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Mr R Needham
Chairperson
Crime and Misconduct Commission
GPO Box 3123
BRISBANE QLD 4001

Dear Mr Needham, *Bob.*

Please find attached a tabled response to the questions posed in the April 2007, *Issues paper: Inquiry into Policing in Indigenous Communities*. Issues raised by the Yarrabah Community during Negotiation Table meetings, have been drawn against the inquiry's questions in this response.

I have been informed that officers from your Department have visited Yarrabah, engaging a public consultation process with the council and people of the Yarrabah community. Information gathered from this process may be able to contribute further to the information provided in this attachment.

Should officers of your Department require further information, my local contact officer in Cairns is Ms Alison McLennan, Principal Project Officer, Northern Area Health Service, who is available on telephone (07) 4046 8519.

Yours sincerely

Uschi Schreiber
Director-General
2/17/07

**ADDRESS TO - CMC ISSUES PAPER: INQUIRY INTO POLICING IN INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES,
QUEENSLAND – APRIL 2007**

CMC ENQUIRY QUESTION	YARRABAH ISSUE	ANALYSIS
<p>a. What is the relationship between the police and people in remote Indigenous communities?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The community have requested a greater social involvement from police into community activities, such as involvement in sporting events, social events and entertainment. ▪ Request for the PCYC to take the children out “bush” to deter them from being on the streets late at night. ▪ PCYC is community based and managed by the local Police Officer. Requires support from community members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If police are not rostered to work on the weekend, then they are likely to leave the community to homes in Cairns or social activities elsewhere with friends and family. ▪ There is some involvement of police playing or coaching football in the community. ▪ Recent alcohol free social events with a police presence have gone well. ▪ The PCYC have received submissions from Yarrabah Aboriginal Council. Snr Sgt. Bird reported that all Indigenous Councils were in disarray with the transition of Local Government Reforms. They were analysing where they stood with the Local Council Act and with the amalgamation of councils. However, since that time, Indigenous councils have placed their submissions as required and are awaiting a response. ▪ Snr Sgt Bird reports that Yarrabah Aboriginal Council is particularly open to working with external organisations and continues to be a functional Community Council despite the insecurities of the future of the Council’s functions and members.

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<p>b. How are policing services currently delivered in Indigenous communities?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Staffing – Currently staffed by 8 State Police, - QATSIPs ▪ Offenders transferred to Cairns watch house instead of using local watch house which has video surveillance already. ▪ There is currently no Indigenous State Police and appears to be no concerted effort to recruit local people as State Police. ▪ PLO's have no arrest powers or powers to enforce the by-laws. Yarrabah Community want the QATSIP program to be maintained and powers of QATSIP Officers improved not downgraded to PLO status. ▪ There is some confusion expressed concerning law and order issues in the community duplicating areas covered by local laws vs State legislation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Alternative QATSIP model. PLOs may not be the preferred option. ▪ Suggestions that Police use the RAITEP model used by the Education Department to train Indigenous Teachers. ▪ It was not recommended that local laws be introduced that contradict or duplicate State laws as enforcement becomes a contentious issue.
<p>c. What changes should be made to improve the delivery of policing services to the remote Indigenous communities?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Requests for a 24 hours Station ▪ The Yarrabah community would like to see the recommendations of the RCIADIC implemented across the board. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Police representatives state that there is currently little indication that policing a 24 hour station at Yarrabah would be an efficient use of resources. ▪ QPS has reviewed its rostering system and the Yarrabah Police roster is now intelligence driven, resulting in police working later shifts as historic evidence and local knowledge demonstrates a need.

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<p>d. How can the community help the police to deliver policing services to the community?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community Justice Group has requested more resources to deal with all the issues they are responsible for. Their unpaid status is also a concern. 	<p>There is currently discussion relevant to the operation of the AMP's being controlled by a lead agency rather than the current system of many departments having varying inputs.</p>
<p>e. What is the most culturally appropriate, timely and effective way to resolve complaints against police by Indigenous community members?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Yarrabah Community have requested that all new police officers undertake Cross Cultural Awareness training specific to the community and conducted by local elders. ▪ There is a perceived poor awareness of official procedures to lodge complaints against the police. The role of the CMC is not well understood. ▪ Identified need for a mediation process between the police and the complainant to be attempted by the CJ Group prior to any official complaints being laid. ▪ Constables have a six month appointment which the community believe to be too brief for police to develop good relations with the community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sergeant Steve Tillett is currently developing Cultural Awareness Programmes specific to the community of orientation. He will liaise with the local CEO as the contact for any cultural awareness activities delivered in Yarrabah. ▪ Freecall number to Cairns district Police administration should be advertised in the Community.
<p>f. Does the current and planned level of surveillance and monitoring of people in detention provide a safe and accountable custody environment?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Video surveillance being put into watch houses and audits are currently being undertaken by the CMC. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Yarrabah has had video surveillance since the late 80's and yet the watch house is only used to hold offenders appearing before the Yarrabah Court.
<p>g. Not applicable to Yarrabah</p>		

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<p>h. What can be done to keep people out of custody?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Yarrabah Justice Group is seen to be the lead agency in crime prevention. ▪ Identified need to work proactively at preventing juvenile crime. ▪ The community have identified a need for diversion centre in Yarrabah to divert minor offenders away from custodial sentences such as for public drunkenness. ▪ Provision for more leisure and recreation programs in the community. ▪ Further strategies for reducing Alcohol Consumption to a reduction in DV and other assault charges. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Several Federal government programs were highlighted to the Community during the recent Crime and Justice Negotiation Table. This identified a need for co-ordination of these preventative programs between the Commonwealth and the State.