

# TANGENTYERE COUNCIL



**Submission to the  
Senate Community Affairs Reference Committee**

**Inquiry into petrol sniffing in remote Aboriginal communities**

**Tangentyere Council**

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## **Senate Inquiry into Petrol Sniffing in Remote Aboriginal Communities**

The following is a position paper developed by Tangentyere Council in response to the Inquiry into petrol sniffing in remote Aboriginal Communities.

### **Tangentyere Council - Background**

Currently Tangentyere is the third biggest employer in the Northern Territory outside of Government with over 75% of our staff being indigenous. The council is arguably the biggest indigenous employer in the country. Our services cover most social, employment and business portfolios in Government in our attempt to deliver a broad range of services to address the direct need of indigenous people.

Tangentyere service delivery base strategically responds to the following:

- Municipal Services
- Employment and Training
- Housing and Infrastructure
- Education
- Youth and Family services
- Financial Services
- Social Justice
- Social Services
- Health and Aged Care
- Arts

Tangentyere provides services to Town Camps in Alice Springs, the Town and Remote areas. Services in remote areas include youth, employment, construction and social justice.

Tangentyere has been addressing the impact of substance misuse over the past 25 years and has a strong base on experience in this area. In relation to petrol sniffing we have provided services through our youth programs and social justice programs for approximately 15 years. Over the past 6 year we established two targeted programs in response to petrol and other inhalant abuse:

1. Yarrenyty Arltere Learning Centre
2. CAYLUS – Central Australian Youth Link Up Service

1. Yarrenyty Arltere Learning Centre was established to address the serious levels of petrol and other inhalant abuse on a Town Camp community in Alice Springs. This community has a strong relationship with a remote area that has suffered years of serious petrol and inhalant abuse. Yarrenyty Arltere (Larapinta Valley) had experienced this abuse heavily for four generations, with young children through to adults abusing inhalants (including petrol).

It is the only program in the region that has been established within a community and been successful in turning around this destructive problem. Through a community based program, in 5 years there has been a resounding success in redressing this generational problem.

2. CAYLUS was formed following a commitment by the Australian Government 3 years ago to invest substantial resources towards petrol sniffing. CAYLUS supports remote communities within the Central Australian region to address this issue and has developed extensive knowledge over the past 3 year of the landscape in this area.

Part of this submission includes a full response by the CAYLUS program to the inquiry. This forms part of the full Tangentyere submission

### **Inquiry Terms of Reference**

The terms of reference for the inquiry targets, “petrol sniffing in remote aboriginal communities.”

Tangentyere Council through our many years of work recognise the following in relation to the terms of reference:

- Petrol sniffing and inhalant abuse are regarded together
- Petrol sniffing can not be regarded separately to other substance misuse such as marijuana and alcohol abuse, both of which are other choices of substances and having devastating effects within the community.
- That strategies based on supply and reduction are recognised for all substances
- That remote communities includes Town Camps situated in Alice Springs due to the following:
  - Strong mobility and relationships between bush and town camps
  - Cultural remoteness and disadvantage of town camps
  - Movement of those abusing petrol between remote communities and town camps

### **Section one**

#### **Effectiveness of Existing Laws and Policing with respect to petrol sniffing in affected indigenous Communities**

The historical difficulties in addressing inhalant abuse in remote areas is the lack of enforcement by the police of existing laws. Prior to the new VSA Legislation, there were some means for police to act on supply of petrol. This action has never been acted upon strategically.

The new VSA legislation will provide further means to assist police and the community to address petrol sniffing. Again it will depend heavily on the approach by the police, their resources, and their working relationship with the community and other agencies.

It is imperative that the police develop a response strategy that is understood and undertaken in partnership with all relevant agencies once the legislation is in effect.

See CAYLUS section for further commentary and recommendations.

