



POLICE ASSOCIATION OF NEW SOUTH WALES

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Lowest police funding in Australia puts NSW at risk

Today, the Australian Productivity Commission (APC) confirmed what the Police Association has been saying for years; NSW Police are under-resourced, and it is only getting worse.

With the lowest expenditure on policing services per person and the worst police to population ratio, excluding the ACT, there is a clear indication of the NSW Government's failure to invest in policing resources.

This comes at a time when NSW is the wealthiest State in the Nation. There is money to splurge on mega-stadiums and tolled roadways, but it seems not enough to maintain the police budget and keep the community safe.

There can now be no doubt that police officers in NSW are being asked to do more with less.

Police Association President, Scott Weber, said "The 310 additional officers Government committed to deliver over 4 years is woefully inadequate. It falls well short of the bare minimum needed just to keep pace with population growth. 'Record highs' do not mean anything when population growth stretches those numbers to breaking point.

"Police officers have been working tirelessly to drive down crime. For the most part, they have been successful, with many categories of crime falling for some years now. However, as officers become increasingly overworked and as budgets get tighter, this becomes more and more difficult to maintain."

The latest statistics from the APC show:

- Understaffing means NSW Police officers are struggling to meet target response times when responding to emergency calls for assistance from the public,
- NSW has the 2nd worst rate of sexual assault in Australia and it is getting worse,
- Drugs are becoming more prevalent, and causing more harm and concern to the community,
- The road toll has increased for the past 3 years, and recent tragedies have reinforced the importance of a strong plan for road safety enforcement, and
- Clear up rates demonstrate police need more resources to investigate the most heinous crimes.

NSW needs more police and a budget which appropriately reflects the importance of public safety in NSW.

Victoria waited until crime spiralled out of control before it reacted to police shortages. Now the Victorian Government has committed to increasing police numbers by 3100, threatening to overtake NSW as the largest police force in the country.

The Police Association is calling for 2500 police officers over the next 5 year to make up for years of neglect of police numbers, and to better prepare the NSW Police Force for the challenges of the future.

With NSW currently the wealthiest State in Australia, the NSW Government can well afford to provide for community safety.

The APC report can be found at: <http://www.pc.gov.au/research/ongoing/report-on-government-services/2018/justice/police-services/rogs-2018-partc-chapter6.pdf>

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