



FEDERAL POLICE DISCIPLINARY TRIBUNAL

**ANNUAL REPORT
1999-2000**

Federal Police
Disciplinary Tribunal

Annual Report
1999-2000

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FEDERAL POLICE DISCIPLINARY TRIBUNAL

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LAW COURTS BUILDING
QUEENS SQUARE
SYDNEY NSW 2000

13 September 2000

The Honourable Daryl Williams AM QC MP
Attorney-General
Parliament House
CANBERRA NSW 2600

Dear Attorney-General,

Pursuant to s.86 of the *Complaints (Australian Federal Police) Act* 1981, I submit to you a report of the operations of the Federal Police Disciplinary Tribunal for the year 1 July 1999 to 30 June 2000.

Yours sincerely,

(A.P. Whitlam)
President

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Section 1

INTRODUCTION - THE TRIBUNAL

This report deals with the operations of the Federal Police Disciplinary Tribunal (the Tribunal) for the year 1 July 1999 to 30 June 2000.

1.1 ESTABLISHMENT AND CONSTITUTION

The Tribunal is established by the *Complaints (Australian Federal Police) Act 1981* (the Complaints Act). The responsible Minister is the Attorney-General. The Tribunal consists of a President and such number of Deputy Presidents and other members as are appointed by the Governor-General. To be appointed as President or as a Deputy President a person must be, or have the same status as, a Judge of the Federal Court of Australia or of the Supreme Court of a State or Territory. A member other than the President or a Deputy President must hold office as a Magistrate or be a legal practitioner of not less than five years' standing. A member holds office for such period, not exceeding seven years, as is specified in the instrument of his or her appointment, but is eligible for re-appointment.

For the purposes of the exercise of its powers in relation to a particular proceeding, the Tribunal is constituted by one member. The President gives directions as to the person who is to constitute the Tribunal.

1.2 FUNCTIONS AND POWERS

The Tribunal deals with disciplinary offences under the *Australian Federal Police (Discipline) Regulations*. In addition, the Minister may refer to the Tribunal for inquiry and report a matter relating to the Australian Federal Police (AFP).

Disciplinary proceedings against AFP appointees are begun by the Commissioner of Police (the Commissioner). The Complaints Act requires certain of those proceedings to be heard and determined by the Tribunal. Other disciplinary proceedings may also be heard and determined by the Tribunal in circumstances prescribed by the Complaints Act, otherwise they are dealt with by the Commissioner.

If the Tribunal finds an AFP appointee guilty of a breach of discipline and the Tribunal is not constituted by the President or a Deputy President, it must remit the proceedings to the Commissioner for the imposition of a penalty. An appeal lies against the penalty imposed by the Commissioner to the Tribunal constituted by the President or a Deputy President, which may affirm the penalty or substitute another penalty.

Where the Commissioner determines that an AFP appointee is guilty of a disciplinary offence and he or she imposes a penalty, an appeal lies to the Tribunal constituted by the President or a Deputy President. The Tribunal may set aside the finding of the Commissioner and either substitute another finding or dismiss the proceeding, impose a penalty in respect of a breach of discipline different from that with which the AFP appointee concerned was charged, affirm the penalty imposed by the Commissioner, or set aside that penalty and substitute another penalty.

In prescribed circumstances the Tribunal may order the Commonwealth to pay the costs of proceedings before it incurred by an AFP appointee.

1.3 PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE

Hearings before the Tribunal normally take place in public. Parties may be represented by a lawyer. Proceedings are to be conducted with as little formality and technicality and with as much expedition as a proper consideration of the matter before the Tribunal permits. The Tribunal is not bound by the rules of evidence. The standard of proof required in proceedings before the Tribunal is proof on the balance of probabilities.

In exercising its discretion as to procedure, the Tribunal has regard to the philosophy embodied in the reports of the Australian Law Reform Commission that led to the enactment of the Complaints Act. The Tribunal does not have an inquisitorial role in hearing and determining disciplinary proceedings. Such proceedings are adversarial in nature and necessarily require a degree of formality. They approximate curial proceedings.

