**Australasian Juvenile Justice Administrators Meeting**

**13-14 November 2014**

**Northern Territory**

***Northern Territory Report***

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# State and Territory Youth Justice Statistics

# N/A

# Schedule of Achievements and Innovations

## Youth Boot Camps

The Northern Territory Government’s “Law and Order – Corrections” Policy Statement includes boot camps for young people who offend or are at risk of offending and/or becoming career criminals. Two types of boot camp programs were proposed:

1. an early intervention program, and
2. a program for young people who were subject to an order under *Youth Justice Act.*

Early Intervention Youth Boot Camp Programs (EIYBCP)

Following a tender and evaluation process in 2013 Tangentyere Council Incorporated and Operation Flinders Foundation were selected to provide EIYBCP to young Territorians identified as being at risk. Tangentyere deliver their program from Walkabout Bore and Operation Flinders from their property Yankayilla in South Australia.

A site for Operation Flinders to deliver their program in the Northern Territory has been identified. The Department of Correctional Services (NTDCS) has reached an in principle agreement with the Traditional Owners of the site and will look to establish the site for the delivery of youth boot camps. The site is expected to be operational in the first half of 2015.

The Tangentyere Council Program has seen 22 young people successfully complete the program with a final camp scheduled for October 2014. Operation Flinders has recently appointed a NT manager to oversee their program in the Northern Territory. This year 38 young people from the Top End have successfully completed the camp component at Operation Flinders South Australian boot camp site. These young people will continue to receive intensive case management support to reinforce the positive results of the camp upon their return home.

The Minister for Correctional Services met with participants from the pilot boot camp held in 2013 to follow up on their progress one year after completing the camp. The participants attended Parliament House as guests of the Minister and attended question time before sharing their stories, experiences and future goals with the Minister over lunch. All the parents of the participants reported a huge change in their attitude to home and study upon their return and attribute that change largely to the participation in the camp.

Connected Self has been monitoring and evaluating the boot camps throughout 2014 and is expected to report to the Northern Territory Government early in 2015.

Youth Boot Camp Program for Sentenced Youth (YBCSY)

NTDCS is conscious that providing boot camp programs for sentenced young people is a significant new initiative that presents a number of challenges. In particular, the need to ensure community safety while ensuring the program delivers the desired outcome to prevent re-offending. Work continues to identify alternative models and programs for sentenced youth.

A review of the proposed model for the delivery of YBCSY has been undertaken. There are six separate sentencing pathways within the *Youth Justice Act* for young people to be referred to a boot camp program. In addition, the youth boot camp program provides an alternative to detention. Management of referrals to the program is paramount to ensure program integrity is maintained. This may require legislative amendment. A meeting was held with members of the Judiciary to discuss the proposed model and gain feedback. The Judiciary are keen to see the program established but there were differing views as to when a young person might be referred to the program and at what point.

Arrangements are being finalised with a company to provide consultancy services on a sentenced boot camp model for the Northern Territory.

## Youth Diversion

NTDCS inherited the Youth Diversion Grant Funding from the Department of Children and Families in June 2012 and have managed the grants since that time. Youth Justice work closely with the Northern Territory Police Youth Diversion Unit and the eleven NGOs that deliver the Police Youth Diversion assessments, case management, and programs.

In August 2014, NTDCS introduced the Grants Management Framework and Service Model that will enable the department to have a robust, streamlined and accountable decision-making system to effectively and efficiently manage grants administration.

The current grant funding agreements will expire in June 2015.

A recent review of grants funding for youth diversion programs highlighted the need to streamline and ensure greater efficiency in the delivery and reporting of youth diversion programs funded through the grants process.

Youth Justice Grants will be hosting a two day consultation workshop with the Northern Territory Police Youth Diversion Unit and the eleven funded organisations to discuss current issues, the NTDCS Grant Management Framework, program logic, improve the existing KPIs for short, medium and long-term outcomes.

