# Episode 18 - Will Broadbridge - v1.mp3

**John Pratt:** [00:00:05] 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 Lutruwita, 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 Lutruwita, Tasmania.

**John Pratt:** [00:00:47] We often talk about how people can become police officers once they finish school or if they want to change careers. But some people might be surprised to know we also have a recruit course available for existing police officers in other jurisdictions across Australia and in New Zealand. We call it our accelerated training program or fast track program. It runs for 12 weeks and includes modules on Tasmanian legislation and Tasmania police policy and procedures, as well as physical training and instruction on firearms and operational safety tactics. If you love the job but can hear the Tasmanian lifestyle calling, this episode of the podcast is for you as we're going to be talking to Senior Constable Will Broadbridge, who made the move from New South Wales. Police will find out what the application process and training course for fast track recruits is like, as well as hear about what policing is like on the north east coast of Tasmania. Thanks for joining us today, Will. It's great to talk to you.

**Will Broadbridge:** [00:01:36] Good afternoon.

**John Pratt:** [00:01:37] So if we can just start the conversation this afternoon, could you just tell us about your career to date and how you've come to end up in Tasmania?

**Will Broadbridge:** [00:01:45] Yeah, sure. So I joined New South Wales Police in 2008, graduated in August and I got posted to the northern beaches of Sydney as a general duties constable and did that for five years and a sort of chance job involving some boats on the northern beaches ended up with me being offered a job in the marine section or water police as it's called, over there. So I went from GDs on the northern beaches to Sydney Harbour Water Police, then to Church Point Water Police, then to Botany Bay Water Police, And then five years ago, or four and a half years ago, I made the swap to Tasmania Police after going through the fast track program.

**John Pratt:** [00:02:26] So it sounds like a pretty interesting career in New South Wales. You must have done some pretty interesting jobs whilst you were with the water police.

**Will Broadbridge:** [00:02:32] Yeah, so different role to the to the marine police here and you do the less of the commercial and recreational fishing but you've big involvement in search and rescue and any crime associated with the water had a lot of Sydney to Hobart trips and a lot of fond memories from my time there. Yeah.

**John Pratt:** [00:02:49] Any really memorable jobs you did whilst you were with the water police in New South Wales?

**Will Broadbridge:** [00:02:53] Yeah, look, we had some search and rescue efforts that took us pretty close to as far as we go, the 200 nautical mile boundary. So, you know, that can take 3 or 4 days at sea and overcoming a lot of different problems along the way. But yeah, certainly some of those experiences where you're experiencing some pretty tough working conditions, but you overcome the problems and get home safe and hopefully get the people home safe that you've gone out to rescue. So look back very fondly on those times.

**John Pratt:** [00:03:20] So I've got no doubt that in New South Wales the water police is an incredibly sought after position. What made you make the move with your family to Tasmania?

**Will Broadbridge:** [00:03:28] Yeah, so I pretty much had my dream job and as you said, pretty much someone had to retire or pass away for you to get a role and you had 100 people lining up. And I had a fortunate set of circumstances that got me into that job and I was very, very lucky. The catch with living in working in New South Wales is the cost of living. And when my wife fell pregnant and then pregnant again, I had a two and a one year old and we were trying to save for a house and the real estate market was becoming further and further out of reach. And with her not working, we just got into this rat race that we, neither of us were particularly enjoying. So although I had a job that I loved, it really wasn't fitting us at that time. So that was one of the reasons for the change.

**John Pratt:** [00:04:09] Had you been to Tasmania previously?

**Will Broadbridge:** [00:04:11] So my mother in law has lived in Hobart for about 20 odd years and she has a small business, she runs herself. And so we'd visited, absolutely loved it. We enjoyed the countryside and the city of Hobart and so yeah, we'd enjoyed it. But at that stage we weren't thinking that we'd end up living here and loving it so much.

**John Pratt:** [00:04:31] So, as you well know, to be eligible for our accelerated training program, applicants must have spent at least four years as a police officer within Australia or New Zealand. They must either still be in the job or have been in the job within the last few years. Well, can you tell us a little bit about how the application process was for you?

**Will Broadbridge:** [00:04:47] Yeah, so it was actually my mother in law that must have noticed a bit of advertising about the Fast Tracker or accelerated training program. And so I visited the Tasmania Police website and just found some recruiting information at that stage. I understand there's always a recruiting drive, but there wasn't a specific recruiting drive at that stage in late 2018. And so I just did the prerequisite training, which involved the screening and the sort of online testing and then the submission of all my medical documents that I was able to do from New South Wales while I was working in the job still and getting paid, which was quite handy. And then I had a lot of contact with Simon Clayton, who is, I believe still the sergeant of recruiting. We had just some pretty open conversations about what the transfer process might look like and eventually I was invited down to undertake the physical training which needed to be done at the academy at Hobart, and I did the interview process on the same day. So in the morning I did the physical testing, which I'm glad to say was successful at and then myself, and I think there were only two other fast trackers, a chap from the NT, as I remember, and a girl from Victoria, and we all had our interviews that morning. I was lucky enough to have Inspector Michael Johnston on my interview panel, who instantly recognised my boating qualifications and saw me as a decent fit for where I'm currently working now, which is on the north east coast of Tasmania at Saint Helens.

**John Pratt:** [00:06:14] So as I mentioned earlier, the fast track course is 12 weeks, so it's quite different to our general recruit course and I've got no doubt it's very different to courses in other jurisdictions as well. How did you find the actual course itself when you did your training?

