

Hey Julia,

I welcome the opportunity to appear before the Committee on Thursday 12th June at 2pm and thank you for your invitation.

In attendance with me will be :

Jane Lawton - Operations Manager NT Mission Australia

Wayne Allum - Shift Supervisor Mission Australia Community Night Patrol

a brief on each of our relevant services is as follows :

Darwin & Palmerston Youth Beat

Focus - to engage and connect with young people up to the age of 25 who are on the streets at night time for the purpose of relationship building, information provision, referral and crisis response. Aims - to improve young people's safety at night, including diverting young people from risky behaviour and crime.

- to engage rather than marginalise young people

- to link young people to family, community, education and recreation through mentoring and referral

- to support families to care for and take responsibility for their children

Community Night Patrol

The Community Night Patrol operates within a harm minimization approach of caring for intoxicated people. Community patrol teams work through the evenings (4pm - 11pm) patrolling public places and responding to requests from the NT Police and the general public. The role of the Community Night Patrol is to intervene with intoxicated people and to manage the related behaviours. Interventions may include asking people to move on, calming a situation, assisting intoxicated people with transportation, or Police callouts. The Community Night Patrol will, with the person's permission, transport them to their home residence or that of a friend or family member, to the Sobering up Shelter or to the Police watchhouse.

Community Day Patrol

The Community Day Patrol operates similarly to the Night Patrol in regard to intervention with intoxicated people, between the hours of 8am and 4pm. The Community Day Patrol is also pro-active in providing education to itinerant camps on alcohol intake minimization strategies, road safety issues and crisis intervention. The patrol works closely with the Larrakia Indigenous Referrals Office in helping itinerant people find stable accommodation and assisting with access to Centrelink benefits, medical facilities, the Return to Home project and other relevant agency referrals.

Darwin and Katherine Sobering up Shelters

Intoxicated clients are accepted into the shelters from 4pm - 2am Monday to Saturday with Darwin SUS also operating Thursday and Friday from 12 noon. The role of the shelters is to provide a safe place for people who are intoxicated and may be of harm to themselves or others. Clients of the shelter are generally referred by the NT Police or the relevant Community Night Patrols and when accepted, are asked to stay for a minimum of 6 hours.

The shelters provide clients with :

- a shower and fresh pyjamas for the night

- washing of the client's clothes whilst at the shelter

regular checks to see that the clients are settled, sleeping well and not in need of medical attention breakfast in the morning the opportunity to discuss substance abuse and the offer of help with lifestyle change assisted referral to other organisations such as treatment services, Centrelink or accommodation centres provision of assistance through the Emergency Relief Funding Program where required Darwin SUS - issue of bus tickets for clients who have limited or no funds to get home

Hope this give you some understanding of the services, however feel free to call me for any clarification.

As discussed on the telephone, I also have worked in the Berrimah Prison as the Indigenous Employment Support Worker and one of the issues that I found relating to recidivism was the support or lack of in regard to released prisoners. It has been my experience, that released prisoners who had a constant support mechanism, be it family or agency, are able to maintain a stable lifestyle long enough to get through the many opportunities for reoffending that present themselves early in their release stage. Those with no support, quite often found themselves in a world that they no longer understood and quickly became frustrated and in a number of instances quite frightened of the prospect of trying to start rebuilding a new life. Supposedly simple actions such as registering at Centrelink and then Job Networks in a quest for employment quickly become confidence sapping exercises and lead many to choose their previous lifestyles as the easier option. This is only one of many examples of how quickly someone who has made a conscious decision to "go straight" can become disillusioned and revert to a life of criminal activity. I'm not sure if this information is of much assistance, however, as discussed, I will leave it to your judgement as to where it goes from here.

kind regards
Peter

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