



Police Federation
of Australia

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Committee Secretariat
Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital
and External Territories
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

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Dear Committee Members

SUBMISSION TO INQUIRY INTO THE ROLE OF THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AUTHORITY

The Police Federation of Australia (PFA) makes this submission on behalf of state, territory and federal police associations and unions representing 50,000 Australian police officers.

Our interest in the current Inquiry into the role of the National Capital Authority stems from our recent experience in relation to the National Police Memorial in Kings Park.

Our submission is most relevant to the Committee's Terms of Reference 2, 3 and 5 relating to:

- Governance arrangements providing accountability for the NCA's operations.
- Oversight to achieve the highest standards for areas of national significance.

- The responsibility of the NCA in developing the distinctive character of the National Capital.

We note that under the *Australian Capital Territory (Planning and Land Management) Act 1988*, the NCA is currently responsible for works in Designated Areas, for works to maintain or enhance the character of the National Capital, and for management of designated National Land required for the purposes of the National Capital.

As part of this function, the National Capital Authority undertakes estate and asset management for some of the national capital's most culturally significant landscapes and national attractions.

This includes management of national memorials, fountains and artworks including the memorials on Anzac Parade, King George V Memorial, the Federation Centenary Fountains, Treasury Fountain, memorials and artworks in Commonwealth and Kings Parks and the artworks in Reconciliation Place. In all, the NCA manages and maintains more than 100 of these structures throughout the city.

The PFA believes that it is vital that the NCA continues to have the primary role of planning, managing and maintaining national memorials and other national assets on designated National Land and the financial resources to do so effectively.

The PFA's recent experience with the National Police Memorial in Kings Park suggests that role needs to be strengthened and given greater emphasis to ensure not only the highest standards of design and architecture, but also the highest standards of on-going care, maintenance and presentation.

The National Police Memorial in Kings Park commemorates more than 700 police officers killed in the line of duty in service of their communities. It was developed in a collaborative effort by the Federal, state and territory governments and their police forces and the PFA with the NCA. The Memorial was opened on National Police Remembrance Day, 29 September 2006 by the then Prime Minister, John Howard MP. The Memorial is now the pre-eminent commemorative site in Australia for police officers. In 2007 it was awarded a distinguished design prize by the Australian Institute of Architects.

The PFA was dismayed to find, in early 2008 that the Memorial, although less than two years old, was showing signs of disrepair and neglect; that misspelling of names of officers killed had not been corrected; and that it was not being maintained to the highest standard. Family members visiting the Memorial for the first time were distressed to find the site in this state.

The PFA took this matter up with the Minister for Home Affairs, the Hon Bob Debus MP who was sufficiently concerned to have the NCA and the

Australian Federal Police take action to rectify the situation in February/March 2008.

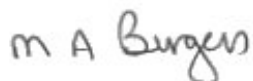
Recommendation:

The PFA recommends to the current Joint Standing Committee inquiry, that the National Capital Authority retain its role and responsibility for the ongoing maintenance of the nation's memorials in the national capital.

- **The PFA believes that it is vital that the NCA continues to have the primary role of planning, managing and maintaining national memorials and other national assets on designated National Land and the financial resources to do so effectively.**
- **The PFA is certain that there are many other Australia-wide representative bodies, such as returned services organisations, which would endorse our views and support the NCA having continuing responsibility for the National Capital's Memorials.**

I would be pleased on behalf of the PFA to give evidence to the Committee and can share with members the photographs of the National Police Memorial which demonstrate the state of repair in which we found the Memorial before the recent maintenance was undertaken.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "m A Burgess". The signature is written in a cursive, lowercase style.

Mark Burgess
Chief Executive Officer