The NSW Police Force responded to a number of requests for help this reporting year following devastating floods and earthquakes interstate and overseas.

Emergency management planning is critical in minimising the effects of an emergency on the community. The NSW Police Force is responsible for coordinating all multi-agency emergency responses, and ensuring support for designated combat agencies such as the NSW Rural Fire Service, NSW State Emergency Service and Fire & Rescue NSW. A State Emergency Operations Controller (SEOCON) and Deputy SEOCON are appointed by the Governor and both must be members of the NSW Police Senior Executive.

Widespread flooding was experienced across New South Wales affecting various areas within Southern, Northern and Western Regions. Police assisted with local evacuations and staffed Emergency Operations Centres.

We sent 150 police to assist the Queensland Police Service during widespread flooding in January 2011. Operation Safeguard was the largest interstate deployment since the Black Saturday bushfires in Victoria in 2009. Three district emergency management officers also worked in devastated areas to provide advice to local disaster management groups.

In February 2011, we deployed 122 officers to New Zealand following earthquakes in Christchurch. Under Operation Monro, both general duties police and forensic specialists from New South Wales were sent to support our colleagues in New Zealand.

Following the Japan earthquake and tsunami in March 2011, the NSW Urban Search & Rescue Team was deployed for 11 days to assist local rescue authorities.
A senior NSW police officer accompanied the team of 76 as the police liaison officer, working in the devastated areas of Minamisanriku and Shizugawa.

The Major Events & Incidents Group (MEIG) coordinated the deployment of NSW police officers to Queensland, New Zealand and Japan. MEIG worked with the Department of Defence and major airlines to get our officers into these emergency management areas to assist our interstate and international colleagues and their communities.

Alcohol misuse remains one of our most significant challenges. Operation Unite, a two-day, trans-Tasman blitz against alcohol related crime and violence, is an ongoing strategy linking simultaneous police operations across Australia and New Zealand.

Three operations were conducted this reporting year in New South Wales, the latest ending with the lowest number of arrests in the operation’s two-year history. 563 people were arrested across the state in May 2011, down from 723 in December 2010, 737 in September 2010 and 640 arrests in December 2009.

Operation Unite demonstrates the united determination of all police in Australia and New Zealand to curb alcohol misuse, crime, violence and antisocial behaviour and promote community safety.

The Public Order & Riot Squad (PORS) has been involved in most major policing operations within the metropolitan area this reporting year. These include New Year’s Eve and Australia Day celebrations, the Sydney Gay & Lesbian Mardi Gras, Oprah Winfrey’s visit and Operation Unite. PORS was also deployed to the Bathurst 1000 Races which attracts more than 440,000 visitors each year; Moree and Boggabilla to assist with flood evacuations; and several other country locations requiring assistance in public order management.

PORS has been directly involved in large scale searches for missing people and for murder victims, and supported the Australian Federal Police at the Villawood Detention Centre disturbances over Easter.

Operation Vikings coordinates funding used to support high visibility policing operations across the state. More than $4.7 million was allocated to support frontline and specialist commands this financial year, which helped to fund more than 50,000 additional shifts. Included in this funding were large scale operations at the Bathurst 1000, the Tamworth Country Music Festival, the Deniliquin Ute Muster and the state’s alpine region during the snow season.

In 2011 Traffic Services Branch formed the Traffic Services Strike Force to target all aspects of road safety within New South Wales. This included a focus on illegal street racing and hoon activity. The Strike Force’s resources can be deployed as required to any local area command across the state at any time.

We increased the number of random drug tests conducted across the state. During 117 separate operations this reporting year, we conducted 35,686 random drug tests with 545 positive results (one in 65 of the drivers tested).

We also coordinated 14 statewide traffic enforcement operations focused on the critical road safety issues of impaired drivers (alcohol or drug), excessive speed, use of seat belts or helmets, and driver fatigue. During these operations 1,444,371 breath tests were conducted and 3,617 drivers were charged with drink driving (one in 399 of the drivers tested).

Police issued 109,613 infringements, including 39,030 for exceeding the speed limit.

