

CHAPTER 11 - NEW SOUTH WALES POLICE SERVICE

Examines the role of police in relation to youth violence and considers a range of policy responses.

RECOMMENDATIONS 108 AND 109 - OFFENSIVE LANGUAGE & THE SUMMARY OFFENCES ACT

Recommendation 108:

That the Minister for Police ensure the provisions of the *Summary Offences Act 1988* dealing with offensive language are not used by police officers to harass young people.

Recommendation 109:

That the Attorney General ensure the maximum penalty for offensive language by juveniles be a formal police caution.

Government response:

The Government is currently considering matters raised by these recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS 110 AND 111 - DEALING WITH WEAPONS

Recommendation 110:

That the Minister for Police develop and conduct a community education campaign to discourage young people from carrying offensive implements and prohibited weapons and informing them of the law in this respect.

Recommendation 111:

That the Minister for Police conduct an education campaign to ensure all police officers are aware of their powers to act regarding offensive weapons and that knives which are clearly being carried for unlawful purposes are confiscated.

Government response:

The Government introduced a well publicised Guns and Knives Amnesty on 1 July 1995. A comprehensive marketing campaign has been promoting the amnesty with success and over 9,600 weapons have been surrendered or confiscated so far.

Following the Australasian Police Minister's Council Meeting in May 1996 it was agreed to introduce a National Firearms Amnesty. The National Amnesty will be accompanied by another publicity campaign and the Commonwealth Government has undertaken to contribute funding.

Further, a proposal is currently being developed, involving Police and School Education, to discourage young people from carrying knives. This program is likely to involve theatre advertising.

The Police Service has included material on knives and firearms in the *Police Service Weekly*. Commissioner's Circulars and Notices are also issued to police when appropriate.

RECOMMENDATION 112 - PROHIBITED WEAPONS

Recommendation:

That the Minister for Consumer Affairs and Minister for Police

- survey and review the local manufacture and sale of cutting weapons to determine whether a broader range of knives and weapons should be prohibited under the *Prohibited Weapons Act 1989* and, if so
- support a ban on the import of such weapons in the Ministerial Council for the Administration of Justice.

Government response:

The Government notes the recommendation.

A range of knives are currently prohibited, including flick knives and sheath knives, which have no legitimate use except as weapons. Products which have legitimate uses, such as knives, should not be banned simply because they might be used as weapons.

The Government continues to monitor weapons, including knives, and will act to take appropriate action to ban or include the item in prohibited weapons legislation where appropriate.

The Government will raise matters relevant to the import of such weapons with the Commonwealth.

RECOMMENDATIONS 113-117- ETHNIC DIVERSITY AND ANTI-RACISM STRATEGIES IN THE POLICE SERVICE

Recommendation 113:

That the Minister for Police introduce positive recruitment strategies to ensure an increasingly representative membership of the New South Wales Police Service and to reflect the State's ethnic diversity.

Recommendation 114:

That the Minister for Police develop a Police Service Anti-Racism Policy and Prevention Plan as a matter of priority.

Recommendation 115:

That the Minister for Police ensure anti-discrimination and anti-racism modules are key components in police training and extend these as in-service modules for senior officers.

Recommendation 116:

That the Minister for Police develop initiatives that encourage better relations and facilitate communication between local police and ethnic communities.

Recommendation 117:

That the Minister for Police establish additional positions of Ethnic Community Liaison Officer to enhance community relations.

Government response:

The Government supports initiatives designed to ensure that the ethnic diversity of NSW's population is represented within the Police Service, racism is eliminated and good relations between police and ethnic communities are fostered.

The soon to be finalised *NSW Police Service Implementation Plan for the Charter of Principles for a Culturally Diverse Society* and its accompanying *Statement of Intent* plus the revised *Police Service Aboriginal Policy Statement* and *Strategic Plan* will reiterate anti-racism policy.

The *Implementation Plan for the Charter of Principles for a Culturally Diverse Society* will contain strategies to ensure that all members of the Police Service receive appropriate training and current information on community related matters. A lecturer has been appointed to the Police Academy specifically for education on multicultural issues.

Education in race relations and cross cultural training is required to ensure that officers perform their duties and responsibilities with the highest degree of professionalism. This policy will be implemented through compulsory training and education programs for all members in the areas of attitudes, beliefs, values and behaviour.

The Police Service is committed to the principle that police officers should reflect as closely as possible, without compromising professional standards, the cultural and linguistic composition of Australian society. 10% NESB recruits per class for the last 5 classes has been achieved. This will continue to be monitored, with a target of at least 20% to be achieved.

The Police Service will ensure that all recruitment policies, practices and standards are equitable and free from any racial or cultural bias.

In addition, the Police Service is currently undertaking lateral recruitment of 26 Asian crime investigators with appropriate language skills. A senior officer of the Ethnic Affairs Commission is on the selection panel.

The Police Service has 9 Ethnic Community Liaison Officer (ECLO) positions. The Implementation Plan proposes that ECLO positions reflect linguistic and cultural balance and are located in areas of significant populations of NESB people. Police Officers also carry out ethnic liaison roles in the community.

In March 1996, the Minister for Police launched the *NSW Police and Community and Training Project (PACT)* which will forge closer ties between police and local communities. This is a joint initiative developed by Police and the Ethnic Affairs Commission to help local communities work together to solve cross cultural problems. Rockdale and Marrickville patrols, have been chosen as initial trial sites for PACT.

PACT is one of a number of initiatives involving police and ethnic communities. These include the establishment of a Police and Ethnic Community Advisory Council and the recent appointment of a Police Policy and Project Officer for Ethnic Affairs.

RECOMMENDATION 118 - CONSULTATION WITH ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES

Recommendation:

That the Minister for Community Services and the Minister for Police ensure Aboriginal communities are consulted on policing practices, and a report on the outcome of these consultations is prepared. The report should include strategies for the recruitment of Aborigines to the Police Service.

Government response:

Consultation, and as importantly, negotiation with the Aboriginal communities in relation to policing and the active recruitment of Aboriginal people are recommendations of the *Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody* which this Government supports.

A Police Service *Aboriginal Employment Training and Career Development Strategy 1995-2000*, released in December 1995, provides a strategic framework for enhancing recruitment, vocational training and career development opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait people. It aims to increase the numbers of indigenous people employed and represented in all levels across the Police Service.

The Police Service *Aboriginal Policy Statement and Strategic Plan* is currently being reviewed. The Plan, released in November 1993, is focussed on reducing the number of Aboriginal people entering the criminal justice system as victims or offenders.

The *Police Aboriginal Council*, established in 1992, has remained as the peak body for consultation between the Police Service and Aboriginal community on policing policies.

The Government has established an Aboriginal Complaints Unit within the Ombudsman's Office as recommended by the *Interim Report of the Royal Commission into the NSW Police Service*. A key function of the Unit will be to assist in establishing better liaison between the Police Service and Aboriginal people, particularly in remote areas.

The Ombudsman's Office has agreed to assist the Police Service in a twelve month research project to evaluate the implementation of the *Police Service Aboriginal Strategic Plan*, subject to the availability of a research grant from the Australian Research Council. Communication is one of the key result areas of the Plan.

The joint evaluation will be conducted in full consultation with Aboriginal people. It will be of vital importance in determining the overall effectiveness of the Plan. It is anticipated that the evaluation should provide useful information for any necessary amendment or refinement of both the Plan and its implementation strategy.

RECOMMENDATION 119 - ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY LIAISON OFFICERS

Recommendation:

That the Minister for Police:

- increase the number of positions of Aboriginal Community Liaison Officers to make the service provided by them available to more communities and
- develop and implement strategies to encourage more Aboriginal women to take up positions as Aboriginal Community Liaison Officers.

Government response:

The Government supports the recommendation.

Last year the Police Service launched the *Aboriginal Employment, Training and Career Development Strategy 1995-2000*. The strategy aims to increase the numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in permanent positions to a minimum level of 2%.

In relation to Aboriginal Community Liaison Officers (ACLOs), the Police Service will be establishing a number of additional ACLO positions in key locations across NSW over the next 5 years.

The Government appointed 10 additional ACLOs in 1995/96 and a further 16 ACLO positions have been targeted over the next 4 years. As part of this employment strategy the Police Service will target and actively encourage the recruitment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women.

The employment of ACLOs is consistent with Recommendation 232 of the *Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody* that different jurisdictions pursue their chosen initiatives for improving relations between police and Aboriginal people.

RECOMMENDATION 120 - ALTERNATIVES TO ARREST FOR YOUNG ABORIGINAL PEOPLE

Recommendation:

That the Minister for Police encourage police to use alternatives to arrest, such as court attendance notices and summons, when dealing with young Aboriginal people.

Government response:

The Government is pursuing the aim of utilising alternatives to arrest, such as court attendance notices and summons, when dealing with young Aboriginal people as part of its work implementing the *Juvenile Justice White Paper*.

RECOMMENDATION 121 - MEDIA REPORTING OF GANGS

Recommendation:

That the Minister for Police inform media organisations that stories on gangs risk creating the problem they purport to reveal.

Government response:

The Government is supportive of responsible media reporting.

Negative media reporting may in fact result in increased levels of gang activity. Sensational media reports about gang activity can cause unnecessary fear to be held by members of the community.

Where appropriate, factual material available about gang activity will be provided to the media in an effort to encourage accurate reporting.

RECOMMENDATION 122 - POLICE AND SCHOOLS

Recommendation:

That the Minister for Police ensure police liaise with school personnel in patrols in which extortion is identified as occurring against young people.

Government response:

The NSW Police Service has become more involved with school and public educational inputs following on from the school based Crime Prevention Workshops. Police are also involved with reducing violence, crime and fear in the school environment and with individual problems in specific areas, eg such as providing school breakfasts to combat truancy.

A Police and Schools Working Party, jointly chaired by the Police Ministry and the Department of School Education, was established in late 1995. The committee is developing contact protocols and policies to encourage liaison between Patrol Commanders and School Principals at a local level.

It is envisaged that this area will also be a key responsibility for Police Youth Liaison Officers.

