

REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS BEFORE
STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL ISSUES

INQUIRY INTO ISSUES RELATING TO
REDFERN/WATERLOO

At Sydney on Tuesday, 18 May 2004

The Committee met at 9.00 a.m.

PRESENT

Ms Jan Burnswoods (Chair)

The Hon. Dr A. Chesterfield-Evans

The Hon. Kayee Griffin

The Hon. Robyn Parker

The Hon. G. S. Pearce

The Hon. I. W. West

CHAIR: Could I start by acknowledging on behalf of the Committee that we are sitting today on the traditional Country of the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation.

I want to make a few remarks from the chair, as we traditionally do in starting a new inquiry or at least the public part of a new inquiry, so I hope you will bear with me for a little while.

The terms of reference, as most people here know, were referred to us by the Legislative Council and they ask us to examine a number of things: Policing strategies, government and non-government service provision in Redfern and Waterloo, the effectiveness of the Government's Redfern/Waterloo Partnership Project in meeting the needs of local indigenous people and others in the community and proposals specifically for the future of The Block.

I want to make a couple of comments about aspects of our inquiry process. We are all committed, I think, to having our process open and consultative, but we always have to balance that with procedural fairness and ensuring that people are not adversely affected by evidence presented either in submissions or in hearings. We know that the inquiry is going to raise some complex and difficult issues for the Committee, but also for many of the participants, and our terms of reference require us to look pretty honestly at what is working in Redfern and Waterloo and what is not working and to make recommendations - positive recommendations, we hope - about a way forward. It is a huge responsibility for us and it is a big responsibility also for everyone participating in our inquiry and for commentators on our inquiry.

We have the issue that we always have to grapple with in our inquiries: Parliamentary privilege. It exists so that we can properly investigate matters, but it is not intended to provide a forum to enable people to make attacks or adversely reflect on others. As I said before, these inquiries are something of a balancing act. We want to make sure that we focus on providing improvements for communities, for groups of people; we do not want to focus on individuals. We are therefore going to request of all witnesses that they avoid mentioning particular individuals, including members of the Aboriginal community and individual police officers, unless it is essential to address the terms of reference. It is because of that that the Committee does not intend to make public particular references to individuals or case studies in submissions that might identify those people.

We are going to hold the majority of our hearings in public. We have six days scheduled at the moment, including today. We will be going to two different sites in the Redfern/Waterloo area over the next couple of weeks. A small number of witnesses that we are speaking to tomorrow and next week have asked if they may give their evidence in private and we have agreed that they can do that and we will be asking members of the public and the media to respect their requests.

I want to briefly address a couple of matters that have been raised over the last 48 hours. There are longstanding parliamentary rules about the confidentiality of certain documents, submissions and evidence provided to parliamentary committees. They remain confidential at least for a period to protect witnesses and maintain the integrity of committee proceedings until the committee makes the decision ever to make them public in whole or in part and we do that after proper consideration and advice in relation to those fairness issues. That is standard procedure for all parliamentary committees and we have followed it. The unauthorised release of a committee document has the potential to interfere with the operations and effectiveness of the committee, particularly at the early stage of the inquiry when so many diverse and often conflicting views are being put forward.

I will leave it at that in relation to those issues, but I will make sure, as the inquiry proceeds, that some of those remarks are made so that the witnesses on each day are aware of them. We are determined to conduct this inquiry as fairly, as openly and as positively as we possibly can, but we need the assistance I think of everyone involved in doing that so that we do work together to seek positive outcomes for the Redfern and Waterloo communities.

I have a formal statement, which those members of the media present have probably heard before, and I might draw their attention to the kind of issues that we need to bear in mind. We have resolved that you be admitted to proceedings and you can broadcast sound and video. The guidelines

make it clear that only members of the Committee and witnesses may be filmed or recorded, not members of the audience, and that people in the public gallery must not be the primary focus of any filming or photos. In reporting on our proceedings you must take responsibility for what you publish or the interpretation that is placed on anything.

Having said all of that, this morning I welcome Col Gellatly and Michael Ramsey.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Madam Chair, I would like to raise a point of order.

CHAIR: Not at this stage, I am sorry.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Well, I would like to raise a point of order, madam Chair: Yesterday, without the authority of the Committee, you made certain media statements in relation to the conduct of the Committee's inquiry.

The Hon. IAN WEST: I think the Committee is now in confidential session.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: And you in particular indicated--

CHAIR: Could I ask that everyone who is not a member of the Committee, including the media, leave the room at this stage. My apologies for this.

(The Committee proceeded to deliberate)

Evidence resumed

CHAIR: Before we start, I need to make a formal statement to the media. Some of you went on either with footage or with sound after I asked that the room be cleared. Can I point out to the media that any use of the material taken, whether sight or sound, after I asked for the room to be cleared is a contempt of Parliament and so for those people who did go on filming or recording I just need to warn you about that.

My apologies to the witnesses, in particular. It is the first time I think that we have never got past going through the names to welcome people. One of the reasons we needed to ask you to wait outside for so long was because we had known in advance that the Honourable Arthur Chesterfield-Evans, one of our members, was going to be late this morning and because of the nature of the issues we needed to decide we felt it was only fair to wait for him. The Committee has resolved those issues, so I will return to welcoming Dr Col Gellatly and Mr Michael Ramsey on behalf of the Redfern/Waterloo Partnership Project and the Premier's Department.

We have received a very detailed and lengthy whole of government submission and that is what will be addressed this morning, but we will be bearing in mind that the Committee will later be taking evidence from individual agencies, including of course the police starting later today, and we have already scheduled Health, Aboriginal Affairs, Education and Training and we are yet to schedule other agencies, including the Department of Community Services, so while the whole of government submission has had input from those agencies we will be asking questions of people from those agencies in more detail later.

COLIN GELLATLY, Director General, Premier's Department, Governor Macquarie Tower, 1 Farrer Place, Sydney, and

MICHAEL JAMES RAMSEY, Project Director, Redfern/Waterloo Partnership Project, Premier's Department, Governor Macquarie Tower, 1 Farrer Place, Sydney, affirmed and examined:

CHAIR: Do one or both of you wish to make an opening statement?

Dr GELLATLY: Yes. I would like to thank the Committee for providing me with an opportunity to make an opening statement to the inquiry. Firstly, I would like to reaffirm the Government's full support for this inquiry. The New South Wales Premier's Department appears here today voluntarily. We would also like it noted that we are prepared to return and also willing to lodge a further submission in order to clarify any matters.

The whole of government submission provided by the New South Wales Government acknowledges the collaborative work being undertaken by New South Wales government agencies in recent times. The approach recognises that no agency has responsibility or capacity to address the issues in Redfern and Waterloo. The government submission was prepared to assist the Committee with its deliberations and provide a comprehensive account of the significant work being undertaken. To prepare the submission I wrote to the chief executive officers of 28 agencies seeking their input and advice. A further four agencies were contacted and asked to provide specific input into the submission. The intention from the start has been to ensure that the Committee was provided with accurate and forthright information to assist in its deliberations. Throughout the process of compiling the submission a major concern was to ensure that the integrity of all of the agencies' advice was maintained. A team based at the Redfern/Waterloo Partnership Project coordinated this agency input. In many instances they also sought to clarify the advice that had been provided. Supplementary information obtained from the agencies has been included in an effort to ensure that the government submission was clear and comprehensive. This whole of government approach to the submission was an effort by the Government to ensure that the complexities of the issues and the work undertaken would be clearly presented. At the time of lodging the government submission, 28 agencies had responded. The advice ranged from verbal advice to a single written page to 60 pages of written information. Three of the agencies that were contacted did not provide submissions. Since the submission was lodged with the Committee additional advice has been received from the New South Wales Fire Brigades and, with the Committee's concurrence, I would like to table that supplementary information for your further deliberation.

I would also like to table supplementary information regarding the ongoing programme that the City of Sydney Council is running from the Redfern Community Centre located next to The Block. This programme is jointly funded by the Redfern/Waterloo Partnership project and the City of Sydney Council and includes the children's school holiday programme run in April as well as continuing community activities for young people, who have complex needs, and their families.

Some in the broader community when referring to Redfern and Waterloo would no doubt focus on the recent high profile events in the area. Such a focus would not recognise the broad level and entrenched need across both of these communities. As outlined in the New South Wales Government submission, Redfern and Waterloo are characterised by an eroded public domain, poor infrastructure, high levels of crime, unemployment, poor housing, family breakdown, drug and alcohol dependence and poor health.

The area is the home and workplace of a variety of communities with divergent views and needs. There is no consensus of opinion across communities or, in some cases, within communities. Balancing these diverse views presents enormous challenges for those in the New South Wales Government and others who are working hard to address the range of issues in Redfern and Waterloo. Sometimes this has led to strong vocal opposition from sectorial interests to some of the work being undertaken. Similarly, there are divergent views across those agencies due to their need to focus on meeting their core responsibilities and priorities.

In the past, Government has not always achieved the level of collaboration across agencies that it would like. However, in recent times there are some significant first steps being made towards improving service delivery to those communities. While agencies have undertaken significant community consultation on broad and specific issues, the Government is committed to consulting further. We acknowledge that there is some criticism of our communication strategies. It is fair to say that we have had to prioritise addressing crises and other issues at the expense to some degree of our communication strategy. The Government is committed to developing and implementing a more effective communication strategy in the future. Consultation and communication are just two of the many challenges being faced by the Government in the area.

Preliminary data now indicates that there are 100 organisations providing 210 services in Redfern and Waterloo and we do not know the capacity of these services, but the anecdotal evidence suggests that there is a high degree of government resources focused on Redfern/Waterloo when compared to many other communities across New South Wales, so some may ask the question: Why do these communities still find themselves in such a serious state of disadvantage? There are professionally run services, State, Commonwealth and council services, together with non-government services in Redfern/Waterloo with dedicated and committed staff who work well beyond what could be considered reasonable. However, there is poor or non-existent coordination, inadequate accountability across the service system, duplication of services and under-resourced, under-trained and non-viable services. This, combined with the policies of past governments, provides further challenges. Services and agencies need to change if the issues are to be resolved.

A further challenge is the need to upgrade infrastructure and renew the urban environment in the area, and this is a major task and the Government is committed to developing social outcomes around such infrastructure development.

I would like to think that the basis for action being undertaken by the New South Wales Government is to address issues in Redfern/Waterloo and detail some of the significant work being undertaken by agencies. Pages 3 to 7 of the government submission highlight some of the key achievements that have been made. The establishment of the Redfern/Waterloo Partnership project in 2002, which is a whole of government, whole of community approach, provides the framework through which the Government is responding to the complex range of issues faced in the area. Research and past experiences have shown that to achieve change there must be strong leadership linked to potential capacity of forced change should this prove necessary. The establishment of the partnership project provides leadership and responded to community calls for a coordinated whole of government approach. The high level of support from within the New South Wales Government and from senior managers of line agencies has meant that the partnership project has been able to examine and implement innovative approaches which would not otherwise have been possible.

The partnership project recognises that solutions to the diversity of issues in Redfern/Waterloo can only be addressed if they involve a holistic approach to working with both individuals and the community. The framework recognises that solutions can only be achieved collaboratively across agencies, across sectors and across governments. In recent times the Commonwealth Government has expressed a willingness to become a partner in the project. This builds on the strong partnership that the New South Wales Government has developed with the former South Sydney City Council and which is expected to be strengthened and enhanced within the new City of Sydney Council.

The partnership project also recognises that stakeholder engagement, together with strengthening and building of capacities of individuals and agencies are essential to creating strong and resilient community. Through the partnership project the Government has put in place a project team which is working at different levels to address the issues in the area.

There is really three areas, there is managing crises, apart from the recent times there have been issues such as the withdrawal of buses in the Waterloo area following incidents involving young people and working towards mid term results, including establishment of the anti-drug strategy and the longer term solutions, such as the redevelopment of The Block.

CORRECTED

Significantly, the success of the program that has been put in place for Redfern/Waterloo may well have implications for the New South Wales Government in strengthening other communities.

There are also a number of other significant achievements of the New South Wales Government agencies in the area that I would like to briefly draw the Committee's attention to. These include establishing the Street team, which is elaborated on in the submission and all these are elaborated on in the submission. Establishing the Intensive Family Support Services, Police Youth Camps and Mentoring Programs, improved education outcomes, increased school enrolments, increased attendance and reduced suspensions.

Many gains that are being made in the area through effective and high visibility policing, closure of all known drug houses and shooting galleries, increased diversion of young people from Court towards youth justice conferencing, upgrading and improving streetscapes.

I am sure that in these areas members of the community will avail themselves of the opportunity to explore further these achievements and the other listed achievements with the representatives of the Premier's Department and other government agencies that have been called to appear.

The future priorities for the New South Wales Government in relation to Redfern and Waterloo are to further progress the longer term objectives of the partnership project, such as redevelopment of The Block, the establishment of a new human services model, development of substance abuse strategy and implementation of the Redfern Eveleigh Darlington - which is known as the RED strategy - leading to sustainable urban renewal and regeneration.

The communities of Redfern/Waterloo have a right to opportunities, services and programs which meet their needs and allow them to fulfill their aspirations and that of their children.

To conclude, there is no quick fix to the long term issues being faced by the Redfern/Waterloo communities. The problems are entrenched, complex and multi-faceted. Whilst many well-intentioned people have put forward solutions to the recent events in Redfern, experience has shown that adhoc and poorly designed solutions often only exacerbate the situation.

I would like to draw the Committee's attention to page 69 of the submission. The community engaged in consultancy conducted by McCallum in 2003 found that in spite of the daily stress people feel living in Redfern/Waterloo, and I quote:

...there is a high level of understanding of the complexities of the social issues and problems besetting the community. The community, for the most part, does not want others to come sweeping in and take over. They want to be consulted, included and to use opportunities to come together with others and work together for sustainable and lasting change. They want to retain and build on what is good about the area and find ways to bring the community together so it is a safe, tolerant and diverse one.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Sorry, Mr Gellatly, you just missed a few words in that quote, they were the words at the beginning that said that the Government was dealing largely successfully with crime, poverty and drugs. You missed those words. I think we all understand why you missed those words.

CHAIR: He started further down the quote but perhaps you could ask that when Mr Gellatly finishes.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: I am happy to do that.

Dr GELLATLY: The New South Wales Government has made a substantial long term commitment to resolve issues in Redfern/Waterloo which builds on the solid foundations which have been established today, but this does not mean that we cannot learn from the knowledge and experience of other stakeholders.

Within this context the Government is committed to considering the outcomes of this inquiry and examining the Committee's recommendations. Thank you, that concludes our statement.

CHAIR: Mr Ramsey, did you need to say anything to start with?

Mr RAMSEY: No, no opening statement.

CHAIR: Well, as you know, in accordance with our usual practice, we have prepared some questions to guide us in questioning you but obviously the Committee members may have others arising out of them or quite different from the ones that we have prepared and which have been distributed amongst the Committee.

Mr Ramsey, could I start off by - since it is such an important part of the terms of reference - asking you to firstly outline the aims of the Redfern/Waterloo Partnership Project?

