

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN SUBMISSION AUGUST 2008

SENATE COMMUNITY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE INQUIRY INTO PETROL SNIFFING AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN CENTRAL AUSTRALIA - TERMS OF REFERENCE

Introduction

The Government of South Australia and the Australian Government are working in collaboration to address petrol sniffing and other substance abuse behaviours in the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands which form part of central Australia. This is an area of approximately 100,000 square kilometres in the far north west of South Australia and bounded by Western Australia and the Northern Territory.

The Government of South Australia launched a major intervention in the APY Lands in March 2004, with the establishment of the APY Lands Task Force (later renamed the Aboriginal Lands Task Force) led by the Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation Division. 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. The South Australian Government, in collaboration with Australian Government agencies and Anangu organisations, has been working consistently to improve the planning and coordination of service delivery to communities on the APY Lands.

Tjungungku Kuranyukutu Palyantjaku (TKP), meaning "Together, towards the future", is a body of representatives from the Australian and South Australian Governments and Anangu organisations. TKP enables all organisations delivering services in the APY Lands to plan and work together to provide better outcomes in law and order, health, education, employment and housing, and in particular, to create greater opportunities for young people. Wiru Palyantjaku is a community group supporting TKP, whose objective is to improve the delivery of services to Anangu living on the APY Lands by working in conjunction with TKP. Wiru Palyantjaku consists of representatives from the major Anangu service organisations and community council representatives, including:

- Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Education Committee (PYEC). This committee develops and implements educational programs that are both Anangu friendly and meet the needs of mainstream bodies.
- Nganampa Health Council (Nganampa Health). The Council provides primary health care services to all people living on the APY Lands, including 24 hour primary clinical care, aged and disability care programs, and health worker training and support.
- PY Media. This service delivers communication and IT services to the APY Lands, including technical staff, information, advice, support networks, media equipment, and radio and television advertising.
- APY Executive Board. The Board has specific powers and functions as described under the *Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Land Rights Act 1981* relating to management, use and control of the APY Lands.
- AP Services. AP Services provides a range of services on the APY Lands, including building roads, as well as maintenance programs.
- Anangu Arts and Culture Aboriginal Corporation (KU Arts). This peak Arts body fosters and directs the development of more sustainable arts practice for artists in the region.
- Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (NPY) Women's Council. The Council provides services and support to improve the quality of life for families on the APY Lands, and an avenue for participation of women in decision-making processes. It also helps people to access training, support and services on the APY Lands, and delivers programs and information.

South Australian Government agencies delivering services on the APY Lands include:

- Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation Division (Lead Agency), Department of the Premier and Cabinet.
- South Australian Police (SAPOL).
- Department of Health; SA Health, Drug and Alcohol Services SA (DASSA).
- Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Training (DFEEST).
- Department for Families and Communities (DFC); Office of Aboriginal Housing (OAH), Families SA, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Services (ATSIS), and Aboriginal Asset Services (AAS).
- Department of Correctional Services.
- Department of Transport, Energy and Infrastructure (DTEI).
- Department of Environment and Heritage (DEH).
- Department of Education and Children's Services (DECS).

In June 2006, TKP developed an action plan focussing on the five priority areas identified by Wiru Palyantjaku where significant improvements in outcomes are required to improve living conditions on the APY Lands. These priority areas are:

- 1) Housing, Infrastructure and Essential Services
- 2) Safety
- 3) Leadership and Management
- 4) Health
- 5) Employment, Education and Training.

Under Safety (priority 2) of the action plan there are two relevant targets:

- Reduce petrol sniffing and other forms of substance misuse; and
- Improve youth programs.

Under Health (priority 3) there is one relevant target:

- Improve disability services.

The initiatives being undertaken by the Government of South Australia in each of these areas will be addressed below under the headings listed in the Committee's Terms of Reference.

