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Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

15 December 2006

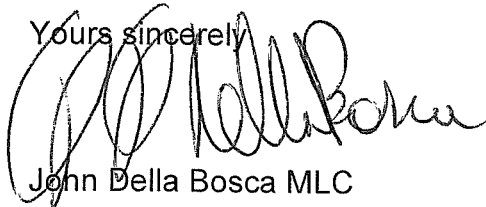
Mr John Evans
Clerk of the Legislative Council and the Clerk of the Parliaments
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Mr Evans

On 16 June 2006 the Legislative Council Standing Committee on Social Issues released Report No. 38 *Public Disturbances at Macquarie Fields*.

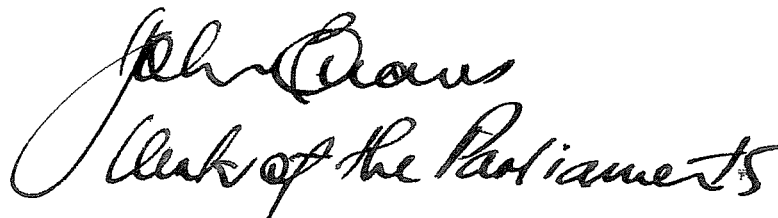
In accordance with the Standing Orders, please find attached the Government's response to the recommendations of the Report.

Yours sincerely

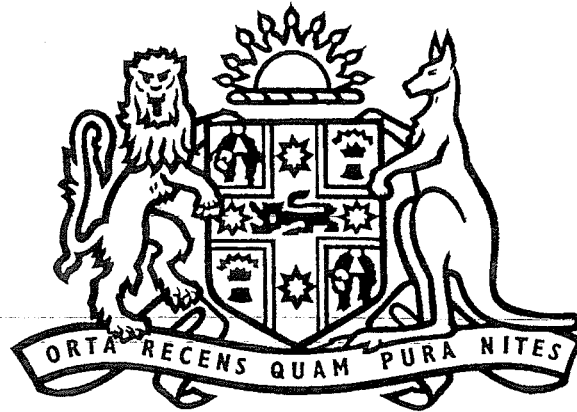


John Della Bosca MLC

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and authorised to be published



John Evans
Clerk of the Parliaments



**NSW Government Response
to**

**Legislative Council Standing Committee on Social
Issues Report into Public Disturbances at
Macquarie Fields**

December 2006

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Introduction

The Legislative Council Standing Committee on Social Issues conducted an Inquiry into public disturbances at Macquarie Fields. The terms of reference for the Inquiry requested that the Committee enquire into, and report on:

1. Policing strategies and resources in the Macquarie Fields area, particularly in the immediate period leading up to and following the motor vehicle accident involving two fatalities on 25 February 2005
2. Government programs and services provision in the Macquarie Fields area, including local and federal government programs
3. Non-government services and service provision in the Macquarie Fields area;
4. Whether the lessons learned from the Social Issues Committee and Coburn Reports resulting from the Redfern disturbance, have been utilised in this incident;
5. The underlying causes and problems which have contributed to individual and collective acts of violence and social disorder, and
6. Any other matters arising from these Terms of Reference.

The Committee tabled its report in Parliament in June 2006. The report makes thirteen Recommendations. The NSW Government is required to respond to the report within six months of its tabling. This paper outlines the Government's response to the Committee's Recommendations.

Recommendation 1: That the NSW Government adequately fund and resource the Macquarie Fields Community Action Plan 2005-2006, and investigate the continuation of the Plan beyond 2006.

The Macquarie Fields Community and Government Action Plan 2005 - 2006 (the Action Plan) brings together a range of plans and the outcomes of a number of different community consultations undertaken by governments and other organisations with the people of Macquarie Fields in recent years. The NSW Government is implementing the actions outlined under the plan, many of which have been completed.

The Action Plan contains a total of 39 actions. Of the 39 actions, 25 have been achieved and are ongoing, and the remainder have commenced. Key initiatives that have been successfully implemented under the Plan include:

- the establishment of a local employment taskforce involving residents, service providers and local businesses with the aim of increasing employment and traineeship opportunities;

- the establishment of a community meeting place on the estate to enable residents to meet socially and formally as well as to access information and services. The community meeting place provides a focal point for a range of activities, e.g. craft groups, cooking and sewing and organisation of community wide festivals and events;
- the establishment of programs to build better relationships and create new opportunities for young people who have come under Police notice; and
- Greatly improved community relations between local police and residents and a significant increase in high visibility policing.