### **Section 2**

#### **The effectiveness of diversionary initiatives and community level activities**

The successful elements to addressing petrol sniffing are true of all substance misuse and should form the basis of strong community life. These elements include:

- Supply reduction (e.g. OPAL rollout)
- Demand Reduction

Demand Reduction is created by strengthening communities through a comprehensive approach to current need. There are 5 major elements that require attention for petrol sniffing to be addressed:

- 1. Community driven strategies**
- 2. Development of adequate youth infrastructure as would be afforded to any community in the rest of the country**
- 3. Job creation and economic development**
- 4. Employment, education and training**
- 5. Cultural safety**

It is important that we create programs that meet the broad and comprehensive need in our communities. To only focus on petrol sniffing can be dangerous as it ignores the other serious substance risks in people's lives, particularly alcohol and increasingly marijuana. It also ignores the underlying causes relating to petrol sniffing. Any initiative must be provide outcomes that addresses all substance misuse the social and family distress associated.

#### **1. Community Driven Strategies**

In the central Australian region the most effective initiatives have been those directed and initiated by Indigenous people. In many cases the success has required support from external bodies or people working in partnership with local people to achieve this success.

The most successful initiatives are:

1. Mt Theo (See CAYLUS section)
2. Yarrenyty Arltere Learning Centre (YALC)

Both program are driven by community expertise and vision and supported through a partnership with non-indigenous people and in the case of YALC, Tangentyere Council, an indigenous organisation with the infrastructure and expertise to assist.

In addition there are successful outstations including Ipolera and Ilpurla, run by local people and only recently receiving support through Government funding and programs such as Tangentyere's CAYLUS initiative.

Finally there are local youth initiative models that are starting to show great merit including the Docker River youth program, and the Willowra Youth program (see CAYLUS section).

These initiatives all emphasise a strong Youth and Community Development approach. They rely on the leadership, commitment and expertise of local indigenous people. They have also required support of external agents.

Case Study  
Yarrenyty-Arltere Learning Centre (YALC)  
(see attached power point presentation)

The Yarrenyty-Arltere Learning Centre is a Learning and family centre situated in the Yarrenyty Arltere Housing Association (Larapinta Valley Town Camp) in Alice Springs. For the last 2 years the position of coordinator has been funded by the Stronger Families and Community Strategies program which is a Department of Family and Community Services project.

Prior to the opening of the centre the community was highly stressed by a core of young people who were chronic 'inhalant substance users'. Many attempts had been made by agencies to assist with the problems with little impact. Young people living at the Larapinta Valley were repeatedly in trouble with the law and had been out of school for a number of years, or had never attended school. The Larapinta Valley community were suffering from high levels of substance misuse both amongst adults and young people, resulting in high degree of violence and disruption in the lives of residents.

The Larapinta Valley Housing Association recognised the problems they were facing and requested a dedicated program to address the issues. The Yarrenyty Arltere Learning Centre was driven by the community as their response to the crisis. Their leadership and commitment has underpinned the success and the importance of the program.

Since it's opening the Yarrenyty Arltere Learning Centre has made remarkable progress. Young people are back in school, and in many cases attending school for the first time. Adults are learning alongside their kids, acting as positive role models and having ownership for what happens and for determining solutions for their own problems. The community has reported a decrease in violence, petrol sniffing and involvement in the criminal justice system. The school based nurse also reports a improvement in health status. People are rebuilding their lives.

The program has been flexible to work in an environment where alcohol and substance misuse were endemic and to respond to complexity of issues that arise within the community.

Operating at the centre is a

- NTDE primary school,
- Accredited art program for adults
- Building training course for 'at risk' young men
- A nutrition program
- Alcohol and other drug outreach program
- Additional programs in social and emotional well being to support learning,
- Regular health clinics, counselling services, financial management and on-going community development programs.

Goal

- The aim of the service is to improve the social, educational, health, environmental and economic wellbeing of the community by developing, maintaining and coordinating a family resource and intergenerational learning centre.

- The centre seeks to:
  - deliver educational activities for children, youth and adults that strengthen and respect culture;
  - promote the capacity of the community to govern their own programs; and
  - increase access to services .

### Funding

The centre is an example of successful whole of government initiative.

- Strategy funding under the Commonwealth Department of Family and Community Services Local Answers to Local Problems Initiative was approved have funded the Coordinator.
- The NT Department of Health and Community Services funds the operational expenses, the nutrition position and the community worker position who are both local indigenous people.
- The NT Education Department, through the Gillen Primary School, funds a teacher and assistant to operate form a school annex for children aged 4-15 years. There is a classroom and a full time teacher based at YALC.
- Accredited adult education programs are delivered by various Aboriginal Registered Training bodies. Currently Batchelor Institute for Indigenous Tertiary Education provides training to the centre. The centre must apply for funding for each training to NT Department of Employment Education and Training. Batchelor College currently provides certificate courses in Art& Craft and Community maintenance.
- In the past year, funding from the Department of Health and Ageing has allowed us to establish an Alcohol and other Drug outreach position.