RESPONSE TO TERM OF REFERENCE:

a) the ongoing effectiveness of the eight-point plan in combating petrol sniffing in central Australia;

The Eight Point Plan is one of a number of strategies and recommendations from inquiries that are influencing the response to petrol sniffing and other substance abuse behaviours on the APY Lands by the Government of South Australia. The responses by the Government have been based on the interventions outlined in that plan consistent with the principles outlined in the following key documents:

- The State Coroner of South Australia's two recent inquests into petrol sniffing related deaths in the APY Lands (State Coroner SA, 2002, 2005);
- *National Strategic Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health 2003*;
- *National Drug Strategy Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Complementary Action Plan 2003-2006* (Ministerial Council on Drug Strategy, 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);
- National Directions on Inhalant Abuse (MCDS, 2006);
- Shaw, G. Watson, C. Wakerman, J. Dewhurst, C (2006) *Feasibility Study for Community Service Models to address Volatile Substance Misuse in the Cross Border Region of Central Australia*, Centre for Remote Health, Alice Springs;

- The 2008 Report of the Honourable E.P. Mullighan *Commission of Inquiry into Sexual Abuse of Children on the APY Lands*; and

All the drug strategy documents listed above suggest that the key principle to guide Government responses to substance misuse, in any setting, would include an ongoing comprehensive balance of supply reduction, demand reduction and harm reduction measures. The Government of South Australia has incorporated each of these elements in its approach.

Elements of South Australia's response initiatives:

1. Consistent Legislation

The Cross Border Justice Project is developing generic legislation to enable police in Western Australia (WA), Northern Territory (NT) and South Australia (SA) to operate throughout the entire Ngaanyatjaraku Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands, with consistent judicial processes. The facilitation of operational capacity beyond existing State and Territory borders will act as a deterrent to those who take flight across borders in order to escape apprehension with respect to a broad range of offending, petrol sniffing and mental health issues. It will also assist with positive action, assistance and support for clients. A draft Bill has been developed and will next be discussed in August at a cross jurisdictional meeting to be held in Perth. The legislation will be supported by a Memorandum of Understanding which is being developed between the three jurisdictions. Agency specific operational protocols in relation to existing facilities such as police stations, courts and mental health facilities are also being discussed.

2. Appropriate Levels of Policing

Operation Midrealm was established in 2004 by NT, SA, and WA Police with the assistance of Federal Government funding. It aims to provide a co-ordinated approach to the targeting of illicit substance abuse and semi-organised drug distribution throughout the Ngaanyatjaraku Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands. The key elements of Operation Midrealm are:

- Increased intelligence holdings that identify specific offenders and groups as well as their methods of operation.
- Detection of activities of offenders and their associates.
- Increased apprehension of offenders for targeted offences.
- Development of a community based crime reduction strategy, based upon coordinated multi-agency commitment.
- Improved public and community awareness of the Substance Abuse Intelligence Desk (SAID) and its operations.
- Reduced incidence of persons detected with illicit substances namely petrol, alcohol and drugs.

The establishment of the tri-Territory/State coordinated approach has enabled a sustained disruption to criminal networks that could not be achieved by individual local enforcement. It has increased the intelligence holdings of police jurisdictions and provides the basis for early intervention opportunities.

SA has substantially increased its police presence on the APY Lands since 2004 when there were no police based within the APY Lands.

Prior to the Commission of Inquiry, Children on the APY Lands (Mullighan Report) which reported in May 2008, the police deployment within the APY Lands was:

- four permanent uniform officers at Umuwa;
- four permanent uniform officers at Murputja;
- four Community Constables;
- three Police Aboriginal Liaison Officers.

SAPOL has subsequently increased its deployment to 12 uniformed officers within the APY Lands. These police rotate every two weeks. The APY Lands are further supported by six uniformed officers and one administrative support officer based at Marla. The longer term commitment to the APY Lands is to provide a total of 19 permanent officers within the APY Lands.

Three new police station/court and accommodation facilities are to be built at Amata, Pukatja and Mimili. Each station will be staffed by four uniformed officers with the first of these stations at Amata due to be completed in August 2009. These extra positions will be established in June, July and August 2009, following construction of the police stations and residences.

In September 2007, SAPOL created a project officer position on the APY Lands to focus on sexual abuse and domestic violence. Issues of domestic violence, child abuse, substance abuse and lack of education are intrinsically linked to a broad requirement for community development and support within Aboriginal communities on the APY Lands.

