specific actions undertaken to rectify faults identified in the system.

Strategy

Promote effective communication across all levels of the organisation and recognise the value of input from staff in policy formulation.

Performance measure

The effectiveness of consultative mechanisms and the degree to which staff are empowered to make decisions for the benefit of our customers.

Resources Summary—6.5.3 Australian Protective Service

FINANCIAL	1995-96	1996-97	1996-97
	Actual	Estimate	Actual
	\$(‘000)	\$(‘000)	\$(‘000)
Adjustments affecting Outlays			
• Revenue			
- Dividends	846	-	-
• Trust Account Transactions - Australian Protective Service Trust Account			
- Receipts	78 494	78 901	78 901
- Expenditure	82 099	77 643	77 643
TOTAL OUTLAYS	2 759	(1 259)	(1 259)
STAFFING			
Staff Years	1 040.0	1 052.0	992.0

Specific accrual accounting information can be found in the accompanying audited Financial Statements.

Performance outcome

The APS has in place a number of regular forums and meetings which empower staff in the decision-making process. These include regional and national consultative forums, station consultative meetings, workplace briefings and information-sharing through the revised *Update* staff newsletter. These initiatives have proved successful in improving service to clients and as forums for information sharing.

Closure of the regional offices also required that decision-making be devolved to individual officers in the workplace, and placed greater emphasis on client focus and a professional level of interaction.

Performance measure

Effectiveness of communication within the organisation.

Performance outcome

The APS places a high importance on two-way communication, particularly due to the geographic spread of its staff. *Update* is distributed to all staff each fortnight, and more regularly when required. *Update* contains answers to questions received from staff, as well as explanations of issues facing the APS and general public service reforms.

A staff magazine, *The Sentinel*, is published twice yearly. It features contributions from regional staff about their experiences and promotes organisational and staff achievements.

Detailed communication strategies are developed to advise staff about major issues. These often take a multi-tiered approach, involving a combination of verbal and written briefings, visual aids and the use of staff feedback mechanisms.

Workplace meetings take place on a regular basis among all levels of staff, with special working groups set up to tackle specific tasks.

Strategy

Provide the most relevant and up-to-date skills and knowledge to staff to ensure they are in the best position to provide quality service to clients.

Performance measure

Competency model for management positions operational.

Performance outcome

The broad range of tasks performed by the APS have been identified for expansion into performance statements. On completion, the performance statements will be assessed against private security industries and Australian police forces competency models.

Performance measure

Regular assessment of staff development needs conducted.



Instructors from the APS demonstrate defensive techniques at a skills display held at the Australian Defence Force Academy in August 1996. The display followed a five-week specialist instructor course on operational safety and defensive tactics.

Performance outcome

The mandatory qualifications needs of staff in relation to operational requirements were assessed and appropriate training conducted. Forty Assistant Protective Service Officers completed training programs to attain qualifications for promotion to PSO 1, and 60 staff were trained as specialist instructors in the fields of firearms, batons and self defence, bomb awareness and first response duties.

Performance measure

Personal development undertaken in accordance with agreed individual development plans.

Performance outcome

The personal development needs of supervisors and managers were assessed and 120 selected officers attended supervision and management programs. Other staff, including senior officers, attended seminars, courses and conferences in matters including first aid, administrative law, job applicants' workshop, compensation case management and investigation skills.

Component 6.5.4

Standing Advisory Committee on Commonwealth–State Cooperation for Protection Against Violence

Role

The Standing Advisory Committee on Commonwealth–State Cooperation for Protection Against Violence (SAC-PAV) is one of the principal instruments for coordinating the national capability for protecting Australia from politically motivated violence. The Protective Security Coordination Centre provides the executive and secretariat support to SAC-PAV and its project groups.

Performance measure

An effective national capability for protecting Australia from politically motivated violence.

Performance outcome

During the year SAC-PAV continued to develop an effective national capability for protecting Australia from politically motivated violence. This was achieved through the cooperative development and refinement of plans and strategies by SAC-PAV. The appropriateness of the revised edition of the National Anti-Terrorist Plan was examined during a number of exercises.

The conduct of training programs, exercise programs and professional development activities coordinated by SAC-PAV continued the process of refining capabilities. Enhanced cooperation between agencies and State and Territory jurisdictions was also achieved. This was an important outcome in the lead-up to the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games.

Resources Summary - 6.5.4 Standing Advisory Committee on Commonwealth–State Cooperation for Protection against Violence

FINANCIAL	1995-96 Actual \$('000)	1996-97 Estimate \$('000)	1996-97 Actual \$('000)
Appropriation Bill No. 1			
Other Program Costs			
• Standing Advisory Committee on Commonwealth–State Cooperation for Protection against Violence			
- Operating Expenses (120-2-06)	3,410	3,462	3,448
TOTAL APPROPRIATIONS	3,410	3,462	3,448
Adjustments affecting Outlays			
• Revenue			
- Miscellaneous	-	5	5
TOTAL OUTLAYS	3,410	3,457	3,442

Specific accrual accounting information can be found in the accompanying audited Financial Statements.

Component 6.5.5

Protective Security Coordination Centre

Component objective

To provide high-quality policy advice to ministers and other client groups on protective security matters, maintain an effective counter-terrorism capability and coordinate protective security arrangements for holders of high office, visiting dignitaries and foreign diplomats.

Role

The Protective Security Coordination Centre supports the Attorney-General by providing policy advice on protective security and national security matters.

The PSCC implements government decisions in the field of protective security. This includes security awareness activities and education through training programs on physical, computer and personnel security, and the production, marketing and maintenance of the *Protective Security Manual*.

The PSCC is also responsible for the coordination of Australia's security interests at the Sydney 2000 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Consistent with its responsibilities for the development and maintenance of arrangements for an effective counter-terrorism capability, the PSCC coordinates protection arrangements for high-risk persons (including ministers and their staff, visiting foreign dignitaries and foreign diplomats), premises and facilities.

The PSCC also coordinates programs through SAC-PAV, such as the conduct of training and the provision of appropriate equipment to Australian police forces. It provides the secretariat for the Special Interdepartmental Committee on Protection Against Violence, and its major sub-group, the Diplomat and Dignitary Security Sub-Committee.

In accordance with the Government's acceptance of the recommendations of the Review of Security for Commonwealth Holders of High Office, the PSCC – previously a branch of the Security Division – was given full division status. New appointments were made to the positions of Director and two Assistant Secretaries.