We are dedicated to delivering better outcomes for victims of domestic and family violence. We reviewed our domestic violence standing operating procedures this year and, with the assistance of a victim of crime, developed a new training resource for police.

We continue to work with other organisations to improve the response to domestic and family violence. In a first for the NSW Police Force, the Orana LAC was awarded the tender to establish the ‘Staying Home Leaving Violence’ support service in the Dubbo region to reduce homelessness in the community as a result of domestic and family violence.

In 2010 the Coroners Act 2009 was amended to establish the Domestic Violence Death Review Team. The NSW Police Force is represented on this team to help identify systemic problems which, if resolved, will help prevent domestic homicides.

The State Crime Command’s Homicide Squad made several significant arrests this reporting year, including the person police believe was responsible for the murder of five members of the Lin family, one of the largest homicides in the state’s history.

Six-year-old Kiesha Weippeart was reported missing from her home in Mt Druitt on 1 August 2010. After an arduous nine month investigation, her mother and step-father were charged with her murder. The skeletal remains of a female child were located in a shallow grave in bushland at Shalvey. It is alleged the remains are those of Kiesha and that she was killed approximately two and a half weeks before her disappearance was reported.

Tegan Lane disappeared two days after she was born at Auburn Hospital in 1996. A police investigation, a coronial inquest and a further investigation by the Homicide Squad culminated in Keli Lane being charged with her daughter’s murder. On 15 April 2011 Ms Lane was convicted at the Supreme Court and sentenced to 18 years imprisonment with a non-parole period of 13 years, five months. Ms Lane has appealed the conviction and sentence imposed by the Supreme Court.

Historical cases also featured this reporting year. The Unsolved Homicide Team charged a man in Victoria with the murder of Donna Hicks, who was shot at Minchinbury in Sydney’s west in 1995.

Forensic science, innovations in technology and national identification systems combined to help investigators solve the 1998 sexual assault of an 85-year-old woman. A DNA sample taken from a suspect in a household burglary offence linked him to the unsolved sexual assault. The offender has since been sentenced to 12 years imprisonment with a non-parole period of eight years.
Strike Force Domino was the largest organised crime investigation and arrest operation ever conducted in New South Wales. The strike force targeted organised crime and as a result, 33 people were charged with more than 280 offences this reporting year, including serious drug, firearm, property and money laundering.

The strike force, which lasted more than 14 months and attracted worldwide media attention, culminated in 580 police executing 42 simultaneous search warrants and the closure of the largest clandestine laboratory ever discovered in the state. More than $14 million in assets connected to seven crime syndicates were identified, including property, luxury vehicles, cash and a helicopter.

We use state of the art technology and equipment to assist frontline police.

We have upgraded our forensic ballistics system by installing the most advanced ballistics imaging and identification system in the world. The IBIS Trax-3D became fully operational in February 2011 and automatically compares electronic images of firearm evidence such as cartridge cases and bullets in both two and three dimensions. The new system achieved 53 hits in the first three months of its use, linking firearms to shooting crimes previously thought unrelated.

Our DNA Science NSW Advancement Program introduced forensic innovations in science and technology. Two mobile laboratories supporting multiple modes of forensic science now provide investigators with fast scientific intelligence at crime scenes. These labs are equipped with self contained specialist communication centres that provide real time connection from the field. The program has also seen the implementation of robotics and associated technologies at the NSW Health Division of Analytical Laboratories.

We commissioned a new twin engine Eurocopter EC135P2+ helicopter. It joined the Aviation Support Branch’s fleet of four other helicopters and one fixed wing aircraft. The new helicopter, Polair 4, features the latest generation rotor technology, which is significantly quieter than previous models. It allows for increased cruise speed of around 220km/h which will contribute to improved police response times.