SAPOL's strategies are focussed upon prevention, early intervention, community engagement, education and detection of inhalant abusers with the aim to provide community health and safety through its harm minimisation strategies. Police are strategically placed within the APY Lands to facilitate response throughout the region in an appropriate way.

SAPOL has also recently selected three additional positions, two Child and Family Violence/Crime Prevention Officers and one Detective Brevet Sergeant, to work on the APY Lands. Initially these three positions will be based at Marla but will eventually be physically located within the APY Lands. The three positions will have a primary focus on child abuse, domestic violence and crime prevention. They will work with other Government agencies that are also increasing resources to combat child sex abuse.

Traditional Community Constables (CCs) play an important role in preserving the peace in Indigenous Communities by:

- providing the first line of policing within the limitations of each Community Constable's minute of appointment and current level of competency;
- intervening in the early stages of incidents before they escalate;
- providing a presence in the community and at community gatherings;
- utilising problem solving approaches which take account of the interplay of cultural factors, including kinship obligations, operating in any particular situation.

Additional new Community Liaison Officer (CLO) positions on the Lands were created by SAPOL in 2008. Anangu are employed on a casual basis to assist Police and Community Constables to provide policing responses and develop community crime reduction strategies. Four people from the APY Lands recently completed this training and are employed at Fregon, Indulkana, Ernabella and Amata. The CLOs work with Aboriginal people, police staff, community groups and other agencies to develop and maintain strong working relationships between police and community members, and to assist police in carrying out their duties. One CLO has become a community constable.

SAPOL also has a full-time Community Constable Coordinator position, at the rank of Senior Sergeant (based in Adelaide), to recruit, support and professionally develop all CCs and CLOs across South Australia. It is envisaged that the increased deployment of police into the APY Lands may also increase the success of Community Constable recruitment.

Part of the police role on the APY Lands is establishing a meaningful relationship with each of the local communities. Fully sworn officers are assigned a liaison role with particular communities. There is an expectation that police will visit the communities on a daily basis and in addition to attending to response matters, will liaise with community leaders.

Police on the APY Lands also manage Community Safety Committees that have been initiated by SAPOL in each major community. They are designed to encourage Anangu people to work with SAPOL to find solutions to crime and disorder issues, including petrol sniffing and substance abuse.

The increased police presence on the APY Lands has had flow-on benefits for the provision of other existing services.

3. Further Roll-Out of Non-Sniffable Petrol

Officers of the South Australian Government have encouraged communities to become part of the Comgas Scheme that subsidises the cost of supplying Opal fuel as a substitute for unleaded petrol in communities affected by petrol sniffing. All Aboriginal communities on the APY Lands now only have diesel and Opal fuel available for retail sales.

4. Alternative Activities for Young People

The Department for Families and Communities (DFC) operates a number of activities to divert people away from substance misuse on the APY Lands and these are discussed below at term of reference (c) "the delivery of youth services in affected areas".

5. Treatment and Respite Facilities

Within the APY Lands, the *Pitjantjatjara Lands Rights (Control of Petrol) By-Laws 1987*, regulate the possession of petrol as an inhalant. The maximum penalty for a person who is found to be in possession of petrol for the purposes of inhalation is \$100. SAPOL in cooperation with DASSA have implemented a voluntary substance abuse referral program on the APY Lands aimed at those who engage in petrol sniffing. Those identified by police are offered referral to DASSA for assessment and participation in rehabilitative services including the mobile outreach assessment and counselling program and the residential rehabilitation program.

The Australian Government has provided funds to build a Substance Misuse Facility and associated staff housing on the APY Lands. The SA Government contributes the recurrent operational costs of the facility. Drug and Alcohol Services South Australia (DASSA) manages the facility which provides a range of treatment and rehabilitation services for people on the APY Lands who are experiencing problems caused by substance misuse. Services aim to combat dependence and assist people to reintegrate into their communities.

A mobile outreach service has operated from the second half of 2006 and to date has had over 110 clients access this service. The first residential program at the facility began in July 2008.

The Illicit Drug Diversion Initiative is relatively new in the APY Lands. A diversionary process has been established but, to date, no diversions have been recorded.