Strategy

Implementation of government decisions on protective security, including training programs and physical, computer and personnel security.

Performance measure

Implementation of government decisions in accordance with government policy and within agreed timeframes, including adherence to guidance contained in the Attorney-General's Department corporate plan.

Resources Summary—6.5.5 Protective Security Coordination Centre

FINANCIAL	1995–96 Actual \$('000)	1996–97 Estimate \$('000)	1996–97 Actual \$('000)
Appropriation Bill No. 1			
Running Costs			
• Salaries (120–1) (p)	2 255	2 822	2 586
• Other (120–1) (p)	10 252	21 609	15 853
TOTAL APPROPRIATIONS	12 507	24 431	18 439
Adjustments affecting Outlays			
• Section 35 (Audit Act) Receipts	–	307	307
TOTAL OUTLAYS	12 507	24 124	18 132
STAFFING			
Staff Years	41.0	44.8	48.0

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Specific accrual accounting information can be found in the accompanying audited Financial Statements.

Performance outcome

Considerable progress was made during the year on the rewriting of the *Protective Security Manual*. Apart from incorporating developments in protective security since the publishing of the last manual, the revised draft incorporated modern security practices and current Australian and New Zealand standards in risk management.

The PSCC worked closely with the Office of Asset Sales through the Government Enterprises and Commercialisation Group of the Legal Practice in providing advice on the protective security aspects of a number of asset sales.

Performance measure

Evaluation of training programs by participants and by clients, both formal and informal.

Performance outcome

Training in all aspects of protective security continued to be provided to agency security personnel under the Protective Security Training Program. There was a significant increase in requests for in-house security awareness training programs across a broad range of Commonwealth agencies,



The US President, Bill Clinton, invited Australian officials and security staff on board Air Force One as a thank-you gesture at the end of his visit to Australia in November 1996. In the group are two PSCC staff, John Simons (left, front) and Gerard Woodward (right, front).

Photograph courtesy of the White House.

from parliamentary departments to research agencies. All sessions were well-attended by staff of the agencies concerned. Given the interest shown to date, and with the publication due in 1998 of the new *Protective Security Manual*, the demand for sessions of this type was expected to continue.

Following a number of requests for protective security information and awareness sessions from many agencies located interstate, seminars were conducted during the year in Brisbane and Melbourne.

In order to meet the increasing expectations of its clients for greater levels of security while coping with the budgetary constraints imposed on it, the PSCC continued with strategies to increase returns from its cost-recovery activities. Strategies adopted included reviewing courses and the manner in which they are conducted. These reviews are expected to continue as the release of the new *Protective Security Manual* will mean changes in security training. A major strategy adopted was to conduct in-house seminars designed to raise the level of security awareness among government agencies.

The 1996 Security in Government conference, with the theme 'Resourceful Security – Putting It All Together,' was held over three days in November 1996. It attracted nearly 200 participants from federal, State and local government agencies. The conference is part of the PSCC's ongoing commitment to security awareness, and as an annual event it forms an integral part of the security education and awareness program. The program is aimed at government security managers and is one of the most important events on the government security calendar. The 1996 conference received very good reports, with a marked increase in the level of feedback provided by participants in comparison to previous years. Of particular note was the satisfaction expressed by participants with the new format of the conference. Over 75 per cent of respondents rated the conference as good or better.

Strategy

Coordination of the Commonwealth's security interests in the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games.

Performance measure

Level of client satisfaction with coordination arrangements, including ministerial feedback and consent provided by the International Olympic Committee and scrutiny by officials.

Performance outcome

The PSCC has established the Olympic Security Coordination Unit to coordinate the Commonwealth's security interests and responsibilities in respect of the Olympic Games, and to provide effective liaison between the Commonwealth and NSW authorities with responsibility for Olympic security. The unit is currently staffed by two officers.

The PSCC provides the Commonwealth member of the Olympic Security Working Committee which oversees security preparations for the Games. The PSCC has worked closely with NSW authorities in developing a strategic plan for Olympic security. This plan will provide guidance to operational planners and set the objectives and milestones that will allow progress to be monitored and evaluated. The PSCC also provides representatives to five work groups of the Olympic Security Working Committee.

Strategy

Develop and implement coordinated protection arrangements for high-risk persons, premises and facilities, including ministers and their staff, visiting dignitaries and foreign diplomats.

Performance measure

Level of client satisfaction with security arrangements.

Performance outcome

The PSCC maintained a 24-hour duty officer system which provided an effective after-hours information network within the Commonwealth and with State and Territory police for matters relating to protection arrangements for high-risk persons, premises and facilities.

With regard to Australian holders of high public office, several improvements to protective arrangements resulted from the acceptance by the Government of the recommendations of the Review of Security for Commonwealth Holders of High Office. Considerable effort was directed at implementing the recommendations, including restructuring of the former Security Division and the elevation of the PSCC to division status. Other recommendations were:

- the enhancement of existing measures for the protection of ministers and other holders of high office;
- the transfer of responsibilities from other agencies to the PSCC, making it a 'one-stop shop' for the management and coordination of the protection of high office holders;
- the creation of new arrangements for the security of Members of Parliament in general;
- the creation of the position of Commonwealth Security Controller to be responsible for the management and coordination of office holders' security.

In accordance with these recommendations, additional funds were provided to the PSCC for new or enhanced responsibilities. During the year the PSCC implemented the bulk of the review's recommendations, including:

- the commencement of a comprehensive security management plan which addresses all aspects of office holder security;
- the refinement and maintenance of a residential security program;
- the refinement and maintenance of an electorate office security program;
- a major physical security upgrade program for official establishments;
- regular review of protective security measures for office holders and other Senators and Members;
- the development of an incident database;
- the development of a security training program for ministerial and electorate staff.

The PSCC continued to provide a high level of leadership and management to Commonwealth, State and Territory arrangements for the protection of visiting foreign dignitaries. Visits requiring major security input included those by the President, Secretary of State and Secretary of Defence from the United States; the Vietnamese Foreign Minister; the German Chancellor; the Indonesian Foreign Minister; the Japanese Prime Minister; and the Chinese Vice Premier and Justice Minister.

The PSCC and its partner agencies have a range of policies and procedures which can be implemented as appropriate, and which are commensurate with the level of threat to the security or dignity of the visitor.