### Outcomes

Before the establishment of the YALC, the families were in a serious crisis. Large numbers of family members were 'sniffing' or drinking on a daily basis, other young people at risk gathered in the community to 'sniff' and the families struggled to deal with the violence, abuse and poor health that affected everyone.

The YALC established a totally unique approach that gave control back to family elders and parents.

1. All children are now enrolled and attending school. For the first time a new generation of young people are growing up strong who have never been involved in substance misuse. Six years ago children of primary age were sniffing petrol. Now they are attending school regularly and through the activities planned by their families in the YALC Community Committee, engaging in many positive and culturally relevant activities. Their parents and older siblings are learning side by side in adult training, acting as positive role models. This is the first generation in many that have not grown up abusing substances.
2. Family Violence has decreased
3. Health has improved
4. Involvement of young people in the criminal justice system has decreased
5. Parents are taking back control of their families and not living in daily crisis. They are able to take care of themselves and their family and are regaining pride and self esteem.
6. The community reports less substance abuse and decrease in violence which in turn has helped reduce community stress.

7. Due to coordinated service delivery through the centre people are more able to access services to do with financial, legal and social problems and are supported to take agency in their lives.
8. The process of families working with the YALC Coordinator and other agencies to find solutions for their young people, in particular the 3 young people who were placed at outstations last year, has contributed to the family's confidence of having control and being able to strengthen their own families.
9. The many positive achievements of people at the YALC is helping to develop positive community pride and is slowly replacing a previously negative reputation. For example the Open Day that was held in December last year celebrated participants graduation from courses, significant community contributions, school award. This event was attended to by various people from the wider Alice Springs, including the Member for Araluen, and the Northern Territory Attorney General.
10. The training for adults and young adults has created positive social outcomes as well as educational. Two years ago these young men were not engaged in any meaningful activities. For example the derelict demountable renovated by the young men has now become a place where they can do further training have meetings or just use as their own space. It is a great source of pride for this group and their families.
11. The YALC Art exhibitions is where the art participants organize and sell work. This has given them employment opportunities, work experience and great pride in their endeavors. A third of all their sales went back to the YALC so we could buy more materials for people to continue painting. The group are working towards the establishment of a small art enterprise to be run from the centre. Family members of all ages have been involved in these events.
12. It is very difficult culturally for families to not allow other family members to come and stay even if they don't want them to be there. Working with the YALC Coordinator and police and tangentyere wardens, family have been able to put other measures in place that has greatly helped this situation.

For 5 months of 2005, there was no inhalant abuse in the Community. Small levels come and go and are managed. This is an unprecedented achievement.

This is the only program based within a community that works to strengthen the whole of the community as a solution to petrol sniffing. As a result we are seeing all other social indicators improving.

#### What is the success

1. The process that YALC undertakes of empowering people and including them in the process.
2. Long term resourcing and support from government agencies.
3. Strong ownership by the community for the project, who through the YALC Community Committee provide planning, goal setting and decision making.
4. Being able to respond flexibly to situations and find solutions from within community.



5. Strong partnerships with other agencies/services, in particular the NT Department of Education, Employment and Training, Family & Childrens Services, case management services.
6. Dedicated and stable YALC staff. The program has had a stable staff over the last reporting period who are committed and are flexible to deal with children and adults who have suffered serious abuse over a long period of time. Children in the school program have very poor attention span and serious behaviour problems; most had foetal alcohol syndrome or parents who were chronic inhalants substance abusers. It takes great perseverance to work full time with this group.
7. Strong support from the Yarrenyty Arltere Housing Association to support YALC initiatives and provide further governance and management.
8. Strong support from Tangentyere Council, who manage the program and provide additional services to assist programs and participants.

