

# **Enhanced Policing in Redfern 2004**

**32 strategies and initiatives  
to improve policing in  
Redfern Local Area Command**

## **Introduction**

***Enhanced Policing in Redfern 2004* is a package of 32 strategies and initiatives to enhance:**

- 1. Community safety in the Redfern area;**
- 2. Strategic and operational effectiveness of the Redfern Local Area Command; and**
- 3. Support for local frontline police.**

**The *Enhanced Policing in Redfern 2004* package includes:**

- Enhanced police resources;**
- Enhanced incident response;**
- Enhanced criminal investigation capabilities;**  
**and**
- Enhanced community engagement by and cultural awareness of police.**

**It also provides:**

- More police at Redfern;**
- More experienced police at Redfern; and**
- More support for Redfern police from other NSW Police commands.**

*Enhanced Policing in Redfern 2004* is informed by a wide ranging review of policing resources and strategies in Redfern, including:

- Police response to civil unrest in Redfern in February 2004;**
- Evidence presented to the Social Issues Committee of the NSW Legislative Council,**
- NSW Police Association submissions, and**
- Recommendations arising from internal investigations undertaken on behalf of the Commissioner of Police.**

## **Summary of strategies and initiatives**

- 1. NSW Police accepts the recommendations of the Coburn investigation, commissioned by Police Commissioner Moroney, in the wake of the riot.**
- 2. Fit-out tenders for a new \$6 million, seven-storey police station in Redfern, visible from Redfern railway station, will be called next week.**
- 3. The Target Action Group, comprising 29 officers, will be based at the new Redfern Police Station.**
- 4. Operation Concertinas will be retained and its numbers boosted to 20 – an increase of twelve, to ensure ongoing high visibility policing.**
- 5. All future officers rotated through the Vikings Street Crime Unit will receive OSG training. Officers will be rotated every six months to increase the number of OSG-trained police who can respond to civil disorder and public order management.**
- 6. The Vikings Street Crime Unit will be staffed by trained OSG personnel from October. This 46 officer strong unit will be available to respond enmasse to incidents of civil disorder, public order management and major incidents as required.**
- 7. A central coordination group for OSG policy, procedures and training will be created within the State Protection Group (SPG).**
- 8. New and additional riot equipment for Redfern officers is being provided.**
- 9. Redfern LACs criminal investigation capacity will be boosted with the addition of three sergeants and one constable.**

- 10. A further six criminal investigators will be seconded to the Redfern LAC, to better target serious drug and robbery crime.**
- 11. Commissioner's Executive Team (CET) has endorsed "Directed Transfers" to increase experience levels in criminal investigation and general duties within the Redfern LAC.**
- 12. Police will suspend the placement of probationary constables at Redfern for the next 12 months. Only experienced officers will be transferred into Redfern to further increase experience levels.**
- 13. NSW Police will allocate an additional five permanent general duty positions to Redfern with a further review of general duties numbers within six months.**
- 14. Local police will undergo additional Aboriginal cultural awareness training to increase their understanding of such issues and positively impact on relations between police and the Aboriginal community.**
- 15. The Redfern Local Area Commander will be strongly supported in his drive to develop and implement Local Area Command Aboriginal Consultative Committees (LACACC) for youths and seniors.**
- 16. A modern Command and Control Vehicle will be made available on a 24-hour basis. The vehicle would be deployed to scenes of civil disorder and public order management and other major incidents at short notice.**

- 17. NSW Police Incident and Emergency Management Training will be upgraded to include specific training for commanders and supervisors in the management and resolution of civil disorder incidents and public order management events.**
- 18. Redfern police will continue to receive specific training for use during riots. Officers in neighbouring commands will also undergo riot training to ensure maximum numbers of police are trained and available for deployment.**
- 19. All Redfern LAC duty officer positions will be permanently filled by substantive officers.**
- 20. Redfern LAC position descriptions will be updated to accurately reflect the duties being undertaken by individual officers in the command.**
- 21. Supervisor vacancies at Redfern will be filled as a matter of priority.**
- 22. The training of two specialist Youth Liaison Officers at Redfern has been expedited.**
- 23. Better communication between Youth Liaison Officers and the South Sydney Police and Community Youth Club (PCYC) will be fostered to ensure constructive development, coordination and delivery of enhanced programs targeting young people.**
- 24. Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer (ACLO) positions at Redfern will be boosted by filling a long-term vacant position.**
- 25. Redfern LAC will be targeted by local Anti Theft, Transit, Highway Patrol and Dog Squad teams to better focus strategies to tackle crime.**