Feedback from a broad range of sources, including ministers, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and foreign governments, indicated that the implementation of effective security measures contributed to the success of these visits and the consequent benefits to Australian interests.

The PSCC, in consultation with other agencies, coordinated protective security arrangements for the diplomatic and consular community throughout Australia. This included tasking the APS to provide protection – primarily static guarding, mobile patrolling and alarm monitoring – to diplomatic and consular premises in Canberra, Sydney, Melbourne and Darwin. The requirement for protective security was continually monitored and evaluated, with resources being allocated as

needed in response to specific events and occurrences, both in Australia and overseas. Significant additional resources continued to be allocated to the protection of Indonesian diplomatic and consular premises.

A range of electronic and physical security measures are operating to ensure the protection of diplomatic and consular personnel and property. Due to the existing effective network of police, security and intelligence agencies involved in diplomatic protection, these measures can be implemented at very short notice in response to local or international events should the need arise.

Numerous foreign missions have written to the PSCC and its partner agencies expressing their thanks for the implementation of effective protective security measures, particularly during security sensitive periods and events.

In March 1997 the PSCC, in conjunction with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, undertook a study of the level and method of security services provided for diplomats and visiting dignitaries in a number of comparable countries. The PSCC is examining a range of issues to provide more cost-effective services as a result of this review.

Various Commonwealth organisations involved in protective security matters have a range of individual security plans. The PSCC has commenced the consolidation of these plans. It is intended that areas in which internal procedures have been developed but not formally documented will also become part of the consolidated plans in due course.

Performance measure

Monitoring of international best practice.

Performance outcome

Senior officers from the PSCC and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade conducted a review into overseas practice for diplomatic, consular and dignitary protection. This found that protective security measures implemented by Australian authorities were equal to, if not better than, those in countries examined by the review. The PSCC also actively encourages critical feedback from State and federal authorities and from foreign security personnel.

Strategy

Provide high-quality policy advice to ministers and other clients in the area of protective security, including through expertise in the fields of research, analysis and liaison.

Performance measure

Level of client satisfaction with timeliness and quality of advice provided.

Performance outcome

The level of client satisfaction is indicated by the increase in demand across a broad range of agencies for advice on emerging issues in protective security, especially in relation to issues associated with outsourcing and asset sales.

Strategy

Continually develop a nation-wide counter-terrorism capability through the provision of exercise and training activities and specialised equipment.

Performance measure

Counter-terrorism capability assessed through evaluation of exercise outcomes.

Performance outcome

Agencies responding to exercise scenarios were assessed on the effectiveness and appropriateness of their counter-terrorism response. Evaluation and agency reports support the view that a credible nation-wide response capability exists.

External consultants were engaged to undertake a comprehensive review of SAC-PAV's exercise, training and development programs during 1996–97. It is intended that the results of the review will be implemented in 1997–98.

The development of close cooperation and inter-operability between State and Territory jurisdictions remained a priority during the year, and will continue to be a focus in preparing national counter-terrorism capabilities for the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games.

A major project to review SAC-PAV's information management requirements was commenced during 1996–97.

Performance measure

Level of client satisfaction with the services provided by the PSCC.

Performance outcome

Client satisfaction can be measured by the substantial contribution of clients to exercises and training activities, and the positive feedback received following counter-terrorist related activities.

Inter-operability in equipment and operating techniques between Australia's eight federal, State and Territory police jurisdictions remained a key consideration for development of the exercise, training and equipment programs.

Performance measure

Monitoring of international best practice.

Performance outcome

The SAC-PAV program sends selected police specialists overseas on study tours and takes advantage of unplanned training opportunities to ensure Australian police specialist units are aware of new equipment and international best practice in their field of specialty.

Strategy

Development of Standard Operation Procedures (SOPs).

Performance measure

Adherence to SOPs.

Performance outcome

Sections within the PSCC have developed SOPs. These are fluid, dynamic documents which are updated on a continual basis to ensure they remain relevant to meeting the needs of clients.

Reviews commenced of a range of specialist police activities to develop national standards. SAC-PAV programs contribute to this standardisation through centralised specialist equipment procurement and collective specialist training.

Strategy

Facilitate the development of the most relevant and up-to-date skills and knowledge by staff to ensure they are in the best position to provide quality service to our clients.

Performance measure

Regular assessment of staff development needs conducted.

Performance outcome

Assessment of staff development needs was made on an individual and group basis at regular intervals. Staff are regularly consulted on their personal development needs.

Performance measure

Personal development undertaken in accordance with agreed individual development plans.

Performance outcome

The process of identifying staff development needs continued, with individual members actively encouraged to undertake appropriate training in accordance with individual development plans.

Performance measure

Regular staff evaluation of suitability of development programs.

Performance outcome

Managers and staff conducted regular evaluation of potential development programs to determine the suitability and effectiveness of those programs. Regular branch meetings were held where the evaluation and identification of potential development programs were discussed by staff.

Component 6.5.6

National Firearms Program

Component objective

To enhance the safety of the Australian community through a national approach to the availability and use of firearms which includes fair and proper compensation to those who surrender prescribed firearms.

Performance measure

The achievement of the greatest possible withdrawal of restricted category firearms from circulation within the Australian community.

Performance outcome

The National Firearms Program maintained a high level of success with almost \$225 million in Commonwealth compensation paid out to gun owners.

The Government dedicated \$500 million to the buyback, which was prompted by the shooting of 35 people at Port Arthur in April 1996. At a special meeting of the Australasian Police Ministers Council in May 1996, Commonwealth, State and Territory Police Ministers reached a historic agreement on uniform and effective national firearms laws.

A nation-wide public education campaign provided information about the buyback schemes operating in each jurisdiction, as well as gun licensing and registration systems. The buyback is scheduled to end on 30 September 1997.

Resources Summary—6.5.6 National Firearms Program

FINANCIAL	1995–96 Actual \$('000)	1996–97 Estimate \$('000)	1996–97 Actual \$('000)
Special Appropriations			
• National Firearms Program Implementation Act 1996	–	500 000	311 524
TOTAL APPROPRIATIONS	–	500 000	311 524
TOTAL OUTLAYS	–	500 000	311 524

Specific accrual accounting information can be found in the accompanying audited Financial Statements.

Component 6.5.7

Office of Law Enforcement Coordination

Component objective

A cooperative and coordinated Commonwealth law enforcement strategy for the detection and prevention of criminal activity.

