

PRESIDENTIAL SPEECH



NATIONAL POLICING  
SUMMIT



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DELIVERED BY  
PRESIDENT MARK CARROLL

Good afternoon everyone... and thank you for the opportunity to address you today.

This is the second year I've addressed the National Police Summit.

Last year I spoke about the outsourcing of police functions, superannuation issues (& haven't they got a prominent position in the current federal election debate) as well as the professionalization of policing.

This year I intend to make the focus of this speech on professionalization of policing.

And my topic is very timely.

Only last week I was here in Sydney at a meeting of ANZCoPP (the Australia New Zealand Council of Police Professionalisation). That title – name – is very important and I'll come back to ANZCoPP and the outcomes of that meeting a bit later as it is very relevant to my presentation today.

Firstly let me take you back a decade and talk about the workings of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) and in particular its role around the issue of professions.

COAG, as you'd all be aware, is the peak intergovernmental forum in Australia. Its members are the Prime Minister, State and Territory Premiers and Chief Ministers and the President of the Australian Local Government Association. The primary vision of COAG is –

To improve the wellbeing of Australians, now and into the future.

Part of COAGs reform agenda states –

'Governments at all levels share responsibility for issues that could not have been foreseen at the time of Federation in 1901'.

Federation and its impact on policing – or dare I say barrier to policing – is perhaps a topic for another day.

But to COAGs view of professions.

Following a 2005 report by the Productivity Commission into issues impacting on the health workforce, in 2006, COAG agreed to establish a single national registration scheme for health professionals.

They determined that such a national scheme for health professionals would deliver many benefits to the Australian community; such as supporting workforce responsiveness, flexibility, sustainability and innovation – that meant the intent to break down barriers of bureaucracy that held back medical professionals from truly evolving, growing, responding to an ever increasing demand for services and expertise.

According to COAG, national registration of health professionals meant removing restrictions on doctors, nurses and other health professionals from practising across state and territory borders - vastly improving workforce mobility between jurisdictions in times of emergency, or when the need to provide locum services in differing states arose.

Fast forward five years and in February 2011 COAG agreed to five themes of strategic importance. Theme 2 focused on ‘a national economy driven by our competitive advantages’; seeking to create a seamless national economy to improve the environment for Australian businesses to operate while assisting to meet Australia’s productivity challenges.

We hear words like productivity and efficiency in policing a lot nowadays – but do we ever really deliver in that environment outside of a budget cut or a decrease in staffing numbers?

Now a key component of Theme 2 is professional registration and occupational licensing, a concept that police associations and unions in this country have supported for more than 25 years.

Even as far back as July 1997... some 19 years ago... the then-Australasian Police Ministers’ Council supported our view by determining that policing should:

- Develop, review and endorse education and development standards.
- Evaluate and approve professional development programmes.
- Provide advice on relevant professional practice.

- Promote and develop proposals for a police professional registration scheme.

19 YEARS AGO! Yes, 19 years ago – looks like they were well ahead of their time!

The PFA has long suggested that a national registration scheme for police would

- improve the status of the police profession;
- facilitate inter-jurisdictional mobility;
- protect the police professional domain; and
- provide and maintain on behalf of the community; proper standards of policing practice, police ethics, a police code of conduct and professional membership.

And we have long argued that police professional registration protects the community by guaranteeing that the quality and standards of police services are maintained by suitably qualified and trained police officers. The same as what COAG aspired (and obtained) for the health profession.

Inter-jurisdictional mobility of police is already a reality across Australian jurisdictions as well as between comparable nations. It's had to be – the Christchurch earthquakes, the Phuket tsunami, the G20 in Queensland – police from across Australia responded to these events. And this mobility has meant that the needs of the community, via a modern and mobile policing workforce, have been met. This occurred in spite of a lack of national standards or commonality among forces.

Hence, a national registration scheme would enhance workforce mobility capabilities and ensure that professional standards are being upheld and maintained across the board. A national registration scheme would provide benchmark standards by which to assess applicants from other police forces, both within Australia and internationally. It would deliver a national data base of police skills and qualifications that could be accessed at times of need for major deployments both within and outside Australia and lead to strategic national workforce planning for policing skills and expertise for decades to come.

You may recall ..... in 2009 the then federal government commissioned the Allen Consulting Group to conduct a federal audit of police capabilities..

That report was produced by Mr Roger Beale AO.

In it... he indicated that the qualifications of employment groups... such as teachers, health professionals, engineers and lawyers... were recognized across Australia...

And that that recognition brought about mobility... to the advantage of the individuals... their employers... and the wider community...

But... in the case of policing... Beale explained... there existed no national recognition of qualifications... and movement across jurisdictions was particularly limited... other than at the top and the bottom...

In the audit of police capabilities... Beale indicated that the advice of some police commissioners, at that time, was that they would not support the mobility of officers above the base...In 2009!

