

# Draft Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Justice Strategy 2011-2014

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For consultation

# Table of Contents

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Background .....	12
Introduction .....	12
The national context - 'Closing the Gap' on justice outcomes .....	14
Principles .....	16
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander over-representation in the criminal justice system.....	17
Offending .....	17
Victims.....	18
Incarceration and detention .....	19
What progress does the data show? .....	19
What causes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander over-representation? .....	20
What can be done to reduce Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander offending and victimisation? ..	21
What does this suggest for Queensland's future Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander justice strategy? .....	22
The Way Forward.....	23
Pillars of reform .....	23
How will the reforms be implemented? .....	24
A place-based approach.....	24
The identification of target areas under the Strategy .....	25
Justice reinvestment: ensuring resources are directed at initiatives that work to reduce offending.....	25
Roles and responsibilities.....	26
Ministerial responsibility.....	26
Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Justice Taskforce.....	27
Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Council .....	28
Community Justice Groups .....	28
How will we know that the Justice Strategy is reducing offending and creating safer communities? .....	29

Monitoring .....	30
Reporting .....	30
Case studies .....	31
Cape York Welfare Reform and Family Responsibilities Commission: positive results emerging....	31
Alcohol reform: positive trends emerging.....	31
Case Study - Training and jobs for those at risk.....	31
Case Study - Partnerships .....	31
Case Study – Focusing on young people.....	32
Case Study – Supporting employment opportunities.....	32
Case Study – Peacemaking through the Mornington Island Restorative Justice Project .....	33
Case Study – Beyond Billabong.....	33
Case Study –Transition from Corrections Initiative .....	34
Case Study – Local level strategies developed through community safety planning.....	34
Case Study - Working with families and young people to increase interest in school, sport, art and music to prevent young people entering the system .....	34
Case Study - Legal services and the courts providing services that are appropriate and fair, and which contribute to reducing re-offending .....	35
Case Study – Better reintegration of people from correctional centres back into the community.	35
Case Study – Addressing mental health issues through participation in the arts .....	35

## Our commitment

On 23 February 2010, the Queensland Parliament made an historic decision to amend the Preamble to the Constitution of Queensland to honour Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the First Australians and Queenslanders. The amended preamble articulates a vision of tomorrow's Queensland as a society based on democracy, freedom, inclusiveness and peace, and describes what our Constitution stands for—responsible and representative government with the purpose of fostering peace, prosperity and good government.

This Strategy acknowledges that the continuing over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the criminal justice system remains a significant impediment to progressing true equality of opportunity and experience between Indigenous<sup>1</sup> and non-Indigenous Queenslanders.

The Queensland Government has also heard a clear message from many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Queensland that offending and violence must stop. The Queensland Government will work in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to ensure that violence in all its forms will not be tolerated.

Offences committed by Indigenous people will not be treated as any less serious than non-Indigenous offending. However, it is acknowledged that to be effective, responses to Indigenous offending must be culturally responsive, tailored as much as possible to the needs of individuals or communities, and allow for community involvement as appropriate.

The victims of Indigenous crime and violence are usually other Indigenous people. Indigenous women, in particular, have sent a clear message about their need for safer communities and getting the violence to stop. Improving community safety and reducing offending will reduce the number of Indigenous victims.

The Queensland Government recognises that we can only succeed in reducing the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people coming into contact with the criminal justice system if we commit to:

- addressing the underlying causes of offending through improving education, employment, support to parents and families, and reducing alcohol misuse.
- concentrating our effort - at every stage in the criminal justice system and outside of it - on prevention, early intervention and other local place-based solutions to reduce offending and improve community safety
- working collaboratively and in meaningful partnership with Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and people, a wide range of Queensland Government agencies, non-government agencies, and the private sector.

This Strategy provides the foundation for this commitment to proceed over the next three years. It acknowledges the work that has already been undertaken, and will build upon it.

Efforts under the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Justice Agreement* since 2000 focused on making the criminal justice system fairer and more responsive for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This has been important work and it must continue. However, the Queensland Government recognises that traditional criminal justice system responses alone will not achieve equality in the level of Indigenous and non-Indigenous contact with the criminal justice system. The

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<sup>1</sup> 'Indigenous' refers to people of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent.

underlying causes of offending must also be addressed – these include issues relating to poverty, raising children, education, alcohol and drug use, employment, health and housing.

This Strategy provides a program of action to address the underlying causes of Indigenous over-representation and to prevent wherever possible contact with the criminal justice system in the first instance.

To achieve this, the Strategy will ensure that agencies that deal with families and community, health, education, housing and employment act to prevent and reduce Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander offending and to alleviate the need for a criminal justice system response.

The program of action to reduce Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander over-representation in the criminal justice system and improve community safety will be pursued under four pillars of reform:

- 1. Restoring social and cultural norms and community safety, particularly to reduce alcohol and substance misuse.**
- 2. Addressing the causes of crime through crime prevention and early intervention for children, young people and families.**
- 3. Reducing offending through employment, education and training opportunities.**
- 4. Ensuring culturally appropriate and responsive administration of justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.**

Practical on-the-ground actions in each of the four areas of reform have been identified. Each of the actions under this Strategy has a target which will provide a way that achievement can be monitored and measured during the life of the Strategy. Key actions will increase the support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and young people to help stop the cycle of offending, and to increase efforts to reduce offending through employment and education. For example under the Strategy:

- parents or carers of Indigenous children and young people who come into contact with the youth justice and child safety systems will be offered parenting support
- a new *Turnaround Team* will be established by the Department of Education and Training to work with schools to improve attendance
- an Indigenous Youth Accord will be developed, to measure long term outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people with complex needs
- a new jail to jobs program - 200 Indigenous people leaving jail each year to be transitioned into employment
- the Queensland Government will seek to enter into a public private partnership arrangement for the building of the recreational Active Trail between Kingaroy and Theebine (132km), traversing Cherbourg, to provide 100 high-risk Indigenous young people, including those who have had contact with the youth justice system, with employment after receiving a qualification, mentoring and other assistance
- Project 2800 – will provide 2800 Indigenous employment opportunities across the Queensland public sector and achieve a minimum 2.6% representation of Indigenous employees across the public sector workforce by June 2013.

While the Strategy will apply statewide, certain areas have been identified as target communities. These target areas are places where most offending occurs, and where most effort is needed to bring positive changes under this Strategy. These include:

- the areas in which many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people live within the regional and metropolitan centres of Cairns, Townsville, Mount Isa, Rockhampton and Brisbane
- each of Queensland's discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- the Torres Strait Islands.

The Strategy's actions and targets are summarised below under the four pillars of reform.

## Summary table: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Justice Strategy 2011-2014 – actions and targets

<b>1. Restoring social and cultural norms and community safety, particularly to reduce alcohol and substance misuse</b>	
<b>The introduction of alcohol related harm reduction targets</b>	DOC/ATSIS, DJAG & QPS
All discrete communities to have community safety plans that identify alcohol related harm reduction targets.	
<b>Community safety plans in targeted areas</b>	DOC/ATSIS & QPS
Community safety plans will be implemented in Cairns, Townsville, Mount Isa, Rockhampton and Brisbane.	
<b>Reducing cannabis related harm</b>	DOC/ATSIS
All community safety planning processes will consider the need to develop and support local projects targeting cannabis use.	
<b>Locally developed social marketing campaigns to promote positive social and cultural norms</b>	QPS, DOC/ATSIS, DET, DPC
Three new local level social marketing campaigns will be developed and implemented in partnership to promote positive social norms such as non-violence, positive parenting and the value of education.	
<b>Incentives for positive social and cultural norms</b>	DOC/ATSIS
Options will be developed for providing incentives to encourage social and cultural norms in the target areas identified under the Strategy.	
<b>Supporting individuals, families and communities to take responsibility for their health and wellbeing</b>	DOC/ATSIS
In partnership, improvements will be developed and implemented to the effectiveness of Wellbeing Centres in each of the Cape York Welfare Reform communities.	
<b>Helping young people to make a healthy transition to adulthood</b>	QH
25 additional health professionals (including drug, alcohol and mental health outreach teams) recruited and operational.	
<b>2. Addressing the causes of crime through crime prevention and early intervention for children, young people and families</b>	
<b>Increasing access to, participation in and engagement with quality kindergarten services</b>	DET
Early Years Centres will be supported to engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and parents in kindergarten programs in order to improve future outcomes, including through:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>working with vulnerable children and their families to support early learning and facilitate access to a kindergarten program</li> <li>working with local elders and leaders in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to promote the importance of kindergarten programs and assist families to participate</li> <li>delivering programs that strengthen parenting skills and confidence, support ongoing learning at home and build understanding of the importance of early childhood education.</li> </ul>	
<b>Promoting school attendance and achievement through PCYCs</b>	QPS & DET
DET and QPS will work with targeted PCYCs regarding the development of programs to improve the attendance and achievement of young Indigenous people at school.	
<b>Crime prevention through education</b>	DET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All 14-17 year old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students will have a case plan focusing on retention and career development.</li> <li>All schools with a substantial proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students will have a plan detailing the strategies that they will use to improve attendance.</li> </ul>	DTMR
<b>Improving Student Outcomes</b>	DET
A new <i>Turnaround Team</i> will be established to work exclusively with schools in the target areas to improve student attendance. This will include building school capacity on a range of measures including professional development for staff, monitoring and analysing attendance data, and strategies aimed at improving the school's connectedness to its' students and their community.	
<b>Engaging at risk young people in healthy lifestyles</b>	DoC
In all of the targeted urban, rural and remote communities, sport and recreation programs will be developed and/or supported that focus on engaging at-risk young people in healthy active lifestyles.	
<b>Promoting positive parenting and school attendance through community safety plans</b>	DoC/ATSIS
Community safety plans in all discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and in the target areas, will develop and implement local strategies to promote positive parenting, and improve school attendance and achievement.	
<b>Breaking the intergenerational cycle of offending through parenting support</b>	DOC & QCS
Extending the provision of parenting support to Indigenous parents in prison or detention to fathers with	

children aged 0-8 years, will be trialled.	
<b>Supporting families to help stop young people offending</b> Parents or carers of young Indigenous people who come into contact with the youth justice and child safety systems will be offered parenting and/or family support by recognised Indigenous parenting and family support providers.	DoC (and QH)
<b>Changing the pathways of our youngest offenders</b> Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 10-12 year olds in contact with the police will receive case management in state schools. DET, with QPS and DoC will implement a protocol for implementation of this initiative by no later than 1 July 2011.	DET (with QPS & DoC)
<b>Early intervention for young people at risk of entering or re-entering the criminal justice system</b> A state-wide support service aimed at assisting to address the underlying causes of crime will be provided by the police through the roll-out and evaluation of the Coordinated Young Persons At Risk (CRYPAR) Engage and SupportLink services by 2014.	QPS
<b>An Indigenous Youth Accord to measure long term outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people with complex needs</b> Program evaluations will show long term improvements for young Indigenous people with multiple and complex needs.	DoC
<b>3. Reducing offending through employment, education and training opportunities</b>	
<b>Establish a targeted Participate in Prosperity program for Indigenous participants</b> A targeted Participate in Prosperity program will provide intensive assistance to Indigenous participants facing multiple barriers in finding employment and securing a stable and positive lifestyle.	DEEDI
<b>Support Indigenous employment through the Queensland Natural Disasters Jobs and Skills package</b> A range of training and employment opportunities will be targeted at Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders engaged in recovery efforts.	DEEDI
<b>Public private partnerships to provide training and address local needs</b> Three new partnerships will be developed with industry (e.g. mining, construction, tourism) to deliver training and jobs that meet local needs in target areas identified under this Strategy.	DEEDI, DPC DOC/ATSI
<b>Project 2800 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people employed in the Queensland Government workforce</b> 2800 Indigenous employment opportunities will be provided across the Queensland public sector to achieve a minimum 2.6% representation of Indigenous employees across the public sector workforce by June 2013 to deliver on the Government's commitments under the Australian Employment Covenant and the National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Economic Participation. This means 1244 additional Indigenous employees as at September 2010.	Public Service Commission
<b>Supporting at-risk young people into jobs</b> The Queensland Government will seek to enter into a public private partnership arrangement for the building of the recreational Active Trail between Kingaroy and Theebine (132km) to provide 100 high-risk Indigenous young people, including those who have had contact with the Youth Justice system, with employment after receiving a qualification, mentoring and other assistance.	DLGP, QCS, DOC & DEEDI
<b>Local police to focus on reducing licensing offences</b> The Educate, Implement and Enforce approach will be used wherever possible by local police to reduce the number of Indigenous people dealt with for driver licence offences.	QPS & DTMR
<b>Re-engaging young offenders with earning and learning</b> 14-17 year olds in contact with the police (both prior to or after the young person being subject to a Community Based order) will receive support from Youth Support Coordinators and continue to be engaged in education, training or employment.	DET (with DOC & QPS)
<b>Continuing education for young offenders leaving detention</b> All offenders of compulsory school age (i.e. before either turning 16 years of age, or completing year 10, whichever happens first) will be supported to transition from detention into continuing education.	DOC & DET
<b>Improving work readiness for those in prison or detention</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Indigenous people in prison or detention who are in need of literacy and numeracy training will receive it, including those on short stays (i.e. less than 12 months).</li> <li>All prisons and detention centres will provide driver education support to assist people to get their licence, or to regain it, including those on short stays (i.e. less than 12 months).</li> </ul>	QCS, DOC & DTMR
<b>A 'second chance' for exceptional individuals</b>	QCS &

A 'Second Chance' education and training scholarship program, contingent on continuing achievement and no re-offending, will be developed and implemented for people leaving detention or jail.	DOC
<b>From jail to jobs</b> 200 Indigenous adults leaving jail each year (approximately one-quarter of the number of Indigenous prisoners exiting prison) will immediately commence traineeships or employment through initiatives such as Active Trails, Advance2Work, Skilling Queenslanders for Work, the Indigenous Business Development program, or other programs.	QCS, DLGP, DEEDI & DTMR
<b>4. Ensuring culturally appropriate and responsive administration of justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people</b>	
<b>Improving relationships with police</b>	QPS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Police will trial and assess strategies to build police relationships within communities, to increase understanding of the role of police in fair enforcement of the law, particularly in areas such as traffic offences, alcohol restrictions and minor public order offences.</li> <li>Police will make on the ground changes to improve the role that local Indigenous people can play in policing roles in their communities. This may include changes to the role of Police Liaison Officers to ensure they play a well respected and well understood role.</li> <li>The CMC will audit and report on police officers' compliance with s.420 of the <i>Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000</i> regarding the safeguards that apply for Indigenous persons being interviewed.</li> </ul>	
<b>Stronger and more effective community justice groups</b>	DJAG
Improved support will be provided to community justice groups to ensure that they continue to provide valuable court support to Indigenous victims and offenders and can play an appropriate role in responding to local level crime and community safety issues. Specifically, DJAG will work with community justice groups to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>better focus their work on court-related activities</li> <li>facilitate involvement of the groups in the development of local strategies to reduce the level of non-compliance with justice orders and justice process offending, prioritising discrete Indigenous communities</li> <li>ensure that alcohol education and assessment programs are considered as an alternative sanction to fines during sentencing in appropriate cases</li> <li>determine what Government support each individual group will receive, including training.</li> </ul>	
<b>Improving the effectiveness of sanctions for offending, especially breaches of alcohol restrictions</b>	DJAG
Steps will be taken to ensure effective sanctions respond to offending, particularly for breaches of alcohol management restrictions, by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>increasing the diversion to alcohol education and assessment sessions in appropriate cases of breach of alcohol management plans in discrete Indigenous communities</li> <li>increasing the access and take up of Indigenous community members to options to finalise outstanding fines managed by the State Penalties Enforcement Register (SPER).</li> </ul>	
<b>More culturally responsive courts for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities</b>	DJAG
Community-specific information and communication mechanisms will be developed and implemented to encourage a good rapport and two-way flow of information between magistrates and the community.	
<b>Improving access to justice</b>	DJAG
In 2011, in addition to the monthly court circuits in the Gulf, 8 additional Magistrates Court hearing circuits will take place to better meet the court needs of the Gulf communities.	
<b>Promoting high standards for legal representation</b>	DJAG & LAQ
Best Practice Standards for Representing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Clients developed and implemented by Legal Aid Queensland will be promoted to legal professionals in Queensland.	
<b>Enhancing supervision of young offenders in discrete communities,</b>	QCS & DOC
Indigenous young people in remote communities will receive enhanced supervision and support to reduce recidivism and non-compliance with statutory orders.	
<b>A stronger and more effective Murri Court</b>	DJAG
The Murri Court will continue to be supported. DJAG will work with the Murri Court to promote increased use of existing services and programs whenever possible to contribute to rehabilitating offenders and reducing recidivism, such as through referral to drug and alcohol programs in court orders.	
<b>The duration of remand for young Indigenous people remanded in custody will be minimised</b>	DOC & LAQ
The duration of remand for young Indigenous people remanded in custody will be reduced, through improved access to legal representation.	