Substance abuse services are also provided by Nganampa Health, and are funded by the Department of Health. This service involves the:

- provision of high quality clinical primary health care for those affected by petrol sniffing;
- provision of case management and individually designed care arrangements, including respite care, where available, for those affected by petrol sniffing;
- support and funding of broad based diversionary programs, particularly in relation to youth development, recreation and training opportunities for young people;
- completion of an annual survey to monitor the prevalence of petrol sniffing on the APY Lands; and
- participation in research that aims to reduce petrol sniffing in this area.

Young people needing treatment and rehabilitation for petrol sniffing are identified by Families SA through its Child Protection, Youth at Risk; and Youth Offending programs. Families SA engages the child or young person, and their family, in a process that aims to increase their safety and to reduce the levels of risk. The case management of such clients may include:

- services outreached to their place of residence on the APY Lands, through local service providers; and
- in some instances the provision of services to the client and their family in a rural or Adelaide metropolitan location, in negotiation with key or significant persons.

Mental health interventions in the APY Lands include medical assessments, video assessments, transportation of patients and cross border consultations and transportations. Improvements in these services are being addressed as part of a wider mental health project being undertaken by SAPOL and SA Health.

6. Communication and Education Strategies

Emphasis is placed on education about the risks of toxicity, seizures and injuries from sniffing petrol. Drug and alcohol education is included in health programs run by Nganampa Health Council, the NPY Women's Council, DECS and the Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Education Council. DFC has distributed copies of the "Petrol Sniffing and Other Solvents Kits" produced by the Aboriginal Drug and Alcohol Council and copies of the Australian Government's *The Grog Book* and *Sniffing and the Brain* to major communities and some homelands.

7. Strengthening and Supporting Communities

The Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation Division (AARD) within the Department of the Premier and Cabinet (DPC) is involved in strengthening and supporting the governance capacity of communities across the APY Lands at a number of levels, including local community-based and higher level initiatives.

To this end, the Commonwealth and South Australian Governments commissioned John Thurtell to consult with APY Lands communities regarding options to improve service delivery. His final report entitled *Scoping Study Of The Delivery Of Municipal And Local Government Services On The Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands (2007)* sets out a range of options.

The Government concurrently established the Children on the APY Lands Commission of Inquiry during 2007. The key recommendations made by Commissioner Mullighan highlight concerns associated with inadequate governance and service delivery. Specifically Recommendation One suggests "... changes to governance of communities on the Lands be implemented promptly so as to reduce the extent of dysfunction and possible corruption in the communities." The Recommendation also states "that the nature of any change should have regard to the empowerment of Anangu and enhancing confidence in disclosing child sexual abuse ...".

The South Australian Government agrees with Commissioner Mullighan that dysfunctional governance undermines attempts to tackle sexual abuse. Further, the South Australian Government believes that the link between dysfunctional governance and social dysfunction, in regards to sexual abuse, also applies in relation to substance abuse and petrol sniffing. Specifically, dysfunctional governance discourages community members from disclosing child sexual abuse, undermines policing efforts to restrict the supply of petrol and other substances, and undermines the ability of the community to establish positive social norms.

The Government's views are reinforced by the findings of the Thurtell Report and the Mullighan Inquiry and it will shortly release a response to these, and initiate consultations with Anangu and key stakeholders regarding the various options and recommendations put forward.

At a community level, AARD is involved in initiatives to strengthen and support the APY Lands communities, which include:

- placing managers, youth workers and sport and recreation officers in communities; and
- implementing a workforce strategy to develop local people for local jobs and to ensure that there are qualified professionals to assist them.

AARD has been working on strengthening the capacity of community organisations since January 2007 with a pilot applied governance program in the Amata Community. The Program ensures that training, planning, administration and service delivery are part of a continuous delivery on the goals and objectives of the community. The program is embedded in the activities of the community and its Council and is both a community development program and an education program.

In order to strengthen the effectiveness of community councils on the APY Lands AARD would ultimately like to expand the applied community governance program to all of the communities on the APY Lands. This may be a 2-3 year program depending on the availability of suitably skilled people to take on the work.

AARD is also currently negotiating a Memorandum of Understanding with the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations about a training plan for remote communities in South Australia designed for people with very low English literacy.

