



Communiqué from
The Executive Committee of
The International Council of Police Representative Associations

London 22nd May 2015

Preamble

The Executive Committee of the International Council of Police Representative Associations (ICPRA) met at the Hotel Indigo, Earls Court London. The full executive was in attendance. Members are as follows;

George Lewis		British Transport Police Federation
Anna Nellberg-Dennis		European Confederation of Police (EuroCOP)
John Ramsey		Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association, USA
Chuck Canterbury	(Treasurer)	Fraternal Order of Police, USA
Greg O'Connor	(Chairman)	New Zealand Police Association
Thandi Hlatshwayo		Police & Prisons Civil Rights Union
Mark Burgess	(via Skype)	Police Federation of Australia
Calum Steele	(Secretary)	Scottish Police Federation

The Executive Committee also welcomed

Tom Stamatakis, president of the Canadian Police Association and Emma Eneström from the Swedish Police Union magazine to the meeting as observers.

Contributions

The Executive Committee was delighted to be addressed by Mark Williams, CEO of the Police Firearms Officers Association (PFOA). Mr Williams advised that the PFOA was a registered charity that worked closely with police federations across the UK. Mr Williams provided a valuable insight into some of the specific activities his organisation undertakes and the Executive noted with interest their role in the delivery of accredited training to police federation representatives.

Discussions and Debates

As would be expected much of the discussions were about the general business activities of ICPRA and how these could be developed for the greater benefit of affiliated organisations and by extension their members across the world.

All members of the Committee were pleased to note the increased interest and awareness of ICPRA amongst affiliates and their domestic member bodies. The Committee welcomed the increased frequency with which ICPRA was able to offer meaningful comment on issues of global policing significance and noted that technology offered additional opportunities to develop this area further.



The Committee noted that activities ranged from direct support to affiliated organisations to wider comments and press releases on issues ranging from the MH-17 airline crash, the Charlie Hebdo shootings and as recently as this week, on the biker gang shootings in Waco, Texas.

The Committee was delighted to confirm that the 2016 meeting of Council will take place on the 25th & 26th April 2016 in conjunction with a meeting of EuroCOP. The meeting will take place at a venue in Europe (to be confirmed in the near future) The Committee agreed this meeting offered a tremendous opportunity for both organisations, whilst also offering a world first in terms of so many different police representative bodies coming together for the first time.

The Committee discussed the role of police and law enforcement officers and in particular how this was constantly changing. It was noted that the use of the excuse of austerity continued to drive down investment in policing and law enforcement but that in doing so government's risked fatally undermining the ability of police and law enforcement agencies to do their job effectively in an increasingly diverse and complicated series of roles.

The Committee noted that in particular police and law enforcement agencies, but specifically police unions and representative bodies, were under increased criticism for wider societal failures. The Committee noted that for example where police/racial tensions existed in some area of the United States, these tensions were in themselves but a symptom of wider governmental failures, for example poverty, nutrition, literacy and unemployment, yet these were being drowned out in an attempt to apportion blame.

Regrettably the Committee agreed that decades of police management approaches, which generally promoted a prosecution and revenue raising style of policing at the expense of police discretion and community based activities has been a significant contributory factor in this recent criticism. The Committee agreed that independent oversight in policing was to be welcomed yet cautioned that where this extends to the language of mistrust about general day to day policing activities, this "oversight" risked neutering effective policing.

Police and law enforcement officers are increasingly reluctant to intervene in situations where they believe that regardless of the outcome, the first consideration of many will be to seek to apportion blame. The creation of an environment where police and law enforcement officers become redundant, or afraid to deal with offenders as a consequence of a wider societal backlash will in itself inevitably erode public confidence and weaken the effectiveness of the only service the public expects to deal with all community problems.

**Greg O'Connor, Chairman
on behalf of the International Council of Police Representative Associations**

*Note Greg O'Connor is also the president of the New Zealand Police Association and can be contacted on +64 (0) 27 2698 9400.