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**Supporting successful transitions from corrections to the community**

DCS/QCS &

- All Indigenous offenders in prison and youth detention will have the opportunity to maintain connections to their families through video link-ups and face to face visits where appropriate.
  - All Indigenous offenders leaving prison or detention will receive enhanced support in order to reduce recidivism.
  - Steps will be put in place to reduce the level of non-compliance with parole orders.
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DOC

## Key questions for consultation

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The Queensland Government is keen to hear your views on the draft Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Justice Strategy 2011-2014. In particular:

- How can the Queensland Government best engage with community leaders to ensure that we are all working together to support the directions for reform set out under the Strategy?
- Who should be represented on the Taskforce overseeing the Indigenous Justice Strategy and providing advice to government, for example, gender balance, and/or a balance between community, government and business?
- How can the Queensland Government, local government and community leaders work together to provide leadership and support the directions for reform set out under the Strategy?
- How can the Queensland Government, local government and community leaders support reconciliation, healing and peacemaking processes to promote the social norm of non-violent management of disputes within communities and across family groups?
- How can Indigenous communities play an increased role in improving safety in their communities?
- Are there other ways that communities and the government can work together to improve safety, reduce offending and ensure access to a fair justice system?
- What are your views on the actions proposed in this Strategy to reduce offending and reoffending of young people and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults and what other actions should be considered to further this objective?

# Draft Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Justice Strategy 2011-2014

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## Background

### Introduction

The Queensland Government is committed to providing a fair and safe community for all. Achieving a fair and safe community involves not only the criminal justice system, but also ensuring that all Queenslanders have the best possible health and education, and that they have the opportunity to contribute to economic development.

We need to acknowledge that, despite the efforts of successive governments, organisations and individuals, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people continue to be more likely than non-Indigenous Queenslanders to be victims of crime. They are also more likely to come into contact with the criminal justice system as offenders, to come into contact with police and the courts and to be placed in the corrective services system.

It is now 20 years since the landmark *Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody* (RCIADIC) in 1991 highlighted the need to address the issue of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander over-representation in the criminal justice system. All jurisdictions have responded to the Commission's findings in some way, with several States and Territories signing up to various forms of Indigenous Justice Agreements to map out their strategies to address the issue.

In 2000, the Queensland Government signed the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Justice Agreement* (the Justice Agreement) with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Board, representing the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of Queensland. The Justice Agreement made a commitment to reduce the Indigenous imprisonment rate by 50% by 2011. This was an ambitious target to improve Indigenous crime and justice outcomes and increase community safety.

Under the Justice Agreement, significant reforms were implemented in the criminal justice system, including initiatives such as:

- the development of the Murri Court where Elders play an important role in the sentencing process
- the development, implementation and evaluation of the Queensland Indigenous Alcohol Diversion Program to divert Indigenous people in contact with the criminal justice and child safety systems to intensive alcohol treatment and case management

- support to community justice groups to provide local input to improve justice outcomes, including by providing for community justice groups to make submissions to the court on relevant matters in bail and sentencing hearings
- expansion of probation and parole offices throughout Queensland to provide better access to supervised community based orders as sentencing options
- increased access to diversion to youth justice conferencing by the police and courts
- improved access to victim support services and financial assistance for Indigenous victims of crime.

While these reforms to the justice system represent important progress towards creating a fairer and more responsive criminal justice system for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, more work needs to be done to tackle the underlying causes of over-representation. The reality is that we have not seen any real reduction in the Indigenous imprisonment rate in Queensland over the last ten years. Clearly, it is important that we continue to work on improving the justice system itself to provide fairer and more culturally responsive practices. However, it is equally important that we focus our efforts on ways to tackle the many underlying causes of Indigenous over-representation in the criminal justice system including levels of alcohol misuse, violence, education, health, poverty and employment. We recognise that strategies that build on the centrality of culture to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and support cultural maintenance are more likely to succeed in addressing these areas of underlying disadvantage.

The Queensland Government has a strong record in this regard. The Queensland Government has an eight year history of implementing an unprecedented level of reform to support Indigenous leaders, women, men and their children who want to put a stop to the devastation caused by alcohol in discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Recent data shows positive community-level change around school attendance, alcohol and violence in some communities, and indicates that some local authority and leadership is beginning to be restored.

The Queensland Government has worked with the Australian Government, the Cape York Institute for Policy and Leadership and the four communities of Aurukun, Coen, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge to support the ground breaking **Family Responsibilities Commission** and **Cape York Welfare Reform** trial.

The Queensland Government has allocated \$40 million over four years to support the Cape York Welfare Reform Trial to restore positive social norms and break the cycle of passive welfare dependence. The trial seeks to end the dysfunction experienced by families by providing intensive income management support, detoxification and rehabilitation services, improved educational opportunities and better health services.

The trial includes the new Family Responsibilities Commission (FRC) which uses conferencing, case management and service referral to promote:

- child safety
- school attendance
- lawful behaviour
- responsible tenancy.

The FRC also seeks to restore local authority by engaging respected community elders who are employed as Local Commissioners.

**Alcohol reforms** from 2002 have included the implementation of alcohol management plans restricting the supply of alcohol. These have been progressively implemented in 19 discrete communities. From 2008, further alcohol reforms have provided \$110 million in state and commonwealth funding for:

- new alcohol and drug treatment services, including increased access to clinical detoxification and counselling services
- new programs like sobering-up facilities and community patrols
- extra police and increased police powers
- more programs focused on literacy, before and after school activities and PCYC programs
- more support for local activities such as men's and women's groups.

This Strategy will continue to build on the learnings from these important innovations in Queensland that restore social norms and reduce alcohol and substance misuse.

## **The national context - 'Closing the Gap' on justice outcomes**

The Strategy will operate within the broader context of the national *Closing the Gap* agenda to reduce the gap in life outcomes and opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The Queensland Government, together with other Australian governments, has committed to targets set under *Closing the Gap* that address Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander disadvantage in health, education, employment and housing. The Government has made a range of commitments to drive reform in these areas including:

- close the life expectancy gap within a generation (by 2031)
- halve the gap in mortality rates of children under five within a decade (by 2018)
- halve the gap in employment outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians within a decade (by 2018)
- halve the gap for Indigenous students in reading, writing and numeracy within a decade (by 2018)
- all four year olds in remote Indigenous communities have access to a quality early childhood education program within five years (by 2013)
- at least halve the gap for Indigenous students in Year 12 or equivalent attainment rates by 2020.

The *Closing the Gap* agenda acknowledges that achieving real change for many types of Indigenous disadvantage requires a sustained effort by Governments, communities, families, and individuals, and that significant change will only emerge over a decade or a generation. Furthermore, all Governments have recognised that the 'closing the gap' commitments will not be achieved without more effort being directed to improving

outcomes in urban and regional areas where the majority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people live.

In November 2009, all Australian governments endorsed the National Indigenous Law and Justice Framework (the Framework). The Framework is a national approach to addressing the serious and complex issues that mark the interaction between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and the justice systems in Australia. The Framework is an aspirational document intended to support the COAG agenda to *Close the Gap* in Indigenous disadvantage, particularly in relation to community safety, and includes the following goals:

- Improve all Australian justice systems so that they comprehensively deliver on the justice needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in a fair and equitable manner.
- Reduce over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander offenders, defendants and victims in the criminal justice system.
- Ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples feel safe and are safe within their communities.
- Increase safety and reduce offending within Indigenous communities by addressing alcohol and substance abuse.
- Strengthen Indigenous communities through working in partnership with governments and other stakeholders to achieve sustained improvements in justice and community safety.

In committing to the national Indigenous policy agenda, the Queensland Government has agreed to priorities for significant investment, coordinated action and rigorous national reporting to ensure momentum is maintained and targets are met. Through COAG, the Queensland Government has also committed to focus on improving the social and economic outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living in urban and regional areas as around 79% of the Indigenous population in Queensland live in cities and regional towns. The development of a specific urban and regional strategy for Indigenous Queenslanders to 'close the gap' will complement the program of action under this Strategy.

Improvements achieved through *Closing the Gap* in education, employment, health and housing will lead to improved crime and justice outcomes for Indigenous people. However, the Queensland Government believes that a program of action is needed under this Strategy to make on the ground changes that will reduce over-representation and improve community safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

## Principles

The Justice Strategy will operate under a set of guiding principles:

### *Recognition:*

- That Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have unique, diverse and ancient cultures, and that connection to country and culture is vitally important.
- That previous government policies leading to dispossession and separation from family and culture are a cause of the social and economic disadvantage experienced by many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- That reconciliation plays a central role in addressing the underlying causes of over-representation in the justice system by increasing understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures in Queensland.

### *Respect:*

- For the knowledge, skills and abilities that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people bring to addressing justice issues, including knowledge about what solutions are needed in their own communities.
- For the importance of culture in the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and the need to recognise this in the justice system and the delivery of all services.

### *Rights:*

- To the same access as the broader Queensland community, to human, civil and legal rights, and to the same justice outcomes experienced by all other Queenslanders.
- Of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to be different, to consider themselves different and to be respected as such, consistent with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People.

### *Responsibility:*

- Of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities, community leaders and Indigenous communities to improve safety.
- Of all levels of government, all relevant agencies, and the broader community (including the private sector), to work towards the success of the Justice Strategy by promoting its objectives and supporting the delivery of programs that will achieve those objectives.

### *Reciprocity:*

- That laws, policies, processes and programs implemented under this Strategy be jointly implemented by the Queensland Government agencies, local governments and community leaders. The Strategy will advance the interests of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Queensland, which will in turn advance the wellbeing of the whole Queensland community.

## Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander over-representation in the criminal justice system

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people comprise a relatively small proportion of Queensland's population but are disproportionately reflected in reported crime statistics. Indigenous people account for 4% (156,517 Indigenous persons) of the Queensland population but make up:

- 22% of offenders
- 12% of all victims of assault
- 11% of all victims of sexual assault.

It is well known that underlying levels of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander disadvantage remain unacceptably high in comparison to the non-Indigenous population. This is especially so in remote areas and in the discrete communities. While there are some signs of improvement indicators in education, health, child protection and employment continue to show poor outcomes. For example:

- Indigenous infants and young children face a mortality rate two to three times as high as all infants and young children.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander babies are more likely to have a low birthweight when compared with the non-Indigenous population.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are more likely to be subject to child protection orders. For example, in 2009-10 the number of children subject to finalised child protection orders was 3.2 per 1,000 generally across the State, but was as high as 70.8 per 1,000 persons in some discrete Indigenous communities.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people are less likely to attend school or achieve the same levels of education as non-Indigenous children. For example:
  - In 2009, the proportion of Queensland year three students who achieved at or above the minimum standard for reading was 77% for Indigenous students and 93% for non-Indigenous students.
  - The Queensland State school attendance rate is 91%. While there have been some important gains in school attendance rates in Queensland's discrete Indigenous communities, attendance rates as low as 62% are still being reported.
- In Queensland in 2006, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were less likely to be employed than non-Indigenous people; the unemployment rate for Indigenous people is 13% compared to 5% for non-Indigenous people in Queensland.

### Offending

Queensland police crime report data in 2009-10 shows that:

- The total number of Indigenous adult offenders was 41,196. There were 166,396 non-Indigenous adult offenders recorded.<sup>2</sup>
- For adults, Indigenous people were identified as offenders and received some form of police action (e.g. arrest, notice to appear, caution, community conference, warrant) in:
  - 27% of offences against the person<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> These offender numbers do not count unique individuals; an individual may be counted multiple times in this police crime report data.

- 19% of offences against property<sup>4</sup>
- 20% of 'other' offences.<sup>5</sup>
- For young people,<sup>6</sup> Indigenous people were identified as offenders in:
  - 30% of offences against the person
  - 36% of offences against property
  - 30% of 'other' offences.
- The total number of Indigenous young offenders was 12,078. There were 23,376 non-Indigenous young offenders.<sup>7</sup>

Indigenous over-representation in offending rates is not a problem unique to Queensland. The Australian Bureau of Statistics provides comparisons between Queensland, New South Wales, South Australia and Northern Territory on the basis of police crime reports:<sup>8</sup>

- Queensland's Indigenous offending rate (10,858.0 per 100,000 population) is 6.4 times greater than the non-Indigenous rate (1663.7)
- the New South Wales Indigenous offending rate is 7.6 times the non-Indigenous rate (7668.6 vs. 1013.1)
- for South Australia it was 10.9 times (14,403.7 vs. 1324.7)
- for the Northern Territory it was 8.2 times (8623.0 vs. 1057.7).

### Victims

The victims of Indigenous crime and violence are usually other Indigenous people. Indigenous women, in particular, have sent a clear message about their need for safer communities and getting the violence to stop. The Australian Bureau of Statistics reports that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are also over-represented as victims of crime. In Queensland in 2009:

- There were 2,534 Indigenous victims of assault, comprising 12% of all victims of assault in the state.
- The assault victimisation rate for Indigenous persons was 1,619 victims per 100,000 Indigenous persons, about four times higher than the non-Indigenous victimisation rate (380 victims per 100,000 non-Indigenous persons).
- Indigenous persons comprised 11% (489 victims) of the 4,387 victims of sexual assault.
- The Indigenous victimisation rate for sexual assault was 312 victims per 100,000 Indigenous persons which was four times higher than the non-Indigenous rate (77 victims per 100,000 non-Indigenous persons).

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<sup>3</sup> Offences against the person are violent offences such as homicide (murder), manslaughter, assault, sexual offences, robbery, extortion, kidnapping, abduction and deprivation of liberty.

<sup>4</sup> Offences against property include unlawful entry, arson, other property damage, unlawful use of motor vehicle, other theft, fraud, and handling stolen goods.

<sup>5</sup> 'Other' offences include good order offences; traffic related offences; drug offences; liquor (excluding drunkenness); breach of domestic violence protection orders; and *Weapons Act 1990* offences.

<sup>6</sup> The *Youth Justice Act 1992* sets out how the criminal justice system in Queensland will respond to young people, that is, those between and including 10 and 16 years old.

<sup>7</sup> These numbers do not count unique individuals; an individual may be counted multiple times in this police crime report data.

<sup>8</sup> in order to provide a cross jurisdictional comparison this data is based on a subset of offender counts and does not reflect the Queensland offender rates or counts referred to elsewhere.

- 81% (2,048) of Indigenous victims of assault and 76% (370) of Indigenous victims of sexual assault reported that the offender was known to them; for non-Indigenous victims the proportions were lower: 49% (7,863) and 71% (2,320) respectively. A family member was the offender for 46% of Indigenous assault victims, compared with 13% for non-Indigenous assault victims.

While official Indigenous victimisation rates are high, they are likely to represent an underreporting. The reluctance of many victims, particularly of sexual assault offences, to report crimes to police is commonly reported. This reluctance is increased in the case of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people where historical factors and mistrust of governmental authorities also contribute.

