

State of Perth Road surfacing work “totally unacceptable” – nearly three weeks on



I have again strongly complained to the council's Roads Maintenance Partnership about “unacceptable” road surface dressing with chippings on part of Perth Road west of Harris Academy that left the area covered in a thick dust and led to many residents' complaints.

I have requested urgent action to deal with large amounts of dust in the area – particularly on the pavements – nearly three weeks on from the original road surfacing work taking place.

I initially raised concerns when the surface dressing took place during the last week of June following numerous constituent complaints.

The council's Roads Maintenance Partnership has since responded to my complaint as follows :

“We have been using this aggregate in surface dressing for a number of years with great success and it is also a popular stone used by other surface dressing contractors in Scotland. The Arbroath Road section completed last year was the same specification as used at Perth Road this year.

The stone is certified by the quarry as meeting the specification for the surface dressing, and the stone is also washed for dust removal prior to use. Over and above the certification requirements we also undertake secondary independent testing of the surface dressing stone to ensure the delivered load meets the specification requirements. I can confirm all these steps were undertaken and the stone met with the specification requirements.

Unfortunately as you are aware we experienced a significant level of early life dust release following laying and I can confirm this was in excess of what was expected and planned. Please accept my apologies for this. We believe the dust is associated with the stone crushing when initially rolled with the pneumatic tyre rollers (PTR).

We are considering changing to an alternate stone source next year ... I can confirm the early dust release has no detrimental impact on the service life longevity of the surfacing laid, it being a nuisance and disruption factor rather than performance.

Lastly, as discussed we increased the aftercare significantly at Perth Road following completion of the works. As noted on the Dundee City Council Road Maintenance website page, we usually sweep the road three times after laying, at set intervals. We have been regularly sweeping and vactoring the road surface in conjunction with spraying with water to suppress the dust ... we believe this will resolve the worst of the dust problem. We will however continue to monitor ... and shall continue with dust suppression spraying and sweeping until we are satisfied the dust issues are no longer prevalent.”

Nearly three weeks on and the situation is still totally unsatisfactory.

The pavement in particular is still covered in a fine dust – see photo above.

How this can be considered an acceptable standard of work is completely beyond me.

Lessons really do need to be learned from this and I have asked the Roads Maintenance Partnership to take immediate steps to improve the Perth Road situation by dealing with any remaining dust, particularly on the pavement.

This has been an extremely poor situation and quality of work and it needs urgently rectified.

[Signs of Amur leopard reported in northeast China](#)

Authorities in northeast China's Jilin Province have found signs of a critically endangered leopard subspecies.

A dead roe deer was spotted last week in a tree farm administered by Tianqiaoling Forestry Bureau, when forest worker Xu Degui was picking mushrooms there. Judging from the scratches and the remaining corpse, experts concluded that it was killed by an Amur leopard, also known as the Far Eastern leopard.

It is not the first time that Amur leopards have been found at the tree farm. In July 2009, forestry experts twice found footprints belonging to the animal. Two months later, Amur leopards were found to have attacked domestic sheep there. In 2014, an Amur leopard was spotted eating a roe deer there.

As one of the world's most endangered species, the Amur leopard was put under top national protection in 1983. There are fewer than 70 Amur leopards in the world, mostly living in Russia's Far East, China's northeastern provinces of Jilin and Heilongjiang, and the northern part of the Korean Peninsula.

[City promotion activity launched in Haikou](#)



Hainan Island, sometimes dubbed as “Asia’s Hawaii”, has been developing eco-friendly tourism over the past decade and focusing on building an International Tourism Island. [Photo by Cui Can/China.org.cn]

Hainan Island, sometimes dubbed as “Asia’s Hawaii”, has been developing eco-friendly tourism over the past decade while focusing on building an International Tourism Island. The island boasts excellent air quality, clean water and the opportunity for a healthy lifestyle.

Themed “Discover Hainan’s New Charm”, the 2017 Internet Plus City Promotion activity was organized by Hainan Daily Press Group and Hinews.

