SOME CRIME PREVENTION PROGRAMS IN AUSTRALIA: A SNAPSHOT

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INTRODUCTION

In recent decades crime prevention has been widely embraced internationally and across Australia (White & Perrone 2010). Moving beyond more traditional state-sanctioned forms of punishment and social control, crime prevention has the ability to be employed by a wide array of agencies and institutions (White & Perrone 2010). Evidence suggests that effective crime prevention programs need to be tailored to the specific circumstances or issues meaning that while there is some continuity in the application of crime prevention initiatives throughout Australia, there is also a diversity of programs (AIC 2011).

This paper will describe some key crime prevention programs and initiatives operating in Australia. This non-exhaustive list provides a snapshot of the nature and type of some contemporary crime prevention initiatives.

NATIONAL CRIME PREVENTION

Australia has a National Crime Prevention Framework which provides guidance and encouragement for an increased commitment to crime prevention at all government levels and

across all States and Territories (AIC 2011). This framework does not dictate any particular actions to be consistently conducted through the country (AIC 2011). In Australia the primary responsibility for the implementation of crime prevention is held by the individual States and Territories through their roles in areas such as policing, criminal justice, education, planning and child protection (AGD 2011). This means that each State and Territory has slightly differing approaches to the application of crime prevention. In saying this, there are still some programs and approaches that are applied consistently throughout Australia. http://www.aic.gov.au/media_library/aic/ncpf/ncp_framework.pdf

A major crime prevention initiative that has been functioning nationally for some time is Neighbourhood Watch programs (Geason & Wilson 1988). Largely encouraged by insurance agencies, Neighbourhood Watch programs focus mainly on target hardening strategies by encouraging individuals and communities to learn how to prevent crimes in their own homes and communities (Geason & Wilson 1989). These programs aim to reduce the occurrence of preventable crime, increase the number of crimes being reported to the police, improve household security and to develop a better relationship between local police and the community (NHW Australasia Inc. 2014). Not only do Neighbourhood Watch programs exist in numerous jurisdictions throughout Australia, but there are models of Neighbourhood Watch all over the world (NHW Australasia Inc. 2014).

Possibly the main crime prevention approach that is consistently applied through all Australian States and Territories is Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED). CPTED is a crime prevention strategy that involves manipulating the built environment in order to prevent crime and delinquency (Geason & Wilson 1989). In recent years each State and Territory has introduced CPTED guidelines as a required aspect of urban planning and design (Southern Tasmania Councils Authority 2010). This national application of CPTED is further evident in Federal programs such as the Safer Suburbs Program and the Safer Streets Program which provide federal funding for community safety measures such as closed circuit television systems and street lighting (AGD 2011).

LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

In Australia most of the responsibility for implementing tailored crime prevention programs falls

upon local governments (AIC 2010). As local governments have the ability to influence change in their communities and establish relationships with other community agencies they play a dominant role in the crime prevention process (AIC 2010). Further to this, crime prevention initiatives are most effective when tailored to the individual circumstances and location being targeted, with local governments able to achieve this much more successfully than programs applied at a state or federal level (AIC 2011).

Creative Solutions- Adelaide City Council

Each year a safety audit is conducted regarding Adelaide's entertainment district, surveying public perceptions of safety (Adelaide City Council 2013). Once the most unsafe locations are identified creative solutions are employed alongside more traditional crime prevention techniques such as street lighting (Adelaide City Council 2013). One particular example involved 70's pop icon Barry Manilow's greatest hits being played consistently between 11pm and 6am to attract a different demographic to the drug users who were inhabiting the space (Adelaide City Council 2013). The police Superintendent also highlighted that the music combatted nearby club music, a positive impact as club music can cause people to act more aggressively than social norms (Adelaide City Council 2013).

http://www.adelaidecitycouncil.com/inside-adelaide/article/creative-solutions-safety-in-the-west-end

Light up for Safety- City of Perth

While street lighting is commonly used as a crime prevention technique the City of Perth has taken this successful measure a step further. Light up for Safety is a rebate program for residents and businesses that allows the city to contribute to the acquisition and installation of lights, timers and sensors (City of Perth 2013). This program allows effective lighting to be extended beyond public locations, complementing the street lighting that is already in place (City of Perth 2013). This reduction of poorly lit areas just off the street or on public property can then enhance safety and reduce crime (City of Perth 2013).