Indigenous persons have also been found to be over-represented in assault victim statistics in other Australian jurisdictions. For example, the Australian Bureau of Statistics reports that Indigenous persons were between three and seven times more likely than non-Indigenous persons to fall victim to assault in New South Wales, South Australia, and the Northern Territory. Indigenous persons comprised 7%, 11%, and 65% of all assault victims in these jurisdictions respectively.

#### *Incarceration and detention*

Data on Indigenous people in custody highlights the following:

- Indigenous young people made up 60% of young people in detention in Queensland as at 30 June 2008.
- Indigenous adults made up 29.5% of those in prison in Queensland as at 30 June 2010.
- The rate at which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults are incarcerated in Queensland has increased over time. The age standardised rate was 1160 per 100,000 population in 2000 and 1443 per 100,000 adult population in 2010 (ABS 2010). In contrast, the non-Indigenous imprisonment rate has decreased from 135 per 100,000 in 2000 to 121 per 100,000 in 2010.

While Queensland's age standardised Indigenous imprisonment rates have increased over time – increasing 24% since 2000 - these increases have been better contained than in other similar jurisdictions – for example, in New South Wales the increase was 51% and the national average increase was 52%.

#### *What progress does the data show?*

The data indicates some positive trends, including:

- over the six year period from 2004-05,<sup>9</sup> Queensland police crime report data shows:
  - that there was a 6% drop in the rate of Indigenous people arrested by police
  - police have increasingly dealt with Indigenous offenders by way of notice to appear in court as an alternative to arrest; and the rate at which Indigenous

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<sup>9</sup> Indigenous status has been reliably recorded in police data since 2004-05.

offenders are dealt with by way of notice to appear has increased 16% over this period.

- recent research conducted by Griffith University shows that police are commonly using the diversionary options of cautions and conferencing to respond to young Indigenous offenders. When considering all offenders born in 1990 who had contact with the Youth Justice system:
  - 79.9% of Indigenous offenders received a caution at some point during their offending history; 75.9% of Indigenous offenders were cautioned on their first contact with the criminal justice system
  - 12.7% of Indigenous offenders were referred by police to a youth justice conference at some point during their offending history; 2.8% were referred to a conference on their first contact with the criminal justice system
- recent independent research shows that there is little evidence of bias playing a role in sentencing decisions. That is, differences in the seriousness of offending, prior criminal history, and being convicted on multiple counts explain most differences in sentencing. After these factors are taken into account there are few differences between the sentences handed down to Indigenous and non-Indigenous offenders.

## **What causes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander over-representation?**

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander offending patterns are a key cause of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander over-representation in the criminal justice system. For example, the fact that Indigenous people begin offending at younger ages, re-offend in higher numbers, offend more seriously, and are more likely to breach their non-custodial sanctions, has been shown to result in higher rates of imprisonment.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander offending is in turn caused by the interrelationship of a large number of factors, often called 'risk factors':

- Being young and male can be described as risk factors for offending.
- There is a strong relationship between alcohol consumption and risk of criminal violence.
- Individual factors such as personality and temperament, intelligence, impulsivity and empathy have been shown to predict offending behaviour.
- Family factors that predict offending include criminal or anti-social parents, large family size, poor parental supervision, child abuse, parental conflict and disrupted families. One of the best protective factors is good parental supervision.
- Environmental factors that predict offending include growing up in low socio-economic households, association with offending friends, attending schools that have a high rate of young offending and living in disadvantaged areas. One of the best protective factors is a high academic focus in schools.
- Those with multiple risk factors are more likely to become involved in offending than those with just one risk factor. For example, Queensland specific research that shows

male Indigenous children who are abused are more likely than not to be on a trajectory to offending.

- Risk factors associated with alcohol use, overcrowded housing, unemployment and the geographical concentration of factors, such as poverty, may be particularly prevalent for Indigenous offending.
- Cultural and historical factors and the impact of stolen generations may also be risk factors for crime for unique to Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander people.

## **What can be done to reduce Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander offending and victimisation?**

Reducing Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander over-representation and improving community safety is heavily dependent on reducing Indigenous offending including by:

- crime prevention and early intervention to prevent offending from occurring
- reducing the re-offending of Indigenous people, including reducing the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander offenders whose re-offending relates to their non-compliance justice order e.g. failure to appear in court or breach of domestic violence order.

An effective response must involve the criminal justice system, but must also occur outside of it. There is strong evidence that the strongest crime prevention effects come from certain programs providing support to parents and children in the early years. For example, high quality pre-school programs and nurse home visiting programs for mother with babies have been shown to have strong crime prevention effects later in life.

Certain school-based and community based programs have also been shown to effectively reduce offending. For example, numerous programs that seek to reduce truancy or improve poor academic performance have been shown to be effective in preventing offending. There is some evidence that high quality mentoring programs, and social marketing campaigns that involve the local community in their development, can be effective.

Programs which focus on cultural strengths rather than deficits can also offer responsive and appealing solutions to long-term social and economic disadvantage experienced by Indigenous communities. For example, arts-led approaches can be successful in offering innovative solutions to difficult-to-engage communities on difficult-to-discuss subjects.

There is evidence showing that a range of programs provided through the criminal justice system, including institutional and post-release programs can be effective at reducing crime. For example, programs have been found to be effective that combine supervision (e.g. monitoring by police and corrections officers) with social support, including access to treatment and assistance in obtaining housing, employment, and to look after children.

Due to the fact that the victims of Indigenous crime and violence are usually other Indigenous people, it is also important that penalties given to Indigenous offenders address the underlying causes of offending and re-offending with the aim of breaking the cycle of offending and reducing victimisation. This does not mean that Indigenous offending will be

treated any less seriously than non-Indigenous offending. Effective programs must be culturally responsive, tailored as much as possible to the needs of individuals or communities, and allow for community involvement as appropriate.

### **What does this suggest for Queensland's future Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander justice strategy?**

Queensland must take a holistic approach to reducing Indigenous over-representation and improving community safety.

Queensland is already leading a strong program of reform through the implementation of Alcohol Management Plans, the Welfare Reform and Family Responsibilities Commission trial, and the development of an urban and regional strategy which complements the *Closing the Gap* initiatives.

We will continue to build on these approaches by:

- focusing on reducing Indigenous offending and re-offending
- encouraging local solutions to crime and offending
- improving early intervention and prevention
- improving outcomes with repeat Indigenous offenders to substantially impact on crime rates and over-representation; this means ensuring these offenders get the right level of support and treatment to bring about change
- maximising access to, and use of, effective alcohol treatment programs for offenders
- focusing on innovation and evaluation in the areas of employment, education, mentoring and social marketing to reduce Indigenous offending
- continuing to assist victims to access support services and financial assistance.

## The Way Forward

### Pillars of reform

Improved employment, education and health outcomes are central to successfully tackling Indigenous over-representation in the criminal justice system. These are the key themes that run through this Strategy.

The challenges that lie ahead in tackling these underlying causes of crime should not be underestimated. However, the Queensland Government is committed to working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to ensure that there are opportunities available for all. For example, education is a critical foundation for success in life. We must work together to raise the expectations that Queensland's schools, teachers, communities, families and friends have of young people in education.

There are very real barriers to employment that Indigenous people often face. The Queensland Government has an ongoing commitment backed with a substantial allocation of funds to improve vocational and other training to help provide employment for Indigenous people. We know that the opportunities for employment are very limited in Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander discrete communities, where most community members are welfare dependent. In these areas we must promote economic activity and ensure that where there is private sector development such as mining or construction, local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are able to benefit by taking up available opportunities.

As well as tackling the underlying causes of crime through existing *Closing the Gap* commitments in the areas of health, housing, education and employment, there is clearly more we can do directly to prevent offending and re-offending.

The following four pillars of reform will determine practical on-the-ground change to be brought about through a range of initiatives contained in the Action Plan.

**1. Restoring social and cultural norms and community safety, particularly to reduce alcohol and substance misuse.**

The Strategy will focus on reducing the harms caused by alcohol and restoring social and cultural norms that value work, positive achievement and non-violence.

**2. Addressing the causes of crime through crime prevention and early intervention for children, young people and families.**

Communities and families themselves have the greatest power to change the lives of people within them. The Strategy will strengthen family and parenting support, including through health and education initiatives.

In this way, at-risk Indigenous people, including those already involved in the youth justice system, can be helped onto a positive pathway and be given powerful protection against offending later in life. For example, under the Strategy there will be a greater focus on breaking the intergenerational cycle of offending and assisting those at the youngest ages of criminal responsibility, who may be most likely to continue offending over many years.

**3. Reducing offending through employment, education and training opportunities.**

Under the Strategy, the delivery of a range of education, employment and training initiatives will reduce offending and re-offending. For example, under the Strategy there will be a focus on improving the support provided to Indigenous people to obtain a driver's license. This will improve the work readiness of Indigenous people and reduce the contact that Indigenous people have with the criminal justice system for licensing offences.

**4. Ensuring culturally appropriate and responsive administration of justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.**

At the same time as putting actions in place to reduce Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander offending, the Strategy will ensure that those who commit crimes are dealt with appropriately. The Strategy will make criminal justice services more responsive to, and inclusive of, the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including victims of crime, and will build the capacity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to be able to improve the safety of their communities.

## **How will the reforms be implemented?**

### *A place-based approach*

The Strategy will adopt a place-based approach, with a focus on high need areas. This approach recognises that the circumstances and needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across Queensland vary enormously across communities and regions. It also responds to the fact that, while most of Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population lives in metropolitan or regional centres, there are also many small communities, including Queensland's discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities that are predominantly Indigenous, that have extraordinarily high needs.

The Justice Strategy will focus services and programs using a place-based approach, to ensure that the solutions are intensive where required and meet the particular local needs of the community. The place-based approach will involve working with individual communities to identify needs and services to reduce offending. In addition to continuing to focus on harm reduction in the discrete communities, the Justice Strategy will focus on areas with the highest number of Indigenous offenders such as Cairns, Townsville, Mount Isa, Rockhampton and Brisbane.

Community safety planning will be a central part of the place-based approach and will involve local community stakeholders including representatives from all levels of

government (local councils, state and federal), community justice groups and community members to develop local solutions to improve community safety and wellbeing.

The place-based approach will allow the innovative work supporting the restoration of social norms and local authority that is already occurring in Cape York Welfare Reform communities (Aurukun, Hopevale, Mossman Gorge and Coen) to be further built upon.

#### *The identification of target areas under the Strategy*

The five areas of Cairns, Townsville, Mount Isa, Rockhampton and Brisbane were identified on the basis of analyses undertaken to identify Queensland Local Government Areas (LGAs) where most Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander offending occurs.<sup>10</sup> The five target areas were identified on the basis that:

- They have a high number of Queensland's Indigenous residents, and therefore together they account for a substantial proportion of Indigenous Queensland residents (34%; n = 39,739).
- They were found to have the highest count of Indigenous adult and young offenders of all LGAs in Queensland. For example, counts of adult offenders in Townsville, Cairns, Brisbane, Rockhampton and Mt Isa accounted for an estimated 43% (n = 17,852) of adult Indigenous offenders and 40% (n = 4794) of Indigenous youth offenders across Queensland.

Queensland's discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities have also been identified as target areas under the strategy. Although the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in these small communities is relatively low, and therefore offence counts are also relatively low, the rates of offending are extraordinarily high. Such high rates of offending have a devastating impact in these small communities of people in close relationships with each other. For example, for 2009-10 in Doomadgee the rate of offences against the person was 53.2 per 1000 persons, while the count of offences was 78. Similarly, on Palm Island the rate of offences against the person was 122.1 per 1000 persons, while the count was 263.

#### *Justice reinvestment: ensuring resources are directed at initiatives that work to reduce offending*

While it is important to acknowledge the action already being taken to improve justice outcomes, including the substantial allocation of government funds, this effort alone is not enough. A key criticism of the Justice Agreement was the need for a clearer picture of what works to reduce offending and what does not.

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<sup>10</sup> Analyses were undertaken by OESR of police crime report data. Analyses were done by the rate and number of person, property and other offences by adult and youth, Indigenous and non-Indigenous offenders. Results included state-wide age standardised rates, LGA crude rates, and LGA counts. Count refers to the actual number or measurement while rate reflects a ratio between the offender count and population count. State-wide age standardised rates are used when comparing Indigenous populations with non-Indigenous populations. LGA crude rates are used when comparing Indigenous rates between regions. LGA counts establish absolute magnitude of offending in each LGA and are useful for estimating service delivery needs.

To achieve better justice outcomes, we need smart solutions that respond to community and individual needs, with local input. Learning more about what works will help Government, communities and individuals get the most out of the significant effort and investment underway, and to identify where efforts should be redirected.

To address this, Government will undertake, in consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and other key stakeholders, an ongoing assessment of its Indigenous justice (and justice-related) programs and services. This assessment will gather information about funding; objectives and scope; and evaluation results, for the purpose of determining whether and where 'justice reinvestment' is warranted.

This concept of justice reinvestment envisages a shift in how finite resources are allocated and prioritised across the justice system having regard to what works, to ensure that the investment of resources is directed to the most effective programs to deliver results on the ground.

A more rigorous application of justice reinvestment in Queensland will be part of the work program underpinning the Strategy. It is important to note that this Justice Strategy adopts the steps outlined in the justice reinvestment methodology to inform the future allocation of resources: mapping crime and offence data, working with local communities to determine need, and evaluation.

## **Roles and responsibilities**

Reducing Indigenous offending and creating safe communities is everyone's responsibility. This means involving individuals, families, communities, community leaders, government (federal, state and local), non government organisations and business in strategies that are effective in reducing offending.

Partnering with the private sector must also play an important part in delivering innovative solutions. Such partnerships have the potential to foster gains for the community in terms of economic and social wellbeing, through new investment and employment, leadership, education and training opportunities.

The Queensland Government will continue to encourage strong and effective partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations, and with the private sector.

### *Ministerial responsibility*

The Minister for Disability Services, Mental Health and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and the Deputy Premier and Attorney-General, Minister for Local Government and Special Minister for State will have joint portfolio responsibility for the implementation of the Indigenous Justice Strategy. The Minister for Disability Services, Mental Health and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships will be primarily responsible for the

coordination of an annual Queensland Government report on progress with details on implementation of initiatives under the Strategy.

The Minister and Attorney-General will be supported by a Director-Generals' Committee that will provide high level oversight of the Strategy's implementation. The Committee will be comprised of the heads of the following Queensland Government agencies: Queensland Police Service, Department of Justice and Attorney-General; Department of Communities; Department of Community Safety; Department of the Premier and Cabinet; Department of Education and Training; Department of Local Government and Planning; Department of Economic Development and Innovation; and Queensland Health.

### *Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Justice Taskforce*

In light of the Queensland Government's renewed commitment to addressing the specific challenges relating to the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the justice system, it is proposed to establish a dedicated taskforce, the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Justice Taskforce, to oversee the implementation and direction of the Strategy. The Taskforce will:

- be chaired by an Indigenous community leader and include representatives from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities (including a representative from Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Council (QATSIAC) and from community justice groups), State and local governments (including Directors-General of key State Government agencies), the community sector and the private sector
- meet quarterly to discuss progress with the implementation of major policies and initiatives under this Strategy. At least one of the meetings each year will be held outside Brisbane and include an open community forum
- have the following functions and responsibilities:
  - promote cross sectoral linkages and partnerships within government and the community, including fostering partnerships with the private sector on initiatives to address Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander disadvantage and over-representation in the justice system
  - monitor the implementation of the Strategy in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and the targeted areas identified under the Strategy
  - review the Queensland Government annual report on progress under the Strategy, and advise the Minister for Disability Services, Mental Health and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and the Deputy Premier and Attorney-General, Minister for Local Government and Special Minister for State on the adequacy of the agency annual report and progress in implementing the Strategy and other justice-related programs and services that impact on Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
  - be informed of the developing evidence base, including evaluations and reviews, about what works to reduce Indigenous over-representation and improve community safety.
  - provide a report to the Premier on initial implementation by January 2012.