Mr RAMSEY: Part two of the submission, the Government submission, outlines the Redfern/Waterloo approach in significant detail as outlined by the Director General.

The partnership project was established in about 2002 and is to provide a whole of government and a whole of community approach and framework to which the Government would respond to the issues in Redfern and Waterloo and that is really our primary aim.

The partnership plays a pivotal role in trying to guide the whole of government and the whole of community approach and tries to provide a critical link between both of the communities. I guess it is important to recognise that both of these communities have different issues and different needs, while they do have a commonality of interest.

The Government submission outlines the research and past experiences that have shown that unless there is a strong leadership it is not possible to bring about the level of change that is needed to achieve the long term solutions.

The high level of support within the New South Wales Government and from senior managers means that we have been literally able to look at different approaches. An example of that is the Street team. That Street team is actually made up of both government and non-government workers working in an integrated service to actually go out to streets and work with the young people there.

So really the partnership project is intended to achieve the following outcomes: enhanced community participation, leadership, reduced crime, improved safety, enhanced services for young people and children and families in the area, provide additional support for families, improve health outcomes, reduce drug and alcohol abuse, enhance educational opportunities, increase employment opportunities, promote employment and enterprise development, improve urban amenity and public space, improve family service co-ordination, enhance relationships between the Government and the local community, to build a capacity of services and to look at different approaches.

The areas that the Government is currently targeting through the partnership project include the enhancement of the human services system and the human services review that is currently being undertaken which is covered in significant depth in our submission, highlights why we are going down that track.

Some of the issues that have been raised by the Director General in his opening address will of course add duplication, the lack of capacity within the service system about the fact that there are so many services out there on the ground, highlight the need for us to come up with a different human services system. So that is one of our focuses.

The issue of addressing community safety issues, the anti-drug strategy, the community safety plan, which has been involved in partnership with South Sydney Council and the New South

Wales Government, the urban renewal crime prevention initiatives, like the improvement of railway security. All of those are actually areas that we have been targeting.

Co-ordinating and driving infrastructure change in Redfern and Waterloo through the RED strategy, improving the well being of children and young people and the range of programs that are put in place range from the In-Home Aboriginal Support Service to Mudgin-Gal, through to Barnardos Intensive Family Support Service, through to the more recently funded holiday and after school program that has been delivered by the new City of Sydney Council.

We are also trying to advance strategies which deal with drugs and crime and a good example of that is the area that we have been working towards in terms of demolition of the shooting galleries in and around The Block, the targeting of drug houses in and around The Block again, but also the targeting of drug houses across in Waterloo.

We are also working with business to look at how we can improve employment and training potentials. Our approach really recognises that the service delivery system must provide a quality service and be accessible and responsive to the needs of the communities of Redfern and Waterloo, both in the short and long term.

It recognises the strategies and actions must be effective and deliver appropriate outcomes and make effective use of the funds available. Service providers both government and non-government must be accountable to the community and to the taxpayer for what they are doing.

There must be open decision making which includes involving the community in finding solutions. Linked to this any solutions we put in place are not going to be sustainable unless they have the support of the community and so that has to be a key element of the work that we actually do in Redfern.

Partnerships between and within council, the government, non-government agencies and the community are critical to the solution.

We also need to look at how we maximize opportunities because there is a limited pool of resources to address the issues in communities like Redfern and Waterloo. So how do we actually look at those opportunities to actually address the social issues? A good example of that is the infrastructure development in Redfern and Waterloo. Does that give us opportunities to improve on social outcomes through that infrastructure development?

On pages 3 to 7 of our submission we have detailed a large number of achievements that we believe have occurred since the partnership project was put in place and I guess this is an acknowledgement of work that has been done by both government and non-government agencies in Redfern and Waterloo. Some of the achievements include the establishment of a drug and alcohol task force and the anti-drug strategy that was announced by the Premier, the increased number of police and police sniffer dogs, operations being conducted around the railway station, the improvement of the lighting and the physical environment around the railway station and the top of the area known as The Block.

The feedback we get from residents is that they are starting to note a difference that is occurring up and around there. I am aware that the Committee has gone down and actually had a look at The Block and the physical environment there is significantly different now since the shooting houses have been abolished.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Could I just interrupt, I hate to be rude but you are painting a very rosy picture of a situation of a community that is in absolute crisis. This community is falling apart and you are talking about achievements and outcomes and yet your own opening statement talks about poor co-ordination, inadequate accountability. This project with \$7 million in funding is two thirds of the way through and yet this huge Government document does not point to the outcomes that you are talking about or achievements.

Can you quantify the achievements that you are talking about and how it is that this community, after \$7 million of funding, is still in crisis?

Mr RAMSEY: There is no solution. The issues in Redfern and Waterloo are incredibly complex and literally there are no quick fixes to those issues.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: You have had two years so far.

Mr RAMSEY: Yes, but the issues have been there significantly longer than two years. Some of the issues have been there for ten, fifteen years. You cannot expect change to occur quickly. So some of these issues like the Street team and the extensive family support service will take some time for them to actually achieve the level of results. That does not mean though that they are not having some impact already on the ground.

The street team is engaging with young people and children out on the streets of both Redfern and Waterloo. They are working up and around The Block. Equally, Barnardos Intensive Family Support Service is engaging with families that have not traditionally been engaged with them in the past.

Remember, some of these families are at the really hard end and it is very difficult and they have not wanted to engage with services, whether they be government or non-government services. It takes an incredible amount of effort to actually get them to engage. So some of these solutions will take time to achieve the level of outcome that the community quite rightly expects, but I think we are absolutely on the right track towards doing that.

Now are there things that we can do better? Obviously there will be things and I would hope that this Committee could actually make recommendations about things that we can do better. We are not saying that we have all of the answers; we are saying that we are actually heading in the right direction. If you look at what is in this submission, there is a huge amount of work being done in Redfern and Waterloo, there are achievements, even down to simple things like it was only a matter of six months ago that you had shooting galleries on The Block. There are not any shooting galleries on The Block now. That was a coordinated effort between the Government and--

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: When did you last visit?

Mr RAMSEY: I last visited only a few days ago.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Would front line police agree with you that there are no shooting galleries on The Block?

Mr RAMSEY: Yes. I mean--

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Dr Gellatly, would you agree with that?

CHAIR: I think we should let Mr Ramsey finish.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Dr Gellatly, do you agree that there are no shooting galleries on The Block?

CHAIR: Mr Ramsey was asked a question. I think we should let him finish and then Dr Gellatly can continue if he wishes.

Mr RAMSEY: I am not saying there is not shooting up going on in and around The Block. There absolutely is. In Caroline Lane there is currently shooting up, there would be--

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: A shooting place, not a shooting gallery.

Mr RAMSEY: Well, no. If you look at the houses on Eveleigh Street that were being used

as shooting galleries for a long period of time--

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: They had to be demolished by the housing company.

Mr RAMSEY: Yes, and--

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Because you guys did nothing about it.

CHAIR: Mr Pearce, it is impossible for Hansard to pick up more than one voice at a time, but I think we have quite a long time with these witnesses, you have time to ask questions, and I think we should let Mr Ramsey finish his answer and then ask a question.

Mr RAMSEY: Just to pick up on the issue that we did nothing about the shooting galleries that were demolished by the Aboriginal Housing Company, we did a lot of work in terms of actually assisting the Aboriginal Housing Company to demolish those houses. That was part of the anti-drug strategy. We relocated the older resident who was living between those two shooting galleries so we could actually demolish them. It took 12 months of negotiating or longer to actually find a house that she thought was suitable. Again, none of these are quick fixes. Part of the anti-drug strategy was about cleaning up of needles in and around The Block. There has been a far more aggressive clean-up of needles in and around The Block by the area health service, they have brought in a contractor to actually do that.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: When was that?

Mr RAMSEY: That has been going I think for nine months, but I will take that on notice and confirm the date that it actually started and get that information back to the Committee. There has been an aggressive clean-up of needles in and around The Block. That does not mean we have resolved the issues - we have not - but we are working towards resolving those issues in Redfern and Waterloo and I guess the other issue is that it is easy to focus on The Block. There are drug issues in both the Redfern and Waterloo communities and we need to address those issues. The anti-drug strategy, and flowing on from that now the substance abuse strategy, is actually part of that approach to deal with those issues.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Dr Gellatly, is the \$7 million that was allocated for a three-year period going to continue? Is this programme extending?

Dr GELLATLY: There is a commitment to continue the programme. The final details of the budget for the next few years are being finalised now, as part of the budget process, but there will be continuing support for this programme.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: What level of accountability will this programme have?

Dr GELLATLY: I am sorry, I am not clear. Accountability to whom?

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Well, that is what I would like to know. How is the project held accountable for achievements? Are there goals; are there quantifiable results that we can have a look at that indicate that they have achieved their objectives or not?

CHAIR: We have hopped to question 19.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Just while we are on that--

CHAIR: Well, just a minute.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: It is just that it has been raised.

CHAIR: No, we had a question from Ms Parker. Her first question was specifically our

question 19. The witnesses have brought answers with them. You can ask your question after Ms Parker.

Dr GELLATLY: Well, I think I have already answered. The money committed so far was 1.768 in 2001-2002; 2.9 in 2002-2003 and 2.9 in 2003-2004, and a number of the initiatives that have been funded have already been mentioned: The street team, family intervention support, establishment of youth services, police mentoring - the list goes on and there are a number that are listed in the submission.

In terms of accountability, it is like any programme that there is budget allocation for within the internal management of the Premier's Department. We are looking at what the work plan is for the next year and then what the proposed outcomes are. Obviously in these types of social areas it is often very difficult to get detailed outcomes that you can quantify. We are looking at experiences right across the board in terms of community solutions strategy that goes to 26 other locations around the State and often, particularly in the early stages of these projects, it is about process and about getting things started, I mean the infrastructure side. It is a long-term plan. So it is not very easy to come up with quantifiable things in terms of the wellbeing of the community and come up with defined performance indicators and say that they are wholly attributable to the project. There is the normal internal management accounting, we have a chief executives committee that looks at this project, and there is the obvious public accountability through the community and what goes on that way.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Has this project achieved its performance indicators?

Dr GELLATLY: Yes. Being responsible for the allocation, I am satisfied that the project has started the process and has worked down towards achieving long-term infrastructure for the Human Services Review, improving the services. I mean there are clearly issues about improving service delivery in the area and just the general capacity of the area and community buildings.

CHAIR: We have questions that we have asked on most of those areas.

Dr GELLATLY: Yes.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: I wanted to ask on the \$7 million funding, if I could have a breakdown, how much of that goes to salaries, how much of it goes to actual projects, how much of it goes to communication strategies, advertising and that sort of thing?

Dr GELLATLY: We can give you a detailed breakdown and provide that on notice.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: And performance indicators as well, please.

Dr GELLATLY: Yes.

CHAIR: I am not sure whether Mr Ramsey had finished his answer to question 1.

Mr RAMSEY: Could I just clarify the question about when the clean-up of needles started: The aggressive clean-up of needles around The Block was in December 2002.

CHAIR: Mr Ramsey, are you happy if members ask other questions at this stage? I am not sure you finished, but I think a lot of our later questions do overlap.

Mr RAMSEY: I am happy, yes.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Dr Gellatly, you have 380 pages. There was a riot 10 years ago and a riot now. Can you give us any insight as to why, with all this happening, there has been a riot and the Bureau of Crime Statistics figures still seem pretty bad?

Dr GELLATLY: Michael is on the ground there and can probably give a better answer

than I could just in terms of this project that we are coordinating, and clearly it only started in 2002.

Mr RAMSEY: I think there probably are a number of factors that have contributed to the riot - some of them are historical factors - but the police, in the investigation that they are currently undertaking in terms of the riot, would have some greater clarity about the actual incident itself. In terms of the relationship between the Aboriginal community and police, there have been significant improvements I think in recent times, since I have been in Redfern and Waterloo, in the relationship between the Aboriginal community and police. They have worked really hard, despite the riot, to develop a constructive relationship. The police mentoring programme and the focus they have actually had around that in terms of trying to develop a strong relationship with those young people in Redfern and Waterloo I think is an example of that. The fact that the police are setting up advisory structures and so forth I think is a fair example of the improvement in the relationship.

When you look at the demographics of Redfern and Waterloo, you are talking about trans-generational unemployment, you are talking about two and three generations of families who have never known employment; you are talking about a high level of people with disabilities; you are talking about a high level of public housing. There is a whole range of factors that impact on Redfern and Waterloo, so those cannot be resolved quickly. Having said that, I think we are starting to head in the right direction and I think the indications that we get from talking on the ground to both individuals and to organisations is that there is a recognition now, that people see that a change needs to occur and want to be part of the process of bringing around that change, and that goes right across the whole area.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: You have not actually speculated on why there was a riot. You have made a lot of general sociological points, but Tony Vinson makes the point in his submission from the Ignatius Foundation that all the areas of social disadvantage which have been producing areas of crime in New South Wales for generations, if you like, are still producing those areas, so in localised areas where crime comes from it could presumably be locally addressed with more resources and yet they have not changed, and while that is going on you cannot give us any answer as to why the riots happened a decade since the last ones?

Mr RAMSEY: No.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Can you say it is likely that it is (1) drugs, (2) social disadvantage, (3) whatever? I mean could you not give us any insight at all?

Mr RAMSEY: No.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: There is nothing in this document that actually gives us any lead as to why you think there were riots.

Mr RAMSEY: I think there have been a number of factors that contributed to that. As to the specifics that led to the riot, no, I cannot give you any insight as to that. I was there on the night of the riot at the request of the police and I talked to Aboriginal community leaders, and particularly the Aboriginal women who worked very hard to try to resolve the riot on the night, and there was clearly a disparity of views about what caused the riot. The issues around the death of the Aboriginal young person need to be addressed in terms of the coroner's inquiry and we clearly cannot talk about that. The police are actually doing their investigations about the riot, what led up to it and so forth, and that will inform, I guess, part of that process, but clearly there were social issues that had impacted on Redfern and Waterloo and would have been a contributor to what happened there.

If anybody can suggest how we actually resolve the problems overnight, we will be the first ones to take that on board, but I do not think there is a quick fix to it. We have to work really hard because the problems are so entrenched. Unless we can create real opportunities for people in Redfern and Waterloo so that they have the same opportunities for employment, education, et cetera, that anybody else in the community has, we are not going to change the issues, which is why we are focusing on employment, which is why we are focusing on infrastructure, which is why we are focusing on creating a human services delivery that is effective. Without doing that, we will not have

changed anything in five years' time, we will be in the same position we are in now. We have to do a radical restructure and that is what we need to work with the community to do.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Do you think the fact that drugs remain illegal is a major factor in this? They have closed the drug houses, but they have effectively done that by demolishing them. I mean they are only going to move across the road, aren't they?

Mr RAMSEY: I honestly cannot express a view on that.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Why not?

Mr RAMSEY: Because I am not an expert on it. My role is to lead a partnership project team which is coordinating across agencies and to facilitate those agencies delivering outcomes. I would suggest you actually address those issues to the appropriate agency, which is the department of health and the area health service.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Perhaps we should talk to Dr Gellatly about that. Is the continuing illegality of drugs a major factor in these riots?

