Missing Person experts come together for conference

AFP Commissioner Andrew Colvin opened the National Missing Persons Conference in Sydney today.

For the first time, the AFP and NSW Department of Justice are co-hosting law enforcement, academics and professionals to share ideas, knowledge and best practice in the missing persons sector.

Commissioner Colvin said that the two day conference will bring together some of the world’s leading experts on all aspects of missing people.

“We are proud to have brought together policing, academic and non-government organisation leaders to share their knowledge at this inaugural event.

“A wealth of information is on offer at the conference with six international speakers, key Australian researchers, investigators, forensic specialists and victim support services sharing their experience. This conference will greatly increase our collective knowledge on all aspects of missing persons.

“In Australia, approximately 38,000 missing person reports are made to police each year; that is one person every 14 minutes; and more than 100 people every day. Approximately 85 per cent of people are located within a week and the vast majority are located, but in some instances this can take some time. However any time a person is missing it impacts their family and friends greatly,” Commissioner Colvin said.

With a theme of Missing People: Challenges and Opportunities, topics will include updated missing persons research, new investigative techniques, the experience of grief and loss associated with missing people and their families, and improving responses to missing people and their families.

NSW Commissioner of Victim Rights and head of the NSW Family and Friends of Missing Persons Unit, Mahashini Krishna, said “This is a landmark conference which has enormous potential to benefit how services and support are delivered to people who are dealing with the stress and trauma of a loved one disappearing”.

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Keynote speakers from the USA, United Kingdom and New Zealand will provide their expert knowledge about approaches to grief and loss, the missing persons sector and law enforcement practices.

The conference is co-hosted by the National Missing Persons Coordination Centre (NMPCC) of the Australian Federal Police and the Families and Friends of Missing Persons Unit (FFMPU) of the NSW Department of Justice.

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