# Episode 3: Closer to home

**Speaker1:** Hello and welcome to Tasmania Police's podcast, this is Tas police. I'm Inspector John Pratt and I'll be your host as we chat to a wide range of Tasmanian police officers about why they joined the job and why others should too. We're coming to you today from Lutriwita, Tasmania. And before we start our conversation, I'd like to respectfully acknowledge the Tasmanian Aboriginal people as the traditional owners of the land upon which we work, and pay our respects to elders, past and present. We recognise the Tasmanian Aboriginal people as the continuing custodians of the rich cultural heritage of Lutriwita, Tasmania. On today's episode, I'm talking to trainee constables Holly Pedder and Jake Kilby, who are both recruits at our Northern Academy campus in Launceston. We'll be chatting about what motivated them to join the Tasmania Police Service and what their experience training at our northern campus has been like so far. It's great to have you both here today. Holly, let's start with you. I understand you had a pretty interesting job before you joined us here at the Academy. Can you tell us about what you did and what motivated you to join Tasmania Police?

**Speaker2:** Yeah, absolutely. Thank you so much. So previous to joining, I spent two years working in Northern Prosecution. So a little familiar with headquarters and the flow of things there on a public service level. My motivation for joining, prior to working with Northern Prosecution, I worked in a customer complaint and resolution department for almost a decade, and I just needed a little bit more, a bit more of a challenge. So here we are.

**Speaker1:** So a decade in your first job and then a couple of years with Northern Prosecution Services. What time for you to make that decision? Anything in particular?

**Speaker2:** Yeah, absolutely. I have a now eight year old. So parenting got in the way of some career goals there for a little while. But we got there in the end.

**Speaker1:** And how's that panning out for you now. Still being a parent obviously, but now training.

**Speaker2:** It's definitely rough. You know, some of my colleagues are going home and studying or having some time out, and I get to go home and be mum until bedtime, and then my studying starts. So it's just about the balance, but it is definitely hard but wouldn't change it. I'm here where I am now and loving every minute.

**Speaker1:** So from what you've experienced so far, has working in Northern Prosecution Services helped you?

**Speaker2:** Look, it's helped me network for sure, but you really don't know what you're in for until you're in it. I thought I would have had some of an idea, but no, it's all very, very new. What I expected, but also not what I expected at all.

**Speaker1:** So what have been some of the big surprises for you?

**Speaker2:** Big surprises, I would say probably coming into the physical aspect of things, learning defensive tactics, obviously you get a concept of what policing is, but knowing how to do it properly and safely has been a bit of an eye opener, I guess you could say.

**Speaker1:** So. I'm supposing that you'd read all the files about it and what's actually happened. Yeah. And now you're experiencing it firsthand.

**Speaker2:** Yeah, absolutely. Um, reading the files was a bit of an insight, but it only really gives you a tiny inch of what it really is made up of.

**Speaker1:** Jake, what about you? Can you tell us about your background and what led you here to Tasmania Police?

**Speaker3:** Yeah, so out of college, I finished after year 11 and did an apprenticeship as a mechanic. Found that I didn't really enjoy that that much once I'd finished it. So I went and did some work as a teacher's assistant in a primary school for a couple of years, which I loved. But it probably wasn't really a career per se. So I looked at the police force probably 4 or 5 years ago, actually, and sort of thought that I wouldn't be capable of getting in. It sort of was a bit daunting. So I sort of put it on the back burner and then ended up going to an information day, and it all sort of snowballed from there. It was something that I wanted to do and just managed to get through the process. And I'm here now.

**Speaker1:** So from teaching in schools or certainly working in schools to really going back to school, how's it going for you?

**Speaker3:** Yeah, it's it's full on. I'm a very busy person out of the academy. So it's been finding that balance of still keeping my life, but also prioritising the academy so that I can succeed with that as well.