List of Organisations Funded for Youth Diversion and their Service Areas

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Organisation | Region Serviced |
| Roper Gulf Shire Council | Roper Gulf Shire |
| YWCA Darwin Inc | Darwin |
| Tiwi Islands Shire Council | Tiwi Islands |
| Groote Eylandt and Milyakburra Youth Development Unit | Groote Eylandt |
| YMCA Katherine | Katherine |
| Anglicare | Gunbalunya |
| MacDonnell Shire Council | MacDonnell Shire |
| East Arnhem Shire Council | Galiwinku |
| Barkly Youth Services | Barkly |
| Relationships Australia | Alice Springs |
| Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (NPY) Women's Council | The Lands |
| Tangentyere | Alice Springs |

## Family Responsibility Program

Darwin

The Darwin Family Responsibility Program (FRP) will commence the Engaging Adolescents Parenting Program with two programs at Rosebery Middle School.  One program will be run in the morning and one in the evening for working parents. This program aims at assisting parents to improve supervision of their children. It is expected that the program will be open to other agencies if there is space available.

FRC have two co-located opportunities occurring at present. One with Casuarina Community Corrections co-locating a dedicated youth Parole and Probation Officer one day per week. The other with FRP’s Aboriginal Cultural Advisor co-locating to Holtze Youth Detention Centre (HYDC) twice per week.

Alice Springs

The Alice Springs FRC has been co-located with Alice Springs Community Corrections since September 2014 to enhance joint work for families and young people involved in the youth justice system and on Supervision Orders. Work between FRP and the Alice Springs Youth Detention Centre (ASYDC) has been a focus this year. Referrals to the FRP directly from the ASYDC has increased due to the co-location of the ASYDC Case Worker at FRP two days per week.

FRP Alice Springs also increased referrals directly from police for youth presenting with anti-social behaviour (aged 10–13 years) through Supportlink and are exploring how the program can increase case collaboration and improve service delivery through Supportlink’s ‘Integrated Services Framework’ (IFS). The IFS provides a single, multi-functional platform within a cloud based IT system that interconnects government and non-government agencies to improve client outcomes. FRP continue to deliver intensive case management services to an average of 20 families at any one point in time.

## Community-Based Youth Supervision Model

The Community-based Youth Supervision model is primarily based on early intervention and prevention focussed on empowering family and community.

A pivotal role will be to ensure the inclusion and participation of Indigenous leaders and law makers in the remote communities within the Northern Territory, to work alongside them and their communities to develop the programs, and to work with mentors to empower the young people at risk, their families and communities.

The starting point is to identify “what works” and identifying the gaps in the current youth justice system. Youth Justice, Police Diversion, Community Corrections, and Youth Detention are all part of the continuum on the pathway for at risk young people.

Youth Justice is working closely with Community Corrections to develop a youth focus framework within Community Corrections. As noted above, a Community Corrections staff member is now located with the FRP in both Darwin and Alice Springs, to provide better continuity of service to young people and their families.

The co-location of these two resources within NTDCS provides a start for the modelling of Youth Justice Teams and improving communication regarding young people in or at risk of entering the youth justice system and reducing the ‘silo’ effect which is apparent at times.

The other challenge is to divert young people away from the court system for lesser offences including administrative breaches (curfews and non-attendance to programs). The co-location of staff will look to bridge this gap for young people.

There is a review underway addressing the case management model for youth detention in the Northern Territory and the through-care models for assisting young people transitioning back into their communities.

**2.5.Seek Education or Employment not Detention (SEED) Program**

The new Seek Education or Employment not Detention (SEED) strategy being developed by NTDCS aims to build youth detainees’ skills in education or employment to support their reintegration back to community and break the cycle of reoffending.

Education is delivered to youth in detention through close collaboration with the Department of Education. Both youth detention centres contain schools that the youth attend. Detainees that are of school age are required to attend school until they are 17 years of age.

Currently, there are two participants from the HYDC in Darwin actively engaged in the program. The Case Management team will identify future candidates and bring them to the attention of the SEED Committee. The SEED Committee provides the overarching guidance of the program and ensures participants are engaged in appropriate education and training programs aligned to their individual case management plans to ensure outcomes meet the individuals’ future aspirations and capabilities.

A pilot program has commenced in Darwin with Alice Springs likely to commence a pilot program in the last quarter of 2014.

# Human Resource Achievements and Initiatives

Both HYDC and ASYDC have undergone bulk recruitment actions as an interim measure towards transitioning across to a permanent staffing model which will have an accredited training component and pre-employment assessments to be introduced in 2015.  HYDC recently recruited to 20 full-time and 20 Casual Youth Justice Officer positions and received 44 and 50 applicants respectively.

