Submission to the

Crime and Misconduct Commission

Policing in Indigenous Communities

Department of Communities

September 2007

Abbreviations

AMPs	Alcohol Management Plans
CMC	Crime and Misconduct Commission
Conferences	Youth Justice Conferences
Convenor	Youth Justice Conference Convenor
DOGIT	Deed of Grant in Trust
GCO	Government Coordination Office
Indigenous people	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
OATSIP	Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships
PCYC	Police-Citizens Youth Clubs
PLO	Police Liaison Officer
QPS	Queensland Police Service
Royal Commission	Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody

Executive summary

The Crime and Misconduct Commission's (CMC) inquiry into policing in Indigenous communities is important and encompasses a very wide variety of critical issues for Indigenous Queenslanders. The Queensland Government has an ongoing commitment to tackling Indigenous disadvantage and recently announced significant funding initiatives as part of the 2007-08 budget relating to: education, employment and engagement with the real economy; housing in rural and remote communities; child protection; family violence; substance misuse; and the strengthening of diversionary programs for Indigenous offenders.

This Department of Communities submission focuses on four interrelated issues which fall under the scope of the CMC's inquiry. It describes complex problems, but also suggests strategies for improvement.

1. Community leadership, capacity and self regulating communities
Existing community capacity and leadership skills must be encouraged and enhanced to enable the reestablishment of pro-social norms of behaviour. Among other things, an increase in informal social control within Indigenous communities will lessen anti-social and criminal behaviour and consequently alleviate pressure upon police resources. Several factors are mitigating against the growth of community capacity, including:
- social and economic disadvantage and lack of support services;
- clan tensions;
- excessive demands upon local volunteers;
- substance misuse; and
- poor health of Elders.

Recommended courses of action to strengthen community leadership and social control include:
- reviewing service delivery models to design 'in' individual, family and community responsibility, leadership and capacity;
- active facilitation of councils adopting and enforcing local laws;
- continued active participation of community engagement in alcohol supply and demand management initiatives;
- developing governance and engagement structures that match and support strong, coherent and inclusive leadership networks in each Indigenous community;
- continuing support for bodies and instruments which empower Indigenous people, such as negotiation tables, community justice groups and the Local Indigenous Partnership Agreements;
- consideration of the expansion of Murri Courts, or similar courts, to sit in remote locations and enable the participation of local Elders;
- encouraging community and Elder participation in activities for youths and youth justice programs;
- funding leadership programs – particularly youth leadership programs which involve local adults, provide youths with escalating opportunities for responsibility, and equip young people with employment skills;
- encouraging community involvement in safe, fun and healthy activities; and
- exploring the use of restorative justice to resolve conflict between clans.

2. Police engagement with discrete communities

Anecdotal reports received for this submission suggest that many Queensland Police Service (QPS) officers across the discrete communities, past and present, have made considerable effort to engage with local people in a manner consistent with a community oriented policing model. However, reportedly this practice is inconsistent and depends on the character of individual officers. A community oriented policing model would increase the flow of intelligence to police and enhance officers' capacity to diffuse or prevent crime through informal social means. Among other things, community oriented policing supports the standing of Elders and, consequently, supports the growth of community leadership.

Potential barriers to community engagement by police officers include:

- difficulties recruiting officers to and retaining officers in remote areas;
- environmental features, such as large patrol areas and extreme weather conditions;
- a lack of police resources in some areas, meaning that officers have little time to engage with the community;
- high crime rates correlated with social disadvantage; and
- a lack of services to respond to these social conditions.

Recommended strategies to improve community engagement by officers include:

- enhancing strategies to improve the recruitment and retention of Indigenous officers and non-Indigenous officers best suited to remote Indigenous communities;
- succession planning to allow time for experienced outgoing officers who are trusted by the community to mentor incoming officers;
- continued high level QPS participation in negotiation tables;
- ensuring that senior officers in discrete communities practice within a community oriented policing model;
- the development of local induction packages for each community, where over a number of days officers meet respected persons and are given an explanation of the community's history, composition, processes and activities;
- the active involvement of the local community and, where available, experienced government staff in the development of officer induction packages;
- continued support for the Police-Citizens Youth Clubs (PCYC) at Yarrabah, Mornington Island and Palm Island;
- exploration of the spread of the police-operated *Cape Activity Programs through Education* model (a low cost version of PCYCs) to all discrete communities without PCYCs;
- continued support for the Indigenous Community Police Consultative Groups; and
- consideration of discrete restorative justice forums to address community acrimony with police, similar to the process described by the New South Wales Ombudsman in 2005.[1]

3. Improving service delivery in discrete communities

The QPS is one arm of the government's service system. Many issues that the QPS responds to in discrete communities require broader service interventions as well as specific criminal justice interventions. Problems with government and non-government organisations (NGOs) service delivery include:

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[1] New South Wales Ombudsman 2005. *Working with local Aboriginal communities – Audit of the Implementation of the NSW Police 'Aboriginal Strategic Direction (2003-2006)'*, a special report to Parliament under s31 of the *Ombudsman Act 1974*, Sydney.

- where services provision is not coordinated, services can overlap or service gaps result;
- all agencies face severe difficulties in recruiting and retaining suitable staff;
- government agencies compete for the same pool of potential employees;
- with high staff turnover, the capacity for services to gain community trust is limited;
- recruitment and retention is affected by shortages in housing and office space for staff;
- use of the fly-in-fly-out model often detracts from the effectiveness of service delivery and limits interaction between agencies;
- community programs, even if effective, tend to have a short lifespan of 18 months to three years; and
- some services lack resources, such as vehicles.

Recommended directions to improve service delivery include:
- continued support for the newly formed Government Coordination Office, Indigenous Service Delivery – within the Department of Communities – which will enhance service delivery through integrated interventions and place based solutions;
- ongoing support for and evaluation of the place based service delivery model currently being developed at Aurukun;
- monitoring of the impact of the current Local Government Reforms on service delivery capacity of discrete Indigenous councils;
- sustaining the Department of Communities' Strengthening Indigenous Non-Government Organisations project, which currently provides intensive support to approximately 30 newly funded Indigenous-managed NGOs; and
- considering new models of service delivery hubs.

4. Youth justice

Young people are essential to the future of the discrete Indigenous communities. Their importance is magnified by the fact that they constitute such a large proportion of the Indigenous population: 50% of Indigenous Queenslanders are aged under 20 years, compared with 28% in the general population. However, Indigenous young people are overrepresented in the criminal justice system. Among other problems, in comparison with non-Indigenous youths, far fewer Indigenous young people are diverted from court to police cautions and youth justice conferences (conferences).

In remote Indigenous communities numerous challenges exist for the youth diversion system, including:
- the complex social conditions interrelated with youth crime, such as substance misuse and family dysfunction;
- competing community pressures upon police officers to divert young people, on the one hand, and to formally charge them on the other;
- perceptions of the inconsistent exercise of police discretion in response to youths;
- the lack of personal bonds between young offenders and positive adult role models;
- many Elders and respected people are overextended with other responsibilities and are unavailable to participate in conferences;
- the use of a fly-in-fly-out model to service some communities with conference convenors, resulting in sub-optimal conferencing practices; and
- the potential pool of Indigenous people who could be employed and trained as conference convenors is limited by, among other things, low literacy levels.

Recommended strategies to address these issues are:

- consideration of the introduction of performance indicators into the QPS' Operational Performance Review process, to encourage a reduction in arrest rates for young Indigenous people;
- increased use of the police power to delay proceedings against youths to enable (a) officers to find appropriate Elders to attend or administer a caution, and (b) youths to receive legal advice;
- the centralisation of police gate keeping – namely, decisions as to whether to divert a youth – to stations' senior officers; and
- continued support for strategies to expand youth development programs which provide multiple positive pathways.

Basic data and anecdotal reports suggest youth crime is decreasing in Cherbourg. This appears to be due to multiple factors including: growing community capacity and leadership; well functioning community organisations (professional and voluntary); and activities of the police and other government agencies. The effectiveness of this model should be monitored and evaluated.

Introduction

In February 2007 the Crime and Misconduct Commission (CMC) was asked by the Minister for Justice and the Attorney-General to examine policing issues in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island communities living on Deed of Grant in Trust (DOGIT) areas. The issues included: potential changes to policy and practice to improve relations between Indigenous[2] people and the Queensland Police Service (QPS); QPS practices for detaining people in custody in remote communities; and the use of State resources to deliver criminal justice services to those communities.

The places that are the focus of this inquiry are amongst the most disadvantaged communities in Australia. Well documented intergenerational social ills include unemployment, substance misuse, family violence, child abuse, overrepresentation in the criminal justice system and chronic health conditions.[3] The policing environment in these communities presents challenges that are arguably unparalleled in suburban or city settings. Fourteen Torres Strait Island DOGIT communities have no permanent police presence. In other DOGIT communities QPS officers represent the only permanent government presence. Unlike their suburban counterparts, police officers stationed in remote areas face: limited resources and backup; cultural and language barriers; clan and family tensions; and the necessity to patrol large areas subject to flooding and extreme weather conditions.[4] In addition, social and geographical isolation are a strain upon police officers and their families.

Seventeen years ago the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (Royal Commission) highlighted a multitude of problems surrounding not only Aboriginal people's contact with the criminal justice system, but also the efficacy of the governments' policies regarding Indigenous social and economic conditions.[5] In 1991 the Royal Commission handed down 339 recommendations (290 of which were relevant to Queensland) which sought to address not only Indigenous justice issues but also the underlying causes of overrepresentation of Indigenous people in the justice system. The recommendations related to such matters as: education; health; housing; self-determination; economic security; land; and diversion from and contact with the criminal justice system. A wide array of policy initiatives have been developed by the Queensland Government over the last decade through the *Ten Year Partnership* (2000), the subsequent *Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Justice Agreement* (2001), *Making Choices, Meeting Challenges* (2002) and *Partnerships Queensland* (2004). The most recent is the establishment of the Government Coordination Office, as a consequence of the *Making Choices, Meeting Challenges* Evaluation No 2 in 2005.