8. Evaluation

The incidence of petrol sniffing on the APY Lands is significantly decreasing as a consequence of the co-ordinated, multifaceted approach to harm minimisation and disruption in the supply of inhalants. There is strong evidence that the partnership approach of the Governments of South Australia, Australia and non-government organisations is achieving significant results.

The Nganampa Health Council Prevalence Survey of Petrol-Sniffing on the APY Lands, May 2007, found as follows:

- In the 2004 survey, 224 persons representing 8.4% of the total population of the APY Lands were identified as having sniffed petrol over the previous twelve-month period.
- In the 2005 survey, 178 persons representing 6.6 % of the total population of the APY Lands were identified as having sniffed petrol over the previous twelve-month period.
- In the 2006 survey, 70 persons representing 2.6% of the total population of the APY Lands were identified as having sniffed petrol over the previous twelve-month period.
- In the March 2007 survey 38 people were recorded as having sniffed petrol at some time over the eight-month period since the previous survey. This number represents 1.3% of the total population of the APY Lands.
- Of this total of 38 individuals, 18 persons only were identified as regularly sniffing petrol, and all of these in secret and at night. These individuals were all located in one community.
- Between October 2006 and May 2007 petrol sniffing was a relatively rare and sporadic event on the APY Lands. There was no petrol sniffing recorded in all but two communities during this period.

The significant reduction in petrol sniffing above is reinforced by the reduced number of recent detections for petrol sniffing related offences on the APY Lands. The reduction in detections has occurred during a period of increased police presence on the APY Lands.

Detections by Financial Year – APY Lands – Possession and Inhalation charges
Source: SAPOL

Financial Year	Detections
2004/2005	329
2005/2006	106
2006/2007	29
2007/2008	5

Detections by Financial Year – APY Lands – Sell/ Supply Charges

Financial Year	Detections
2005/2006	0
2007/2008	1

TERM OF REFERENCE:

b) the extent of the roll out of Opal fuel;

The national introduction of Opal fuel, as administered by the Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health, has assisted communities and police to reduce petrol sniffing on the APY Lands. Nevertheless, South Australia cautions about the reduction in petrol sniffing being attributed to this supply measure alone. It is likely that it is the combination of supply, demand and harm reduction measures that is achieving the results.

All Aboriginal communities on the APY Lands now only have diesel and opal fuel available for retail sales. Roadhouses at Mintabie, Marla and 12 outlets in Alice Springs have Opal fuel available for sale but premium unleaded is also available at these locations. It is understood that an effort is made not to sell premium unleaded fuel to Anangu, and especially not in containers.

The introduction of Opal fuel into the APY Lands has seen a progressive reduction in the offender detections from 329 detections within the 2004/2005 financial year to 5 detections within the 2007/2008 financial year. This decrease has also contributed to a reduction in crime on the APY Lands.

The outcome of changes to commercial practices at Mintabie should lead to reduced travel to Mintabie by Anangu people. Currently numerous Anangu people are travelling to Mintabie shops because of the availability of credit, much longer operating hours and access to products not available in the APY Lands' shops and this also increases the risk of illegal sale of drugs, petrol and alcohol.

TERM OF REFERENCE:

c) the delivery of youth services in affected areas;

APY Youth Engagement Strategy

This project was developed by the Government of South Australia and the Australian Government to engage young people between the ages of 12 and 20 who are disengaged from education, vocational learning and employment.

Many young people on the APY Lands either do not attend school or are at risk of leaving school early. Upon leaving they often do not move into paid work or other training opportunities. With limited opportunities for recreational or work activities to provide meaningful use of time, there is a high risk that through boredom and the influence of others, these young people will engage in other high risk activities such as substance abuse. Even those who have completed all or part of their high school education may also adopt high risk activities on returning to community.