### *Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Council*

QATSIAC will be represented on the Taskforce and will play an important role in monitoring implementation of the Strategy in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and across the criminal justice system.

QATSIAC provides Queensland Government Ministers with high level, strategic advice on policies, programs, services and partnerships that can contribute to meeting the COAG *Closing the Gap* targets, the Queensland Government's *Towards Q2: Tomorrow's Queensland* ambitions and current and emerging Indigenous issues, including Indigenous justice.

### *Community Justice Groups*

Community justice groups (CJGs) play a critical role in delivering Indigenous justice in Queensland and serve a range of different functions according to community need. The primary role of CJGs is currently to assist people coming into contact with the justice system through supporting offenders, victims and families through the court process, and advising the courts on relevant cultural and community factors for consideration during bail and sentencing hearings.

An independent review of community justice groups was completed in 2010. The review found that the CJG program provides a positive contribution to reducing the likelihood of crime escalation (for individuals and the community), improving the cultural appropriateness and responsiveness of the justice system, and promoting community wellbeing through volunteerism. The review also identified areas in which the community justice group program can be improved including:

- addressing the foundations of the program (including program aims, design and delivery)
  - how to better support and develop the skills, capacity and effectiveness of the community justice groups to enable them to perform a range of court support activities.
- Consultation regarding the recommendations made in the review is currently underway and this will inform the development and implementation of the Queensland Government's response.

CJGs will continue to make an important contribution in the context of place-based solutions within the new Strategy. Accordingly, the Queensland Government will work with CJGs to:

- better focus their work on court-related activities
- facilitate involvement of the groups in discrete Indigenous communities in the development of strategies at the local level to reduce the level of non-compliance with justice orders and justice process offending
- ensure that alcohol education and assessment programs are considered as an alternative sanction to fines during sentencing in appropriate cases
- determine what Government support each individual group will receive, including training.

## How will we know that the Justice Strategy is reducing offending and creating safer communities?

In the longer term this Justice Strategy will contribute toward reducing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander offending and victimisation, with a reduction in the rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander:

- offending (including offences against the person, property offences and other offences)(including adults and young people)
- hospitalisations for assault
- death from homicide
- incarceration and detention
- reoffending.

Consistent with the *Closing the Gap* agenda, it is acknowledged that it may well take some time before we can see substantial improvements in some of the key measures identified above. Interim measures are required to ensure that we remain on track. It is for this reason that each action outlined in the strategy identifies a target to provide more immediate measures of success of the strategy.

The targets identified vary. Some targets document a specific measurable outcome that is to be achieved over the three year life of the strategy, for example:

- 200 Indigenous adults leaving jail each year (approximately one-quarter of the number of Indigenous prisoners exiting prison) will immediately commence traineeships or employment through initiatives such as Active Trails, Advance2Work, Skilling Queenslanders for Work or other programs
- 100 high-risk Indigenous young people, including those who have had contact with the Youth Justice system, will be transitioned to employment after receiving a qualification, mentoring and other assistance in the building of the recreational Active Trail between Kingaroy and Theebine (132 km).
- The duration of remand for young Indigenous people remanded in custody will be minimised.

Other targets, however, seek to ensure the right steps are taken over the next three years toward improving outcomes in the longer term, for example, by increasing the number and proportion of Indigenous people who receive early intervention and prevention support, or Indigenous offenders who receive treatment and rehabilitation. The following provide examples of such targets:

- All parents or carers of young Indigenous people who come into contact with the youth justice and child safety systems will be offered parenting and/or family support.
- All Indigenous people in prison or detention who are in need of literacy and numeracy training will receive it, including those on short stays (i.e. less than 12 months).
- All prisons and detention centres will provide driver education support to assist people to get their licence, or to regain it, including those on short stays (i.e. less than 12 months).

Performance measures, targets and reporting alone will not achieve better outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and people – however, they play a critical role in the overall effort to ensure that the commitments embodied in the Strategy are upheld.

A major criticism following the preceding Justice Agreement was that Government could do much more to coordinate effort and maintain momentum over the life of the Agreement.

To this end, this Strategy envisages a strong framework of monitoring and reporting, to keep the focus on accountability and on what works to improve outcomes in partnership with Indigenous people.

### *Monitoring*

Key performance indicators will be assessed throughout the life of the Justice Strategy. The purpose of monitoring is to ensure that actions taken under the Strategy are responsive to the need of communities and meet the Justice Strategy's aims. Other monitoring activities will include:

- mapping of place-based needs based on crime and offence data
- ongoing justice reinvestment assessment in relation to Government's Indigenous justice (and justice-related) programs and services, including investigation into a deeper application of justice reinvestment in Queensland as part of the work program underpinning the Strategy
- high-level oversight of progress within Government.

### *Reporting*

Annual reporting ensures information is collected, coordinated and made publicly available, and ultimately keeps Government accountable. The Queensland Government will report annually through an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Justice Strategy Annual Report which will be an important mechanism to ensure Government agencies, communities, non government organisations, the private sector and other key players remain focused on the aims and commitments of the Strategy.

The Annual Report will contain an update on progress made in terms of improving community safety, reducing over-representation and offending; key information on policies and programs, such as service mapping results, investment and how programs are contributing to the key performance indicators; innovations and good practice examples; and evaluation outcomes.

The Queensland Government is committed to openness and accountability and accordingly the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Justice Strategy Annual Report will be tabled in Parliament.

## Case studies

### **Cape York Welfare Reform and Family Responsibilities Commission: positive results emerging**

The Family Responsibilities Commission is proving effective in its role of increasing parental responsibility and restoring social norms in the trial communities of Aurukun, Coen, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge:

- The Family Responsibilities Commission 2010 Annual Report highlighted that the Commission had referred 583 people to support services and entered into 216 Family Responsibility Agreements to ensure people take personal responsibility and attend support services.
- Improvements are also being seen in terms of school attendance. This appears to be particularly true in Aurukun where school attendance has risen from less than 44% in 2008 to around 62% in 2010.

The FRC has significantly assisted to restore the authority of local Elders and increasingly community members are voluntarily seeking assistance, including voluntary income management.

### **Alcohol reform: positive trends emerging**

- From 2002 to 2010, hospital admissions for assault-related conditions trended downwards in eight communities: Coen, Hope Vale, Kowanyama, Lockhart River, Mapoon, Napranum, Pormpuraaw and Wujal Wujal. Yarrabah trended downwards from 2004.
- From 2002 to 2010, reported offences against the person trended downwards in five communities : Aurukun, Kowanyama, Mapoon, Pormpuraaw and Yarrabah.
- From 2007 to 2010 school attendance was maintained or improved in 11 communities: Aurukun, Coen, Cherbourg, Hope Vale, Kowanyama, Mossman Gorge, Napranum, Pormpuraaw, Woorabinda, Wujal Wujal and Yarrabah.

### **Case Study - Training and jobs for those at risk**

At-risk Indigenous young people, including those who have had contact with the Youth Justice system, will be transitioned to employment through participation in a building program administered through the Department of Local Government and Planning. This program will fall under the Active trail initiative and will involve building a new trail between Kingaroy and Theebine (132 km), traversing the Cherbourg Aboriginal Community.

The trail itself will deliver recreation, social and health benefits to families, bicycle tourists, mountain bike riders, outdoor education groups, horse riders and walkers. Like other regional recreation trails, such as the Boonah to Ipswich Trail this new trail will also provide opportunities for local businesses such as bed and breakfasts, tour guides, equipment hire and camping.

### **Case Study - Partnerships**

The Queensland Government has partnered with the Australia Zoo to provide mentoring and training experience for rangers working in Queensland's Wild Rivers regions.

Wild River Rangers employed by the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy, undertake important land management duties, working with landholders, communities and traditional owners

to protect Queensland's Wild River systems in Northern Queensland. Over \$8 million has been invested in the Wild River Ranger program to date, with 27 rangers employed.

The partnership between the Queensland Government and Australia Zoo will offer Wild River Rangers an opportunity to broaden their experience in wildlife handling and management issues. Future options being considered to support the program include a possible 'ranger exchange' or rotational placements which will provide Wild River Rangers with opportunities to develop new skills in different environments.

### **Case Study – Focusing on young people**

The South West Queensland Indigenous Families and Youth Coaching and Mentoring Service in Roma has been established to prevent Indigenous young people in south-west Queensland from entering out-of-home care or youth detention. Over \$2 million has been provided by the Department of Communities for coaches and mentors to work with young people and their families, providing support to meet each family's needs.

The initiative focuses on providing practical support to families and supporting young people. Local volunteer Indigenous mentors are being recruited to act as role models and provide emotional and social support to young people. Local child safety service centres, the Brisbane Youth Detention Centre, the local youth justice service centre, local police and schools will work closely with the teams to support and improve the lives of young people at risk.

Through tackling the causes of offending, the initiative aims to help young Indigenous people break out of the cycle of social and economic disadvantage and build brighter futures.

This innovative service will be evaluated in order to develop evidence about the success of the service, which in turn will help to inform future funding decisions.

### **Case Study – Supporting employment opportunities**

Two local Lockhart River businesses - Puchiwu Fishing Cooperative and Lockhart Car Hire - have overcome impediments to create employment opportunities at the local level, with support from the Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation.

Puchiwu Fishing Cooperative harvests tropical rock lobster, mud crab and reef fish in the community. The proposal was first raised in a Learning Circle in 2004, and then incorporated and registered, with boating and diving training provided to support the business. The company creates real jobs for local people and its intent is to continue developing a sustainable and viable commercial fishing enterprise for the people of Lockhart River.

Lockhart Car Hire has addressed a gap in local service delivery, and provides professional car hire services to enable travel in the region. The business began in Lockhart River in 2008 with just one vehicle, and now operates in two Far North Queensland locations. It has created employment opportunities previously not available in the area.

Encouraging and progressing economic participation in communities is critical to reducing disadvantage in Aboriginal communities.

## **Case Study – Peacemaking through the Mornington Island Restorative Justice Project**

The Mornington Island Restorative Justice Project uses a mix of ‘black fella’ and ‘white fella’ ways to provide peacemaking processes to manage disputes, reduce family conflict and prevent the escalation of disputes to violence.

This pilot project was established in 2008 and is jointly funded by the Commonwealth Attorney-General’s Department and the Queensland Department of Justice and Attorney-General (DJAG). The project operates through a partnership between multi-skilled dispute resolution staff, Elders and respected members of the community.

The peacemaking process has been used to negotiate a variety of disputes including those referred from police and the courts. As well as direct from community members or Elders. Mediations have been conducted in relation to disputes about:

- relationships
- mobile phone text abuse
- rumour mongering/gossip
- verbal abuse
- family tensions
- offences such as assaults and public nuisance.

The program has undergone an interim evaluation and this demonstrated that while there is still a need to continue to develop and improve the program, it has made good progress, is well supported among community members, and shows promise in terms of assisting to manage a range of disputes peacefully within the community and outside of the criminal justice system. As one magistrate has commented, the project ‘encourages relationships, be it family or individual, to be mended where they are broken which in turn promotes a strengthening of the fabric of the community.’

This project is an innovative pilot and is currently supported by the Queensland Government until June 2012. Lessons learnt from this project can be built upon in developing healing, reconciliation and peacemaking processes in other small communities of people in close relationships who continue to feel the impact of the high crime and violence levels of the last several decades

## **Case Study – Beyond Billabong**

From January 2009, Beyond Billabong has delivered life skill and vocational training to multiple disadvantaged Indigenous youth from remote Queensland.

For example, eighty-four participants completed the ‘Billabong to Beach’ program in 2009, with 55% placed in employment and 25% actively pursuing further education. During the four week program, Indigenous youth learn horsemanship and livestock handling, computing and four-wheel-drive skills. They also learn about working in a team, cooking, health and nutrition. The program empowers

young people to make positive life choices through mentoring and developing individual pathways to support them through to, during and post employment.

The Queensland Government currently supports Beyond Billabong through Queensland Health and the Department of Communities - Sport and Recreation Services. Queensland Health provides funding for a psychologist and standard health checks on program commencement. The Department of Communities - Sport and Recreation Services have provided the use of Active Recreation Centres for seven programs for the 2011 financial year at no cost to Beyond Billabong.

### **Case Study – Transition from Corrections Initiative**

The Department of Communities' Transition from corrections Facilities Initiative which provides assistance to prisoners with mental health issues has achieved positive results in reducing recidivism.

National and international literature indicates that rates of re-offending/re-incarceration for people with mental illness post-release from prison are normally between 50-60%.

From July 2007-June 2010 there were 243 clients supported (37 were Indigenous clients) approximately 13% of all clients supported reoffended.

### **Case Study – Local level strategies developed through community safety planning**

A community has become aware that young people are committing offences after the regular dance parties. The local council, Community Justice Groups and other community groups and government agencies discuss the issue and include an action in their Community Safety Plan to supervise the young people leaving the dance and ensuring they are getting home without getting into trouble.

### **Case Study - Working with families and young people to increase interest in school, sport, art and music to prevent young people entering the system**

Eleven year old Joshua hangs out with some older boys in his community and was caught breaking and entering into the local shop. The police refer Joshua to a youth justice conference and to receive Youth Justice support. Joshua, his parents and Elders of the community attend the conference where Joshua agrees to fix the damage done to the shop. There is also agreement that Joshua's parents and Elders will assist to get Joshua back to school.

Joshua's mother and father agree to access some support for parents and they agree that this helped give them some new ways of responding to some of Joshua's behaviour.

Arrangements are also put in place to help Joshua with after school activities at the Police Youth Citizens Club which includes homework time. The PCYC also helps Joshua by providing weekend football and music activities to those with good school attendance. The Department of Communities continues to support Joshua and his family and makes sure services are in place after the youth justice conference.

### **Case Study - Legal services and the courts providing services that are appropriate and fair, and which contribute to reducing re-offending**

Joe is a 36 year old man who is in a de-facto relationship with a woman. They live with her father. Joe had a difficult childhood, suffering abuse at the hands of his stepfather. He spent time in youth detention and, once he became an adult, spent several years in prison. He has a history of alcohol and drug use and is currently on medication for a mental illness. Joe did not finish high school, has no qualifications and little work experience. He had not worked for twelve months when he recently appeared in court on his latest public nuisance charge (this time for using obscene and indecent language).

Joe asked that his matter be referred to the local Murri Court, which is one of a number of Murri Court locations across Queensland that has the Queensland Indigenous Alcohol Diversion Program (QIADP) available as a bail program. As part of QIADP his needs were assessed and a support plan developed. He attended alcohol and drug rehabilitation and received support from the local Men's Group. During sentencing, the magistrate took into account Joe's participation in QIADP and his willingness to turn his life around. The magistrate sentenced Joe to a community based order rather than imprisonment. Since completing QIADP, Joe was referred to an employment agency and he has since secured work in the construction industry.

### **Case Study – Better reintegration of people from correctional centres back into the community**

Cedric is currently in Lotus Glen Correctional Centre. He is 42 years old and has been to jail many times before. When Cedric first goes to prison, Corrective Services staff assess his needs and develop a plan for his rehabilitation. The plan includes attending Indigenous specific alcohol and anger management courses. It also includes courses to improve his numeracy and literacy to get Cedric work ready. The prison organises visits by teleconferencing with Cedric's family and Elders from his community. Cedric is a talented artist and continues to paint in prison. Cedric agrees to sell his paintings and the proceeds from the sales are given to a local community benefit fund as a way of making amends for committing the offence.

A release plan is developed while Cedric is still in prison which improves his chances of getting employment, ensuring he has somewhere to live when released and support to ensure that he does not relapse into alcohol misuse. The plan involves improving Cedric's literacy and numeracy and giving him training, including driver's licence training, before he leaves prison. Accommodation and access to culturally appropriate support services will also be arranged to ensure he does not leave prison into homelessness and has the support he needs to stop drinking. The release plan is developed in conjunction with other government agencies that can provide support to Cedric and reduce his chances of reoffending.