However, there is increasing recognition that the bulk of investment and spending focussed upon the end states of disadvantage and dysfunction for Indigenous people is insufficient. Increasingly, attention has been paid to early intervention and prevention. Responses have rested largely on statutory interventions, policing, detention and imprisonment. By contrast, new directions emphasise the importance of strengthening Indigenous communities: to address causes of disadvantage and dysfunction; to build resilience and capacity; to respond to their own criminal justice issues; to re-establish pro-social norms and systems of self-regulation; to engage

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[2] 'Indigenous' in this document refers to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
[3] *Partnerships Queensland: Future directions famework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy in Queensland 2005 – 2010: Baseline Report 2006*, Department of Communities: Brisbane.
Fitzgerald, T. 2001. *Cape York Justice Study,* Queensland Department of the Premier and Cabinet, Brisbane.
Donovan, V. 2002. *The realities of a dark history.* Platypus Graphics: Brisbane.
[4] Fox, J. 2004. 'Meeting challenges, making choices: the challenge for policing in Cape York Remote Communities', paper presented at the Third Australasian Drug Strategy Conference, Alice Springs, Northern Territory 4-6 May 2004.
[5] Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody: National Report. 1991. 5 vols, AGPS: Canberra.

with the Government in partnership; and to improve service delivery and coordination.[6] Underlying these objectives is an acceptance that even within conditions of disadvantage and social dislocation, important capabilities remain in Indigenous communities to lead positive change. Notwithstanding poverty, many people are law abiding and social responsible. In addition, systems for engaging with Indigenous communities are being reassessed, for example through negotiation of Local Indigenous Partnership Agreements. Similarly, local government reforms are working towards more effective models of governance.

This submission concentrates on select issues rather than commenting on all topics falling under the CMC's term of reference.[7] Four topics are discussed, namely:

- community leadership, capacity and self regulating communities;
- police engagement with discrete communities;
- improving service delivery in discrete communities; and
- youth justice.

The Department of Communities hopes that its contribution may be useful because of the nature of its core business, in particular through its: interaction with Indigenous communities at negotiation tables; cross agency perspective of Indigenous strategies; and service delivery encompassing all life stages of Indigenous Queenslanders.

Material for this submission drew on interviews with Department of Communities staff, as well as staff of the Department of Justice and Attorney-General, Department of the Premier and Cabinet and QPS officers. Anecdotal reports and individual perspectives contained in this submission do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Communities.

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[6] See Terms of Reference, Strong Indigenous Communities CEO Committee.
From hand out to hand up, 2007. Cape York Welfare Reform Project, Cape York Institute for Policy and Leadership.
Pearson, N. 2000. *Our Right to Take Responsibility,* Noel Pearson & Associates Pty.
[7] Officer level consultation indicated the CMC's acceptance of this approach (Mark Pathe, pers. comm., 30/04/2007).

1.0 Community leadership, capacity and self regulating communities

1.1 Background

Considerable cultural diversity exists within and between Aboriginal groups and Torres Strait Islander people. Insofar as Aboriginal traditions are concerned, various social systems existed for preventing or responding to unacceptable behaviour, including intervention from Elders, and elaborate rules for avoidance behaviours and dispute resolution.[8] Many such traditions are incomparable to modern Western culture.

Each of the discrete communities has a particular history that cannot be detailed here. However, a common feature of those histories has been the degradation of pro-social norms and methods of social control. The factors underlying these events were complex, but they seem to have both contributed to, and been exacerbated by, the loss of community leadership. In some communities, the control that Elders exerted over the community was gradually lessened, particularly with the arrival of police officers. The break down of pro-social norms may have occurred rapidly in other communities, such as those founded as Missions. Anecdotal reports suggest that, with the closure of the Missions, the social mechanisms and norms which had regulated behaviour degenerated and anti-social norms developed, substance misuse being one example.

Whatever the causes, there is consensus that the resuscitation of social norms that regulate behaviour is critical for Indigenous communities, including remote communities. Noel Pearson and the Cape York Institute's welfare reform project view the restoration of social norms as a foundation from which can grow greater personal responsibility for education, employment and the nurturing of children – leading eventually to independence from State welfare.[9]

Similarly, where policing is concerned, many commentators place emphasis on the restoration of social control for rural and remote Indigenous communities. In his 2001 study, Fitzgerald commented that with the absence of such controls "virtually the entire burden of regulation falls on the agencies of external constraints; that is, liquor licensing authorities, police and councils and their by-laws".[10] Identical conclusions were drawn by Delahunty and Putt in their 2006 study of remote Indigenous communities in Queensland, the Northern Territory, South Australia and Western Australia.[11] Backing these pragmatic observations are the bodies of criminological research that have underscored the processes by which social control – via attachment to families, schools, workplaces and so on – results in the internalisation of social norms and individual self-regulation.[12] Healthy communities also exert control by providing well established patterns or routines of behaviour, encompassing for instance school and work through the week, and, sport and recreation on the weekend.[13]

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[8] Royal Commission, 1991.
[9] *From hand out to hand up*, 2007.
[10] Fitzgerald, 2001: 14.
[11] Delahunty, B. & Putt, J. 2006. *The policing implications of cannabis, amphetamine and other illicit drug use in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities.* National Drug Law Enforcement Research Fund, Monograph series no. 15.
[12] Braithwaite, J. 1989. *Crime, Shame and Reintegration.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
[13] See Cohen, R. & Felson, M. 1979. 'Social change and crime: a routine activity approach', in Jacoby, J. (ed.) *Classics in Criminology.* 2nd ed., 66-74. Prospect Heights: Waveland Press.

1.2 Barriers to community self-regulation

How are discrete communities to revive their social norms and "to take control of their own lives"?[14] A number of positive points were repeated by those interviewed for this submission. First, interviewees emphasised that many locals have significant personal attributes to contribute to their communities. The same point has been made by researcher David Martin, who warns of the mistake of underestimating Indigenous communities, within which can be found "extraordinary resilience, humour, zest for life, and artistic and intellectual creativity".[15] Indeed, public perception of the lawlessness of discrete communities may be exaggerated; those who work in the communities report that the bulk of the locals are law abiding most of the time. References were often made to a handful of troubled families who accounted for the majority of antisocial or criminal behaviour.

Additionally, the potential exists in most communities for traditional lore to be drawn on in some capacity. Some Elders have considerable knowledge of traditional ways and this can be harnessed for the benefit of the community. In Lockhart River, for example, Elders assisted with establishing a series of cultural interventions that successfully addressed a sudden increase in petrol sniffing by young people. The interventions increased in intensity, culminating in a traditional shaming ceremony for the few youths that had not desisted from sniffing. Observations made from within the Department of Communities are that generally Government has not learned how to identify and draw on the strengths of individual leaders. In general, the pattern has been for such community bollards to be identified by Government only in response to particular crises.

Notwithstanding the potential within communities, it is important to recognise some significant barriers that exist to reigniting self-regulating norms. First, it must be noted that the goal of resuscitating social norms is complicated by a key demographic characteristic of the Indigenous population in Queensland: age. Whereas approximately 28% of the non-Indigenous population are under the age of 20 years, among Indigenous people the proportion is 50%. This means that an even greater weight rests upon Indigenous adults to promote pro-social behaviour among young people and children.

Secondly, interviewees noted that considerable tensions exist between families and clans that strain many communities. Complexities differ between regions. For instance, issues in Palm Island are affected by it having many more clans and language groups than other discrete communities. Population density and housing may be a factor too; houses in Lockhart River are closely packed, whereas in Mapoon much space lies between properties. The root of conflict between families or clans can span generations. Such tension can spark violence, especially at parties or gatherings where alcohol is consumed. But it also has the power to hamstring community work – volunteer and professional. One interviewee spoke of clan-based rifts that factionalised a locally operational non-government organisation. Jealousies over volunteer positions have apparently fed malicious attacks on individuals and even, it was claimed, false allegations of child sexual abuse.

A greater problem facing the pool of volunteers is exhaustion. Almost all Department of Communities operational staff interviewed for this submission commented on volunteer "burn out". Those members of the community with the tenacity, drive and leaderships skills to volunteer their time often find themselves contributing to multiple

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[14] Royal Commission, 1991: 1.7.9.
[15] Martin, D 2005. 'Rethinking Aboriginal Community Governance', in Smyth, P, Reddel, T & Jones, A (eds) *Community and Local Governance in Australia.* University of New South Wales Press, pp. 108 -130: 3.

bodies. The list may include women's and men's groups, education councils, health action groups, community justice groups and negotiations tables. As will be discussed below (section 4.0), volunteers may also be repeatedly invited to youth justice conferences. When all roles and positions are combined, some volunteers have commitments literally equivalent to full time employment. Additional responsibilities may include the caring of children or grandchildren. Depending on the role, some adult members of the community – typically males – are unable to assist in voluntary capacities because of their criminal records. In some cases the records relate to offences committed as youths.

Problems associated with alcohol misuse in discrete communities are well known. Among other things, alcohol has harmed some Elders to varying degrees, limiting their capacity to contribute to their people. As one interviewee noted, partially as the result of alcohol, "Elders are a mixed bag". However, police intelligence suggests there has been a dramatic increase in the use of marijuana in many remote areas, as discussed in Box 1, below.