An independent evaluator for the Commonwealth Stronger Families and Communities program stated:

“This project is a successful model which would appear to have application in all town camps, though not necessarily with the inclusion of a school annex, as children in other town camps are attending several different mainstream or Aboriginal schools. It has been particularly effective in enabling and supporting the whole community to deal with inhalant misusers. Offering a range of educational and training projects to all generations in the same local location gives the whole community ways and opportunities to participate in a positive, supportive environment. This multi and intergenerational intervention provides a community focus for ongoing capacity development.

A big investment in the early years appears to be very worthwhile because it offers hope and options for the next generation and breaks the cycle of substance misuse and violence. Playgroups, in particular, support and enhance early development and support mothers in their role of caring for kids.”

## **2. Development of adequate youth infrastructure as would be afforded to any community in the rest of the country**

Substance misuse, grief and social stress are all serious matters afflicting remote areas and Town Camps. There has been a neglect by all governments spanning many years to address the based youth service infrastructure needed in these communities, and that are enjoyed by most other Australians in the rest of the country.

This infrastructure is critical in engaging young people in meaningful activities, that assist in personal development, emotional expression, physical skills development, self esteem and involve having fun.

This basic infrastructure involves 2 youth workers, accommodation for workers (in remote areas), vehicle (4 wheel drive), a recreation hall (due to extreme temperatures), activity

infrastructure e.g. basketball court, oval, camping and activity equipment, and basic operation expenses annually. Ideally swimming pools in remote communities would also be provided given their strong relationship with health outcomes.

The social and health impacts of this type of infrastructure would likely see reduction in substance misuse including petrol sniffing, a reduction in suicide, improved emotional and mental health, and fuller community engagement of young people in positive aspects of community life. Importantly these programs can provide a strong training ground for young people in education, training and employment.

Historically resources have either not been made available, have not been adequate or have been wasted due to poor administration.

Currently some communities are operating successful youth programs, while others have struggled for many years to implement effective programs despite adequate funding.

Establishing a strong, stable and experienced workforce in remote areas is critical if we are going to provide effective youth initiatives in remote areas. To strengthen the youth services infrastructure in remote areas, Tangentyere Council strongly recommends a focus be given to remote youth workforce development.

The youth workforce in remote areas has struggled for many years, making the provision of services to the youth sector unpredictable, unstable and limiting effecting outcomes. The reason behind the problems are related to three main areas:

- difficulty in recruiting staff
- lack of experience in remote areas in managing youth programs resulting in poor support for staff, poor program planning, and lack of sustained programs
- lack of infrastructure for staff

Currently many remote youth organisations identify recruitment as a major hurdle. Experience has shown that appropriately trained and experienced youth workers are often not available. Many people who are recruited to such positions are going to a remote community for the first time when they take the job on. They more often than not commence the job with inappropriate accommodation, little introduction into the community and little support. Due to delays in recruitment, there can often be gaps of several months before the commencement of a new worker, resulting in lack of program continuity, and loss of program knowledge. As a result we have seen very few remote area programs develop into strong comprehensive and sustainable youth initiatives.

The administration and support of programs in remote areas often places programs at risk. Councils or organisations that have minimal history or expertise in running youth initiatives administer many programs. As a result the staff recruited have poor supervision, the programs are not regarded as a priority as they are not well understood, and the need related to program development is lacking.

In addition there is little opportunity or avenue for the training, recruitment and support of local indigenous people in these programs. It is these staff who ultimately will provide the stability and future of such programs.

### **A Remote Youth Work Development Service needs to be established.**

This service would provide:

- a) Recruitment services
- b) Staff support
- c) Local Training Initiatives

a) Recruitment services

Due to the high demand of many communities for sound youth workers, this service would offer communities and government recruitment services. As many communities require the service, it could run the majority of the recruitment, placing adds and selecting a shortlist of candidates. The service could link potential applicants with concrete information on what the job would entail as well as producing and disseminating promotional materials about youth work in central Australia.

Communities or organisations would maintain ultimate control over staff selection through the interview and selection process. The service could provide personnel to the panel with expertise in youth service provision to provide expert advice to communities or organisations as requested.

*Short Term placement service*

The service would arrange placements for communities that had a short term need for youth workers, either through recruitment delays, existing workers taking leave or discrete programs such as school holiday programs.

