

## Evidence Guiding South Australia's Approach

It is well documented in the literature on inhalant abuse that adversity coupled with the absence of community support are direct contributors to youth inhalant abuse. (Colman et al, 2001, Kurtzman et al, 2001, Brady, 1995, Dell et al 2005)

Inhaling petrol for its mind altering affects is neither a new nor a peculiarly Aboriginal problem although it is a more significant problem for some of the Indigenous people of Australia, Canada and the USA than other populations (d'Abbs and MacLean, 2000). In general volatile substance misuse is more common among people from lower socio-economic backgrounds (Dinwiddie 1994).

Petrol sniffing emerged as a problem among Indigenous communities in Australia in the 1960s and 1970s (D'Abbs and Brady 2004). Brady (1992) reported that petrol sniffing had been reported in 56 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, but was concentrated in parts of Arnhem Land, central Australia and the eastern goldfields of Western Australia.

The State Coroner of South Australia has conducted two inquests into petrol sniffing related deaths in the APY Lands in recent times (State Coroner South Australia, 2002, 2005). The recommendations of the Coroner have guided the Aboriginal Lands Task Force's response to petrol sniffing on the APY Lands.

A survey conducted by Nganampa Health Council in 2004 (Tregenza, 2004) found that the total number of individuals sniffing was approximately 200, which equates to 14.4% of the 10-40 age group. Anecdotal evidence indicates that approximately 20 individuals sniff petrol in Yalata, which is approximately 8% of the total population of around 250.

The South Australian Coroner found that the causes of petrol sniffing are directly related to the socio economic setting on the APY lands:

*Clearly, socio-economic factors play a part in the general aetiology of petrol sniffing. Poverty, hunger, illness, low education levels, almost total unemployment, boredom and general feelings of hopelessness form the environment in which such self-destructive behaviour takes place (2002, para. 13.2)*

The policy responses of Australian governments to petrol sniffing in Indigenous communities from the 1980s to 2004 were reviewed by Peter d'Abbs and Maggie Brady (2004). They concluded that it was an area of policy failure by governments and recommended the following approaches to improve it:

1. Whole of government approaches, including coordination between levels of government
2. Improving the evidence base relevant to petrol sniffing
3. Replacing the current pattern of short term, pilot and project funding with longer term evidence based interventions
4. Replacing the insistence that communities take ownership of the problem by a genuine commitment to partnerships involving government, non-government and community sectors.

Similar views were put forward by The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs in its recent report *Many Ways Forward: Report of the inquiry into capacity building and service delivery in Indigenous communities*. The Committee concluded that the way forward to build community capacity involves major challenges for government, Indigenous organisations, communities and individuals:

*It involves a revision of approaches by governments and a move away from conventional methods of service delivery which reinforce dependency to the pursuit of real partnerships with Indigenous organisations and communities. A challenge to move from the rhetoric of partnerships to being a real resource, together with a commitment to incorporating capacity building into the design and implementation of partnerships for service delivery. (2004, p. 251).*

These principles have also guided South Australia's response. In particular, the Department of Health and the Department for Families and Communities have established an ongoing presence near the APY Lands. Three senior experienced officers are now based in Marla on an ongoing basis and a senior project officer is based there for an initial period of six months. They are managing the government response to health and wellbeing needs in the Lands. They are supported by a Director of Aboriginal

Lands within the Department for Families and Communities in Adelaide. This means that communities are not left to sort out problems themselves with infrequent visits from changing bureaucrats. Neither are communities having solutions forced upon them. Officers are readily accessible and able to be on site to assist communities in a partnership arrangement at very short notice and in an ongoing way. Relationships with the non-government organisations providing services on the APY Lands are being strengthened, providing best practice in integrated service provision.

In Yalata most service responses come from State government officers based in Ceduna (approx 200 km away). Key community support positions are also being re-established in the community.

In June 2005 a service coordinator for the APY Lands was appointed. A regional service coordinator and a service coordinator to be based on the Lands have been appointed to commence in January 2006. The service coordinators' role will include: overseeing both state and commonwealth service delivery and providing advice directly to the two governments; working with Anangu to improve the quality and effectiveness of governance and administration of Anangu organisations and communities; and building communication, collaboration and partnerships between Anangu and the governments. This is a joint state and commonwealth government initiative and the commonwealth has committed \$1.4 million to service coordination in 2005-06.

The South Australian government committed \$12 million in 2003-04 over a four year period for initiatives on the APY Lands. An additional \$13 million was approved for the four years from 2004-05. Funds were also separately approved to establish a permanent police presence on the Lands and upgrade police cells and stations.

The complex nature of petrol sniffing means that it is too early to assess the effectiveness of the programs which the South Australian government has put in place to address the problem. Early indications are encouraging, but it will take a sustained effort to overcome the social problems that underlie petrol sniffing in the region.

Comments on the work of the current Senate Inquiry are set out under headings of the specific terms of reference below.

## **The effectiveness of existing laws and policing with respect to petrol sniffing in affected Indigenous communities**

### ***Existing South Australian Legislation***

#### **1. Controlled Substances Act 1984:**

- Section 19 of the Controlled Substances Act 1984 creates an offence for a person to sell or supply a 'volatile solvent' where the supplier suspects, or if there are reasonable grounds for suspecting, that the consumer intends to inhale the solvent or to sell or supply the solvent to another person for the purpose of inhalation.
- While there is no provision in the Controlled Substances Act 1984 that makes it an offence to inhale a volatile solvent or to be in possession of a volatile solvent for the purpose of inhalation, these are offences under the by-laws under the Pitjantjatjara Land Rights Act 1981 and the Aboriginal Lands Trust (Yalata Reserve) Regulations 2005.
- The Police Drug Diversion Initiative (PDDI) operates under Section 31 of the Controlled Substances Act 1984. Under the PDDI police are required to refer people who are alleged to have committed a simple possession offence to a nominated assessment service. There is currently a lack of adequate assessment, treatment and rehabilitation support facilities and services to support the operation of the PDDI. However an assessment and treatment service is planned to commence operation in the first half of 2006. Please refer to page 12 for further discussion of the PDDI's operation on the Lands.