### **Case Study – Addressing mental health issues through participation in the arts**

In 2007 Queensland Health and Arts Queensland formed a partnership to develop the concept of "Creative Recovery". An art exhibition was held for the launch of Mental Health Week in September 2008 at the Tanks Arts Centre in Cairns. The Healing Journeys exhibition set the artists' personal

experiences against a national backdrop in a year where Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's apology to Australia's Indigenous peoples was a critical milestone on the road to national healing.

Supported by Access Arts and a number of health agencies, three Lockhart River artists and a Torres Strait Island artist joined an Indigenous psychiatrist and a Cairns mental health clinician in depicting their experiences from both sides of the mental health healing process. Over the life of the project, the whole dynamic of "health worker" to "patient" shifted to one of "professional" to "professional". Art was no longer seen as merely diversionary therapy, but as a tool for genuine communication. While anxious about coming to Cairns for the exhibition opening, the artists ultimately found it to be a very positive experience, one which boosted their confidence and self-esteem. Project coordinator, Dr Geraldine Dyer, spoke about how people from very different backgrounds, some from a very remote and disadvantaged community, became part of something which was ultimately much more powerful than the work of any of the individuals involved.

The participants are still reaping the benefits and have found the process to be therapeutic and an ongoing aid to recovery. The recognition they have received as artists from their communities has also reduced some of the stigma associated with mental illness. One of the artists is now a coordinator for Creative Recovery and is involved in other community projects such as the reduction of cannabis use. The health professionals have made art an essential part of their work practice and Indigenous Art Centre managers have also begun to rethink the way they engage with artists experiencing mental health issues. Healing Journeys has been a great success story – for the artists, the professionals involved, and their communities.

# Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Justice Strategy 2011-2014

## 1. Restoring social and cultural norms and community safety, particularly to reduce alcohol and substance misuse

### What is already underway?

#### **Alcohol reforms: restricting alcohol and increasing access to treatment programs**

The Queensland Government has over the last decade taken decisive action to implement a program of reform to tackle the very high incidence of alcohol-related harm. Alcohol restrictions have been introduced in Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander discrete communities since 2002. The restrictions have been coupled with increasing access to drug and alcohol treatment services. Substantial resources have been allocated to these reforms, including over \$100M allocated in Australian and State Government funding over four years from 2008.

Alcohol reforms in Queensland's discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities will continue to focus on restricting supply of alcohol and increasing the access of Indigenous people to effective drug and alcohol treatment services. Notable recent achievements in terms of improving access to drug and alcohol treatment include the:

- Townsville Alcohol and Drug Withdrawal Facility, which commenced outpatient detoxification services in July 2010
- substantial upgrade of treatment facilities at Pormpuraaw, Bamaga, Lockhart River, Kowanyama and Mossman.

#### **Cape York Welfare Reform and Family Responsibilities Commission**

From 1 July 2008, the Welfare Reform Trial has operated to rebuild social norms through a range of strategies, including making welfare payments conditional on responsible behaviour. The Family Responsibilities Commission (FRC) is a key initiative of these reforms and it engages respected community members as Local FRC Commissioners to assist make decisions about a person's compliance with socially responsible standards of behaviour and determines appropriate actions to address the dysfunctional behaviour of people in the community. The Family Responsibilities Commission is notified when a community member fails to meet any of four obligations:

1. ensuring their children attend school
2. keeping their children safe from harm and neglect
3. not committing offences punishable in the Magistrates Court, and in particular drug, alcohol and family violence offences
4. complying with their tenancy agreements.

#### **Mornington Island Restorative Justice Project**

This innovative pilot uses a mix of 'black fella' and 'white fella' ways to provide peacemaking processes to manage disputes, reduce family conflict and prevent the escalation of disputes into violence. An evaluation of the MIRJ project has been conducted which will inform the future development of such initiatives.

#### **Housing**

Through the National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing, the Queensland Government has committed to reducing overcrowding, particularly in remote areas and discrete communities. Some of the actions being undertaken to achieve this outcome include:

1. Undertaking a program of ongoing maintenance and repairs that will progressively increase the life cycle of remote Indigenous housing from seven years to up to 30 years.
2. Constructing new houses and undertaking repairs and maintenance of existing houses in remote Indigenous communities

## 1. Restoring social and cultural norms and community safety, particularly to reduce alcohol and substance misuse

- 3 Resolving land tenure issues on remote community-titled land in order to secure government and commercial investment, economic development opportunities and home ownership possibilities in economically sustainable communities.

### Community leadership

Local Councils play an important role in all communities but particularly where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander councils exist in Indigenous communities. The State Government is currently reviewing the Local Laws of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Councils in consultation with their communities to determine appropriate local laws to address their specific needs.

### 'Weed it Out'

'Weed it out' is a cannabis reduction initiative run by the Queensland Police Service in partnership with James Cook University (JCU) which commenced in October 2007. In five pilot communities in the Cape York and Torres Straits Islands the project aims to establish crime prevention, supply reduction and demand reduction strategies by 2012 so that cannabis use and the associated harms are reduced to levels that can be managed in the core business of multi-agency stakeholders.

### What will be new under the strategy?

	Initiatives	Lead Agency	Action	Resources	Timeframe
i	<b>The introduction of alcohol-related harm reduction targets in discrete Indigenous communities</b>	DOC/ATSIS, DJAG & QPS )	<p>In each discrete community where alcohol restrictions apply, alcohol-related harm reduction targets will be included in community safety planning. These targets will clearly set out the standard of improvement and reduction of alcohol-related harm required before alcohol restrictions can be eased.</p> <p>Community safety planning will be undertaken by community leaders including Local Councils, community justice groups, and Local FRC Commissioners in the Cape York Welfare Reform communities, in partnership with government and non-government service providers.</p> <p><b>TARGET: All discrete communities will have community safety plans that identify alcohol-related harm reduction targets.</b></p>	Existing	2011
ii	<b>Community safety plans in targeted areas</b>	DOC/ATSIS (with QPS)	<p>Community safety planning is already underway as part of the Queensland Government's response to <i>Restoring Order</i> in discrete communities. The reach of community safety planning will be broadened to include other targeted areas, under this Strategy.</p> <p>Community safety planning will be undertaken by community leaders, including Local</p>		

1. Restoring social and cultural norms and community safety, particularly to reduce alcohol and substance misuse					
			Councils and Community Justice Groups, in partnership with government and non-government service providers.		
			<b>TARGET: Community safety plans will be implemented in Cairns, Townsville, Mount Isa, Rockhampton and Brisbane.</b>		
iii	<b>Reducing cannabis-related harm</b>	DOC/ATSIS	The State Government has committed to reducing cannabis-related harm in Indigenous communities as part of its response to the Social Development Parliamentary Committee’s Inquiry into addressing Cannabis-related Harm in Queensland. The State Government has committed to supporting local projects through community safety planning to raise awareness of the impact of cannabis use on community members.	Existing	2011-2014
			<b>TARGET: All community safety planning processes will consider the need to develop and support local projects targeting cannabis use.</b>		
iv	<b>Locally developed social marketing campaigns to promote positive social and cultural norms</b>	QPS, with DOC/ATSIS, DPC, DET and QH	The Queensland Government will continue to support a range of social marketing campaigns to promote positive social norms. These may include local campaigns and mass media campaigns. The Normanton Stingers Rugby League Football Club’s ‘Domestic Violence is not our Game’ campaign provides a good example of a successful local campaign developed in the past. The <i>Which Way Our Way</i> program builds community resilience to alcohol-related harm through a culturally effective mass media strategy that connects and supports local alcohol demand reduction activities. This program is being implemented in 20 North Queensland Communities including Coen, Cooktown, Bamaga, Mapoon, Napranum, Yarrabah, Doomadgee, Hopevale and Mount Isa.  Under the Strategy the Queensland Government will support engagement with private sector expertise including those in the advertising industry, to work with Indigenous communities to develop social marketing campaigns on issues such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the inappropriateness of violence as a means of resolving disputes</li> <li>• non-violent parenting and the importance of modelling non-violent behaviours</li> <li>• school attendance and performance.</li> </ul>	Existing	2011-2014
			<b>TARGET: Three local level new social marketing campaigns will be developed and implemented in partnership to promote positive social norms such as non-violence,</b>		

1. Restoring social and cultural norms and community safety, particularly to reduce alcohol and substance misuse					
			<b>positive parenting and the value of education.</b>		
v	<b>Incentives for positive social and cultural norms</b>	DOC/ATSIS	The State Government is currently investigating opportunities to provide incentives to encourage school attendance, support families and reduce harm.	Existing	
			<b>TARGET: Options will be developed for providing incentives to encourage social and cultural norms in the target areas identified under the Strategy.</b>		
vi	<b>Supporting individuals, families and communities to take responsibility for their health and wellbeing</b>	DOC/ATSIS	The Queensland Government will work with Cape York Welfare Reform partners to ensure Wellbeing Centre services address the needs of their local communities. Potential improvements may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• responding to locally identified gaps in service delivery</li> <li>• greater use of the centres as ‘hubs’ for family and peer support, including by ensuring alcohol and drug counselling and support services are integrated in community life.</li> </ul>	Existing	
			<b>TARGET: In partnership, improvements will be developed and implemented to the effectiveness of Wellbeing Centres in each of the Cape York Welfare Reform communities.</b>		
vii	<b>Helping young people make a healthy transition to adulthood</b>	QH	To support young people to make healthy lifestyle choices, the Queensland government will improve access to integrated drug and alcohol and mental health services for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 8-18 years. The additional health professionals will be located state-wide. The positions are to deliver new or enhanced services for young Indigenous people aged 8-18 years in four areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sexual health</li> <li>• mental health</li> <li>• alcohol and other drug programs</li> <li>• youth offender health.</li> </ul>	Existing	2011-2014
			<b>TARGET: 25 additional health professionals (including drug, alcohol, mental health and outreach teams) recruited and operational.</b>		

## 2. Addressing the causes of crime through crime prevention and early intervention for children, young people and families

### What is already underway?

#### **Early Childhood and Parenting Services reform - *Closing the Gap: Indigenous Early Childhood Development***

Under the *National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Early Childhood Development*, the Queensland Government has set out specific actions to close the health gap by providing more maternal health and early childhood support for a strong and healthy start to life. COAG funds of \$151.89M have been allocated for Queensland over six years from July 2009 to support initiatives in early childhood. Actions include:

- Parenting support and advice is to be provided by dedicated young parent support workers to help young people prepare for parenting from the beginning of their pregnancy to well after the birth and into the toddler period.
- Increased access to antenatal and postnatal care services is being provided by mid-wives and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander maternal health workers in hospital and in the community after a birth, especially for pregnant women 20 years and under.
- Young people will have greater access to sexual and reproductive education and health services.
- Children and Family Centres are to open in 10 areas: Mt Isa, Cairns, Ipswich, Mareeba, Mackay, Rockhampton, Mornington Island, Doomadgee, Marsden and Palm Island. These centres will provide integrated quality early childhood education and care, parenting and family support, and maternal and child health services.
- Youth health workers are to continue to be recruited in secondary schools to deliver programs promoting healthy lifestyles, wellbeing, the responsibilities of pregnancy and parenthood, and reproductive health.
- In Cape York communities there will continue to be greater access to primary health care services and specialist services, to parenting programs and home visiting, child health checks, and school health promotion programs.

#### **Early Childhood Education Reform – delivering universal access to a kindergarten program**

The Queensland Government is committed to delivering access to a kindergarten program for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children in Queensland. It is estimated that more than 70 per cent of Indigenous children living in remote areas access quality early education through *Bound for Success* pre-Prep programs in 35 Indigenous communities. Additional actions include:

- Additional kindergarten services are being established in areas with significant populations of Indigenous children.
- Long daycare services with enrolments of Indigenous children are prioritised for approval as kindergarten program providers.
- The kindergarten education program, *The Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guideline*, incorporates a strong focus on Indigenous perspectives and cultural competence. Professional development resources are being prepared for teachers to provide inclusive programs.
- Under the Indigenous Remote Area Strategy, Indigenous Queenslanders in remote areas are supported to seek a career in early childhood education and care.
- Non-Government Organisations are supported to provide early childhood education and care services, including family support hubs in Indigenous communities.

## 2. Addressing the causes of crime through crime prevention and early intervention for children, young people and families

### Education reform – *Closing the Gap: Indigenous Education Strategy*

In Queensland the priority for Indigenous students is 'Every day, in every classroom, every student is learning and achieving'. That is, the focus is on improving attendance, retention and attainment.

#### Attendance

- The *Indigenous Education Support Structures* (IESS) pilot works with Indigenous students, teachers and families to improve student attendance, achievement and school completion levels.
- The Youth Support Coordinators initiative supports secondary students at risk of disengaging with school.

#### Attainment

- The *Foundations for Success* and *Bound for Success* programs provide the framework for quality early childhood education and schooling in Cape York. The evaluation of the *Foundations for Success* program is to be finalised in early 2011 and the results will be carefully considered in order to make further improvements. The effectiveness of the collaborative work done with the Smith Family on early reading strategies will be considered in this process.
- The *Families as First Teachers* program engages families in early literacy and numeracy development.
- The *Let's Stay Put* project assists schools in Central, North and South East Queensland to work with highly mobile students. The results of the evaluation of this program will be finalised in 2011.
- From 2011, gifted and talented Indigenous students will be supported through the *Top Tier Thinkers* program which will identify high achievers in year 3 then work with the student and their teachers to develop their ability.

In addition, the Australian Government recently approved \$6.3M over two years for the implementation of three supporting projects in Queensland:

- The *Principals as Literacy Leaders with Indigenous Communities* will run in 20 schools across Queensland. The project aims to enhance the leadership capabilities of principals and school community leadership teams to work with teachers, parents and families to improve reading in schools.
- The *Moving Together* project partnership with *Dare to Lead* aims to build the capacity of school leaders to engage with Indigenous staff, parents and the community. The project will be run in selected schools in South-East Queensland (six to eight schools).
- *Bridging the language gap: expanding the Leadership in Language program, English as a Second Language Essentials* workshop and the *Adopt-a-School* initiative aims to provide significant professional development to teachers of Indigenous students with English as a second language. This initiative will target 76 state and 13 Catholic schools across Queensland.

#### Retention

- The *Learn, Earn, Legend – Year 12 destinations* initiative ensures that all Indigenous Year 12 students have a real outcome. This initiative was established in 2010 and case manages every Indigenous Year 12 student on a pathway to further education, training or meaningful employment. The initiative will continue to develop industry led education, training and employment programs for regional Indigenous students, for example in the mining sector.
- Indigenous Pathways Coordinators in each of the seven regions ensures that every Indigenous Year 12 student is case managed and supported to Year 12 completion

## 2. Addressing the causes of crime through crime prevention and early intervention for children, young people and families

and then transitioned to either further education, training or meaningful employment.

- The establishment of the *School to Work* team, who will develop initiatives to assist schools change the way they do business in order to accelerate outcomes for Indigenous Year 12 students.
- The Australian Employment Covenant *P-Plate* program works with students and their parents from year 8 on in partnership with schools and industry.
- School based apprenticeships and traineeships.
- *Transitional Support Services* support Indigenous students who leave their home communities in the Cape York, Northern Peninsula Area and Torres Strait islands to pursue their education at secondary boarding school.

### Other key initiatives

The **Coordinated Response to Young People at Risk (CRYPAR)** project has been developed by the QPS since 2003. It is a multi-agency initiative operating in some police districts in Queensland (Northern Brisbane, Pine Rivers District, Logan and Rockhampton) assisting young people with those factors that contribute to the development of criminal and self-harming tendencies and anti-social behaviour. The target audience are children (aged 0-11) and young people (aged 12-24) 'at risk' of being involved in or further involved in criminal, self harming or anti-social behaviour as a result of underlying social problems. CRYPAR aims to provide referrals to appropriate services to divert young people from the criminal and youth justice system and address the underlying causes of offending behaviour.