Tangentyere has successfully supported communities over the past 2 years in undertaking these responsibilities. Over 2003/04 CAYLUS successfully coordinated school holiday programs in many remote communities in Central Australia. This included locating specific short-term project workers, making practical arrangements such as travel and accommodation and ensuring a process of accountability for programs provided. The process assisted in identifying good potential long-term workers as well as providing essential short-term services. In addition they have supported communities in recruitment and staff support of long term youth workers to great success.

Our ability to continue this and provide it on a regional basis is limited, and requires a dedicated service.

*Student and Volunteer placements*

The position would also work to co-ordinate student placements in central Australia with university courses in other states and internationally. As well as providing support during the summer holidays, the placement activity also gives potential future workers an experience of work in the field, which would inform their decisions regarding making a career of remote area youth work. This has the potential to develop a more stable workforce, as new recruits would be going to work where they already have had some experience.

Volunteer placements would allow the service to engage with and identify potential long term workers, give them experience in a few communities and then encourage them to apply to suitable positions. There is an untapped resource of good will in the wider Australian community towards Indigenous people that this position could mobilise. For all positions criminal history checks would be compulsory, as would reference checks with previous employers.

There are a number of volunteer agencies offering services which are not being systematically being taken up. University youth work courses with mandatory fieldwork placements that are currently not systematically being accessed by youth services in the southern region of the

NT. The position would also work to coordinate student placements in Central Australia with university courses in other states and internationally.

Both volunteer and student placements would allow the service to engage with and identify potential long term workers, give them experience in a few communities and then encourage them to apply to suitable positions.

#### *Holiday program support*

This position would work with communities to recruit full time recreational workers and also provide support to these workers and the communities to address need over school holiday periods. CAYLUS' work has demonstrated an unmet need to provide regional support for the school holiday periods. This would include liaising with the local school to access resources such as school buildings, accommodation and vehicles. In the past, CAYLUS has found the schools to be very happy to support this sort of activity, both to provide some protection to the resources that otherwise are an obvious target for bored youth, and because the school students are in better shape for the beginning of the school year if a structured recreation program has been operating just prior to term one starting.

#### b) Staff Support - Providing support and mentors to new workers

The support of staff in remote areas is essential to program success. The Remote Area Youth Workforce Training Coordinator would be responsible for setting up systems of support for remote area youth workers. This would involve sight visits and mentoring, regular training and professional development opportunities and working with communities and organisations to develop processes of supervision, accountability and reporting. The coordinator would work with existing programs such as CAYLUS and town based youth agencies to coordinate training, mentoring and support systems for remote workers.

#### c) Local Training Initiatives

There is great scope to develop an indigenous youth workforce in the region. While recruitment of local indigenous people to youth work has been limited in the past, the role of the coordinator would be to develop a solid and comprehensive training program to increase numbers in the local workforce and develop local employment opportunities for indigenous people. This would involve working with the apprenticeship scheme, local registered training organisations and local youth organisations to develop a comprehensive training and support package. It would also involve working with local employment programs such as CDEP's, Footprints Forward and Tangentyere Council Job Shop to assist with job placement initiatives.

A similar recruitment and program model is currently being provided in the Ngaanytjarraku Shire (contact number 89567966). This model was the historical model in central Australia run by the YMCA. The YMCA ran regional recreation programs, and provided training for local people, national recruiting for positions, and support for the workers and communities in all aspects of providing activities for youth. The system which replaced the YMCA was based in each community and part of the overall responsibility of the local Council. This has proved a less than ideal way of providing services to youth, as the Council has so many other responsibilities.

### **3. Job creation and economic development**

Remote Communities in Central Australia suffer seriously due to the neglect of government to provide meaningful employment options that will lead to economic independence.

Related to the lack of service infrastructure, remote communities are not afforded the same basis of employment as most communities in Australia. The lack of roads, youth and social services, policing, education and other municipal services, means that employment in these areas is not afforded to those living there. Indeed there are many cases where indigenous people have worked for 10-20 years in legitimate jobs without receiving a wage. These jobs include working as Night Patrol officers (often the only form of justice in a community), teachers aids or teachers, aged care and child care workers, road maintenance, refuse control etc. It has been common for the Government to allow these legitimate positions to be paid as CDEP (work for the dole) or voluntarily for many years. As a result income is low, poverty is high, cost of living in remote communities remains high and social distress ensues.

