

Thankful for young cops on the beat

**Paul
Nicolaou**



It takes a special outfit to routinely turn out an assembly line of heroes, but as recent events attest that's what we have in the ranks of the NSW Police Force. First it was Inspector Amy Scott and her epic display of courage during the Bondi Junction emergency.

Now add to the list Constable Elvis Poa who was stabbed in the head in the city on Sunday but still managed to pursue and help arrest his alleged attacker.

I feel a certain affinity with the men and women who make up our state's wonderful thin blue line. It was a pure accident of timing that, in the days leading up to the Bondi Junction horror, I joined other community and business representatives in a two-day familiarisation experience with the police. It was an eye-opener to say the least.

It was incredible to first visit the Goulburn Police Academy, the "incubator" of new generations of police heroes who serve to protect us all.

I met young people in blue who would make any parent proud. There were some who had made the jump from other professions bringing real life experience to their law enforcement role.

In so many respects, it is not a pretty world. It's one where drug

abuse, alcohol and domestic violence prevail. It is also one where people grapple with mental illness at a time when community health services are stretched way too thin.

These young people will be called upon to make split second decisions. They will listen to the pleas of parents in public housing estates living in fear of their ice-addicted adult children.

It is a grim reality that our police officers stand between us and chaos. They give us a city that in most respects is usually one of the safest in the world.

And they do it because it's a calling. It's not one that comes with a huge income. Some of the reward comes from serving their community.

Fortunately, most of our serving police officers will never be called upon to put their lives on the line or to take down an offender in the most dramatic of circumstances.

But a number will and, as a community, we can be assured that there are so many other Amy Scotts and Elvis Poas in the ranks.

Ever ready to step up when duty calls because that is inherently what they do. And for that we can be thankful.

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director of Business Sydney**