ASYDC has had a recruitment round for both casual and full-time Youth Justice Officers and full-time Senior Youth Justice Officers with another recruitment round underway for an additional five full-time Youth Justice Officers.  In September 2014, seven casual and 11 full-time Youth Justice Officers were recruited to receiving 21 and 25 applicants respectively.  The Senior Youth Justice Officer recruitment is currently under assessment.  Both Darwin and Alice Springs have also accessed the entry level program to assist with urgent escorting requirements seeing one recruited to in Darwin and two recently to Alice Springs on a temporary three month contract.

Additionally, a Reception/Booking Officer was also recruited to using the entry level program at Darwin due to a staff member gaining higher duties within the Agency.

# Research, Reviews and Publications

## 4.1.Youth Justice Framework

The Youth Justice Framework was developed to guide a coordinated and comprehensive response to youth justice issues in the Northern Territory, with the aim of reducing offending and re-offending by young people.

The purpose of the Youth Justice Framework is to provide a culturally safe framework for government agencies and non-government organisations to work together with families and communities to address offending behaviours of young people in, or at risk of entering, the youth justice system.

The key findings from consultations identified that the Youth Justice Framework should:

1. Adopt the principles of the *Youth Justice Act*.
2. Ensure all program and service delivery is culturally appropriate and safe.
3. Include a through-care case management model.
4. Recognise the value of Indigenous organisations and partnerships with Indigenous organisations to deliver programs and services to young people in, or at risk of entering, the youth justice system.
5. Ensure the best interests of the child or young person are paramount in all decision making.
6. Recognise the importance of evidence based programs and services while not discounting opportunities for innovation.
7. Explore initiatives to actively combat risk factors for young people in, or at risk of entering, the youth justice system.
8. Identify ways to better share information across the sector.
9. Ensure all program and service delivery is monitored and evaluated.
10. Contribute to the goal of reducing re-offending by 20 percent by 2016.

Seven themes for change in the Northern Territory youth justice system have been identified:

1. Family and community engagement: Families and communities are invested in the social and responsible development of young people.
2. Early intervention and Prevention: Young people at risk of offending are identified early, to prevent or divert them from having contact with the youth justice system.
3. Community-based orders and youth detention: Comprehensive and coordinated programs and services are delivered to young people who are on community-based orders or in youth detention.
4. Reintegration: On completion of a supervised sentence, young people and their families have access to programs and services to support reintegration and adjustment.
5. Legislation, legal practice and court reforms: Legislation, legal practice and court procedures are specific to the youth justice sector and the changing needs of young people in the Northern Territory.
6. Workforce development and integrated information: The Northern Territory Government (NTG) youth justice sector has people with the necessary skills, cultural competence and capabilities, supported by the appropriate tools and information, to work effectively with young people.
7. Accountability and governance: A youth justice monitoring and evaluation framework is established and the youth justice sector is transparent and accountable.

**4.2.Detention Centre Review**

On 2 October 2014, the Minister for Correctional Services announced that the Northern Territory Government would conduct an independent review into youth detention following a series of serious incidents. The review will look at youth detention operations in the Northern Territory with the aim of examining existing operations and practices and make recommendations that will inform future direction and operations. This review does not have the same intent or scope as the previous review entitled Review of the Northern Territory Youth Justice System; this review specifically focuses on youth detention services delivered in the Northern Territory.

Mr Michael Vita, who is currently the general manager of the Reiby Juvenile Justice Centre near Campbelltown in Western Sydney, will be undertaking the review. Mr Vita managed Sydney's Long Bay Gaol for 21 years and oversaw the expansion and redevelopment of the Villawood Detention Centre. Mr Vita has commenced meeting with stakeholders and gathering information.

Mr Vita will review the structure, management and operating practices of youth detention, in particular:

* procedures and practices for the classification and management (control and treatment) of detainees;
* security practices and protocols;
* immediate challenges facing the delivery of youth detention services at the HYDC and the ASYDC;
* immediate challenges facing the delivery of youth detention services as they are transitioned from the HYDC to the Darwin Youth Detention Centre;
* the pattern of contributing factors and issues surrounding significant incidents in youth detention since December 2009;
* the ability of youth detention to contribute to the NTDCS Strategic Intent and key milestones; and
* the ability and likelihood of the Northern Territory Youth Justice Framework to address systemic youth detention issues.

Mr Vita will also be invited to look at and make recommendations about the Government’s recent proposal to use the existing Berrimah Correctional Centre as a youth detention centre.

The timeframe for the review will include an initial report by the end of November and a final report and recommendations by the end of December 2014.

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