RECOMMENDATION 123 - POLICE YOUTH LIAISON OFFICERS

Recommendation:

That the Minister for Police ensure positions of one or more Police Youth Liaison Officer are established in every police patrol where there is a significant youth population.

Government response:

The Police Service is working on a range of initiatives in this area.

The Police Service *Youth Policy Statement Action Plan 1995-2000* provides for the deployment of Youth Liaison Program Officers as a foundation initiative. It is proposed that the development of these officers will be prioritised to areas of greatest need.

A Youth Liaison Officers Forum is scheduled for July 1996 to forge the future of policing services for young people. This Forum will reinforce the Youth Policy Statement and update police officers interested in working with youth on current juvenile justice issues.

RECOMMENDATION 124 - POLICE TRAINING

Recommendation:

That the Minister for Police:

- ensure police training emphasises non-violent policing methods
- introduce Youth Violence Studies into the Police Academy curriculum and
- implement in-service training for police on the needs of special groups, including young women, young Aborigines and young people from a non-English speaking background.

Government response:

The Executive Director, Education and Training, has established a Working Party at the Police Academy to develop youth specific courses, youth specialist skills training, youth awareness training and to consider other relevant education and training issues.

It is proposed that youth issues will be included in all specialist skills training courses conducted at the Police Academy.

The Youth Liaison Officers Forum, being held at the Policy Academy, will include an information exchange between current Youth Officers and Academy staff from the Education and Training Command who are responsible for the development of a Youth Liaison Officer's course.

Youth organisations, such as the Youth Action Policy Association and the Youth Justice Coalition will be attending the Forum and will be consulted on police training and education issues.

RECOMMENDATIONS 125 AND 126 - POLICE/YOUTH CONSULTATION

Recommendation 125:

That the Minister for Police encourage appropriate youth representation on Community Consultative Committees and Customer Councils.

Recommendation 126:

That the Minister for Police establish Police-Youth Liaison Committees as a pilot project in selected patrols.

Government response:

The Government is committed to consultation between the community and Police.

As part of the *Juvenile Justice White Paper*, Police are committed to involving young people in community crime prevention initiatives, including Youth Crime Prevention Committees and Community Consultative Committees and Customer Councils. It will expand Patrol Customer Council guidelines to ensure adequate youth representation.

The *Police Service Youth Policy Statement Action Plan* also sets out a number of proposals to ensure that all community consultation involves youth.

KEY RECOMMENDATION 127 - SAFETY AUDIT

Recommendation:

That the Minister for Police ensure all patrols of the New South Wales Police Service collaborate with government and community agencies to

- undertake a Safety Audit in their Local Government Area to identify potential, perceived, and/or actual locations of violent activity
- devise appropriate strategies to deal with such violence and ensure public environments are conducive to community safety.

Government response:

NSW Police Service trials of the Community Safety and Crime Prevention Program took place in seven local government areas, from March 1994 to October 1995. The results confirmed that local results depend on local support. This evaluation will assist in further developing effective mechanisms for liaising with Councils on community safety issues.

The Council on Crime Prevention provides an opportunity for the Police Service to work with Local Government bodies in developing the safety audit aspects of crime prevention through environmental design.

The Minister for Local Government is also developing best practice guidelines for local councils on crime prevention which will cover a range of crime prevention issues including local alcohol management strategies and the design and management of public places.

Several local councils have installed, or are in the process of installing Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) monitoring in business precincts in order to curb street-crime and other violent and anti-social behaviour. CCTV is an initiative promoted by the NSW Police Service.

Further, the Police Service and the Department of Local Government are working together to ensure dance (or 'rave') parties are safe venues for the entertainment of young people.

RECOMMENDATION 128 - COMMUNITY POLICING WITHIN SPECIFIC COMMUNITIES

Recommendation:

That the Minister for Police establish and enhance high profile community policing activities within specific communities where youth violence is identified.

Government response:

Community based policing is a key practice area of the Police Service. Beat policing is fundamental to the philosophy of community based policing. The visible presence of police officers on the street directly addresses issues of crime and increases perceptions of community safety.

At a Patrol level, Police intelligence identify trouble spots within each patrol and allocate resources accordingly. At a District level, intelligence is gathered and specific operations are undertaken to address matters, such as youth violence.

The *Police Service Youth Policy Statement* also addresses the need to reduce the incidence of alcohol related crime and anti-social behaviour among young people.

RECOMMENDATION 129 - POLICE HARASSMENT OF YOUNG PEOPLE

Recommendation:

That the Government commission an independent state-wide review examining the extent of police violence against young people and developing strategies to deal with incidents of violence against young people.

Government response:

The Government intends to carefully consider the report by the NSW Youth Justice Coalition, *Nobody Listens - the Experience of Contact between Young People and Police*, the findings of which help to inform this recommendation of the Committee. The Government will examine Recommendation 129 in this context.

The Government also notes that:

- the whole area of investigations of complaints against police is being considered in the light of the recommendations of the Royal Commission Interim Report and the establishment of the Police Integrity Commission
- additional resources have been provided to the Ombudsman's office to help upgrade investigations of police complaints. This will enable the Office to conduct more direct investigations of police complaints and greater monitoring of Police Service investigations of such complaints
- a Youth Liaison Officer will be appointed to the Ombudsman's Office in July 1996 to implement a program to improve access to, and awareness of, the Ombudsman's Office among young people.

For further details of these initiatives see the Government's response to recommendations 130 and 131 below.

RECOMMENDATION 130 - OMBUDSMAN'S ROLE IN INVESTIGATING COMPLAINTS

Recommendation:

That the Premier ensure the Office of the Ombudsman has sufficient resources to:

- monitor the investigation of complaints of police violence referred to the Police Internal Affairs Branch when the complainant is 17 years of age or younger and where desirable
- deal directly with these complaints, and refer appropriate cases to the Director of Public Prosecution for suitable action.

Government response:

The whole area of investigations of complaints against police is being considered in the light of the recommendations of the Royal Commission Interim Report and the establishment of the Police Integrity Commission. Legislation is being introduced which will clearly set out the role of the Ombudsman and the Police Integrity Commission in dealing with complaints against police.

The Government has also announced the provision of additional resources to the Ombudsman's office to help upgrade investigations of police complaints. This will enable the Office to conduct more direct investigations of police complaints and greater monitoring of Police Service investigations of such complaints.

RECOMMENDATION 131 - CHILDREN'S OMBUDSMAN

Recommendation:

That a position be created in the Office of the Ombudsman, with the status of Deputy Ombudsman, responsible for the coordination of complaints made by children and young people, including those in the Juvenile Justice system, and that

- adequate resources be made available to assist in the creation of this position and
- an information campaign for children and young people about the role of the Ombudsman be conducted.

Government response:

The Government notes the recommendation.

To assist young people, a Youth Liaison Officer will be appointed to the Ombudsman's Office in July 1996 to implement a program to improve access to, and awareness of, the Ombudsman's Office among young people. The Youth Officer will:

- liaise with peak groups which are involved in providing advice and services to young people to educate them about the Ombudsman's services
- be involved in visits to juvenile justice centres
- develop strategies and materials for the Office to use to communicate with young people, including the conduct of a communications audit of the Ombudsman's current procedures and practices to make them more user friendly for young people.

The Government also notes that the Legislative Standing Council on Social Issues is currently conducting a comprehensive Inquiry into Children's Advocacy. Its terms of reference are to inquire and report on the adequacy of:

- advocacy for children in health, education, law and justice and care and protection areas
- the organisation and co-ordination of existing agencies responsible for children's advocacy
- current grievance mechanisms for young people.

The Government will give careful consideration to the Committee's recommendations when it reports to Parliament.

CHAPTER 12 - THE JUSTICE SYSTEM, SENTENCING AND CORRECTIONS

Considers issues relevant to young offenders in the justice system and examines penalties and deterrence, community based sentencing options and counselling programs for violent offenders.

KEY RECOMMENDATION 132 - RESOURCES FOR YOUNG VIOLENT OFFENDERS

Recommendation:

That the Government provide adequate resources to ensure

- effective intervention at the time young violent offenders first come in contact with the justice system
- the multiplicity of problems of incarcerated young violent offenders, such as alcohol and drug abuse, are adequately addressed and
- effective preventative strategies are developed to break the cycle of recidivism among young violent offenders.

Government response:

The Government supports the recommendation and a variety of strategies and resources have been initiated.

The Department of Juvenile Justice offers a range of services to violent clients, for those convicted of violent offences and those exhibiting violent behaviour against others or themselves while in custody. Services include:

- the *Robinson Program* - a purpose allocated unit to which boys under 16 years in detention are referred to stabilise their behaviour, to allow time to identify the problem behaviours to both the boy and staff, teach them more effective ways of handling these and then to oversee their re-integration into mainstream detention
- the *Sex Offender Program* - juveniles are taught to recognise and manage their cycle of offending
- the *Crisis Service Team* - a team of psychologists which offers a crisis service in detention centres to clients experiencing a crisis of severity needing professional help outside normal business hours
- the *Juvenile Justice Collaborative Research Unit* - initially set up in April 1995, in conjunction with the University of New South Wales. Its purpose is to provide a site for research into the incidence, aetiology and treatment of violence and sexual violence among young offenders. It will research outcomes of the Violent Offender and Sex Offender programs. It offers an educational base for Department of Juvenile Justice staff, as well as a site for visiting professorial staff and students who can add to the knowledge base of the Department. The unit is currently investigating the characteristics of the past client group of the sex offender program. Ongoing evaluations of the client groups received into the sex offender and violent offender programs are planned to commence in the near future. A project comparing the alcohol and other drug use amongst male and female offenders and the role of these drugs in violent offending is also in progress.

The Department of Juvenile Justice is currently developing a *Violent Offender Program* for repeat violent offenders in detention centres. It will provide a cyclical model of intervention, using both group and individual work. Offenders will be referred for specialist assessment and a treatment intervention that is streamed for age, sex and ethnicity. This will assist diversion, sentencing and programming. The interventions address firstly the offending behaviours, look later at the juvenile's own issues which underpin this violence and conclude with relapse prevention. The program will be implemented in July/August 1996.