The Plan has now been implemented and the Local Reference Group has resolved to develop a new Plan for 2007.

Recommendation 2: That the implementation of the Community Action Plan in Macquarie Fields involve a strategy to ensure adequate consultation with the community and involvement of the community in decision making processes.

The NSW Government remains committed to working with the Macquarie Fields community, in partnership with the Campbelltown City Council and other key stakeholders, and to involving the community in making decisions that affect the Macquarie Fields area. Through the implementation of the Community Action Plan, and associated initiatives in the local area, the Government has sought to empower the community to help address the underlying social problems in the Macquarie Fields area.

From the earliest stage, the Government has sought to work with all key stakeholders to improve outcomes in the Macquarie Fields area. In October 2005, the Macquarie Fields Forum was held, and the work of the Forum informed the development of the Macquarie Fields Government and Community Action Plan. Development of the Action Plan also involved local residents of the Macquarie Fields area and Federal, State and Local Government representatives.

Implementation of the Action Plan has been overseen and coordinated by the Project Management Group, which is comprised of senior representatives from NSW State Government agencies, Local Council and community representatives and is chaired by the Director General, Premier's Department. The Local Member for Macquarie Fields continues to be an active participant in the Project Management Group.

The Project Management Group is supported by the Macquarie Fields Government and Community Local Reference Group. The Local Reference Group includes representatives from:

- State Government Agencies (Police, Department of Education and Training, Department of Housing, Department of Community Services, Department of Health, and the Premier's Department);
- Commonwealth Government agencies (Department of Family and Community Services and Indigenous Affairs and the Department of Workplace Relations);
- Campbelltown City Council;
- Local Members of Parliament;
- six residents of Macquarie Fields; and
- six representatives of local non-government organisations.

The Group meets bi-monthly and is chaired by Campbelltown City Council. Meetings are held in a community location and local residents are able to nominate themselves for membership of the Group.

A Community Forum was held in Macquarie Fields on 5 December 2006 attended by more than 60 local residents and agencies. The outcomes of this Forum will form the basis of a new Work Plan for 2007.

Community consultation and involvement of the community in decision making processes also occurs through the Local Partners in Employment Macquarie Fields Employment Taskforce for the Macquarie Fields Housing Estate and the Interim Steering Committee of Partners in Employment. This scheme supports residents who reside on the five public housing estates in the Campbelltown Local Government Area. Under the Scheme there is a current network of over 47 agencies who meet regularly in each of the public housing estates to support and sustain the local community.

Recommendation 3: That the Macquarie Fields Community Action Plan review and develop community development strategies, the primary focus of which is community members and groups.

The NSW Government supports the role and value of a community development approach. The NSW Government recognises that when strategies are developed in consultation with the community, there is a sense of community ownership which provides a solid foundation for sustainability and effectiveness.

There are a number of community development activities that have commenced in Macquarie Fields following the development of the Macquarie Fields Government and Community Action Plan 2005 – 2006, the Macquarie

Fields Local Reference Group and the Project Management Group. These include:

- the establishment of a community cottage on the public housing estate;
- the employment of a community development worker at that cottage;
- the provision at the cottage of a community café, a Small Business course by TAFE, a Stress Management course, and a meeting space for a variety of community groups;
- the establishment of a Macquarie Fields Employment Taskforce to develop employment opportunities for residents;
- setting up a community leadership training program for residents; and
- offering a number of other vocationally related training programs through TAFE.

***Recommendation 4:* That the NSW Government, through the Macquarie Fields Community Action Plan and the Campbelltown Coordination Group, take all possible steps to achieve genuine partnerships between government agencies at all levels of government.**

The NSW Government is committed to supporting the development and maintenance of genuine partnerships across all levels of government, and between government and non-government agencies, in order to ensure that people can access the support they need when they need it.

Since the disturbances in Macquarie Fields in 2005, genuine partnerships have been developed and strengthened between government agencies at all levels of government. These partnerships have underpinned the successful establishment and operation of the Macquarie Fields Local Reference Group and the Project Management Group, and the implementation of the Macquarie Fields Action Plan. These groups include representatives from Commonwealth, State and local government, non-government organisations and local residents. The aim of the Action Plan is to achieve better coordination and partnership outcomes for all stakeholders in Macquarie Fields.