The APY Youth Engagement Strategy is being developed through the appointment of a Senior Project Manager. This position is currently working with APY communities as well as state and Commonwealth agencies:

- To identify the young people in the target group in each community across the Lands
- To develop and implement the program structure
- To develop ideas for diversionary programs that could be run in each community (from 2009)
- To establish a method of evaluation
- To run or support a number of trial programs during 2008

To date;

- A database of young people within the target group of between 12 and 20 years and not attending school or other training or work has been developed.
- A trial program developed by APY Land Management has been run and completed. The Pastoral Industry Training program was run from 12 - 30 May 2008 at Double Tanks on the APY Lands and was successfully completed by twenty one participants.
- A trial Construction program at Ernabella School which is offering training and accreditation opportunities for approximately eight to ten young men.
- A trial Bush Mechanics program, is being developed at Amata and is likely to commence later in 2008.

APY Lands Sport, Multi Sport and Youth Recreation

The Australian and South Australian Governments are working together to develop and run a sports program on the APY Lands. Funding is being provided to the South Australian National Football League (SANFL) to coordinate and manage the program. A number of State and Commonwealth agencies are involved in supporting this program.

The program comprises sporting competitions on the APY Lands for males and females (football and softball) along with an after school multi skills youth program. The SANFL has appointed an APY Lands Program Manager, and an Indigenous Development Officer along with two APY based Field Officers who work with the eastern and western regions. The trainees will undertake a Certificate II in Sport and Recreation, which will provide training suitable for future work in sport, youth work or in pool management. The trainees commenced this program in February 2008. Additional support is being provided by Youth Workers, Bungala and TAFE SA regarding 'on the job' training opportunities.

The After School Youth Multi Skills program will offer an opportunity for children (Years 2 to 7) to participate in comprehensive school holiday coaching clinics followed by after school sport sessions.

Department for Families and Communities facilitates the following activities to divert young people away from substance misuse:

- 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; and
- Dirt bike (motor cross) programs.

It also operates a disability support program for people with brain injuries resulting from petrol sniffing.

DFC youth related initiatives/services on the APY Lands:

- 1) Employment of youth workers located in communities.
- 2) Training of youth workers.
- 3) School Holiday programs.
- 4) Recreational Programs in partnership with the Australian Government.

- 5) Young people with acquired brain injury from petrol sniffing are able to access the DFC Disability Support Program on the APY Lands.
- 6) Cooperating with the establishment of the APY Youth Engagement Strategy.

1) Employment of youth workers located in communities

The overall objectives of the APY Lands Youth program are to develop the leadership skills of Aboriginal children and young people to enable them to develop their potential and participate fully in community life, thus increasing community capacity. The target age group is 12 -25 year olds.

Youth workers are currently employed by community councils in Ernabella, Amata, Pipalyatjara, Kalka and Mimili. Funding is provided through DFC, and workers are supported by DFC Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Services staff located full time at Marla, near the APY Lands. However, approval has been received for the youth workers to be employed under the Public Sector Management Act by DFC rather than through community councils. DFC is currently working to transition this employment arrangement and has commenced a recruitment process as part of an overall restructure of the management of the youth programs.

Youth Sheds are open in Amata, Pukatja and Mimili. These provide a safe supervised space for young people to gather and relax and divert them from anti-social activities. Some of the activities available include: pool, discos, electronic games and movie nights. Other activities organised through the youth program on an ongoing basis, including school holiday periods, include camping trips, swimming carnivals, hunting trips, music activities, BMX programs and dirt bike programs.

2) Training of youth workers

Training is provided to youth workers by DFC contracting with Relationships Australia (RASA). All training delivered is aligned to the nationally recognised Certificate III in youth work. Assessments and recognition processes are tailored to assess competencies from Certificate III, IV or Diploma level.

Over the period from July 2007 to June 2008 the formal training sessions have covered key topics from the youth work qualifications including program planning, crisis management, sports and recreational skills, mental health first aid (depression, suicide, and psychosis), youth development and applying for funding. Since July 2007 twenty two youth workers have attended the training.