From July 17 to 22, over 50 reporters and photographers from national key news media and mobile news networks travel to Hainan to witness the achievements made by the whole province in recent years.

Starting from Haikou, through Wenchang, Qionghai, Wanning, Baoting, Sanya, the city tour will demonstrate Hainan as a province of economic prosperity, social civilization, ecological livability and people’s happiness.

Meanwhile, by fully making use of Hainan’s advantages in ecological environment, special economic zone and the international tourism island, Hainan has earned a reputation at home and abroad as the “Garden of Full seasons” and a “Paradise Resort.”

To push forward the building of Hainan International Tourism Island, Hainan has been given fresh impetus to social, economic and cultural development. Rich in natural resources and backed by its eco-friendly development, Hainan has become a more attractive and energetic city.

Han Chaoguang, the CEO of Hinews, delivered a welcome speech to participants of the activity on July 16.

In his speech, he mentioned that Hainan has carried out a new round of reform to further its building of an international tourism island. And by utilizing the Internet Plus City Promotion activity, Hainan expect its new image through the media.

[Press Conference with Chief of the Defence Force, Air Chief Marshal Mark Binskin AC](#)

PRIME MINISTER:

I am very pleased to be here at Holsworthy to outline new measures to enhance Defence's support of the national counter terrorism arrangements.

As you've seen we've been joined by the Chief of the Defence Force, Air Chief Marshal Mark Binskin and the TAG Force East Command, and we're announcing the outcomes of the Government's review into how we can enhance our military support to first responders in our state and territory police.

The measures I am announcing today will ensure that the ADF is more readily available to respond to terrorism incidents, providing state and territory police with the extra support to call on when they need it.

We have to stay ahead of the threat of terrorism. We have to constantly review our law enforcement capabilities. We have to constantly act to improve our ability to keep Australians safe.

This is a key focus of my Government. There is no place for 'set and forget', or for complacency.

Our enemies are agile and innovative. We have to stay ahead of them. We have to ensure that every resource we have – legislative, military, police, intelligence, security – is always at the highest standard and able to be brought to bear to keep Australians safe.

Now, last week as you know I was in Hamburg meeting with the leaders of the G20, the 20 largest economies. We saw there, at what is normally predominantly an economic forum, a very heavy focus on terrorism. You saw a unanimous communique on enhancing our collective response to deal with counterterrorism, one in which Australia played a leading role in ensuring that we brought it up to the level of dealing with 21st century technologies and ensuring that the internet is not used as a place for terrorists and

other criminals to hide from the law.

Following that, I visited Prime Minister May in London. As you know, I met with the first responders at the scene of the terrorist attack at London Bridge and Borough Market where so many innocent lives were lost, including those of two young Australians Kirsty Boden and Sara Zelenak.

I met with the two metropolitan police officers, two young men, unarmed police officers who had done their best with CPR to revive Sara Zelenak after she'd been attacked and murdered by those terrorists.

Now, we initiated the review into Defence's role in counterterrorism in May last year in response to the changing nature of the terrorist threat as seen in the terrorist attacks in Paris, Brussels, Ankara both in February and March and in so many other places. Recent attacks in Indonesia, London, Manchester and Melbourne as well as the continuing battle against ISIL in the Philippines, continue to underscore the pervasive and global nature of this terrorist threat.

Since the review commenced, we have worked closely with the states and territories to ensure our national counterterrorism arrangements can meet the challenges of the evolving tactics and methods of terrorists.

My highest priority and that of my Government is the safety and security of all Australians to maintain our way of life, our values and our freedom.

Now we can all be assured that our law enforcement and security agencies and our military, are the best in the world.

We have just seen firsthand some of the impressive capabilities that our Tactical Assault Group here can contribute in the event of a complex or protracted domestic terrorist attack.

We have a broad continuum of operational responses to terrorist attacks spanning from the initial response by general duties police in the first instance, to the deployment of specialist members of the ADF such as those we've met today.