For example, the recently funded Young Offender Mentoring Program is a strategy that has been developed from the Young Offender Network. This network was established as a result of the incidents that occurred in Macquarie Fields last year. Members of the Network are: Council, Department of Juvenile Justice, Macquarie Fields Police Local Area Command, South West Sydney Multicultural and Community Centre, Mission Australia, PCYC, Legal Aid, Macarthur Legal Service, TAFE,

Probation and Parole, Youth off the Streets, Burnside Youth Services and Dept of Community Services.

The Young Offender Mentoring Program is identified as a partnership project between Campbelltown City Council, Department of Juvenile Justice, South Western Sydney Institute of TAFE and Macquarie Fields Police with the members of the Young Offender Network identified as stakeholders who will form a reference group overseeing the outcomes of the program.

In addition, there are a range of other whole of government initiatives and collaborative partnerships that are being implemented in Macquarie Fields. These aim to target the underlying causes of the problems encountered by disadvantaged communities like Macquarie Fields. Examples of some of these initiatives include the following.

- Early intervention: supporting families and children in the early years of children's lives in order to positively influence their outcomes later in life. Research shows that children who establish strong connections to family, community and education in their early years will have better social, employment and health outcomes in later life. Examples of state-wide NSW Government early intervention programs which are being implemented in partnership with the local community, include *Families First* and *Better Futures*.
- Community renewal program: the Department of Housing has worked in partnership with the local community, the local council and the Aboriginal Housing Office to renew and regenerate public housing within the Macquarie Fields area, and the NSW Government is committed to working with the community to meet the challenges in Macquarie Fields. For example, \$49 million has been invested in Macquarie Fields over the past ten years as part of community renewal plans to redress physical design issues of the existing public housing estate.
- Youth Centre and Community Nursery in Macquarie Fields: Youth Off The Streets (YOTS) is currently developing a new Youth Centre in Macquarie Fields. The Department of Housing has worked with local stakeholders, including YOTS and Eden Garden Centre, to develop a project for a Community Nursery in Macquarie Fields, which would be located at the Youth Centre. The aim of the nursery is to get young people and their families involved in developing and maintaining the nursery. This will offer an opportunity to engage local residents, provide them with a meeting place and an opportunity to gain experience in a maintaining a nursery.
- Community Building Initiatives: a total of \$1.46 million has been invested to date in Community-Building Initiatives, which are a partnership between the Department of Housing and the local

community. These include initiatives such as a Neighbourhood Technology Centre with WorkVentures to increase access to the internet for local families; improving opportunities for on-line learning, training and employment opportunities with Job Network Agencies, and establishing a new Community Centre on the public housing estate.

- Community Services Grants Program: The Government, through the Department of Community Services, funds a range of programs under the Community Services Grants program in the Macquarie Fields Area;
- NGO Programs and Services funded by the State Government: The NSW Government funds a range of programs in the Macquarie Fields area, under the Area Assistance Scheme, that are either delivered in partnership with or solely by a non-government organisation. Examples include:

- *Networking for Change*, auspiced by the Society of St Vincent de Paul, and specific to Macquarie Fields public housing tenants;
 - *Muru Nanga Mai Family Healing Program*, auspiced by Macarthur Community Forum, and aims to bring together Aboriginal people in the Campbelltown area to form strong cohesive groups that contribute to the social and emotional well-being of families, and develop funding projects that promote Aboriginal culture to the broader community
 - *Unity in Diversity*, auspiced by the Deaf Society of NSW, provides train-the-trainer leadership workshops to enhance access by culturally and linguistically diverse and deaf women and youth to relevant information designed to address their personal and safety needs
- Partners in Employment: The TAFE NSW - South Western Sydney Institute is represented on the local Partners in Employment (PIE), Macquarie Fields Employment Taskforce for the Macquarie Fields Housing Estate and the Interim Steering Committee of Partners in Employment. This scheme supports residents who reside on the five public housing estates in the Campbelltown Local Government Area. There is a current network of over 47 agencies who meet regularly in each of the public housing estates to support and sustain the local community.
 - Health Services: The Sydney South West Area Health Service works in partnership with other key service providers including local NGOs and other Government Departments (e.g. Housing, Justice Health and Centrelink) to provide a coordinated approach to client care.
 - Crime Prevention Plan: the Campbelltown City Council has developed a Crime Prevention Plan, following wide consultation with the local community and other stakeholders. This was endorsed by the NSW

Attorney General as a Safer Community Compact in April 2006, and is endorsed for 3 years. A Community Safety Committee has been established to oversee the implementation of the plan, and is comprised of a diverse group of stakeholders, including local council members, representatives from the business community, NSW government agencies, a number of non-government organisations, and the local community.

