

MOUNT ISA COMMUNITY YARNING CIRCLES

# Submission

---

## **Inquiry into crystal methamphetamine (ice)**

**Stephanie King, Leann Shaw (Facilitators and Founders of the Community Yarning Circles Mount Isa)**

**6/10/2015**

3x Young People  
2x Law Enforcement Officer  
1x Council Representative  
2x Community People  
1x Drug Service Worker

The community yarning circle and local contacts in the community of the Mount Isa have provided input into this inquiry.

## **Inquiry into crystal methamphetamine**

### **Terms of Reference**

Pursuant to the committee's functions set out in paragraph 7(1)(g) of the *Parliamentary Joint Committee on Law Enforcement Act 2010*, the committee will examine the criminal activities, practices and methods involved in the importation, manufacture, distribution and use of methamphetamine and its chemical precursors, including crystal methamphetamine (ice) and its impact on Australian society.

In particular, the committee will examine:

**(a) the role of Commonwealth law enforcement agencies in responding to the importation, manufacture, distribution and use of methamphetamine and its chemical precursors;**

The local police service work in partnership with federal police and other commonwealth agencies to investigate the above.

**(b) the adequacy of Commonwealth law enforcement resources for the detection, investigation and prosecution of criminal activities involving the importation, manufacture, distribution and use of methamphetamine and its chemical precursors;**

Due to Mount Isa's location some services and commonwealth agencies are not located within the Mount Isa district, more adhoc (not on the ground) because we are living in Rural and Remote.

**(c) the effectiveness of collaborative arrangements for Commonwealth law enforcement agencies with their regional and international counterparts to minimise the impact of methamphetamine on Australian society;**

Police networks with other agencies, our networks capabilities have been enhanced with more teleconferences and communication as well as better sharing of information around this area. The local police have since had improved in-house sharing of information within the local police service.

**(d) the involvement of organised crime including international organised crime and outlaw motorcycle gangs in methamphetamine related criminal activities;**

Not just targeted towards motorcycle gangs, it is across the board.

**(e) the nature, prevalence and culture of methamphetamine use in Australia, including in indigenous, regional and non-English speaking communities;**

The need for Rehabilitation and additional Services, so people can seek supports in own community to get well.

Need something for young adults to do here, too easy to get bored , small town ,not much to do and to keep their mind from wanting to do ICE more young adult activities would help decrease boredom and be a deterrent for people .

Things that interest the young adults from 17 years and older like: Paintball, Laser Tag, there also needs to be transport to get people there and money for people activity to participate in activities

Fly in- fly out workers and the impact of these workers brining in drugs within communities was seen a lot. Working in the mines and being drug tested, it is well know that it can be in your system and out within 3 days. Weed will stay to long in your system and so can actually turn people to try other alternative or harder drugs to avoid job loss and that are less likely to be detected.

Grog in communities is still the highest drug and impacts steaming from this, ICE is not a major epidemic.

It's about having the conversations with our children, partners or anyone using drugs- sitting down and talking. Education for the whole family, mums, dads, grandparents, partners and children.

Family social support still key to getting people off drugs and with more supports to the user , more education and more support for families as we

will never get rid of these drugs and will only make things worse if we push them the other way.

The people taking these drugs doesn't discriminate, not just an Indigenous issue, is happening across cultural group for people living in rural and remote areas – but not really know as there is not enough evidence around and testing or perceptions of what the type of drugs are not conclusive. For many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, they are faced with lot of stressors (Cultural, Family, Community and spiritually) and these alone can cause a lot of strain on Indigenous people.

**(f) Strategies to reduce the high demand for methamphetamines in Australia; and**

Education & Training offered for free around Indigenous mental health first aid, ASSIT training and drug awareness, other substances, addictions and where and how to get supports in the community. Education needs to be assessable, appropriate and really factual with the correct advice for people as media can tend to not paint the whole story and give people the wrong information.

Training and Family therapy supports for peer groups, family groups need that need to be better prepared and skilled in how to reduce the harms associated with drugs. Everyone involved needs to know the kind of impacts that taking drugs has on yourself, other people-especially young people, families and children.

Suggestions of Real life education, and tougher rules for those, importing, selling and manufacturing.

A young person and young adult suggested to Legalise weed and this would give people an alternative to still be able to relax and chill out or take their stress away on their days off.

Videos and stories made by local people to make about the journey of being on drugs, have different scenarios and what did they did to get off it, what impacts it has on a person health and wellbeing, the families, the community ect.

One of the Federal ads is abit unrealistic because yes people can do that and do look like a zombie, but many are clean looking, everyday people too. The advertisement by the Federal Government that has the mother and the son who steals money and the little sister who see it. That advertisement –hits home more. The other ad where the doctor and emergency department, yes that does happen and it is usually when people are really bad on it and at the worst end of it.

Looking for additional services that are missing a community, every community needs to have the services that support and help to reduce the harmful impacts of drugs and help to get people healthy and well.

Flexibility amongst services to be able to provide and deliver flexible, culturally appropriate and specialised approaches as a lot of organisations and services has tight guidelines.

**(g) other related issues.**

Whole of community needs to get behind it, it has to start with the families tackle this issues.

Support people and carer givers of users – they need support, educations, with the most update and relevant information to give people the power to know what to do.

It is very shame , taboo and a lot of fear around it ( fear you'll get into trouble from services , law enforcement , fear they will take your kids away , fear that you're going to get killed doing it or retaliation on your family. More people talking and supporting and knowledge sharing is key to breaking down the stigmas associated with drugs.

Building up people to feel strong and brave to seek help and supports from services in the community. By treating the root cause of drug taking and use not by criminalising or law enforced but by taking the issue as a serious health problem and supporting people to seek services and help.