1.4 INFORMATION ON THE TRIBUNAL

Information about the Tribunal is available on the internet at:

http://www.fedcourt.gov.au/aboutct/aboutct_fpdt.html

Section 4

FINANCE

Resources for the Tribunal are appropriated to the Federal Court of Australia as part of the budget process. Expenses associated with the Tribunal are attributed to:

- Federal Court of Australia Output Group 1.2 - “Management of cases and deciding of disputes according to law – Tribunals” and
- Federal Court of Australia Output Group 1.3 – “Services to Government”.

These resources are managed by the Federal Court on behalf of the Tribunal and are audited as part of the process for monitoring financial management in the Federal Court.

Expenditure during the year, which is specifically attributable to the Tribunal, is set out in Appendix III to this report.

Section 5

APPEALS TO THE FEDERAL COURT OF AUSTRALIA

The Complaints Act and *Australian Federal Police Act 1979* provide for appeals to the Federal Court of Australia from decisions of the Tribunal in disciplinary proceedings. There were no appeals to the Federal Court of Australia during 1999-2000.

Appendix I

Enquiries - Tribunal Registrar

Phone: (02) 9230 8567
Fax: (02) 9230 8535
Email: jennifer.hedge@fedcourt.gov.au
Internet address: http://www.fedcourt.gov.au/aboutct/aboutct_fpdt.html

District Registries of the Federal Court of Australia providing lodgement facilities on behalf of the Tribunal.

New South Wales
Level 16 Law Courts Building
Queens Square
Sydney NSW 2000

Queensland
Level 6
Commonwealth Law Courts
119 North Quay
Brisbane QLD 4000

Western Australia
Level 6
Commonwealth Law Courts
1 Victoria Avenue
Perth WA 6000

Northern Territory
First Floor
Commonwealth Law Courts
Corner of Mitchell and Herbert Streets
Darwin NT 0800

Federal Court Registry Hours:
NSW, Qld, S.A: 9.00am to 4.00pm
Vic 9.00am to 4.30pm
NT: 9.30am to 4.00pm
WA: 8.30am to 4.00pm
Tas: 8.30am to 5.00pm
ACT: 10am to 1.00pm &
2.00pm to 4.00pm

Victoria
Level 7
305 William Street
Melbourne VIC 3000

South Australia
8th Floor Grenfell Centre
25 Grenfell Street
Adelaide SA 5000

Tasmania
Ground Floor
Commonwealth Law Courts Building
39-41 Davey Street
Hobart TAS 7000

Australian Capital Territory
First Floor Federal Court Building
Childers Street
Canberra ACT 2601

Appendix II

REGISTRAR AND DEPUTY REGISTRARS OF THE TRIBUNAL

Location:

Registrar

Jennifer Jill Hedge

Sydney

Deputy Registrars

Martin Tshin Fong Jan P.S.M

Perth

Kim Margaret Lackenby

Sydney

Graham Kingsley Ramsey

Brisbane

Peter John Seccombe

Melbourne

Appendix III

EXPENDITURE

Specific expenditure in respect of the Federal Police Disciplinary Tribunal for the financial year ended 30 June 2000:

Description of Expenditure	Amount
General Office Expenditure (being the printing, binding & freight costs for 1998-99 Annual Report)	\$ 1,149.00
Total	\$ 1,149.00

The Federal Court of Australia attends to the administration of the finances of the Tribunal. The expenditure is audited as part of the annual audit of the Federal Court of Australia.

Appendix IV

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS UNDER OTHER LEGISLATION

1. Statement under section 8 of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*

- I. Information on the organisation, functions and the decision making powers of the Federal Police Disciplinary Tribunal is found in pages 1 to 3 of this Report.