Their opposition was based on concerns the commissioners held about officers from other forces lacking sufficient training to operate in their states...In 2009!

Maybe police commissioners didn't fully appreciate that the development of national practice standards would provide a benchmark against which to assess all officers.

It's also an interesting analysis by a number of them considering that many of their senior colleagues over the years had personally benefited by such mobility.

Undeterred, Beale recommended that -

***The Productivity Commission should be commissioned, with the support of COAG, to conduct a study on the national policing workforce akin to that which has been conducted in relation to health. This should incorporate likely future demands, examine demographic drivers and alternative mechanisms for assisting police in determining the allocation of policing resources geographically. It should also examine barriers to the***

***development of a national policing labour market, in particular barriers relating to qualifications and the mutual recognition of qualifications.***

While history has shown us that Beale's recommendation was not taken up by either side of federal politics, the notion of professional registration for police has been supported by both major federal political parties since 2007. And to be blunt, the reality is that the Federal government would support a push for police professionalization if requested to do so by police commissioners.

So back to ANZCoPP!

In 2011 the then Australasian Police Professional Standards Council (APPSC), which was subsequently superseded by ANZCoPP, (primarily just a name change), approved a funding model and implementation plan for the Police Practice Standards Model (PPSM).

It should be highlighted and underscored that both the PFA and the NZPA are funding this work along with police jurisdictions. We have skin in the game and we seek a return on our investment. The PFA has budgeted more than \$200k for our share of the costs in developing the PPSM.

So why then.....after such staunch and long standing opposition to the notion of professional registration.... did Commissioners agree to endorse the PPSM project in September 2011?

We believe this goes back to June 2009 when the then Ministerial Council of Police and Emergency Management – Police, sanctioned a Feasibility Study into a National Police Registration Scheme; which reported in November 2011.

Its final recommendations were –

1. A National Police Registration Scheme not be progressed at this stage
2. APPSC, or its retitled successor (being ANZCoPP), be requested to review the possibility of a National Police Registration Scheme when the certification element of the Police Practice Standards Model (PPSM) is considered which was estimated to be mid-2013

3. APPSC, or its retitled successor, be requested to provide a report to SCPEM (Standing Council on Police and Emergency Management) no later than the end of 2013 on the implications of the certification element of the PPSM for the feasibility of a National Police Registration Scheme taking into account the 2011 feasibility study.

You will note that the 1<sup>st</sup> recommendation is that the registration scheme not be progressed at that stage. And needless to say some saw this as the only recommendation of the Study.

Fortunately the Ministerial Council saw fit to ensure that the PFA had a seat on the study and before the final report was released, recommendations 2 and 3 were agreed to be added – thus making sure that the registration issue could not be swept under the table indefinitely. It had to be revisited.

Unfortunately, it's been glacial in its progression. But, back to my question, why did Commissioners agree to the PPSM project back in 2011?

It is our view that it was their attempt to be seen to be doing something.... a move in the direction of professionalization... but with the intent of deferring the registration debate indefinitely. I say this because Commissioners at the time openly discussed their opposition to Professional registration. As some still do. They do not see a need for it.

But, perhaps some commissioners hadn't counted on the PFA's ability to have the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> recommendations inserted into the final report back to Ministers.

## ANZCoPP

So what/who is ANZCoPP? ANZCoPP is an entity like no other in policing.

It is an incorporated association, registered under the Victorian Associations Incorporations Reform Act 2012. Its Purposes, as contained in the Rules of Association, are to –

- a) advance, lead and advocate for professionalization of policing in Australia and New Zealand;
- b) c) develop, establish, maintain and approve police practice standards for education and training; and policing practice.

and

d) progress the development of the policing profession in Australia and New Zealand.

Its members, as described in its rules are – Australia's eight (8) Police Commissioners, the New Zealand Commissioner, the President of the PFA and the President of the Police Association of New Zealand.

What makes ANZCoPP unique in the world of policing is that, as far as we can determine, there is no other body like it- where police employer and employee representative organisations sit as equals on an independent legal entity – all with skin in the game. The commissioners at taxpayer expense, the unions at members expense.

Also quite imperatively - ANZCoPP's charter is governed by an Act of Parliament, which places particular obligations on Officeholders of the Association and this includes that they act in the best interests of the Association.

And those interests are about – absolutely – professionalization of policing and developing and approving police practice standards – dare I say it – National standards!

So to recap.... In 2011 Commissioners endorsed the funding and development of an implementation plan for the PPSM, and four (4) generic police practice levels within the PPSM were subsequently approved –

- Police Officer
- Police Supervisor
- Police Manager
- Police Executive

Over the past several years, a range of role specific education and training guidelines have also been developed.