Role

The Office of Law Enforcement Coordination (OLEC) is responsible for policy matters relating to the operational law enforcement agencies within the Attorney-General's portfolio and general law enforcement issues; policy advice relating to firearms and illicit drugs; administration of the National Campaign against Violence and Crime; secretariat support to the Ministerial Council on the Administration of Justice; and support to the Commonwealth Law Enforcement Board. CLEB comprises the Secretary, Attorney-General's Department; Chairperson, NCA (Board Chair); Commissioner, AFP; Director, AUSTRAC; and an Executive Member. It provides coordinated advice to the Attorney-General in the form of an annual strategic crime assessment, an annual Law Enforcement Planning Document (LEPD) and an annual report on fraud control issues.

Strategy

Provide strategic policy advice to the Attorney-General on Commonwealth law enforcement, criminal activity and related issues.

Performance measure

Satisfaction of Minister in the advice provided.

Performance outcome

The Attorney-General accepted the 1996 LEPD and the associated briefing material.

The 1996 LEPD marked the start of a strategic planning process which was initiated by CLEB in early 1995 to fulfil a number of its objectives and functions. The process was designed to enable CLEB to report to the Government on the main challenges facing the Commonwealth's primary law enforcement agencies, and the responses necessary to meet those challenges.

The 1996 LEPD was endorsed by the Government in May 1997. It examined the Commonwealth's law enforcement interests, the nature and costs of crime in Australia and the main factors underpinning our strategic law enforcement environment. It also recommended several enhancements to existing law enforcement arrangements and emphasised the need for continuous improvement in Commonwealth law enforcement, primarily in priority-setting and policy development, consultation and coordination, information technology and communications, data access and analysis, investigation capabilities and international cooperation.

Resources Summary—6.5.7
Office of Law Enforcement Coordination

FINANCIAL	1995–96	1996–97	1996–97
	Actual	Estimate	Actual
	\$(‘000)	\$(‘000)	\$(‘000)
Appropriation Bill No. 1			
Running Costs			
National Crime Authority			
• Salaries (130–1) (p)	2 161	2 312	1 217
• Other (130–1) (p)	2 938	7 539	917
A-G’s Department			
• Salaries (120–1) (p)	–	1 448	1 299
• Other (120–1) (p)	–	6 319	1 236
TOTAL APPROPRIATIONS	5 099	17 618	4 668
Adjustments affecting Outlays			
• Trust Account Transactions—			
Law Enforcement Projects Trust Account			
– Receipts	549	–	–
– Expenditure	102	148	148
• Section 35 (Audit Act) Receipts	–	50	50
TOTAL OUTLAYS	4 652	17 716	4 766
STAFFING			
Staff Years	35.6	38.0	36.0

(p) indicates that the amount shown against an appropriation item is only part of the amount appropriated under that item.

Specific accrual accounting information can be found in the accompanying audited Financial Statements.

Note: The Support Group for the Commonwealth Law Enforcement Board was transferred from the National Crime Authority to the Department during the year (effective from 2 January 1997). The Support Group now operates as an additional division of the Department and is known as the Office of Law Enforcement Coordination.

It was the first time such a level of strategic planning and reporting had been completed, and the report significantly increased the quality and breadth of advice available to the Government about Commonwealth law enforcement issues.

OLEC played a major role in the preparation of the 1996 LEPD. It was responsible for preparing various drafts of the report under direction from CLEB and from the LEPD working group of senior officials from CLEB's agencies. OLEC was also responsible for preparing progress reports to CLEB on the report's preparation. OLEC prepared a range of ministerial submissions and correspondence on behalf of CLEB relating to the LEPD process; conducted officer-level consultations on the report with a large number of Commonwealth, State and Territory agencies; and provided a range of associated support services.

The LEPD process was expected to result in improvements to Commonwealth law enforcement arrangements, leading to increased levels of performance and accountability. Accordingly, OLEC began a process of coordinating preparation of the second LEPD. This will be available for consideration by the Attorney-General in late 1997. To maximise the benefits of the strategic planning process, the second report will advance the LEPD process by including information about the capabilities and performance of CLEB's agencies against the Government's law enforcement priorities.

Commonwealth Coordination

Tasking of Commonwealth Coordination with law enforcement administrative and policy matters indicated a high level of satisfaction. Regular communication with ministerial staff indicated the Minister was satisfied with the advice provided in submissions, with the development of uniform guidelines and standards and with the level of consultation with other appropriate agencies.

Work commenced in cooperation with the AFP and the Security Law and Justice Branch to coordinate the development of a proposal outlining changes to the *Australian Federal Police Act 1979* to reflect the changed organisational structure and operation of the AFP.

In June 1997 the Government tabled its response to the report of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on the NCA entitled *Law Enforcement in Australia – An International Perspective*. The response was developed in consultation with the NCA, the AFP, the Australian Security Intelligence Organization, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, AUSTRAC, the ASC, the ACCC, the Insurance and Superannuation Commission, the Australian Customs Service and the Director of Public Prosecutions.

OLEC represents the Department on the Standing Interdepartmental Committee on the Prevention of Olympic Crime (SIDCPOC) and on two of its working parties (Drugs; Illegal Entry/Exit of People, Goods, Weapons and Intellectual Property). SIDCPOC provided a report to the Commonwealth–State Ministerial Sub-Committee on Olympic Security on aspects of concern to Commonwealth agencies.

The government response to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on the NCA report into organised criminal paedophile activity was developed in consultation with the NCA, the AFP, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Australian Broadcasting Authority and the Australian Bureau of Criminal Intelligence. The response was tabled in December 1996.

OLEC represents the Department on the Interdepartmental Committee on the Movement Alert List. The committee is looking at improving the coordination of information which is placed on the movement alert list by law enforcement agencies.

The Australasian Women in Policing Advisory Committee was established by the Australian Police Ministers Council in November 1996 to advise Australasian Commissioners of Police on policy issues affecting women in policing. OLEC represents the Department on this committee.

Strategy

Provide support to CLEB.

Performance measure

Satisfaction of CLEB in the services provided.

Performance outcome

OLEC provided a range of policy advice and support to CLEB on matters affecting Commonwealth and national law enforcement. This included the preparation of a variety of papers and submissions for consideration by CLEB.