- 26. Local liquor accords will be rigorously enforced by police, local licensees and the Department of Gaming and Racing to help prevent alcohol related crime.**
- 27. Legislation relating to deliberate acts of violence and civil disorder towards police will be reviewed, including the adequacy of existing offences for throwing missiles at police.**
- 28. New riot training will be provided for all Police recruits.**
- 29. A statewide assessment of local public order response capabilities, risk assessment systems and profiles will be conducted.**
- 30. The capacity of existing police computer systems for recording violence against police will be reviewed.**
- 31. NSW Police will continue to work with the Redfern/Waterloo Partnership Project to better coordination with other Government services.**
- 32. This package will be reviewed in six months to determine if any additional initiatives are needed.**

## **Detail about strategies and initiatives**

### **1. NSW Police accepts the recommendations of the Coburn investigation, commissioned by Police Commissioner Moroney, in the wake of the riot.**

The Coburn report prepared for the Commissioner in response to the civil unrest at Redfern on February 15 and 16 has been provided to the Coroner whose inquiry is ongoing.

The strategies outlined in this document take into account the recommendations of the report.

The Parliamentary Committee examining issues arising from the Redfern riot has also requested a copy of the Coburn Report. Legal advice and the Coroner's assistance has been sought to determine how the report might be appropriately disseminated without jeopardising the Coroner's inquest, other legal proceedings or ongoing policing operations.

### **2. Fit-out tenders for a new \$6 million, seven-storey police station in Redfern, visible from Redfern railway station, will be called next week.**

By early 2005, police in Redfern will be working from TNT Towers in the heart of Redfern. The new police station will occupy seven floors of the Towers and will be within sight of Redfern Station, one of the busiest train stations in Australia. The new police station will comprise modern offices and new technology replacing the ageing facility in Turner Street.

The Department of Commerce has advised that fit-out tenders should be called next week, with the police station to be opened in early 2005. The Department of Commerce also advises that the current total estimated budget for the new police station is around \$6 million.

### **3. The Target Action Group, comprising 29 officers, will be based at the new Redfern Police Station.**

The 29 member City Central Target Action Group (TAG) will be relocated from Regent Street to the new Redfern Police Station.

This will result in a considerable increase in police visibility and activity in and around Redfern Station and other “hot spots” within the Redfern Local Area Command and bordering commands.

Target Action Group members will focus on serious criminal activities including robbery and drug activities within Redfern and neighbouring Local Area Commands.

### **4. Operation Concertinas will be retained and its numbers boosted to 20 – an increase of twelve, to ensure ongoing high visibility policing.**

Operation Concertinas is an intelligence-led high visibility policing operation targeting criminal activity in and around Redfern Station.

Focused high visibility policing activities disrupt criminal activities by reducing the opportunities for offenders to commit offences including robbery, street level drug dealing and other related offences.

Operation Concertinas will be increased by 12 officers from eight to 20 to conduct investigations, target hot spots and repeat offenders and maintain high visibility policing.

**5. All future officers rotated through the Vikings Street Crime Unit will receive OSG training. Officers will be rotated every six months to increase the number of OSG-trained police who can respond to civil disorder and public order management.**

OSG-trained officers will rotate through placements in the Vikings Street Crime Unit. Officers working together immediately after training of this type will consolidate methods learnt and improve individual and team response to incidents. This in turn will raise the overall standard of the OSG response capabilities of NSW Police.