Now let me be very clear; state and territory police are and will remain, the primary responders to any terrorist attack.

The immediate actions of those first responders will have the greatest impact in terms of saving lives and neutralising any threat.

In the current threat environment, it is most likely that a terrorist attack will use simple methodologies – a knife, a gun, a vehicle– and the attack itself would be over in minutes.

Now, each state and territory police force also has specially trained police who have expert capability to respond to terrorist attacks.

Where necessary, the Commonwealth will assist states and territories to respond.

The Australian Federal Police has high-end tactical and technical capabilities that are able to operate with state and territory police operational response units. You've seen some of those demonstrated at the centre in Majura in Canberra. In worst-case scenarios, the ADF has a range of specialist capabilities to resolve complex terrorist incidents, especially protracted sieges and hostage situations.

It is the case that our existing arrangements are robust and Defence's primary role in counterterrorism is offshore; that is, through our operations abroad in the Middle East to disrupt and degrade terrorist networks and in supporting regional capacity building efforts.

Defence's largest counterterrorism commitment is in Iraq and Syria, where the liberation of Mosul is a milestone in the campaign to defeat Daesh. When Daesh first captured Mosul in June 2014, it signified its emergence as a major threat both to the region and to the world. Mosul's liberation signifies the beginning of the end for this criminal Islamist terror group. The defeat and collapse of its so-called caliphate, which it used to considerable effect as a recruiting tool across the world. But the fight to defeat its extremist ideology and terrorism is not over.

The security of Australians and our interests cannot involve a 'set and forget' attitude. We've demonstrated, as I said at the outset, that we continuously monitor changes in the security environment. We review legislative, policy and operational arrangements to ensure we remain ahead of the threats.

This is the first time these arrangements have been reviewed in over a decade and we are very clear-eyed about the evolving terrorist threat.

The Defence Minister Marise Payne and I know it is vitally important that Defence is able to respond and assist in domestic counterterrorism efforts.

So we need to ensure that nationally we have the best laws and abilities to respond to terrorist attacks, whether they are simple, complex, brief or protracted. We have to be flexible and agile in the way we support the states and territories before, during and after an attack.

That's why the outcome of the review is increased practical counterterrorism engagement between the Commonwealth, states and territories to build on the strong relationships we already have between the military and police.

Now given this is a national issue, consultation with the states is vital. We know there is not necessarily be a one-size fits all in every circumstance, but as much harmonisation as possible is the objective.

So this will initially occur through the Australia-New Zealand Counter-Terrorism Committee, which includes Commonwealth and all state and territory representatives.

It will involve working with states on specialised ADF training to select state and territory law enforcement elements. In other words, to ensure that the skills the men and women we've met this morning, the skills they have are

able to be shared with the state and territory police tactical response groups. We want to make sure that they are as well-equipped as they possibly can be to respond to the threats to which they will invariably be the first responders.

We will be placing Australian Defence Force liaison officers with the counterterrorism groups, both at state and territory level. Again that is to ensure that there is the closest possible collaboration between the specialists here in the ADF and the frontline police so that once again each of them knows the capabilities, both the strengths and the weaknesses on each side so that there is the ability for the ADF to be able to say to police in certain circumstances, we can do something that you can't, this is where we may be able to provide some assistance.

It is vitally important that we have that close liaison. There's no point operating in silos. Our enemies aren't. We have to be completely connected at all times.

And we're clarifying the ability of the ADF to pre-position, both personnel and materiel to fortify and enable the quickest possible response.

We're going to streamline the legislative process for the callout of the ADF under the Defence Act to provide more flexibility for the states and territories to request Defence assistance. Without going into the legalities of it, it is a very cumbersome process at the moment. It basically requires a state to demonstrate that they have exhausted their ability to defend themselves. What we want to be able to do, and this is consistent with the Constitution, is be in a position where a state government, a state police commissioner, for example, and premier can come to the conclusion that there is a special, it might be a niche assistance, it might be using the rig that we've got behind us here, or some other specialist assistance where that special assistance is required, it can be readily called upon and deployed. Again, we want to make sure that every asset we have, that is designed to keep to Australians safe, is brought to bear to do so when it is needed.