RECOMMENDATION 133 - CONSULTATION WITH YOUNG PEOPLE ABOUT VIOLENCE STRATEGIES

Recommendation:

That the Attorney General ensure young people are appropriately represented on and consulted by the Juvenile Crime Prevention Advisory Committee and the Juvenile Crime Prevention Division in developing strategies to prevent or reduce violence.

Government response:

The Government supports the recommendation.

The Juvenile Crime Prevention Division is committed to ensuring the input of young people in initiatives to prevent juvenile crime. The Juvenile Crime Prevention Division works closely, and consults extensively, with peak youth bodies and youth specific organisations to ensure that the Division's work remains appropriate to young people.

Current membership of the Juvenile Crime Prevention Advisory Committee gives priority to ensuring the views of young people are represented, for example it includes members of the Youth Justice Coalition and Youth Action and Policy Association. Advice provided reflects the experiences of young people themselves and youth service providers.

RECOMMENDATION 134 - PRE COURT RESOLUTION SCHEMES

Recommendation:

That the Minister for Community Services and the Minister for Police implement recommendation numbers 35 to 50 of the Standing Committee on Social Issues Report into Juvenile Justice in New South Wales, 1992.

Government response:

The Government supports the recommendation to implement a court diversion scheme in NSW, as detailed in the Standing Committee on Social Issues *Report into Juvenile Justice in New South Wales* (1992).

The Government has been trialing a scheme called Community Youth Conferencing (CYC) in six sites around NSW since February 1995. The scheme was recently independently evaluated. While the evaluation highlights various problems with CYC, on the whole it supports diversionary conferencing as a viable alternative to traditional processes.

The Government is also considering a form of diversionary conferencing called the 'Minor Offenders Punishment Scheme' (MOPS). The NSW Attorney General has established a Working Party to consider the results of the CYC evaluation and prepare recommendations for the expansion of police cautioning and introduction of MOPS across NSW.

RECOMMENDATION 135 - COMMUNITY BASED SENTENCING OPTIONS

Recommendation:

That the Attorney General ensure that where appropriate, courts continue to utilise community based options in the sentencing of young offenders, including young violent offenders.

Government response:

The Government supports the recommendation.

It is actively working to develop alternatives to detention, where appropriate, to steer young offenders away from detention, to avoid stigma and the possibility of reoffending.

For example:

- the NSW Law Reform Commission is reviewing sentencing laws and examining the adequacy of existing non-custodial sentencing options. It released a Discussion Paper in April 1996 concerning the general principles of sentencing law. The second phase of its inquiry will examine the sentencing of young offenders, Aboriginal offenders and offenders with an intellectual disability
- work is underway by the Department of Juvenile Justice to introduce an 'Attendance Centre Program' to provide skills based and personal development programs aimed at enhancing awareness, self-esteem and coping mechanisms to assist juveniles to avoid further offending
- legislative amendments have been introduced to increase the maximum number of hours for Community Service Orders (CSOs) from 100 to 250
- Aboriginal communities will be consulted for suitable programs to increase the sentencing options of courts.

The Judicial Commission provides new judicial appointees with comprehensive training and orientation, including sentencing workshops which discuss community based sentencing options. All judicial officers have access to information about all sentencing options contained in the *Sentencing Information System (SIS)*, an on line computerised database developed and maintained by the Commission. In the context of young offenders, the *Children's Court Information Bulletin* also provides information relevant to the sentencing options and facilities available for juvenile offenders, case digests and notes on recent legislation. The Commission has also produced a number of research monographs concerning community based sentencing options.

The Commission provides judicial officers with information concerning various sentencing services and facilities, such as the proposed Violent Offenders Program, via the sentencing facilities component of SIS. This database contains a separate directory of juvenile facilities, compiled from information obtained from a number of government agencies, including the Department of Juvenile Justice.

RECOMMENDATION 136 - SUPERVISION OF VIOLENT OFFENDERS IN THE COMMUNITY

Recommendation:

That the Minister for Community Services ensure, as a matter of priority, that adequate resources are available to Department of Juvenile Justice Offices throughout New South Wales to enable the consistent and relevant supervision and counselling of young violent offenders serving community based sentences.

Government response:

The Government supports the recommendation.

Funding has been made available to the Department of Juvenile Justice, in response to the *Burdekin Report into the Rights of the Mentally Ill* (1994), to set up a number of initiatives (known as the Burdekin Initiatives). Included in these initiatives is the Violent Offenders Program which is currently being implemented. This program is to be trialed first in the Detention Centres, and once evaluated it will be extended to the community. This will augment the counselling services already being provided in the community through the Intensive Programs Units.

RECOMMENDATION 137 - PROGRAMS FOR VIOLENT OFFENDERS IN THE COMMUNITY

Recommendation:

That in order for Juvenile Justice Officers to adequately supervise and counsel a young violent offender in the community the Minister for Community Services must ensure that there is a wide range of suitable programs within the community from which they can draw assistance. Those community organisations offering relevant services should be provided with adequate government funding so that co-operative service delivery between the government and the non-government sector can be fostered.

Government response:

The Government supports the recommendation.

The violent offender programs being developed by the Department of Juvenile Justice will offer direct services to violent offenders who are at the serious end of the offending spectrum. Other violent offenders will receive general counselling programs and skills development from a specialist Violent (Serious) Offender Counsellor.

A similar service will be available to those on supervision orders. All services will be linked with, and have access to, the services of a multi-disciplinary team which includes drug and alcohol workers, sex offender counsellors, psychologists and psychiatrists. Brokerage with mainstream services occurs as required.

A register of fee for service counsellors is being drawn up to provide services in rural areas.

RECOMMENDATION 138 - COMMUNITY WORK FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE ORDERS

Recommendation:

That the Minister for Community Services ensure that

- adequate resources are available and relevant support services able to be drawn upon to assist Juvenile Justice officers in all regions to adequately supervise and to offer a range of community work to those young offenders placed on Community Service Orders and
- counselling programs for violent offenders on Community Service Orders can be offered as part of the fulfilment of Community Service Orders in addition to other work orders.

Government response:

The Government is acting to ensure that adequate resources are available and relevant support services able to be drawn upon to assist Juvenile Justice officers in all regions to adequately supervise and to offer a range of community work to those young offenders placed on Community Service Orders (CSOs).

The Department of Juvenile Justice has recently employed Program Development Officers (PDO's) in each region. One of the key tasks of the PDOs is to foster contact with local community organisations

with a view to engaging them as CSO placement agencies. The PDOs are also responsible for maintaining support and contact with placement agencies.

The Department has also employed Sessional Supervisors in both metropolitan and rural areas to provide supervision for young people on CSOs. The employment of Sessional Supervisors has enabled the Department to expand the number, range and type of projects undertaken under the CSO scheme. A specific focus on projects of community service options has been projects of significance to local communities, especially heritage and environmental projects. The employment of Sessional Supervisors has enabled the Department to provide CSO supervision on weekends, which better suits the needs of young people who work and/or attend education/vocational courses.

The Government notes the recommendation to ensure that counselling programs for violent offenders on CSOs can be offered as part of the fulfilment of CSOs in addition to other work orders. It is not considered that counselling should form part of CSO hours, although supervision and assessments by the Department of Juvenile Justice will facilitate referrals to counselling programs where appropriate. The proposed Violent Offenders Program will eventually be expanded into the community. If violent offenders are placed on Community Service Orders by the courts they will also be offered realistic counselling services which will help them to reduce reoffending.

RECOMMENDATION 139 - INCREASING COMMUNITY SERVICE ORDER HOURS

Recommendation:

That conditional upon the implementation of Recommendation 138 the Minister for Community Services amend the Children (Community Service Orders) Act, 1987 to allow the maximum number of hours which can be given to young offenders under a Community Service Order to be 250 hours.

Government response:

The Government has introduced legislative amendments to the *Children (Community Service Orders) Act 1987* to allow the maximum number of hours which can be given to young offenders under a Community Service Order to be 250 hours.

RECOMMENDATION 140 - COUNSELLING FOR VIOLENT OFFENDERS ON CONDITIONAL RELEASE

Recommendation:

That the Minister for Community Services ensure appropriate counselling and support is extended to violent offenders on conditional release.

Government response:

The Government is concerned to ensure appropriate counselling and support is extended to violent offenders on conditional release. One initiative which will see this occur is the Department of Juvenile Justice's Violent Offenders Program.

RECOMMENDATION 141 - ESTABLISHMENT OF THE VIOLENT OFFENDERS PROGRAM

Recommendation:

That the Minister for Community Services establish the violent offenders program as a priority and ensure that it is appropriately resourced to enable its utilisation throughout New South Wales.

Government response:

The Government is currently implementing the Violent Offenders Program for repeat offenders in detention centres.

The *Juvenile Justice Collaborative Research Unit* has been established by the Department of Juvenile Justice to conduct outcome research into the Violent Offenders Program.

These and other programs being developed by the Department of Juvenile Justice are detailed in the Government's response to Key Recommendation 132 above.

RECOMMENDATION 142 - JUDICIAL EDUCATION REGARDING VIOLENT OFFENDERS

Recommendation:

That the Attorney General and Minister for Community Services ensure that judicial education is undertaken by members of the magistracy and judiciary likely to preside over matters involving violent juvenile offenders, to facilitate such offenders being referred to the Violent Offenders Program as appropriate.

Government response:

The Government is working to ensure judicial education is undertaken by members of the magistracy and judiciary likely to preside over matters involving violent juvenile offenders, to facilitate such offenders being referred to the Violent Offenders Program as appropriate.

The importance of judicial education about the structure and content of the Violent Offenders Program has been recognised and is being addressed by the Department of Juvenile Justice with the aim of ensuring magistrates make appropriate use of this program.

The Judicial Commission provides judicial officers with information concerning various sentencing services and facilities, including the proposed Violent Offenders' Program, via the Sentencing Facilities component of the Sentencing Information System, an on-line computerised database developed and maintained by the Commission which can be accessed by all judicial officers. This database contains a separate directory of juvenile facilities, compiled from information obtained from a number of government agencies including the Department of Juvenile Justice.