Officers rotated through the Vikings unit will return to their local commands with OSG skills and knowledge embedded in their response capabilities. This will improve overall officer and public safety at future incidents of civil disorder. All Local Area Commands will benefit from this increased OSG deployment capacity.

**6. The Vikings Street Crime Unit will be staffed by trained OSG personnel from October. This 46 officer strong unit will be available to respond enmasse to incidents of civil disorder, public order management and major incidents as required.**

This plan will significantly boost the ability of police to quickly and effectively mobilise a large, well-trained group of officers to respond to civil disorder and public order management events anywhere in the State.

Officers will be available to respond 24-hours a day, seven days a week, to support Local Area Command-based OSG officers or as a discrete group.

The next group of officers to be rotated through the Vikings Street Crime Unit will undergo specialist riot training similar to that already completed by police attached to Redfern.

OSG officers undergo additional specialist training in public order management, including riots. OSG-trained officers will also continue to work in Local Area Commands and be called upon to attend events and incidents as required.

**7. A central coordination group for OSG policy, procedures and training will be created within the State Protection Group (SPG).**

The SPG will assume new responsibilities for central coordination of OSG policy, procedures and training. They will work with officers from the Operational Safety Tactics Training Unit to further develop the methods and tactics available to police for responses of this nature.

This will include developing clear guidelines on responsibilities, strategies to be used, and appropriate deployment methods and equipment and training standards. The SPG are leaders in the application of operational tactics and methods of operating in difficult, violent and emotionally charged situations.

This added responsibility for the SPG will result in the development of practical strategies to be adopted in events ranging from those attended by OSG operatives to the most violent incidents attended by the elite Tactical Operations Unit.

## **8. New and additional riot equipment for Redfern officers is being provided.**

New OSG equipment, including riot helmets, riot shields and leg protectors, have been allocated to Redfern for immediate deployment as required.

## **9. Redfern LACs criminal investigation capacity will be boosted with the addition of three sergeants and one constable.**

The NSW Police Workforce Planning Unit reviewed Redfern LAC and recommended an increase in positions from 164 to 168 with a focus on increasing criminal investigation capabilities.

The three new sergeant positions are Investigations Manager, Crime Coordinator and Criminal Investigation Team Leader. The constable position will also be allocated to criminal investigation.

**10. A further six criminal investigators will be provided to the Redfern LAC, to better target serious drug and robbery crime.**

Redfern continues to have a high rate of robbery in comparison with the rest of the State. In addition, it is clear that ongoing operations targeting drugs will be needed to stem the supply of heroin and other drugs in and around Redfern. Accordingly, an additional six criminal investigators will be seconded to Redfern for a minimum of six months to help target these crimes.

**11. The Commissioner's Executive Team (CET) has endorsed "Directed Transfers" to increase experience levels within the Redfern LAC.**

The Executive recognises the immediate need to place experienced officers at Redfern to stem the number of robberies and related offences occurring. Experienced officers will be able to conduct complex investigations linking offences and offenders, which should lead to successful prosecutions and increased community safety.

In May this year, the Region Commander, Assistant Commissioner Bob Waites, directed the transfer of four experienced investigators from other commands to work at Redfern to meet these important and immediate community needs. This approach will continue, to ensure experience levels remain high.

**12. Police will suspend the placement of probationary constables at Redfern for the next 12 months. Only experienced officers will be transferred into Redfern to further increase experience levels.**

Experienced officers will be transferred to Redfern to fill vacant positions. No probationary constables will be allocated for a period of one year.

NSW Police has grown substantially in recent years resulting in the placement of many probationary constables at Redfern and other commands. Submissions from the NSW Police Association and community organisations, the NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into government services at Redfern and the intensity of the riot at Redfern in February justify this special measure.

**13. NSW Police will allocate an additional five permanent general duty positions to Redfern with a further review of general duties numbers within six months.**

Five additional general duty positions will be allocated to Redfern which will be filled by experienced officers. In six months a further review will be conducted of general duties staffing levels.