Box 1: Substance misuse in regional and remote Indigenous communities of Australia

Delahunty and Putt's 2006 report indicates that marijuana has become increasingly popular in rural and remote Indigenous communities:

One long-term resident at Woorabinda estimated there were perhaps five or six regular marijuana users in the town in 1984, and 30 to 40 regular smokers by 1994. But by 2004 he estimated that as many as 60% or more of the town's 945 residents smoked heavily. Some start as young as 10 years old, but regular smoking was more common from the ages of 12 to 16 years.[16]

According to the study, it appears that among some peoples marijuana is not viewed as seriously as alcohol. Amphetamines are also becoming more prevalent. Organised drug trafficking networks have extended to regional and remote areas of Australia in search of profit margins vastly greater than those available in suburban settings. Locals too are involved in trafficking; there are indications that local networks originally established for "sly grogging" have extended to the sale of illicit drugs.

Where marijuana is concerned, reports suggest that smoking habits in Indigenous communities are different from non-Indigenous people. It is more likely that, once a bag of marijuana is purchased, it is smoked in one sitting. Even large quantities of marijuana will be smoked in two or three days. It is unclear what health implications arise from such excessive binge consumption, though there may be an increased risk of negative psychological impacts.

A common complaint was that the "extreme profits"[17] to be made from marijuana – four or five times the suburban retail price – attract some of the best and brightest Indigenous adults into trafficking or dealing. Such outcomes undermine the reestablishment of pro-social norms.

Another social ill is child abuse and neglect, which – because of the potential impact upon victims – particularly threatens long term community capacity. Per capita, the

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[16] Delahunty & Putt, 2006: 23.
[17] Delahunty & Putt , 2006.

Department of Child Safety receives more notifications that Indigenous children may be in need of protection than non-Indigenous children. In 2005-06, as a rate per 1000 people aged 0-17 years, 48.1 Indigenous children were subject to notifications compared to 24.9 among non-Indigenous children.[18]

The interrelation between alcohol and child abuse, namely sexual abuse, were the focus of the highly publicised *Little Children are Sacred* report, based on investigations conducted in regional and remote Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory.[19] The report made 97 recommendations with respect to ensuring children attend school; reducing alcohol consumption; improved policing and family support services; introduction of community justice groups; and appointing a commissioner for children and young people. However, it is important to note that Queensland has previously addressed the majority of issues raised in the Northern Territory Government report. Under the Meeting Challenges Making Choices (MCMC) response to the 2001 Cape York Justice Study, responses to the CMC report into Child Safety and subsequent reforms, the Queensland Government acted to introduce alcohol management plans in the 19 MCMC communities, established community justice groups, established a children's commissioner, and improved policing levels

As a final issue, one interviewee expressed concern about the health of many Elders in the Torres Strait, suggesting that diabetes in particular will cause premature deaths, leaving a gap in community leadership. The same problem may afflict some Aboriginal discrete communities. Importantly, a 2004 study indicated that in the general Queensland population, 50% of people who were hospitalised for renal failure – which is commonly associated with diabetes – were aged 75 years or older. By contrast, for DOGIT communities 63% of such hospitalisations occurred in those people aged under 55 years.[20]

1.3 Future directions

Positive change has occurred in some discrete communities. In the interviews conducted for this submission, encouraging comments were made about Yarrabah and the community momentum gained through the local governance structures, including the community justice group. Much detail was also provided about progress made in Cherbourg. That community now has well functioning men's and women's groups as well as contributions from Elders and the community justice group to youth justice issues. There is some evidence youth crime is reducing in Cherbourg, which is arguably one indicator of an improvement in community self-regulation (see Box 3 in section 4.0). Admittedly, several factors appear to have contributed to this outcome, including the model of government and NGO service delivery. It is also true that Cherbourg is distinct from other discrete communities, namely in that it is not remote. Still, there are interesting signs that community capacity is beginning to be marshalled there.

Insofar as the impact of alcohol on community capacity is concerned, it is important that the discrete communities continue to actively engage in alcohol supply and demand management initiatives. Local councils are instrumental in adopting and enforcing local laws relating to not only alcohol but good order and anti-social behaviour. Law enforcement aside, there is scope to consider whether the Murri

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[18] *Child Protection Queensland 2005-06 Performance Report*, Performance Measurement Branch, Department of Child Safety.
[19] *Little Children are Sacred*: Report of the Northern Territory Board of Inquiry into the Protection of Aboriginal Children from Sexual Abuse, 2007. Northern Territory Government.
[20] *Health Determinants Queensland 2004*, Queensland Health. Retrieved July 2007 from
<http://www.health.qld.gov.au/phs/documents/phpru/22418dmp.htm>.

Court initiative could be expanded to encompass the discrete communities. These sentencing courts were established to reduce the over-representation of Indigenous offenders in prison, improve court attendance rates and decrease the re-offending rate. However, the Murri Courts also have potential to strengthen community capacity because of the processes whereby Elders and respected persons advise the sitting Magistrate on cultural issues and sentencing. Murri Courts in Brisbane, Caboolture, Rockhampton, Townsville, Mount Isa, Cleveland, Caloundra, Ipswich and Cherbourg.

Regarding strategies that target community leadership specifically, one promising program has operated in the Cape York Peninsular since 2003. The Cape York Strategic Leaders Program adapted training for public sector managers to suit key Indigenous community members, as well as government agencies and QPS. The package is an intensive five day residential workshop. A 2005 evaluation, which interviewed 17 program participants, indicated that the package:

- increased self confidence and belief in personal capacity to effect change in communities;
- provided access to different learning valued by Indigenous people; and
- improved participants' understanding of Cape York and how the public service operates.

Anecdotal reports from participants suggested that the package had a direct positive influence on local programs and collaborative work. However, the efficacy of the program is yet to be evaluated longitudinally. Additionally, although the participation of QPS in the program is considered important for developing social and professional networks, QPS have been unable to attend most five day workshops because of competing operational demands.

Of course, leadership can be encouraged in adolescents as well as adults. Jaru Pirrjirdi (or "Strong Voices") is part of the Mount Theo Program in a remote area of the Northern Territory. At any one time Jaru Pirrjirdi works with over 30 people aged between 17 to 25 years, endeavouring to develop young community leaders. Jaru Pirrjirdi involves a wide range of activities including:

- Serving as youth workers for the local youth program;
- Night School;
- Bush trips and excursions;
- Project work, such as film making; and
- Mentoring.

As the participants gain confidence, experience and capacity they are given more responsibility to assist with the activities. Eventually the participants themselves become mentors for younger people. The program has reportedly had good success in skilling young adults to find employment, including with local organisations and service providers.[21] There is scope for similar schemes to be developed in Queensland.

The Department of Communities recognises the importance of programs which specifically target leadership among Indigenous youths. Since 2004 the Department has coordinated Young Indigenous Leaders Forums in Brisbane and Cairns. The Young Indigenous Leaders Forum initiative provides young Indigenous people with an opportunity to learn more about leadership, connect with other young leaders, develop leadership skills, explore opportunities, connect with potential mentors and discuss issues within their own communities. In 2006 the forums delivered highly successful outcomes, with positive feedback being provided from participants about

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[21] For details see the Mount Theo Program Annual Report 2005/06. Retrieved July 2007 from <http://www.mttheo.org/pdf/05_06_report.pdf>.

their experience. A range of other initiatives are being pursued by the Department. In particular, as part of the 2007-08 budget the Department has allocated $870,000 funding for *Northern Outlook*, a scheme to progress the delivery of training, resources and support services for at-risk young people in Far North Queensland.

Ultimately, schemes to nurture leadership among youths will function best with the active participation of the local communities and Elders. Such intergenerational interaction could occur in a broad range of youth activities, beyond those with a leadership focus. In addition to interacting within programs, it is vital to community capacity that locals can strengthen bonds and friendships through normal activities, events and festivities, such as those that occur in well functioning communities. For this reason, the Department of Communities supports strategies which encourage community participation in safe, fun and healthy activities.

On a different note, there appears to be some value in exploring whether restorative justice forums could be employed to address tensions between families and clans. Attempts at mediation and healing services have been tried to improve relations between clans. However, anecdotal reports from one interviewee suggested that the services were unsuccessful. Although restorative justice is best known in Australia as underpinning youth justice conferencing, internationally restorative practices are used in a wide variety of contexts. Restorative practices have proved popular with Indigenous communities in Canada, New Zealand, Australia and elsewhere. Indeed, restorative justice owes much of its growth to the influence of Indigenous dispute resolution techniques.

In one well documented case involving the Indigenous Canadian community of Hollow Water, restorative justice played a key part in encouraging open discussion of incest, which resulted in over 30 males admitting to sexual offences.[22] Without detracting from the potential of restorative justice to respond to clan conflict in discrete communities, any such strategy would need to be carefully planned. In particular, it would be vital to identify an appropriately experienced – and Indigenous – convenor to plan, prepare and facilitate the forum. Naturally, the appropriateness of restorative practices would vary between communities.

Finally, consideration should be given to the 2007 report of the Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research (CAEPR), based on an analysis of Indigenous governance systems in 11 Australian sites, including Coen and the Torres Strait.[23] Among many issues, the report underscored the subtle nature of leadership networks within Indigenous communities, all of which vary from place to place and are formed "out of relationships [and] shared histories, values, experience and knowledge."[24] According to CAEPR, leaders differ in the extent to which they can influence the community and some leaders have recognised expertise in particular matters.

CAEPR firmly argued that the contemporary leadership networks are vital to local governance and community capacity building. However, the networks in each community can be difficult for outsiders to understand, even "incomprehensible".[25] One main risk is that if local governance structures are imposed from above, then the

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[22] Braithwaite, J. (1999). "Restorative justice: assessing optimistic and pessimistic accounts", in Tonry, M (ed.), *Crime and Justice* (pp. 1-127). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
See further Aboriginal People's Collection (1997) *The Four Circles of Hollow* Water, APC 15 CA: Public Works and Government Services Canada.
[23] Hunt, J & Smith, D 2007. Indigenous community governance project: year two research findings. CAEPR Working Paper No. 36/2007. Australian National University: Canberra.
[24] Hunt & Smith 2007: xiii.
[25] Hunt & Smith 2007: xiii.

correct leaders for particular issues may not be engaged, authorised leadership will be undermined and ultimately Indigenous governance will not be strengthened.

