

Attorney-General and Justice

A Safer and Stronger Australia

Law Enforcement. Strong, effective law enforcement underpins the Coalition's commitment to protecting the community from crime. Strong modern, effective law enforcement will provide greater protection for all Australians and build safer communities. The Coalition will target the traffickers who would have our children addicted to drugs, those who would invade our homes and steal our belongings, and those who would prey upon the elderly and vulnerable in our community.

A Safer and Stronger Australia

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Executive Summary

A Coalition government will:

- **contribute up to \$50 million over 3 years for the establishment of a national crime information system – *CrimTrac*.** *CrimTrac* will allow police forces across Australia to speedily access and share information to solve crimes and catch criminals. This will include details on fingerprints, domestic violence and apprehended violence orders, firearm licences, stolen vehicle information, and DNA data;
- **develop as part of *CrimTrac* a national paedophile database** to provide greater protection for our children. The database will be available to police under strict controls to assist agencies which are responsible for the placement and protection of children to ensure children are not placed in at-risk homes, and are removed from environments where they may be at risk;
- **provide \$21 million over 3 years for the *Building Safer Communities* programme to develop new approaches to crime**

prevention. This will target burglary, crimes involving young people, assaults and robbery, particularly against the elderly, and domestic violence; and

- **deliver \$1 million over 2 years additional funding to the Young Offenders Programme** to extend intensive job search training and assistance for juvenile offenders about to return to the community.

Labor's Record

13 Years of failing to protect our community

Despite uncontrolled spending in a wide range of areas, Labor in government consistently cut funding and undermined the efforts of the Australian Federal Police (AFP).

By the end of Labor's term in office, the AFP could mount only one major drug investigation at a time.

Labor's funding cuts to the AFP assisted criminals and their networks to flourish and allowed the uninterrupted flow of illicit drugs into the country.

Labor allowed national police information exchange systems between police forces to fall into disrepair, making the task of catching criminals even harder.

Labor was unable to reduce the numbers of dangerous firearms in the community.

Labor failed to work effectively with States and Territories to address crimes affecting our communities, for example burglary, car theft, and assault.

Highlights of the Government's Achievements

(i) The Firearms Buyback and Uniform Firearms Laws

The Coalition provided the leadership to achieve uniform national firearms control legislation as well as a buyback of firearms in the community.

This has resulted in more than 640,000 dangerous firearms being surrendered under the firearm scheme. The Coalition has made

Australia a safer place, particularly for women and children.

(ii) Tough On Drugs

Many in our community, especially young people and their families, suffer greatly when drugs affect their lives.

The Coalition's *Tough on Drugs* policy is the largest anti-drugs initiative ever undertaken in this country. A **\$215 million commitment** has been made by the Coalition to confront this problem.

The strategy has focussed on:

- attacking the illegal drug trade;
- providing rehabilitation services for addicts; and
- educating our children about the dangers of drugs.

Under our *Tough on Drugs* policy, almost \$100 million has been provided to improve law enforcement and to attack the criminals involved in the illegal drug trade. This includes:

- providing \$28 million over four years for the formation of six mobile strike teams within the AFP;
- \$21 million over four years to target drug importation through the National Crime Authority's investigation of organised crime syndicates with overseas links;
- \$11.6 million over four years for expanded liaison work and cooperative law enforcement programmes in the Asia Pacific Region.

- \$0.9 million over three years for a national heroin signature programme to allow sources of heroin to be identified and tracked nationally and internationally;
- \$2.8 million over three years for witness protection and informant handling;
- \$1.5 million over three years for tracking suspicious financial transactions by international drug barons of the international drug

trade; and

- promotion of uniform, nationally consistent drug laws so those who organise and profit from the drug trade can be brought to justice.

(iii) A Federal Police Force Second To None

The AFP enforces federal laws, particularly those involving international and organised crime.

The Coalition will ensure an Australian Federal Police force second to none. The Coalition has undertaken a wide-ranging review of the needs of the AFP and **provided additional funding of \$65 million over 3 years.**

This funding provides for 200 additional Australian Federal Police staff and ensures that officers have the skills to combat a more sophisticated and globalised environment of criminal activity.

The funding boost is in addition to an extra \$51 million provided to the AFP by the Coalition, including \$42 million under the *Tough on Drugs* policy.

(iv) Crime Prevention

In its first term **the Coalition provided new funding of \$13 million to establish the National Campaign Against Violence and Crime.** This campaign demonstrated a strong leadership role by the Coalition in crime prevention and was built on active co-operation with State and Territory governments. National projects have identified specific crime prevention and violence prevention strategies, including those aimed at reducing burglaries, domestic violence and violence at public events, including sporting events.