http://www.perth.wa.gov.au/newsroom/featured-news/light-safety

We Need to Talk- City of Melbourne

We Need to Talk: Preventing Violence Against Women is a crime prevention strategy that focuses on preventing violence against women in three particular settings- the workplace, home and the community (City of Melbourne 2013). In the workplace this strategy includes education and training on the cost, impact and prevalence of violence against women; promotion and celebration of the White Ribbon campaign; and developing workplace policies and support procedures (City of Melbourne 2013). In the home this strategy includes information and counselling services, refuges and building on pre-existing services (City of Melbourne 2013). Finally, the community aspect involves and array of activities including employment opportunities and supporting and hosting community activities and events from partners such as White Ribbon Australia (City of Melbourne 2013).

http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/CommunityServices/CommunitySafety/Pages/PreventingViolenceAgainstWomen.aspx

DIVERSITY OF CRIME PREVENTION

In addition to the crime prevention programs implemented by federal, state and local government there are also a whole host of diverse crime prevention programs operating under a range of other agencies and non-governmental bodies. It is frequently highlighted that police alone cannot prevent crime and therefore crime prevention measures need to be implemented by an array of government agencies, non-governmental organisations, businesses, communities, community groups and individuals (AIC 2011, AIC 2013). Below are some example of the huge array of crime prevention initiatives being implemented across Australia by a range of different bodies and often by multiple agencies and/or bodies working together.

Keeping Me Safe- New South Wales

This program aims to assist teachers and police to work together in order to help young children to identify safe adults and safe locations in their community (NSW Police Force 2006). The program teaches children to develop individual safety strategies that apply to a variety of possible situations so they know how to respond and where to go (New South Wales Police force 2006). Keeping Me Safe strongly enforces the message that it is not safe for children to leave school or other locations with anyone unless their parents or guardian has given their permission (NSW Police Force 2006).

https://www.police.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0018/113823/keeping_me_safe_section3.pdf

Positive pARTnerships- Queensland

This program works with a range of stakeholders including local schools and community groups in order to create public works of art that in turn build community pride and ownership in areas of rail infrastructure (Queensland Rail 2013). Run by Queensland Rail the Positive pARTnerships program has produced ninety artwork pieces which in combination have beautified over 19123 square metres of infrastructure such as buildings, bike lockers and subways (Queensland Rail 2013).

http://www.queenslandrail.com.au/Community/Pages/PositivePartnership.aspx

Community Night Patrols- Northern Territory

Community Night Patrols function by assisting those at risk of becoming either victims of harm or causing harm themselves (Beacroft et al 2011). In this manner this program serves to break the cycle of crime and delinquency that exists in many Aboriginal communities (Beacroft et al 2011). Patrols engage in activities including providing safe transportation, providing advice and

information, preventing or diffusing possible violent scenarios, diverting intoxicated individuals out of the criminal justice system and relocating individuals to secure environments such as women's shelters or hospitals (Beacroft et al 2011).

http://www.victoriadaly.nt.gov.au/our-services/community-patrol

Goodbye Graffiti- Western Australia

Applying the principles of CPTED Goodbye Graffiti has developed resources that inform the public on how to design out graffiti through the use of lighting, surveillance, landscaping and protective coatings (WA Police 2014). This program also recognises the positive effect urban art can have as a preventative measure against graffiti (WA Police 2014). While focusing on preventing graffiti from occurring Goodbye Graffiti also provides information and resources on both how to report incidence of graffiti and how to remove graffiti (WA Police 2014).

http://goodbyegraffiti.wa.gov.au/

Blue Light Outdoor Adventure- South Australia

A partnership program between South Australian police, Blue Light (SA) and the community, Blue Light Outdoor Adventure provides life skill education programs for young people (Noorla Yo-Long 2010). The range of programs aim to expose individuals to challenging activities in order to encourage them to look at how they interact with others and in turn develop key skills that will help them manage and plan their everyday lives (Noorla Yo-Long 2010). The activities undertaken by the youths address topics such as "alcohol and drug use, law and teaching social responsibility through physical activity, team building, leadership programs, creating positive attitudes, self-motivation, employment acquisition skills, problem solving, conflict resolution, family violence, individual personal growth and well-being" (Noorla Yo-Long 2010).