RECOMMENDATION 143 - ATTENDANCE CENTRE PROGRAMS

Recommendation:

That the Minister for Community Services ensure that, having regard to the evaluation of the pilot scheme, Attendance Centres and programs are established throughout New South Wales.

Government response:

The Government is now working on an attendance centre program to provide skills based and personal development programs aimed at enhancing awareness, self-esteem and coping mechanisms to assist juveniles to avoid further offending. This program will incorporate a review of the pilot Attendance Centre program. The Metropolitan Attendance Centre programs will be conducted in Blacktown and Newtown Police Citizens Youth Clubs and are due to commence in August 1996, subject to successful recruitment of staff.

RECOMMENDATION 144 - GUIDELINES FOR THE ATTENDANCE CENTRE PROGRAM

Recommendation:

That the Minister for Community Services ensure that, in developing guidelines for the Attendance Centre orders and programs

- due regard is given to the availability of the Attendance Centre sentencing option to violent offenders, where appropriate and
- programs are developed which address violent offending behaviour.

Government response:

The Government supports the recommendation.

Assessment of young offenders will consider whether individual cases are appropriate for inclusion in the Attendance Centre Program, the Violent Offenders Program, or other programs conducted by the Department of Juvenile Justice.

The Attendance Centre Program will contain program modules which address anger, aggression, self esteem, assertiveness and associated issues. The intention of the program is to provide juveniles with information and social skills training in relation to a variety of issues which affect their daily lives. The program aims to develop awareness and coping mechanisms in young people which will assist them to avoid offending behaviour in the future.

RECOMMENDATION 145 - RECIDIVISM OF YOUNG OFFENDERS

Recommendation:

That the Minister for Community Services ensure that

- the level of recidivism among young offenders in the juvenile justice system is consistently monitored to assess the rate of graduation to more serious and violent offences and
- the impact of detention on recidivism and the nature of offending behaviour is evaluated.

Government response:

The Government is actively examining and addressing the issue of recidivism among young offenders in the juvenile justice system.

The Department of Juvenile Justice conducts an annual profile of juveniles in detention. As a series of studies, these profiles permit an examination of the nature of offences for which juveniles are incarcerated, the level of recidivism, and any trend over time in the escalation to more serious and violent offences.

A comprehensive study of the effect of detention and other court ordered sanctions on preventing juvenile re-offending has been undertaken by the Department of Juvenile Justice.

The need to monitor and to evaluate the impact of the Violent Offenders Program on recidivism has been recognised, and evaluation procedures have been built into the program. At the same time the establishment of the Centre for Research into Violence, set up in conjunction with the University of New South Wales, will provide additional information pertinent to recidivism.

The Government recognises that another significant issue is the over-representation and management of people with an intellectual disability in the criminal justice system. The Ageing and

Disability Department has convened an inter-departmental committee on people with an intellectual disability and the criminal justice system. Working groups have been formed to undertake a range of tasks, including:

- mapping the respective roles and responsibilities of agencies at each stage of the judicial process
- describing the interface between departments, so a whole-of-Government protocol may be prepared
- identifying gaps in the system
- making recommendations
- liaising with the NSW Law Reform Commission which is examining the issue of people with an intellectual disability and the criminal justice system (due to report by the end of 1996). The Law Reform Commission's recommendations will have implications for addressing issues of recidivism and the graduation to more serious and violent offences by young people with an intellectual disability.

RECOMMENDATION 146 - RESEARCH ON GRADUATION OF JUVENILES TO THE ADULT SYSTEM

Recommendation:

That the Minister for Community Services and the Minister for Corrective Services conduct research, involving the Department of Juvenile Justice and the Department of Corrective Services, that examines the graduation of juvenile offenders to the adult system.

Government response:

The Government supports the recommendation.

The Department of Juvenile Justice and the Department of Corrective Services are conducting two research studies which seek to track juvenile offenders into the adult system. The first deals with recidivism and its relationship to variables such as age at first proven offence. The second study will have a clinical emphasis and focus on the efficacy of the treatment models initially applied in sex offender rehabilitation.

The first study is in draft form and will be published in the second half of 1996. A retrospective study of 204 clients of the Sex Offender Program has been completed. This study focussed on demographic data. The research project on treatment outcomes is currently being designed.

The Police Service has established a Youth Crime Intelligence Unit. One of the roles of the new unit is to research the progression of juveniles into adult organised crime.

RECOMMENDATION 147 - ROBINSON PROGRAM FOR BOYS

Recommendation:

That the Minister for Community Services ensure that the Robinson Program for Boys addresses the underlying causes of violence, including issues relating to gender construction.

Government response:

The Robinson Program for Boys addresses the underlying causes of violence, including issues relating to gender construction.

It is premised on the need to treat the violent behaviour of young offenders. The program is multi-modal providing both individual and group work to inmates. A clinical psychotherapist is employed

to work with these boys. Staff have had special training in confronting and dealing with violence both in its physical expression and in assisting the boys to understand the nature of the violence within them. Aggression Replacement Therapy has been used. The clinical psychologist is well trained and knowledgeable about gender issues and their impact upon juveniles, together with background and lifestyle issues. Every endeavour is made to have a female staff member on each team and to address the gender issues that are part of everyday life.

RECOMMENDATION 148 - SEX OFFENDER PROGRAM

Recommendation:

That the Minister for Community Services ensure adequate resources are consistently provided to the Department of Juvenile Justice's Sex Offender Program so that the program can function effectively.

Government response:

The Government supports the recommendation. Adequate resources will be ensured by ongoing monitoring and review of the Program.

Sex Offender Counsellors are based at Reiby, Worimi and Mount Penang Juvenile Justice Centres and all metropolitan Intensive Programs Units, but they are mobile and the service offered is flexible. Country areas are serviced by using fee for service counsellors. The program includes individual and group work, as well as some family work.

RECOMMENDATION 149 - RESOURCING SEX OFFENDER PROGRAMS IN RURAL AREAS

Recommendation:

That the Minister for Community Services ensure adequate funding is provided to meet the management and treatment needs of juvenile sex offenders in rural areas.

Government response:

Current practice for the management and treatment of sex offenders in rural areas is to provide fee for service counsellors. The adequacy of resources is subject to ongoing monitoring and review.

RECOMMENDATION 150 - COMMUNITY BASED RESIDENTIAL SERVICES FOR JUVENILE SEX OFFENDERS

Recommendation:

That the Minister for Community Services assess the need for and feasibility of providing specialist, community based residential services for juvenile sex offenders who do not receive control orders or who are released into the community.

Government response:

The Government notes the recommendation.

The Department of Juvenile Justice is working towards improvement of accommodation services for juvenile offenders within the context of the *Juvenile Justice White Paper 'Breaking the Crime Cycle - New Directions for Juvenile Justice in NSW'*.

RECOMMENDATION 151 - ABORIGINAL JUVENILE BAIL SUPPORT SCHEMES

Recommendation:

That the Minister for Community Services facilitate the introduction of pilot Aboriginal Juvenile Bail Support Schemes, and evaluate the potential to extend the Scheme to other communities.

Government response:

The Government is working to facilitate the introduction of pilot Aboriginal Juvenile Bail Support Schemes, action which is consistent with recommendations of the *Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody*.

The current status of the Department of Juvenile Justice's program is as follows.

- *The Safehaven Program*

This assists Aboriginal young people who have committed minor offences and are likely to be refused bail on the basis of homelessness or lack of suitable accommodation. The Department of Juvenile Justice identifies suitable carers from the community who are prepared to care for young people between the ages of 10 to 18 years, who are in contact with the law. Wherever possible, the extended family of the juvenile will be the first placement option explored as the Department supports the concept of Aboriginal young people residing with their families. The Department provides training and support for carers to ensure that they are equipped to deal with issues as they arise. An allowance is paid to carers to accommodate, support and meet the daily needs of the young person. An additional one-off allowance for clothing and other incidentals is available on a needs basis. The scheme currently operates in Dubbo and Wagga. The Government is currently working to facilitate the extension of this program to other areas of need.

- *Metropolitan Bail Hostel*

The Department of Juvenile Justice is currently in the process of funding an Aboriginal organisation to establish and operate a Bail Hostel in the metropolitan area, to provide 24 hour, 7 days a week residential care with intensive supervision for up to six Aboriginal young people (male and female). The hostel will be staffed by suitably trained and skilled Aboriginal residential care workers. Admission to the hostel will be via the courts and the Juvenile Justice Community Services. During the establishment of the Bail Hostel program the Department liaised and consulted with a variety of organisations and people providing services to young Aboriginal people. The promotion of the program and the recruitment of additional staff for the hostel will increase and enhance community liaison and consultation between local juvenile justice officers and Aboriginal communities. The selected Aboriginal organisation is currently seeking suitable premises and the Bail Hostel is expected to be operational before the end of 1996.

- *Nardoola Bail Hostel*

The Community Youth Support Task Force, established in 1993, looked at a number of youth issues, including the social, economic and cultural problems in the Moree area. After extensive community consultation, the Nardoola program evolved to provide an accommodation option for up to six young Aboriginal people either on remand, community service orders or conditional discharge. All residents will undergo assessment by the Department of Juvenile Justice prior to entering the program. The service is expected to be operating by August 1996. Supervision of juveniles will be intensive, and no young person will be placed at Nardoola if considered a risk to the community or him/herself. Staffing of the hostel will include four youth workers and two houseparents who will have experience in working with young people. Two staff will be on site at all times. Programs will include:

- living skills, literacy and numeracy tuition
- alcohol and other drug education and
- group work examining violence and abuse issues.

RECOMMENDATION 152 - ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY INPUT INTO PROGRAMS FOR VIOLENT OFFENDERS

Recommendation:

That the Minister for Community Services ensure that any program developed by the Department of Juvenile Justice that targets young violent offenders both in custody and the community, and includes young Aboriginal offenders, has appropriate input from Aboriginal communities and is culturally sensitive.

Government response:

The Government supports this recommendation.