**Will Broadbridge:** [00:06:27] Yeah, so I really appreciated that we weren't treated the same as recruits, as in, I think Tasmania Police recognise that we are trained police from other jurisdictions so we know how to be police, but we're there to learn how things are done in Tasmania, the difference in legislation, police powers and those types of things. So as far as the tone of the course goes, it’s very, very different from Goulburn Police Academy when I was a new recruit that didn't know anything and it's a lot of yes sir, no sir, but this was more of a casual learning environment. You're really invited to ask questions. It's very much a team learning environment and it's sort of tailored more towards the individual. So it was quite I remember it as being quite flexible. We were asked what we needed extra time on, what we needed, less time on. And as far as the three months goes, that was quite a generous time slot. So in fact we ended up helping assist, sort of acting as role players to some of the recruits, which is really handy because as we know, when you're teaching, you're learning at the same time. So sometimes we were giving them advice on things and instead of reaffirming what we'd learnt in the classes as well. So yeah, it was an enjoyable time. It's tough if you've got a family and you're asking your family to come and stay or if they've left the respective state you've come from and you're putting them up. There were some challenging times around that, but as a whole, the course itself was enjoyable and the people were friendly and accommodating.

**John Pratt:** [00:07:50] So you've now been through two academies in Australia, the New South Wales Police Academy and the Tasmania Police Academy. Can you tell us a little bit about the differences between the two?

**Will Broadbridge:** [00:07:58] Yeah, I.think a big difference is just the scale of the police forces or police services. So roughly what are we up to? 1400 and something police in Tassie, I think there was 17,000 or 18,000 when I when I joined in New South Wales and now there's 24,000. So the scale of the academy and the learning process is very different. I was in a class of 60. It was a very kind of like a military style learning. And so I guess the Academy in Hobart is different, it's smaller, it's more intimate, and you feel like there's more of a personal touch. You feel like you're less of a number when you're there.

**John Pratt:** [00:08:33] So once you'd graduated from the academy here in Tasmania and then you went out into the operational field, can you tell us about the differences between operational work in New South Wales and what you do now in Tasmania?

**Will Broadbridge:** [00:08:44] Yeah, so I think the initial thing was I mean I've got posted to a regional area that was country and I think the biggest thing that stuck out to me was the community side of policing here and how important that is to get right. So the people that you deal with on day to day in those sort of more city areas or populated areas where I was used to in New South Wales, you're unlikely to see them again, whereas in regional Tasmania or even just Tasmania itself, because of its lower population, it pays to be more mindful that you're going to be seeing those people, especially in the town that I work in, the supermarket and those types of things. So that comes with its extra challenges. I also noticed how multi-skilled the police are here, whereas because of the size of the force, it doesn't afford us the capability to have people solely doing their specialist jobs, like diving, for example, would be a like a secondary role where you're retained and you do it. You don't have full time divers. We were doing our own forensic work in Saint Helens. You know, that's something that where you're carrying around forensic kits. So you're not always getting a forensic officer to come and assist you when you're doing a car or whatever. So just seeing how skilled the police were was quite amazing, really.

**John Pratt:** [00:09:56] Now that you've settled into the north east of Tasmania, how's it going for you and your family up there?

**Will Broadbridge:** [00:10:00] Yeah, look, quite honestly, we haven't looked back. The quality of life here, the work life balance and the yeah, the time I get with my kids and the time I'm not spending in a traffic jam is all to me worth more than money. And on that subject, if you do choose to work regionally, you do attract some extra pay, which is good, which all helps. So yeah, I've really enjoyed being part of the community. I've had to learn, you know, to manage that in different ways, but largely it's been extremely positive.

**John Pratt:** [00:10:32] What advice would you give to anybody else from other parts of Australia or indeed New Zealand that are considering moving to Tasmania to join Tasmania Police?

**Will Broadbridge:** [00:10:39] Look, I would first consider what your priorities are. I mean there's going to be a lot of people that will have similar motivations to move. It did mean it's very difficult to make ends meet in Sydney as a copper. And if you're trying to get on the first rung of that real estate ladder or you just want more time and space with your family, then it's going to fit you. So consider whether this type of lifestyle is for you. Maybe come and holiday here and see if it's for you. And then the second part of my advice is to just take the punt, because you can spend a lot of time thinking about a move and not doing it. And in my case, the punt paid off.

**John Pratt:** [00:11:17] Policing is a very rewarding job as both you and I know Will. I'm glad that the move down to Tasmania has worked really well for you and the family. You're certainly living in a great place of Tasmania, that's for sure. It's been great talking to you today, Will. Thanks very much for sharing your experiences with police so far.

**Will Broadbridge:** [00:11:32] Thank you.

**John Pratt:** [00:11:38] That's it for today's episode. I hope you've enjoyed it. So far on This is Tas Police we've chatted to our commissioner, Donna Adams, our recruitment services team, some new recruits, and we've experienced a day in the life of a constable on the beat in Launceston. We've also heard from an investigator of a long term missing persons case and we've jumped aboard one of our police vessels and heard what it's like to work for marine and rescue services. There have been some interesting and inspiring conversations from people who have experienced everything, has police has to offer.

**John Pratt:** [00:12:06] In our next episode of This is Tas Police, we'll hear from a detective as they work through a very interesting case. Detective Sergeant Leah Adams works with Bellerive CIB, and we're going to hear what a week in her life as a detective with Tas Police is really like.