To avoid these risks, the report recommends that governance structures should be tailored to each community that reflect existing leadership networks through a variety of strategies, such as: encouraging Indigenous people to create their own codes, guidelines and procedures; designing local mechanisms to enforce these instruments and hold local leaders accountable; clearly delineating individual's responsibilities; and providing governance training to support board members and other leaders. Importantly, CAEPR argues that governance structures which properly embody existing leadership networks will have greater legitimacy in the eyes of Indigenous people, meaning that organisations such as local councils will be more effective.

In the medium term it is reasonable to anticipate that these objectives may be furthered through the Local Indigenous Partnership Agreements. Among other things, these will assist with identifying strengths of discrete communities with particular reference to addressing governance as well as: land tenure and access; housing; substance misuse; family violence; child safety; and chronic disease. Importantly, the agreements will allow communities to determine how they want to lead reform in partnership with the government.

2.0 Police engagement with discrete communities

2.1 Community oriented policing

For several decades international research has focussed on the development of models to define policing objectives and to set strategies for organisation and practice. A number of key models have emerged, including the community policing model, which views the community as the most important resource for crime prevention and control.[26] This model, also referred to as community oriented policing, emphasises the importance of maintaining strong relationships with the community, adopting a broad perspective of police officers' roles and adjusting practices to local conditions. Among other things, participation in community meetings and incidental interaction with the community on the street are encouraged. The literature indicates that the model has the potential to improve perceptions of the fairness of police services, increase intelligence flows to police and, ultimately, reduce crime.[27] Others have accredited community oriented policing for improvements in community life and police officers' job satisfaction.[28]

With respect to the Australian setting, recent inter-jurisdictional research on policing in rural and remote Indigenous communities noted difficulties in convincing police officers of the usefulness of community oriented policing and in maintaining their acceptance of it over time.[29] Notwithstanding, Delahunty and Putt argued that "effective community policing seems fundamental in any setting where there is a significant Aboriginal presence".[30] Reasons they provided included: improving police understanding of cultural complexities in specific communities; increasing the nature and amount of offences that come to police attention; and addressing strained relations between Indigenous people and police.

The recommendations of the Royal Commission are clearly consistent with a community oriented policing model. Recommendation 88 urged police services to "closely examine" whether their allocation of resources sufficiently emphasised community oriented policing. The Royal Commission highlighted the importance of police collaboration with Aboriginal people, communities, groups and organisations to assess the appropriateness of policing to meet the needs of those communities (Recommendations 214 and 215).

2.2 QPS strengths

It is outside the scope of this submission to assess the extent to which QPS as an organisation has addressed these recommendations. That aside, it seems quite clear that many officers on the ground are aware of the importance of interacting with their communities. Indeed, many of the operational staff interviewed for this submission spoke very highly of officers who were either currently stationed locally or had served the community in previous years. In a general sense, such officers:
- are "low key";

[26] Fleming, J & O'Reilly, J (forthcoming) 'In search of a process: Community Policing in Australia' in T. Williamson (ed) *The Handbook of Knowledge Based Policing: Current Conceptions and Future Directions,* John Wiley, Chichester, Sussex, forthcoming

[27] Mastrofski, S. 1999. *Policing for the People, Police Foundation*, Washington, DC. Retrieved June 2007 from <http://www.policefoundation.org/pdf/Mastrofski.pdf>.
Tyler, T. 1990. *Why people obey the law*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
Tyler, T. 1997. Procedural fairness and compliance with the law. *Swiss Journal of Economics and Statistics* 133:219–240.

[28] Sherman, L. & Eck, J. 2002. 'Policing for Crime Prevention' in L Sherman, D Farrington, B Welsh & D MacKenzie (eds) *Evidence-Based Crime Prevention,* Routledge, London.

[29] Sarre, R. 1997. 'Crime Prevention and Police' in P O'Malley & A Sutton (eds) *Crime Prevention in Australia: Issues in Policy & Research,* Federation Press, Leichhardt: cited in Delahunty & Putt 2006.

[30] Delahunty & Putt 2006: 76.

- spend time getting to know locals and maintain relationships when out of uniform;
- participate in celebrations and community groups;
- work with justice groups, youth groups, women's and men's groups;
- once trusted by the community, are given much intelligence about criminal behaviour, including child sexual assault;
- know how to harness existing traditional social controls, for example through encouraging "skin" uncles to sanction adolescents' behaviour; and
- know when "to put that power in their back pocket" [31] – that is, know when situations can be diffused through informal social methods.

Many examples were given of officers who contributed more than was expected of them. An officer on Mornington Island drives a bus around his community on Friday and Saturday nights to pick up children and young people. This keeps the youths occupied, safe and out of trouble. As they fall asleep the officer drives them to their home or another safe place. Another officer in Cherbourg seemed well known for running barbeques for locals, to which he brought his own children. There were also examples of officers who had applied for and won external funding to run social programs for the benefit of the community. Furthermore, it was pointed out that some officers had devised pragmatic strategies for social problems, such as suicide prevention, based on their understanding of cultural ways.

Positive comments were made about the Police-Citizens Youth Clubs (PCYC) at Yarrabah, Mornington Island and Palm Island. PCYCs are widely accepted as facilitating positive interaction between youths and police – channelling youths' energy away from antisocial and criminal behaviour towards healthy recreational activities.[32] Interviewees noted that the PCYC at Yarrabah is particularly popular because it offers activities after school hours, with discos on Fridays and Saturday nights. Several interviewees commented that PCYCs are most effective when they offer activities in the evenings and on the weekends – that is, times when young people can become bored and more prone to antisocial behaviour.[33]

Interestingly, a number of interviewees noted that if senior officers (usually senior sergeants or sergeants) were oriented towards community engagement, they had a positive influence on the constables under their command.

2.3 QPS' capacity to engage with communities
Consistent messages were provided by the interviewees about QPS' capacity to engage with people in discrete communities. Anecdotal reports suggest that prior negative contact with officers inhibits attempts to forge new relations. But perhaps the most striking problem is the apparent lack of QPS personnel and resources in many areas – an issue which has also been raised repeatedly at many negotiation tables. Box 2, below, considers the policing numbers in remote areas compared with the rest of Queensland.

Box 2: Numbers of police officers stationed in discrete communities

Ostensibly, claims that discrete communities have insufficient policing resources seem comparable to suburban agitation over policing numbers and perceived

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[31] Inspector Trevor Adcock, pers. comm. 3 September 2004: cited in Delahunty and Putt, 2006: 84.

[32] See further <http://www.pcyc.org.au/>.

[33] Boredom becomes a critical factor for youths especially during the wet season. Well functioning PCYCs assist to regulate young people's daily patterns so that they go to bed early and are more inclined to go to school.

crime waves. Indeed, the ratio of officers to citizens in Indigenous communities is two to three times higher than in the general population.[34] For instance, Kowanyama has a population of 891 people and eight QPS officers. This equates to a ratio of approximately one officer for every 112 people, whereas across Queensland the ratio is 1: 435.

However, these data do not account for the policing environment in discrete communities. A wide variety of complex differences exist between the logistics of policing in remote areas compared with suburban locations. Notably, because of their remote location it is impractical for QPS in many discrete communities to receive support from neighbouring stations when, for example, the level of offending fluctuates upwards. Even in the case of an emergency requiring immediate significant police numbers, local officers would need to wait a number of hours before backup arrived.

With respect to the Torres Strait, as noted in the Introduction, 14 discrete communities have no permanent police presence: Hammond; Kubin; St Pauls; Mabuiag; Boigu; Saibai; Erub; Ugar; Mer; Poruma; Warraber; Iama; Masig; and Duaun. Police officers have a schedule for regularly visiting Badu. Seventeen officers are stationed on Thursday Island, giving the community a ratio of one officer for every 155 residents. Horn Island has two permanent police officers and a ratio of 1:291.

The perception in some discrete communities is that local QPS are short staffed and, as a consequence, their police model has become a reactive one where the bulk of work consists of responding to calls for service. One operational staff member stated that for quite some time the community have only seen the local officers "when they're driving around in their 4X4s". He respected the officers, particularly the sergeant, and was certain it was workload that limited the officers' engagement with the community. Other anecdotal reports suggest that events – such as the detention of a prisoner – which can easily be absorbed in larger police stations, immediately impair the capacity for stations in many discrete communities to react to calls.

A concern in some discrete communities is the incapacity of police to respond quickly to events after hours. In fact, whether or not it is a realistic expectation, it seems some residents want their local police station to operate 24 hours a day. There was consensus among those interviewed for the submission that trouble is most likely to occur in communities between 12:00am and 8:00am, when intoxication becomes more wide spread. Even without violent incidents, for example, it appears that many community members have complained about the frequency with which excessively loud music at night disrupts their sleep. Anecdotal reports suggest that some locals deliberately wait until officers have gone to sleep before committing offences, including sly grogging. Insofar as outlying Aboriginal communities are concerned, which may be two or more hours' drive from a police station, it seems that even for quite serious offences – serious assaults and the like – officers may not arrive until 24 to 48 hours after the event.