**Speaker1:** Have there been any big surprises for you or any shocks, things that you weren't expecting?

**Speaker3:** Uh, not particularly. I think it's been pretty similar to what I was expecting. It's been full on in terms of the learning. Like, I think you're learning something all the time, whether it be on the physical side, defensive tactics, firearms, or whether it be with some of the uni stuff. It's sort of just switching between the different capacities and being ready and switched on to take in what you're being taught.

**Speaker1:** So we started training recruits at our northern campus in 2022, and this meant that for the first time ever, people from the north and north west of Tasmania were able to complete their training without moving to Hobart and didn't have to leave their families and support networks behind. Holly and Jake, you've both been training at the northern campus now for the last ten weeks. I'm interested to hear just how you're finding it. So, Jake, how are you finding the course so far? How are you connecting with everyone else on it?

**Speaker3:** Yeah, I'm loving it. Probably wouldn't have been something I'd have been able to do if I had to go to Hobart. So finding out that the northern course was an option was probably one of the big things that actually sparked my interest, and it's been really good. Our course directors are great, and I think that's important because we don't have quite the interaction as what you would at the academy. They're really good and have a pretty good wealth of knowledge to share with us, and it's nice to they've got it arranged so that everything you're getting at the academy, you're still learning the same things in Launceston. It just might be through a different avenue, if that makes sense. You're still getting to the same end goal, but maybe just with a slightly different process.

**Speaker1:** So in your cohort up there in Launceston at the moment there's 20 of you. How are you all getting along.

**Speaker3:** Yeah. Good. It's it's one of those funny things you sort of you go from being in an adult work environment. Then you come back into a bit of a, it can be a bit of a high school environment at times, and you just have to remind yourself that it is a work capacity because it's good fun. You all enjoy being together and getting to know each other, and sometimes it is a matter of actually going, hey, we are at work too. Like we probably shouldn't be enjoying ourselves too much.

**Speaker1:** So Holly, as you've already told us, you're a mother. so I would imagine that's a great benefit for you being able to train in Launceston and stay with your family. Are there any other benefits that you've experienced?

**Speaker2:** Look, I think mainly balancing the family aspect. It just goes to show, I guess, that Tas Police is really family focused. If I wasn't able to do the northern campus, it probably wouldn't be a career that I could pursue. So I think we're really, really lucky to have the campus and have what it's been developed into, you know, a couple of years in now, and I think every year it just gets bigger and better. So yeah, it's enabled me to follow through with my career.

**Speaker1:** Jake mentioned there was a slight difference between training at the academy and training in the northern campus. How were you actually finding that part of it?

**Speaker2:** Look, I'm a bit of a people person, I guess you could say. So we spent the first week of academy down in Hobart, and that gave us some foundations for some friendships, some of them I'm still maintaining to date. So I guess you get out what you put in. If you make the effort then it is really rewarding. So we are like a really big family and we just video call every day.

**Speaker1:** And from what you've experienced so far, do you think there's anything that you're missing out on training in the northern campus as opposed to training in the academy?

**Speaker2:** Besides being able to speak to directors and presenters face to face, I really think it's the same end goal. It's just a little bit of a different path to get there. We have some great directors, as Jake mentioned, so we're really lucky in that aspect. But we also have the support and encouragement from those at the southern campus, directors and presenters. You know, they're really happy for us to reach out. We've made a couple of phone calls to them and they've answered straight away. So, you know, I don't think we're really missing out on much.

**Speaker1:** And certainly some of your lectures and teachings are delivered by way of electronic means. But we also do have instructors go up there and deliver face to face.

That's correct.

**Speaker2:** Yeah, that's absolutely right. We just had Senior Wieland come up and visit us this week actually, which was a bit of a hoot. We always like to see faces in the flesh.