**14. Local police will undergo additional Aboriginal cultural awareness training to increase their understanding of such issues and positively impact on relations between police and the Aboriginal community.**

Police recruits undertake cultural awareness training at the Police College, including specific training about Aboriginal cultural issues. Further training is given to officers at Redfern.

While the cultural training undertaken at the Academy and across NSW is useful, NSW Police recognises the need to have more specific training for police attached to Redfern. Training developed in consultation with local Aboriginal community leaders, organisations and police will strengthen relations and maximise outcomes for police and the Aboriginal community in Redfern.

**15. The Redfern Local Area Commander will be strongly supported in his drive to develop and implement Local Area Command Aboriginal Consultative Committees (LACACC) for youths and seniors.**

As stated in the NSW Police Aboriginal Strategic Direction, solutions to many of the crime problems confronting Aboriginal people are best identified by their community and resolved through a working partnership with police.

Redfern LAC is currently discussing with Aboriginal people the best ways to establish and develop new senior and youth advisory committees that can demonstrate and deliver long-term, consistent attention to the concerns and needs of Aboriginal people.

Police recognise the important role of Aboriginal people in identifying community concerns and developing solutions, in keeping with the principle of self-determination.

The new committees will maximise the police and community partnership approach to problems in the area. Having two committees ensures the correct approach to the different needs of members in the community.

**16. A modern Command and Control Vehicle will be made available on a 24-hour basis. The vehicle will be deployed to scenes of civil disorder and public order management and other major incidents at short notice.**

Officers at the Redfern riot identified that access to a fully-equipped command post (vehicle) would significantly assist in establishing command and control of major incidents. A vehicle with equipment to assist in commanding and coordinating the police response to major incidents has been made available 24-hours a day, seven days a week. Commanders will be encouraged to use this vehicle as a command post at major incidents.

**17. NSW Police Incident and Emergency Management Training will be upgraded to include specific training for commanders and supervisors in the management and resolution of civil disorder incidents and public order management events.**

Training in incident management and resolution tactics for commanders, duty officers and supervisors will be revised to reflect lessons learnt from the Redfern riot.

**18. Redfern police will continue to receive specific training for use during riots. Officers in neighbouring commands will also undergo riot training to ensure maximum numbers of police are trained and available for deployment.**

Redfern officers currently undergo special riot training. This will continue. Many of the officers who attended the Redfern riot came from neighbouring commands. Those officers had not previously received specific riot training. Introducing riot training to neighbouring commands will ensure more appropriately trained police are available to respond to incidents of this kind quickly and professionally.

**19. All Redfern LAC duty officer positions will be permanently filled by substantive officers.**

The duty officer position currently occupied by an officer on long term sick leave will be filled as a matter of priority using the merit-based promotion process.

In the absence of the commander, duty officers are responsible for the management of all areas of LACs. This will ensure appropriately skilled and experienced commissioned officers are available 24/7 to command, control, coordinate and manage resources in response to any major incident.

Coupled with the increase in experienced officers, this will positively impact on the management of incidents in the Redfern LAC.

**20. Redfern LAC position descriptions will be updated to accurately reflect the duties being undertaken by individual officers in the command.**

Reclassification of a number of positions (Youth Liaison Officer, Domestic Violence Liaison Officer etc) in the NSW Police human resource system will provide a more accurate description of the current status of the Redfern LAC as well as its capabilities.

This will assist in ongoing reviews of the LAC, its resources and performance. This process will allow more accurate analysis of the command's human resource availability to the Region Commander as well as the Commissioner's Executive Team.

**21. Supervisor vacancies at Redfern will be filled as a matter of priority.**

Redfern, along with other commands, has experienced some difficulties attracting officers to fill supervisory positions. Ensuring there are enough appropriately trained and experienced supervisors at Redfern will increase the effective and efficient deployment of staff. Positions will be filled via merit-based promotion ensuring the most capable officers are selected. This process should be completed by mid-September.