This is not to suggest that the interviewees were unsympathetic to officers' work-life balance. On the contrary, it was well understood that demands placed upon officers can become excessive and impinge on private life. Further comments were made about life for officers, including housing conditions and limited schooling opportunities

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[34] Queensland Police Service, *Policing in Indigenous Communities: The Current State of Play.* Internal working document prepared for the Law and Justice CEO Committee, May 2006.

for their children. Some also acknowledged that community expectations of the availability of officers after hours – to socialise with locals as well as to operate the station – can become unreasonable.[35]

Two interviewees suggested that enforcement of alcohol carriage limits with an area restriction under the *Liquor Act 1992* (Qld.) (usually a DOGIT area) exacerbates demands upon police. Among other things, it appears that Alcohol Management Plans (AMPs) are related to an increase in the prevalence of drink driving. This reportedly affects communities such as Kowanyama, where residents can drive outside the perimeter of the restricted area to purchase and consume alcohol. A different complexity facing Wujal Wujal is that its restricted area does not encompass the main road through the town, onto which back many residential properties. This apparently severely limits QPS' ability to prevent alcohol from entering Wujal Wujal.

Those interviewed for this submission were quick to point out that the capacity of QPS officers to engage with discrete communities is hampered in some areas by gaps in delivery of services by other agencies. In short:
- because contributing factors to social disadvantage are not addressed, crime rates and calls for police service remain high;
- programs to engage the community and support community leadership can rely heavily on police; and
- in areas serviced by other agencies with a fly-in-fly-out model, police appear to inherit the role of coordinating government and NGO workers and introducing them to the community.

So far the discussion has related reports of police officers who do engage with their communities, or at least want to engage. Notwithstanding, some discrete communities can provide examples of officers, current or past, who appeared disinterested in engaging with the community and who enforced the law sometimes with a very heavy hand. Importantly, operational interviewees suggested that officers' temperaments will determine whether they adopt a community oriented policing model. Good officers adapt to the environment in which they are placed. But, according to reports received for this submission, newly stationed officers do not appear well equipped to remote Indigenous communities on the basis of their training alone.

Although all interviewees recognised the problems faced by QPS (and all government agencies) in recruiting and retaining staff in remote areas, it was felt that more could be done to encourage officers towards community oriented policing. No matter what skills or experience an incoming officer possesses, building a trusting relationship with locals takes time. Consequently, it was suggested that succession planning would be beneficial. In particular, QPS should allow an overlapping period where outgoing officers could mentor new arrivals, as well as to introduce them to the community. This could apply to all ranks; one interviewee noted instances where outgoing sergeants did not even meet their replacements. Alternatively, it was suggested that in some areas it might be possible for experienced officers from neighbouring communities to assist with the induction of new staff, especially if the experienced officer was known to the locals from previous postings.

Aside from sworn police officers who are Indigenous people, three main categories of community police exist in Queensland: Police Liaison Officers (PLOs); Queensland

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[35] This appears more likely to occur in communities lucky enough to ever be served by a police "saint", that is, an outstanding officer who made themselves constantly available. After such officers leave a community, the locals tend to expect similar standards of engagement from subsequent police.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Police (QATSIP); and Community Police Officers (CPOs). In its response to the 2005 *Evaluation of the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Justice Agreement,*[36] the Queensland Government committed to replacing QATSIP and CPOs with a combination of PLOs and sworn QPS officers. This process will take a number of years. Whilst the QPS is managing this transition, complications may arise concerning the funding sources of CPOs. CPOs are currently funded or partly funded by the Australian Government's Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) program (in addition to the State Government Financial Aid Grants). Future reforms to CDEP in rural and remote areas are anticipated. These could result in the sudden withdrawal of CPO positions in discrete communities – placing additional strain upon the QPS during the transition period.

The Department of Communities is currently examining the extent CDEP subsidises essential service delivery in rural and remote communities, including policing services, and will report to Government by the end of 2007.

Without commenting upon the Government's commitment to a model of PLOs and sworn officers, it is appropriate for this submission to acknowledge concerns held by some members of discrete communities regarding PLOs. Some, not all, Indigenous people perceive that PLOs have less capacity to actually police Indigenous communities because, unlike QATSIPs, PLOs do not have powers of arrest. Others query whether the QPS will have sufficient resources to fund enough PLO positions to replace all QATSIPs and CPOs.

2.4 Future directions
The importance of recruitment for community oriented policing has recently been underscored by Jenny Fleming, a leading researcher in police studies.[37] In reference to police organisations in all Australian jurisdictions, Fleming suggested that new strategies are needed to attract individuals with skills best suited to community oriented policing. Similarly, this submission recommends that the QPS enhance its efforts to recruit (a) Indigenous sworn officers and (b) non-Indigenous officers who are best suited to community oriented policing in remote Indigenous communities. The recently announced increase in pay for QPS officers who work in discrete Indigenous communities will potentially assist future recruitment campaigns.

However, officer training is equally important. According to Department of Communities operational staff, the discrete communities have repeatedly called for localised induction packages for police officers, designed in partnership between QPS and the communities themselves.[38] This is based on the perception that, as noted above, generic QPS training in cultural awareness does not prepare officers for specific community dynamics. Most considered that induction should occur over a period of a few days or more and involve:
- meeting community Elders, or people who influence the social fabric of the community in various ways;
- an explanation of the clan and family relations and tensions; and

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[36] Cunneen, C, Collins, N & Ralph, N 2005. *Evaluation of the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Justice Agreement.* Institute of Criminology: University of Sydney.
[37] Fleming, J and O'Reilly, J (forthcoming) 'The Small-Scale Initiative: the rhetoric and the reality of Community Policing in Australia'*, Policing: A Journal of Policy and Practice,* Vol. 1 (2) 1-8 August.
[38] As an entrée to community life, it was also suggested that incoming officers could be "adopted" by specific families. This system has been tried in some communities in the past with mixed success, depending partly on the response of individual officers.

- an outline of the history of the community, with reference to particular events that remain in the local consciousness and possibly sour police-community relations.[39]

Significantly, as part of its Cultural Appreciation Project the QPS is developing Community Specific Training packages for discrete areas. The packages are being designed in partnership with members of the communities. Although details of packages' content and design are not yet available, there is potential for them to contain the elements listed above.

Regarding PCYCs, since they are expensive to build and to operate, they may not be economically feasible for most discrete communities, especially those with small populations. However, in 2004, a QPS officer developed a low-cost model of the PCYC system in Wujal Wujal. The model is called Community Activity Programs through Education (CAPE) and attempts to replicate PCYC objectives on a smaller scale, drawing on government and private sector support. CAPE has the potential to be applied in other discrete communities. There is scope for PCYC – or CAPE – facilities to be better integrated with other activities in Indigenous communities. For instance, the facilities might be used for non-police programs, including programs promoting parenting skills and health education. Some interviewees saw potential for the facilities to gradually be seen by locals as a community centre. Steps are also underway to develop a more coordinated approach to the provision of services for Indigenous youth by QPCYWA, Sport and Recreation Queensland and Education Queensland in the Cape York region.

Additionally, the QPS has also established 26 Indigenous Community Police Consultative Groups. The groups are forums in which communities can discuss policing issues – big or small – with local officers. Since the groups vary in the frequency with which they convene, it is difficult to list exactly which groups are operating. It is approximated that 24 groups are functioning, including groups in two discrete communities, namely Palm Island and Woorabinda. The QPS intend to encourage other discrete communities to participate in establishing new groups. The QPS report that to date conversations at the groups have centred upon domestic violence, community safety, suicide prevention, reconciliation and youth diversion. A particular feature of the groups is that they can be attended by any member of the community, unlike negotiation tables, for example.

One potential strength of these forums is that they may increase community understanding of factors affecting police behaviour, including resources. The forums may also be used to address community ill feeling regarding particular incidents. An extreme example comes from New South Wales where a small coastal community felt bitterness towards the police over the fact that: a series of vicious child murders had remained unsolved for 14 years; and the families of the victims had not been informed of the police investigations and other developments, including an inquest. To resolve the situation, officers conducting the investigation met with the families and explained the details of the case. A senior officer, the sector commander, apologised to the community. Commenting on the positive impact of these steps on locals, the State's Ombudsman reported that "the sensitive handling of this difficult situation gave police an opportunity to turn a major obstacle to the police community relationship into a chance to fast track improved relations".[40]

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[39] One interviewee noted, however, that designing such induction packages would be difficult in places with multiple clans and strong clan tension.
[40] New South Wales Ombudsman 2005, p.18.

It is interesting to note that the events described by the Ombudsman have some major hallmarks of restorative justice, namely respectful open dialogue, information sharing, acknowledgement of emotional harm and apology. Section 1.3, above, discussed whether restorative forums could be used to address clan tensions within discrete communities. It is worth considering whether similar forums could be held to improve community-police relations.

3.0 Improving service delivery in discrete communities

In addition to the efforts of the QPS, the delivery of services by government agencies and NGOs are integral to the wellbeing of discrete Indigenous communities – addressing some of the social problems correlated with crime. Moreover, issues that police deal with often require multifaceted responses, including service interventions and referrals as well as criminal justice interventions. Optimal service delivery will incorporate the QPS as participants in cross-agency service systems and responses.

However, a number of problems affect government and NGO service delivery for Indigenous Queenslanders. These are diverse, complex and cannot be discussed here in detail. These matters are a particular focus of the newly formed Chief Executive Officer Committee for Strong Indigenous Communities. It is noted that the Government Coordination Office (GCO), Indigenous Service Delivery has been operating since September 2006. The GCO was formed to drive urgent and sustained changes in service delivery, significantly through the coordination of government agencies, in the DOGIT communities.

Some issues were raised by interviewees relating to government and NGO service delivery. First, where services are operated without adequate consideration of other services provided to the community, negative consequences can result, including inefficiencies and gaps in service delivery. Such problems will be addressed in part by the development of service coordination models for each discrete community in recognition of communities' strengths and needs. The development of Local Indigenous Partnership Agreements is one mechanism currently being pursued which is designed to recognise communities' individual strengths and needs. Government coordination activities are organised around a placed-base approach and support local solutions.

