



CANTERBURY CITY COUNCIL

City of Cultural Diversity

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Presentation to

*The Inquiry into Crime in the Community:
Victims, offenders and the fear of crime*

The Role of Local Government

to

*The House of Representatives Standing Committee on
Legal and Constitutional Affairs*

10 October, 2002

Inquiry into Crime in the Community: Victims, Offenders and the Fear of Crime

Canterbury City Council's Submission

There are three themes in our submission:

- Promotion of Best Practice Partnerships and Co-ordination
- Recognition and Support of the Role of Local Government
 - Situational Crime Prevention and Social Development
- Resourcing Community Development
 - Supporting victims and three levels of Crime Prevention

Our partnership with the Commonwealth

The Inquiry is investigating, in the broadest possible terms, the incidence and fear of crime and the effectiveness of measures to counter and prevent crime.

We welcome the Commonwealth's commitment to partnerships as expressed in the establishment of the National Crime Prevention Strategy. This strategy acknowledges the Commonwealth's leadership role in alleviating crime and violence; to promote innovative ways to prevent crime and the fear of crime.

We also support the role of the Commonwealth in furthering the objectives of the ANZ Crime Prevention Ministerial Forum (2000):

- To support strategic thinking and policy development
- To promote research
- To encourage innovation & support evidence-based programs
- To promote partnerships and co-ordination
- To encourage integration of crime prevention into the core business of other organisations.

➤ **The Commonwealth should continue to support and promote models of good practice amongst Councils that promote local partnerships to further these objectives.**

➤ **This could include supporting State authorities to fund Councils and communities that are effectively implementing approved strategies.**

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Council's Role and Policy Approach

Consistent with the Commonwealth's objectives in Crime Prevention, Canterbury City Council has also been concerned with community safety and crime prevention for many years.

We recognise the impacts of the incidence and fear of crime on local communities. We recognise that we share with other levels of government a responsibility within our recognised authority to take action to minimise the incidence of crime and reduce the risk factors associated with offending behaviour.

We, as a local Council, have supported community initiatives to build social capital and have for many years undertaken a wide variety of works within our environmental and infrastructure roles to prevent crime.

Like a growing number of Councils in NSW, we have more recently welcomed a role in strategic and co-ordinated programming to support situational and developmental approaches to crime prevention.

More specifically this has included a holistic approach to co-ordinating our activities with our community, private and government representatives in performing the following roles:

- Community consultation and Research
- Community Development - promoting partnerships with our community, local groups, police, and State government bodies.
- Co-ordinated planning.
- Information and Community Education.
- Environmental and Community Facility Development.
- Management of Public Space.
- Integrated Environmental Design and development assessment.
- Program Delivery for victims, offenders and at-risk groups.
- Evaluation
- Community Advocacy

- **In recognising the diversity of local government, there should also be recognition and recurrent support of Councils that take an active and effective role in crime prevention.**
- **The Commonwealth with its larger tax base should resource capital works that contribute to the development of social infrastructure such as community and youth centres.**

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The Role of Neighbourhood Community Centres in Crime Prevention

Over many years, Councils have provided essential support to the development of neighbourhood community centres in their areas.

These centres play a critical role in community safety and crime prevention.

They offer flexible and responsive crime detection and intervention services in a non-threatening, inclusive environment. They also provide valuable activities at all three levels of crime prevention:

Primary Prevention: Community Information
Promoting participation & community development
Providing adult education/cultural experiences
Building community harmony and belonging
Home and Community Care
Recreation Services
Early intervention – Child care. Playgroups
Building Social Capital

Secondary Prevention: Victims support programs
Parent education and counselling services
Emergency relief, material assistance and supported accommodation
First time offender case management/treatment
Support and redirection of at-risk groups
Drug prevention activities.

Tertiary level: Offender treatment programs (AA, Narcan)
Prisoner release programs
Domestic Violence and Child protection services
Court order placements

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ A whole-of-government approach should be pursued to develop minimum standards of service to local areas.➤ The Commonwealth should also pursue a partnership with the states to increase levels of recurrent funding to these centres in recognition of their role in community safety and crime prevention. |
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