We look forward to continuing our work with states and territories to ensure that they have the powers they need to prevent terrorist attacks and ensure we have the most robust national response. So we're going to continue discussions with the states, for example, to ensure that the penalties for those serious terrorist offences are adequate and terrorists aren't walking the streets on bail or parole. You saw the commitment I secured at the last COAG meeting in that regard. We want to aim to have nationally consistent, pre-charged detention of terror suspects, full legal protections to ensure that police are empowered to use lethal force where the public is at risk.

While it is a state issue, I'm of the view we should have as much uniformity as possible when it comes to protections for our first responders. We'll continue working with industry and other leaders to ensure security and law enforcement agencies can access relevant information when investigating terrorists, paedophiles and violent criminals' use of the internet. The laws that apply offline must apply online.

I have convened, as you know, a special COAG later this year to comprehensively review the nation's laws and practices directed at protecting Australians from violent extremism and terrorism.

This is all part of our commitment to keep Australians safe. We are constantly reviewing every aspect of our legislation, of our policy, of our resources. The way we deploy our forces. The way we work with States and Territories. The way we collaborate internationally. Everything is focused on securing the safety of all Australians. That is our commitment, that is our duty.

I will now ask the CDF to add to those remarks and we will take questions.

AIR CHIEF MARSHAL MARK BINSKIN AC – CHIEF OF THE DEFENCE FORCE:

Thank you Prime Minister. It's great that we are able to host you here at Holsworthy this morning. I'd like to take the chance to thank the team at TAG East for the demonstration and the discussions. This is an important moment for the Australian Defence Force. We fully support the outcomes of the review. Importantly, it acknowledges the primacy of the state and territories and the police in the domestic policing role, but it gives us the chance to better provide advice either before or during an event. It gives us the chance to provide specialist training to selected territorian and state police organisations and their people. Importantly, if we're ever required to be called out, it does streamline that process and allows us to support them more quickly and in a better way.

It is a good review. We will now be working with the state and territory police organisations to see how we can best work together to enhance the capability right across Australia.

JOURNALIST:

Can you point to any [inaudible] where it would have made a difference in the Lindt siege scenario?

PRIME MINISTER:

Referring to Lindt, as you know, the coroner's conclusion was that the New South Wales police were fully capable of dealing with that situation. So while there were recommendations made by the coroner after the Lindt Cafe siege which we have adopted, this is a consequence of a review I set in place last year after a number of terrorist incidents overseas. What we do is constantly review the pattern of terrorist activity, both internationally and of course at home and then adapt our practices and our policies to adjust to that. But in terms of Lindt, the coroner's conclusion was the New South Wales police had all of the capabilities to deal with the matter and I can't say anything contrary to that.

JOURNALIST:

In that case would there be any scenario where it would play out differently under these new laws?

PRIME MINISTER:

What this will do is it will give states and the Commonwealth greater flexibility to deploy specialist ADF personnel and assets. You can imagine circumstances, you've seen some of the equipment here today. Obviously most of the capabilities of TAG East are not on public display I am pleased to say, but we'll have a closer collaboration with the police. It is already close, but we want to make it closer. We want to see more tactical response groups from the police training here. We want to raise their capabilities to respond to terrorist incidents.

Remember, the circumstances in which the tactical assault group here can be deployed to an incident in Sydney itself, is hours. To other cities in Australia it's many hours. Now with these incidents, are resolved typically very quickly. If you go to the London Borough Market and London Bridge attack, the armed response group of the metropolitan police got there in eight minutes and they killed the three terrorists. I walked over the course of that crime scene with Prime Minister May and frankly, it wasn't much more of a walk than we have done this morning. It was in a very short compass. So in a few minutes, those three murderers were able to kill eight people and wound 50. So it was a shocking example of the speed with which these incidents progress.