Arguably a greater problem is the considerable difficulties that all agencies face, including the QPS, in recruiting and retaining staff in discrete communities. Examples can be taken from all sectors of vacancies that cannot be filled and of positions with very high turnover rates. Compounding this situation is the fact that some communities, such as Aurukun, do not have adequate housing for government staff and are under resourced where vehicles and other necessities are concerned. Without housing or office space within local communities, some departments use periodic visits to discrete areas by plane or vehicle. Some agencies' practice standards are not affected by this "fly-in-fly-out" model. In other situations the model may impinge on service delivery. For example, the Department of Communities delivers youth justice conferences (hereinafter "conferences") to a remote discrete community. On a six monthly basis, non-Indigenous youth justice conference convenors (hereinafter "convenors") visit the area to facilitate the conferences referred to them. However, under these conditions it is difficult for the convenors to establish relations with the local community and ascertain which adults are best to invite to each conference, with whom the young offender has strong relationships.

Finally, a number of interviewees noted difficulties for agencies to establish new programs. In particular, reportedly it can take several months before sufficient rapport is built between the community and those staff operating the program. Interviewees also commented that often successful programs depend on the drive and charisma of individuals who invariably come from outside the community. In many cases within 18 months to three years, the individual leaves the community – sometimes due to burn out – and the program is discontinued. Anecdotal observations suggested that

scepticism can grow within communities towards new initiatives if the community has witnessed the short life span of previous programs.

3.1 Future directions
Government coordination for indigenous service delivery will be fundamental to addressing service delivery issues in the medium to long term for discrete communities. As well as identifying required changes in service delivery approaches, the government coordination function in the Department of Communities will drive those changes at central, regional and local levels. The difference between the role undertaken by the government coordination approach and orthodox government service delivery is that the new coordination approach intends to deliver:

- integrated service delivery intervention that will enable a rapid response, and focus on priority issues; and,
- service enhancements based on intelligence and information gathered at the local level.

A third critical difference is the delivery of place based solutions. The placed based approach is a key principle overarching the strategies currently being developed by the GCO. The aim of a place-based approach is to match the needs of the community – as identified by the community – by services and solutions with government funds or new government service delivery designs. The place based approach emphasises the need for government coordination staff to live and work in discrete communities. The effectiveness of the government activities are due to be measured at the end of 2008.

Another pending place-based project is planned for Aurukun. The State Government has determined Aurukun will be the site for the development of a model for effective Queensland Government effort and investment. Evaluations of this project will be significant in determining the requirements of service delivery in the discrete communities.

The provision of diversionary services is one way in which the Department of Communities' activities directly interrelate with the QPS' criminal justice interventions. Importantly, the Department will be addressing service coordination through specific funding for the improvement of alcohol diversion services to Indigenous people. In the 2007/08 budget, $21.3 million over four years was allocated to target: Diversionary Centres; Cell Visitor Services; and other diversionary measures. Funding will enhance operational budgets for services and provide for workplace training, program development and increased sector capacity. The first phase of the funding roll-out will focus on addressing identified risks and gaps in current diversion services.

Regarding local government reforms, recognition of the need for improved service delivery in Indigenous communities was a driver for the community governance reviews. The reviews resulted in changes to local government legislation for Aboriginal communities in 2004 and support for councils through the Community Governance Improvement Strategy, implemented by the Department of Local Government, Planning, Sport and Recreation (DLGPSR). While the outcome of current Local Government Reform initiative will not be known until August 2007, there may be changes to boundaries which could mean Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island councils could be amalgamated with other Indigenous or non-Indigenous councils. Should this occur, service delivery at the local level for discrete Indigenous councils will need to be strengthened to improve the myriad of human services and social programs the current councils administer.

The Department of Communities is working with DLGPSR and other relevant agencies to explore alternative governance options should changes be made to local government arrangements, with particular reference to the need for improved service delivery. The Department's Strengthening Indigenous Non-Government Organisations (SINGO) project aims to provide intensive organisational development support to newly-funded Indigenous-managed organisations and established organisations experiencing significant service and management issues. The SINGO officers have been involved in training and support activities and are currently providing direct support to approximately 30 Indigenous-managed non-government organisations. The Department of Communities is considering how the model of service delivery "hubs" might be developed for the discrete communities. The term hub can refer to a facility or centre, as in the case of the rural multi-tenant service hubs that will be funded through the Department of Communities' Strengthening Rural Communities Strategy. In combination with other schemes, the hubs are designed to increase the viability and effectiveness of rural NGOs.[41] Similar community hubs will also be trialled for the provision of early years services. Such multi-tenant infrastructures could be useful for remote areas where government and NGO services lack office space and accommodation. Infrastructure aside, "hubs" can also refer to systems whereby a group of communities share service delivery. These regional hubs would incorporate, for instance, communities that: lie in close proximity to each other; mix together for business or social reasons; and share family relations. An example of a potential regional hub might be the communities of Napranum, Mapoon and Weipa.

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[41] *Blueprint for the Bush: Building a sustainable, liveable and prosperous rural Queensland,* 2006. Department of Communities.

4.0 Youth Justice

Young people are the future and hope of any culture. Arguably this is more pertinent to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Queensland because, among other things, young people constitute a sizeable portion of the total Indigenous population. Fifty per cent of Indigenous Queenslanders are aged 19 years or younger, which is almost twice the percentage of the non-Indigenous community (28%).

Criminological studies have long established the vulnerabilities that youths face when they are processed by the criminal justice system. Notably, court appearances appear to have a stigmatising effect upon young people and increase the risk of further criminal behaviour. More serious deleterious effects can result from periods of incarceration. Conversely, for most young people, the more expediently and less intrusively they are dealt with in relation to offending behaviour, the less likely they are to continue to commit offences. For these and many other reasons most Australian jurisdictions have formalised systems for diverting young people from court proceedings.

In Queensland, youths may be diverted to police cautions, youth justice conferences or, for minor illicit drug offences, drug diversion assessment programs. As noted in section 2.4, above, conferences are a form of restorative justice. Strong empirical evidence from a quasi-randomised experiment indicated that conferences are more effective than court in reducing recidivism for violent offences.[42] But different beneficial outcomes have been reported for not only victims but communities as well, including empowerment, reparation of emotional harm and strengthening pro-social relationships.[43]

The importance of improving the treatment of Indigenous youths by the criminal justice system is well recognised in this State. In 2005, Cunneen, Collins and Ralph reported that Indigenous youths were diverted by the QPS at lower rates than non-Indigenous to both cautions and conferences.[44] In a formal response to this report in 2006, the Queensland Government reaffirmed its commitment to increasing rates of diversion for Indigenous youths, particularly through the efforts of the QPS and the Department of Communities.

4.1 Key features of youth diversion in Queensland
The *Juvenile Justice Act 1992* (Qld.) (the Act) stipulates that before initiating court proceedings against a child, that is a person aged 10 to 16 years inclusive, police officers "must consider" whether it is more appropriate to:
- take no action;
- administer a caution;
- refer the matter to a conference; or
- if the offence is a minor drugs offence, refer the child to a drug diversion assessment program.[45]

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[42] Strang H. 2003. *Repair or revenge: victims and restorative justice.* New York: Oxford University Press; Ahmed, E, Harris, N, Braithwaite, J & Braithwaite, V. 2001. *Shame Management Through Reintegration.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
[43] Braithwaite 1999.
[44] Cunneen et al 2005*.*
[45] *Juvenile Justice Act (1992)* Qld. Section 11 (1).

This discretionary police power, sometimes referred to as "gate keeping", applies to all but very serious offences committed by young people. Cautions and conferences are only available to youths who consent to the process and admit to an offence.[46]

When exercising their gate keeping role, the Act requires officers to consider the nature of the offence, the youth's prior offending history and – in effect – how well the youth has responded to cautions or conferences previously.[47] Importantly, if necessary officers "must delay" starting proceedings to comply with the Act.[48] The courts can also refer young people to conferences either to finalise a matter, or prior to sentencing.[49]

In preparing to administer a caution, officers must, if practicable, arrange for the attendance of the youth's parents or an adult chosen by the youth or the youth's parents. For Indigenous youths, officers must explore whether an Elder or a respected member of the youth's community is available and willing to administer the caution.[50]

Similar conditions apply to the Department of Communities staff who facilitate conferences, called youth justice conference convenors. Convenors are required to consider inviting to conferences for Indigenous youths: respected members of the youths' community; or representatives of the local community justice group.[51] Notably, if a youth is not legally represented, the convenor must ensure that the youth is: informed of their right to legal representation; given information on how to seek legal advice; and given the opportunity to obtain it.[52]

4.2 Challenges for juvenile diversion in discrete communities
The reality of operating within this legislative framework in a remote Indigenous community is far from straightforward. First, the availability of respected members of communities, including Elders, is an issue. As noted above (section 1.2), such people are frequently overextended insofar as voluntary roles are concerned. Anecdotal reports suggest that officers and convenors, respectively arranging cautions and conferences, may baulk at inviting the same few individuals time and again. For convenors who operate under a fly-in-fly-out model, it may be difficult to form the sorts of community relationships that promote good practice in conferencing (see further section 3.0).

Ideally, the Department of Communities would employ and train as convenors local Indigenous people from the discrete communities. Yet, according to reports from interviewees, this option has a number of hurdles, including low levels of literacy. Literacy is critical for convenors to write conference agreements as well as the requisite reports to the QPS and courts. On another point, criminal records can prevent some locals from being eligible to apply for positions as convenors. Additionally, in facilitating conferences, convenors frequently are called upon to manage conflict and tense group dynamics. It is important that the conference participants are confident that the convenor is objective. However, in small communities, including discrete Indigenous communities, pre-existing relationships and social expectations may compromise the ability for the convenor to feel that they can exercise their duty impartially. In some communities clan tensions might also rise

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[46] Sections 16 (1) & 22 (1).
[47] Section 11 (2).
[48] Section 11 (3).
[49] Sections 161 – 163.
[50] Sections 16 (2) & 17.
[51] Section 34 (3).
[52] Section 35 (2).

to the fore, where one group might resent their own youths attending a conference convened by a member of a different group.