**Support for Indigenous child witnesses of domestic and family violence:** Specialised counselling services are provided to child witnesses of domestic and family violence through the:

- Remote Indigenous Child Witness Domestic and Family Violence Counselling Service in Cape York and the Gulf of Carpentaria
- the Cooktown Indigenous Domestic and Family Violence Pilot Service to Hope Vale, Wujal Wujal and Laura
- Safe Havens in Mornington Island, Coen, Cherbourg and Palm Island (joint State and Commonwealth Governments initiative).

**Treatment based care for children in the child safety system** [\$6.8M for four residential facilities, plus costs of specific response care]: The Queensland Government provides treatment based care for children in the child safety system. This includes four therapeutic residential facilities across the state providing 24 places (six places each). The Queensland Government will continue to roll out across the state the model of professional foster care (Specific Response Care) to increase access to treatment and support for young people in the child safety system.

**No Wrong Door:** The No Wrong Door approach improves the way the Department of Communities delivers services to Queenslanders, making sure they are client-centred, consistent and that they provide appropriate links to the community sector.

**Indigenous Knowledge Centre (IKC) network, including Culture Love,** provides opportunities to develop and transfer intergenerational cultural knowledge, as well as diversionary activities for children and young people. Local Councils and the State Library of Queensland (SLQ) partner to provide 20 IKCs primarily in Cape York Peninsula and Torres Strait regions as well as the *kuril dhagun* at the State Library, Southbank. IKCs provide traditional library services (including information and communication technologies) as well as a means and a place to capture and preserve local history and traditions. In partnership with Arts Queensland, SLQ funds an IKC school holiday

## 2. Addressing the causes of crime through crime prevention and early intervention for children, young people and families

program, Culture Love, which uses arts activities to engage young people with Elders in understanding their culture and to give creative expression to their ideas and talents. Programs such as Culture Love demonstrate the role of the arts in engaging disengaged young people by providing meaningful diversionary activities. For some young people this program can be an important first step towards more formal training and a career in the arts.

### What will be new or improved under the strategy?

	Initiatives	Lead Agency	Action	Resources	Timeframe
i	<b>Increasing kindergarten access and participation</b>	DET	<p>The four Queensland Early Years centres will be actively supported to better engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. Early Years centres provide children and their families with access to a range of services and programs including kindergarten, parenting, health and family support services.</p> <p><b>TARGET: Early Years Centres will be supported to engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and parents in kindergarten programs in order to improve future outcomes, including through:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• working with vulnerable children and their families to support early learning and facilitate access to a kindergarten program</li> <li>• working with local elders and leaders in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to promote the importance of kindergarten programs and assist families to participate</li> <li>• delivering programs that strengthen parenting skills and confidence, support ongoing learning at home and build understanding of the importance of early childhood education.</li> </ul>	Existing	2011-2014
ii	<b>Promoting school attendance and achievement through Police Citizens Youth Clubs (PCYCs)</b>	QPS and DET	<p>PCYCs operate in a significant number of Queensland's discrete Indigenous communities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PCYCs exist in Palm Island, Yarrabah and Mornington Island. A new PCYC facility will open at Doomadgee in 2011 and will be staffed by a police Sergeant and 2 Indigenous Police Liaison Officers.</li> <li>• A variation of the PCYC model, the Community Activity Programs through Education (CAPE) program is provided in Napranum, Hope Vale, Northern Peninsula Area, Aurukun and Woorabinda. It is proposed that the CAPE program will be implemented in Kowanyama once the new Sport and Recreation Community Centre is complete and a decision made on its management. There are plans to expand the CAPE program into further communities by 2014.</li> </ul>	<b>Existing (including 1.9M per year allocated for expansion of CAPE Project over four years until 2012; the QPS provides \$8.41M in support to PCYC programs through wages and grants).</b>	2011-2014

## 2. Addressing the causes of crime through crime prevention and early intervention for children, young people and families

PCYCs also exist in many regional and metropolitan areas with substantial Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations. PCYCs exist in each of the target areas identified under the Strategy of Cairns, Townsville, Mount Isa, Rockhampton and Brisbane.

All PCYCs and CAPE programs in the targeted areas identified under the Strategy will be requested to develop incentive based programs to improve the attendance and achievement of young Indigenous people at school. For example, involvement in special events or activities may be made contingent upon school attendance.

**TARGET: QPS and DET will work with targeted PCYCs regarding the development of programs to improve the attendance and achievement of young Indigenous people at school.**

iii	<b>Crime prevention through education</b>	DET	Actions under the Indigenous Education Strategy will drive intermediate improvements towards <i>Closing the Gap</i> in education outcomes.	<b>Existing (including funding of \$2.5M in 2010-11, to complete the \$10M four-year commitment to the Indigenous Education Support Structures pilot).</b>	2011-2014
		DTMR (in terms of E2E)	In addition, there will be a new focus on developing retention plans for every Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student to improve retention to Year 12, and attendance strategies for implementation in all schools with a substantial proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. There will be a strong focus on improving retention and achievement from Year 9 onwards as this is a critical transition point for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people.		
			<p><b>TARGETS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>All 14-17 year old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students will have a case plan that is focused on retention and career development</b></li> <li>• <b>All schools with a substantial proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students will have a plan detailing strategies used to improve attendance.</b></li> </ul>		
iv	<b>Improving student outcomes</b>	DET	A new <i>Turnaround Team</i> will be established to work exclusively with schools in the target areas to improve student attendance. Turnaround Teams offer state schools new opportunities to work with a multidisciplinary team of highly skilled educators to support the development of evidence-based approaches to school reform and	<b>Existing</b>	2011-2014

2. Addressing the causes of crime through crime prevention and early intervention for children, young people and families					
			improvement. Turnaround Teams have been established in regions to work with school leaders and staff as they implement, review and refine strategies to improve student outcomes.  <b>TARGET: A new Turnaround Team will be established to work exclusively with schools in the target areas to improve student attendance. This will include building school capacity on a range of measures including professional development for staff, monitoring and analysing attendance data, and strategies aimed at improving the school's connectedness to its' students and their community.</b>		
v	<b>Engaging at-risk young people in healthy active lifestyles</b>	DoC	In all of the targeted urban, rural and remote communities, Sport and Recreation Services, DoC, will work with Community Safety Planning participants at the local level to help develop and support sport and recreation programs. These programs will focus on engaging at-risk young people in healthy active lifestyles as a significant alternative to substance abuse and other behavioural problems, help defeat boredom, reduce truancy and provide skills development opportunities.  <b>TARGET: In all targeted urban, rural and remote communities, sport and recreation programs will be developed and/or supported that focus on engaging at-risk young people in healthy lifestyle activities.</b>	Existing	2011-2014
vi	<b>Promoting positive parenting and school attendance through community safety plans</b>	ATSIS, DoC	Community safety planning in discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and other targeted' areas identified, will address the issues of positive, non-violent parenting and school attendance. At the local level, communities and families will be asked to develop and implement strategies to promote messages, for example, that using physical violence to discipline children is not ok, and that school is a valuable, important and respected.  <b>TARGET: Community safety plans in all discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and the five other targeted areas identified, will develop and implement local strategies to promote positive parenting, school attendance and achievement.</b>	Existing	2010-2014
vii	<b>Breaking the intergenerational cycle of offending</b>	QCS and DoC	Parenting programs (e.g. Parenting Under Pressure or Indigenous Triple P) will be provided to Indigenous parents of children aged 0-8 years, in prison or detention, even those on short stays (i.e. less than 12 months).	Existing	2011-2014

## 2. Addressing the causes of crime through crime prevention and early intervention for children, young people and families

	through parenting support		<b>TARGET: Extending the provision of parenting support to Indigenous parents in prison or detention to fathers with children aged 0-8 years, will be trialled.</b>		
viii	<b>Support for families to help stop young people offending</b>	DoC (with QH)	<p>Parenting support (e.g. Parenting Under Pressure or Triple P) will be offered to the parents/carers of young Indigenous people who come into contact with the youth justice system. To support diversion from future offending, family supports will be offered to Indigenous parents/carers with children with complex needs who come into contact with the child safety system.</p> <p><b>TARGET: Parents or carers of young Indigenous young people who come into contact with the youth justice and child safety systems will be offered parenting and/or family support by a recognised Indigenous parenting or family support provider.</b></p>	Existing	2011-2014
ix	<b>Changing the pathways of our youngest offenders</b>	DET (with QPS & DoC)	<p>After referral from police, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 10-12 year olds in contact with the police will receive case management at the state schools in which they are enrolled. This case management will focus on maximising their educational engagement and success. This will be undertaken by the appropriate education professionals e.g. guidance officer, teacher etc</p> <p><b>TARGET: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 10-12 year olds in contact with the police will receive case management in state schools. DET, with QPS and DoC will implement a protocol for implementation of this initiative by no later than 1 July 2011.</b></p>	Existing	2011-2014
x	<b>Early intervention for young people at risk of entering or re-entering the criminal justice system</b>	QPS	<p>From 2011, the Coordinated Young Person at Risk (CRYPAR) service and the QPS have partnered with Xstrata Coal to develop a strengthened CRYPAR model for State-wide rollout, this will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A CRYPAR Engage service for young people at risk of entering or re-entering the youth justice system: this early intervention project will assess the level of risk and protective factors for young people using the Youth Assessment and Screening Instrument (YASI), a validated common assessment tool. SupportLink staff will structure a case management plan, link clients to appropriate agencies and monitor the progress of clients for an initial period of six months. The aim is to reduce the risk factors of clients whilst</li> </ul>	Existing	2011-2014

## 2. Addressing the causes of crime through crime prevention and early intervention for children, young people and families

increasing protective factors. An evaluation will be conducted by the University of Queensland to establish the cost benefit of this process. A state-wide SupportLink service for adults and young people: an e-referral system provides a web-based system for the electronic transfer of referrals and relevant feedback in a secure environment. SupportLink provides opportunities for rural and remote Queenslanders (especially in Indigenous communities) by providing a mechanism to link clients to national services that provide counselling on a range of issues including drug and alcohol, domestic violence, depression, suicide prevention, bereavement services and family conflict. Services have agreed to make contact with people within 48 hours of receiving a referral.

**TARGET: A state-wide support service aimed at assisting to address the underlying causes of crime will be provided by the police through the roll-out and evaluation of the Coordinated Young Persons At Risk (CRYPAR) Engage and SupportLink services by 2014.**

xi	<b>An Indigenous Youth Accord to deliver intensive case management and measure long term outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people with complex needs</b>	DoC	The Department of Communities will enter in to an Indigenous Youth Accord that aims to improve long term outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people with complex needs. These complex needs include housing, education, training and employment, disability, mental health, parenting, relationships, involvement with statutory systems and life skills. To support the Accord, an evaluation of a range of programs will be conducted over a four year period to determine successful outcomes for young people prior to, during and after leaving the program to ensure interventions are sustainable over time. Successful outcomes for Indigenous young people will contribute to diversion from offending through the development of pro-social skills leading to positive and sustainable futures.	Existing	2011-2015
			<b>TARGET: Program evaluations will show long term improvements for young Indigenous people with multiple and complex needs.</b>		

### 3. Reducing offending through employment, education and training opportunities

#### What is already underway?

##### **Project 2800**

The Queensland Government has an Indigenous employment target for the Queensland Public Service of 2800 by June 2013 under the Australian Employment Covenant. Apprenticeships and traineeships will provide a major bridge for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people into public sector employment. All agencies have developed implementation plans and set targets to ensure that the Queensland public sector reaches the goals set for Indigenous employment. For example:

- Queensland Health's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Strategy 2009-12 is being implemented across all health Service Districts and Divisions through the development of Local Action Plans. This will be supported by expansion of Queensland health Indigenous Cadetship Programs for:
  - Nursing and Midwifery targeting Diploma of Nursing, Bachelor of Nursing, Bachelor of Midwifery, Bachelor of Nursing and Midwifery.
  - Allied Health cadetships targeting social work, pharmacy, physiotherapy and occupational therapy.
- Support for Indigenous doctors will occur through the provision of clinical placement support for the increased intake of Indigenous medical students at James Cook University and University of Queensland. In addition, all Indigenous medical students will be offered an internship in Queensland Health when they graduate.
- The Department of Communities' Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Plan, June 2010 shows the representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff within the Department is 4.16% (1st Quarter, 2010). This compares favourably with the Queensland Public Sector average of 2.09%; however, the Department aims to have a higher representation across all service areas. Detention centre staffing at Cleveland Youth Detention Centre is comprised of 50 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders (26% of establishment) and Brisbane Youth Detention Centre (BYDC) is comprised of 26 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders (8.4% of establishment). Under the Strategy, an Indigenous recruitment strategy will target the Brisbane and Cleveland Youth Detention Centres in line with the department's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Plan.

##### **Skilling Queenslanders for Work**

Under the Skilling Queenslanders for Work initiatives the State Government will invest more than \$100M each year from 2009-10. Initiatives include:

- The *Participate in Prosperity Program*: an \$8M a year strategy targeted at low socio-economic communities where many people are unemployed. Individuals can be offered intensive case management to help them improve their circumstances.
- The *Community Literacy Program*: provides \$2M a year to help disadvantaged jobseekers improve their language, literacy and numeracy skills.
- The *Indigenous Employment Policy for Queensland Government Building and Civil Construction Projects* (the IEP 20% policy) creates employment and training opportunities in specified Indigenous communities and in Weipa through Queensland government funded building and civil construction projects. All civil contracts and building contracts over \$250,000 must include a minimum requirement of 20% of the deemed labour hours to be sourced from the local Indigenous community.
- Queensland's *Green Army* creates new jobs to enhance our natural assets, strengthen tourism and promote increased environmental awareness. The Queensland Government is investing \$57M over three years to create 3,000 jobs in Queensland's Green Army. There will be 2,300 green 6 month work placements and 700 green traineeships available throughout the State.
- Indigenous Employment and Training Officers (IETSOs) work with communities, industry, government and training providers to identify and create employment and

### 3. Reducing offending through employment, education and training opportunities

training opportunities for Indigenous Queenslanders. IETOs help Indigenous apprentices, trainees and vocational students complete their training and stay in the workforce by providing culturally appropriate, one-to-one mentoring and support. IETOs also help employers become more aware of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders cultural responsibilities and protocols.

#### **Home and Community Care**

The programs being undertaken through Home and Community Care's (HACC) *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Service Development Plan 2009-12* are also providing vital employment and training opportunities for Indigenous people. These include a program to improve access to accredited training, an Indigenous Mentoring Program and a Peer Support Network. HACC has also secured and is managing funding for a total of 56 positions within HACC service providers that were previously Commonwealth Government's Community Development Employment Projects positions.

#### **Public private partnerships**

The Queensland Government continues to support public private partnerships that provided training and employment for Indigenous people. Such partnerships have been successfully developed in the mining, tourism and construction industries. For example:

- Myuma Pty Ltd, an Indigenous not-for-profit civil construction and labour hire business in the Camooweal region, has provided participants with jobs as they have undertaken paid training and on-the job work experience in civil construction, open cut mining and life skills.
- The Lockhart River businesses Puchiwu Fishing Cooperative and Lockhart Car Hire have created training and employment opportunities at the local level. The Puchiwu Fishing Cooperative is developing a sustainable commercial fishing enterprise in Lockhart River harvesting rock lobster, mud crab and reef fish. Lockhart Car Hire has grown from a one vehicle operation in 2008 and now operates in two locations, creating employment opportunities in each.

#### **Queensland Indigenous Driver Licensing Program**

Since 2003 the Queensland Indigenous Driver Licensing Program has provided mobile licensing units to offer licensing services to remote communities in far north Queensland, including Cape York, the Gulf and Torres Strait Islands. It is now led by the Department of Transport and Main Roads. The program is directed at reducing unlicensed driving and the consequential legal, social, and actual cost to the individuals, their families, and communities including fatalities, incarceration and unemployment. An evaluation of the program is currently being finalised and this will inform future work in this area.