The Department of Juvenile Justice has addressed this need, in relation to the Violent Offenders Program, through consultations carried out with Aboriginal groups prior to planning the program. The need for cultural sensitivity is reinforced in staff training for the program.

More generally, the Government is committed to consultation and negotiation with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, family and young people when devising and implementing programs and strategies affecting Aboriginal young people, as recommended by the *Royal Commission into Black Deaths in Custody* (recommendations 235-239). For example, the Department of Juvenile Justice has appointed nine Aboriginal program officers with responsibility for developing programs with local communities.

The Aboriginal Justice Advisory Committee (AJAC), in responding to the Recommendations of the Report, has advised the Government that the Committee's Report does not address racist violence on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people in communities throughout NSW and its relation to the perpetration of crimes of violence. The AJAC notes the report by the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission arising from the National Inquiry into Racist Violence in Australia, *Racist Violence* (1991). The AJAC believes much greater emphasis is needed on the development of strategies which target law enforcement agencies and the wider community to ensure the elimination of incidences of racism and racist violence perpetrated against, and by, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The Government has established an Aboriginal Complaints Unit within the Ombudsman's Office. A key function of the Unit will be to assist in establishing better liaison between the Police Service and Aboriginal people, particularly in remote areas. The Office will help the Police Service to evaluate implementation of the *Police Service Aboriginal Strategic Plan* (subject to the availability of a research grant from the Australian Research Council). These initiatives will help address some of the concerns of the AJAC.

RECOMMENDATION 153 - NESB COMMUNITY INPUT INTO PROGRAMS FOR VIOLENT OFFENDERS

Recommendation:

That the Minister for Community Services ensure that any program developed by the Department of Juvenile Justice that targets young violent offenders both in custody and the community, and includes young offenders of non-English speaking background, has appropriate input from relevant ethnic communities and is culturally sensitive to the offender's background.

Government response:

The Government supports the recommendation.

As noted in the Government's response to Recommendation 152, the need for the Violent Offenders Program to be culturally sensitive to the needs of young offenders of NESB has been recognised and will be re-enforced through the training program for all new staff.

The Department of Juvenile Justice works very closely with ethnic communities in formulating policy and delivering programs and services. Consultation is aided by the work of an NESB Project Officer.

Examples of direct consultation

An extensive consultation process has been conducted to identify gaps in services to NESB clients and their families.

The Department is committed to developing partnerships with community agencies and has entered agreements to fund two initiatives aiming to improve reintegration of NESB offenders into their communities.

The Minister for Community Services recently launched the Barnardos Post Release Options Program which aims to assist young offenders by providing culturally appropriate pre and post release intervention to young offenders, their families and communities. The program focuses on young people who are over-represented in the juvenile justice system, particularly youths from Arabic, Indo-Chinese, Maori and Pacific Island backgrounds.

The Minister also launched the new Indo-Chinese Juvenile Offender Support Program to be run under the auspices of Careforce Migrant Services, part of the Anglican Home Mission Society. This program, based in Cabramatta, aims to provide pre and post release support to Indo-Chinese young offenders in partnership with the Department. Both of these post-release programs will attempt to address the specific needs of violent offenders from non-English speaking backgrounds.

Examples of indirect consultation

Program and service providers to the Department include non-government organisations. Staff of these organisations who are from non-English speaking backgrounds network with ethnic communities and actively communicate with the families of clients entrusted to the Department's care.

The NESB Project Officer is working in a consultative capacity with a large number of government and non-government community organisations.

Cross cultural training programs

In addition to these initiatives, an extensive evaluation of the needs of clients of non-English speaking background has been conducted by the Department. Training programs, aimed at improving service delivery to NESB clients are being developed for Departmental staff, eg the Department's NESB Project Officer is currently liaising with psychologists and trainers at the Adult Migrant English Service and the Transcultural Mental Health Service at Cumberland Hospital to develop training programs for departmental psychologists. Introductory training started in April and will be followed up in July 1996. The Department has also employed a senior training officer in the Specialist Programs Division to develop training for division staff. This will include specialist cross-cultural skills training for staff working with violent offenders.

Identified/specialist positions

An identified position for an Indo-Chinese juvenile justice counsellor has been created at the Liverpool Intensive Programs Unit. There is one identified Vietnamese juvenile justice officer and one identified multi-cultural officer at Fairfield Juvenile Justice Community Services. Minda Juvenile Justice Centre has one identified senior youth worker position. A co-ordinator of Vietnamese programs is based at Mount Penang Juvenile Justice Centre but also provides services to Mount Penang and other metropolitan juvenile justice centres.

Case management

The Department of Juvenile Justice has recently reviewed its assessment procedures so the particular needs of people from NESB are taken into account in assessment interviews and case management planning.

A co-ordinated approach to service provision

The Department is working with the Ethnic Affairs Commission and other government agencies to improve the co-ordination of services provided to NESB clients. For example, it is represented on the Education Advisory Committee NESB Sub Group and is co-operating with TAFE and the Department of School Education to address education and training issues for NESB juveniles under departmental control or supervision.

RECOMMENDATION 154 - PROGRAMS FOR VIOLENT YOUNG FEMALE OFFENDERS

Recommendation:

That the Minister for Community Services

- develop appropriate programs and counselling services for young female offenders in the community and in detention, that focus on violent offending among young women and
- ensure that such programs and counselling services are sensitive to the specific needs of young female offenders.

Government response:

The Government supports this recommendation.

The Department of Juvenile Justice administers a *Young Women in Custody Program*, a comprehensive plan for managing young female offenders. Each young woman in custody has an individualised case plan that addresses her special needs and provides her with skills to assist her reintegration into the community.

The Program employs a psychotherapist and a psychologist to provide appropriate counselling services, particularly to address violent offending. In addition, a Young Women's Group which addresses offending behaviour, including violence, is conducted cyclically.

Young female offenders in the community have access to gender appropriate counselling through Intensive Programs Units.

RECOMMENDATION 155 - PRE-DISCHARGE PLANNING

Recommendation:

That the Minister for Community Services ensure adequate pre-discharge units are established, and the programs offered from these units are extended into community settings and to all young offenders leaving custody.

Government response:

The Government supports the recommendation.

The Pre-Discharge Working Party, including representatives from the Department of Juvenile Justice and the Department of School Education, is in the process of closely examining pre-discharge programs and initiatives in Juvenile Justice Centres.

Funding has been provided through the *Juvenile Justice White Paper* to assist with establishing such programs. The Anglican Home Mission Society and Barnardos have been funded to provide post release support to young NESB offenders in the metropolitan area. Expressions of interest have also been sought in targeted rural areas for organisations to provide such services. These organisations are expected to be funded by 30 June 1996.

As part of a trial at Keelong Juvenile Justice Centre the Illawarra Institute of TAFE and the Principal of Keelong School are establishing formal networks for detainees leaving Keelong Juvenile Justice Centre and entering their local TAFE College.

RECOMMENDATION 156 - COMMUNITY AND FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Recommendation:

That the Minister for Community Services ensure

- the potential for all young offenders to be reintegrated into their families is assessed prior to their release from Juvenile Justice Centres
- a family mediation project is developed for young offenders to assist in this reintegration, where desirable and
- where re-integration is not possible, the young offenders are given appropriate support in re-entering the community.

Government response:

The Government supports the recommendation. It is actively working to ensure rehabilitation of young offenders and their reintegration into the community after release from detention, with family support where possible.

The introduction of case management into the Department of Juvenile Justice has enabled a formal process of involvement of the family in the case plan of young offenders in custody. A number of points are relevant to this recommendation.

- The focus of the custodial case plan developed at the beginning of the custodial period is the reintegration of the young offenders into the community.
- The development of the case plan is based on a case conference held in the first weeks of the custodial period. In all cases, where appropriate, the family is invited to take part in the case conference and contribute to the case plan development. For example, at Mount Penang Juvenile Justice Centre during August 1995, 35 case conferences were held. Families were involved in 72% of these.
- All Juvenile Justice Centres are implementing strategies to facilitate interaction between young offenders and their families during custody. For example, at Mount Penang Juvenile Justice Centre, during August 1995, 40 bookings were made for the two flats which provide accommodation for families (particularly from rural areas) visiting their children in custody.
- On an individual basis, case management staff in Juvenile Justice Centres have implemented mediation strategies including the engagement of the Family Mediation Service.
- Pre-discharge case conferences again assist the reintegration of young offenders and outline the support strategies to be employed on release.
- Non-Government organisations are being funded to provide post-release support to assist in community reintegration.

RECOMMENDATION 157 - SPECIAL CARE UNIT

Recommendation:

That the Minister for Corrective Services ensure systematic programs such as the Special Care Unit are supported by the provision of appropriate follow-up programs for inmates when they leave the Special Care Unit and return to the mainstream prison system.

Government response:

The Government is working to ensure systematic programs such as the Special Care Unit are supported by the provision of appropriate follow-up programs for inmates when they leave the Special Care Unit and return to the mainstream prison system.

The Department of Corrective Services aims to ensure that offenders committed to its care, displaying violent or other inappropriate behaviours, are managed so as to maximise their opportunities for a successful reintegration into society by providing a range of programs specifically designed to address their needs.

The aim of the intervention program, known as the Special Care Unit, is to teach inmates skills to modify their behaviour, including appropriate coping skills. When inmates have completed the program and are returned to the mainstream centres it is planned to develop a strategy for follow-up support through the use of the case management and program pathway processes. Correctional centres will be able to maximise the utilisation of skills gained by inmates in the Special Care Unit through the development of inmate Peer Support Programs. Ongoing support by way of liaison with the Special Care Unit will assist this process. The development of these follow-up strategies at each correctional centre is part of the Department's overall response to the specific requirements of inmates.

RECOMMENDATION 158 - VIOLENCE PREVENTION UNIT

Recommendation:

That the Minister for Corrective Services

- facilitate the establishment of the Violence Prevention Unit at Long Bay Correctional Centre and
- examine the feasibility of extending the therapeutic program developed for the Violence Prevention Unit to other Correctional Centres.

Government response:

The Government supports this recommendation.