Our Marine Area Command played a key role in the state’s biggest cocaine seizure this reporting year. In mid July 2010, a Colombian catamaran carrying 464kg of pure South American cocaine, the third largest cocaine importation into the state of New South Wales, off-loaded its illicit cargo to a German catamaran destined for the Australian coast. On Friday 8 October, the catamaran made a rendezvous with a New South Wales registered yacht, which allegedly took delivery of the cocaine and set sail towards the New South Wales north coast. Australian law enforcement vessels were deployed, including the NSW Police Force’s offshore patrol vessel Nemesis. Officers from the Australian Federal Police, NSW Police Force, and Australian Customs arrested members of the yacht’s crew.

A month later, Operation Vibe combined the resources of the NSW Police Force, Queensland Police Service, Australian Fisheries Management Authority and Australian Customs to target illegal activities within the Australian Exclusive Economic Zone (out to 200 nautical miles at sea). Ten people were charged with a variety of minor drug related offences, 100 random breath tests were conducted, and approximately 30 state marine compliance offences were detected.

Rural crime investigators specifically target crimes against agricultural and pastoral industries. They receive specialist training specific to rural crime, livestock handling and the National Livestock Identification Scheme.

Operation Kingoon was established by Western Region in June 2010 to investigate the theft of Angus cows from a rural property in the Gulgong area. Police recovered 79 head of stolen cattle from a number of properties across central and western New South Wales. In May 2011 the accused pleaded guilty to six counts of cattle theft worth in excess of $90,000.

The operation was supported by Industry & Investment NSW and other rural stakeholders.

Detection dogs are trained to detect different odours including illicit drugs, firearms and explosives, human remains and cash. They are extremely valuable for police work, assisting in investigations, emergencies and recovery operations. Their contribution is set to continue with the launch, in 2011, of the Detection Dog Breeding Program, which
has already yielded seven Labrador puppies. The program provides the NSW Police Force with a consistent, high quality and cost effective supply of detection dogs.

This reporting year we developed the 2011-15 Corporate Information & Communication Technology (ICT) Strategy, which provides the roadmap for the implementation of smarter and more efficient policing systems.

The focus of the new strategy is on improved overall data quality for better decision making; improved information exchange with external agencies and the community; better remote access to information for frontline police; and innovative, high quality and cost effective technology to support improvements in policing.

We commenced the modernisation of our Computerised Operational Policing System (COPS), which has served the NSW Police Force well for over 16 years, introducing a new user-friendly interface with important additional features.

Using web-based screens, the WebCOPS™ interface provides improved navigation, standard word processing functions, integrated multimedia, consolidated views of information, and quick links to common forms and systems, all designed to improve usability. These enhancements are the result of extensive consultation with frontline police over several years.

The WebCOPS™ interface allows the business of policing to go on while further work is done to make COPS more powerful, more flexible, faster, and easier to use.

This reporting year 1,202 students attested at the NSW Police Academy and commenced work as probationary constables. There were 904 men and 298 women, 21 were Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders, and 137 were from a culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) background; a profile which indicates that our recruitment has been effective in ensuring student groups reflect our state’s diversity.

We introduced training in the use of electronic control devices (TASER) as part of the curriculum. TASER training now forms an important component of recruit training for all Associate Degree of Policing Practice students.

The Community Awareness of Policing Program (CAPP) has continued to improve understanding among community leaders and opinion leaders, and in turn the public, about what police do and why we do it. Participants responded to mock public order incidents, crime scenes and maritime search and rescue missions. Those who have completed the program this reporting year include former NRL player Hazem El Masri, Channel 10 news reporter Matt Doran, entertainer John Paul Young, former professional world surfing champion Layne Beachley and the executive officer of Deerubbin Local Aboriginal Land Council Kevin Cavanagh. Planning is underway for a Rural CAPP in October 2011.

This reporting year we also launched the Community Engagements Guidelines, which require all commands across the state to conduct at least five community engagements each year. Our goal is to encourage police to introduce themselves to members of the community more often and talk about local crime issues and community concerns.

We’ve also recognised those officers who have made an exceptional commitment to customer service through the annual Commissioner’s Customer Service Excellence Awards. Seven categories allow the Commissioner and the police executive to recognise individuals, commanders and groups who have displayed excellence in customer service to the community of New South Wales.