(v) National Criminal Laws

The Coalition has provided leadership in the development of **modern and consistent national criminal laws.** These reforms ensure that Australia's criminal laws are up to date and reflect community attitudes.

The reforms cover a wide range of criminal offences including violent crimes such as homicide and sexual assault, stalking and other serious personal harm offences, serious drug offences such as commercial trafficking, slavery and sexual servitude, and damage offences

including misuse of computers.

The Coalition also has taken a leadership role in reforms to other criminal laws, such as:

- removing the 'drunk's defence' so that drunkenness is no longer an excuse for a federal offence;
- proposing uniform, national domestic violence laws; and
- introducing legislation to prohibit sexual slavery and servitude.

(vi) Olympic Security

The Coalition has responded to the need to put in place a comprehensive security plan to **safeguard the Sydney 2000 Olympics** by providing funds in excess of \$45.6 million to the AFP, the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation, and the Protective Security Coordination Centre.

The Australian National Audit Office has confirmed that our security planning for the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games is comprehensive, co-ordinated and effective.

(vii) Law Reform

We have put the Proceeds of Crime on our reform agenda by giving the **Australian Law Reform Commission** a new reference to investigate the adequacy of current laws relating to recovering the proceeds of crime. The community expects criminals to be forced to pay back their illegal gains, and pay appropriate compensation to victims, and not profit from the proceeds of the crimes that they commit.

(viii) Young Offenders

The Coalition provided funding of \$1.85 million to the *Young Offenders Pilot Programme*. All projects target juvenile offenders aged 13 to 20 who are at risk of offending, who are in detention, custody, or community custody and assists them into employment, education and training before they return to the community.

12 pilot projects have been funded so far, covering both rural and urban regions of New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria, 5 of which are run by ATSIC with a specific focus on young indigenous

offenders.

Continuing the Fight Against Crime

The Coalition shares the community's great concern about crime and its impact on the lives of mainstream Australians. The Coalition will continue its leadership role, in cooperation with the States and Territories, to more effectively deal with crime and its impact, through a national crime prevention strategy.

The most effective results in law enforcement will be achieved through strengthening co-operation between police forces across Australia and internationally.

A CrimTrac - The National Criminal Tracking System

The Coalition is determined to ensure Australians have safer communities.

Too many crimes occur without the criminals being caught.

Many crimes that affect Australians on a daily basis such as car theft, burglary and assaults often remain unsolved. This can be due to the lack of information police have to identify the criminal.

To successfully strengthen the fight against crime, police services must have quicker and more effective sharing of information through use of the latest technology.

The Coalition will contribute up to \$50 million over 3 years to establish a national crime information system – *CrimTrac*.

CrimTrac will be available to all Australian police services, and will match information from suspected criminals with unsolved crimes.

CrimTrac will use the latest advantages in technology including information on the DNA records of convicted criminals and DNA records from crime scenes.

As well as DNA information, the system will include a register of fingerprints, apprehended and domestic violence orders, firearms licences, and stolen vehicles.

Through *CrimTrac*, police will be able to solve more crimes quicker and build safer and stronger communities, protecting all Australians.

Given the national significance of this important initiative, the

Commonwealth will discuss ongoing resource requirements with the states and territories.

B A National Paedophile Database

The Coalition is committed to protecting our children. We are particularly concerned about protecting them from the grave risks which they face from the abhorrent activities of paedophiles.

The Coalition will continue to provide national leadership on child protection by developing a **National Paedophile Database**, in consultation with the states and territories through the Australian Police Minister's Council. The database will operate within the *CrimTrac* system.

All Australian police forces will be able to work more effectively with federal and state agencies and community organisations responsible for the protection and placement of children to ensure that children under the agencies care will not be placed at risk. These organisations will include schools and childcare agencies.

Access to the database will be strictly limited to police forces. It will not include the names of people who only come to the attention of the police as a result of allegations made in the context of family law disputes.

C Building Safer Communities

A Coalition Government will provide additional funding of \$13 million over 3 years to establish a *Building Safer Communities* programme. This will build on the initiatives commenced in our first term of government under the National Campaign Against Violence and Crime.

The programme will target key areas of community concern about crime, including burglaries and home invasions, assaults and robbery, particularly against the elderly, and domestic violence.

The Coalition will also provide additional funding of \$8 million for a youth crime and family breakdown programme. The programme will seek early identification and intervention in troubled and at-risk families to prevent youth delinquency problems.

D Young Offenders Programme

The Coalition will provide an additional \$1 million over two years

to the *Young Offenders Programme* to extend the programme to every state and territory. The programme will build upon the successful pilot projects providing intensive job search training and assistance for juvenile offenders about to return to the community.

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