The Violence Prevention Program (VPP) is to be conducted in the recently constructed Alexander Maconochie Unit of the Special Care Centre at Long Bay Correctional Complex. The staff selection process has been completed and a four week staff training program commenced on 13 May 1996. It is anticipated that the first inmates will be received into the VPP in early June 1996.

Correctional centres that send inmates to the Special Care Centre to participate in the VPP will develop a local action plan for the ongoing case management of inmates upon their return from the program. Inmates who complete the Violence Prevention Program will also be visited by VPP staff every three months for the remainder of their sentence.

It is intended that each institution using VPP graduates will, over time, establish a Violence Prevention Committee to develop and implement a violence prevention strategy.

RECOMMENDATION 159 - CRISIS SUPPORT UNITS

Recommendation:

That the Minister for Corrective Services

- establish, as a matter of priority, a Crisis Support Program at Mulawa Correctional Centre and
- continue to establish Crisis Support Units and Programs throughout New South Wales Correctional Centres.

Government response:

The Government supports this recommendation.

The establishment of a Crisis Support Program at Mulawa is a high priority for the Department of Corrective Services and the construction of the Therapeutic Unit at Mulawa Correctional Centre is expected to be complete by August 1996.

It should be noted what was once referred to as Crisis Support Units are now called Therapeutic Units. The units provide psychologically informed programs directed at the reduction of self harm and suicide. Inmates 'in crisis' are usually provided with medical management in hospital accommodation.

RECOMMENDATION 160 - SEXUAL ASSAULT PROGRAMS

Recommendation:

That the Minister for Corrective Services develop pilot programs

- for victims of sexual assaults in prisons and
- for victims of past sexual assaults, including a program designed specifically for female inmates.

Government response:

The Government is acting to implement this recommendation.

The Director, Psychological Programs, Department of Corrective Services, is currently developing a strategy to address the needs of victims of sexual assault.

As an interim measure individual counselling is provided by psychologists to victims of sexual assault whilst in custody. Inmates participating in the Therapeutic Unit program at the Special Care Centre have access to group counselling conducted by a psychologist. Follow-up referral to community based resources on release from custody is arranged as necessary, and if appropriate, contact with specialist services can be arranged for inmates who are still in custody.

For female inmates who have suffered past sexual assault there is individual psychological counselling, with access to community based agencies arranged as necessary and follow-up referral to such agencies on release.

Male inmates who have been victims of sexual assault are also able to access the above mentioned individual psychological counselling and community based resources. Inmates participating in the Therapeutic Unit program at the Special Care Centre have access to group therapy.

RECOMMENDATION 161 - YOUNG SEX OFFENDER PROGRAMS

Recommendation:

That the Minister for Corrective Services:

- develop prison and community-based pilot programs for young sex offenders and
- evaluate the effectiveness of such programs after a reasonable time.

Government response:

The implementation of a program for sex offenders is a high priority for the Department of Corrective Services.

A prison based program for sex offenders has been developed, in which young sex offenders are identified as a sub group of sex offenders and their particular requirements addressed. It will operate at the Long Bay Correctional Complex which will be redeveloped as part of the Government's announced restructure of the NSW correctional system.

The Probation & Parole Service currently supervises sex offenders on parole or probation as a condition of their order. The Service does not offer a specific sex offender treatment program. The implementation of a community based treatment program involving the Probation and Parole Service will be considered consequent to the successful introduction of the sex offender treatment program at Long Bay Correctional Complex.

A carefully regulated community based program for intra familial offenders of all ages is being operated by the Department of Health, known as the NSW Pre Trial Diversion Program.

RECOMMENDATION 162 - ALTERNATIVES TO VIOLENCE PROJECT

Recommendation:

That the Minister for Corrective Services

- investigate the feasibility of allowing the Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) to conduct weekend workshops in Correctional Centres
- provide appropriate premises within Correctional Centres to conduct AVP workshops and
- ensure disruptions to AVP workshops in Correctional Centres are minimised and participants are not removed during the course of the workshops.

Government response:

The Government notes the recommendation.

The Department of Corrective Services' approach is based on the development of therapeutic units to conduct programs and the development of individual strategies for each correctional centre to provide support services which are a continuation of the specialist programs.

The development of correctional centre strategies will include the examination of the services provided by the Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP).

RECOMMENDATION 163 - STAFF TRAINING AND THE ALTERNATIVES TO VIOLENCE PROJECT

Recommendation:

That the Minister for Corrective Services consider including Alternatives to Violence Project workshops as a staff training option for personnel of the Department of Corrective Services.

Government response:

The Government notes the recommendation.

The Corrective Services Academy offers anger management and conflict resolution courses to correctional staff.

RECOMMENDATION 164 - PAROLE SUPERVISION FOLLOWING RELEASE FROM CUSTODY

Recommendation:

That the Attorney General amend s.27(4) of the *Sentencing Act* to ensure

- all parole involving young offenders is supervised and
- the Department of Juvenile Justice accepts responsibility for the supervision of juvenile offenders where the court has failed to specify a parole agency.

Government response:

The Government notes the recommendation.

As part of the implementation of the Juvenile Justice White Paper, the Government is reviewing the *Sentencing Act*, the *Children (Criminal Proceedings) Act* as well as other relevant legislation. This recommendation will be reviewed in that context.

RECOMMENDATION 165 - JUDICIAL EDUCATION

Recommendation:

That the Minister for Community Services and the Attorney General ensure, following the amendment of s.27(4) of the *Sentencing Act*, judicial education is provided to ensure that the changes to the legislation are understood and accepted to facilitate the use of appropriately supervised parole as a feature of custodial sentences for young offenders.

Government response:

The Government supports the recommendation.

The Department of Juvenile Justice will collaborate with the Judicial Commission to ensure this occurs. The use of parole and the nature of parole supervision is being monitored. The impact of any future legislative change will be examined and evaluated by the Department of Juvenile Justice.

RECOMMENDATION 166 - HOMOSEXUAL PANIC DEFENCE

Recommendation:

That upon the release of the report from the Criminal Law Review Division the Attorney General give priority to examining the validity and legality of the "homosexual panic defence".

Government response:

The Government supports the recommendation.

A Working Party has been convened to examine trials where the so-called 'homosexual advance defence', also known as the 'homosexual panic defence', is relied upon. The Working Party is expected to report to the Attorney General with its findings by mid 1996.

The NSW Law Reform Commission also has a reference which may be of some relevance to this issue - *Partial Defences to Murder: Diminished Responsibility, Provocation and Infanticide*. The Commission is expecting to report by the end of 1996.

CHAPTER 13 - OTHER GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Examines the role of a range of Government agencies whose services and policies impact upon young people and youth violence.

RECOMMENDATION 167 - MAINTENANCE OF PROGRAMS AT ORMOND AND MINALI

Recommendation:

That the Minister for Community Services maintain a commitment to ensuring programs for young people at Ormond and Minali address the needs of young people with acting-out or violent behaviour.

Government response:

The Government notes the recommendation.

Within the restructure of the substitute care program there has been ongoing consideration of the need to be able to respond to the needs of young people who exhibit behaviours which are destructive within the community or to themselves. The Government is committed to ensuring that services required by these children are available.

Currently these young people's placement needs are met by intensive support services. The centres currently being used for these young people are, however, only interim arrangements until the young people are placed in an extended placement, returned to their parents/extended families or placed in some form of supported independent living situation.

Because of the special needs of these young people there is an ongoing need to develop innovative responses which meet individual needs. The large centres at Minali and Ormond do not necessarily meet the extensive needs of these people. It is well documented that congregate care for young people, who have significant behaviour problems, can exacerbate undesirable behaviour.

The Minister has supported the establishment of the Intensive Support Services Project Management Committee convened by a Senior Officer of the Department of Community Services. This Committee is ongoing and includes specialists in substitute care. The Committee has the responsibility to reform current practice and/or develop and implement alternative models for children requiring intensive care.

See also the Government's response to Recommendation 24.

RECOMMENDATION 168 - SUBSTITUTE CARE REFORMS

Recommendation:

That the Minister for Community Services

- monitor the audits conducted by the Department of Community Services to ensure that the needs of each young person currently in the Department's care will be met by future services under the substitute care reforms and
- evaluate the effectiveness of the reforms after three years to ensure these needs are being met.

Government response:

The Government, through the Case Planning and Management Strategy, is reviewing the future needs of all children currently in placement. This will be undertaken by officers of the Department

of Community Services and others co-opted externally and the review will continue throughout 1996-98.

The Interim Sub-Care Ministerial Advisory Committee will continue to monitor the outcomes of the move of children from Departmental residential institutions which were closed in recent years and develop advice for the Minister in the establishment of a permanent monitoring body. The new monitoring body, to be established in mid 1997, will oversight the quality of care for children in government and non-government services.

Ongoing evaluation will be an integral part of the monitoring of services as will the constant review of services by the Department to determine changes needed to meet developments within the substitute care sector.

The Government will establish a Substitute Care Ministerial Advisory Committee, to independently advise the Minister on the program.

The Minister for Community Services has also:

- released a Discussion Paper on the Review of Substitute Care for Aboriginal Children
- commenced the development a policy on children with a disability and substitute care. The Ageing and Disability Department is addressing the issue of children with disabilities entering substitute care and the needs of families to have access to preventative services to meet the needs of the family as a whole so that the child can remain at home. Where family breakdown is unavoidable, the Department is examining the need for a range of out-of-home placement options, based on permanency planning principles, which aim to ensure the best interests of the child are safeguarded.

RECOMMENDATION 169 - SUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Recommendation:

That the Minister for Community Services ensure the NSW Government's funding commitment to SAAP is maintained at a level enabling the program to meet the needs of young people through support services which

- provide appropriately supervised accommodation for unaccompanied children under 16 years
- assist children under 16 years accompanying their parents in other crisis accommodation facilities and
- address the long term needs of all groups of young people.

Government response:

The Minister for Community Services has signed the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) Agreement, thus ensuring the continuity of the program. The program currently provides a total of \$26,408,000 for youth projects.

New South Wales has negotiated a national research project on Children in SAAP to be completed in 1996/97.

