

Our President, Mark Thomas, was hospitalised and diagnosed with PTSD, depression and anxiety in February 2013 which stemmed from a traumatic incident he attended in April 2003 whilst serving as a Victoria Police member. Whilst hospitalised, Mark felt incredibly alone and (incorrectly) thought that no other person could possibly know what he was going through.

Once Mark resumed full time work duties in June 2015, he started a support group so that no professional first responder would feel alone in their own mental health journeys. Mark soon met Rob (and his assistance dog "Jimmy") and Ben, both Victoria Police officers and diagnosed with PTSD at a support group catch up and soon formed a strong bond between them.

Mark, Rob and Ben hatched the idea to register the support group as a charity to sponsor assistance dogs, having seen the incredible value that "Jimmy" brought to Rob's life.

The Code 9 Foundation was formally registered as a charity in April 2018.

The foundation supports professional first responders that live with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety, depression and other mental health conditions that came from their service to the community.

The foundation has evolved over time and now provides a number of different services to its mentally injured members.

We provide healthy meals to those that are struggling heavily as diet plays such a critical role in positive mental health. This also provides an immediate lowering of stress levels to responder families going through crises.

We send members away on respite weekends to have a weekend of relaxation at a destination of their choice, where we pay for the cost of accommodation. Having a break away from the day to day stress of mental health crises to a new environment can help families build memories and help them heal.

We organise for house and garden maintenance of members whose anxiety levels are so high, they cannot attend to these chores.

We do so much more, essentially we do not have a criterion of how we can help members, if we can achieve it, we will do it to help care for our colleagues.

Proudly, from inception, we have included and supported the families of our colleagues and make no distinction between serving and former members. They are all part of our family.

Ultimately, we want to prevent the suicide of our colleagues and anecdotally, we have achieved this however we still have members taking their lives. We will continue to do what we do, to do whatever we can to stop this from happening.