Recommendation 5: That the NSW Government, in liaison with non-government organisations in Macquarie Fields, recognise and resource a local body to act as the focal point in the planning and coordination of programs and funding in Macquarie Fields.

A Local Implementation Reference Group has been established in Macquarie Fields to improve the coordination of services and programs. The Group reports to the Macquarie Fields Project Management Group on the implementation of the actions in the Macquarie Fields Government and Community Action Plan 2005 - 2006. Membership of the Group includes six residents of Macquarie Fields and six representatives of local non-government organisations. The Group meets bi-monthly and is chaired by Campbelltown City Council.

Recommendation 6: That all levels of government work together, through the Macquarie Fields Community Action Plan Implementation Groups, to ensure appropriate facilities are available for the local young people.

Since the disturbances in Macquarie Fields in 2005, genuine partnerships between government agencies at all levels of government have been developed and strengthened. A wide variety of initiatives, including those in the Macquarie Fields Government and Community Action Plan, are being implemented in the Macquarie Fields area to improve the services and facilities available to, and outcomes for, young people.

In its report, the Committee noted some of the positive outcomes being delivered for young people through several of the initiatives currently being delivered by the NSW Government and through collaborative partnerships between the Government and other stakeholders. The NSW Government submission to the inquiry outlined in detail the wide range of initiatives underway aimed at assisting children and young people within the local area. These include the following.

- **Promoting Education**
 - local schools providing a range of personal development and student welfare programs and facilities to increase student

retention and reduce absenteeism and encourage students to fully participate in schooling.

- **Addressing anti-social behaviour**
 - programs initiated by the Police Local Area Command for young people in Macquarie Fields, particularly those involved in or at risk of involvement in criminal or anti-social behaviour. For example, a number of camps have been held for young people where police and mentors such as leading footballers work to improve the life skills of the youth.
- **Improving relationships and interactions with Police**
 - establishment of a Police Youth Advisory Council.
 - Youth Off The Streets (YOTS) organisation has established a number of programs and activities in Macquarie Fields to engage with at risk youth, developing leadership skills and diverting them to sporting and other activities.
- **Blue Light Disco**
 - is held at James Meehan High School on Friday nights providing a safe environment for high school aged young people.
- **Youth Off The Streets**
 - is raising funds from the Corporate sector to build a large youth facility in the area.
- **Enhanced programs and activities for youth**
 - will be a feature of the new Work Plan which the Local Reference Group is developing for 2007. A Youth Working Group has been established, convened by Campbelltown Council which will include young people from the local high schools and those involved in Youth Off The Streets activities and programs.

In addition, NSW agencies continue to work in partnerships with other stakeholders to develop programs that could involve young people in Macquarie Fields. For example, the Department of Housing is working with Youth Off The Streets and local schools to provide a young women dance program. In addition, the Young Offender Mentoring program, also outlined in the response to Recommendation 4, links trained local volunteer mentors to a local young person in need of support to prevent re-offending, to help improve the young persons basic skills and to assist them to reach their goals. Funding is provided, through the Safer Community Compact Grants administered by the Attorney General's Department, to the Campbelltown City Council to coordinate and implement the program.

Recommendation 7: That the short-term nature of funding programs be reviewed with a view to ensuring that successful programs continue to be funded in Macquarie Fields and other communities throughout NSW.

Short term funding allocations have a strong role to play in agency resource allocation, as there is scope for programs to be reviewed and extended when strong outcomes are being realised.

To date, two successful programs in the Macquarie Fields area have had their funding extended. These programs are the Schools as Communities Centre at Curran Public School which had time limited funding, and which has been given ongoing recurrent funding, and the Primary Connect at Guise Public School which has had funds extended to 2007 to be reviewed at that time pending evaluation.