Dr GELLATLY: As Michael said, we are not experts in drugs, but clearly drugs are a major issue there and it is not just local use, it is the other trafficking and use that goes on, so that is about all that we can say, that it is a major issue, but there are experts.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Is the fact that they are illegal and thus extremely lucrative to the people who get people on them a major factor? In the sense that prohibition did not work, is this not a major factor prolonging the social problem: The money involved in drugs?

Dr GELLATLY: I do not think we can comment on a broad policy issue like that.

The Hon. IAN WEST: As the department responsible for looking at the outcomes that are listed in the submission at pages 3 to 5, can you give us some as to the community involvement and community ownership of the projects in the Redfern/Waterloo project?

Dr GELLATLY: If I could ask Michael to do that as he is involved in it in a daily basis.

The Hon. IAN WEST: In other words, has the community been involved in the measurement of the achievements of the projects listed?

Mr RAMSEY: There have been a number of ways that we have attempted to engage the community in the Redfern/Waterloo Partnership Project. Every government agency has its own mechanisms clearly for consulting with community and engaging with the community and those mechanisms feed information through to the partnership project. These are on a formal basis to an informal basis, because of the things that we have to make sure we do is not over-consult the community, because that is one of the criticisms that exists from the past. So what we are hoping is to avoid duplication, but having said that, we are also trying to balance the issue about getting regular community input with not trying to make the whole process so bureaucratic that you do not get to hear the voices of everybody who should participate.

We have established a number of mechanisms for ongoing community input into the Government's work. That ranges from the establishment of the Community Council, which is made up of individuals and key people in the community who can advise the project. It includes setting up a task force, the drug and alcohol task force, for example, the families and children's task force, the youth task force and so forth.

It also involves the convening of media forums and so forth as things arise. Over and above all of that, we have also undertaken an extensive range of community consultation and I will work backwards - the Human Services Review in itself is a consultation process. We want to hear what the

community thinks directly about its own human services system. Is it effective? Is it doing what the community wants?

There has been extensive consultation as part of the Human Services Review, consultation around the RED strategy. There was extensive consultation around the RED strategy so in fact there were four community information feedback sessions in June last year, there was one community services agency meeting, public meeting, a total of 520 people participated in those community information sessions around the RED strategy. We received 104 feedback forms, which was responsible for about 20% and there were approximately 250 people who attended the public meetings. Given that you are only talking about 15,000 people living in Redfern and Waterloo, that is a significant number of people who participated.

On top of that we also had a community engagement consultancy which was to pick up some of the issues to test what the community sought for itself. That occurred in March 2003. That was testing out how the community saw itself then, so we could actually then in two or three years' time come back and see whether or not there has actually been significant change in the way that the community perceived and had we achieved those outcomes that the community wanted. That collected a whole lot of information which informed the strategies that we have put in place now.

There was another consultation, Building of Better Futures for Our Children, which led to the creation of the Intensive Family Support Service, the Mudgin-Gal In Home Family Support Service, the Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Family Support Service. That was in September 2002. There was a Pathways to Prevention consultation, that was led by Attorney-Generals, to look at the type of program which was put in place, which was funded through the Commonwealth, to actually keep kids at school.

On top of that there was a new consultation around the streets. There was an extensive number of consultations, both specific and general.

The Hon. IAN WEST: I am more interested in the issue of ownership, community ownership of the project in the sense of a feeling that not just a question of consultation but in terms of measuring outcome, that the community actually feels some ownership of the project. Is there any development taking place along those guidelines?

Mr RAMSEY: I think that is probably a hard question to answer in the sense that there would be some people in Redfern and Waterloo who have a strong sense of ownership of the project and the way we are going and there would be other people who do not have a sense of ownership of the project. Part of that probably acknowledges the fact that our communication strategy has not been as effective as it could have been, as the Director General said, and we do acknowledge that we need to do some work around that.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: It is pretty hard to spin the facts here, isn't it?

Dr GELLATLY: If I could just follow on, the issues you have raised about community involvement in the actual determination of the performance indicators and so on, it is something that we would certainly be prepared to look at, the progress, as we progress with the project.

The Hon. IAN WEST: In terms of measuring achievements, community ownership would be a major indicator.

Dr GELLATLY: Yes. They are not easy. There is a fair bit of literature around, I was just looking at a framework for community solutions on projects, but we are doing some work on it, in an evaluation framework, because clearly it is needed, but I have just got to say, it is not easy.

Mr RAMSEY: That benchmark the community gave to the consultancy was to actually test out some of that sense of ownership within the community and we need to come back to that again to see whether or not the community feels a stronger sense of ownership as the project does more and more stuff.

CHAIR: Because Mr West has obviously raised in general terms our community consultation questions 5 and 6, could you just answer that specific one we had about the RED strategy that was the options that were due to be taken for consultation in February/March. We understand that has been delayed. Could you just inform us of the new timetable for that process of community consultation and I think that probably rounds off that bit about consultation.

Mr RAMSEY: In May 2003 the then Planning New South Wales but now the Department of Infrastructure, Planning & Natural Resources, engaged Elton Consulting to conduct community consultation around the RED strategy. They also brought on board Cox Richardson to develop some principles that we could actually then look to to form the development of the RED strategy. Those principles were built around creating a sustainable town center to serve the Redfern and Waterloo areas, to capitalize on the Redfern stations new support and revitalization of the station and town precincts, providing a safe and activating public domain, optimizing social and economic opportunities of government landholds ensuring the safety of public life, fostering community identity and strengthening community cohesion.

Those principles were to be used to develop a series of options that we could then take back to the community. We had intended that that would be in February/March this year. Some of the issues, in looking at the options, are more complex than were initially thought and so it has actually taken us longer to develop those options because what we do not want to do is go back to the community with options that are not implementable, so we only want to go back with real options that can be implemented.

I guess our intention is that sometime within the next couple of months the Government will review the options that it can take back to the community that are implementable and the community will absolutely have a say in those options and what they think about those options. Flowing out from that, once the actual RED strategy as such is actually developed, it will also go back to the community for consultation. So this is not just one bite of the cherry, there are a number of processes in place to ensure the community actually owns the outcome over time.

Dr GELLATLY: Could I just add, page 73 of the submission outlines the Redfern/Waterloo Community Council, which is a formal part of the project that allows the community to have representation and feedback.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Dr Gellatly, part of our frustration is the Government's submission, it is very lengthy but does not deal with specific details. Who made the decision that there would be a whole of Government submission?

Dr GELLATLY: As the guidelines that approve a submission going before a Parliamentary Committee have to be cleared by cabinet office before it is submitted. We discussed it with them. Given the number of agencies involved, we agreed that the best way to do it would be to ask for them to submit their submissions to us and then we would go through the normal processes or what has been the practice.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: That is a form of censorship, surely?

Dr GELLATLY: No. You can call the individual agencies to come and give evidence obviously if you wish, and there has been no attempt to do that.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: They have to adhere to the memo that is circulated about checking off with the relevant Minister first, Circulation 99-52?

Dr GELLATLY: As has happened over the last twenty years in public sector of New South Wales.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Why couldn't we have their submissions up front in the first place? Some of them apparently were sixty pages long. There is nothing in here that is sixty pages

long. The section that deals with DOCS out of a 400 page submission is less than ten pages.

Dr GELLATLY: You obviously can have access to the submissions we have got. We are trying to present that there are a--

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Did you say we could have access to the individual submissions?

Dr GELLATLY: Yes.

CHAIR: Can I just say, the Committee has in fact, I think on the motion of Ms Parker, actually written to the 26 or 28 agencies inviting them to give us the material or any other information.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Could you take that on notice to provide those individual submissions?

Dr GELLATLY: Certainly. The attempt was to try and present the whole picture given the complexity of it, to try and fit the bits together.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Who did you talk with before you came to this inquiry about Redfern and the riot, etcetera, who did you consult with?

Dr GELLATLY: When, about what happened on the night or what happened generally?

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: In your presentation to this inquiry, the Government submission, who have you been discussing Redfern with?

Dr GELLATLY: Over the years I have discussed it with many people, the local people.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: The Premier?

Dr GELLATLY: Not on this particular submission, no.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: The Minister?

Dr GELLATLY: No, I have not discussed it personally with him.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: The front line police?

Dr GELLATLY: In the normal process of this project over the years I have obviously discussed it with the Premier and proceeded forward. In terms of this particular submission, Michael is the one I have talked to about it. We have got no riding instructions. We are just giving the evidence as it has come in, as we have obtained it, as we put our own particular inputs into it. I have not discussed it with the Premier or--

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Have you sought expert advice on any of the issues, policing, for example?

Dr GELLATLY: Well, clearly we have included the police's submission, there are parts of it there. They are appearing and they can give their evidence as they will this afternoon. I have not spent time discussing it with because clearly it is their role to present their own evidence.

The Hon. KAYEE GRIFFIN: Mr Ramsey, you were talking about - it may actually have fitted in with the community consultation process, but you started to talk about some of the feedback of residents was that they were noticing differences and I think at that stage other questions came in. I would ask you if you would like to make some further comment about how this feedback is coming back to you if it is not by the community consultation process?

Mr RAMSEY: We get feedback in a range of ways. Literally my staff and myself are available to meet with and we do meet on a regular basis with anybody who actually asks to meet with us. We are up and around Redfern and Waterloo and around The Block on a regular basis. Our office is located in Redfern and we are fairly accessible. So we get feedback both formally and informally. Some of the feedback we get is through the formal processes which we take but the level of informal feedback is also significant. As late as yesterday, one of my staff was actually meeting with some residents from Darlington who wanted to actually raise some issues about Redfern/Waterloo and provide some feedback. It is literally as simple as that. Plus, as I said, and I emphasise, we have formal processes but we also have informal processes that people feed into. I think nobody would say, would be silly enough to say in fact, that the issues in Redfern and Waterloo are resolved, but I think people are starting to see some change occurring, so even some of the groups that we deal with who I know are going to appear before this inquiry have said that the situation is better than two years ago. Is it what they would like it to be now? No, but it is better than what it was two years ago. That is the sort of feedback we are getting, that things are slowly improving, but we have a hell of a long way to go.

The Hon. KAYEE GRIFFIN: You also mentioned that Barnardos are providing intensive family support services. Could you expand a little on what is happening with those services or what type of services are being provided at the present time?

Mr RAMSEY: The Barnardos Intensive Family Support Service was established out of that consultation I was talking about. One of the things that came out of that consultation and one of the things which had also been raised by agencies was that those families at the hard end, if you like, there were not services that were dealing with those families, so the Department of Community Services, who can actually go into more detail with you when they appear about the rationale behind the approach, identified that we needed to have a different way of delivering that service, so they established what they called an assertive outreach programme. We attach brokerage money to it so they have the capacity to be able to provide practical support for people while they are engaging with them, and by "assertive" it may mean they knock on the doors of families on a regular basis, two or three or four times a week, to try to get those families engaged, to try to build up a relationship with those families. That cannot be done in isolation. One of the things which I think is significant is that no one agency has the capacity to meet the needs of some of these families in Redfern and Waterloo. There has to be absolutely a case coordination approach to deal with it. What Barnardos is doing and the type of service that it provides needs to be complemented by some of the other programmes and services on the ground, for example, the street team. They need to work hand in hand. The Mudgin Gal in-home service works hand in hand with the Barnardos service, so each of them is actually picking up a different path and delivering on that integrated plan around those families that are involved.

The Hon. KAYEE GRIFFIN: That probably leads to question 7: Would you care to comment on the adequacy of government and non-government agencies currently providing services in the Redfern/Waterloo area? I think that fits in with some of the things you have just said.

Mr RAMSEY: I guess the Human Services Review recognised the fact that the existing service system did lack some flexibility and it lacks the capacity to meet the needs of the community and that is not achieving the best outcomes for the local communities. As we have said, there are issues around coordination, inadequate accountability, duplication, under-resourced services, under-trained and non-viable services, so really the driver for the Human Services Review is to try to create a human services system that is flexible, which moves away from the programme type approach that has existed in the past to one which is responsive and has the capacity to meet the needs of those communities. The review specifically involves the assessment of the level of need in Redfern and Waterloo, giving us clarity around how we might best meet that need, mapping the breadth of the existing service network, examining the spread of the services, including the appropriateness of their location, assessing the quality of services being delivered against the level of need, identifying service gaps and then identifying strategies.

There are some themes coming out already from the preliminary work that has been

undertaken by the consultant, consultancy consortium. As I said, they have identified at this stage 100 organisations providing 210 services. In your submission I think it says 195, but since we have put the submission in there have been another 15-odd services identified. The other thing which is worth mentioning is that one of the things they are identifying is that a lot of these services are very small and, by their definition of "small", are less than one full-time equivalent employee but up to 1.9, so we are talking about those services being really small.

The other thing about the human services system is to recognise what we are trying to do is to deal with it in an integrated way, so we are looking at not just funded services, we are looking at services which are provided by the Government, contracted or licensed, so we are saying all of those things make up the whole human services network. If all of those things are intended to address the needs in these communities, they need to work well together, so whether it be the domestic violence worker located at the police station or whether it be the intensive family support services, a clear linkage between those types of services.

The things that are coming out so far in the consultation process are: The need for people to work together. There are issues around the future of young people of all cultures, particularly where they are disengaged from their family, community, culture, education and employment. The effectiveness of services has been raised. Maintenance of social mix in the area, cultural opportunities for all cultures, the need to increase safety and build on interests of young people to reduce vandalism, the need to create real employment. One of the critical reasons why it was important to get the Commonwealth involved in this process was that the Commonwealth has a primary role to play in terms of employment and if we do not create employment we are never going to resolve the problems in Redfern and Waterloo. The need for an effective community development and strengthening strategy is also one of the other things that is coming out, but there are some strengths that have been identified in the preliminary work such as that there is a broad range of services, so, although there are 210, there is actually a broad range of services. There are a number of services already doing good partnerships. There is a willingness to acknowledge the need for leadership. There is a shared, common set of issues identified through different groups, although they may have different views on how those issues and needs may be met. There is a common view about the core issues. There is a desire to build partnerships across many of the organisations and the community has expressed a strong desire to keep the type of social mix that currently exists. They see this as the strength of their community and they want to make sure that that is retained in the process. I think what we will end up with is a human services system which the community, in one sense, owns and can actually drive but which has the flexibility and breaks away from the solo type approach that has existed in the past.

CHAIR: We do have other questions on the Human Services Review, but we also have members waiting to ask questions, so we might go to Mr Pearce and after that Dr Chesterfield-Evans, but I would ask Committee members to bear in mind that some of these questions relate specifically to our terms of reference and we do need to get them on the record.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: I would like to ask Mr Ramsey a couple of questions. Can I just confirm that we will be extending into the break period?

CHAIR: Yes. We did actually discuss that before. We simply will not be breaking for morning tea and our next witness has been informed and is quite happy for us to try to make up the time we lost before.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: And I had understood that you were going to inform the room of the Committee's decision to call Mr Huxtable on 8 June.

CHAIR: Mr Pearce, I will clear the room if you--

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: No, I had understood--

CHAIR: Okay, sorry, everybody out again.