As of June 2008 the attainments of Youth Workers are as follows:

- **Pukatja** – One Youth Worker has completed Certificate III, enrolled in Certificate IV and has attained 3 competencies towards this certificate.
- **Indulkana** – One Youth Worker has completed Certificate III, enrolled in Certificate IV Youth Work and has attained 3 competencies (now left position), one youth worker 70% completed attainments for Certificate III in Community Services (following RPL process).
- **Mimili** – One Youth Worker has completed Certificate III, enrolled in Certificate IV Community Services and has attained 3 competencies in this certificate. One Youth Worker enrolled in Certificate III in Community Services.
- **Amata** –Two Youth Worker's completed Certificate III (One Anangu, one Non-Indigenous), 2 youth workers have enrolled in the Certificate III in Community Services.
- **Pipalyatjara** – Two Youth Workers have completed 70% of the Certificate III.
- **Kalka** –Two Youth Workers is enrolled in Certificate III in Community Services.

Individual mentoring and assessment sessions were also provided at all communities. The training sessions and community meetings are also networking opportunities. RASA regularly invites other workers visiting the APY Lands into these sessions to build connections and relationships with the Youth Workers to support collaboration and referral pathways.

3) School Holiday programs

Previously DFC contracted additional service providers to run holiday programs in communities. To increase coordination between service providers, since December 2007 specific targeted holiday programs have been run in each community in conjunction with NPY Women's Council to provide additional activities for young people. Volunteers have provided welcome additional skills and support.

Activities conducted have included:

- hip hop dance and arts activities;
- music workshops and recordings, bush trips, and film and multi-media programs;
- Circosis - circus skills that include hula hoops, juggling and acrobatics; and
- Ngapartji Ngapartji: Film making and theatre games program.

DFC and NPY Women's Council will work in partnership to deliver school holiday programs through to June 2009.

4) Recreational Programs in partnership with the Australian Government

DFC has also been a partner with the Australian Government in Shared Responsibility Agreements covering youth activities such as a BMX program, the Mimili horse program and a dirt bike program (motor cross).

5) Young people with acquired brain injury from petrol sniffing are able to access the DFC Disability Support Program on the APY Lands.

DFC ATSI Community Support Officers located in all major communities provide a local disability support service in each community. As Anangu take up the opportunity of training and employment within the disability field there will be a team approach to supporting people with a disability and their family/carers.

The Disability Support Program is developing and with an increased opportunity for Anangu to train as disability support workers the program has the potential to provide greater support to people with a disability and their families/carers. Currently ATSI has two Disability Coordinators (east and west) working with the Community Support Officers to update individual client support plans, develop an Anangu workforce, collate data and to provide an immediate local response to identified needs.

Families SA also provides youth services to:

- Young people who have entered the Juvenile Justice system through their offending behaviours. Families SA having primary responsibility in this area to administer and supervise offending orders on these young people; and
- Young people who have engaged in behaviours that promote their vulnerability to abuse and neglect, and are subject to a Child Protection notification through the Child Protection system. In such instances, Families SA adopts a safety and wellbeing approach to these young people, involving their family and the community in decision-making processes and safety planning for them.

In addition, Families SA in partnership with DECS has introduced an initiative which places Social Workers in DECS Schools. Initially three senior Families SA staff were relocated to the APY Lands during the year 2007/08, these positions are supported by the Coober Pedy District Centre. Currently, two of these positions are operational and are based in Iwantja (Indulkana) and Kaltjiti (Fregon). The third position was filled until recently, and a recruitment process is currently underway to refill the position. A key function of these positions is to target young people who are at risk or who are currently engaging in behaviours that place them in danger (such as petrol sniffing). Three additional Social Work positions in DECS schools have been announced as a result of the recommendation from the Commission of Inquiry - Children on the APY Lands. A recruitment process is in place to fill these positions.

Behaviour Management Service

The Specialist Intervention Support service provides a specialist counselling and support/ response service in the APY Lands for Anangu with violent/aggressive and challenging anti-social behaviours and incorporates support for family and other members of the APY Lands communities. On referral, individual cases are assessed for eligibility by the DFC ATSI team. If eligible for the program the practitioner then provides counselling and support to the individual, the family and community as required.

The Intensive Support Service Practitioner is based in Marla or on the APY Lands. Generally the practitioner works with 3-6 clients however this number can vary depending on the requirements of the individuals at a specific time and the intensiveness of the support required.

SAPOL provides a Blue Light Disco program for youth. Regular, well attended discos are held throughout the communities. SAPOL uses these events to encourage positive activity by the community.

