

# AFP helps Iraq build a stronger police force



**The AFP is making an important contribution to building a sustainable and strong Iraqi law enforcement capability through a special training project - the Iraqi Police Service (IPS) Training Project - which will enhance skills in fields such as forensics, leadership and management**

During a visit to Iraq in December 2007, Prime Minister Kevin Rudd made a commitment to the Iraqi Prime Minister that after the withdrawal of its combat element from the Overwatch Battle Group (West), Australia would provide alternative assistance to the IPS.

On 13 May 2008, Minister for Home Affairs Bob Debus announced a \$13.7 million package of support to the IPS, with the AFP to provide training for up to 243 IPS members.

The funding will provide police-related training in Australia, in the areas of forensic science and leadership. The program is tailor-made for the Iraqi Police participants and will build on other forensic science and leadership police training programs conducted by international agencies in Iraq.

A senior Iraqi police participant said the objectives of establishing police forces anywhere around the world are the same.

"The most important ones are to provide security and stability to the people, to maintain general order, to enforce the laws in order to ensure peace, welfare and happiness, and to take all the legal actions to avoid tampering with the stability of society," he said.

"For that sake, we came here as guests in your country, as students seeking the knowledge you have developed. We want to learn from your latest technologies in the field of forensic science, especially in regard to crime scenes. This will enable us to contribute with you to achieve a society full of love, harmony and peace."

The forensic program will focus on advanced crime scene investigation, forensic biology, chemical criminology, bomb data awareness, advanced fingerprint techniques and police leadership.

Many of the participants will be residing in Australia for up to three months while undertaking the training. The leadership courses will be delivered through the Australian Institute of Police Management over a three week period.

The training will provide collective and syndicate-based learning activities with opportunities for individual reflection.

The course participants will also undertake training and activities to develop trust and group cohesion.

The forensic components of this program will be delivered by the AFP Forensic and Data Centres in partnership with the National Centre of Forensic Studies, which includes the AFP, Canberra Institute of Technology and the University of Canberra. The program draws on the AFP's extensive experience in international law enforcement forensic science capacity building.

The first three-month advanced crime scene course began on 2 February and will give the Iraqi Police participants access to the specialist expertise of the AFP's forensic scientists. It will assist in building a crime scene analysis system and extending the participants' knowledge and skills for undertaking the individual components of crime scene examinations.

Photos: Mel Hill.