

NATIONAL POLICE REMEMBRANCE DAY 2017
REMARKS BY
HER EXCELLENCY PROFESSOR THE HONOURABLE KATE WARNER AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
TASMANIA POLICE ACADEMY, ROKEBY
FRIDAY 29 SEPTEMBER 2017

Good morning.

I begin today by paying my respects to the traditional and original owners of this land – to pay respect to those that have passed before us and to acknowledge today’s Tasmanian Aboriginal community who are the custodians of this land.

I wish to acknowledge:

- the Commissioner of Police Darren Hine;
- the Honourable Chief Justice Alan Blow;
- the Honourable Elise Archer representing the Premier, the Honourable Will Hodgman;
- and all State Parliamentarians;
- Senator Parry, other distinguished guests, and all members of Tasmania Police.

This is the day that we honour and remember Police Officers who have lost their lives either in the line of duty or through illness or other circumstances. It is very sobering to read through the long list of those officers who lost their lives in the execution of their duty or who otherwise died while in the service. Many of you here would feel their loss deeply and very personally. My husband Dick and I offer our heartfelt condolences to you.

The loss of a Police Officer is felt not just by their loved ones, their friends and their family, but by the whole community because of the position of trust that they hold and the reliance that we have on them.

In my role as Governor, I have had considerably more personal engagement with police officers and their work. I been very struck by the professionalism, and competence of the Police Officers I have met and it engenders a deep level of confidence in me for any of the tasks they are dealing with. It has also brought home to me their dedication and commitment, and a much keener appreciation of the daily challenges and dangerous situations police officers face in serving the community.

I noted in my brief that this memorial ceremony will also acknowledge and make reference to the fact that 2017 marks a significant milestone, 100 years of women in policing in Tasmania. In 1917 the first three women police officers were employed, with tasks related to neglected children, escorting female prisoners and suppressing fortune telling.

Today 31% of Tasmanian police officers are women, which is close the proportion research suggests is necessary to change workplace culture to make it a comfortable place for women to be employed. Research has suggested that in male-dominated industries, of which mining is an example, more women in the workplace has led to improvements in workplace safety. It is not fanciful to suggest that more women in the police force could lead to the use of less physical force both against the police and members of the public.

We live in a time of such rapid change, new technologies and new threats. At the same time too, policing is becoming much more sophisticated; police are better educated and better trained than ever before. On this day in particular, it is of some comfort to know that policing is in fact becoming safer with a decline in police deaths over time. Policing in fact is not in the list of Australia's most dangerous jobs. Commercial fishing, truck driving and mining are more dangerous.

Nevertheless, there is a glaring difference between policing and other dangerous occupations – only police officers face the threat of murder as part of their job. For this reason in particular, we need to be specially thankful to them and today to thank, honour and remember those who have died in police service.

Thank you.