**Speaker1:** Jake, what are the highlights of the training so far? As far as you're concerned?

**Speaker3:** It was really good in the first week to get down to Hobart and meet the whole cohort. I enjoyed that, I'm pretty similar to Holly. I like meeting people. I love engaging in that side of it. In terms of the actual training, the firearms is pretty hard to beat. That was pretty great to get out on the range and, and learn about that side of it and the defensive tactics stuff as well. I think for me, it was a bit of a realisation of as a bigger guy, it's actually not enough. There still certain tactics that you need to have, right, because they're going to work regardless of size. So that was pretty cool to learn that side of it too.

**Speaker1:** And what aspects of the training are you looking forward to most?

**Speaker3:** I'm definitely looking forward to outstations to get out on the job and sort of actually piece the jigsaw together. You learn a lot of different things and at times you sort of feel like you haven't learnt much, but then you do your scenarios and stuff and it pieces it all together for you. So I'm definitely looking forward to getting out and actually seeing it as a holistic thing.

**Speaker1:** How about yourself, Holly? What are the training highlights for you so far?

**Speaker2:** I would have to agree with Jake. Firearms has been a huge highlight coming from someone who's never shot a gun or really been around them going out into a controlled environment with our director, Sergeant Eldershaw, who's very passionate and really skilled at what he does, you know, going in really nervous. He was easily able to calm your nerves, and it was really eye opening and gives you a bit of confidence, I guess, in what you're going to be doing out on the job.

**Speaker1:** And what are you looking forward to?

**Speaker2:** I would also say outstations. There's a bit of excitement about putting everything that we've learnt and we've studied and the journey so far, putting it into real life practice.

**Speaker1:** So Tasmania Police has had a partnership with the University of Tasmania for quite a few years now, and that partnership has enabled us to operate the northern campus out of the university facilities up in Launceston. Holly, I understand that you've almost completed the university components of the recruit training course. Have you found that aspect of the training.

**Speaker2:** School for me was a little bit daunting. It's been quite some time since I have had to do any form of classroom or study, being almost 31. So this side of it coming in really scary, not knowing what to expect. And it's again been super supportive. It's not been as hard as I thought it was going to be. Again, it's one of those things that you get out what you put in. If you spend the time studying and taking notes and looking back at what it is that the learnings are, yeah, it's a bit of a breeze.

**Speaker1:** You mentioned support in respect to the university component of the training. Can you explain to us where that support actually comes from?

**Speaker2:** Yeah, absolutely. So we have a lecturer, Doctor James, who actually has a room within our facility. He has an open door policy. So any questions or anything that you need he really encourages you to go in, knock on the door and he's there whenever you need for anything.

**Speaker1:** And Jack. What about you? How have you found the university component of the training?

**Speaker3:** Yeah, I think it adds a lot of depth to what we're learning. We learn a lot from police themselves. So to learn a bit from the uni lecturers who come from different backgrounds gives us a more rounded understanding, I guess. So it gives us an opportunity to develop understandings a bit more. I've done a little bit of uni study before so I wasn't too overly stressed about it, but it's also very different to the university I've done before. As Holly said, there's a lot more support, it's a lot more personalised. So I think to be honest, anybody that was in the course that's made it through the recruiting process is more than capable of completing the uni component.

**Speaker1:** Is there anything in the uni component that's actually surprised you at all?

**Speaker3:** I wouldn't say surprised, but in terms of interest, the unit we do with Doctor James, which goes into police corruption and a lot of stuff like that has been really interesting and good that we learn about that in an early stage, I guess, in a preventative capacity has been really interesting.

**Speaker1:** How about yourself, Holly? Any surprises?

**Speaker2:** Surprises in the best way. Like I said, going in, not having gone to school for quite some time, I was expecting it to be really hard. We're going to have to write 10,000 word essays, and it's really not turned out to be like that at all. You know, we do have assignments and they are due within a reasonable time while you're trying to manage your studies with the police units, and then you've got your physical aspects that, you know, you go out on Mondays and Fridays for your OP skills, so you're not actually in the classroom. But no, I'm surprised in the best way that it's not what I thought it was going to be.