Powers affecting members of the public who are involved in the functions of the Tribunal are:

- (a) The power to summon a person to appear before the Tribunal to give evidence and produce documents. (s.71(2) of the *Complaints (Australian Federal Police) Act 1981* ("the Act".))
 - (b) The power to issue a warrant for the apprehension of a person who, having been so required by summons, fails to attend as a witness. (s.73(1) of the *Act*.)
 - (c) The power to direct that a hearing, or a part of a hearing, shall take place in private. (s.74(2)(a) of the *Act*.)
 - (d) The power to give directions restricting or prohibiting the publication or disclosure of certain evidence, matters, findings or decisions. (s.74(2)(b) of the *Act*.)
 - (e) The power to permit certain persons to appear before the Tribunal and to permit their representation by a legal practitioner or by some other person. (s.75(5) of the *Act*.)
 - (f) The power to make orders in respect of costs of proceedings. (s.76(4)(c) of the *Act* and Regulation 7(1) of the *Complaints (Australian Federal Police) Regulations*.)
- II. There are no arrangements existing for bodies or persons outside the Commonwealth administration to participate either through consultative procedures, the making of representations, or otherwise in the formulation of policy by the Tribunal.

To the extent that the Tribunal can be said to be administering the *Complaints (Australian Federal Police) Act 1981* by dealing with proceedings before it, the bodies or persons outside the Commonwealth administration who participate in the functioning of the Tribunal are members of the Australian Federal Police and other persons and their legal representatives concerned in individual proceedings. Members of the Tribunal who hold part-time appointments are considered to be within the Commonwealth administration when acting pursuant to their appointment to the Tribunal.

- III. The Tribunal maintains no documents open to public access under an Act (other than the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*), where access is subject to a fee or other charge.

The Tribunal maintains no documents available for purchase by the public in accordance with any arrangement made by the Tribunal, other than decisions of the Tribunal that have not been the subject of a confidentiality order.

The Tribunal customarily makes copies of its annual report available to the public, otherwise than under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*, free of charge upon request.

- IV. The Tribunal uses the registry facilities of the Federal Court of Australia, whenever required, to permit physical access by members of the public to its documents. These registries are located in all Australian capital cities and are listed in Appendix I at page 6 of this Report.

- V. The Registrar and Deputy Registrars of the Tribunal are available to assist any applicant for access under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*. Initial inquiries concerning access to documents may be directed to the Registrar in Sydney on (02) 9230 8567.

The Registrar of the Tribunal is the only officer authorised to deny access to documents.

The Tribunal maintains no documents that are required to be available for inspection or purchase under s.9 of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*.

During the year the subject of this Report, the Tribunal did not receive any requests for access to documents under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*.

2. Industrial Democracy and Occupational Health and Safety

The President and Deputy President of the Tribunal are Judges of the Federal Court of Australia and the Registrar and Deputy Registrars of the Tribunal are employees of that Court. Therefore, the Tribunal does not have its own Industrial Democracy plan or Occupational Health & Safety policy.

Appendix V

SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE WITH GUIDELINES FOR ANNUAL REPORTS

Guidelines for the content, preparation and presentation of annual reports by statutory authorities (1982)

Categories	Location of material in annual report
1. Enabling legislation	Section 1.1
2. Responsible Minister	Section 1.1
3. Powers functions and objects	Section 1.2
4. Membership and staff	Section 2, Appendices I, II
5. Financial statements	Section 4, Appendix III
6. Activities and reports	Sections 3 and 5
7. Operational problems	Not applicable
8. Subsidiaries	Not applicable

Additional information required under other legislation:

Statement under s8 of *Freedom of Information Act 1982* Appendix IV

Information on Industrial Democracy and Occupational Health and Safety Appendix IV

Contact Officer for Annual Report:

Jennifer Hedge, Registrar
Federal Police Disciplinary Tribunal
Level 16, Law Courts Building
Queens Square
Sydney NSW 2000
Tel (02) 9230 8567
Fax (02) 9230 8535
Email: jennifer.hedge@fedcourt.gov.au

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