The Department has prepared a Draft Protocol between the Department of Community Services and SAAP funded services which defines roles and responsibilities in regard to the placement of children under 16 years in SAAP services. The document is to be released for consultation purposes following Commonwealth agreement. After consultation, the draft Protocol will be finalised for the Minister's approval. Implementation of the Protocol is expected in late 1996.

See also the Government's response to Recommendations 25-27.

RECOMMENDATION 170 - NOTIFICATION OF CHILD ABUSE

Recommendation:

That the Minister for Community Services undertake a review of the Department's responsiveness, and adequacy of staff to respond, to notification of child physical abuse and ensure immediate action is taken to guarantee the safety of the child by

- prompt investigation and, where desirable
- removal of the child.

Government response:

In October 1995 the Department of Community Services issued *Strategic Directions in Child Protection*, a draft document which outlines the proposed reform of the Department's child protection program. The document specifically identified the need to review the Department's response to notifications, including those of physical abuse.

This process included reviewing the nature and timing of the Department's investigation of allegations of abuse. It also provided guidelines on the level of Department intervention in situations of alleged abuse. The outcome of this will be greater clarity around circumstances that require that a child be removed from his/her home. It will also broaden the perspective of child protection investigations to ensure that, where there is no ongoing role for the Department but a child and/or his/her family requires further support, that a linkage between the child/family and an appropriate service is made.

An initial review of procedures commenced in January 1996. Within six months of this date recommendations on improving Departmental practices at intake, assessment and referral will be in place for implementation.

The Department is introducing a new child protection notification classification system for child abuse notification to be in place by June 1996, based on safety and risk considerations.

Further strategies include:

- a review of 260 child protection cases to determine adequacy of several aspects of the Department's intervention, eg intake information, classification, level of Department intervention, referral pathways, interagency coordination, service gaps and decision-making and
- the introduction of a Practice Improvement Process in each Community Services Centre to implement immediate strategies to improve practice care and protection. Adolescents are identified as a special needs group.

Following on from the decision in 1995/96 to appoint 60 new child protection specialists, 45 additional field staff will be appointed during 1996/97 to provide child protection services at the point of notification of abuse. Further, 51 new District Officer positions will be created to improve the Department's response to substitute care in line with the strategic directions for the substitute care program.

Removal of children from the care of their families is a complex issue. The Department will also address the need for change through the current review of the legislation which underpins its work in child protection, the *Children (Care & Protection) Act 1987*.

RECOMMENDATION 171 - CHILD ABUSE INVESTIGATION UNIT

Recommendation:

That the Minister for Police examine the feasibility of establishing a specialist unit to be responsible for investigating child abuse cases.

Government response:

The Government has established the Child Protection Enforcement Agency within the NSW Police Service to investigate organised paedophile activity and serial sexual offences against children.

The Agency's estimated annual Budget is \$3.4 million. At present the agency has 25 staff and at full capacity it will employ 53 staff. It is expected to be fully operational by 1 July 1996.

Regional Child Protection and Investigation Teams will continue to play a crucial role in child protection. The Government also promotes Operation Paradox, which provides a means to allow members of the public to phone-in and anonymously report cases of suspected child abuse.

RECOMMENDATION 172 - PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Recommendation:

That the Minister for Transport continue to ensure

- crime prevention strategies are considered in the provision of transport services and
- pricing policies encourage young people to use public transport.

Government response:

In regard to crime prevention, this area is primarily the responsibility of the New South Wales Police Service with the principal area of concern being crime prevention on the City Rail network. City Rail continues to liaise closely with the Police so that resources can be used in the most effective manner possible.

Crime prevention strategies

Measures in place to enhance customer safety include the following.

- Patrols of stations and trains by CityRail revenue protection officers, transit and beat police on the basis of intelligence information gathered by CityRail and the Police. This enables the patrols to be targeted to specific high risk locations and/or services. In addition, random patrols are conducted of other stations and services throughout the CityRail network.
- Customer to crew communication system on all Tangara carriages. Similar systems are being progressively fitted to the other double deck suburban carriages.
- Train guards are equipped with two way radios enabling assistance to be sought when necessary.
- Blue lights on trains to indicate where the guard is located.
- Closed circuit television surveillance on many stations and security cameras randomly provided on trains.
- Security on trains and stations was further enhanced, from October 1995, with the deployment of additional security officers on trains and stations from 7 pm to 1 am. On average 1,300 train and station patrols are conducted each week.

The Minister for Police has provided an extra 44 transit police to patrol suburban stations and trains. The new transit police are based across the City Rail network at Granville, Sutherland, Lidcombe, Campbelltown, Wollongong, Hornsby and Gosford. There are plans to restore transit police to full strength in 1996.

Beat police will continue to complement the work of transit police.

In addition, in May 1995, the Minister established the Transport Safety Bureau within the Department of Transport. The Bureau is responsible for accrediting public transport operators in NSW and ensuring the highest practicable levels of passenger security are maintained. The Bureau is currently reviewing the passenger security programs of the State Transit Authority (STA) and State Rail Authority (SRA) together with the development of passenger security standards and performance indicators.

In October 1995 the Government announced the introduction of 63 Safe Stations across the CityRail network. Each station will feature remote monitored CCTV, passenger Help Points, increased staff presence, improved lighting and regular police patrols supplemented by contract security personnel.

Other strategies concerning the City Rail network that have an impact on youth violence are as follows.

- Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) audits of Sydney Metropolitan stations.
- A schools education program which addresses rail and personal safety issues.
- Joint operations with the NSW Police Service to target specific problem locations or services.
- Vandalism and graffiti minimisation programs.
- Extension of the two car Nightsafe accommodation on late night trains from 30 July to commence at 7 pm from outlying suburbs and at 8 pm for services from the City.

Pricing policies

The Government's pricing policy provides a number of generous concessions, including those listed below, specifically targeting young people and encouraging the use of public transport.

School Student Transport Scheme

- STA- School Bus Pass, School Ferry Pass
- SRA - School Rail Pass
- Private bus operators - School Bus Pass
- Department of Transport - School Vacation Rail Pass

TAFE Student Transport Scheme

- STA - TAFE College Rail Pass, TAFE College Ferry Pass
- SRA-TAFE College Rail Pass
- Private bus operators - TAFE College bus pass

NSW Student Identification Card

School Pupils Railway of Australia Card

Student Railways of Australia Identification Card

Apprentice 1st/2nd Year Identification Card

Australian Traineeship System Trainee Identification Card

Half Fare Entitlement Card (issued to registered unemployed people, including young unemployed)

In addition, the Department of Transport's program for the provision of improved public transport interchanges at railway stations should also assist young people to make greater use of public transport and to reduce their dependence on private motor vehicles.

Young people now have access to free carriage of accompanied bicycles during off-peak travel. To assist bicycle riders further, the Department of Transport is implementing a program by which secure bicycle lockers will be installed at 28 stations, initially, on CityRail's network.

RECOMMENDATION 173 - INTEGRATION OF PUBLIC HOUSING INTO THE COMMUNITY

Recommendation:

That the Minister for Housing pursue a policy of integrating public housing into the broader community, both in new and existing housing developments.

Government response:

The Government supports the recommendation.

The Department of Housing has maintained its efforts to pursue the integration of public housing into the broader community. The Department now aims to provide housing in a different way and avoid the kind of mass development it undertook in previous decades.

In general terms, the Department no longer acquires or builds new projects which have more than 25-30 units for any one client group (aged, single, family) which are in close proximity to other public housing projects.

Currently the Department is embarking on a *Neighbourhood Improvement Program* to ensure that public housing estates look and operate in a way comparable with other residential areas and to remove the stigma associated with those estates. Positive outcomes through its implementation will include:

- a high degree of tenant and community participation in the urban renewal process and management of estates
- a change in the balance of public and private open space
- an increase in tenant control on security of homes
- a reduction in homogeneity of public housing by the sale of at least 20% of dwellings to mix tenure
- improved asset value
- the strengthening of local neighbourhood organisations and neighbourhood based community development
- the introduction of total asset management principles
- the involvement of the private sector in redevelopment
- increased youth and community health and recreational services
- the decreasing of community isolation
- an increase in employment opportunities.

Pilot projects have already been completed on 110 houses in Macquarie Fields and Airs to follow with other similar operations in Campbelltown LGA, which will involve expenditure in the order of \$100 million over the next 13 years.

The Government's *Housing Policy Green Paper* also proposes that 'head leasing programs' (where separate privately owned dwellings are leased long-term to the Government) and 'community housing associations' (which manage a wide variety of dwellings in the broader community outside public housing estates) be expanded. Both these strategies will assist in integrating social housing into the broader community.

RECOMMENDATION 174 - PUBLIC HOUSING FACILITIES

Recommendation:

That the Minister for Housing ensure consideration is given to:

- providing access to adequate indoor and outdoor facilities for young people in housing estates and
- housing families with young people in areas with adequate facilities for young people.

Government response:

The Government notes the recommendation.

The *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act* requires the Department of Housing to publicly account for its contribution to the communities it is housing. Coupled with rising community standards this has meant extra effort by the Department to establish acceptable levels of infrastructure provision through negotiations with the local consent authority.

Apart from the provision of infrastructure during the development process, the Department has generally sought to have local government authorities use the rate revenue from the Department to fund, for example, new community centres and new playground equipment. The Department undertakes the care and control of community rooms and playgrounds where the land is not dedicated to council.

The Department's approach has always been to house people in their area of choice rather than direct them to specific areas.

The *Neighbourhood Improvement Program* is also relevant in the context of this recommendation (see the Government's response to Recommendation 173).

RECOMMENDATION 175 - ACCOMMODATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE AND PUBLIC HOUSING

Recommendation:

That the Minister for Housing examine strategies for increasing the access of young people to public housing, including special purpose-built housing for single unsupported young people.

Government response:

The Government supports the development of housing strategies for young people. Strategies which increase access to a wider range of housing options for young people are a priority and the development of these strategies will be linked to the achievement of outcomes such as:

- better identification of the needs of young people and priorities for service development
- better targeting of resources to ensure that an appropriate level and mix of service options are being developed and
- the monitoring of planning processes and implementation of service delivery strategies to ensure that objectives and outcomes are being met.

