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Parramatta shooting: Australia's police union chiefs to demand action over terror threat

AUSTRALIA'S police union chiefs will meet in Adelaide today to discuss strategies to safeguard the nation's 60,000 police officers from future terror attacks, in the wake of the deadly Parramatta police station shooting.

Nigel Hunt

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Members of the local community light candles at a vigil for Curtis Cheng in Sydney on Wednesday, Oct. 14, 2015. Mr Cheng, a police accountant, was shot by 15-year-old Farhad Jabar Khalil Mohammad outside the NSW police headquarters on Friday, October 2. (AAP Image/Paul Miller) NO ARCHIVING

AUSTRALIA'S police union chiefs will meet in Adelaide today to discuss strategies to safeguard the nation's 60,000 police officers from future terror attacks.

The meeting will be the first since the [deadly Parramatta police station shooting](#) just over a fortnight ago. The attack sent shock waves through Australia's policing community and resulted in major new security measures being introduced for NSW police.

The threat of a local terror attack is one of several major issues on the agenda at the Police Association of SA's annual two-day conference. A keynote speaker on the topic will be Dr David Connery, from the Australian Strategic Policy Institute.

Other issues on the agenda include stalled Enterprise Bargaining discussions with the State Government, SAPOL's organisational review and proposed legislation aimed at restoring benefits for police officers injured on duty.

PASA president Mark Carroll said the union leaders will be discussing what "federal, state and territory governments need to do to address the terror threat".



Members of the Parramatta community light candles at a vigil for Curtis Cheng in Sydney, after he was shot dead by 15-year-old Farhad Jabar Khalil Mohammad outside the NSW police headquarters on October 2. Pic: AAP

"There are a range of initiatives that we believe should be happening," he said.

"We know police officers, police facilities and defence personnel and defence facilities are the number one target for terrorists. The threat level for police across the country is at high.

"There is no doubt we, as the voice of police in this country, are extremely concerned for the safety of our members and the communities we protect."

The union officials attending include Police Federation chief executive Mark Burgess, Queensland president Ian Leavers, Victorian police union president John Laird, NSW police union executive member Craig Partridge and executive members from the Tasmanian, WA and NT unions.

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Mr Carroll said PASA held a meeting with Police Commissioner Grant Stevens after the Parramatta shooting — which claimed the life of police accountant Curtis Cheng — to discuss the security of SA police.

He said while there was no imminent threat against SA police, he felt the Government should "seriously consider" the impact that mandated efficiency dividends forced on SAPOL would have over the next few years.

The government forced SAPOL to cut \$46 million from its budget last financial year, with this figure rising each year to \$81 million in the 2017/18 financial year.

"All governments, especially the State Government, need to revisit the impost of efficiency dividends and budget cuts," he said.

"It is a bit hard to defend the defenders when you have one hand tied behind your back because you have no money to do the necessary work to protect police infrastructure and police personnel."

Mr Carroll said the current organisational review, which will result in wholesale changes to many areas of SAPOL's operations, would also be discussed at the conference.

"It has more to do with budget cuts than improving service delivery," he said.

The current stalled enterprise bargaining negotiations with the State Government would also be discussed with work bans not ruled out if there is no resolution "fairly promptly".



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