In supporting the operation of CLEB and the conduct of its meetings, the secretariat to CLEB coordinated the preparation and compilation of agenda material and ensured that members received that material five working days prior to meetings. As appropriate, the secretariat responded to requests and directions from CLEB and its Executive Member. The secretariat also maintains the official record of CLEB meetings and decisions.

CLEB expressed its satisfaction with the services provided.

Strategy

Develop and implement the Commonwealth's fraud control program.

Performance measure

Progress in implementing programs.

Performance outcome

During 1996–97 OLEC played a central role, in cooperation with the AFP, in developing and implementing the Commonwealth's fraud control policy on behalf of CLEB. OLEC implemented the policy by:

- advising Commonwealth agencies on their responsibilities for fraud control, in particular the development of fraud risk assessments and fraud control plans;

- evaluating, with the AFP, 19 agency fraud risk assessments and 22 fraud control plans, and providing feedback to the agencies concerned;
- providing secretariat services for, and participating in, the Commonwealth Investigation Technical Standards Committee, the Commonwealth Fraud Training Advisory Committee, the Project Management Committee for the Competency Project and the Fraud Prevention Working Party;
- distributing the Commonwealth fraud investigation standards package developed by the Commonwealth Investigation Technical Standards Committee;
- identifying national functional competencies for fraud prevention, detection and investigation and submitting them to the National Training Framework Committee;
- assisting the Fraud Prevention Working Party in the development of a risk assessment package for small agencies (methodology, generic risks and generic controls) and fraud control performance indicators for agencies.

CLEB expressed satisfaction with the progress achieved.

Strategy

Develop Commonwealth law enforcement priorities and monitor their implementation.

Performance measure

Agreement on priorities for law enforcement bodies by the Government.

Performance outcome

In May 1997 the Government endorsed the 1996 LEPD, which identified comprehensive priorities for CLEB agencies.

OLEC was coordinating preparation of the second LEPD, which will advance the work of the 1996 report by monitoring the implementations of its recommendations and reporting on the capabilities and performance of CLEB agencies against the Government's law enforcement priorities.

The Office of Strategic Crime Assessments (OSCA) within OLEC supports the Attorney-General and CLEB through the provision of strategic assessments of the criminal environment affecting Australia three to five years ahead, and through its activities facilitating coordination of the Commonwealth's law enforcement intelligence effort.

OSCA's 1996 Annual Assessment of Emerging Threats to Commonwealth Law Enforcement was considered at CLEB meetings on 16 December 1996 and 7 March 1997. It was submitted to the Attorney-General for consideration on 19 March 1997. A number of individual assessments, issue briefs and trend alerts addressing in detail specific issues covered by the assessment were prepared for CLEB and stakeholder agencies during the year.

The 1995 OSCA assessment was a key supporting document for the 1996 LEPD. Similarly, the 1997 LEPD will draw on material in the 1996 assessment in its examination of strategic responses to the emerging criminal environment.

OSCA supported CLEB in the preparation of its submission to the Financial System Inquiry in September 1996, and also assisted AUSTRAC in the preparation of the report to CLEB of the Electronic Commerce Task Force, completed in January 1997.

Strategy

Facilitate the development of the National Campaign Against Violence and Crime in consultation with relevant Commonwealth, State and Territory bodies.

Performance measure

Progress in implementing strategy.

Performance outcome

The Minister and the Prime Minister's office expressed satisfaction with progress.

The National Campaign Against Violence and Crime (NCAVAC) was allocated \$13 million over three years in the 1996 Federal Budget. The campaign was launched by the Prime Minister on 5 June 1997. It is a high-profile strategic campaign which aims to reduce levels of crime and violence and fear of crime in Australian society. This is being achieved through targeted research and demonstration crime prevention programs; through community education and information sharing; through the provision of crime prevention policy advice to government and other agencies; and through assisting the States and Territories to enhance their crime prevention capacity.

During 1996–97 11 national projects were developed, in cooperation with either the States and Territories or other Commonwealth partners. These included an audit of the provision of programs for perpetrators of domestic violence; an assessment of crime prevention training needs across Australia; a project to identify good practice in preventing crime at public events; a review of violence prevention programs being undertaken with adolescents; and research into the nature and implications of fear of crime in the community.

Strategy

Provide strategic policy advice to the Minister on the development of a coordinated policy on the supply control of illicit drugs and on uniform firearms regulations.

Performance measure

Satisfaction of the Minister with the advice provided.

Performance outcome

Regular communications with ministerial staff suggested the Minister was satisfied with the level of agreement reached between all Australian governments on firearms control, and on the degree of progress in implementing uniform firearms regulations. Similarly, the Minister appeared satisfied with progress in developing a Commonwealth law enforcement position for the annual meeting of the Ministerial Council on Drug Strategy.

Full agreement was reached between all Australian governments on adopting a National Agreement on Firearms Control. Implementation included new or amended firearms legislation being proclaimed in all jurisdictions; over 400 000 firearms handed in by gun owners and almost \$225 million paid in compensation; and uniform licensing and registration requirements adopted in all jurisdictions.

Agreement was reached between all State and Territory health and law enforcement members of the National Drug Strategy Committee to recommend to ministers the adoption of the third evaluation report on the National Drug Strategy. This will shape Australia's approach to drugs, both licit and illicit, for the period 1997–2000.

Strategy

Coordinate arrangements to facilitate best practice, common services, exchange of information and joint operations within Commonwealth law enforcement agencies.

Performance measure

Enhanced cooperation between Commonwealth law enforcement bodies.

Performance outcome

Recognition by Heads of Commonwealth Law Enforcement Agencies (HOCOLEA) of CLEB's role in coordinating the development of uniform guidelines and standards, and continuing support by HOCOLEA and CLEB agencies for OSCA's intelligence coordination activities, indicated a high level of satisfaction. Information technology endeavours enhanced cooperation between Commonwealth law enforcement agencies.

OSCA, on behalf of CLEB, supports cooperative arrangements within the law enforcement intelligence community to coordinate the Commonwealth's law enforcement strategic intelligence efforts. The primary vehicle for this activity is the Commonwealth Law Enforcement Intelligence Consultative Committee, chaired by OSCA, which meets quarterly and brings together the heads of the intelligence units of Commonwealth law enforcement agencies for discussion of issues where a coordinated or collective intelligence community approach is desirable. Revised terms of reference for this committee, reflecting a broader focus of consultation, were approved by CLEB on 8 July 1996. As part of its intelligence coordination function, OSCA represents CLEB on national intelligence committees as appropriate.