TERM OF REFERENCE:

d) the effectiveness and adequacy of resources provided to address petrol sniffing and substance abuse in central Australia;

The marked reduction in the number of Anangu sniffing petrol on the APY Lands as described in the evaluation section earlier is evidence that the resources provided by the SA and Australian Governments have been very successful to date in reducing petrol sniffing and substance abuse on the APY Lands.

Petrol sniffing has been substantially reduced on the APY Lands. To continue to combat petrol sniffing effectively the current levels of funding, resources and programs need to be maintained on an ongoing recurrent basis, otherwise people are likely to revert to petrol sniffing or substitute it with other substances.

TERM OF REFERENCE:

e) what more needs to be done to effectively address petrol sniffing.

There is a need for continued investment in providing communities with information relating to the causes, effects and strategies for addressing: petrol sniffing, individual safety, disability and child abuse and neglect. This approach, coupled with support for community members, will enable the historical effects of such issues to be addressed and will assist with future community safety planning. Community driven change provides a sound basis for individual family change.

Close agency linkages with Aboriginal communities are necessary for creating stronger environments for children and young people to develop. Agencies are keen to partner with communities and other service providers to develop opportunities to increase capacity within the community to address concerns relating to child and youth safety. Community Development initiatives are seen as a means of growing and enabling strong partnerships with Aboriginal communities. Such practice reform requires:

- significant investment in joining with Aboriginal communities to clearly articulate and define how best to work in a way that is culturally relevant and achieves improved child safety and wellbeing outcomes;
- building collaborative and respectful partnerships with families and communities so that the responsibility for ensuring child and youth safety is shared and families and communities have choice about how best to address the relevant issues, such as petrol sniffing; and
- developing closer links and partnerships across Government, non-government services and communities to ensure implementation of best practice models of community development.

Support for, and investment in, Community Development initiatives will:

- facilitate linkages with communities, community groups and relevant agencies;
- facilitate the development and implementation of specific community initiatives that relate to the safety and wellbeing of Aboriginal children, young people and families;
- assist in the development and implementation of community education and information packages regarding safety needs and rights; and
- promote community ownership of environmental, situational and abusive interactions with children and young people.

A rollout of Opal fuel along the Eyre Highway would reduce a ready source of petrol to a small number of sniffers at Yalata and the Maralinga Tjarutja Lands which join the APY Lands in the West of South Australia. The South Australian and Australian Governments are working in partnership to provide infrastructure to facilitate the sale of Opal fuel and diesel at Yalata to address this issue.

The introduction of the *Statutes Amendment (Petroleum Products) Act 2007* which came into operation on 1 July 2008 will also provide valuable legislative backing to police. The legislation amends section 19 of the *Controlled Substances Act* in relation to the sale or supply of volatile solvents. The three amendments are as follows, they:

- prescribe an offence for purchasing (at the request of another person) a volatile solvent on behalf of the other person for the purpose of inhalation at the request of another person;
- provide an offence for selling or supplying a volatile solvent to persons under 16 years of age; and
- empower an authorised officer (including a member of the police force) to confiscate a volatile substance (together with its container) if the authorised officer has reason to suspect that the person has the solvent for the purpose of inhalation.

The volatile solvents have been prescribed in the *Controlled Substances (Volatile Solvents) Regulations* and include a range of adhesives and glues; certain aerosols; cigarette lighter fluid; correction fluids and thinners; nail polish removers; paint thinners; some permanent marker pens; whipped cream aerosols which contain nitrous oxide; and petrol which contains benzene, hexane, toluene or xylene.

SAPOL's ability to take substance abusers to health or rehabilitation centres is preferable to detention in police custody. The new rehabilitation/detoxification centre at Amata may assist in that regard.

Interagency liaison such as that between SAPOL and DAASA should continue to progress initiatives and to identify emerging substance abuse problems in the absence of petrol, (eg chroming and glue sniffing), as well as drugs and alcohol abuse.

SAPOL is developing a "Remote Aboriginal Communities Management Plan" which will provide a regionally specific plan that will enhance the understanding, appreciation, accountability and purpose of policing within these unique areas of South Australia.