

AJJA UPDATE

June 2013

Australasian Juvenile Justice Administrators

A message from the Chair...

Welcome to the fourth AJJA Update. The last few months have seen the inaugural Australasian Youth Justice Conference and the AJJA meeting in May. The Conference proved as a tremendous opportunity for professionals from across Australia and New Zealand to share research and ideas in order to improve practice and outcomes for the young people in our communities. The Meeting raised some interesting discussion and offered the chance for new members to get together. I look forward to working with members to deliver on the AJJA work plan, in particular finalising the National Youth Justice Framework.

Dr Mark Collis

CYCSPRWG and SCCDSAC Update

The Children, Youth and Community Services Policy and Research Working Group (CYCSPRWG) meeting was held on 22 May 2013. As AJJA are a standing item on the agenda, Mark Collis presented the agenda item, via teleconference. Mark updated members on the progress of the National Youth Justice Framework, finalisation of the Bail and Remand Report, the success of the Australasian Youth Justice Conference, and release of the AIHW Bulletin 'Youth Justice in Australia 2011-12'.

AJJA was on the agenda of the Standing Council on Community and Disability Services Advisory Council (SCCDSAC) meeting held on 21 March 2013. This agenda item was presented by the Chair (Mr Terry Murphy – WA) on behalf of the CYCSPRWG. Kathryn Anderson (previous AJJA VIC representative) attended on behalf of Mark Collis. SCCDSAC Members noted the major working projects of AJJA and the complexity of reporting arrangements for AJJA within the COAG governance structure.

Briefly...

- ❖ The Protection and Support Services Working Group (PSSWG) has changed its name to Child Protection and Youth Justice Working Group (CPYJWG).
- ❖ Senate Committee review of justice reinvestment approach to criminal justice in Australia, available on AJJA website
- ❖ Could Members please ensure AJJA invoices have been processed and paid. Payment from several jurisdictions is still outstanding.

Australasian Youth Justice Conference

The Conference was held on 20-22 May at the National Convention Centre, Canberra. It was a success with approximately 240 delegates attending from across Australia, New Zealand, Canada and Thailand. The Keynote speakers were all well received, and included Professor Mark Halsey, Dr Ray Corrado, and Justice Andrew Becroft. Dinner held on 21 May at the Boathouse by the Lake, Canberra, was enjoyed by all, particularly the opportunity for networking between the Keynote speakers and AJJA members.

NYJF Update

The National Youth Justice Framework is still under review. Mark Collis will meet with Dr Tomison, Director, Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) to finalise the AIC's involvement in the venture. The Project Control Group (PCG) are meeting via teleconference on 10 July and will discuss the project in relation to a 'principles' versus 'framework' document, gaps and changes required, and the process from here on. Decisions on these will be raised for endorsement by AJJA at the 16 July teleconference.

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Feedback...

- ❖ The AIC plan to publish the 'Bail and Remand for young people in Australia: a national research project' in July 2013.
- ❖ Please provide contact details to the Secretariat regarding a representative from your jurisdiction for the proposed Youth Justice Workforce Health committee.
- ❖ The budget has been finalised for the 2012-13 financial year and will be circulated to all members prior to the 16 July AJJA teleconference. There is a substantial surplus available for research. Please prepare your research proposals for discussion at the teleconference.

Important Dates to Remember...

- Stage 2 public release of *Youth justice in Australia 2011–12*: fact sheets and web pages - 2 July 2013
- National Youth Justice Framework PCG teleconference – 10 July
- AJJA Teleconference – 16 July 2013
- *Young people aged 10–14 in the youth justice system: 2011–12* - 25 July 2013
- AJJA Meeting (Adelaide) - 7-8th November 2013

Significant Leave / Member Changes...

- Margaret Anderson (NT) has left her position as Director, Youth Justice Division. Russell Caldwell is acting for the interim.
- Eric Heller (Deputy Chair, RIG) will be on long service leave from 23 September 2013- 17 March 2014. Rebecca Fitzsimons (VIC) will act as Deputy Chair, RIG during this period.
- Valda Ruis (NSW) is on leave returning Monday 22 July. Leonie Bender will be acting Chief Executive during this time.

Jurisdiction in Focus

New South Wales - Oral Language Competency

Associate Pamela Snow and Professor Martine Powell will be commencing research in NSW on Oral Language Competence of a cohort of young offenders in NSW.

The aim of the study is:

- To examine the relative prevalence of language impairment in a representative sample of incarcerated young offenders in Juvenile Justice NSW including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) backgrounds;
- To examine links between language impairment and other developmental risks, such as early school departure and involvement with child protection services, in both groups identified above;
- To develop and pilot language-focussed interventions for young offenders, using a Response to Intervention (RTI) model to assess intervention effectiveness.

The results of this study should be of interest to all jurisdictions due to the cohort of Aboriginal young offenders that will participate in the research. The research will be completed in June 2015.

Youth Boot Camps – Northern Territory

The Northern Territory Government's new "Law and Order – Corrections" Policy Statement includes Youth Boot Camps for young people who offend or are at risk of offending and/or becoming career criminals. It is intended that the camps will be evidence based, aligned with current trends in Youth Justice and will include:

- structure, discipline and physical activity
- personal development and self-esteem building
- addressing the causes of crime
- on-going support to young people and their families.

Two types of Youth Boot Camps have been proposed:

- an Early Intervention Youth Boot Camp Program targeting young people at risk of entering a criminal trajectory; and
- a Youth Boot Camp Program for Sentenced Juveniles targeting young people subject to orders under the *Youth Justice Act 2012*.

The Northern Territory Department of Correctional Service is currently engaged in negotiating operational agreements with a number of providers, with the aim of commencing initial Youth Boot Camp trials in June 2013.