(The Committee proceeded to deliberate)

Evidence resumed

CHAIR: I welcome everyone back and apologise for the Committee having to have the break. Dr Gellatly and Mr Ramsey have agreed to remain until 11.45 and we have been in touch with Mr Moore and he is content to start at 11.45 and we will go on until 12.30 and cut short our lunchbreak.

Could I again remind the media that any footage, sound or video, after I asked that the room be cleared may not be published or you will be in contempt, so could I ask you to make sure that your coverage stops.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Mr Ramsey, you indicated the complexity of the issues at Redfern and Waterloo and we understand the complexity. My concern is that the Government ought to be able to get its own act together and the fact that you come here and have to revise the number of agencies that are involved in the area does not fill me with confidence that really the Government knows what is going on, but what I really have a concern about is that your boss has come here and had to make a submission in which he says that there is poor or non-existent coordination of government and other agencies, duplication, under-resourcing, under-training, they are non-viable, and we are here because there was a riot. Your job was to coordinate these agencies. I would have thought you were for the high jump. The way this Government works, you identify someone who is going to take the blame. You have had a three-year \$7 million programme designed to improve this coordination and here we have to have the Government come along and tell us about non-existent coordination, duplication, non-viable programmes.

Dr GELLATLY: I think there are a number of wrong assumptions in that question, Mr Pearce. One is that it is not just government agency services we are talking about, it is Commonwealth Government, it is non-government agencies.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Well, was his job to coordinate these or not?

Dr GELLATLY: Can I just comment? The information that was provided on the number of services is being obtained by, I think it is Disney Consultants who are doing the Human Services Review.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: But you still do not even know how many agencies are there.

CHAIR: Mr Pearce, can we let him finish.

Dr GELLATLY: It is currently underway and as they have not presented us with a report yet, in the interests of being up to date for the Committee, we have updated the information they have given us from when the submission was prepared until we appeared today. It is not a matter of not knowing.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: You did not know when you did the submission. You did not have the right number then. You have had nine years to try and work out how many agencies are there.

Dr GELLATLY: I do not think you are understanding. It is information from the people who are doing the review provided us with that information.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: You do not even know how many agencies are there?

Dr GELLATLY: We are not talking about agencies, we are talking about number of services. If you read the submission it outlines that in quite a bit of detail.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Mr Ramsey, I would really be getting that C of V together

though, because it is the way that the Government reacts.

Dr GELLATLY: I think that sort of comment is inappropriate.

CHAIR: I agree with Dr Gellatly, your imputations--

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: It is not imputations, it is a commentary on the success or otherwise of the program.

CHAIR: Could I ask you to withdraw the question and I would ask you to ask your question in a way that is more respectful of our witness.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: I have asked the witness to explain to us how he comes to be running a program which has a role, you said it before, that is to co-ordinate all these agencies, and you do not even know how many there are. You have been there two and a quarter years. You are not an expert and you are making comments on how many shooting galleries there are, how many drug houses there are.

CHAIR: Mr Pearce, if you have a question.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: That was the question.

CHAIR: Well, it did not sound like a question. Dr Chesterfield-Evans, do you have a question?

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD EVANS: I will give Mr Ramsey an opportunity to respond.

CHAIR: I do not know. Mr Ramsey may respond if he wants but it seemed to me it was not a question but a diatribe, but if he wishes to respond, that is up to him.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: So, he has not got a response to that?

CHAIR: He does not seem to be able to get a word in between your rudeness, quite frankly.

The Hon. Dr Arthur CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Does Mr Ramsey want to respond? I do not want to interrupt him if he does.

Mr RAMSEY: Actually, I will respond in a broad way, in saying that you can actually look at any other area of New South Wales and if you can tell me how many services exist within those areas or tell me anybody who can identify those number of services, I think you would be surprised. Why it has taken so long and why we actually employed Morgan Disney to do this Human Services Review is we are literally burrowing down to identify every single service that is in Redfern/Waterloo so we can develop a very effective, a very responsive human services system. That is an entirely new approach. This is not just a simple little exercise of creating a directory of services.

This is actually literally going out and talking to everybody to find out exactly what exists. In terms of the difference between 195 and 210, the consultancies are still going on. The consultancy is still going on. The consultancy has not been completed. We said quite clearly in the Government submission that this will not be completed until the end of June and we think absolutely within that context we will tell you exactly how many services exist, what the strengths of those services are and we will be able to then tell how it has to be restructured.

If you want to bring about systemic change, it cannot be done in an adhoc piecemeal way and so the Human Services Review is intended to bring about systemic change.

The Hon. Dr Arthur CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Mr Gellatly, I want to pick up a point you made before about other agencies. You have collected 32 agencies to produce this report. We have written to them saying if they would like to put in a further submission they may. Now, if they do put in that submission, does it then have to go to the Minister before it gets to us?

Dr GELLATLY: Yes, in accordance with usual procedures.

The Hon. Dr Arthur CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: This usual procedures is the muzzling of public servants from time immemorial, isn't it?

Dr GELLATLY: No, it is part of the standard process that is applied by all governments since I know about 1984, about the processes that were granted permission to the Parliamentary inquiries..

The Hon. Dr Arthur CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: I mean, you have got whistle blower legislation so that honest public servants can speak their mind in the public interest. We now have a Committee trying to get to the bottom of this issue and still an honest public servant cannot give their honest opinion without the Minister checking it.

Dr GELLATLY: There is a process for evidence before Parliamentary inquiries, the role of public servants who have actual information, to present that information, it is not to offer political judgments or policy.

The Hon. Dr Arthur CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Can any public servant tell us anything they want without interference or without discrimination to their career in the future?

Dr GELLATLY: There are guidelines that I think you know are available that require - I can go through them - oral evidence before committees--

The Hon. Dr Arthur CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: I just want you to say yes or no to my question. Can any public servant give us any information they want - the Government has said it is committed to this inquiry - in the interests of their point of view to get to the bottom of this without discrimination?

Dr GELLATLY: They can do this in accordance with the existing guidelines about how public servants should give evidence to Parliamentary committees and that is give evidence of a factual nature and should refer questions seeking opinions or judgments of a political nature to the Minister.

The Hon. Dr Arthur CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Aren't opinions or judgments part of a sensible person's evidence?

Dr GELLATLY: In terms of what they are employed to do and their job for each agency and then appearing before this Committee, this is not about political judgments.

The Hon. IAN WEST: Could the Director General or Michael Ramsey advise us what involvement the Government has had in the redevelopment of The Block?

Mr RAMSEY: The Government's involvement in the redevelopment of The Block primarily comprises the provision of assistance to the Aboriginal Housing Company. You would be aware that the Aboriginal Housing Company owns and manages the land and the properties on The Block. It is not owned by the Government, it is in private ownership, so the determination of what happens on The Block is very much within the control of the Aboriginal Housing Company. Much of the Government supports to the AHC is provided in kind. However, within that it is also important to recognise that the AHC currently receiving funding from both the New South Wales and Commonwealth Government but the in kind support that we have provided to the AHC in terms of redeveloping The Block has been to establish a high level of cross agency working groups to oversight the Government's involvement in the proposed redevelopment, that involves the Premier's

Department, the Government architects, the Department of Aboriginal Affairs, Landcom, Aboriginal Housing Office and so forth.

We have asked the Commonwealth to participate in the process of redeveloping The Block and to work with the Aboriginal Housing Company and ourselves to redevelop it because the reality is that one of the key elements of the proposal, if we hope to develop Redfern and Waterloo, is to actually develop quality affordable housing for Aboriginal people on The Block.

The Block is actually, as you are all aware, on the national estate. It is important therefore that there be a continuity of Aboriginal people living and controlling in and around The Block. So the AHO, Aboriginal Housing Office, they have been working with the AHC to improve and manage planning and reporting, as well as management and tenancy of properties. We have commissioned Resitech, an arm of the Department of Housing, to undertake an evaluation of The Block. The primary reason for that is just to ensure that the AHC acts a property valuer and it is included in the financial statement.

We have had the Government architect review the AHC's design proposals for the site and develop three preliminary concept plans. In our submission - I cannot remember the page I am sorry - we have given you the design proposals that the Government architects have come up with.

We have asked the Government architect to take those design proposals further and to actually look at developing them in a form that consultation can actually occur, so that the broader community and Aboriginal people living outside of The Block can actually have a clear understanding of what the AHC is proposing.

We will also commission an audit of the AHC's financial position to look at how to actually strengthen the capacity of the Aboriginal Housing Company to manage complex projects.

That audit will look at the AHC's business viability now and into the future. It will look at actions that can be taken to strengthen the financial position. It will also look at an implementation strategy.

Our work that we have been doing with the Aboriginal Housing Company has been ongoing and we are committed to supporting the Aboriginal Housing Company and the Aboriginal community in terms of working to redevelop The Block. The concept plans are on page 220.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Part of our frustration today I think is a lack of tangible results out of the partnership and the whole of Government submission, it is hard to come up with some quantifiable results. I just wanted to draw your attention though to comments by DOCS in the report and it does talk specifically at page 173 about four families in Redfern and Waterloo who have averaged about forty child protection reports to DOCS each. They include things like domestic violence, neglect, physical and sexual abuse, criminal behaviour, drug and alcohol, mental health issues, etcetera. It then goes on to say that they are assessed in level 3 reporting. I would just like your comments on whether that would be a level 3 in any other community - level 3 being a lower level than level 1 or 2.

Dr GELLATLY: You would have to ask DOCS that question.

CHAIR: We can note that to ask Dr Shepherd and the DOCS people when they appear.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Perhaps you can take that on notice.

CHAIR: Do you want to save it up for DOCS?

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: I will ask DOCS plenty of questions when the time comes. I would also like you to find out at the same time how many children have been taken out of some of those horrendous situations. We are getting lots of reports of children wandering the streets at all hours. Could you please come back with some tangible quantifiable results in terms of action taken

with children in the area and a comparative of those with other communities.

Dr GELLATLY: Yes.

The Hon. KAYEE GRIFFIN: I am not sure who wants to make comment on the question I am about to ask but what are your views of the relationship between police and the local community in the Redfern/Waterloo Aboriginal community?

Mr RAMSEY: In the New South Wales Government submission in chapters 14 and 21 in particular, we look at issues around the relationship between the police and the Aboriginal community and it actually addresses within there policing strategies that would impact particularly on the Aboriginal community.

Historically there are particular issues of problems between policing strategies and needs of the Aboriginal community and these are not easily overcome. However, I am of the view that there has been a significant improvement in the relationship between the police and the Aboriginal community in recent years. This is particularly the case since the appointment of the new local area commander and crime manager, which has led to an implementation of a significant increase in the level of pro-active policing, particularly around The Block and Redfern railway station.

It is important to add that the anti drug strategy which clearly has a police component within that, was actually developed in response to the Aboriginal community, amongst other issues from other people, about the need to target drug dealers. The police absolutely have been responding to issues that the Aboriginal community has actually raised with them.

The work that the Aboriginal community and police have actually undertaken together in and around The Block in terms of the targeting of the drug houses I think shows an incredibly good level of co-operation. For instance, when the police actually arrested people within the site in Louis Street, the Aboriginal Housing Company then actually took significant action to actually seal up that house so it could not continue to be used as a drug house.

Again, I think that kind of thing shows a good level of co-operation between the Aboriginal community and the police in terms of addressing the drug issues. The feedback we have received from the broader Aboriginal community is that there has been an improvement in the relationship with police and that they welcome a reduction in crime in the area.

As I said earlier, the police have initiated a number of initiatives to engage with young Aboriginal people and to build a relationship with the community, and in chapter 10, pages 103 and 104, we have identified some of those. That includes implementing employment opportunities through the community development employment programme. Some members of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community participate in a three month training and work experience programme with the local area command. The scheme is focused on developing members of the Aboriginal community so that they can actually fulfil the role of the Aboriginal community liaison officer. Two Aboriginal employees have already completed this programme and one is currently participating. ACLOs assist the police to resolve issues affecting Aboriginal people and improve Aboriginal-police relationships by improving channels of communication. Police are also providing Aboriginal cultural awareness training for staff at Redfern. There is a New South Wales approved training course. Police are also actively involving Aboriginal elders to address Redfern policing on training days on various issues. Police have also agreed to establish a senior advisory committee of Aboriginal community leaders to advise police in terms of how they can better foster an effective relationship between the Aboriginal community and police. Complementing that, they have agreed to establish an Aboriginal youth advisory committee to specifically look at issues around young people and policing. All they are waiting for is literally the Aboriginal community to identify the appropriate membership of those committees and the Redfern local area commander has worked with the Aboriginal coordination team and identified the need to have procedures in place about the management of Aboriginal issues within the local area command and they have put in place a draft set of standard operating procedures outlining activities to be undertaken to improve relationships between the ACLOs, the police and the Aboriginal community, and also procedures to be

implemented in the event of a critical incident involving an Aboriginal person.

So in relation to working with Aboriginal young people and building a police relationship with them I think that the fact that police have actually put a considerable amount of time in trying to engage these Aboriginal young people and children shows a willingness on the part of the police and the Aboriginal community to see how they can work together. The Redfern local area command is also liaising with the Hillsong church group with a view to developing further activities for Aboriginal young people from the area and there is regular interaction between the Redfern youth liaison officer, the Aboriginal community liaison officer and the police citizens youth club, so in recent times the Redfern local area commander has referred five young people to the police citizens youth club as a priority one. Three of those are from The Block and two come from Waterloo. Two of these young people were involved in the Redfern riot and I guess that shows you the complexity of some of the issues in terms of the young people within the area. The PCYC is currently working with the Police-Aboriginal Coordination Team to provide better services to the local community and build better relationships and my view is that the local area commander, the crime manager and senior police officers in the Redfern and Waterloo area are committed to developing an effective and harmonious relationship with the Aboriginal community and a relationship which actually ensures that the police respond to the needs of Aboriginal people living in Redfern and Waterloo effectively.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Professor Vinson has said in his submission that the crime statistics have not improved much and Constable Huxtable in his submission and in an article in the weekend press has said that the police, having reported a lot of activity, give up reporting it any more, which suggests that if anything they would be higher than as reported. Is it the Government's position that the crime situation in Redfern is improving?

Dr GELLATLY: I think based on the statistics that are on page 235 of the submission there is an indication that, over the period recorded there, certainly some of the figures peaked in 2001, so based on the quantitative evidence that is available I think that is a fair statement. Michael might want to add something from a local perspective.

Mr RAMSEY: The BOCSAR statistics that are in our submission were specifically developed for Redfern, Waterloo, Darlington and Chippendale, so we could get an accurate indication. I think the indications are that there has been an improvement in crime statistics, but I would seriously suggest that the Committee explore that with the police when they attend.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: You do not think there is under-reporting in police due to fatigue?

Mr RAMSEY: I am not aware that there is any under-reporting, so I just cannot comment on it.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Are you able to tell the Committee the total amount of money that is directly put into Redfern and Waterloo?

Dr GELLATLY: So you are counting police, health, DOCS, juvenile justice and so on?

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Yes.

Dr GELLATLY: I can take that on notice.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Can I draw your attention to page 280 of the submission and Strike Force Coburn, which was established by police. To your knowledge, has that strike force made a preliminary report?