#### **Flexi schools**

The Burragah program in Townsville and the Hymbah Yumba program in South Brisbane provide community based alternative education programs to assist young recidivist offenders to re-engage with education or vocational training following their stay in detention or while completing community based justice orders.

#### **The Positive Dreaming, Solid Futures: Indigenous Employment and Training Strategic Plan**

The 2008-2011 Progress Report demonstrates considerable achievements have already been made under this plan, including increased participation and completion rates in vocational education and training (VET), and increased numbers of partnership arrangements that promote employment of Indigenous VET participants and graduates.

#### **Youth in Detention Centres**

The Barrier Reef Institute of TAFE delivers VET programs for young people in detention centres. This is part of a key commitment to implement strategies outlined in an

### 3. Reducing offending through employment, education and training opportunities

agreement between DET, the Department of Communities, and Queensland Health to ensure the provision of programs and services to support, help and reintegrate into the community young people who have committed offences under s3021b of the *Juvenile Justice Act 1992*.

#### **Training Initiatives for Indigenous Adults in Rural and Remote Communities (TIFIARRC)**

Approximately 1,700 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders participated in training or received training support services under the joint Commonwealth-State funded TIFIARRC program. Industry relevant training was delivered across a wide range of areas from civil construction, mining and conservation and land management to nursing, primary health care and community development.

#### **TAFE Programs**

- The Cape York Training and Employment Strategy in the Far North Queensland region is one of many VET programs that link training to real employment opportunities or community work. These programs are open to residents in the Cape York region and are accessed primarily by Indigenous Queenslanders.
- Tropical North Queensland Institute of TAFE as lead institute has overseen development and delivery of training products and professional development resulting in a range of e-Learning resources to support Indigenous learners.
- Palm Island Equitable Delivery Strategy is delivered by the Barrier Reef Institute of TAFE to support Palm Island residents to access pathways into education, training and employment opportunities

#### **Re-integration programs**

A Construction and Civil Construction industries pre-employment program has been developed to support Indigenous offenders from Lotus Glen Correctional Centre as they make the transition into the community. Two groups of 12 offenders are undertaking a 16 week program with pathways into the industries. The program is coordinated by Venture Projects who liaise with community justice groups and other stakeholders to maximise success.

Maryborough Correctional Centre and Cherbourg Correctional Centre delivered a construction course to Indigenous prisoners in consultation with local businesses and authorities who indicated that employment opportunities existed in the Cherbourg and South Burnett regions. Barbecue tables and seats constructed during the program as part of reparation to the community as well as course requirements, were presented at a public community function.

Within correctional centres there are well-resourced industries employing prisoners that offer training opportunities for participants to gain marketable work related skills. On the job training is provided to prisoners working in industries through the QCS integrated VET model of delivery. In this model, prisoners are also able to participate in off the job training with qualified instructors from registered training organisations.

Participation by Indigenous prisoners in integrated VET programs has increased from 10 per cent in 2008-2009 to 13 per cent in 2009-2010. Participation by female Indigenous prisoners is expected to increase as integrated VET was introduced at the Women's facility in 2009-2010

**Cairns Indigenous Art Fair (CIAF)** is a market place for national and international buyers of quality Queensland Indigenous arts. Developed in partnership with key government and business organisations in Far North Queensland, CIAF profiles leading and emerging Indigenous artists and gives them access to new markets and income streams. In its first two years (2009 and 2010), CIAF attracted over 20,000 visitors and generated sales of over \$1.2 million. It forms part of the Backing Indigenous Arts

### 3. Reducing offending through employment, education and training opportunities

program managed by Arts Queensland which aims to build a more sustainable and ethical Indigenous arts industry in Queensland. As well as delivering significant employment and economic outcomes, CIAF creates opportunities for the transference of cultural knowledge and skills, engenders community pride and self-esteem, and promotes reconciliation through wider public recognition of Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. Along with the network of Indigenous Arts Centres which help generate the supply of quality art product, CIAF normalises economic participation for Indigenous artists and reduces the likelihood of their involvement in the justice system. Art Centres operate in many discrete and Torres Strait Island communities and often provide the sole opportunity for business enterprise outside employment in council businesses. They offer talented artists support to develop their skills, deepen cultural connections and improve their access to markets.

**The Aboriginal Centre for the Performing Arts (ACPA)** is a government owned company based in Brisbane, offering certificate and diploma level training in music, dance and theatre. ACPA provides a nurturing learning environment for young Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders who are often far away from their communities and families to help them grow a career in performing arts.

#### What will be new or improved under the strategy?

	Initiatives	Lead Agency	Action	Resources	Timeframe
i	<b>Establish a targeted Participate in Prosperity program for Indigenous participants</b>	DEEDI	<p>Participate in Prosperity is an \$8 million a year strategy targeted at low socio-economic communities where many residents are not participating in the labour market. An estimated 1270 people a year are assisted. Participate in Prosperity funds organisations to enable highly vulnerable Queenslanders to more easily navigate and access the complete range of government and nongovernment services that they may need to overcome personal difficulties, develop skills and ultimately enter the workforce.</p> <p>Participate in Prosperity will also provide funding for innovative solutions to gaps in services. Individuals are offered intensive case management to help them improve their circumstances.</p> <p><b>TARGET: A targeted Participate in Prosperity program will be established to provide intensive assistance to Indigenous participants facing multiple barriers in finding employment and securing a stable and positive lifestyle.</b></p>	Existing	2011-2014
ii	<b>Support Indigenous employment through the Queensland Natural Disasters Jobs and</b>	Skills Queensland, DEEDI, DET and DEEWR	<p>A Queensland Natural Disasters Jobs and Skills package has been established, to support Queensland industry, businesses and communities to recover from the recent flood and cyclone crises. Indigenous specific initiatives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indigenous Employment Program - funding for training and employment projects for activities directly related to flood damage, or opportunities for skilling presented in the</li> </ul>	\$83 million in 2011	2011-2014

3. Reducing offending through employment, education and training opportunities					
	<b>Skills package</b>		recovery phase; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indigenous Employment Coordinators - will connect Indigenous Australians with training and employment opportunities in flood and cyclone affected areas; and</li> <li>Government Apprenticeship Program - funding for apprenticeships with a target of 20% Indigenous participation.</li> </ul>		
			<b>TARGET: A range of training and employment opportunities will be targeted at Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders engaged in recovery efforts.</b>		
iii	<b>Public private partnerships to provide training and address local needs</b>	DEEDI (with ATSI)	Public private partnerships will be developed to provide training and respond to local needs.  <b>TARGET: Over the three year period of the strategy, three new partnerships will be developed to deliver training and jobs that meet local needs. These partnerships will be developed in target areas identified under the Strategy and will focus on mining, construction and tourism industry partnerships.</b>	Existing	2011-2014
iv	<b>Project 2800 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the Queensland Government workforce</b>	Public Service Commission	Implementation plans under Project 2800 will drive intermediate improvements in employment outcomes to increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people employed to 2800. This will include supporting the transition of young at risk Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people into Queensland Government internships.  <b>TARGETS: 2800 Indigenous employment opportunities will be provided across the Queensland public sector to achieve a minimum 2.6% representation of Indigenous employees across the public sector workforce by June 2013 to deliver on the Government's commitments under the Australian Employment Covenant and the National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Economic Participation. This means 1244 additional Indigenous employees as at September 2010. By 2013 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people will represent:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3.7% of the Queensland Health Workforce (up from 2.11% as at September 2010); this means 1244 additional Indigenous employees</li> <li>2.6% of the Department of Premier and Cabinet workforce (up from 1.2% as at September 2010); this means 9 additional Indigenous employees</li> <li>1.6% of the Queensland Treasury workforce (up from 0.29% as at September 2010); this means 14 additional Indigenous employees</li> <li>2.6% of the Department of Transport and Main Roads workforce (up from 0.98% as at</li> </ul>	Existing	2011-2014

### 3. Reducing offending through employment, education and training opportunities

- September 2010); this means 173 additional Indigenous employees
- 2.6% of the Department of Education and Training workforce (up from 1.86% as at September 2010); this means 615 additional Indigenous employees
- 3% of the Department of Public Works workforce (up from 2.28% as at September 2010); this means 56 additional Indigenous employees
- 2.6% of the Department of Justice and Attorney-General workforce (up from 1.69% as at September 2010); this means 36 additional Indigenous employees
- 3% of the Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation workforce (up from 1.77% as at September 2010); this means 67 additional Indigenous employees
- 2.6% of the Queensland Police workforce (up from 2.2% as at September 2010); this means 59 additional Indigenous employees
- 2.6% of the Department of Environment and Resource Management workforce (up from 2.15% as at September 2010); this means 25 additional Indigenous employees
- 4.4% of the Department of Communities workforce (up from 3.92% as of September 2010); this means 50 additional employees
- 2.6% of the Department of Community Safety workforce (up from 2.03% as at September 2010); this means 63 additional employees
- 2.6% of the Department of Local Government and Planning (up from 1.09% as at September 2010); this means 13 additional Indigenous employees.

v	<b>At-risk young people into jobs</b>	DLGP (with QCS, DOC & DEEDI)	<p>High-risk Indigenous young people will be transitioned to employment through their involvement in building of a recreational Active Trail between Cherbourg and Theebine (85km), traversing the Cherbourg Aboriginal Community. This initiative will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide participants with a qualification in horticulture or construction, mentoring through an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community based support network and assistance for graduates to gain ongoing employment</li> <li>• deliver recreation, social and health benefits to families, bicycle tourists, mountain bike riders, outdoor education groups, horse riders and walkers. Like other regional recreation trails, such as the Boonah to Ipswich Trail this new trail will provide opportunities for local businesses such as bed and breakfasts, tour guides, equipment hire and camping.</li> </ul> <p><b>TARGET: The Queensland Government will seek to enter into a public private partnership arrangement for the building of the recreational Active Trail between Kingaroy and Theebine</b></p>	Existing funds of \$3.4M allocated to initiatives such as Skilling Queenslanders for Work can be pooled to support this initiative. Private	2011-2014
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3. Reducing offending through employment, education and training opportunities					
			(132 km) to provide 100 high-risk Indigenous young people, including those who have had contact with the Youth Justice system, with employment after receiving a qualification, mentoring and other assistance.	sector funding of \$1M will also be sought for the project.	
vi	<b>Local police to focus on reducing licensing offences</b>	QPS (with DTMR)	<p>Wherever possible the local police will implement the 'Educate, Implement, and Enforce' or 'EIE' approach to reduce licensing offences. This strategy will have particular application in discrete and other small communities. This policing strategy involves police first educating community members that they must have a licence if they want to drive, about the risks associated with unlicensed driving and that police will soon be focusing on enforcing this aspect of the law. Then police will assist the community to implement what must be done to achieve compliance with the law — for example, by setting aside and publicising days when licence testing is done and by reminding specific individuals to attend. As the final phase, police are to check that drivers have licences and charge those driving without a valid license.</p> <p><b>TARGET: The Educate, Implement and Enforce approach will be used wherever possible by local police to reduce the number of Indigenous people dealt with for licensing offences.</b></p>	Existing	2011-2014
vii	<b>Re-engaging young offenders</b>	DET (with QPS and DOC)	<p>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 14-17 year olds in contact with the police (prior to the young person being subject to a Community Based order) can be referred to Youth Support Coordinators. The Youth Support Coordinator will support the young person to remain engaged in education or training and to make a successful transition to further learning or employment.</p> <p><b>TARGET: 14-17 year olds in contact with the police (prior to the young person being subject to a Community Based order) will receive support from Youth Support Coordinators and continue to be engaged in education, training or employment.</b></p>	Existing (including the annual DET commitment of \$9.6M per annum up until 30 June 2013).	2011-2014
viii	<b>Continuing education for young offenders leaving detention</b>	DoC and DET	<p>Stronger support will be provided to transition young people into education and training post-detention. The Department of Education and Training and the Department of Communities will undertake:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>joint planning to develop transitional arrangements for young people prior to their release and to monitor and support arrangements following release</li> </ul>	Existing	2011-2014

### 3. Reducing offending through employment, education and training opportunities

- to provide a regional youth support coordinator in each of the seven regional education offices to support the process
- tracking and reporting on the academic progress and destinations of students in detention centres
- to establish a joint DOC and DET Program Advisory Committee.

Additionally, youth justice services will engage with DET to enable client access to the *Participation to Employment Program*. This initiative aims to improve school to work transitions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people or to provide alternative learning strategies for Indigenous students who are at risk of disengaging from school and seeks to embed literacy and numeracy skills within vocational training.

**TARGET: All offenders of compulsory school age (i.e. before either turning 16 years of age, or completing year 10, whichever happens first) in detention will be supported to transition from detention into continuing education.**

ix	<b>Improving work readiness for those in prison and detention</b>	QCS, DOC & DTMR	<p>Driver education support will be provided in prisons and detention centres including for people who have lost their license so that they are able to regain their licence.</p> <p>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in prison and detention will receive literacy and numeracy training, including those on short stays (i.e. less than 12 months).</p> <p><b>TARGET:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>All Indigenous people in prison or detention will receive literacy and numeracy training including those on short stays (i.e. less than 12 months).</b></li> <li>• <b>All prisons and detention centres will provide driver education support to assist people to get their licence, or to regain it, including those on short stays (i.e. less than 12 months).</b></li> </ul>	Existing	2011-2014
x	<b>A 'second chance' for exceptional candidates leaving detention or jail to continue education or training</b>	QCS and DoC	<p>The Queensland Government will work with the private sector to develop a 'Second Chance' scholarship program for exceptional candidates leaving detention or jail to continue in education or training to improve their employment prospects. Support will be contingent on continuing achievement and no re-offending.</p> <p><b>TARGET: A 'Second Chance' scholarship program, contingent on continuing achievement and no re-offending, will be developed and implemented for people leaving detention or jail.</b></p>	Existing	2011-2014

### 3. Reducing offending through employment, education and training opportunities

xi	<b>From jail to jobs</b>	QCS, DIP, DEEDI, DTMR	<p>The Queensland Government will focus on ensuring that more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people leaving jail immediately commence traineeships or employment through a range of initiatives. For example, such initiatives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing mentoring efforts, including through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- requiring funded organisations to undertake Indigenous employment mentoring to dedicate 20% of their direct activity to Indigenous prisoners</li> <li>- dedicating an Indigenous Employment and Training Officer (IETSO) to mentor Indigenous prisoners entering employment</li> <li>- working with the Federal Government to dedicate Federal resources/officers to indigenous prisoner employment mentoring as part of the Natural Disaster Jobs and Skills Package</li> <li>- working with five of its largest Skilling Queenslanders for Work providers to direct a proportion of their SQW effort towards Indigenous prisoners.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The existing Advance2Work program focused on preparing prisoners to transition from prison to employment. For example, in the North Queensland region the program is providing assistance to 24 Indigenous people developing employability skills and employment pathways in the civil construction industry.</li> <li>• There are opportunities for people on parole or other corrective service orders to participate in the development of the Active Trails currently under construction such as the Ipswich – Boonah Trail. The Active Trail program provides paid work, on-the-job accredited training, life skills training, mentoring support, and job search support as part of building new facilities.</li> <li>• Re-prioritisation of the Indigenous Business Development program will target discrete communities to maximise employment and economic development opportunities through the roll-out of social housing and other government- funded infrastructure projects. This will include increasing employment opportunities for Indigenous prisoners upon their release.</li> </ul> <p><b>TARGET: 200 Indigenous people leaving jail each year (approximately one-quarter of the number of Indigenous prisoners exiting prison) will immediately commence traineeships or employment through initiatives such as Active Trails, Advance2Work, Skilling Queenslanders for Work, the Indigenous Business Development program, or other programs.</b></p>	Existing	2011-2014
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## 4. Ensuring culturally appropriate and responsive administration of justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

### What is already underway?

#### **Murri Court**

The Murri Court and Youth Murri Court provide greater involvement of Indigenous Elders and respected persons, family members and community justice groups in the sentencing process for certain Indigenous offenders in the Magistrates Court.