## 2. Public Intoxication Act 1984:

- Under Section 7 of the Public Intoxication Act 1984 police have the power to apprehend a person who is in a public place while under the influence of a drug or alcohol. Police also have the power to take that person to their place of residence, a place approved by the Minister of Health, a police station or a sobering up centre for admission as a patient.
- In 2005 the Public Intoxication Act was amended to include petrol.
- Initiatives are underway to provide programs to divert people in remote communities under this provision.

## 3. Pitjantjatjara Land Rights Act 1981:

- Section 43 of the Pitjantjatjara Land Rights Act 1981 provides for the making of by-laws and includes the following provision: *prohibiting the inhalation or consumption of any regulated substance on the lands and prohibiting the possession, sale or supply of any regulated substance on the lands for the purpose of inhalation or consumption.* Under this Section, petrol is defined as a regulated substance.
- The maximum penalty for a person who is found to be in possession of petrol for the purposes of inhalation is \$100.
- Police working on the APY Lands report that they encounter the same sniffers on a regular basis with little positive impact on changing the sniffers' behaviour. They also report that the usual penalty is a fine of \$30 with no conviction being recorded.
- There has been a lack of suitable detoxification, treatment and rehabilitation facilities and services on the APY Lands to which courts can refer sniffers however a mobile assessment and treatment service is planned for early 2006, see pages 8 and 9'

## 4. Aboriginal Lands Trust Act 1966

- A court may order a person, who is found to have been unlawfully in possession of a regulated substance for his or her own use, to undergo treatment or participate in a rehabilitation program at a prescribed place. Regulated substance is defined to mean petrol or any other substance declared to be a regulated substance.
- Under the Aboriginal Lands Trust (Yalata Reserve) Regulations 2005 a person must not, while on Yalata, inhale or consume a regulated substance, possess a regulated substance for the purposes of inhalation or consumption or sell or supply a regulated substance to another person knowing or suspecting that the other person intends to inhale or consume the substance or sell or supply it to another for that purpose.
- Police who suspect a contravention of the regulation may confiscate any regulated substance to which the contravention relates.

Since March 2004 there has been a presence on the APY Lands of seven fully sworn police officers. In the longer term SAPOL is planning to station eight fully sworn officers on the Lands in addition to the Community Constables there. Currently most officers are rostered in from outside the Lands, but as housing becomes available they will be resident on the Lands. A duplex to house two officers has been completed at Umuwa and two officers took up permanent positions there in early November. Housing for a further two officers is expected to be completed there by the end of February 2006 and housing in Murputja for another four officers will follow.

As part of the new policing strategy police stations in each major community are opened at identified times and to date have received a good community response.

Six community constables are in place and SAPOL is making ongoing efforts to fill the four vacant positions.

Police facilities are being upgraded and to encourage community involvement and ownership, each station will have a mural painted on it.

SAPOL is advancing the establishment of night patrols on the APY Lands. Currently programs are being run at Indulkana, Mimili, Amata and Ernabella. Night patrols employ community members to patrol their communities at night to detect and manage behaviour that constitutes a problem for the community and to help protect community members.

Recently South Australian police committed to Operation Midrealm in cooperation with the Western Australian and Northern Territory police. This operation was launched on 19 January 2006 and has financial support from the Commonwealth Government. The Cross Border Justice Project covers the APY Lands in South Australia, the Ngaanyatjarra Lands in WA and the central east and south of the Northern Territory. The project was established following a Roundtable meeting in June 2003 which included community members and senior representatives from the Departments of Justice, Indigenous Affairs and Police Services in NT, SA, and WA. The Roundtable highlighted the significant safety and security issues in the region, including high levels of family violence, sexual abuse, substance misuse, and relatively limited access to justice and other services.

Although petrol sniffing in itself is not the focus of the Cross Border Justice Project, the community profiling that was undertaken to support the project identified this as an issue.

The Cross Border Justice Project recognises the common cultural and social bonds and mobility of Anangu and aims to minimise the difficulties created by the remoteness of the region and State and Territory borders in the provision of effective court, police and correctional services.

A key strategy is legislative change to enable justice agencies to operate in a multi-jurisdictional environment and the development of supporting Inter-Governmental Agreements to bring the legislative changes into operation. It is anticipated that these arrangements will facilitate improved access to services and timeliness of service delivery.

As it is expected that implementation of cross border legislation and inter-governmental agreements will have a positive impact on policing in the cross border region, it should also have a positive impact on petrol sniffing.

It is hoped that the cross border legislation will be operational by September 2006.

Two permanent police officers are now based in Yalata to improve safety and security in that community.

The National Inhalant Abuse Taskforce (NIAT) recently prepared its draft final report. In the report, NIAT included a national framework for addressing inhalant abuse in Australia. The major component of the proposed framework that relates directly to policing is reducing the supply of abuseable products by supporting the widespread use of Opal fuel and exploring options for the modification of commonly abused inhalant products to deter abuse.