Dr GELLATLY: I am not aware. The police will be attending this afternoon; it would be a question for them.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: I am interested in the comments that you have in the report

that some preliminary information from Strike Force Coburn had been provided.

Dr GELLATLY: Those words were provided by the police themselves.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Do you have any further knowledge of the issues that are indicated there, that there was a problem with lack of equipment for the police at Redfern?

Dr GELLATLY: No, I do not have any further knowledge.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: There is also a comment, which I assume is from the police, that there was an issue of awareness and preparedness?

Dr GELLATLY: Yes, that is straight from the police submission.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: So that will be one of those documents that you will be giving to us on notice?

Dr GELLATLY: Yes.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: How long will you take to provide those?

CHAIR: We will have to discuss that globally.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: There are all sorts of commentaries around at the moment that the police knew that something was going to happen; there are comments that Channel 7 was parked out there all day and various other things. Do you have any further knowledge as to the state of the intelligence that the police had?

Dr GELLATLY: No, clearly that is a matter for police.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: I note in the submission comments relating to the mobile needle and syringe service.

Dr GELLATLY: What page?

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Page 255. There are comments relating to the failure of the New South Wales Government to respond to community concerns regarding relocating the service permanently. Do you support those comments?

Dr GELLATLY: The words "perceived failure of the New South Wales Government"?

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: So the New South Wales Government has not failed?

Dr GELLATLY: It says "perceived failure". Michael has been involved in this very complex issue. I think it is illustrated in the submission that there are strong views from the community and from the public health professionals there are strong views about the public health aspects and the transmission of HIV and Hep C, so there are strong views on this issue from both sides and it is a very complex one, but Michael might like to comment. He is certainly aware of the perceived failure.

Mr RAMSEY: In providing the submission for the Committee for its deliberation we have made very clear what the community views are, what the police views are, what the views of the health professionals are, and that is to show the divergence of opinion, and they are strong opinions about the van, whether it should stay or be relocated. The Government is committed to relocating the van to Hudson Street at the time when the health imperatives can actually be met because it is a balancing act in terms of public health and community safety. We have already responded to some extent to the community concerns, so the relocation of the van from 3 to 5 p.m. Monday to Friday was

to respond to the community concerns that the van should not be located on or around The Block while children were home, so that relocation occurred and the van moved to Hudson Street. We have put in place an assertive clean-up, as I mentioned earlier today. There has been a reduction in needles distributed in the period 2001-2002, although there has been a gradual increase since early 2003. There has been information strategy to inform the community around relocating of the van before we moved it from 3 to 5, but it is important to look at the overall community objection. The community says that the van is not servicing only Aboriginal people, and that is very true, it services a mixed group of people. They are of the view that there is an unreasonably high number of needles and syringes being handed out. They say that it perpetuates the image of The Block as being a drug centre and there is a view that it has a honey pot effect and so forth, but unless we can be assured and health officials can be assured that by moving the van it does not put at risk the health and well-being of Aboriginal people it would be irresponsible to move it, so we are committed to moving the van but doing it in a responsible way that balances public health and community safety.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Is it a needle exchange or is it a needle give-away? How does it operate? Do people have to bring needles, is it an exchange programme, or do they just get dispensed, and who do they get dispensed to?

Mr RAMSEY: I would suggest you ask that of the department of health officials when they attend.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Are you aware of claims that there are at least 20 needles at a time dispensed to drug dealers?

Mr RAMSEY: Yes, I am aware that people have suggested that needles are being handed out, but the area health service has been working very hard to reduce the number of needles being handed out to people. However, they also have to adopt a responsible process so that, for instance, at times when the needle service is not there, people have the capacity to have clean needles, so it is quite legitimate from a public health point of view that you do hand people a number of needles so that they can shoot up outside of those hours, but again please explore this.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Twenty at a time?

Mr RAMSEY: I am not aware of the actual numbers, but I am sure that the department of health and the area health service will be able to give you those particulars when they attend.

The Hon. IAN WEST: Do any of the strategies in the partnership project specifically relate to the local Aboriginal community, and I am particularly interested in your comments in light of the Vinson statement on the top of page 139 in regard to employment?

Mr RAMSEY: There are a significant number of initiatives that State Government agencies have put in place to address the issue and provide support to Aboriginal people in Redfern and Waterloo. I am happy to take it on notice and give it to you.

CHAIR: That may be best.

Mr RAMSEY: There are a significant number of strategies, including a number of new services, which have been established. For instance, the Department of Community Services has established the Yallimundi intensive family based service, which is to provide support for indigenous families with home-based support. The street team clearly has a role to play in terms of working with Aboriginal young people and children. The Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care has the Alleena Aboriginal Home Care branch, so there are a lot of strategies and we are happy to come back to you with details about that.

CHAIR: Could I conclude by thanking you very much for coming, and particularly for sitting through the two lengthy breaks that we had. We have some questions you have already said that you would take on notice. I flagged when you returned that we might ask you to take the written questions which you have not had a chance to address on notice as well. The Committee officers can

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confirm what we think is outstanding. Would two weeks from today be a reasonable time to ask for that material?

Dr GELLATLY: I think most of the questions we have undertaken to provide answers on are okay within two weeks. The only one that could be a bit longer is the question about resources right across the Government. That might take a little longer.

CHAIR: There are also some documents, so questions and documents. If we could say two weeks from today, subject to your explanation that you may need longer on that one in particular and others.

Dr GELLATLY: Yes.

CHAIR: Thank you both very much for coming. As you probably know, this Committee almost always brings the lead agency back later in its process of hearings because we usually find that we have things that have been raised by other witnesses that we need to put before you, so expect to come back. We will probably need more days of hearing than we have so far scheduled.

[Motion by Mr West to accept tendered documentation: Agreed]

(The witnesses withdrew)

(Short adjournment)

CHAIR: There has been some uncertainty about some of the details concerning the remaining program. Most of the program up to 8 June is actually on our website. In most cases the witnesses are named. In some cases where the organization is named, where there are some witnesses who are yet to confirm their ability to come and then there is another group of witnesses - Dr Shepherd has been given as an example this morning - where he and DOCS are coming but we are going to have to schedule an extra day for them to come.

In terms of the list of witnesses, for anyone who wants to know where we are going after here, you can look at our website and we will have other details available.

GARY MOORE, Director, Council of Social Services of New South Wales, 66 Albion Street, Surry Hills, affirmed and examined:

CHAIR: We have sent you some questions and you had a chance to discuss those with the Committee staff. Do you want to make any further opening statement or shall we treat our first question about the overview of the role that your organization, particularly in relation to Redfern/Waterloo plays, as part of your opening statement?

Mr MOORE: Could I just make a few general comments and then try and pick up the rest from our submission and other comments in response.

It is no accident that Redfern and Waterloo are some of the most studied and some of the most promised to neighbourhoods in New South Wales. I think as was mentioned in the last evidence, Waterloo remains as one of Sydney's most disadvantaged communities, as to Tony Vinson's 2004 work, whilst Redfern exhibits enormous growth and extremes in income over the past ten years.

The future wellbeing of Aboriginal people and the future of The Block are critical but they are not the only issues to be successfully addressed if Redfern/Waterloo is to have the prosperous social, economic and environmental future. Crime in Redfern/Waterloo has a relationship with long term unemployment, drug and alcohol and mental health issues, early school leaving, domestic violence and child neglect and abuse. There is an urgent need notwithstanding Redfern/Waterloo Partnership Project for a Government business community vision and commitment which reaches common ground on major urban renewal in Redfern and Waterloo with a ten to fifteen year horizon, not a two to four year horizon.

This form of urban regeneration in our view has to retain social mix in terms of families, incomes and cultures, it has to create and direct economic and employment opportunities to existing and new local residents. It does have to improve human services provision, but most importantly as part of the process, has to generate civic pride and community use of open space in the public domain.

CHAIR: As I said, our first question invited you to give us a brief overview of the role of your organization, particularly in relation to Redfern/Waterloo.

Mr MOORE: NCSS is the peak body for the non-government community services sector in New South Wales. Broadly across the State that means that we have a relationship directly or indirectly with just over 7,000 not for profit community services' bodies. We have, certainly numbering fifty to sixty, organizations that operate in the not for profit sector in human services in Redfern/Waterloo as our members and in terms of the development of our submission to this inquiry, we engaged in some significant conversation with our members who operate in Redfern/Waterloo. I also am a member of the Redfern/Waterloo Community Council, which operates as an advisory body to the Redfern/Waterloo Partnership Project.

Since being appointed to that position I have made it my business to talk with our member organizations on a regular basis.

CHAIR: What do you understand to be the major areas of social disadvantage in Redfern and Waterloo?

Mr MOORE: I guess rather than sort of spending a lot of time in terms of going through the various intricacies, you will be very well aware of Tony Vinson's work in looking at the thirteen indicators of the social disadvantage and three indicators of assets and community resilience and adversity. I mentioned at the beginning some of the key things that do strike us, is that you do have inter-generational long term unemployment, that is both with the indigenous and non-indigenous population and a rapidly aging population, particularly in Waterloo, frail aged and people with disabilities but lower income, both public tenants and private tenants.

The indigenous community within Redfern and within Waterloo experiences significant disadvantage in terms of educational and health outcomes, job outcomes, its incarceration rates, etcetera, etcetera.

So, in some respects these two suburbs, these many communities within these two suburbs, have some of the strongest examples of social disadvantage that we have in urban New South Wales.

Can I also make the point that particularly in Redfern with recent developments pushing things from the City and from the east that we have a growth of middle and higher income residents. It has been going on for the best part of ten or twelve years, with Green Square pushing from the Sydney airport end at the boundaries of Waterloo. We also have some pressures there and some emergence of newer middle and higher income people, the merging of the two areas and so over time, irrespective if nothing was to happen in Redfern and Waterloo, presumably the composition will change.

CHAIR: I will just ask you maybe that third question but you mention in your submissions, there have been many attempts over the years to alleviate those problems that you have just enumerated. Could you elaborate a bit on your submission and give us your views as to why you think these attempts did not succeed terribly well.

Mr MOORE: I think certainly in the human services areas, the initiatives taken over the years by and large have been pretty piecemeal. They have involved perhaps some slightly standard public sector health and community services from time to time. They have involved the non-government sector, growing its service space and its capacity but never in a very terribly linked or integrated sort of manner.

At the same time the level of need within the communities has in fact grown over the three census periods that data is available for, so simply the lack of an integrated approach, the piecemeal approach dealing with an issue that arises into the public arena and community's arena for a short period of time, have meant that the effectiveness of what has been done certainly has not, in our view, met the demands and the needs of the population.

I will talk in a little while about some perspectives and parts of it, the different population groups that are in Redfern and Waterloo. I think in many respects too the large public housing area in Waterloo, as with many public housing areas, as public housing has policies of Government, Commonwealth and State, they move essentially to only house the most marginal in public housing and move away from income mixes and a social mix type that you have had an experience of further disadvantaged being entrenched within that area and it is only really in recent years some appreciation about that and some attempts in a much broader sense to engage public housing tenants, to engage the community in trying to group their own we have seen perhaps some new movement.

As I indicated before, within the indigenous community, once again I think there have been resources provided to certain indigenous organizations, arguably never to the right amount and possibly even the right sort. Also within the indigenous communities, it is certainly NCOSS's understanding from indigenous organizations that we speak to that once again, I guess lack of integration and collaboration that occurs between organizations has also meant the effectiveness of the total has perhaps been far less than what one might have hoped.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: How long have you been with NCOSS?

Mr MOORE: 1995 I became Director of NCOSS and then for two years from 2001 to late 2003 I worked in the Premier's Department and I have been back at NCOSS for twelve months.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: What was the nature of your work in the Premier's Department?

Mr MOORE: It was involvements with looking at strengthening communities and place management projects across New South Wales.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Have you had discussions with anyone prior to coming today to present?

Mr MOORE: No I have not and I made sure deliberately that I did not in terms of the subject of this inquiry.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: You have talked in your submission a great deal about the huge number of organizations and you have talked about the co-ordination of those organizations. We are trying to get a handle on it ourselves and no-one seems to know exactly how many government and non-government agencies. Would you like to make some further comments on that level of co-ordination between the State and Federal, Local Government and non-government?

CHAIR: It is basically question 4.

Mr MOORE: It is probably fair to say that the non-government and government sector have grown in Redfern over 25 years in a way which has not been aligned and has not had the opportunity to form the most effective network. It is also I think fair to say that many of the non-government organisations that have been there for a long time were pioneers in what they were doing, developed service models if they were direct service providers or community development activities often on the smell of an oily rag, and some would indicate, and I do not have the figures - as you heard previously, nobody currently has the figures available - to judge to what extent the gaps in service provision actually operate. The Human Services Review that the partnership project is sponsoring hopefully might provide some indication of that.

There are lots of small organisations in Redfern and Waterloo which are very, very focused on their specific local populations, local client groups. Many of them have significant difficulties with back office viability, capacity to operate effectively, and part of that is because of the historic low funding levels, part of it is because of, I think, historically and culturally, not being able to effectively grow their capacity and deal with the change in environment in which they are operating.

The last thing that I would want to suggest by making these comments is that we simply go and slash and burn and start again, or the next thing that I would not want to suggest is that we find more effective organisations from outside and bring them in. The issue here is about looking at evaluating what is there and the hard stuff of getting organisations on the basis of various clients that they work with to agree about how they case manage, how they work together, how they collaborate in the back offices, et cetera. Those things can only be achieved, in our view, when people can see the benefits of it. It will not happen if guns are held at people's heads to make that occur.

So I guess my view is that it should be possible - hard, but possible - to work within the broader framework of what I have alluded to in terms of a 10 to 15 year roll-out in Redfern/Waterloo to get reform of the sort that I think we all recognise.

The other thing to say is that there are, I think, new needs that have emerged in new parts of the community which are not satisfactorily dealt with. That includes people from some smaller non-English speaking background communities in Redfern and Waterloo and at the same time, as I mentioned before, the ageing of the population, particularly in Waterloo, and the mismatch of demand

and supply in terms of community care services in particular is a really significant issue that in fact will simply get worse very quickly if we do not do something in that arena.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Is it your view then that if there was an agency or an organisation providing a good result in another community we should not bring that in? Is that what you are saying?

Mr MOORE: No, what I am saying is that you should look at the practice, wherever the good practice is, but what you do is you start from the position of negotiating with the network of services that you have. The Government does have the purse strings and it also has regulatory responsibility in that regard, but I would have thought that the best way to move forward is to try to negotiate a partnership, to use some of those levers in terms of helping to do that. The area could do with an integrated community services plan. Whether or not what is going on in terms of the review at the moment will get us to that level, I cannot comment, I just do not know, and we are certainly informed from NCOSS both positive and negative views from our member organisations about that.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: We have heard today at length about the \$7 million Redfern/Waterloo Partnership Project. Have you got some comments to make about that project, its effectiveness and how it meets the needs of the local community?

