

POLICE AND THE MEDIA

NOTES FROM A MEETING OF POLICE AND THE MEDIA FOR COOPERATION IN SIEGE/HOSTAGE INCIDENTS

The media coverage of the so called 'Cangai Siege' earlier this year stimulated much debate on the responsibility of the media in reporting sieges, especially when hostages are involved. The role of the police in keeping the media and the public informed was also raised as an issue.

At the time, the Federal Minister for Justice, the Hon. Duncan Kerr, called on media organisations to critically evaluate their performance and to co-operate in a review of the coverage of major criminal incidents.

In June, representatives of media organisations met with police and justice representatives to develop a non-regula-

tory approach to the issue. Commercial television (FACTS) and radio (FARB), ABC Radio news and ABC Television, the Media Union (MEAA) and the ABA met with staff of the Attorney-General's Department, NSW Police, Victoria Police, Queensland Premier's Department, South Australia Police and the Australian Defence Force. Debra Richards, Director Programs, represented the ABA.

The meeting was conducted under the auspices of the Standing Advisory Committee on Commonwealth/State Cooperation for Protection Against Violence (SAC-TAV), Australia's senior advisory body on politically motivated violence.

The half day meeting included three short presentations, open discussion on the issues and a proposal for a national forum announced by the Australasian Police Ministers' Council (APMC) in New Zealand on 29 May 1993.

The meeting agreed that education was the key to producing change. Understanding of police operations and of the pressures that operate in the media was required. Awareness from both sides has increased through discussions already held. The meeting agreed that efforts in the areas of training, briefings, seminars and discussions to raise awareness would achieve far more than any legislative solution at this stage.



PROGRAMS CLASSIFIED C AND P

The following table contains of programs C and P classification by the ABA between 25 June and 9 July 1993. Producers interested in submitting programs for classification should contact Nigel Ryan on (02) 334 7700.

PROGRAM TITLE	ORIGIN	CLASSIFICATION	NEW/RENEWAL	DECISION DATE	APPLICANT
DEBATE!	Australia	PRC	new	9.7.1993	Television and Telecasters Limited (Network Ten Australia)
DEEPWATER HAVEN	Australia	CAD	new	22.6.1993	Beyond Productions Pty Ltd
SKY TRACKERS (Series)	Australia	CAD	new	25.6.1993	Australian Children's Television Foundation
ZOO LIFE WITH JACK HANNA	USA	C	new	8.7.1993	Australian Television Network
<i>Legend</i> CAD = Australian Drama PRC = Provisional C					