NIAT has also drafted a set of *Guiding Principles for Inhalant Legislation* to assist the development of best practice legislation in relation to inhalant abuse. These principles note that:

- the primary aim of legislation should be to protect the health and welfare of inhalant users
- legislation should not criminalise the behaviour of inhalant users and should protect their civil rights
- it may be appropriate for the legislation to include the power to confiscate inhalant products to protect the health and safety of an inhalant user
- it may be appropriate for the legislation to include the power to apprehend and detain an inhalant user to protect his/her health and safety or to link him/her to treatment
- the legislation should be enforced in keeping with its primary objectives of protecting the health and welfare of inhalant users
- legislation should be supported by a commitment to adequately resource its implementation
- the operation of the legislation should be monitored and reviewed to ensure that its objectives are being met and to assess its impact.

In addition, the NIAT report notes that the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing is funding a project that is conducting scientific and technical trials to explore the feasibility of modifying volatile substance products that are subject to inhalant abuse (i.e. petrol, butane gas and spray paint).

To this end, NIAT have included the examination of product modification as one part of its strategic approach to addressing inhalant abuse.

NIAT has proposed the establishment of a National Inhalant Abuse Coordinating Group under the auspices of the Ministerial Council on Drug Strategy.

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

Programs which have been effective in the past in addressing petrol sniffing have been well documented in d'Abbs and MacLean (2000). South Australia, through its Department for Families and Communities (DFC) has worked in partnership with communities to develop and implement a range of community based programs which have been developed to enhance self esteem, build skills and improve the overall health and wellbeing of youth and families affected by or at risk of petrol sniffing. The approach involves young people and their families in a range of activities to improve self-esteem and community cohesion. The responses put in place by DFC have been based on the interventions outlined in that study together with the principles outlined in the following strategies and frameworks:

- National Strategic Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health 2003
- National Drug Strategy Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Complementary Action Plan 2003-2006 (MCDS,2003)
- Aboriginal Health - Everybody's Business. Substance Misuse. A South Australian Strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People 2005-2010 (SAAHP,2005)
- The National Drug Strategy. Australia's Integrated Framework 2004-2009 (MCDS, 2004)
- South Australian Drug Strategy 2005-2010 (SA Department of Health, 2005)

All the drug strategy documents listed above suggest that the key principle to guide government responses to substance misuse, in any setting, would include a comprehensive balance of supply reduction, demand reduction and harm reduction measures. The South Australian Substance Misuse Strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People 2005-2010 (SAHP, 2005) has categorised the following classes of people who require services tailored to their needs:

- People who don't use substances
- People who try out substances
- People who sometimes use substances
- People who are regular users of substances
- People for whom substances are 'it's my life'
- People who are damaged by their use of substances

Based on these documents a comprehensive strategy would include the programs listed below.

(Note: programs in *italics* are not yet in place. \* indicates the program is not in place in all major APY Lands communities)

<b>Type of User</b>	<b>Supply reduction</b>	<b>Demand reduction</b>	<b>Harm reduction</b>
People who 'don't use' substances	Expansion of Comgas Scheme and availability of Opal fuel Policing initiatives including Operation Midrealm	Youth programs	Health promotion campaigns
People who 'try out' substances	Expansion of Comgas Scheme and availability of Opal fuel Policing initiatives including Operation Midrealm	Youth programs <i>Police Drug Diversion</i>	Health promotion campaigns <i>Sobering up facilities</i>
People who 'sometimes use' substances	Expansion of Comgas Scheme and availability of Opal fuel Policing initiatives including Operation Midrealm	<i>Substance misuse facility</i> Youth programs <i>Police Drug Diversion</i>	Health promotion campaigns <i>Sobering up facilities</i>
People who are 'regular' substance users	Expansion of Comgas Scheme and availability of Opal fuel Policing initiatives including Operation Midrealm	<i>Substance misuse facility</i> Youth programs <i>Police Drug Diversion</i>	Health promotion campaigns <i>Sobering up facilities</i>
People for whom substances are: 'it's my life'	Expansion of Comgas Scheme and availability of Opal fuel Policing initiatives including Operation Midrealm	<i>Substance misuse facility</i> Youth programs <i>Police Drug Diversion</i>	Health promotion campaigns <i>Sobering up facilities</i>
People who are 'damaged' by their use of substances	Expansion of Comgas Scheme and availability of Opal fuel Policing initiatives including Operation Midrealm	Disability support programs * Positive behaviours support service*	Health promotion campaigns <i>Sobering up facilities</i>

### Demand reduction

This includes two types of interventions: prevention and treatment. Prevention interventions are aimed at preventing or delaying the uptake of drug use while treatment seeks to reduce or eliminate demand for substances by existing users.

## Prevention

These services are for people who don't use, try out, use sometimes or are regular users of substances.

A range of substance misuse prevention interventions have been established on the APY Lands:

- Sports and recreation pursuits
- Renovation of community buildings into youth centres
- Learning and playing instruments
- Horse breaking programs
- Meals programs
- Bicycle maintenance programs
- Holiday recreation programs.

Particular examples include:

