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Insulting claims

I NORMALLY avoid responding to comments made by or attributed to Greg Barns on the basis that he is, of course, entitled to his opinion, but on this occasion ("Look in mirror, cops told", *Mercury*, March 2), I feel compelled to inject some balance into the discussion as his reported claims that police often have themselves to blame for being assaulted are ill-informed.

There is no denying that policing can be a risky business. Our members know that and accept it as part of the job but they also know they are not there as "punching bags" and neither are our other emergency services personnel who frequently have to deal with violent people often

affected by alcohol or drugs or both.

Emergency services personnel and their families deserve to know they will be coming home safely at the end of a shift. They have the right to expect nothing less.

Mr Barns's claims that many police bring violent attacks on themselves are akin to saying police deserve what they get. I strongly disagree.

It's insulting to Tasmania's committed and professional police officers and shows an ignorance of the challenges of modern policing.

Darren Hine
Acting Commissioner, Tasmania
Police