Continuing from the previous year, OLEC facilitated and chaired the Information Technology Strategic Plan Coordination Committee (ITSPCC). This was responsible for overseeing the

implementation of the plan for improved communications, data access and data analysis for law enforcement agencies, which was endorsed by CLEB and HOCOLEA in 1995. As well, OLEC facilitated the activities of three sub-committees formed by the ITSPCC to cover security matters, data access and general information technology issues of interest to the Commonwealth's law enforcement agencies.

During 1996–97 the development of the federal law enforcement agency grid, an inter-agency communications network, continued and a plan to provide improved access to ASC data and related analysis tools was completed.

Also, with the participation of the Department's Information Technology staff, the ASC and AUSTRAC, OLEC fostered the development of plans by the AFP and the NCA for the convergence of their IT systems.

Commonwealth Coordination

In August 1996, HOCOLEA endorsed an overarching principles document for use by HOCOLEA agencies in selecting cases for investigation and administrative, civil and criminal sanctions. OLEC's Commonwealth Coordination staff, together with HOCOLEA agencies, were instrumental in the development of the paper. HOCOLEA also agreed that the principles should be endorsed by the Government and made available to the public. The Attorney-General endorsed the document on behalf of Government and wrote to his HOCOLEA ministerial colleagues seeking support for the application of the principles by HOCOLEA agencies.

In November 1996 HOCOLEA agreed that CLEB coordinate, in conjunction with other interested agencies, a basic principles document on charging for services between law enforcement agencies. Accordingly Commonwealth Coordination staff, in conjunction with interested HOCOLEA agencies, developed a document which was endorsed by HOCOLEA in May 1997. Subject to



The National Campaign Against Violence and Crime (NCAVAC) was launched in June 1997. Pictured at the launch are (from left) Acting Commonwealth Attorney-General Philip Ruddock, South Australian Attorney-General Trevor Griffin, Prime Minister John Howard and Yvonne Korn, Director of the NCAVAC Unit.

statutory obligations and intergovernmental agreements, and consistent with government policy, each HOCOLEA agency supports and facilitates HOCOLEA's principles on charging for law enforcement services and practice.

During 1996–97 Commonwealth Coordination staff provided secretariat services to HOCOLEA's Criminal Assets Liaison Group and administered procedures for the selection of law enforcement projects for funding from the Confiscated Assets Trust Fund and the evaluation of completed projects. Following the Government's decision to absorb the trust fund into consolidated revenue, HOCOLEA dissolved the Criminal Assets Liaison Group. Commonwealth Coordination, however, continued to administer the accountability process for outstanding project evaluations, reconciliations and acquittals of current grants.

Under the direction of HOCOLEA, OLEC coordinated the development of new data-matching guidelines for law enforcement agencies. Consultations with the Privacy Commissioner resulted in amendments to existing guidelines to satisfy concerns raised by HOCOLEA. The new uniform guidelines were endorsed by HOCOLEA and by the Privacy Commissioner, and were to be issued as uniform Commonwealth guidelines.

Strategy

Facilitate the development of the most relevant and up-to-date skills and knowledge by staff to ensure they are in the best position to provide quality service to our clients.

Performance measure

Regular assessment of staff development needs conducted.

Performance outcome

Staff development needs are monitored to ensure that there are opportunities for training and skills development.

Performance measure

Personal development undertaken in accordance with agreed individual development plans.

Performance outcome

Individual development plans for OLEC staff were not available in 1996–97, though these were to be introduced in 1997–98. Individual needs are assessed in the ordinary course of business, with each unit receiving funding each year to cover costs associated with personal development.

OSCA conducts regular training needs assessments of its staff to ensure that their skills match the analytical requirements for each year's annual assessment. In support of analysis for the 1997 assessment, OSCA staff undertook training in subjects including survey design and analysis, Internet exploitation, meeting facilitation, risk analysis, electronic publishing, intellectual property law and consultancy management.

Social Justice

The Attorney-General's Department works to an extensive social justice agenda founded on principles of equality, universal access, civil liberty and the right of all citizens to protection from crime. Virtually all areas of the Department are involved in implementing this social justice agenda.

The **Civil Law Division** is concerned with policy initiatives that are fair and responsive to changing circumstances in the areas of family law and marriage law, administrative law, information access, privacy, human rights and humanitarian law, legal procedures and judicial administration.

The activities of the Division are almost wholly directed towards the development of policies which have social justice implications, including a range of initiatives for which the Division was responsible in 1996–97.

After conducting informal consultations with a wide range of interested organisations, the Division prepared a discussion paper examining whether non-judicial family law services, such as mediation and counselling, could be better provided to the community outside the court system. The proposal is aimed at discouraging people from engaging in an adversarial process in order to resolve family law problems. The discussion paper is to be released for broad consultations in 1997–98.

The Department has funded the provision of interpreter training in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages for a number of years. An interpreter awareness training package for judges, tribunal members and staff of courts and tribunals was produced to provide judges, members and court staff with information and skills on how to work more effectively with interpreters.

During 1996–97 the Department, in conjunction with Batchelor College in the Northern Territory, arranged a series of interpreter training workshops in eight locations towards accreditation by the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters Ltd.

In conjunction with the NT Attorney-General's Department and the Office of Aboriginal Development, the Department developed an Aboriginal languages technical interpreter service for use by the health and legal systems. Trials were initially conducted for six months from September 1996 to February 1997 but were later extended to 30 June 1997.

Funding was provided to the NT Office of Aboriginal Development to develop a translation of the police caution in 15 of the most commonly used Northern Territory Aboriginal languages, and to develop a video for the medical and legal professions on how to work successfully with Aboriginal language interpreters.

The Division was responsible for the Sex Discrimination Amendment Bill introduced into the Parliament on 6 November 1996. The Bill is designed to make the law fairer by removing or limiting protection for unjustified discrimination, doing so by further reducing the scope of exemptions contained in the Sex Discrimination Act for acts done in direct compliance with specified legislation.

During 1996–97 the Division was engaged in the development of disability standards under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA). Such standards are designed to make clearer the rights and obligations provided for by the DDA. In conjunction with a number of other agencies, work was undertaken in relation to possible draft standards in the areas of public transport, employment, education and access to Commonwealth information.