Mr MOORE: I think a number of the strategies that sit inside the project are heading in the right direction, but can I make two comments to begin with: If you compare the commitments we make here in terms of this sort of project and in other communities and compare them to, say, the UK, Canada or the US where we are talking about not incomparable inner-urban communities, there we have commitments out of the 10 to 15 years mark, so we have governments making that level of commitment, well beyond electoral cycles. Secondly, the general starting point in the more successful projects is about a proper engagement with all the stakeholders about what the vision might be rather than perhaps starting from an issues management perspective, a top-down management of problems which occurs, which in this community has been around for many, many years and which was in fact part of the catalyst for the Redfern/Waterloo Partnership Project. So those two things in my mind are missing from what we currently have. Having said that, I think one of the interesting things about the project is that it is well beyond simply human services provision. It is talking about jobs, affordable housing, redevelopment of public open space. That is the sort of urban renewal which it is in my mind and NCOSS's mind that we need, but the commitment is going to have to be for much longer than the \$7 million, four to five years, in my view. One of the things that is going to have to be looked at is who governs and manages this across into the future. Should it just simply be Government, State Government and City of Sydney Council or should we be looking at a rolling out of a new governance model of this type of activity. There are lots of examples, once again in northern Europe and North America, community development corporations, regeneration authorities, et cetera, which of course are jointly managed by government, business and community interests. The sustainability of what has been started here is critical.

I am sorry that I cannot give you more detail. I am aware that there are some things in the early phases of that project where there are some improvements in terms of the direct service provision being made, the numbers being seen. The other thing to say to you is that the Blair Government in the UK made a 10 year commitment, a 10 year evaluation, from which you would not see results in terms of significant improvement of well-being in the community until the second half of that 10 years at least, and we are into, what, year three at Waterloo.

The Hon. IAN WEST: I am not sure whether you have answered this or not, but, if not, could you briefly outline the key elements of your plan for urban regeneration?

Mr MOORE: Our view is that one of the first and foremost things for residents in Redfern/Waterloo is to have a sense of being party to owning a vision about what the place is going to look like in 10 to 15 years' time and not just have the sorts of gentrification, urban consolidation pressures which are on the area simply roll through. There are real requirements for both the State Government and the City of Sydney Council to be engaged with the community broadly and the business groups about, well, are we looking at keeping 30 percent of this community for low income

housing in 2010 or 2015, and that needs to be talked about up-front now, not just alluded to from time to time, because one of the difficulties that is currently besetting, I think, from my position on the community council for Redfern/Waterloo Partnership Project, is a level of distrust in services that numbers of people in the indigenous and non-indigenous community have because some of the key questions are not on the table in the open, so the first point about it is actually getting and agreeing a vision which has generally been the basis of some successful urban renewal projects elsewhere in this country and overseas.

I do think the second thing is that there needs to be a shared ownership of the management of this process through. It is not good enough to have Cabinet ministers and CEOs from agencies focusing on Redfern and Waterloo and where the real decisions are getting currently made. I do think it is time to be looking at a Redfern/Waterloo development corporation which would have the two levels of government that are most directly affected, community and business representatives, both indigenous and non-indigenous community.

There is no doubt we do need a significant employment and economic development strategy as part of this that ensures that, if we are going to have 30 or 40 percent of people who are going to be lower income groups into the future, they get their share of job opportunities and training opportunities. We also, in our view, need to ensure that when the Premier says to business: It is open gateway at the south CBD all the way through to the airport, that is said within a framework of what Redfern/Waterloo is going to be retained at rather than simply open slather business: You move in, you do what you need to do, you may or may not employ local people, and consequently coming from Green Square and the airport, the other way.

I do think that there is a component of this plan about redevelopment of The Block which is going to require public and private finance. NCOSS does not agree with the Government when it says it is not going to contribute funds to the redevelopment of The Block. Having said that, it is our view from all of the discussions we have had with a range of indigenous groups and non-indigenous groups that the Aboriginal Housing Company in Redfern currently does not have a capacity to deliver on the redevelopment of The Block, so a condition of public funding and any private funding is going to have to be some agreements about long-term affordable housing for Aboriginal families, transparent and fair tenant selection and management processes and a much more accountable way of doing things because it has been put to us by numerous people for quite a long period of time that part of the problem, part of the really tragic circumstances at The Block at the moment, has been the incapacity over now a number of years to deal with a sensitive, appropriate redevelopment approach within the indigenous community.

They are some of the ingredients, but I think the key one is a sign at the front end from a vision of the stakeholders and then the Government's arrangements forward over that time not simply being Government doing to.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Could I ask the simplest question? There was a riot 10 years ago. Why has there been a riot now?

Mr MOORE: Part of the picture I have tried to paint is that in fact not much has changed. A tension has occurred, a few things happen and we all turn our backs and the place just goes on. I do think, and certainly from the views put to us by many people in that group, indigenous and non-indigenous, that since the mid-1990s we have seen a decay of the housing, we have seen some significant difficulties within the indigenous communities between different families and different groups and ownership of the indigenous organisations - I will not be popular for saying that, but that is what is put to us in terms of trying to progress forward in any sort of coherent way. A perfect environment in which both alcohol and drug abuse can flourish.

I have not said anything about policing as yet, but I do want to say something briefly about that. It is also put to us constantly that Redfern - and Waterloo, but Redfern - numbers remain below level on establishment and have done and continue to do, but one of the real issues is that it almost appears that the place becomes a dumping ground for inexperienced police who stay there very short periods of time. I know you have police coming after lunch and it would be interesting to know, but

certainly it is put to us that the capacity to build relationships, the capacity to do things in proper police community relating ways, particularly in this community, are undermined by the significant rotation of staff, by the fact that there are a number of positions that are not filled. The Aboriginal liaison officer position, as I understand, five times has been moved over in recent years but we are talking here about the front line police, not discussing specifically other positions and that is a real concern about how you ever hope to promote strong active police community relations in these sorts of communities and build some trust and some social and some social capital etcetera along the way.

But I have to say to you I think it is at the end of day, things happen, we deal with the crisis, we put the issues back in the box and hope that they do not occur again.

The Hon. Dr Arthur CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Is the government doing the right thing, and if not, what should it be doing differently?

Mr MOORE: As I have indicated, I think the elements of the Redfern/Waterloo Partnership Project, a lot of them are right. I am must not sure if they can enjoy support and the engagement of the community and all of its facets whilst the project is being operated in the way in which it is and that is why we think that it is time to suggest, not a brand new start, but to have a re-engagement about a negotiation and shared vision and the government takes its place alongside rather than runs a roll out of a renewal program over a long period of time.

It is possible budget-wise to make forward commitments of the scale that we are talking about. I am not suggesting that the Government go out and do that because we do not know what the scale is, that is part of this process but it is possible to do it. As I say, it has been done in a number of jurisdictions in other countries.

The Hon. Dr Arthur CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Is the illegality of drugs a major driver of the problems there and could a change in drug policy lessen that?

Mr MOORE: I do not think I can give you an answer on that in terms of a competent answer. What I would say is that the questions about the underlying circumstances if seriously dealt with I think are the way in which we might get a far greater achievement rather than looking at the legality or illegality of drugs.

It is also important to think in policing terms about just how the intelligence operates and how the relationships with the various key individuals in the community operate as well too, both in Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal organizations.

The Hon. Dr Arthur CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Vinson said there was no change in the level of unmet need, there is an increase in unmet need, you would agree with that?

Mr MOORE: Yes, the data certainly suggests that, both his data and looking between 1996 and 2001 census. As I said but, there are some changes occurring on the edges of both these suburbs, particularly in East Redfern and particularly at the south end of Waterloo.

The Hon. Dr Arthur CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: But surely the gentrification of adjacent suburbs makes the disadvantages more stark, does it not?

Mr MOORE: Well, it certainly does but I think that also raises concerns and fears of the members of the community of many residents about what is going on, are we simply going to be another Green Square or another City West or whatever.

The Hon. Dr Arthur CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: And obviously a housing policy which does not just concentrate of the very poor to create in effect a ghetto, would make a big difference?

Mr MOORE: I think you are well aware that the bodies like NCOSS and others have been arguing now for a long time about much more sound and affordable housing in mixed developments. Once again, on a place base focus, a location focus, if we were to involve ourselves in a ten to fifteen

year sort of roll out, we might have a chance of actually getting that in Redfern/Waterloo with retaining the social mix.

The Hon. Dr Arthur CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: And presumably you would not suggest the high rise such as the tower blocks even if there were structural programs going with them?

Mr MOORE: No I think most of the evidence suggests, I know there has been some new work done there and you need to talk to people about that, but the evidence in our minds still suggests that is not the greatest form of housing design to encourage effective social relationships and community wellbeing.

The Hon. Dr Arthur CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: The architecture is a major determinative of that, because obviously higher density is less expensive in terms of the overall suburb.

Mr MOORE: Sure but there are also other ways which one can be looking about delivering affordable housing and design and adaptable housing and if I could just make that point, that particularly once again in Waterloo, the scope, the aging population that is there at the moment, is a significant issue that is not very much talked about and given this inquiry is looking at those suburbs and the interconnections, the question of adaptable housing and private rental and public housing is really significant for that part of the world.

The Hon. KAYEE GRIFFIN: You made mention of long term unemployment, do you have a view at the moment about whether or not the services that are provided for people at the present time to either come back to work after long term unemployment or even the training programs that may be available in the Redfern/Waterloo area are sufficient at the moment and if not, what was your view about what should be there?

Mr MOORE: The evidence and the views that we have suggest that there is a misfit between the job network provision that is federally funded and the State based provision in Redfern/Waterloo. Now I am aware that the partnership project has had some engagement with talking between the two levels of government about that. I am not sure where that is up to, but that is one of the key things about getting the Commonwealth funded employment placement providers in the State on which vocational training deliverers are much more reliant.

I think there has been for a long time and there remains significant sort of opportunities in terms of infrastructure development and indigenous employment within Redfern/Waterloo and also to other disadvantaged groups in the labour market.

There are some, as I am aware of, some interesting but small examples of some good apprenticeship and traineeship arrangements but there needs to be much more than we have got and if we are going to have a significant urban renewal program, if that is where we can head, those opportunities will grow a lot further.

In addition, in terms of the reminded work of the Aboriginal employment strategy in Moree, Narrabri, and other River towns in the north west in their recent capacity to be able to leverage employment opportunities in the retail area and the hospitality industry and Redfern/Waterloo will have the retail and hospitality future. There is no doubt in my mind about that. The question is can we make sure that significant numbers of indigenous and disadvantaged non-indigenous people get a career path through that, come from this area. Those opportunities are there today.

I would also want to say that in the same way once again as the Premier and others have talked business about looking at investment in these areas, the opportunity would be to look at I guess the employment growth strategies and training support strategies around the investment and that would be my view, part of any private partnership, about The Block redevelopment and also other commercial attractions in the area.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: In relation to the partnership project, you said something about you thought it almost needed a new start and it would not get support while the project is being operated as it is. The Government should take its place alongside not roll out of projects. Can you just be a bit more specific about what you see as the shortcomings or different directions that are required for the partnership project?

Mr MOORE: Part of the problem we see at the moment is that there is a lack of support and engagement by all the sections of the community in the partnership project. A number of people tell us that it is still regarded as top down do to rather than an engagement with. I am not saying that is not an incredibly difficult thing to overcome, of course it is, and in any urban regeneration and community projects find their way forward without the same criticism, however we are at this point in time, if we could put some of the key things on the table and look at and negotiate an agreement between the stakeholders about what the future of this area is at this time, then we would have a better chance of overcoming those things and I have mentioned before I think, the Government's arrangements has to have much more joint ownership than what they currently do.

It is not that some of the things funded in the Redfern/Waterloo Partnership Project are not worthwhile pursuing, it is the framework in which they operate and how we are going to sustain it are what count.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: You have said that you did not think the Redfern Housing Company had the capacity to deliver redevelopment and again I do not want you to be critical of individuals, but what do you mean by capacity, what areas do you think they are lacking in?

Mr MOORE: It is interesting listening to, which I have not heard about some of the more recent things the project has been doing with the AHC in terms of design and housing management capacity. Can I say, it has been said to us quite frequently that if you like the interfamily, the difficult politics that exist between different groups within the indigenous community are not reflected in the board of the Aboriginal Housing Company. It is perceived by a number of people on that score perhaps not to be able to deliver for the broader issues of the population. That is one side of the equation. The other side of the equation is that it is so difficult to think that any community housing organization, the Department of Housing trying to manage a major redevelopment, it needs the kind of skills and the resource base we think that it simply does not have.

As Mr Ramsey mentioned previously, it is Aboriginal land, the Housing Company has control of that land and there is no way that I am suggesting any of that should change but if we are going to bring this forward and in our view not come back here in ten years' time, as was suggested by Mr Chesterfield-Evans, we actually have to make a break on this. So the AHC has to be part of it, it is not the only part of it, that is what I am saying.

CHAIR: Can I ask you one of the areas of responsibility it seems to me that you have not addressed is the role of the Federal Government. You did, to some extent, on the question of unemployment but in terms of housing money and urban regeneration money is it possible to do much of this without a Federal input?

Mr MOORE: Certainly one would need two things, Commonwealth re-engagement in public housing and social housing funding, which has been diminishing significantly for a number of years, since the mid 1990's. So yes, the Commonwealth does have a role in terms of regeneration on the housing side, directly in spending, which is not occurring at the moment.

There are certain Commonwealth funded services in the human services area and the child and family area which are going indirectly to Waterloo and which need to be effectively aligned and I know that the project is talking about some of those things but I think there are varying views within the community about how long that is happening. The Commonwealth does have some specific program areas and responsibilities.

There are arguably, as we all know depending on your point of view about affordable housing and property and taxes at both levels, some responsibilities that potentially sit there. For

example, this is one of these areas where strongly we would have thought like many other locations, especially with some changes to things such as negative gearing at a Federal level, land taxes and stamp duty and in fact could encourage some affordable housing investment in the low to modest level, and that is part of what, in our view, has to be looked at.

So the Commonwealth has a real role to play, there is no doubt about that but I do think the two levels of Government, Federal and State Government, have the principal governmental responsibility.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: I just want to clarify something you mentioned before about the police in terms of building relationships. I note in the Government's submission when I turn to the family community section, large blocks of that were in fact on the ground surfaces been provided by police, trips to Nippers, taking the children away on camps and those sorts of things that you would not normally expect front line police to be offering. It seems to me that they are making extraordinary efforts to build relationships and so I was surprised by your comments because they seem to be picking up on things that other agencies are not doing.

Mr MOORE: The comment I was trying to make is that - and not negating what you have said - the suggestion that is made to us by many in Redfern/Waterloo is that that is some police, not all police, and that there are significant numbers of police in terms of their capacity, their experience, their maturity, their abilities that perhaps do not share and do not fall into groupings particularly of older and more mature police that in fact are responsible for some of the activities that you have talked about. Now that is what is being said to us, both from indigenous and non-indigenous community groups in Redfern and Waterloo. I am not saying it is not happening, but it is perhaps not happening broadly enough, strongly enough or on a regular enough basis.

I take your point about the issue concerning other forms of liaison community building, whether through sport or art or in services, and that certainly is an area that this Human Services Review hopefully is also looking at in terms of where those responsibilities fall or do not. In other words, whether that network of agencies is engaged in this sort of activity.