Those role specific guidelines cover areas of policing such as –

- Mental health
- Family & Domestic Violence
- Police Investigations
- Police Intelligence

- Community Engagement
- Emergency Management
- Forensic Firearms Examination
- Forensic Document Examiner
- Investigative Interviewing of Vulnerable Persons
- Crime Scene investigation
- Fingerprint Examination
- Incident and Emergency Management
- Police Search & Rescue
- Police Prosecutions
- Police Covert
- Police Negotiations
- Police Dog Handling
- Mounted Police Operations
- Police trainers/educators
- Tactical Flight Operations

to name just a few!

To date, it is estimated that police jurisdictions, the PFA and the NZPA, have contributed some \$2 million dollars to the PPSM project, with an in kind contribution from all participants possibly in the range \$2 million on top of that.

In late 2015 the Australia and New Zealand Police Advisory Agency (ANZPAA) produced a Scoping Report for consideration by ANZCoPP titled “Transition to Practice Standards”.

This report considered whether to proceed with the transition from Education and Training Guidelines to Practice Standards. At the moment, the four (4) generic practice levels and the array of role specific ones are still guidelines.

The next step is to move them to standards, which is an important step towards a professional registration scheme. And that is the role of ANZCoPP – that’s why it exists – to develop, establish, maintain and approve police practice standards.

Standards Australia defines standards as:

*“...published documents setting out specifications and procedures designed to ensure products, services and systems are safe, reliable and consistently perform the way they were intended to. They establish a common language which defines quality and safety criteria.”*

Generally, standards:

- set a benchmark for ‘best’ or ‘currently acceptable’ practice
- set standards that are practical and achievable level
- are regularly reviewed to ensure they remain contemporary and relevant; and
- are based on industrial, scientific and consumer experience.

And isn’t that what modern, professional and responsive police services in the same country should be doing? 23 million people, 9 police services, more than \$10 billion dollars a year invested in annual budgets– and NO national standards! Outrageous!

Of course there are a number of different types of standards currently in use within all jurisdictions of policing, primarily owing to legislative arrangements and other instruments. We have professional standards for ethics and discipline and procedural standards for complaints handling. And counter terrorism response is coordinated nationally through the ANZCTC.

But police practice standards, as in the ANZPAA Scoping Report and in the PPSM model, that relate to the overall outcome expected of individual police members attained through education and training are not mandated.

They were described in the PPSM Feasibility Study, previously endorsed by Commissioners through the ANZCoPP process as:

- establishing a common language
- supported by criteria and specifications that define them; and
- designed to be used consistently among jurisdictions.”

The results of the scoping report, together with a further report on “Registration/Certification and Continuing Professional Development” were presented to a meeting of ANZCoPP in February this year.

Prior to this the move from guidelines to standards was unanimously supported at the 2015 PFA Federal Conference and it is our continued view that such a decision is an essential pre cursor as we move towards the development of a professional registration scheme.

It is the PFA’s opinion that the practice level of Police Officer, as outlined in the PPSM, should be the registration standard for policing particularly given that all jurisdictions agree that they currently meet the guidelines for that practice level.

Now, what about the Fire service? Let’s talk about them for a minute. In 2014 the Australasia Fire and Emergency Services Authorities Council (AFAC), endorsed the establishment of a national certification scheme for incident managers in emergency management situations.

The Fire service see this as an important element in the professional journey for those involved in incident management and indeed, broader emergency management. They also argue that it is consistent with many other professional bodies establishing formal certification schemes to accredit individuals nationally.

The four elements of the AFAC scheme are:

- Familiarisation
- Registered User
- Accreditation
- Certified Practitioner

The PFA have no issue with this, however, you might recall that a few minutes back I identified that Incident and Emergency Management guidelines have also been established through the PPSM process.

Both Furies and Police manage incidents!

Moreover, the Fire service through AFAC is establishing a national register for Australasian Inter Service Incident Management System users at an individual level and individuals will gain a National AIIMS Certification Scheme (NACS) license reflecting their journey along this professional pathway.

It is hard not to see the irony.... where guidelines established under our process are being used by other organisations for verification of competency....just not in policing!

Here is an agency, external to police, who have built their own certification scheme which identifies "...training developed in line with the relevant Graduate Certificate or ANZPAA PPSM Guidelines" as a pre requisite before seeking accreditation.

How long will it be before police are expected to undertake certification as an Incident Controller and will they need to attain that accreditation from an agency outside of police?

I expect the first coronial or other Inquiry that identifies that an incident controller is not certified will bring the issue to a head.

I assume that the implications of this are not lost on you. Don't forget that some of our Police Commissioner's responsibilities cover not only police but fire and emergency services as well. That could mean that in some jurisdictions, Commissioners who do not support such an outcome for police may find themselves with professional certification schemes operating under their command.