Assistance was given to the Australian Building Codes Board review of the access provisions of the Building Code of Australia for people with a disability to be brought up to the requirements of anti-discrimination law.

The Division is responsible for the operation and administration in Australia of the Hague Convention on Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction. Efforts were made in 1996–97 to increase public awareness of the convention and to improve its effectiveness in Australia. A child abduction information kit was produced for the seventh National Family Law Conference held in Canberra in October 1996, and an officer of the Division presented a paper and participated in a panel for a session on child abduction. The child abduction work of the Division was the subject of a number of media articles and programs. The Division's publications on child abduction continued to be sought, and numerous requests for information and advice were received from the public and legal practitioners. The Division worked closely with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade on a number of difficult cases involving Australian children taken to other convention countries.

Steps were taken to persuade other signatory countries to the Hague Abduction Convention of the need to protect the welfare of children returned under the convention. The Special Commission, at its meeting on the operation of the Hague Abduction Convention held at The Hague in March 1997, adopted an Australian proposal that parties to the convention accept an obligation to protect the welfare of children returning to their country of habitual residence.

Negotiations continued during 1996–97 between officers of the Division and State and Territory government officers to conclude arrangements for the implementation in Australia of the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption. The Division responded to numerous representations from adoption interest groups on progress towards ratification of the convention.

In December 1996 the Division organised the first meeting of a forum of non-government organisations (NGOs) to discuss domestic human rights issues. Thirty NGOs attended, including representatives of women, children, Aboriginal people, people living with AIDS and other disabilities, as well as officers from a number of government departments. It was resolved that such meetings should occur annually.

The Division was engaged under a consultancy contract with UNAIDS and the UN Centre for Human Rights to produce draft guidelines on HIV–AIDS and human rights considered by an international consultation in Geneva on 23–25 September 1996. The consultation, attended by 35 international experts, adopted the guidelines with minor amendments.

The Division continued to provide information and material about the changes introduced by the Family Law Reform Act to the general public and to bodies such as Community Legal Centres and schools. The Division provided speakers on the Act for a number of seminars and conferences.

Negotiations were held with New Zealand and United States government representatives on new reciprocal arrangements for the registration and enforcement of child support and liabilities. Work commenced on developing new legislation for the improvement and extension of Australia's current system of enforcing Australian child support liabilities overseas, including possible Australian accession to the Hague Convention on the Recognition and Enforcement of Maintenance Obligations. The Division sought to increase public awareness of its maintenance arrangements, and to improve the effectiveness of those arrangements, through the continued distribution of its

publications, media publicity for the Division's role in assisting parents and responses to the public's requests for advice.

The **Criminal Law Division** examines and advises on all draft legislation which impacts upon Commonwealth criminal law to ensure that any proposals accord with Commonwealth criminal law policy and are in a form acceptable to the Parliament. The focus is on providing practical solutions to problems. The scrutiny process impacts on social justice by ensuring that different regulatory regimes do not apply different standards without justification, which is particularly important where personal liberty might be at stake.

The Division prepared the Crimes Amendment (Forensic Procedures) Bill 1997 to regulate the authorisation and conduct of forensic procedures on persons suspected of indictable offences against Commonwealth law, clarifying the powers available to police to conduct forensic procedures while introducing a number of safeguards to ensure the protection of the rights of suspects. It will also regulate the retention, storage, use and admissibility of forensic procedure results. Because the procedures involved are intrusive by nature, extensive consultation occurred with various civil liberties groups before parliamentary introduction to ensure that the need for effective law enforcement was appropriately balanced with the need to protect the rights of the individual.

The Bill increases the investigative repertoire available to law enforcement agencies, giving access to modern technological aids to investigation. It impacts on social justice in that it provides comprehensive safeguards for suspects, including special provisions for the protection of vulnerable groups such as children, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, persons incapable of managing their own affairs and persons whose command of the English language is inadequate for them to comprehend fully the investigative process provided by the Bill.

The Division also contributed to the Government's response to the report of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on the NCA into organised criminal paedophile activity; provided a detailed briefing for the Australian delegation to the World Congress Against the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children; commented on the draft optional protocol on the sexual exploitation of children; and commented on the discussion paper and draft code of conduct prepared by the Commonwealth Paedophile Inquiry.

In addition to its security and law enforcement role, the **Information and Security Law Division** monitors Aboriginal justice issues within the Department. The establishment of an Aboriginal Justice Monitoring Unit has contributed to a higher standard of reporting on Aboriginal justice issues. The unit has successfully developed Aboriginal justice networks within and outside the Department. It is developing strategies to aid the implementation and monitoring of the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, and is involved in coordinating departmental contributions to the annual report on the implementation of the Royal Commission's recommendations.

The Division also collects statistics from all Commonwealth agencies on the operation of the FOI Act and prepares an annual report for publication by the Attorney-General on the administration of the Act, including those statistics.

The Division participated in the Smart Card Privacy Working Group established by the Asia-Pacific Smart Card Forum. The group developed a code of practice on smart card privacy to address privacy concerns in relation to smart cards. The code aims to set a standard for good industry practice and thus provide assurance to consumers that the use of smart cards need not

pose a threat to privacy.

Legal and legal policy advice was provided to the Attorney-General and Commonwealth agencies on a wide range of privacy and information access issues throughout the year. Attention to privacy issues continued to increase, particularly in relation to new technologies. Government moves towards increased outsourcing and privatisation also required consideration of privacy and information access issues in relation to a number of other portfolios, most notably education, health and social security. This advice enabled efficiencies from outsourcing and privatisation to be pursued while privacy and information access rights were protected.

Assistance was given to CLEB in considering a number of issues of concern to law enforcement agencies in relation to the data-matching guidelines developed by the Privacy Commissioner. The Division also clarified the concerns of a number of law enforcement agencies as to the extent of the operation of Information Privacy Principle 11(1)(e) which deals with disclosures of personal information for the purposes of the criminal law or the protection of the public revenue.

In April 1997 the Department convened a seminar in Canberra on a proposal by World Intellectual Property Organisation for a new international treaty on protection of databases, and collaborated with the Commonwealth Law Reform Commission in convening a forum in Sydney on access to copyright. Comments received as a result of those consultations suggested that they had succeeded in establishing or maintaining effective communication with the interests concerned. Discussion at the public forums on databases protection and access to copyright suggested that those who attended appreciated the opportunity to take part in the discussions, and would support the convening of further consultative forums on copyright topics of interest or concern to them.