The Hon. IAN WEST: The issue of engagement, the issue of ownership and the issue of some dignity usually stem from employment, from the ability to provide your own food, clothing and shelter, et cetera. Getting back to the important question that was asked by the Honourable Kayee Griffin, the issue of the amount of money being put in to create employment, am I being over-melodramatic in saying that, unless we solve that, the rest of it is superficial?

Mr MOORE: I do not know if I would use the term "melodramatic", but it is critical and I think, once again, if you look at the good urban renewal stuff that happens elsewhere you see employment and economic development strategies as a core part of making a difference long-term. It is not just about trying to fix human services, it is much broader than that.

The Hon. IAN WEST: And that really relates to the very important question of the interrelationship between JobNet and Federal and State funding?

Mr MOORE: That is part of it, yes.

CHAIR: We did not ask you specifically about your suggested Redfern/Waterloo community foundation and we were going to ask you to give us names and details of some of the more successful models, but, if you would prefer, the staff can talk to you later since we have held you up so much and we are over time now.

Mr MOORE: Yes.

(The witness withdrew)

(Luncheon adjournment)

MARCIA ELLA-DUNCAN, Chairperson, Regional Council of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commissioner, affirmed and examined:

CHAIR: You have received some questions and had a chance to discuss them. Do you want to make any sort of statement before we get to the first question?

Ms ELLA-DUNCAN: I think the first thing I would like to point out is I am feeling very under-prepared for today. My main concern is that I do justice to the community's concerns that have been expressed to me.

I have an extensive history in criminal justice, so I think a lot of my comments will be informed by my knowledge and experience in that area. I would also like to take the opportunity, if I may, to make further submissions if there are areas that perhaps I need to provide further detail on.

CHAIR: We usually ask witnesses at the end. Sometimes you will have taken something on notice but we will usually say to a witness at the end that we may get back in touch with you if we have got further questions and of course it works both ways. If you want to talk to us again or provide us with further information, you can do so in written form or talking to the secretariat or even if necessary, you can talking at a hearing like this again. It is pretty flexible.

I guess we thought it would be sensible to start by asking you to give a bit of an overview of the role of your organization and particularly as it relates to the Redfern/Waterloo area.

Ms ELLA-DUNCAN: As I mentioned just a minute ago, ATSIC's primary role is to provide policy and advocacy on behalf of the Aboriginal community to improve social and economic development. Most people here would be aware that around April last year there was a significant change to the way ATSIC operated and we have separation of powers. In the previous financial year Council administered or distributed funding to Aboriginal communities based on regional priorities. We managed about five significant programs from law and justice to health housing infrastructure and social and physical wellbeing.

The separation of powers meant in fact that Council no longer had the ability to directly direct how that funding was distributed and the executive agency, ATSIS, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Services was born. Effectively in the last twelve months regional councils have undergone a significant change in the way we work.

Previously perhaps we were less concerned with the policy and advocacy, more concerned with funding distribution. Since the separation of powers we have had a very different approach to our work and I am now engaged in a robust policy and advocacy program.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: When you say advocacy, do you mean advocacy on an individual basis or do you mean advocacy of issues or both?

Ms ELLA-DUNCAN: Advocacy of issues. Within that however we have quite recently identified priority communities, which I guess is taking it a little further down to grass roots level. We have nominated two priority areas in Sydney, Redfern/Waterloo and La Perouse.

I might add as well that this is my first term on the Council and I was actually voted in as the Chairperson of Sydney Regional Council the day after the Redfern riots and so immediately had to leave my regional council meeting to attend crisis meetings in Redfern.

I tell you that because in the context of my personal experience as the Regional Chair, I will probably refer almost exclusively to that period since February to now.

CHAIR: How long have you been on the Council itself?

Ms ELLA-DUNCAN: Since October 2002. Should I just go on to the questions?

CHAIR: Yes. Members of the Committee will soon hop in I am sure with things arising out of those questions or things that are quite different but it is often easier to start with exactly what is there and then we all relax a bit and think of things that we want to throw in. The second question is pretty obvious, what are the major areas of social disadvantage for indigenous people specifically?

Ms ELLA-DUNCAN: I would not prioritise these issues, but I would put to you that the issues that Sydney Regional Council believes are the major areas of social disadvantage are health for Aboriginal people, housing for Aboriginal people in the Redfern/Waterloo area, certainly law and justice issues - very topical - and education. However, I would suggest that the priorities are health, law and justice and housing.

CHAIR: If we are trying to actually talk about reasons for social disadvantage being particularly strong in that area, would you nominate a list of reasons?

Ms ELLA-DUNCAN: I certainly believe that for Aboriginal people generally the impact of colonisation has never truly been acknowledged in terms of understanding where Aboriginal people are in the Australian community. I believe that the changing role of family members, predominantly the changing role of men, and the evolution of the role of women in our communities has undergone significant change obviously resulting in a whole lot of issues: The changing role of the man as the provider for the family where now we have generations of people unemployed and the men that have been impacted in terms of their self-esteem that seek a role in the community, frustration perhaps, I think all of those issues certainly impact on where we are now.

I think that there are characteristics about Redfern that are really quite unique to that location, not unique to the Aboriginal community but unique to that location. Typically Aboriginal people in metropolitan communities have extended family networks that cover all of New South Wales and indeed all of Australia. Redfern has an incredibly rich and proud history of dealing with Aboriginal disadvantage, it is the area where our legal services were born, our Aboriginal medical services, our Aboriginal children's services, and they are still critically important to our well-being.

I grew up at La Perouse. I have a very close association with Redfern. In my growing up, Redfern was really quite a special place because of its political history and you could go down to Redfern and go down to The Block and see people that you read about or that your parents talk about and it was really quite an awesome place to be. Over time that has certainly changed, I think, and there are things about Aboriginal affairs and the role that individuals have played in that that have changed, but also I think what has contributed to Redfern/Waterloo is the transient nature of our people, the access to transport, so people are actually coming to the city and coming to Sydney frequently; it is more affordable, so we tend to see that quite a bit. People maintain strong connections with family and extended family networks, so when they come to Sydney for whatever reason they are likely to stay for a while, stay with families, and that can be anything from a couple of days to a couple of years. Redfern has a tendency to be like that. My community at La Perouse tends to have a more stable population mainly because we have at La Perouse what we call a mission or a reserve, which is quite a cohesive and discrete community. Redfern is a bit different in that it is not as discrete, it has people that pass through the community at a far greater rate than other communities.

People also come to Redfern to access the services. I will give you an example: I lived in Ballina for seven years and I had two young children and I would save up my doctor's visits, including doctor's visits for my children, until I got to Sydney to go to the Redfern AMS. It is that strong. The same can be said for our legal services. I recently spoke with a young man from the Sydney area who lives in Queensland but wants to access the Sydney ALS. So that attachment to Sydney, or to Redfern/Waterloo in particular, is for many reasons, the political reasons, the access to services and family issues, and of course I assume that there are lots of other reasons for people coming in.

I think what makes it really difficult is that Redfern has gained this reputation of being the drug capital of Aboriginal Australia. I feel terribly uncomfortable with that notion. It is not consistent with my experiences in the Redfern/Waterloo area, although it certainly has changed over

time. There is still a vibrant Aboriginal community. When I was visiting Redfern immediately after the riots I was struck by the Aboriginal community's commitment and ownership of the issues in that area. They were clearly saying: Yes, there are problems; yes, we need to deal with them; yes, we want to take some control, but any agency, any service provider in the area, will tell you how complex the issues are there. It is no less complex for the Aboriginal organisations in the area and no less complex for the leaders that are in that area and want to be able to do something effective for their communities.

CHAIR: Did you want to say any more about that?

Ms ELLA-DUNCAN: Not at this point.

CHAIR: We will come back to many of those, but thank you for giving us that background. It is something we have not yet heard, certainly we have not heard it today, but we will hear more of it, I know. The relationship between police and local Redfern and Waterloo indigenous communities is a major issue in our terms of reference as is specifically the issue of police strategy and resources, and we will be talking to some of the police witnesses we will have over the next few weeks this afternoon, but we would very much like your comments on the relationship between police and indigenous communities.

Ms ELLA-DUNCAN: I think this is one of those areas that will be heavily influenced by my experiences outside of the Redfern/Waterloo area as well. I would say that the issue of the relationship between police and Aboriginal people has never received the attention that it should have received. I know that there have been numerous attempts, particularly at State levels, to acknowledge and address these issues and the Police Aboriginal Advisory Committee is a good example of the acknowledgment at a State level of the importance of a relationship. However, in my experience, that very rarely translates to positive action at a local level and I understand that there have been initiatives that have recently arisen, either out of the Redfern/Waterloo Partnership Project or other initiatives, that look at improving those relationships and I understand that there is a mentor programme running with police and the Aboriginal community that has had very positive outcomes. I think one of the biggest issues is that there has been no consistent effort to develop and maintain a relationship over time. It only happens when there is a crisis. In my experience, mentor programmes have fantastic outcomes, but they very rarely run for any length of period beyond a year, maybe two years. Typically they are pilot programmes that have phenomenal outcomes. Sometimes they have phenomenal unintended outcomes, but typically the funding for those projects or those programmes ceases after a year or two. I think Redfern is one of those areas where there has been a lack of consistent effort. The effort is put in when a crisis arises and then the effort is discontinued when the crisis abates.

I think the issue of policing and young Aboriginal people in particular is at a crisis point not just in Redfern but in New South Wales and indeed Australia. Particularly leading up to elections there is a very strong law and order campaign, and I will give you an example of the Children's (Parental Responsibility) Act, which I believe was an attempt to make young people safe and an attempt to encourage parents of children to take more responsibility. In my experience, that was one of the most discriminatory pieces of legislation that we have seen in recent times and I think we have seen good examples in Moree where 98 percent of children who were subject to police attention under that Act were Aboriginal. To me, although we are talking about another community, it highlights the really difficult relationship between police and young Aboriginal people.

The policing strategies such as targeting recidivists and known offenders has an extremely detrimental effect on Aboriginal people, and young people in particular, where typically, you know, we have an offensive language charge and if you have one of them you probably have a resist arrest and assault police charge. When you have been called a recidivist and a known offender and you have been targeted, and I know young Aboriginal people who have ended up with those charges for not wearing a helmet on their bike, people with no previous criminal history end up with the trifecta and therefore they are known offenders and they are targeted. I tell you from personal and professional experience, that has a devastating effect on young people, and you do not have to be directly affected. If it is not my child, it will certainly be my niece or my nephew or my cousin, it will

be somebody in my extended network who is directly affected by that. It has taken us 200 years to get to this situation and it is not going to be resolved in two months or 200 days. It will take quite a bit of effort to address that.

My point is that there is a very poor relationship that stems from colonisation. We have a series of laws that, whether they intend to or not, do discriminate against Aboriginal people and my concern is particularly for young Aboriginal people and I think Redfern is a very good example of how that tension builds over time and how it impacts on an individual's behaviour.

I do not know what the coronial inquest is going to find. I have visited the area where young TJ died. I have talked to people out there about what happened and about what it is like out there and, while I am not saying that anything happened, I am certainly not qualified, I do not have all the information, I have no intention of saying that police were responsible or not in TJ's death, but clearly there is a problem around the way Aboriginal people, and young people in particular, view police. If TJ was not being chased, and in no way do I assert that he was, he was riding very fast and he was very scared. I can relate to that. I have had situations where I have been pulled up by police for traffic offences where I have tried to hide in the car and I am a mature adult woman. There is this whole thing about police and the role they have played in our history and we cannot ignore that and we cannot pretend it did not happen. We need to acknowledge that it is like that and adjust our behaviour accordingly.

Critical to that is an ongoing positive relationship between the Aboriginal community and police.

CHAIR: A lot of what you are saying is because it is historical and so deeply rooted, it is almost regarded as the individual efforts and individual performance of the police like the ones you have described in the mentoring program. We have had some evidence already today about the effects of things like a preponderance of young and inexperienced police at Redfern and I guess this could be related to what you are talking about, where perhaps more maturity and more experience amongst police makes it easier to understand the issues you are dealing with. Do you have any comments on that?

Ms ELLA-DUNCAN: Certainly I agree that is an issue and it could well be a critical issue in the Redfern/Waterloo area, but do not be fooled for a minute that older and more mature police are better, because sometimes they are not and sometimes it is the older and more mature police that maintain that culture.

I guess I am sympathetic to the new superintendent that is out there. I think he is quite a genuine person and has made a great deal of effort in terms of working with the Aboriginal community and the Aboriginal community at Redfern/Waterloo itself will say that there are some things that are happening now that are great and they would like to see that built upon. We need to acknowledge that and build upon it, but build upon it over time.

To me a critical question about police behaviour and their interaction with Aboriginal people and young people in particular, is the quality of training. I do not know what it is, I think it is a two year training program for the police at the Academy, I think there is one day of cultural awareness and I do not know about the quality of that cultural awareness but I assume that it contains qualitative historical information, which is terribly important.

It does not really do anything to a new officer that has been posted to a place with a strong Aboriginal community, it does nothing to help them understand the community, the community's history, its dynamics, its politics, how the community solves its problems or how it does not solve its problems. That new officer does not come in and suddenly understand who the elders are in that community and how to identify them. That is all fly by the seat of your pants.

Some Aboriginal communities have developed very solid induction programs for new police and one that comes to mind is the Taree area for example where between the local police and the Aboriginal community they put together a bit of a project that new officers had to complete and it

included visiting the organizations, speaking with them, finding out what that organization's role is in the community, who its leaders are, what the issues are and the officer would have to report on that. I think that goes quite some way to alleviate some of those issues about the young and gungho go get 'em coppers that are coming into our communities.

I think it goes some way to establishing a bit of a relationship and a bit of understanding, not just on behalf of police but of course the community gets to see who is coming in, who they are, what they are.

I cannot over emphasise the importance of Aboriginal people knowing who they are talking to. I have been working in Aboriginal affairs for over twenty years in a lot of difficult areas, criminal justice, child protection, I am an Aboriginal woman and to this day when I go to work for the community either in my capacity as the ATSIC Chair or in a voluntary capacity, the first thing I do is try to open myself to the people that I want to work with, give them an opportunity to know me and to trust me and it is only then that we can go forward and do the work that we have to do, and I think those approaches like that one in Taree provides that opportunity for the community, who are you, where are you from, what are you like, what are your values, etcetera, and it allows a relationship to develop.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Just to go back to some of your earlier statements about Aboriginal children and parental responsibility. You are not saying, are you, that it is okay for young children to be running round the streets in the middle of the night?

Ms ELLA-DUNCAN: Absolutely not.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: You are not saying that it is okay to throw rocks and that sort of thing?

Ms ELLA-DUNCAN: Absolutely not.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: And you would agree that parents need to take some responsibility?

Ms ELLA-DUNCAN: Absolutely.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: And what role do you think the police should play in terms of those children that are in those situations?