Another challenge for conferencing relates to a shortage of positive adult role models who may encourage pro-social norms and behaviour. Importantly, evidence indicates that these adults must have established bonds with the young offender.[53] Although an Elder or other respected person in an Indigenous community may be a positive role model for youths in a general sense, they may not have an established relationship with a youth attending a conference.

In the context of a troubled discrete community, the adults with whom a youth may have the strongest relationships may be negative role models. Their words and actions may endorse sub-cultural norms, such as substance misuse, the use of violence to resolve conflict and so on. In conditions such as these, the potential for even a series of well run conferences to alter adolescent behaviour is questionable.

Relevant too is the effect of service delivery on diversions. For instance, conferences run in a suburban setting may result in a youth agreeing to attend a treatment program for drug use or anger management – which might address major contributing factors to criminal behaviour. Alternatively, a police officer could caution or take no (formal) action, but refer the youth and their family to an appropriate support service. The CRYPAR (Co-ordinated Response to Young People At Risk) initiative, being piloted in North Brisbane Police District, is an example of how this works in a well-serviced context. Without additional programs and services available in discrete communities, the ability of a diversion in these discrete communities to meet youths' needs is limited.

Interviewees suggested that, generally, police officers appreciate the value of cautioning and conferencing, particularly more senior officers. This appears to be coupled in some instances with a strong reluctance to arrest and detain any Indigenous people, especially youths. Two interviewees emphasised the pressure under which officers can be placed in exercising their gate keeping role. The Indigenous community may, naturally, want the police to divert young people away from court, particularly to avoid the risk of detention. On this point it is important to underscore that, unlike youths in suburban settings, adolescents from remote areas may be required to make a three day trip to appear in court. These circumstances undoubtedly increase the distress and anxiety experienced by Indigenous youths from discrete communities when appearing in court. Arguably the risk of stigmatisation and subsequent recidivism is therefore greater.[54]

On the other hand, communities can become disgruntled with police for diverting young people who subsequently reoffend. There have been situations where communities want officers to send troublesome youths to court, in the hope that they will be sentenced to detention. In this sense, detention appears akin to banishment.

Resourcing can play a critical role when police respond to groups of youths. Circumstances were described by interviewees in which groups of adolescents taunted the police at night, committing various public order offences. In the spirit of

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[53] Maxwell G. & Morris A. 1999. *Understanding reoffending.* Wellington: Institute of Criminology, University of Wellington.
Braithwaite 1989.
[54] At times the Department of Communities bears considerable cost in transporting youths to appear in court. For example, one interviewee reported that, when other flight services are unavailable, the Department charters private planes to fly individual youths from Aurukun to cairns at a cost of over $4,000.

the Act, if the police chose to take no action they ran the risk of upsetting local adults. Alternatively, apprehending the youths could:
- be very time consuming and leave the rest of the town unpoliced[55]; and
- result in young people being drawn into the criminal justice system.

Notwithstanding the difficulty of the police role, some criticism was directed towards the QPS. According to the interviewees, many communities feel that police gate-keeping practices are inconsistent. In part this relates to the issues discussed above (section 2.3) – that policing practices on the ground heavily depend on the character of the individual officers and their engagement with the community.[56] Interviewees felt that officers who have a limited knowledge of – or confidence in – cautioning and conferencing are less likely to make best use of their discretionary powers in dealing with Indigenous youths. Though police procedures may be followed professionally and to the letter, youths can be unnecessarily drawn into formal criminal proceedings. Anecdotal reports suggest that some communities perceive police practices as uncaring and clinical.

Finally, as described in the previous section (4.1), diversion is only open to youths who admit to their offence. However, many are reluctant to admit to an offence because of historically negative relationships between their community and the police. In addition, some legal services advise Indigenous adolescents not admit to an offence in their absence, but the arrival of legal services can take days. Whilst some officers use the legislative provision to delay proceedings against youths – which would, among other things, enable legal services to arrive – the practice is not uniform across the discrete communities and in some cases may not be appropriate due to the nature of the offence.

4.3 Future directions
The Department of Communities has recently announced strategies that promise to have a positive impact upon the Queensland youth justice system. In the 2007/08 State Budget $14.37 million were committed to the Department by the Queensland Government to enhance youth justice services, including services which support increased involvement of Indigenous young people and Indigenous participants in conferencing. Though these funds are not specifically directed at remote communities, the impact will be widespread. Additionally, the Department announced a review of the *Juvenile Justice Act 1992* (Qld.) and invited submissions on, among other things: the appropriateness of existing justice options for young Indigenous offenders; and legislative refinements to conferencing provisions. This process may identify legislative amendments and policy proposals which improve diversion in the discrete Indigenous communities. However, insofar as this submission is concerned, the main recommendations concern changes to practice by the QPS and the Department of Communities.

First, there may be scope for the QPS to develop performance indicators which encourage reductions in arrest rates of young Indigenous people. These indicators could be incorporated into the QPS' Operational Performance Review processes. Such an approach would heighten awareness of the issue within the QPS and enable comparison of the police regions. Comparisons might enable the QPS to identify if police practices in any region are reducing youth arrest rates, with a view to adopting those practices elsewhere.

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[55] It was suggested that sly groggers have at times deliberately encouraged groups of adolescents to draw police attention to ensure that illicit deliveries of alcohol are not intercepted by the officers.
[56] Evidently another factor contributing to inconsistent gate keeping practices are officers' relationships with the youths, which have appeared to bias police decisions.

Second, aside from providing more time for youths to meet a legal advocate, other benefits could be gained from police officers delaying proceedings against youths. A delay of a few days could enable officers to arrange for other members of the community, perhaps someone particularly respected by the youth, to be present at a caution or to actually administer a caution. If appropriate, during this period the officer could also arrange for an opportunity for the youth to apologise to the victim of the offence.[57] On a different note, reportedly some police already use the provision to allow a youth some time to reflect upon their actions. This means that youths are more likely to make a calm decision about whether to (a) admit to the offence and (b) participate in a caution or conference.

Additionally, the delay of proceedings against youths provides the opportunity for the QPS to investigate new gate keeping models for discrete communities. In other jurisdictions the gate keeping role is centralised to a senior officer, often a sergeant, but alternatively an officer with recognised experience in youth matters. This officer makes the final decision as to the processing of all youths through their station, although other officers can recommend a course of action. This process appears to result in greater consistency in gate keeping practices and better use of police discretion.[58] This system might circumvent some of the inconsistencies reported by remote Indigenous communities.

With regards to conferencing practices, as noted the Department of Communities understands that many remote communities would benefit from the employment of local Indigenous convenors. Potentially, local convenors could run conferences more effectively because of their greater capacity to harness traditional social systems. This might contribute to the empowerment of the community and increase the popularity of restorative justice forums, as has occurred in other Indigenous communities overseas. In the words of one interviewee, restorative justice is very close to "the way Murri people deal with things". However, as discussed above, there are complexities involved in employing local convenors.

Importantly, the Department of Communities has new positions to address the use of the fly-in-fly-out model for conferencing. The positions, termed Indigenous Conference Support Officers, target appropriately skilled Indigenous applicants with strong relationships within their own communities. The officers support the role of convenors to improve conferencing outcomes for Indigenous clients. An evaluation of the Conference Support Officers is currently in draft form, but early indications regarding the impact of the officers are very encouraging.

Two Indigenous residents of Cherbourg have been recruited and trained as convenors. They work part time. The conferences operated by these staff are reportedly very effective and contribute to a lessening of youth crime. However, as the case study of Cherbourg (see Box 3, below) suggests, effective conferencing is one part of a suite of well functioning formal and informal systems that draw upon community capacity with the support of the QPS and Department of Communities' services.

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[57] Section 19.

[58] Prichard, J. 2004. *Juvenile conferencing and restorative justice in Tasmania.* University of Tasmania: Sandy Bay. The history of the spread of conferencing in Australia contains some useful lessons as to the acceptance of diversionary practices by police. Particularly important have been police champions. Perhaps the most well known is Terry O'Connell, a New South Wales officer who dramatically increased police acceptance of juvenile conferencing and, later, restorative justice. In the mid-1990s O'Connell visited other jurisdictions. Some of these visits inspired local officers who inturn became very effective champions for diversion, conferencing and restorative justice. Characteristically such officers were not high ranking, but had standing among their peers because of their significant experience in frontline policing and dealing with adolescents. This background enabled them to explain the benefits of diversion and conferencing in the context of everyday strains on police officers. Similar champions could play a role to improve diversion in DOGIT communities.

Box 3: Cherbourg – a youth justice case study

In 1904, Aboriginals from over 20 clan groups were brought to live together in Cherbourg, among them the traditional owners of Fraser Island. Cherbourg is a discrete community of approximately 1,100 people, 51% of whom are under the age of 20. The town is 261 kilometres northwest of Brisbane and can be reached by car in less than three hours. The nearest township, Murgon, is seven kilometres away, while Gympie – with over 16,000 people – is just over one hour's drive. Unlike the discrete communities of northern Queensland, Cherbourg sits in rolling hills of dry sclerophyll, largely unaffected by the wet season, and is serviced by bitumen roads. As well as an active town council, Cherbourg has a successful dairy farm. Tourism sources note Cherbourg's Aboriginal arts and crafts.