Comments on the changes to be implemented in the Copyright Amendment Bill suggested that commentators had an accurate general understanding of the proposals and the relevant issues they raised. The changes were generally welcomed as appropriate by the copyright owners whom they are intended to benefit. The qualifications in the Bill on the new rights for which it provided were recognised and welcomed by affected user groups. Because the package of rights and the qualifications on them represented a compromise between the aspirations of copyright owners and the concerns of users, there was some criticism from both groups.

The **Insolvency and Trustee Service, Australia** aims to increase public awareness resulting in more informed decisions by persons in financial difficulty. To this end ITSA delivered a wide range of information services in 1996–97, issuing a range of pamphlets including *Your Rights and Responsibilities as a Bankrupt*, *Overseas Travel*, *The Most Commonly Asked Questions About Bankruptcy* and *Early Discharge*; releasing a new information video entitled *Bankruptcy, Not the Only Option*, launched by the Attorney-General on 23 May 1997; and conducting public education and information presentations by trained ITSA staff at seminars, conferences, workshops and other venues for the benefit of community groups, professions, business and financial institutions, insolvency practitioners and financial counsellors in major cities and regional areas.

Legal Aid and Family Services continues to make a significant contribution to social justice by providing access to assistance for the prevention and resolution of disputes through a range of mechanisms; access to justice through legal aid schemes and increased awareness of legal rights and responsibilities; and access to a range of high-quality family relationship services.

The Family Services Program assists families to achieve and maintain appropriate functional

relationships by providing reasonable access to quality marriage celebrant and family relationship services, including alternative means of family dispute resolution where appropriate. The program includes family, child and relationship counselling services, marriage and relationship education, and family and child mediation to assist separating couples reach agreement on matters including parenting and care, finances and property.

The program also sponsors adolescent mediation and family therapy which aims to prevent youth homelessness, contact services which facilitate safe contact arrangements for children whose parents are in high conflict over the contact, and family skills training which provides vulnerable families with skills in positive parenting and non-violent problem-solving.

A needs-based planning process was used to identify locations for 34 new marriage and relationship education services funded from 1 January 1997. The process took into account the estimated target population, locations and levels of existing service delivery and the particular needs of regional and rural areas.

Six community development officers were placed in counselling organisations to promote the development of service models which improve the responsiveness of services to the needs of clients from linguistically and culturally diverse backgrounds through a process of organisational change.

A project to determine the most effective ways of delivering marriage and relationship education services in rural and remote areas was commenced. The project, involving the development of service prototypes, was to be completed by September 1997.

A number of best practice initiatives in marriage and relationship education will be funded for two years from 1997–98 following completion of the evaluation of this sub-program. It is expected that these will include some initiatives to develop service models that more appropriately meet the needs of indigenous Australians.

Auscript, at its cost, continued to offer impecunious litigants the facilities to listen to the audio recording of hearings or to read the transcript in its premises during 1996–97.

The **Office of Law Enforcement Coordination** is playing a pivotal role in the Government's National Campaign against Violence and Crime. The initiative will provide the framework, leadership and support for important research and cooperative crime prevention strategies toward making Australia a safer place for everyone.

Internal and External Scrutiny

The Australian National Audit Office conducted an audit of the Department's Financial Statements and reported that there were no significant findings. The ANAO found improvements in relation to departmental controls and quality assurance procedures. The Department's financial statements were again free of qualification by the Auditor-General. A full list of ANAO reports of relevance to the Department appears at Appendix 9.1.

Internal Audit coverage of the Department was carried out in accordance with a three-year rolling plan monitored by the departmental audit committee. Tasks undertaken included coordination and compilation of the Portfolio Evaluation Program and reviews of the Collector of Public Monies' cash handling; NOMAD data integrity; assets verification; the Qantas travel contract; and the OTISS system's integrity.

Legal Practice audit coverage extended to reviews of Resources, Information Technology, Criminal Law Division, Central Practice, Business Operations, Civil Law Division, Security Division and Offices of the Australian Government Solicitor in Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth, Adelaide, Hobart, Sydney and the ACT. In the course of this coverage, audit recommendations led to the issue of departmental procedures for sponsorship, revised instructions on the use of SES motor vehicles and on certain aspects of interstate travel. The new instructions and various revisions were undertaken by the Financial Operations Section and will form a part of the new Chief Executive Officer's instructions as required by forthcoming financial management legislation.

Within ITSA, reviews of office administration, bankruptcy administration and proceeds of crime were conducted in Victoria, South Australia/Northern Territory and in the Central Office. Coverage entailed an office administration review of the central management of CAT (Confiscated Assets Trust) and CIF (Common Investment Fund) accounts. The introduction of OTISS and subsequent delays experienced with its implementation had some impact on audit planning, but nevertheless a review of OTISS controls was completed.

Internal Audit's coverage of the Australian Protective Service extended to office administration reviews of the entire eastern and southern regions, as well as assistance in the area of quality assurance.

Auscript's audit coverage encompassed accounts and office administration reviews of the ACT office and the Victoria/Tasmania regional office.

There was continuing close liaison during the year between Internal Audit and OLEC, with the latter providing a variety of methodologies used by other agencies in the formulation of fraud control plans and fraud risk assessments. Internal Audit used this material to establish a best practice procedure for the revision of the Department's own risk assessments and fraud control plans. A draft of the fraud risk review submitted to OLEC received the following response:

'The draft lays out the methodology and results of the risk assessment process in a logical, well-thought-out way which should certainly assist in the subsequent development and adoption of the fraud control plan.'

Subsequently a draft fraud control plan incorporating the risk assessment was prepared and submitted to OLEC, and the resulting comments were incorporated into the final draft. The draft was

circulated informally outside the Department for critical comment and submitted to the Institute of Internal Auditors for information purposes.

As a result of the risk assessment process recently undergone, various activities within the Department as a whole appeared to attract a higher risk rating than others. Internal Audit's strategy will be to place extra emphasis on these items during the current review of its audit approach.

The Department has a number of measures in place for monitoring relations with clients, including clients outside the Australian Public Service. A description of those measures and the nature of client comments, including complaints, is provided at Appendix 8.

A list of parliamentary committee inquiries relating to the Department during 1996–97 appears at Appendix 9.2.