- youth workers are employed on the communities. A vacancy exists at Fregon. Youth workers are a mixture of Anangu and non Indigenous workers.
- two youth coordinators are being recruited to assist youth workers build capacity and skills. One commenced in November 2005.
- training in Certificate III in Youth Work for the youth workers is funded by DFC and provided by Relationships Australia, a registered training provider. During September, 2005 the trainers visited all relevant communities and made formal assessments of competency. All communities in which youth workers are employed have youth workers with some level of formally assessed competencies. One youth worker has achieved a complete Certificate IV in Youth Work and is currently studying for a Diploma in Youth Work.
- the Fregon community and surrounding homelands are engaging young people, including people with substance misuse problems, in horse breaking and horsemanship and a hairdressing program. The Watarru community has engaged young people in camel and horse mustering as an alternative to petrol sniffing. Tjurma homelands are providing a meals program to improve the health and well being of young people and educating them about the dangers of petrol sniffing. Funding has also been provided for kitchen upgrades
- a bike track is being built at a homeland near Ernabella (Pukatja) for a dirt bike program that will commence shortly
- a substance misuse coordinator has been appointed in Yalata to deal with youth and substance misuse issues. A substance misuse community worker position has been funded and will be filled shortly
- Yalata school conducted a very successful four day workshop "Working together towards a happy future" at the end of November 2005 at Coorabie School. In all there were 30 participants aged 9 to 27 years of age from Yalata. Ten presenters from a variety of organisations facilitated workshops with community and local service providers, focusing on education in relation to substance misuse
- Children Youth and Family Services in Ceduna is working collaboratively with Oak Valley administration and Yalata to plan a camp for petrol sniffers in the Oak Valley region where young people would abstain from sniffing and take part in cultural activities
- funding has been provided to Nganampa Health Council to employ two men's health workers, who are working closely with the Substance Misuse and Youth Programs
- programs have been funded during the school holidays in the Fregon, Amata and Ernabella communities. One was the *Deadly Treadlies* program. This involves teaching young people to repair, maintain and use bicycles safely
- school holiday activity programs for young people are being developed and implemented by the community youth workers with support from DFC personnel as they assist in diverting young people from substance misuse

- the youth program at Ernabella (Pukatja) is providing activities such as music, snooker and pin ball. The youth shed there is open five nights a week providing supervised activities. It attracts up to 50 young people per night
- DFC has distributed copies of the *Petrol Sniffing and Other Solvents Kits* published by the Aboriginal Drug and Alcohol Council in the APY Lands. Similarly, DFC has distributed copies of the Australian Government's publications *The Grog Book* and *Sniffing and the Brain* to all major communities and some homelands. DFC plans to distribute further copies to youth and other workers as opportunities arise.
- a homelands abstinence program along the lines of the Mt Theo program in the Northern Territory is actively being pursued with a number of homeland communities. The program will provide petrol sniffers with a place where they have to abstain from sniffing and will engage in traditional activities
- a feasibility study on culturally appropriate service delivery models to address volatile substance misuse in the cross border region is currently being undertaken by the Centre for Remote Health for the Cross Border Reference Group on Volatile Substance Misuse
- vehicles are being provided so that youth workers can visit young people in remote areas and also provide them with transport to and from youth activities.

### Treatment

These services are aimed at people who 'sometimes use', are 'regular users' and for whom substances are 'it's my life'.

### *Rehabilitation Facility*

State government officers have worked with representatives from the Australian Government, Nganampa Health Council and the NPY Women's Council to develop a culturally appropriate model for the design and operation of a substance abuse rehabilitation facility. Consultation with communities and Anangu organisations will continue until the location and operational details are finalised. DFC has largely been responsible for the community consultation on the APY Lands. The facility will be operated by Drug and Alcohol Services South Australia (DASSA).

The goal of the facility is to provide a range of treatment and rehabilitation services to persons from the APY Lands who are experiencing problems caused by misuse of any substance, particularly petrol, to enable them to attain freedom from substance dependence and reintegrate into their communities.

The model of service delivery is based on evidence of what has worked elsewhere in other drug and alcohol programs, particularly in Aboriginal populations, as well as more formal research.

The facility will provide:

- assessment by facility staff (in local communities)
- referral to hospital where intensive medical support is required for detoxification
- residential rehabilitation programs for up to 3 months
- outreach services in communities by facility staff.

A mobile outreach service is planned to commence operation in the first half of 2006, after consultation with the community and Anangu organisations. This will provide assessment, counselling and drug education in communities. This will be accessed under the Police Drug Diversion Initiative.

It is anticipated that construction for the rehabilitation facility will commence in 2006. The mobile outreach service will continue as an integral part of the facility's operation and will assist with reintegration of former facility clients back into communities.

South Australia is also investigating the feasibility of a detoxification and rehabilitation centre in Port Augusta.

The Department of Health through DASSA funds two main diversionary programs on the APY Lands.



### *The Nganampa Health Council (NHC) Substance Abuse program*

The NHC Substance Abuse program was initially funded by the Department of Health in 2002-2003.

The broad priorities for funding and the strategic directions for service delivery are as follows:

- provide high quality clinical primary health care for those affected by petrol sniffing.
- assist in the process to provide case management and individually designed care arrangements, including respite care, where available, for those affected by petrol sniffing.
- support and fund broad based diversionary programs, particularly in relation to youth development and recreation and training opportunities for young people.
- conduct a survey to monitor the prevalence of petrol sniffing on the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands.
- encourage and participate in research which aims to reduce petrol sniffing in this area.
- the target groups applicable to these services are Anangu at risk of petrol sniffing and those affected by petrol sniffing.

The Objectives of the program are:

1. to reduce petrol sniffing on APY Lands
2. to provide effective diversionary programs and preventative youth programs
3. to provide training and skill development to youth
4. to carry out ongoing research and monitor the prevalence of sniffing.

The NHC Substance Abuse program has established a number of successful interventions. These key activities include:

- a two week music recording studio at a remote homeland leading to a CD of Anangu music
- sponsorship of Southern APY football A and B grade teams. (The A grade team was successful in reaching the finals this year)
- two week Kindred Productions circus skill workshops held in community
- a petrol sniffing prevalence survey.

### *Police Drug Diversion Initiative*

The Police Drug Diversion Initiative (PDDI) is an Australia wide program funded by the Australian Government.

PDDI is a mandatory police diversion for any person (adult or juvenile) detected for simple possession of an illicit substance. The exception is cannabis possession for adults for which an expiation notice process still applies. The diversion is out of the criminal justice system, directly into a health based intervention. The intervention consists of an assessment of the individual's drug misuse and further treatment as negotiated.