There is also provision for approved Safer Community Compact projects (for example, the Youth Offender Mentoring Program currently in operation in the Macquarie Fields local government area) to apply for a sustained funding project grant from the Crime Prevention Division of the Attorney General's Department. To apply for sustained funding, applications must demonstrate that the project has delivered or is continuing to deliver clear crime prevention outcomes.

Recommendation 8: That the NSW Government urge the Federal Government to take all possible steps to achieve coordination with State and local Governments, and local non-government organisations, in providing and funding programs in Macquarie Fields and other communities throughout NSW.

The NSW Government continues to advocate greater Commonwealth engagement and investment in Macquarie Fields in partnership with the NSW Government, local governments, local non-government organisations and community groups. Difficulties continue to occur in establishing and maintaining a collaborative partnership approach because of the failure of the Commonwealth Government to consult with the state and local governments on funding prioritisation and allocation. A fragmented approach to service delivery compounds the difficulties in service coordination and results in less than optimal outcomes for the local community as well as causes frustration for local agencies and residents.

In those instances where the NSW and local governments have successfully engaged the Commonwealth Government in collaborative service delivery, improved outcomes have been secured for the Macquarie Fields community. For example, under the Macquarie Fields Government and Community Action Plan, the NSW Department of Housing has worked in conjunction with the Commonwealth Department of Employment and Workplace Relations and TAFE NSW to successfully establish a local employment taskforce. The taskforce involves residents, service providers and local businesses and meets regularly to promote employment and trainee

opportunities. It also provides information to the community on issues such as the Welfare to Work reforms and options for TAFE study.

Recommendation 9: That research be undertaken to establish the real costs to the government and the community of preventive action to address social disadvantage, versus later remedial action.

The NSW Government is committed to a greater focus on early intervention and prevention and is increasingly seeking to tackle disadvantage by preventing problems from happening in the first place and stopping existing problems from getting worse.

There is already a considerable body of research which demonstrates the link between social disadvantage and poor life outcomes, particularly in health and education, and the need for preventative action to address problems early before they develop into complex issues requiring more intensive intervention and management.

Under the NSW Government State Plan, the Government has made clear its strong commitment to increased investment in early intervention and to a range of early intervention strategies that will result in improved outcomes for people in health and education as well as for the more vulnerable members of the community.

The Government has committed to building stronger communities by reducing levels of anti-social behaviour, and to increasing participation and integration in community activities. Efforts in these areas will seek to support communities in addressing disharmony and social disadvantage in the community before it escalates. Where community harmony has broken down, the NSW Government will support the efforts of those in the community who want to work towards better social harmony and diversity in order to break down social isolation and marginalisation.

As part of the State Plan we will also tackle disadvantage through embedding a prevention and early intervention approach into Government services. This will change the way we develop policies and deliver programs. The NSW Government will examine ways of evaluating the benefits and costs of early action compared to remedial intervention at a later stage. The Government has committed to produce an early intervention policy framework by mid-2007, which will guide policy development and research in this area.

The *Families First* program provides a good example of the Government's commitment to early intervention, and a number of initiatives are being implemented under this framework in the Macquarie Fields area. Under the program, early intervention family support services are provided for families

with children 0-8 years. This program is targeted at first time parents, young parents, parents with multiple pre schoolers, and those with special needs, and is delivered in the Macquarie Fields area by the Campbelltown Family Support Service. It offers home visiting and some group work, and seeks to increase parental confidence. This in turn reduces family stress and risk which impacts on children, and provides families with an increased ability to ask for assistance before problems become entrenched and require crisis intervention.

Other programs supported by the NSW Government under *Families First* include the First Five Years Volunteer Home Visiting Project, where trained and assessed volunteers provide support to families with young children, and the Campbelltown Community for Kids, which offers a mobile play group that brings the playgroup information, resources and services for families with children 0-8 years.

Recommendation 10: That the NSW Government and police continue to develop, support and adequately resource initiatives to strengthen relationships with local young people.

The NSW Government and NSW Police supports this recommendation. The Government is committed to promoting strong and robust relationships with the young people of the Macquarie Fields area to create a resilient community and contribute to positive community outcomes. The Macquarie Fields Action Plan has identified a number of strategies to address communication and strengthen relationships between the Police and local young people, as well as policing resources in NSW. In addition, NSW Police have implemented a whole of command response to youth issues in Macquarie Fields, acknowledging that positive relations between young people and the police are imperative to reducing the likelihood of significant public disturbances occurring again.