http://www.noorlayo-long.com.au/

Step To- Victoria

Step To is a program that utilises dispute resolution as a tool for crime prevention (VIC Department of Justice 2014). The main component of this strategy is a fifteen minute video that highlights how appropriate dispute resolution can both lead to successful resolution of disputes and also prevent disputes escalating to a level that may require a criminal justice response (VIC Department of Justice 2014). The video also encourages community members to access the assistance and resources available at the Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria to help reach an agreement (VIC Department of Justice 2014).

http://www.crimeprevention.vic.gov.au/home/resources/step+to+-+appropriate+dispute+resolution+as+a+crime+prevention+tool

Bizsafe- Australian Capital Territory

This initiative aims to reduce the risk of theft, robbery, fraud and other relevant crimes for businesses within the ACT (Crime Stoppers ACT 2014). This is achieved by providing businesses with not only information on the types and prevalence of crimes relevant to their business type and location, but also the skills and knowledge on how to assess their individual risks and the most effective strategies to implement in order to address these risks (Crime Stoppers ACT 2014).

http://www.police.act.gov.au/crime-and-safety/for-act-businesses/bizsafe-program.aspx

U-Turn- Tasmania

Run by Mission Australia and Tasmanian Police this program sets out to break the cycle of motor vehicle theft in Tasmania (Goodwin 2005, Mission Australia 2014). U-Turn is a diversionary strategy that re-directs young people away from illegal or thrill seeking behaviours associated with motor vehicles into a structured training course on mechanics, car maintenance and body work (Goodwin 2005, Mission Australia 2014). Other life skills and behavioural issues are also addressed through literacy, numeracy and road safety education and recreational

activities such as go karting (Goodwin 2005, Mission Australia 2014).

http://www.missionpromotion.com/uturn/

Crime Stoppers

Crime Stoppers is a program designed to utilise the media and other resources to entice information from the public that can facilitate police investigations. Crime Stoppers is run by a volunteer board and its activities include hosting annual training conferences and supporting regional leadership and training programs.

Crime Stoppers coordinates networking resources for local Crime Stoppers' operations, such as a website and print publications. It is funded by dues paid by member organisations. Some of the services Crime Stoppers provides to its members include an annual awards program for local Crime Stoppers operations, produces an operations manual to assist new programs and to help set up and guide new Crime Stopper programs, and providing legal services to its members

Crime Stoppers Australia operates throughout Australia and has become an integral part of policing with the information gathered and supplied by the community essential to crime fighting and crime prevention. Intelligence led policing relies on leads and information that can be analysed and used to potentially lead to the solving of crimes where initial evidence is lacking. Properly used and with the public's confidence in reporting crime, Crime Stoppers can assist in enhancing investigators ability to identify and prosecute offenders who may have thought they had got away with the committing of a crime.

Stakeholders include:

- Police forces from each State and Territory in Australia
- State and Territory Governments
- Australian Federal Police
- Australian Government – Department of Home Affairs
- The media

- The community – all the people who call this country – home

A coordinator is appointed by the Police to run the Crime Stoppers program on a daily basis with additional staff operating an office that takes tips on the Crime Stoppers line. The Police are required to investigate the various Crime Stoppers tips from the public and report back to the coordinator when a case is solved.

Since 1976 when Crime Stoppers was first founded in the US, more than $10 Billion in drugs and property have been recovered and more than 1 million arrests have been made. This equates to solving a crime every 14 minutes, somewhere in the world.

Information on crimes can be reported by calling 1800 333 000 or using their online anonymous reporting. Victims of crime must contact their local police to report a crime.

CONCLUSION

It is evident that crime prevention strategies have been widely adopted throughout Australia (White & Perrone 2010). Recognised nationally and applied locally these crime prevention strategies are not only reducing the incidence of crime but helping people feel safer within their communities.

The Australian Crime Prevention Council supports attempts to prevent crime in Australia and recognises the diversity of programs and activities that achieve this aim. This snapshot of some contemporary examples of crime prevention demonstrate how communities, individual, criminal justice agencies and other government agencies routinely contribute to the prevention of crime. The Council is thankful for the voluntary assistance of Sarah Ford in preparing this document.

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