



**JOINT SUBMISSION TO THE INQUIRY BY THE JOINT STANDING
COMMITTEE ON THE CORRUPTION AND CRIME COMMISSION INTO
IMPROVING THE WORKING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE
COMMISSION AND THE WESTERN AUSTRALIA POLICE**

The Western Australia Police (WA Police) and the Corruption and Crime Commission ("the Commission") note the inquiry by the Joint Standing Committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission ("the Committee") into improving the working relationship between the Commission and WA Police and accordingly make this joint submission addressing five points.

First, the Commission has a statutory function to oversee the way WA Police deals with misconduct allegations and reviewable police action. WA Police accepts that such oversight is appropriate and a necessary means of promoting public confidence in the police.

Secondly, the relationship between the two agencies, while complex and multifaceted, is effective. They frequently and regularly engage each other on numerous issues at multiple levels of their respective agencies. Among other things, they investigate each other, conduct cooperative investigations, engage in joint investigations, disseminate intelligence to each other, share resources, exchange information and work cooperatively on inter-agency committees and working groups.

Thirdly, these wide ranging and complex interactions can, from time-to-time, create tension between the two agencies. The extent and level of that tension depends on the context of the particular issue. Tension between agencies that work in an investigative and review context is to be expected and is perfectly normal. This is highlighted on those occasions when the Commission deals with intricate and difficult matters that have the potential to cause WA Police discomfit. Any resulting tension usually dissipates rapidly and does not have long-term ramifications for the overall effectiveness of the relationship.

Fourthly, while heightened pressure may occur in one part of the relationship at any point in time, the wide range of other activities continue unaffected.

Last, in light of the overall effectiveness of the now mature relationship between the agencies it is the opinion of both WA Police and the Commission that there appears to be little benefit in exploring areas of tension by means of a public inquiry. To ventilate sensitive aspects of the relationship in such a public forum risks the unnecessary creation of defensive positions and

misunderstandings, which may inadvertently promote unwarranted and unproductive tension and suspicion between the two agencies thus damaging rather than building a better working relationship.

Further, the effort spent raising issues, protecting positions and responding to the inevitable media inquiries will require considerable time and resources distracting the two agencies from their critical primary functions. This will especially be the case if the matters reported on publicly by the media focus on what are perceived as the more sensational aspects of the complex relationship between the two agencies. The end result is more likely to be the diminution, not the promotion of public confidence in both agencies.

However, the Commission and WA Police would each welcome the opportunity to give evidence before an in-camera or closed hearing of the Committee.

We welcome the continued focus of the Committee on the effectiveness of our agencies and thank it for the opportunity to make this joint submission.



Mr Christopher Shanahan, SC
ACTING COMMISSIONER

Date: 5th August 2014



Dr Karl O'Callaghan, APM
COMMISSIONER OF POLICE

Date: 8 August 2014



Mr Neil Douglas
ACTING COMMISSIONER

Date: 8th August 2014