As outlined in detail in the NSW Government submission to the inquiry, the NSW Government, and in particular the NSW Police, have a number of key initiatives and strategies relevant to Macquarie Fields which seek to build constructive and lasting relationships with local young people. For example, a range of programs directed at youth issues receive significant support from the NSW Police Local Area Command, such as the Police Youth Advisory Council, Positive Choices Educative Program and IMPACT Youth Camps. Other community based programs such as Father Riley's Youth Off the Streets program, the Department of Education's School Suspension Model, Pacific Islander Referral Program and PCYC young offenders program have been used to refer and case manage young people experiencing difficulties. Examples of other initiatives include:

- **Community Consultation and Participation:** The NSW Police Macquarie Fields Local Area Commander, Superintendent Wilkins and the NSW Police Youth Liaison Officer, Senior Constable Cotter, are actively engaged in the Macquarie Fields local community and regularly attend interagency meetings and youth programs, for example the 2006 Reconciliation Week Activities at Macquarie Fields college. General duties police also attend community events and have become mentors for programs and camps.
- **Post Release Support Program:** The Department of Juvenile Justice runs a *Post Release Support Program*, which provides numeracy and literacy programs to young people with educational difficulties, and the Employment Skills Program, which provides outreach services to clients within the Macquarie Fields area.
- **Young Offender Mentoring Program:** A Young Offender Network has been established in the Campbelltown local government area and includes representatives from local service providers and government agencies. The Network has worked with Council to develop a Youth Mentoring Program to provide support and guidance to young people who have been in contact with the Juvenile Justice System and are living in the Campbelltown local government area.
- **Youth Liaison Officers:** work with families and community members to engage young people in processes that focus not only on assisting to change offending behaviour, but also to develop positive relations with police through a range of programs and initiatives. Examples include responses to interfamily domestic violence and young people, the implementation in 2007 of School Liaison Police across the State to help prevent students from becoming involved in crime, programs around safe party behaviour and that address antisocial behaviour at parties and events.

Recommendation 11: That in any public order incident a strategy be implemented to ensure adequate liaison with and dissemination of information to the community.

The NSW Government is currently reviewing various strategies to improve liaison and the dissemination of information to the community during a public order incident.

In October 2005, the NSW Police Commissioner's Executive Team endorsed the Incident Command and Control System. A dedicated Media/Public Information Officer position now exists within the Police Commander's Command Team to develop strategic advice and ensure that a targeted uniform message is sent to the community.

More generally, Local Area Commands build relationships with their communities through a range of mechanisms including, Police Accountability Community Teams, Liaison officers and beat policing.

Locally-based Ethnic Community Liaison Officers assist Local Area Commands with customised communication strategies for select population groups. The Ethnic Community Liaison Officers at Macquarie Fields and Campbelltown have been using targeted communication strategies to build community trust.

Recommendation 12: That NSW Police provide continuing training to officers to heighten awareness of the cultural and social issues faced in disadvantaged communities.

The NSW Government supports this recommendation. Training in cultural and social awareness, and in understanding the issues facing disadvantaged communities, is mandatory for all police during initial training, in-service training days, specialist courses and through a variety of educational and resource materials provided by NSW Police.

Local Area Commands run their own cultural awareness training relevant to their demographic. The Macquarie Fields Local Area Command has developed an additional training package to address the specific needs of the area. Police at Macquarie Fields now participate in an induction course including field training upon arrival, and ongoing training as well as workshops as part of the youth mentoring program.

In addition, across NSW the Constable Education Program covers subjects including cross-cultural communication; communication across the community; and Indigenous issues. Cultural diversity training is also included in several continuing education programs such as the Detectives Education Program, Safe Custody training, Joint Investigative Response Teams' (child protection) Training, Domestic Violence, Youth, and Gay & Lesbian Liaison Officers' training.

As stated in the NSW Government submission to the inquiry, NSW Police has a range of initiatives in place across NSW and in the Macquarie Fields area to promote understanding between the Local Area Command and the local community, and to heighten Police awareness of the cultural and social issues faced in disadvantaged communities. These include the following.