It is vitally important that front-line police have their skills improved and the training to be able to deal with these incidents on the spot. But when you do get more complex or protracted situations, then Defence can be brought into bear.

I should also add that the ability to pre-position Defence personnel and Defence assets is also important because there will be circumstances where, through our intelligence, we get wind of an attack being likely or being planned and so you can get people in position in advance.

What I am doing is taking a lot of the red tape and the gum out of the works to enable the cooperation between the police and the ADF and particularly, the specialists, the operators we have met this morning, so that they can work together more seamlessly. That's what this is all about. We've got to keep on improving the way we are able to respond to these threats.

As I said, we've got fantastic police, security intelligence and armed forces. They are the best in the world, but we must never be complacent. We can never set and forget.

JOURNALIST:

Prime Minister if there is an incident again, how will it work if the ADF are watching an incident and they go: "Well, we could go in there and we could help?" Who is going to actually call them in, because the Army offered their services in Lindt and that was knocked back. How would it work then under the new system?

PRIME MINISTER:

Yeah, under the constitution the State has to make the request. That's the constitutional situation. But clearly with both the State police and the ADF working more closely and with those liaison officers working with the counter-terrorism groups in each State, they will have a better understanding of what each can do and what each may not be able to do. You've got that ability to bring the collective talents together in a more effective way.

JOURNALIST:

So state police shouldn't feel a bit slighted by this?

PRIME MINISTER:

No, no absolutely not. It is absolutely quite the contrary I can assure you. You should never imagine that the first responders are anything other than the state police. I mean they are on the spot. Unlike the United Kingdom, our front line police are armed. That's a very important things to bear in mind about the London Bridge and London Borough Market incident; the first responders there, the first police were all unarmed. They were very brave doing their best to deal with these guys with nightsticks and throwing things at them and so forth. They were really courageous but unlike our police, they didn't have side arms. So the key thing here is to make sure we can work more closely and more effectively. What these changes we are making to the Defence Act and the changes we are making to operational practice, will ensure that where the ADF has specialist or niche capabilities that will be of value, they can be called into the situation much more quickly and much more flexibly.

JOURNALIST:

Prime Minister do you think we should have a Department of Homeland Security set up to perhaps coordinate these responses?

PRIME MINISTER:

Thank you for that. That's a frequent question and as you know, I met in the UK with the Home Secretary Amber Rudd and her distinguished predecessor, now the Prime Minister Theresa May. The British have always had a Home Office and these administrative matters are often under discussion and considered but we have got outstanding arrangements in Australia. We are always open to improving them. Again, there is no place for set and forget. My focus as Prime Minister, I can assure you, is on keeping Australians safe. I never rest in my efforts to improve the way our outstanding men and women of the ADF, of the AFP, working with our intelligence and security agencies and their State and Territory counterparts, I never rest, as I focus on how I can ensure they have the maximum support in every respect, to do their job, which they do, bravely and professionally, in keeping us safe.

So thank you all for coming out to Holsworthy.

[ENDS]

[Recording of the Week: a princess cannot eat stew](#)

This week's selection comes from Niamh Dillon, National Life Stories Project Interviewer.

Prue Leith is well known to television viewers of the *Great British Menu*. She started her career as a chef and restaurateur in London. In this extract from a longer recording with Niamh Dillon for [Food: From Source to Salespoint](#), recorded in 2008, she recalls a surprise visit from Princess Margaret. Her request for pheasant stew caused considerable consternation in the kitchen resulting in a fire, a singed jacket and a spilt pot of coffee. If only VIP's knew what happens behind the scenes!

[Prue Leith and Princess Margaret C821/202](#)

 **Prue Leith (courtesy Paul Tozier)**

The full interview with Prue Leith can be found in [Food](#), an online collection of oral history recordings that chart the extraordinary changes which transformed the production, manufacture and consumption of food in 20th-century Britain.

Follow [@BL_OralHistory](#) and [@soundarchive](#) for all the latest news.