But let's not forget the elephant in the room - professional registration in the private security industry.

The Security Professionals Registry Australasia (SPR-A) is an initiative of the Australasian Council of Security Professionals. We can't be critical – the security industry has simply beaten policing to the punch. How embarrassing quite frankly.

The SPRA espouses that the registry was established to provide leadership and management of a system providing security registration and certification which would determine professionalism within the security industry.

For their industry, registration allows security professionals to have their skills, qualifications, experience and attributes assessed, recognised and registered.

According to the SPRA, the manner in which registration is carried out is similar to the way other professionals are measured and registered and that registration proves a security professional's competency within the industry.

And do you recall I mentioned that a police registration scheme would provide and maintain on behalf of the community; proper standards of policing practice, police ethics, a police code of conduct and professional membership.

The security industry use almost the same phrasing arguing that the Security Professionals Registry Australasia benefits the community and government by providing a register of those professionals who have been assessed by their peers as having the skills, qualifications, experience and attributes required in the security discipline. It all sounds so familiar?

So armed with all that history, ANZCoPP's commitment to move (albeit very slowly) from guidelines to standards at last week's meeting heralds a positive and constructive approach to the ongoing debate over professional registration/certification.

[So what are the benefits of registration/certification and what might a scheme look like in the police context?](#)

As I mentioned earlier, registration is a way of protecting the policing profession. Such a scheme would ensure that only police officers who have satisfied all the requirements for registration are able to exercise police functions. It's called turf protection and no one should underestimate just how important that is. It also protects the community by providing assurance as to the quality of police services by suitably qualified and trained police officers. Anyone not meeting the registration requirements is prohibited from calling themselves a police officer and cannot be employed or sworn in as a police officer and, importantly, neither can any government allow such a person to exercise police powers. You can't be a nurse or a teacher in Australia unless you are registered.

Of great benefit too, would be the provision of a national data base of police skills and qualifications that could be accessed at times of need for major deployments both within and outside Australia, as well as a vital tool for workforce planning across police jurisdictions both for the present and future.

In its simplest form the National Police Registration Scheme would be overseen by ANZCoPP. It would see police across Australia, and possibly New Zealand, become registered practitioners on a national data base, by being assessed as having met the practice level of Police Officer under the PPSM. The various jurisdictions would be given authority to sign off on officers' having met the agreed national standard.

And in relation to certification, where a member is judged as having met the national standard in one of the role specific standards agreed to under the PPSM, that member would be certified in that particular area of practice/discipline.

The PFA continues to argue though, that the overriding authority for what is determined as the best model for policing should be ANZCoPP. We look forward to putting our views and discussing them in a mature and robust way about what a future system might look like. The PFA is committed to such a process. But, our patience is not endless and our kindness should never be misconstrued for weakness as there are other avenues we could take.

The PFA has invested several hundred thousand dollars of members' money in this process to date. We are committed to seeing it through and have encouraged all Commissioners to continue to work with us on what we argue is one of the most important projects for the future of policing.

It is also not lost on us, that many overseas policing jurisdictions are watching the outcomes of this debate, as like us, they also see significant merit in such a process.

Making sure that the 60,000 police across the country are informed and educated to the benefits of professionalization is essential; highlighting what this means to them and the benefits to their career is paramount. To

this end, the PFA will design and embark upon an information campaign using each of the state branches as a vehicle for information dissemination.

We have also had discussions with the federal government, about the prospect of using the Commonwealth Proceeds of Crime funds to help fund the development of a Police Professional Registration Scheme. We are advised that the legislation allows for such an expenditure of funds and we have advised Commissioners of such.

If we can get a collective agreement to move forward with this project, then the PFA is happy to work with the government to ensure such funding is made available.

## CONCLUSION

Last year, when speaking on this topic, I commented on my expectation... or at least hope... that others would also want to see the police occupation afforded true professional status... with nationally agreed education standards...

Why wouldn't anyone in this room not want to see police with the broadest possible range of on-the-move capabilities?... and being interoperable across state, territory and federal boundaries...

National police registration would pose no risk to police commissioners' powers or their right to hire and fire and discipline in the context of the particular industrial regimes of each jurisdiction. And they would maintain the right to set higher standards for their own jurisdictions.

Police recruits today join a vastly different occupation from the one their predecessors joined 30, 20 or even 15 years ago. The status which comes with a professional identity is simply the expectation of today's recruit.

Policing is an undeniably professional task which presents its practitioners with continuous intellectual challenges. It demands public recognition as a profession.

In a recent article, I wrote that French writer Victor Hugo famously said: "You cannot resist an idea whose time has come". That applies to professional registration: its time has come.

It is simply another stage in the evolution of the police occupation. Commissioners and leaders who oppose it are holding police officers back from their aspirations, destinies and professional fulfilment.

Thanks for listening.