In December 1995 the Government released a *Housing Policy Green Paper* which outlines a program for reform to the system of housing provision and new directions for housing policies in NSW. The directions outlined in the Green Paper are in accord with the Government's social justice objectives and will considerably improve the delivery of housing assistance to all groups in the community, particularly people in crisis or those with special needs.

The access that young people currently have to a range of housing assistance options across the public and community housing sectors will continue to improve as services are expanded and diversified through the development of these strategies. NSW is already in the process of improving access and diversifying housing options for youth in both special housing and mainstream programs.

In special housing, this is occurring through the allocation of \$3.6m in 1995/96 for projects in the *Community Housing Program* which specifically target youth, and the allocation of \$2.317m in 1995/96 for 11 youth projects as part of the *Crisis Accommodation Program*. Youth in crisis remain one of four main target groups under the latter program.

In mainstream housing, the availability of smaller dwellings is being substantially increased to meet rising demand from single or small sized households through initiatives such as the redevelopment of existing public housing stock and headleasing arrangements. Well over 95% of housing procured in 1995/96 will be one and two bedroom dwellings.

Allocation processes have also been streamlined to ensure assistance is provided in a more timely manner and better reflects the needs of clients, particularly those with complex needs such as youth. Youth have also benefited from the funding that is allocated to the Rental Assistance Scheme, which provides access to the private rental market. Funds for this program are allocated according to demand and \$14.104m has been allocated in 1995/96.

Historically, there have been difficulties in achieving appropriate models for youth housing. The Government is investigating ways of developing purpose built low-cost housing for single young people using funds from the *Social Housing Subsidy Program* which subsidises the cost of raising funds to finance housing programs. The Commonwealth and States have agreed that the 1996/97 *Social Housing Subsidy Program* will focus on youth. NSW has established a commencement target of 246 studio, one and two bedroom dwellings during 1996/97 and 1997/98. 50% of these will be targeted to low income people aged under 25 years. Properties will be acquired through a combination of purchasing existing dwellings and procuring purpose-built dwellings designed specifically to suit the needs of youth. Properties will be leased to selected community housing associations for a period of up to 20 years and will be located in areas where there is a demonstrated high demand for single and youth housing.

The 1995/96 *Aboriginal Housing State Strategic Plan* identified young people as a high priority group for housing assistance. Aboriginal housing needs are being met by capital works strategies aimed to address the large demand from single people by acquiring more smaller-sized stock and by redeveloping stock in culturally appropriate ways. Priority is also being given to improving planning and service delivery through improved consultation processes to better understand and respond to the need and priorities of Aboriginal communities.

Homelessness is a major problem affecting young people. A number of recent reports of inquiries into youth homeless and housing programs targeting youth have made wide-ranging recommendations. The Office of Housing Policy has established a committee, with broad representation from relevant government and non-government agencies, to develop a consistent and integrated approach toward reforming services for the homeless. Areas being examined include:

- exploring long-term housing solutions for people in crisis
- addressing issues relating to the management and administration of programs
- improving service planning, including greater consultation with homeless people
- developing needs indicators and performance measures.

RECOMMENDATION 176 - COUNSELLING AT COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRES

Recommendation:

That the Minister for Health review the availability of counselling at Community Health Centres for young people aged 18 to 24 years, particularly the perpetrators of violence.

Government response:

The health needs of young people are a key priority for the Department of Health. The recently released Youth Health Discussion Paper, *Caring for Young People*, proposes strategies to improve young people's access to health services. Strategies include positive promotion of young people, staff development and mechanisms to ensure accountability by service providers.

The Government considers that a prevention and early intervention focus on mental health issues for children and young people is the most appropriate and effective strategy for long-term gains in dealing with the development of disruptive behaviour problems, which may progress to violence. Community counsellors should recognise the need for appropriate referrals and appropriate mental health training and support to adequately meet the needs of young people.

RECOMMENDATION 177 - SUPPORT SERVICES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Recommendation:

That the Minister for Health ensure adequate funding levels are provided for sexual assault, drug and alcohol, mental illness and crisis and long term support services for young people.

Government response:

The Government supports this recommendation.

The recently released Youth Health Discussion Paper, *Caring for Young People*, addresses the need to provide access to health services for young people, including access to existing sexual assault, drug and alcohol, mental health and crisis and long term support services. All these services are available through the network of youth health centres.

Sexual assault services

Sexual assault services support children and young people through a network of 50 specialist services across NSW. These services provide crisis medical and counselling support, follow up counselling, group work, court preparation and court support and assistance in applying for Victims' Compensation. Services are also provided to young people through a range of non-government organisations funded by the NSW Health Department such as Dymrna House, Sydney Rape Crisis Centre and women's health services. Sexual assault services liaise with a range of youth and other community agencies through their participation in local Area Child Protection Committees.

Drug and alcohol services

The Drug and Alcohol Directorate provides funding of \$31 million per year for programs to prevent and treat drug-related harm in NSW. Of this, \$4.7 million is allocated to programs specifically targeting young people. The vast majority (\$4.3 million) is dedicated to education and prevention programs rather than treatment. This reflects the fact that proportionately few young people are drug dependent or experience significant drug-related health problems requiring treatment services.

The Government is providing additional funding for drug and alcohol education programs (\$1 million per year over 5 years) to strengthen drug education in schools, improve co-ordination of drug education services to schools and improve access to support at school for students at risk of drug abuse.

See also the Government's response to Recommendation 44.

Mental health services

Improving mental health outcomes for children and young people through the expansion of early intervention and prevention and treatment services has been identified as a key priority by NSW Health.

The Government is considering proposals to establish a Children and Young People - Mental Health Task Force. It is envisaged that the proposed Task Force would guide the development of a State wide strategic children and young people's mental health plan to address needs and establish priorities for the effective development and implementation of evidence based strategies, particularly those targeting children and young people and their families at highest risk. The issue of young people at risk of developing disruptive behaviour problems and recommendations for effective prevention and early intervention strategies would be examined by the proposed Task Force.

The 1995/96 Budget included an additional \$12 million recurrent funding to improve services for people with mental health problems. Additional resources will be focused on priority areas which include responding to the needs of young people, Aboriginal people, rural and isolated communities and those with a complex range of problems including substance abuse.

RECOMMENDATION 178 - AREA ASSISTANCE SCHEME

Recommendation:

That the Treasurer review the limitation on the availability of pick-up funding for Departments sponsoring projects under the Area Assistance Scheme.

Government response:

The Government notes the recommendation.

The Area Assistance Scheme is administered by the Minister for Urban Affairs and Planning and Minister for Housing and it was agreed that revised arrangements would apply to the scheme from 1995/96. These arrangements included an increase in funding available for ongoing projects and a requirement that funding for such projects be referred to the Budget Committee for determination.

The Department of Urban Affairs and Planning is currently reviewing the Area Assistance Scheme. The Review will examine the impact which the limitation on the availability of 'pick-up funding' (recurrent funding which other Departments are encouraged to provide to ensure projects continue) has on the Scheme. The Review will seek input from the various pick-up Departments, local government and the community. Any changes to the Scheme would be subject to the Review's findings and would be assessed in the overall budget context.

RECOMMENDATION 179 - FORMER OFFICE OF YOUTH AFFAIRS

Recommendation:

That the Premier re-establish the Office of Youth Affairs as a matter of urgency and ensure it is sufficiently resourced to meet its objectives fully.

Government response:

The Government does not support this recommendation.

The Government abolished the former Office of Youth Affairs, implementing a pre election commitment. The former Office of Youth Affairs had become a politicised body under the former Government, and was considered to be inefficient and ineffective in dealing with and resolving the important issues of concern to young people.

Its resources were heavily devoted to program management and process issues, and it had little strategic policy focus or influence across Government.

The Government has retained most important programs of the former Office which include Time Out, Circuit Breaker, Helping Early School Leavers and the Koori Youth Program. These are now run effectively by the Youth Programs Unit of the Department of Training and Education Coordination (DTEC).

Strategic youth policy responsibilities have been transferred to The Cabinet Office where a specific Youth Branch has been established to give across Government policy advice on the complex areas which concern young people. The very complexity of these interrelationships is demonstrated by the Committee's own report on Youth Violence.

The location of the Youth Branch responsible for youth policy in the key central policy agency of Government enables the issues of young people to receive far greater attention and weight than if the function were to be located as a small Office in a particular line agency.

The resources available to the Youth Branch are similar to the policy resources allocated to the former Office of Youth Affairs and are comparable to the policy resources available in other Australian jurisdictions and New Zealand.

RECOMMENDATION 180 - COMMUNITY YOUTH SUPPORT INITIATIVES

Recommendation:

That NSW Government agencies support the Community Youth Support initiatives in Moree, Walgett and Marrickville as models for interagency co-operation and, dependent on the evaluation of the operation of the initiatives, they be extended to other areas of the state.

Government response:

The Government notes the recommendation.

Community Youth Support initiatives in Moree, Walgett and Marrickville are currently being evaluated. After the evaluation is complete the Government will carefully consider its findings before deciding on the initiative's future.

RECOMMENDATION 181 - PUBLIC EDUCATION CAMPAIGNS TARGETING BOYS AND YOUNG MEN

Recommendation:

That the Attorney General ensure the responsibilities of the Juvenile Crime Prevention Unit include the development of public education campaigns targeting boys and young men and

- encouraging non-violent conflict resolution
- encouraging non-sexist and non-violent relationships and
- condemning violence against minority groups.

Government response:

The Government notes the recommendation. The Government will evaluate the funding implications for the Juvenile Crime Prevention Division as it was not envisaged at the time of its establishment that it would be responsible for the conduct of public education campaigns.

The Government also notes the Legislative Council Standing Committee on Social Issues' *Report on Sexual Violence* (Part III). Key Recommendation 6 is that the Department for Women conduct a Statewide Community Education and Awareness Campaign on sexual violence, aimed at women and men. The Department for Women has advised it will place an emphasis on young men in designing any such community education program.