**22. The training of two specialist Youth Liaison Officers at Redfern has been expedited.**

Redfern LAC has specific youth issues as a result of having a large youth population coupled with significant cultural issues. The role of Police Youth Liaison Officers is critical in any command, and more so, due to the specific environment of Redfern. Redfern has two Youth Liaison Officers who have undergone special training which enables them to more appropriately address youth issues.

Police also undergo specialist youth officer training to increase their knowledge and application of diversion options available under the Young Offenders Act. Youth Liaison Officers and supervisors undergo this training.

Experienced Youth Liaison Officers from areas with similar issues to Redfern, including Moree and Wagga Wagga, have been identified as mentors for the Youth Liaison Officers at Redfern.

This will enable sharing of information and ideas and provide improved support within their specialist area.

**23. Better communication between Youth Liaison Officers and the South Sydney Police and Community Youth Club (PCYC) will be fostered to ensure constructive development, coordination and delivery of enhanced programs targeting young people.**

The appointment of new youth liaison officers and new staff at South Sydney PCYC was identified as an opportunity to encourage improved communication and cooperation between officers.

A combined forum to discuss and address youth programs in the area is one example of improved coordination.

**24. Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer (ACLO) positions at Redfern will be boosted to four by filling a long-term vacant position.**

Redfern LAC has four Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer positions. ACLOs are usually recruited from within the community they will be working in to ensure they are aware of the specific cultural issues.

Recruitment processes for the fourth position are underway and the position is expected to be filled by August. Having a full complement of ACLOs will substantially increase the community-police partnership approach to solving problems in the area.

**25. Redfern LAC will be targeted by local Anti Theft, Transit, Highway Patrol and Dog Squad teams to better focus strategies to tackle crime.**

These units service a number of commands. Inner Metropolitan Region police have identified opportunities and measures to increase and improve service by those resources to Redfern LAC. This will be personally oversighted by the Region Commander.

**26. Local liquor accords will be rigorously enforced by police, local licensees and the Department of Gaming and Racing to help prevent alcohol related crime.**

NSW Police encourages responsible service of alcohol and will work with local licensed premises on strategies to decrease the occurrence of offences related to consumption and supply of alcohol.

**27. Legislation relating to deliberate acts of violence and civil disorder towards police will be reviewed, including the adequacy of existing offences for throwing missiles at police.**

Redfern police identified that offences currently available to NSW Police in cases where offenders deliberately throw objects at police officers and/or police vehicles are inadequate.

Consequently, a review will be conducted to determine whether these existing offences and penalties are adequate.

**28. New riot training will be provided for all Police recruits.**

The ferocity of the attacks on police at Redfern highlights the level of risk to which police may be exposed. To better manage those risks, basic riot training and familiarity with riot equipment, will be introduced to recruit training.

**29. A statewide assessment of local public order response capabilities, risk assessment systems and profiles will be conducted.**

All commands will be required to reassess their procedures to ensure they achieve maximum public order response capacity. This will include standardised intelligence collection plans, developing resource strategies (including triggers to activate criminal investigators) and support units.

Commands will also be required to review their risk assessment processes to ensure location profiles are current and operationally sound.

All police will be required to familiarise themselves with the current Standing Operating Procedures for Public Order Management and ensure local plans are developed in line with these procedures.

### **30. The capacity of existing police computer systems for recording violence against police will be reviewed.**

The classification of incidents of violence against police in the Computerised Operational Policing System (COPS) will be reviewed to ensure police officers can readily record acts of violence against them and/or police property. This is to enable accurate and timely analysis of such offences and development of appropriate tactics to protect the police and their property from attack.

### **31. NSW Police will continue to work with the Redfern/Waterloo Partnership Project to better coordinate with other Government services.**

The Redfern/Waterloo Partnership Project is a government and community approach to combat a complex range of serious, long term problems, including crime, alcohol, housing, health and education.

The Premier recently announced that the Partnership would be extended until 2006.

Police at Redfern will continue to work closely with the Partnership team.

**32. This package will be reviewed in six months to determine if any additional initiatives are needed.**