PDDI is a front end intervention, picking up people in possession of illicit substances and encouraging them to assess and address their drug use through a health intervention rather than a criminal sanction. The intervention consists of an assessment of the individual's drug misuse and further treatment as negotiated between the client and the assessor. It is meant to operate throughout the whole state, but does not operate on the APY Lands.

In South Australia the PDDI operates under Section 31 of the Controlled Substances Act 1984. Under this Act, petrol is declared to be a volatile substance.

Police on the APY Lands however generally use the by-laws under the Pitjantjatjara Land Rights Act 1981 instead of the Controlled Substances Act 1984. Section 43 of the Pitjantjatjara Land Rights Act 1981 includes the following provision: *prohibiting the inhalation or consumption of any regulated substance on the lands and prohibiting the possession, sale or supply of any regulated substance on the lands for the purpose of inhalation or consumption. Under this Section, petrol is defined as a regulated substance.*

The Nganampa Health Council was initially allocated funding from within the PDDI program in 2003-2004 for the provision of assessment and support services for substance abusers diverted by Police within the APY Lands.

Nganampa Health Council has reported a number of difficulties in providing clinical assessments under PDDI .

Drug and Alcohol Services South Australia (DASSA) is currently looking at other options for assessment of people detected for simple possession of an illicit substance in the Lands. To assist with this, DFC has offered to have its youth coordinators and managers trained as assessors for the PDDI.

It is planned that the rehabilitation facility's outreach service will be able to provide assessment and counselling under the PDDI from the first half of 2006, after consultation with the community and Anangu organisations. Police will also be able to divert any person detected for simple possession of an illicit substance to the new residential rehabilitation facility for rehabilitation.

### *Disability Care Programs*

There are also programs in place for people who have been damaged by their use of substances and their families:

- progress continues to be made with the new disability services in Ernabella and Amata with up to 25 people with disabilities accessing the service. Many of these people have a disability as a result of substance abuse. Early evidence is that the incidence of substance abuse has significantly decreased in people who are participating in the disability program.
- a single tri-state funding and service agreement has been developed and implemented between the SA, WA and NT governments and the NPY Women's Council.
- the (Disability) Client Services Office has set up a training program in collaboration with the community councils and Anglicare NT. Amata and Ernabella community leaders have completed the first two phases of the training program aimed at enhancing the communities' knowledge and understanding of governance issues as they pertain to running state funded disability services. The long term plan for Anangu is to develop competency and capacity to manage their own local disability support services.
- the services of the Northern Territory Government Positive Behaviour Support Unit have been purchased to undertake intensive interventions and positive behaviour strategy training with disability clients with challenging, violent and anti-social behaviours, their families and disability workers in Amata and Ernabella (Pukatja).
- the Independent Living – Equipment Program is now operating on the APY Lands and services and equipment are being provided.
- Home and Community Care services are being provided through the NPY Women's Council and Nganampa Health Council to the aged, young disabled people and their carers. Forty Anangu are being employed as aged care workers to provide services such as meals, transport, firewood collection, blanket washing and respite for family carers.

### Harm Reduction

Education about the risks of toxicity, seizures and injuries while sniffing petrol may keep people alive and prevent harm to themselves. There is some drug and alcohol education included in health programs run by Nganampa Health Council, the NPY Women's Council, the Department of Education and Children's Services and Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Education Council. DFC has distributed copies of the *Petrol Sniffing and Other Solvents Kits* published by the Aboriginal Drug and Alcohol Council. Similarly, DFC has distributed copies of the Australian Government's publications *The Grog Book* and *Sniffing and the*

*Brain* to all major communities and some homelands. DFC plans to distribute further copies to youth and other workers as opportunities arise.

### **Lessons that can be learned from the success some communities have had in reducing petrol sniffing, including the impact of non-sniffable Opal petrol.**

D'Abbs and MacLean (2000) have documented programs which have been effective in the past and South Australia's response has been based on the successful interventions outlined in that study. We have had direct discussions with Mount Theo staff and we are incorporating the principles of that successful program into the service model for the rehabilitation facility. We are also pursuing the development of a Mount Theo style outstation program with a number of interested APY Lands communities.

There is increasing demand by governments, policy makers, program designers, service providers, advocates and communities to obtain and analyse data and information to inform their efforts to address petrol sniffing, including design of interventions. There are, however, no consistent data definitions nor collection and reporting methodologies.

South Australia funds Nganampa Health Council to conduct a petrol sniffing prevalence survey, which is undertaken approximately every two years. An annual survey could be considered. Also, culturally appropriate ways of incorporating APY Lands residents into national drug surveys conducted by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare should be considered for funding by the Australian Government.

#### *Supply reduction*

Officers of the South Australian government have encouraged communities to become part of the Comgas Scheme. This is an Australian Government scheme that subsidises the cost of supplying Opal fuel as a substitute for unleaded petrol in communities affected by petrol sniffing. During the early part of 2005, Watinuma community became part of the scheme. This means that all Aboriginal communities on the APY Lands now only have diesel, Opal and avgas available.

South Australia is pleased to note the Australian government's recent expansion of the Opal fuel subsidy across the central desert region. State government officers have discussed with the APY Executive the possibility of including the use of Opal fuel in Mintabie as a condition of use in lease negotiations and are also working with the local community and the Australian Government with a view to having Opal available in Yalata.

Police in the region are active in seeking to intervene to prevent illicit distribution of petrol and substances, including alcohol. A reward scheme has been established whereby police pay for information which has the capacity to identify those engaged in the illegal supply of substances. Police are active in following up information towards apprehending those involved in illegal supply.