For these and other reasons it is difficult to find another discrete community similar to Cherbourg. Notwithstanding, there are some early indications that Cherbourg is making interesting progress with respect to its young people. Interviewees reported that over the last year Cherbourg witnessed a noticeable drop in not only in antisocial behaviour among youths, but crime. To assess this claim, data were sought from the Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement Branch of the Department of Communities regarding young people – aged 10 to 16 years inclusive – from Cherbourg. Figure 1, below, presents the quarterly numbers youths who were (a) the subject of a youth justice order and (b) remanded in custody between January 2005 and March 2007.

Figure 1. Cherbourg youths subject to youth justice orders and on remand
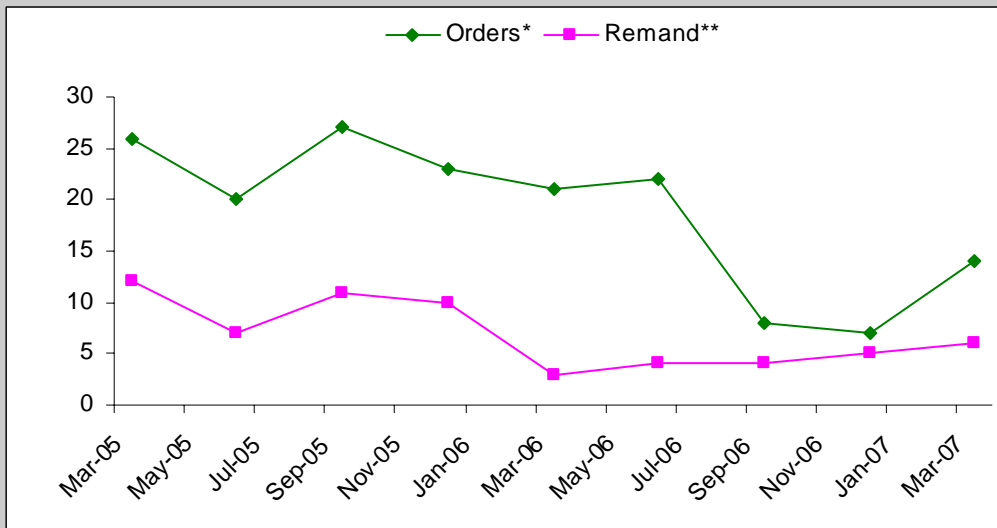
Source: Department of Communities [electronic file].
* Includes Community Service, Detention, Detention linked probation, Probation, Community Service Orders and Supervised Release. Individual youths may be subject to more than one order.
** Represents distinct youths.

It is important to note that the two measurements differ; Remand presents numbers of distinct youths remanded in custody, whereas Orders may count the same individual youth subject to multiple orders. Orders include Community Service Orders, Detention, Probation and Supervised Release Orders. Reference to the raw data indicates that over the two years measured there were

12 Detention Orders.

The numbers presented in Figure 1 are small. This means slight fluctuations, which maybe due to chance, are magnified. Far more robust analyses – encompassing a longer time period and comparing other parts of the State – are needed before confident statements can be made about youth justice in Cherbourg.

However, there is a discernable downward trend in both Orders and Remand levels. The numbers of Orders remained above 20 per quarter from the beginning of 2005 and dropped to below 10 in the September 2006 quarter. The pattern for Remand is less marked, although figures for the quarters March 2006 to March 2007 are slightly lower than those of March 2005 to January 2006.

If youth crime and antisocial behaviour are decreasing in Cherbourg, what is it that is working? The answer appears to be multifaceted, encompassing community capacity and leadership as well as the activity of the QPS and other government agencies. By all accounts the negotiation table itself is strong and in various ways – informally and formally – supports other community organisations including:

- Barambah Local Justice Initiative Group;
- Aboriginal Shire Council;
- Critical Incident Working Group;
- Elder's Group;
- Men's Group, which currently has 67 members; and
- Cherbourg/Murgon Sistagirl Network, with 44 members.

Cooperation between these groups, NGOs and government organisations has had positive results. For example, the men's group collaborates with the QPS and Youth Justice workers to provide activities for boys, including working bees and fishing trips.

Interestingly, Cherbourg's negotiation table has met with members of the judiciary to discuss the importance of youth diversionary options, which may well have influenced sentencing patterns. In addition, in 2006 a Youth Justice centre was opened in Cherbourg, which one interviewee suggests promotes stronger relationships with the local youths and, consequently, assists with Youth Justice's core business. Two locals have been employed and trained as conference convenors. Cherbourg's police sergeant makes efforts to interact with the community after hours and is trusted by the locals. Both Cherbourg's sergeant and the senior sergeant at Murgon are considered to be positive influences upon younger officers in terms of encouraging community oriented policing.

As pointed out by a number of interviewees, greater attention could be paid to the provision of youth programs and activities, particularly after school and on weekends. It was felt that such programs would lessen demands on police and the youth justice system, mainly because boredom tends to precede adolescent antisocial behaviour. Conditions are particularly challenging for youths in communities affected by the wet season, when outdoor activities are limited. In recognition of this issue, the Department of Communities holds monthly meetings with the Queensland Police-Citizens Youth Welfare Association (QPCYWA) – the registered charitable organisation which manages PCYC sites. As well as aiming to strengthen working relationships between the Department and QPCYWA, the meetings discuss

strategies for activity in the Cape. One such strategy concerns registering PCYCs as Licensed Operators to deliver The Duke of Edinburgh's Award program, which will expand opportunities for young people to become involved in a broad range of positive youth development and leadership activities.

Although sport is undoubtedly popular among Indigenous youths in discrete communities, interviewees emphasised the importance of providing a range of activities to appeal to both sexes as well as different character types, including both modern and traditional crafts, art, music and dance. The Department of Communities has made available one-off seed funding for which community agencies can apply to help establish The Duke of Edinburgh's Award. Currently, the funding is available for communities agencies in Weipa, Mornington Island, Inala and Cherbourg. This program encourages participation in recreation, skills, community service and outdoor adventure activities. Additionally, through the $13.97 million the Department of Communities has allocated over four years for the Alcohol and Other Substances Demand Reduction Program, youth activities will be provided in remote Indigenous communities, including:

- camping and fishing weekends;
- drama and musical productions;
- discos and flim nights;
- sporting clinics; and

work experience. Aside from offering youths a good variety of activities, a number of interviewees commented on the importance of offering adolescents positive pathways, where possible. These might include pathways into professional sport.[59] Other pathways could be offered within youth programs, as occurs in the Northern Territory's Jaru Pirrjirdi project, described above in section 1.3.

Finally, it is worth noting that the Far North Queensland region is the pilot site for implementing two new initiatives by the Department of Communities: the Young Offender Community Response Service and the Bail Support Service[60]. Both services are expected to reduce the rate of offending in this region by adopting an integrated and culturally appropriate approach that targets the risk and protective factors contributing to young people's offending. A comprehensive evaluation will be conducted of the new initiative during the pilot period to assess the achievement of this outcome as well as provide feedback to strengthen and improve the delivery of the services.

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[59] On this point it is encouraging to note that AFL Cape is considering establishing Queensland's first AFL academy in Cairns.

[60] The purpose of the Bail Support Service is to provide the courts and police with a viable alternative to remanding young people in custody. This will be achieved by supporting young people in existing accommodation arrangements and facilitating new placements for those who have been granted bail by the courts and who require additional assistance to meet bail conditions.

5.0 Summary of key future directions

This submission has attempted to address a question central to the CMC inquiry, namely how can policy and practice improve relations between Indigenous people in discrete communities and the QPS? The submission has also considered quite specific issues surrounding the delivery of criminal justice services for youths, including police cautions and youth justice conferences.

All interviewees acknowledged not only the complexities of policing in remote areas, but the magnitude of the tasks facing both Indigenous communities and the government. Numerous discrete strategies were suggested to tackle problems, ranging from the use of restorative justice to diffuse clan tensions, to succession planning for senior officers, through to the centralisation of police gate keeping systems for youths.

A number of broader interrelated issues recurred throughout this submission. First, it is paramount that community capacity and leadership is enhanced within discrete Indigenous communities to: assist with the identification of community needs; empower community ownership of problems and improvement strategies; fill local professional and voluntary positions within the community; and strengthen pro-social norms of behaviour. Existing structures and systems that will promote community capacity and leadership include negotiation tables, community justice groups, Local Indigenous Partnership Agreements, councils, Elder's groups and women's and men's groups. There is also scope for the spread of programs which promote leadership among adults and youths.

However, the growth of community leadership must be supported by government partnership in the medium to long term. Insofar as the QPS is concerned, its aim is the maintenance of the rule of law. As to how this objective should be met, the experience of police officers and national research evidence are in accord – policing in discrete Indigenous communities will be most effective when officers engage with locals within a community-oriented policing model. In addition, the model may itself enhance community leadership and, among other things, the standing of respected persons and Elders.

From this perspective, current positive QPS initiatives and programs include: development of community-specific training and induction packages, designed with community involvement; involvement in PCYCs; investigating the spread of the CAPE model (a low cost facsimile of PCYCs); and the Indigenous Community Police Consultative Groups. Still, the skills of officers stationed in remote Indigenous areas will markedly influence their capacity for – and interest in – community-oriented policing. Therefore, incentive packages for the recruitment of appropriate officers to discrete Indigenous communities should remain a priority.

In many communities the social conditions correlated with crime and anti-social behaviour can be better addressed by government and NGO services. Information regarding progress in Cherbourg, although largely anecdotal, suggests that normative behaviours are strengthened by the existence of a suite of services, in combination with strong community organisations (professional and voluntary). Some services do not function optimally with a fly-in-fly-out model. In some cases the model does not facilitate inter-agency cooperation. Underlying these problems in discrete Indigenous communities is a shortage of office space and accommodation for staff. The government coordination function within the Department of Communities will be

essential in addressing these and other issues in the short to medium term. Emphasis will continue to be placed upon in improving service delivery to the discrete communities through: placed based solutions; the integration of service delivery; and enhancing services based on locally gathered information and intelligence.