Young people have watched for many generations their elders work and remain poor. There are few job opportunities for young people or adults, and particularly few job opportunities for men. As a result we see a generation of people who are now engaged in substance misuse more than they are engaged in employment.

The current \$9B Welfare to Work package announced by the Federal Government does not afford one dollar to job creation. Most of the money is dedicated to assessment and training development. In remote areas, there are many people with certificates and few people with employment.

Tangentyere has been operating a builder trainer course successfully in 7 remote communities, engaging young men in the building industry. These sorts of initiatives and existing positions such as night patrollers must become waged as a means of engaging young people, and reducing petrol sniffing and other substance misuse.

If government made a commitment to provide waged positions to remote areas to address the social and infrastructure services found in most jurisdictions, employment of indigenous people would increase dramatically.

Employment is one measure that can be addressed almost immediately by Government and will have an immediate impact petrol sniffing. Creating waged positions for legitimate service delivery is possible and an immediate need.

### **4. Employment, education and training**

Linked both to youth service infrastructure, job creation and economic independence is ensuring a strong education and training base for remote communities and Town Camps. I refer the inquiry to the many reviews undertaken in the area of Indigenous Education, including the Collins' Review and the Review into Indigenous Secondary Education in the Northern Territory.

Adequate education services, starting from early children development, including primary and secondary education must be addressed as a matter of urgency if Petrol sniffing and other substance misuse is to diminish. This includes apprenticeship training for young people and educational opportunities that will lead to real employment.

There currently exists too many remote areas and town camps with limited or no early childhood education, limited or no access to primary school and no access to secondary schooling.

## **5. Cultural safety**

The above measures must all ensure cultural safety measures for success. This means a recognition by Government and Service providers that indigenous cultures differ from Western cultures and that Indigenous cultures have great strength, cultural and social norms and customs that must be supported if services are to be successful.

There needs to be a basic trust that indigenous people have the expertise to address their issues and that non-indigenous people have expertise to support these ideas.

There needs to be a recognition that the historical top down solutions approach given to indigenous people by non-indigenous people has failed for the past 200 years.

Young people need to grow up knowing that their culture and their families are valued. They need to be given the opportunities to walk in both worlds equally. Identity is fundamental to human development. Where a young person has the value of their identity questioned, ignored, or diminished, their emotional and mental health suffers. This is true of any young people in any culture. For indigenous young people this is a daily occurrence. We must begin to see the strengths in indigenous people and culture and provide young people with belief and future choice. The current absence of this is fundamental to the current levels of petrol sniffing in the region.

### **Section 3**

#### **Lessons that can be learned from the success some communities have had and the impact of OPAL petrol**

The above provides a commentary on the success that communities have had in addressing petrol sniffing from a whole of community context.

In relation to supply reduction, AVGAS and now OPAL is vital. We have seen the strong and immediate impact of supply reduction through the introduction of these fuels (see CAYLUS section for more detail).

Tangentyere is aware that the impact of only rolling OPAL out in remote areas will result in a serious movement of chronic abusers into Town and likely into Town Camps. This will result in potentially disastrous impact on Town Camp communities, most of which have managed to keep themselves free of this issues over the years. There are only two town camps that have any serious history with petrol sniffing. Yarrenyty Arltere, as discussed above has managed to almost resolve their problems. Hoppy's Town Camp has over the past 2 years seen the brunt of young people and adults come to town and partake in inhalant abuse. This town camp is currently suffering seriously from this problem

There are a further 16 town camps in Alice Springs, all discrete communities that will potentially be affected if OPAL is not rolled out regionally.

In addition to communities we need to see OPAL rolled out to the Road Houses in the region to prevent dealers from accessing other forms of sniffable fuel.

## **Recommendations**

### **Recommendation 1**

That the Government address petrol sniffing by adopting strong and comprehensive supply and demand reduction strategies.

### **Recommendation 2**

That demand reduction strategies must include the following:

1. Community driven strategies
2. Development of adequate youth infrastructure as would be afforded to any community in the rest of the country
3. Job creation and economic development
4. Employment, education and training
5. Cultural safety

## **Community Driven Strategies**

### **Recommendation 3:**

Models such as YALC be repeated in other town camps and be considered as a model for remote areas.