Recently South Australian police committed to Operation Midrealm in cooperation with the Western Australian and Northern Territory police. This operation was launched on 19 January 2006 and has financial support from the Commonwealth Government. A substance misuse intelligence desk based in Alice Springs will coordinate intelligence across the region to inform targeted operations aimed at enhancing police capacity to apprehend traffickers of petrol, alcohol and illicit substances.

### **ADDITIONAL SERVICES**

In addition to policing and substance abuse programs, the South Australian government has put in place a wide range of programs and services in response to the broader social, economic and health issues faced by affected communities.

## **Governance**

The South Australian Government is committed to improving governance on the Lands:

- the *Pitjantjatjara Land Rights Act (Executive Board) Amendment Bill 2004* was enacted to enable fresh elections to be held for the chair and executive board. An election was held on 4 October 2004 when a new chair and executive were elected
- the *Pitjantjatjara Lands Rights Act 1981* has been reviewed to improve governance arrangements. Following negotiations with the APY Executive Board and its legal representative and community consultation, a Bill to amend the Act was drafted. At a special general meeting of Anangu Pitjantjatjara in June 2005 the community supported the draft Bill. The Bill has been proclaimed and APY elections were held on 28 November 2005 under the new Act
- governance and management training and support will be provided to members of the APY Executive, community council members and other community organisations. Governance workshops were held in a number of communities in June and July 2005. They were well supported and the information gained from these sessions has been used to develop a long-term governance training and support program. The proposal was discussed with APY Executive, community councils and other Anangu organisations in November 2005. A series of workshops were delivered to these bodies in November and December 2005, including a very successful governance training workshop which was held for the incoming APY Executive Board at its first meeting on 7 December 2005.
- The KU Arts Executive body held a three day planning session in Adelaide in July. Further governance workshops will assist Executive members in managing the responsibilities of this group and in their roles as members of the governing bodies of each of the art centres operating on the Lands.

## **Government Presence**

In addition to the new police and Department for Families and Communities officers mentioned above:

- a new ten house sub-division at Umuwa has been developed to provide housing for government workers. All sites are now pegged, serviced and able to receive new dwellings. The Department of Administrative and Information Services, in consultation with the APY Executive, is evaluating the feasibility of a government services office and short term accommodation centre on the Lands
- in order to facilitate interaction between government agencies and Anangu, the government has contracted with an interpreter and translator service provider for interpreter services.

## **Health And Well Being**

Improving the health and wellbeing of the people on the Lands is a priority for the government. In addition to the programs mentioned above:

- family support workers are providing advice and support to young women and children in three APY Lands communities with a vacancy in another. One of the family support workers represented SA at the recent National Indigenous Women's Forum in Sydney. Intensive training of family support workers has commenced and will provide a formal qualification. A family support worker position in Yalata has recently been funded
- the family support workers are actively seeking to link to existing services on the Lands. An Indigenous woman has been employed as a Senior Project Worker to provide support and education to the family support workers and to provide a consultancy service to local residents
- Children Youth and Family Services has established a multifaceted approach to service delivery on the Lands. This includes youth justice, child care and protection, and community capacity building. Regular three-weekly trips to the Lands are being made by staff with a combination of social, youth, financial and community support expertise from the Coober Pedy District Centre. Additionally, the Coober Pedy youth worker is now attending every court circuit in Coober Pedy, Oodnadatta and the APY Lands. The teams address specific case work requirements, and focus

on developing partnerships with schools, health and other community services, including Alice Springs agencies

- additional environmental health services are being funded by the government including additional environmental health workers in Kalka, Amata, Mimili and Ernabella (Pukatja). Training is being provided by Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education, and the workers are being supported by the Department of Health and other agencies
- a physiotherapist has been recruited and commenced employment in February 2005
- strategies have been developed to improve the management of people with suicidal behaviours, including:
  - advancing cross border detention arrangements between SA and NT following review of Acts in both jurisdictions
  - streamlining transport and clinical responses when a person needs treatment in either Adelaide or Alice Springs
  - the response to urgent situations by Royal Flying Doctor Service
  - safe management options in communities
  - safe transport options for treatment
  - support of police to remain with health clinic staff until assessment is completed
- the Department of Health has negotiated a memorandum of understanding with the Northern Territory Department of Health and Community Services to enhance the capacity of the Central Australian Remote Mental Health Team to service the Lands and Anangu residing in the Northern Territory
- SA provided funds for the to enable the Central Northern Area Mental Health Service to employ an additional psychiatric nurse and increase the visiting service it provides to the Lands
- two SA-based psychiatrists visit the Lands at least four times a year, usually for three to five days. The Alice Springs based psychiatrist visits approximately six times per year for 1-2 days. This arrangement will continue following confirmation of SA's funding from the Australian Government for the next four years
- the government has introduced a Bill to amend the *Pitjantjatjara Lands Rights Act* to create offences related to the sale or supply of a regulated substance (petrol or any substance declared to be regulated for the purpose of the Act) knowing or having reason to suspect, the substance will be inhaled or consumed. The maximum penalty proposed is \$50,000 or imprisonment for ten years and the seizure and forfeiture of vehicles connected with the commission of an offence. This Bill is currently before Parliament
- additional funding has been provided to screen pre-schoolers for ear and eye problems so that assistance can be provided to these children to overcome their disadvantage
- as part of the Community Housing Program there has been approval for new construction and house replacements in Communities on the Lands as well as the provision of additional Commonwealth funding to supplement rental income for repairs and maintenance

## Justice

Most government agencies (CYFS, police, teachers) already undertake police checks as part of their recruitment process, but until now the non-government employers on the APY Lands have not been required to do so. SAPOL are working with the APY Executive to introduce a police check process for new non-government workers on the Lands

SAPOL has also initiated a number of other community safety/crime reduction programs:

- **Community Safety Committees** – the committees focus on crime reduction and improvements in public safety and have been set up in the six major communities
- **Blue Light Discos** - events occur in the majority of communities on a regular basis

- **Fregon Bicycle Program** – children have been provided bicycles and helmets in return for school attendance in an aim to reduce truancy and juvenile crime. Police are now sourcing additional bicycles and plan to establish a bike track
- **PY Media Program** – Community Constables conduct a regular radio program dealing with policing issues on the Lands
- **Football Team** - Senior Community Constable Grant Burton is coaching the APY Lands senior football team that played a curtain-raiser at AAMI stadium on 21 May 2005
- **Football/Netball** - several community events have been arranged in conjunction with the Port Adelaide Football Club (Port Power) and Adelaide Quit Lightning Basketball Club. The program initiated by SAPOL, and supported by the Department of Education and Children's Services has resulted in a group of Port Power footballers and Erin Phillips from Adelaide Quit Lightning visiting the Lands in March 2005.

The Department of Correctional Services has implemented a new service delivery model in the Lands:

- a case management team of three community corrections officers supervises orders and bonds, prepares reports for the courts and provides counselling for offenders
- a two person mobile community service team visits most communities three times every year to increase the viability of community service orders as a sentencing option – this has proved very successful with over 3,000 hours of community service being completed in 2004, its first year of operation, compared to 800 hours completed in 2003
- community corrections officers attend each circuit to assist the Court.

A feasibility study has been undertaken into the development of a low-security correctional facility on the Lands as an alternative to imprisonment for certain categories of Aboriginal offenders from the APY Lands.

## Infrastructure

Work is being undertaken to improve infrastructure on the Lands:

- work has been undertaken to upgrade aerodromes with some further work to be completed this financial year
- installation of UV water disinfection equipment in five communities. A water awareness program is being conducted by TAFE with the support of SA Water to increase the effectiveness of this project
- a contract for town planning services for the APY Lands has been awarded and work commenced
- an infrastructure needs survey for the APY Lands has been completed
- six new community houses and 10 major housing upgrades have been allocated to the APY Lands for 2005-06
- a new database that will enable better community housing management is currently being piloted and due to go online in the new year.

## Environment

Communities on the Lands are involved in a number of environment related activities:

- the Kuka Kanyini land management program is continuing to protect rock holes from feral animals, to survey and monitor threatened species, to undertake patch burning and to muster camels. The project provides employment to members of the Watarru community and the school is involved in recording and accessing data from the project. Ten people are employed in permanent part-time positions, and up to 10 Anangu are employed on a casual basis. This project has also had a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of participants through increased physical activity and a better understanding of the effect of diet on health

- in February 2005 the Indulkana and Kenmore Park Communities participated in a consultation process regarding the extension of the Lake Eyre Basin Agreement undertaken for the Department of Water, Land and Biodiversity Conservation
- communities on the Lands will work with the Department of Water, Land, Biodiversity and Conservation to undertake a project funded through the National Land Care Program to monitor APY lands subject to cattle grazing
- the Alinytjara Wilurara Natural Resources Management (NRM) board, whose area includes the APY lands, was established in July 2005 as part of new NRM arrangements across the State. The Board will be the first Aboriginal Board in Australia to be responsible for regional natural resources management.

## Education

The Department of Education and Children's Services (DECS) works collaboratively with the Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara Education Committee (PYEC) and is responsible for the development, delivery and monitoring of preschool and school education to students living in communities on the APY Lands. Recent achievements include:

- the 'Countering Risky Behaviours' Curriculum was introduced to Anangu Schools in response to the 2002 Coronial Inquest. All APY Lands Schools deliver a 'Countering Risky Behaviours' Curriculum that focuses on HIV/AIDS, hepatitis, substance abuse (including petrol and marijuana) and sexuality issues for students in years 6 to 10
- this program has been approved by the PYEC and is delivered with the support of the Nganampa Health Council and SAPOL. In each school the principal and Anangu staff monitor students who are displaying signs that they may be petrol sniffing and work with their families to help get them back to school and away from petrol sniffing
- DECS Drug Education Strategy Team has worked closely with all APY Lands Schools to develop a whole of school drug strategy with each school site
- primary school attendance has improved from 71.8% in 2002 to 77.0% in 2004 and secondary school attendance improved from 64.3% to 76.4% over the same period
- five Anangu students successfully completed their SACE in 2003 and a further five in 2004. A further four completed their SACE in 2005
- DECS and CYFS have developed a Mandatory Reporting training package that is inclusive of Anangu. Important issues such as neglect and abuse have been defined and now raised in Anangu society. The training package was delivered in term 2 2005, led by Katrina Tjitayi, PYEC Director, for all Anangu staff in schools. She was supported by a DECS and CYFS combined training team. The training was opened up across agencies and participants included Community constables, youth workers and TAFE lecturers.
- Mind Matters, a program focusing on well-being, values and building resilience and self esteem in students is being introduced to all APY Lands schools. Indulkana, Fregon and Wiltja schools started the pilot project in 2004. Using the learning from the pilot, Mind Matters has been introduced to the rest of the district at the Annual Lands Education Conference. Mind Matters staff together with Katrina Tjitayi and Indulkana Anangu women led a training day for 200 Anangu and non-Anangu staff
- in 2005, the staff of Anangu Education Services began to explore with Anangu a protective behaviours curriculum. This will intermesh Anangu values, Anangu lifestyle patterns with a new DECS curriculum that is being developed. It is expected that parts of this will be trialled in the latter part of 2006
- as part of the School Retention Action Plan the Social Inclusion Board has funded the Student Voice Program at Amata
- significant funding from the Capital Program has also been allocated to schools across the APY Lands, as follows:

- Fregon Anangu School – Over \$1.5M has been invested at Fregon for completion of a new administration area, staff/student toilet block and a multi-purpose space, as well as minor upgrading to existing accommodation
- Amata Anangu School – Over \$3.7M has been invested at Amata for completion of a new administration block and staff/student toilet block. This also includes future provision of new classrooms, Child Parent Centre and canteen, upgrading the activity hall and mechanical upgrades, which are due for completion early 2006
- Ernabella Anangu School – \$0.8M has been allocated to upgrade the Child Parent Centre
- Pipalyatjara Anangu School – An allocation of \$1.5M has been made to provide a new Child Parent Centre, classrooms and toilet block.