#### **Diversion of offenders from the criminal justice system as often as appropriate**

Over the past two decades the Queensland Government has implemented a range of reforms that increase the number of diversionary options available. These include:

- alternatives to arrest such as notices to appear in court, cautioning, transfer to sobering up centres or a place of safety, and ticketing for some minor public order offences
- police and courts can also divert eligible offenders to youth justice conferences in which young offenders face the victims of their offences and take responsibility for their actions
- Indigenous Conferencing Support Officers are employed in Youth Justice Service Centres
- bail support programs, e.g. the Youth Bail Support program operates in Mt Isa, Townsville, Cairns and Brisbane, the Youth Opportunity Program that provides support across far north Queensland, and the Conditional Bail program operates state wide through Youth Justice.
- drug and alcohol education and/or treatment programs, e.g. the Queensland Indigenous Alcohol Diversion Program (QIADP) is a major initiative, including a residential rehabilitation component, that targets Indigenous defendants charged with offences where alcohol is a contributing factor and Indigenous parents involved in the child protection system who have an alcohol problem.

Recent evidence shows that diversion is a commonly used option in the Queensland criminal justice system to deal with offending behaviour. The appropriate use of a range of diversionary options will continue to be encouraged.

#### **The *Restoring Order* response**

The *Restoring Order - Crime prevention, policing and local justice in Indigenous Communities* report was released by the Crime and Misconduct Commission in November 2009. The Government response to the *Restoring Order* report, tabled in Parliament on 11 June 2010, provides a commitment to progressing a number of initiatives designed to improve community safety, including:

- enhancing the regional capacity of the Queensland Police Service (QPS) by establishing a new positions focusing on Indigenous issues
- appointing a Deputy Commissioner as the key sponsor/champion for Indigenous policing issues
- improving the way in which local community members are engaged in policing and law enforcement roles, and in crime prevention, including assessing the roles of community police, Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Police and Police Liaison Officers
- progressing local level plans on community safety
- progressing an assessment of appropriate early childhood development projects in remote communities
- expediting Reviews of the JP Magistrates Courts, community justice groups, Local Laws and Queensland Crime Prevention Strategy.

#### 4. Ensuring culturally appropriate and responsive administration of justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

Current progress includes:

- The QPS has advertised two new positions for the Far Northern and Northern police regions to support policing in Indigenous communities. Positions will also be created within the Cultural Advisory Unit in Brisbane to better resource that Unit and to provide additional support to the Central (Woorabinda) and North Coast (Cherbourg) police regions.
- The Deputy Commissioner, Regional Operations has been appointed as Champion for Indigenous policing to promote and support the delivery of quality policing services for Queensland's Indigenous people and advance reforms consistent with the CMC's recommendations.
- Community safety planning exercises have commenced. Doomadgee and Mornington Island have scheduled their community safety plans for completion by June 2011. Local police are to play an important and proactive role in community safety planning.
- An internal assessment of effective early childhood development initiatives and parenting supports has been undertaken, and an independent evaluation of the *Foundation for Success* program will be finalised in early 2011. The findings from this will be used to improve the quality of the *Bound for Success* pre-Prep program.
- The reviews of the JP Magistrates Courts, community justice groups, Local Laws and Queensland Crime Prevention Strategy have been or are being finalised. These reviews will inform future service delivery and the steps toward justice reinvestment. The QPS will also develop a program to undertake research on issues in the Indigenous policing policy area including the impact of some of the responses to the *Restoring Order* report.

##### Effective interventions for young offenders

The Department of Communities is responsible for providing evidence based strategies to help young people in the youth justice system make positive and lasting changes to their behaviour. For example:

- The Safe Youth – Safe Community initiative, the Woorabinda Early Intervention Coordination Panel, addresses the risks and needs of young people involved in violent behaviour. More than \$500,000 was made available to provide support to approximately 50 young people and their families in Woorabinda and the Logan/Ipswich corridor.
- Changing Habits and Reaching Targets (CHART) is a structured individual intervention program for youth justice clients who require moderate and high intervention to reduce their risk of reoffending.
- Aggression Replacement Therapy (ART) is a multi-modal treatment that targets the cognitive, behavioural and emotional aspects of adolescent and early-adult aggression.
- There are two community-based programs for young sexual offenders, the Griffith Youth Forensic Service and Mater Family and Youth Counselling Service. Professional practitioners provide individual assessments and treatment services. The programs hold young people accountable and involve their families in the treatment program.

Many such programs also provide significant support to ensure that young people have the best chance of complying with youth justice orders. For example :

- The Youth Opportunity Program which operates in north Queensland includes a bail support program but also provides a holistic therapeutic approach to addressing the developmental needs of young people in the youth justice system or at-risk of offending.
- The North West Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Association (NWAICA) provides programs aimed at improving the cultural, physical and social well-being of the North-West Brisbane Indigenous community. The Breakout youth program assists young people to comply with the conditions of their youth justice orders and to participate in daily activities that promote culture and personal development.
- The Youth Housing and Reintegration Services include After Care Services (YHARS) in six locations – Townsville, Toowoomba, Inala, Rockhampton, Mt Isa, and Hervey Bay/Maryborough. This service provides support and access to a range of accommodation options and targets young people exiting youth detention.

#### 4. Ensuring culturally appropriate and responsive administration of justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

Under the Strategy the Queensland Government will continue to provide support to young offenders to reduce their numbers in remand, and otherwise to ensure that they are able to comply with any youth justice order made and to prevent reoffending. Youth justice interventions will be subject to a continuous quality cycle and revised as necessary to ensure cultural relevance for Indigenous young people.

##### **Holistic approach to reducing domestic and family violence**

*Breaking the cycle of domestic and family violence in Rockhampton:* trials new ways to integrate a range of services to provide a more efficient and effective intervention to people affected by domestic and family violence by way of case management services, a behaviour change program for perpetrators of the violence, legal services, and community awareness raising. The trial is due to end on 30 June 2011 and its evaluation will inform the future allocation of resources to such initiatives.

##### **Transition to Community**

The Department of Communities' Transition from Corrections Facilities Initiative has achieved positive results in reducing recidivism. National and international literature indicates that rates of reoffending/re-incarceration for people with mental illness post-release from prison is normally between 50-60%. Approximately only 13% of the 243 clients supported (37 were Indigenous) from July 2007-June 2010 through the department's initiative reoffended.

##### **Cultural capability training**

Throughout the criminal justice system there is an ongoing program of work in place to ensure that culturally appropriate services are delivered by staff with appropriate levels of cultural capability. For example:

- In Youth Justice cultural capability training is mandated for all departmental staff.
- The Brisbane Youth Detention Centre has worked with Elders to have the centre recognised as Shared Country in late 2009. Within detention centres, Indigenous staffing reference groups advise on and assist cultural program delivery, and help to facilitate weekly/monthly visits from Elders to meet with and support young people (remand and sentenced). The reference group assists with staffing strategies and cultural awareness support within the centres. In addition, all staff are required to undertake cultural capability training. Programs include dance troops, spiritual awareness, connectedness to country and traditional lifestyles.
- The Department of Justice and Attorney-General has committed to implementing the following cultural competence training for staff by June 2012: online training for all staff; a cultural competency training component for all new staff; and tailored training for service delivery staff.

#### What will be new or improved under the strategy?

	Initiatives	Lead Agency	Action	Resources	Timeframe
i	<b>Improving relationships with police</b>	QPS (with CMC and	Under the strategy an effort will be made to improve police relations with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people on three fronts: 1. By trialling strategies to build police relationships within communities, and to increase understanding of the role of police in fair enforcement of the law, particularly in areas such as	Existing	2011-2014

#### 4. Ensuring culturally appropriate and responsive administration of justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

- DJAG) traffic offences, alcohol restrictions and relatively minor public order offences.
2. By improving the role that local Indigenous people play in policing their own communities, including by making improvements for Police Liaison Officers to ensure their role is well respected and understood by officers and community members.
  3. Enhancing police accountability to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people by ensuring police compliance with the protections provided to Indigenous people under the law. The CMC will be asked to audit and report on police officer's compliance with s.420 of the *Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000* regarding safeguards for Indigenous people being interviewed. This will complement the CMC's ongoing work in this area, as they have made a public commitment to report again on aspects of its 2009 *Restoring Order* report.

**TARGET:**

- **Police will trial and assess strategies to build police relationships within communities, to increase understanding of the role of police in fair enforcement of the law, particularly in areas such as traffic offences, alcohol restrictions and relatively minor public order offences.**
- **Police will make on the ground changes to improve the role that local Indigenous people can play in policing roles in their communities. This may include changes to the role of Police Liaison Officers to ensure they play a well respected and well understood role.**
- **The CMC will audit and report on police officers' compliance with safeguards for Indigenous persons being interviewed under s.420 of the *Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000*.**

ii	<b>Stronger and more effective community justice groups</b>	DJAG	<p>Improved support will be provided to community justice groups. In response to suggestions made by the Crime and Misconduct Commission that the community justice group program is not fulfilling its potential, the Queensland Government commissioned an independent review of community justice group program in 2010. The review identifies areas in which the community justice group program can be improved including in terms of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• addressing the foundations of the program (including program aims, design and delivery)</li> <li>• how to better support and develop the skills, capacity and effectiveness of the community justice groups to enable them to perform a range of court support activities.</li> </ul> <p>In response to the review the Queensland Government will work with community justice groups to implement reforms including to better focus their work on court-related activities and in particular, the development of strategies at the local level to reduce the level of non-compliance with justice orders and justice process offending. Community justice groups will also be</p>	2011-2014
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#### 4. Ensuring culturally appropriate and responsive administration of justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

encouraged to play a role in ensuring that alcohol education and assessment programs are considered as an alternative sanction to fines on sentencing in appropriate cases.

**TARGET: Improved support will be provided to community justice groups to ensure that they continue to provide valuable court support to Indigenous victims and offenders and can play an appropriate role in responding to local level crime and community safety issues. Specifically, DJAG will work with community justice groups to:**

- **better focus their work on court-related activities**
- **facilitate involvement of the groups in the development of local strategies to reduce the level of non-compliance with justice orders and justice process offending, prioritising discrete Indigenous communities**
- **ensure that alcohol education and assessment programs are considered as an alternative sanction to fines during sentencing in appropriate cases**
- **determine what Government support each individual group will receive, including training.**

iii	<b>Improving the effectiveness of sanctions for offending, especially breaches of alcohol restrictions</b>	DJAG & QPS	<p>Steps will be taken to improve the effectiveness of sanctions in two ways. Firstly, steps will be taken by police and the courts wherever it is appropriate to divert those in breach of the alcohol restrictions to an alcohol education and assessment program.</p> <p>Secondly, there will be an improved focus on the need to reduce the amount of unpaid fines of Indigenous offenders. There are a number of options that can be used to finalise outstanding fines managed by State Penalties Enforcement Registry (SPER) including conversion of the unpaid fine to a Fine Option Order allowing the debt to be repaid through unpaid community service or via an instalment plan. These options for finalising fines will be promoted in Indigenous communities including through local community organisations such as community justice groups, and through the SPER Community Engagement hotline 1300 131 510.</p> <p><b>TARGET: Steps will be taken to ensure effective sanctions respond to offending, particularly for breaches of alcohol management restrictions, by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>increasing the diversion to alcohol education and assessment sessions in appropriate cases of breach of alcohol management plans in discrete Indigenous communities</b></li> <li>• <b>increasing the access and take up of Indigenous community members to options to finalise outstanding fines managed by the State Penalties Enforcement Registry (SPER).</b></li> </ul>	2011-2014
iv	<b>More culturally</b>	DJAG	Magistrates will be provided with up to date community-specific information on commencement	2011-2014

#### 4. Ensuring culturally appropriate and responsive administration of justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

	<b>responsive courts for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities</b>		of their circuit court duties. Mechanisms for increased communication between magistrates, community justice groups and local service providers will be developed and implemented based on what is appropriate and necessary in the individual community. This will encourage a good rapport and two-way flow of information between magistrates and the community.  <b>TARGET: Community-specific information and communication mechanisms will be developed and implemented to encourage a good rapport and two-way flow of information between magistrates and the community.</b>		
v	<b>Improving access to justice</b>	DJAG	The need for additional Magistrates Court circuits in the Gulf of Carpentaria (the Gulf) in 2011 has been identified and will be responded to with an increase in the number of circuits. The court needs of the communities will continue to be monitored.  <b>TARGET: In 2011, in addition to the monthly court circuits in the Gulf, 8 additional Magistrates Court hearing circuits will take place to better meet the court needs of the Gulf communities.</b>	Existing	2011
vi	<b>Promoting high standards for legal representation</b>	DJAG & LAQ	The Best Practice Standards for Representing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Clients developed and implemented by Legal Aid Queensland, are to be more broadly promoted to legal representatives across Queensland, for example, through Continuing Legal Education papers and seminars.  <b>TARGET: Best Practice Standards for Representing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Clients developed and implemented by Legal Aid Queensland, will be promoted to other legal professionals in Queensland.</b>		2011-2014
vii	<b>Enhancing supervision of young offenders in discrete communities,</b>	QCS and DOC	To enhance supervision of young offenders in discrete communities, the Department of Communities will work with the Department of Community Safety to enable probation and parole officers, where appropriate, to work with young people subject to statutory orders including the development and supervision of case plans and interventions.  <b>TARGET: Indigenous young people in remote communities will receive enhanced supervision and support to reduce recidivism and non-compliance with statutory orders.</b>		2011-2014
viii	<b>A stronger and more effective Murri Court</b>	DJAG	Murri Court will continue to be supported. The operation of Murri Courts will be improved to ensure existing programs and services, such as drug and alcohol programs, are being used whenever appropriate by the court in bail and sentencing orders. In this way orders will facilitate more effective rehabilitation as well as being fair and just.	Existing (DJAG currently allocates \$2.4M p.a. to	2011-2014

4. Ensuring culturally appropriate and responsive administration of justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people					
			<p><b>TARGET: The Murri Court will continue to be supported. DJAG will work with the Murri Court to promote increased use of existing services and programs whenever possible to contribute to rehabilitating offenders and reducing recidivism, such as through referral to drug and alcohol programs in court orders.</b></p>	continue to support Murri Court and QIADP)	
ix	<b>Reducing the duration of remand</b>	DOC & LAQ	<p>Youth Justice Services will strictly monitor remand in custody to ensure young people, including young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, have legal representation for bail advocacy and that all possible options are being considered by the courts when deciding bail. This will include the progression of higher court bail applications by Legal Aid Queensland where necessary.</p> <p><b>TARGET: The duration of remand for young Indigenous people remanded in custody will be minimised.</b></p>		2011-2014
x	<b>Supporting successful transitions from corrections into the community</b>	QCS (with DoC and QH)	<p>A range of improved support will be provided to assist the successful transition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander offenders from detention or prison. For example, breach of parole and supervised orders contribute to the high rates at which Indigenous offenders return to custody and this issue will be examined to determine what steps can be put in place to reduce this level of non-compliance.</p> <p>The Department of Communities will deliver a short term recovery oriented support service to people with a moderate to severe mental illness being released from a correctional facility so they can access appropriate accommodation, connect with the local resources, participate in activities to reduce social isolation and enhance quality of life (transition from Correctional Facilities Program). Queensland Health through their Mental Health Services has a legislative obligation to provide a Limited Community Treatment Plan for individuals who are subject to a Forensic Order.</p> <p><b>TARGET:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All Indigenous offenders in prison and youth detention will have the opportunity to maintain connections to their families through video link-ups and face to face visits where appropriate.</li> <li>• All Indigenous offenders leaving prison or detention will receive enhanced support in order to reduce recidivism.</li> <li>• Steps will be put in place to reduce the level of non-compliance with parole and supervised orders.</li> </ul>	Existing	2011-2014