Local Area Command Aboriginal Consultative Committee

NSW Police considers that the solutions for many of the problems confronting Aboriginal people are best identified by the community and resolved through a working partnership. Aboriginal people have the right to live in an

environment of mutual respect, free from crime and the fear of crime and to seek a collaborative approach to the resolution of community concerns. This can only be achieved through strong community leadership, ongoing commitment of all parties, the development of practical solutions and an intolerance of crime.

The NSW Police relationship with local Dharawal people is strong and positive in Macquarie Fields. The Aboriginal Consultative Committee, comprised of local Indigenous Elders and community representatives and Police meets on a bi-monthly basis addressing local Indigenous issues.

Arabic Community Advisory Committee (ACAC): The ACAC examines issues impacting upon the Arabic community within the Campbelltown Local Government Area. Membership is comprised of Police representatives, Health Services, Campbelltown Council, Macarthur Diversity Services Inc and Macarthur Disability Services.

Community and Police Support Group: Macquarie Fields Local Area Command has a Community and Police Support group which assists Police with ethnic community issues, including organising meetings and assisting with discos at schools.

Ethnic Community Liaison Officer: Ethnic Community Liaison Officers perform a variety of duties aimed at assisting operational police to build closer relationships with local communities from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Aboriginal Community Liaison Officers: Aboriginal Community Liaison Officers assist Police to resolve issues affecting Aboriginal people, and improve Aboriginal/Police relations by improving the channels of communication.

Aboriginal Client Services Specialist Program: This program aims to improve the delivery of local court services to Aboriginal clients. It involves the placement of Aboriginal officers at 18 local courts across the State to provide support and assistance to Aboriginal defendants, victims of crime and witnesses (and their families).

Recommendation 13: That the NSW Government and Police ensure the ongoing review of policing resources and strategy

The NSW Government supports this recommendation. Existing NSW Police corporate policies encourage NSW Police Commands to engage in ongoing reviews of policing resources and strategies based on operational and community needs. Various tools and programs, including the Command

Audits, Operational Crime Reviews and Audits are used to ensure that sufficient policing resources are being directed appropriately.

As stated in the NSW Government submission to the inquiry, as part of the response to the disturbances at Macquarie Fields, NSW Police conducted a full internal inquiry into the handling of the events and have implemented a number of initiatives in response to the recommendations from that inquiry, including the following.

- establishment of a Major Incident Response Team, bringing together the specialist skills and experience within NSW Police, to be deployed to all significant unplanned public order incidents;
- establishment of a Public Order Management Committee to support the operations of the Major Incident Response Team;
- establishment of a full-time Public Order and Riot Squad;
- ensuring regular review of crime trends by the Macquarie Fields Local Area Command to identify hotspot crimes and recidivist offenders/victims;
- ensuring that all Local Area Commanders undertake the Major Incident (Public Order) Management course; and
- ensuring that all general duty police and new recruits to receive specialised Public Order Management Equipment Training

It is intended that these initiatives will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure they continue to deliver improved outcomes.

In addition, the Government has a range of other programs and initiatives in place to inform police operations and ensure frequent consideration and review of policing resources and strategy.

- Police Accountability Community Team: forums for the community to express views about police accountability, police deployment and crime generally, which feeds into NSW Police's consideration of appropriate resourcing and initiatives to address any problems identified.
- Crime Management Faculty: The Crime Management Faculty provides innovative assistance to units throughout NSW by researching, developing, implementing and assessing state-of-the-art strategies in regard to crime prevention, detection and intervention
- Operations Command: Local Area Commanders are required to provide daily briefings, both verbally and in writing, to the Region Commander on all significant incidents, events and trends that occur

within the Local Area Command. This is part of NSW Police's reporting arrangements and accountability requirements

- Annual Operations and Crime Review: the Operations and Crime Review process examines the Local Area Command performance in reducing crime and improving public safety, people management, compliance and financial management

NSW Agencies that contributed to the Submission

The following NSW Government Agencies contributed to this response:

-
- Attorney General's Department
 - Department of Aboriginal Affairs;
 - Department of Community Services;
 - Department of Education and Training;
 - Department of Health.
 - Department of Housing;
 - Department of Juvenile Justice;
 - Office for Women (Premier's Department);
 - Premier's Department; and
 - NSW Police.