## Employment & Training

A focus of the government's initiatives on the APY Lands has been improving employment, education and training outcomes:

- improvements are being made to TAFE facilities and to the Mobile Multi- Trade Skills Centre. The Mobile Skills Centre is used to provide vocational training in a number of communities that do not have a permanent TAFE presence. Hairdressing equipment has been added to the Mobile Skills Centre in response to requests for hairdressing training in a number of communities
- in addition to improving training facilities there has been a focus on including training components in positions established as part of projects and programs on the Lands:
  - family support workers, environmental health officers, youth workers, disability workers and those who will work in the substance abuse programs are being provided with training by TAFE and other providers
  - community constables and night patrol officers receive training from SAPOL
  - essential services officers will undertake a vocational educational program to train to maintain the disinfectant equipment for water supplies on a day to day basis
  - Mimili community members are undertaking on the job training and will be able to undertake horticultural training through TAFE
  - selected community members in communities with pools will be trained as pool operators and life guards
  - Anangu involved in the Kuka Kanyini program will be able to undertake appropriate training through FarmBis
  - TAFE are providing management, IT and retail training to 40 Anangu trainees. The training has been tailored to meet the requirements of positions to be filled in stores and the rural transaction centres
  - a training and employment program for Anangu interested in employment in the housing construction and maintenance sector is being developed
  - six trainees from the 2002-2003 State Government Youth Traineeship program graduated and were successful in gaining full time employment with schools in the APY Lands. Two trainees are currently placed in the State Government Youth Traineeship Program – one at Murputja and the other about to commence at Fregon
  - TAFE are managing a Commonwealth Department of Employment and Workplace Relations Structured Training Employment Program (STEP) across the APY Lands that had an intake of 50 Anangu in late 2003.

TAFE has also re-established a presence at Yalata.



## Community Enhancement

Projects to enhance the amenity of the communities, some of which will also have economic benefits, have been established:

- a ceramicist with extensive experience in supporting Indigenous communities in the Northern Territory and in third world countries to establish sustainable ceramics enterprises, has been contracted to assist Ernabella Arts Inc to implement the Ceramics Business Plan
- Arts SA and Country Arts SA have provided funding to Ananguku Arts and Culture Aboriginal Corporation for APY artists to take a leadership role in the development of Indigenous artists in SA. APY artists will deliver skills development training and workshops to other SA Indigenous artists and arts centres
- Kaltjiti Arts and Crafts have received funding to assist the expansion of their successful rug and paper maché production. Designs created by artists from the Fregon community are sent to Kashmir and are used to create these unique items. The project has been running continuously since its establishment in 1996.
- commonwealth and state government funding has been provided for the construction and upgrade of housing for art coordinators at Indulkana, Amata and Ernabella.
- the Reedy Creek Nursery has been contracted to work with the Mimili community to cultivate Australian native food with the aim of developing a small sustainable horticultural enterprise. The construction of the infrastructure and the first planting took place in November 2004. The community has been harvesting crops from April 2005. Food produced in Mimili will be available to the community, with excess sold back to Reedy Creek for production of commercial relishes and sauces. With the support of Reedy Creek Nursery the Mimili community is re-landscaping community areas, incorporating bush food plants to increase the availability of fresh foods to the community, as well as trees to provide shade
- in response to community interest in bush food cultivation enterprises, a second bush foods plot will be established in Amata. Initial ground work preparation commenced in August 2005.
- a number of groups have booked tours with Mimili's tourism enterprise, Mimili Maku Tours, to be conducted over the next couple of months. The community based enterprise will receive extra support from the new Mimili TAFE staff
- the PY Ku rural transaction centre operations are being trialled in temporary accommodation at Mimili and Amata. This project is managed by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing. Service SA is working with PY Media to provide access to a range of state government services including applications for birth certificates, driver's licences, car registration through the PY Ku network. The rural transaction centres will provide employment opportunities for a number of the current intake of STEP trainees
- swimming pools are planned for the APY Lands. They will add to the infrastructure in the remote communities and provide a centre for employment opportunities. There will be a 'no school, no pool' rule to improve school attendance. There is evidence that swimming pools reduce the occurrence of infectious illnesses such as 'glue ear'. The Commonwealth and South Australian Governments are funding the pools. Construction of the Mimili pool commenced in November 2005
- the Office of Recreation and Sport is undertaking an audit and scoping study of recreation and sporting facilities and services on the Lands to aid future planning
- the Mai Wiru (Healthy Food) Stores Policy is improving the availability nutritious foods in local stores, coordinating purchases to improve affordability and providing retail training for Anangu. This project is managed by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing. TAFE is working closely with coordinators of the policy to ensure that trainees interested in employment in community stores have appropriate training. In consultation with the coordinators of the Stores Policy, Reedy Creek Nursery have supplied the Mimili community store with desert raisins and other bush foods, attractively packaged and at cost price on a trial basis. The aim is to provide children with healthy alternatives to commercial lollies. As the Mimili bush foods plot comes into full production a wider range of bush foods will be available through the community store.

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