

## **Question and Answer with Rachel Amphlett, author of *Call to Arms***

### **1. What can you tell us about *Call to Arms*?**

Returning to work after an enforced absence, Detective Kay Hunter discovers she wasn't the only victim of her previous investigation.

DI Devon Sharp remains suspended from duties, and the team is in turmoil.

Determined to prove herself once more and clear his name, Kay undertakes to solve a cold case that links Sharp to his accuser.

But, as she gets closer to the truth, she realises her enquiries could do more harm than good.

Torn between protecting her mentor and finding out the truth, the consequences of Kay's enquiries will reach far beyond her new role...

### **2. How do you pick your characters' names?**

On rare occasions they pop into my head at the same time as the idea for a character, but other times it's a case of sifting through lists of names via a search engine until something resonates.

I had a difficult time with Kay Hunter's name because I couldn't settle on it until about eight weeks out from publication of the first book in the series, *Scared to Death!* It was simply caused by the fact I wanted a name that could carry a series, not just a standalone book – that caused some sleepless nights, I can tell you!

### **3. Can you share your writing process with us, in a nutshell?**

Once I have an idea, I'll do some initial research to get me going and then it's a case of jotting down a couple of bullet points for each scene that's already popped into my head and sorting out a basic sequence. I've studied screenwriting, so I tend to work in a five Act structure, which gives me an indication of where the big "lift" points are in the story – those bits that make you go "woah!" and turn the page.

I've got a production schedule I work to during the year, so as soon as I

start I know when I want to publish the book. I can plug that information into the Scrivener writing software that I use, and that tells me what my minimum word count is every day. After that, it's a case of getting my bum in the seat every morning and hitting that word count.

If I don't know something, or I haven't got a name for a character, I'll simply put "XXX" and keep going – for me, the first draft is about momentum. I can go back and fix things later.