### **Recommendation 4:**

Mt Theo, Ilpurla, Ipoera be resourced adequately to support employment of workers, administration support and infrastructure support, and provide programs that provide for the full development and well being of the young person or adult.

### **Recommendation 5**

That initiatives be evaluated regularly for success, and where proven be provided long term funding in recognition that change requires a generational time frame

## **Development of adequate youth infrastructure as would be afforded to most other communities in Australia**

### **Recommendation 7:**

Remote Youth Workforce Development Service be developed for Remote Area Communities in Central Australia

### **Recommendation 8:**

Comprehensive service infrastructure for youth services is implemented in all remote and Town Camp communities as per outlined in this submission.

## **Job creation and economic development**

### **Recommendation 9:**

That the Territory and Australian Government make a commitment to fund waged positions in remote areas that provide the social and infrastructure services found in most jurisdictions (e.g. early childhood development, patrolling/policing, education, youth recreation, aged care, road maintenance), thus reducing CDEP and Welfare income as the only current opportunities for people.

### **Recommendation 10:**

That the Territory and Australian Government extend programs such as the Tangentyere builder trainer program to develop skilled apprentices and qualified tradespeople and workers in remote areas in the fields of construction, mechanics, and other industries and professions etc.

## **Employment, education and training**

### **Recommendation 11:**

That comprehensive education services be afforded to remote areas, including adequate early childhood development, primary and secondary education and that these services meet the basic principles found in the Collins Report and more recently the Central Land Council education forums.

### **Recommendation 13:**

That apprenticeships that are locally based be supported in the trades areas, environmental management, health, education and other relevant fields

## **Cultural safety**

### **Recommendation 14:**

That all new initiatives are directed by the expertise within the indigenous community and make provision for partnership with non-indigenous expertise where required

### **Recommendation 15:**

That new initiatives respect and support the bi-cultural life, knowledge and understanding of young indigenous people.

## **Supply Reduction**

### **Recommendation 16:**

That a full regional roll out of OPAL fuel be supported through the Central Australian region including Alice Springs

### **Recommendation 17:**

That the NT Police develop a strategic approach to addressing suppliers and users as part of the introduction of the new VSA legislation and that this approach be developed in partnership with relevant agencies and programs.



## **Summary**

The above provides Tangentyere Council recommendations on the development of services to address inhalant substance misuse in Central Australia. It is by no means exhaustive or meant to be definitive position paper.

We would welcome further discussion and development of the recommendations presented in the paper. We believe this is all achievable and necessary if we are to respond to the current and ever expanding need in this area.

Tangentyere Council still believes that the ultimate answers lie in remote area community development, in the areas of employment, infrastructure, economic viability, services access and self-determination.

The paper does not touch on treatment and rehabilitation except in its support of existing outstations. This matter is in itself comprehensive. The reason for its exclusion is two-fold – firstly time constraints limit a full review in this area. Secondly and most importantly Tangentyere wishes to see the Government focus on strategies that are long term and preventative. It is all too common to see money spent on reactive strategies due to political and public perceptions of need. Real change will only happen when we address community, family and individual need as a whole.

## Appendix 1

### Current Available Services

#### DETOX

	ADULTS	15-25 Yrs	Under 15 yrs
Current	DASA - 2 beds	ASYASS - 4 beds Outreach workers	Tang - 1 bed Outreach work in partnership with Reconnect
OUTSTATIONS	Provided support is available – as discussed in paper		

#### DASA

DASA will soon have the capacity to accept 2 adult clients at any time to detox from inhalant substances. To detox the adult must be accompanied by family or adult support. There is no capacity for outreach work.

ASYASS will soon begin their On Track service which will provide 4 beds for 15-25 year olds. There will be outreach workers attached to the program to support young people not requiring beds but requiring outreach support, as well as providing follow up for those who have accessed the residential service.

Tangentyere Council Safe Families program will have the capacity to take the under 15year olds requiring detox. It is anticipated that this would be limited to one young person at any time. There will be limited outreach services attached to this.

CAAAPU do not provide a detox service however they do provide rehabilitation. It is unclear what their capacity or need is currently.

Remote- Outstations provide both detox and rehabilitation facilitates. Their current capacity and need is outlined in the paper.