**Speaker1:** All right, so you've both been with us now for ten weeks undertaking your training, which puts you both in a great position to give people a little bit of advice. Holly, what do you think makes the ideal candidate for Tasmania Police?

**Speaker2:** You've just got to be a bit of a go getter. I guess you can do anything that you set your mind to. So if you're thinking about being a potential career, give it a go.

**Speaker1:** Jake. What do you think makes the ideal candidate?

**Speaker3:** I think patience is a massive one. I think if you have a bit of patience and especially being a people person, it'll take you a long way. I think a lot of interactions that you are going to have in the training and once you're out are based upon how well you can communicate with people. So if I could define it to one thing, I would say, if you're a communicator, you're going to be a really good chance of being successful.

**Speaker1:** You mentioned Doctor James and ethics and corruption and all that sort of thing. What sort of values do you think a person needs to become a police officer?

**Speaker3:** Integrity is obviously a massive one. You have to have that level of integrity within yourself so that your values are strong to you and you're happy to uphold them. And alongside that, honesty is obviously very important, goes hand in hand with integrity.

**Speaker1:** Anything you'd like to add to that? Holly?

**Speaker2:** Yeah, I'm going to bang on about the support. Super duper important. As I said, we get a bunch of it and, you know, it's just something that's going to continue. I guess. Obviously we get to support each other in the classroom environment, getting each other through the course. But then also once we graduate, we're there for the support of the community as well.

**Speaker1:** And do you have any advice that you can give to anybody that's thinking about joining Tasmania Police?

**Speaker2:** Yeah, absolutely. Coming from someone who was skeptical whether or not I could do it, given, you know, family's first for me, if you're worried about the the studying aspect or you know that your main priority is your family, applying and going through this process doesn't take away from any of that. As I said, the support is there. They support you through it all. Family also comes first for Tas police, so don't put anything in the way of of taking the shot but yourself.

**Speaker1:** Jake, can you give some advice to anybody that's thinking about joining?

**Speaker3:** Yeah, I'd say give it a go. I think for me, I put up a bit of a wall that I wouldn't be able to get in and I wouldn't be able to do it. And once I actually had a crack, I could. And on a more basic note, just make sure your fitness is at the level it needs to be before you go to the fitness test. Like, it sounds like a simple one, but the the standards aren't crazy. Just check what they are and make sure you're right for them before you go.

**Speaker1:** And anybody that is thinking of joining, especially from the north of the state or the north West, would you recommend the advantages of being able to train at the northern campus?

**Speaker3:** Yeah, definitely. I think it's a real balancing act, and we talk about it a lot between committing to the Academy, but also continuing your life outside of it, because obviously, to be at your best, you need to still be living life and still enjoying yourself. So being able to do that with family and friends, with sporting commitments, with whatever it be, makes it a real positive to be able to do that in your end of the state.

**Speaker1:** And you. Holly.

**Speaker2:** Yeah, look, I agree, it just means that your outside life doesn't stop while you temporarily go into training to reach that end goal of being a police officer.

**Speaker1:** Thanks very much, Jake and Holly, for your time. It's been great hearing about your experiences to date. I'm certainly very pleased that the option of training at the Northern campus has encouraged you to join and is working out well for you, and I wish you all the best for the rest of your training and look forward to seeing how you go. Thank you.

**Speaker2:** Thanks, Inspector.

**Speaker1:** That's it for this episode of This is Tas Police. I hope you enjoyed the conversation. In our next episode we'll be talking with a couple of recruits who joined the academy after working in the Tasmania Police Radio Dispatch Services, otherwise known as RDS. Stay up to date with all our episodes by subscribing on your favourite podcast app, and you can find all our previous episodes on the Tasmania Police recruitment website. Recruitment dot police dot tas dot gov forward slash podcast.