Ms ELLA-DUNCAN: Good question. Certainly I think if children are at risk of harm then police have a responsibility to ensure the safety of the child. My issue is not with the intention of the Act but in fact how it was put in place, in practice. An incident that was quite heavily reported on in the Moree circumstance was a young child who had suffered some trauma a little while previously, I think that child had either lost a sibling or a close family member, anyway, in rather traumatic circumstances. The young person had been undergoing counseling for quite a period of time and this day had a counseling appointment, went uptown with aunt, aunt called into one of the shops there, Best and Less to get something, said "Wait out here boy, I'll be out in a minute", aunt came out and the boy was gone. The police had lifted him under the Parental Responsibility Act, returned him to school, which under the Act is one of the places that they can return, and the school said "What is this boy doing here, he is supposed to be at a counseling session."

Those are the circumstances under which Aboriginal young people have to cope and believe me, that was not an isolated case. Unfortunately in my opinion it was more frequently those types of circumstances under which children were removed.

The Sydney Regional Council's priority is children. It is about ensuring their safety and wellbeing and about providing opportunities for children to reach their full potential.

I do not think we have come anywhere near exploring all of the possibilities on how we can

achieve that. I am of the firm opinion that pieces of law will not achieve that. I do believe that we need to encourage parents to take more responsibility for the children but I think that needs to be achieved in a much more appropriately cultural manner.

There is a dearth of family support services and those that do exist often are based around the typical nuclear family model, totally inappropriate to the way we bring up our children. There is a bit of, not paranoia, but Aboriginal people are extremely concerned about the capacity that they have to discipline their children. Kids tell us that we cannot smack them because they will go and tell the cops. Parents just throw their hands up in frustration, they do not know what to do. We go the opposite way and commit violence upon their children. That is not culturally the way we deal with our children and any assertion that Aboriginal communities are violent communities is wrong. I see that is an impact of colonization.

I do not think that we have come anywhere near meeting the needs in our communities in helping our communities become sustainable healthy vibrant communities and I think Redfern and La Perouse are two very good examples about dysfunction and the unwellness in communities and I think that manifests itself frequently in the way that we behave with each other and perhaps the way we behave in the broader community, but throwing rocks is absolutely not something to do.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Thinking about security and safety of those children, there has been criticism of DOCS in Redfern/Waterloo and their role and their failure to adequately meet the needs of the Aboriginal community there and in particular children. What are your views on that?

Ms ELLA-DUNCAN: I must say that in my time as Chair I have had no dealings with DOCS. I have talked to a number of agencies in the Redfern/Waterloo project, the police, housing office, Aboriginal legal services, I have spoken to a number of organizations. I have spoken once extremely informally with a DOCS' officer and not necessarily in the capacity of a DOCS' officer, so I cannot comment on how DOCS behave in the community.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: What are the families telling you though?

Ms ELLA-DUNCAN: What you have heard. Very dissatisfied with the service. DOCS are known for their ability to take children away and not for them to return or to help families.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Does that happen in Redfern?

Ms ELLA-DUNCAN: I know there is a family support service, I think it is Barnardos at Redfern and I am not sure but I think that was an initiative of the Redfern/Waterloo Partnership Project.

When I first found out about that I was astounded that it was not an Aboriginal specific service and I do not mean a service run only for Aboriginal people, I mean a service for families, any families but run by Aboriginal people.

It is clearly an issue in Redfern/Waterloo, but it is an issue for all of Sydney, it is an issue for all of Aboriginal Australia. In my experience family support services can be critical in maintaining the wellbeing of families. They provide a mix of therapeutic and practical support to families and I have actually worked in a family support service and there have been some phenomenal learnings I think around the way we work with Aboriginal families, particularly in counseling or behaviour change context and I think we have seen some good examples of DOCS' funded organizations like the Intensive Family Based Service at Casino, an Aboriginal specific family crisis service, for children at imminent risk of removal. In my experience that is a fantastic service for Aboriginal people. It provides those services in the home at the time of crisis, not afterwards when the police are called and DOCS are called, the kids are in substitute care and Mum's locked up, right at that point when it is going on in the house, those workers are there and they are on call for those families. They do a lot of role modeling, they deliver it in a culturally appropriate way, in that they will work with the family to identify the problem.

One family I worked with, I think we had 36 members of the family and I think it has been evidenced that that program has fantastic outcomes for the community and not only the family but the community where those families are located. Why haven't we got more of them?

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: We have heard today there are hundreds of organizations in the Redfern/Waterloo area. In fact the Redfern/Waterloo Partnership Project does not know how many organizations are delivering services and we have heard at length from the Redfern/Waterloo partnership. What is your view of that project and how effective it is for indigenous communities?

Ms ELLA-DUNCAN: I have only really been involved with that project since February, since my appointment as Chair. I believe that ATSIC's involvement prior to my appointment has been minimal and I will not attempt to quantify that, perhaps that is something I need to get back to you on. My perception of the Redfern/Waterloo project is that it does very little, if anything, for Aboriginal people. One of the first things I was presented with in that forum was a structure chart, how the Redfern/Waterloo project was managed by the community and various people. I have not seen a more complex structure in all my life. Possibly the regional management co-ordination groups can be a bit more complex. What I was struck by as well, not only its complexity, but in the attention given to indigenous issues, for me, it was almost that it was that it was a side issue and it was put to me that there were more Russian immigrants in the area than Aboriginal people and the emphasis should be there. I sort of put it to them I don't see the Russian immigrants rioting up at Redfern station. That was my initial perception.

I have participated in a number of meetings related to the Redfern/Waterloo project. I have not attended one Redfern/Waterloo project specific meeting. I do not know where I fit in that complex structure. I certainly want to be involved, I want to be able to influence that as much as I possibly can on behalf of the Aboriginal community. I am still not clear on how I might be able to do that.

The meetings that I have attended have been meetings that have been convened by the project specifically to address the crisis, the riot and initiatives following from that.

The Hon. Dr Arthur CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Could I ask a question about the cohesion of Aboriginal society. If someone has a problem because they are Aboriginal rather than because they are third generation unemployed white if you like, that may be the origin of their problem but to some extent it gives more hope in the sense that you can reach them through their Aboriginality. Does that mean there is still some Aboriginal awareness as a group which would allow Aboriginal youth to be helped perhaps more easily than dispossessed white fellers, is that possible?

Ms ELLA-DUNCAN: I think the cohesion, particularly amongst young Aboriginal people, is certainly one of our community strengths. I think you might even hear, from the Redfern/Waterloo project, about how complex it is to work with the Aboriginal community in the Redfern area. It is incredibly complex, but it is no less complex anywhere else. There is a plethora of organisations in the area and I think ATSIC in this current financial year actually funds organisations in the Redfern/Waterloo area to the tune of \$5.8 million, keeping in mind that some of those organisations provide services to all of Sydney, not just Redfern.

CHAIR: Do you know how many organisations are funded?

Ms ELLA-DUNCAN: We fund? Sorry, AXIS, I should say.

CHAIR: Yes. We can follow it up with you later.

Ms ELLA-DUNCAN: I have them here: Seven. Some of those organisations deliver more than one service.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Can I ask you about Aboriginal leadership. I mean I think Aboriginals are as diverse as white fellows, you cannot get one white fellow to speak for whites--

Ms ELLA-DUNCAN: We are more diverse, I reckon.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: --so you presumably cannot get one Aboriginal to speak for Aboriginals, but in a sense I see that there are elected Aboriginals, there are Aboriginals who have qualifications and respectability and go in as public servants or whatever, and then there are elders who were, presumably in tribal situations, groomed to be leaders and then found these other two lots were ahead of them. How does that affect leadership? We hear that leadership of Aboriginal people needs to be encouraged, negotiated, whatever. How does that structure affect how you would fit it into a hierarchical structure and how white society would relate to Aboriginal people with credibility?

Ms ELLA-DUNCAN: I think one of the difficulties in working with Aboriginal communities is that by and large the government structures that we have are imposed, and that includes the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission structure, New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council structure - our elected ones, of course - and then of course our organisations, for example, the Aboriginal Legal Service, the Aboriginal Children's Service. Aboriginal people behave in family groups and yet none of our structures enable family groups to have an equal say. It essentially pits an organisation against another and therefore pits families against each other. I do not think we have been creative enough - when I say "we" I mean the Aboriginal community - in coming up with alternative models that satisfy our own cultural needs and our own cultural structures and that can facilitate that ongoing consultation or relationship building. I have a view that we need to talk to everybody, not just a couple and not just our leaders. For example, we hear a lot about the Redfern situation, we hear a lot from people like Shane Phillips, Micky Mundine, Robbie Welsh, all leaders in their own right and all heading up important organisations, but we very rarely hear a young person speak out about their experiences, for example, so I think it is important to speak to as many people as we can and I think that culturally that is the way to go as well.

Because people have different views and because we have different identifiable cohesive groups within our communities, one of the issues has been that service providers and government agencies will not invest in the up-front relationship building. We want to consult about a new policy or a new piece of law, so we will go and talk to somebody, and we will talk to the ALS if it is about a new law or to the Aboriginal Children's Service if it is about child protection matters and we tend to run off and somewhere down the track we will get a pile of mail that contains a report and stuff like that and that is all well and good, and then we sort of toddle off and that is it. We need to have an ongoing relationship where everybody feels comfortable in having a say. Agencies need to invest a considerable amount of time and money and energy into just spending time in the community and developing that relationship with the community. The information will come and we need to encourage as many people as possible to have a voice, and that will only happen when we invest up front, not up the back. It is incredibly complex.

My own community visits following the Redfern riots have been very informal. I have made no attempt to call major meetings because we tend to get the same people. I have sat down and had a cup of tea with people and just talked about the weather, about themselves, about what is happening with ATSIC, and then after time we get down to business. I have found that, in doing that, people have been actively seeking me out to tell me their views. I have gained far more understanding about what people's priorities are in the area. I have, I think, started to develop a relationship with the Redfern community that they know what I am about and they know what they can get through me or through ATSIC and I have a much better understanding of the circumstances that they are operating in, so I think we really need to turn upside down the way we approach work with Aboriginal communities and spend a great deal more time with them.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: So the answer is there is no generic answer?

Ms ELLA-DUNCAN: There is no generic answer. We are a diverse community, so it will take diverse responses.

CHAIR: Quite a lot has been said about the role of women, the female elders, in the Redfern area. Do you want to make any comment on their importance or the role they play compared to the other people you have mentioned?

Ms ELLA-DUNCAN: The older Aboriginal women in that community are phenomenal. They are phenomenal. They were there when the riot happened, they were there trying to calm the situation. I believe they acted as intermediaries between police and community. The Aboriginal women have been the most outspoken at the meetings I have attended and the most positive and productive people at those meetings. They have an enviable determination and perseverance to make things better for their people and I believe that it has not been easy for them sometimes. I call those women rocks, by the way, I think they are rocks in our community and we have them in every community. They are typically the women who have raised their children and their grandchildren, they are typically the women from whom we in the community might seek advice or support if we are having problems, they are people that we honour at events, but they are people who do not get any support. With children's services, ALS, we provide support in schools and a whole range of places, but we do not really do anything for our rocks and, by and large, they are Aboriginal women, I think because we tend to live a bit longer than our men unfortunately. I do not know what their capacity is to continue this level of input, but I would suggest that they have the barest capacity, getting to meetings, having the support and resources to communicate their understandings back to the community.

One of the criticisms that I constantly hear from the Aboriginal community about the Redfern/Waterloo Partnership Project is that the community has no idea what they talk about and when I have raised that in forums it has been put to me that, well, we do this, we put newsletters out and we have community members on. Well, it is wonderful having community members on, but if your community members have not got the capacity to communicate that to the rest of their community then they are only ever going to be individuals, they are not community reps, and I think that is something that is often overlooked by agencies. Involving Aboriginal people in key decision-making forums we need to be able to resource them to carry out their functions and responsibilities, not just to the committee but to the community.

The Hon. IAN WEST: You indicated in your opening comments the importance of health, housing, law and justice, the legal system and education. You did not mention employment. Can you give us some insight into that issue of the difficulty of gaining some dignity in employment? You did make mention of the difficulties that especially some of the men have.

Ms ELLA-DUNCAN: Yes. I might say I did not deliberately leave employment off. The most confronting issues for me are health, housing and the other areas, law and justice. Certainly employment is a key issue. It is such a key issue in fact that ATSIC funds the Redfern Aboriginal Corporation to conduct a community development employment programme. I think that is \$1.3 million annually. It provides employment training opportunities for over 90 Aboriginal individuals from around the area. It is really hard to get employment when you have no education and it is really hard to get employment or to get a good education when you are unwell. I think if we look at the incidence of otitis media, for example, and understand the impact that that has on Aboriginal children learning at school and therefore how that impacts on employment, it is very much part of an enmeshed cyclic issue.

One would argue that metropolitan communities provide an abundance of employment opportunities and I think if we look at the vacancies numbers we will see that indeed that is so. Access to those employment opportunities I think is a big barrier and skills and experience certainly are contributing factors there and one of the main objectives of our community development employment programme is to provide those opportunities to acquire skills and to gain experience. Clearly there is a need there. The Redfern Aboriginal Corporation, as I said, employs over 90 individuals. I think at the moment it is operating close to 95 people. If you take that CDEP away and just leave those people in the community it would have a devastating effect, so the importance of that programme in Redfern/Waterloo cannot be over-estimated.

Certainly I think racism plays a key role, and I am not saying racism in the Redfern/Waterloo area, but racism in the Australian community is certainly a barrier. I think other barriers, apart from education and health, are our own self-esteem, and I think that is an effect of generations of unemployment. If you talk to a lot of Aboriginal people, particularly young people, and say, "What are you going to be doing in five years' time", they will say, "Working on the CDEP". That is as far as their aspirations go and that is because we just do not have all those role models out there working 9 to 5. Often we get Aboriginal people into jobs or into training opportunities and there are all these expectations about how they will be on time, how they will dress, how they will interact with their bosses. That really has never been experienced by that individual before, so there is a whole lot of new learning that occurs in a very short time when people get jobs and I think you will find - I do not have the data with me, but I think you will find - we have a fairly high turnover rate in that people might start jobs but they last only a little while and then fall off. Certainly that characterises the training industry and Aboriginal participation.

The Hon. IAN WEST: Are there any programmes to follow up for those people who fall off to attempt to give assistance and can you give us any insight into any difficulties between Federal and State funding issues?

Ms ELLA-DUNCAN: There are no difficulties between Federal and State funding in my opinion because they just do not exist. The Redfern Aboriginal Corporation, to my knowledge, is 100 percent funded by the Commonwealth.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: By the Commonwealth?

Ms ELLA-DUNCAN: Yes. Do you have a problem about that?

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: No.

Ms ELLA-DUNCAN: I thought you might have had information that I do not have access to.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: No.

Ms ELLA-DUNCAN: That is to my knowledge, and I think most of our CDEPs are 100 percent Commonwealth funding. There have been significant attempts nationally and at a State level to have service delivery agreements between, for example, TAFE and other training providers. I think that has been quite problematic and it is different in each area. At La Perouse, for example, they just cannot get the numbers to run programmes. Redfern might be quite different but again it depends on that relationship between that organization and the training provider.

The job network I think has undergone such rapid change and I do not think Aboriginal people fully understand their rights and responsibilities in relation to the job network. I challenge anyone to know that. It is really quite different and Aboriginal people I do not think have really got the maximum benefit out of a restructured job network.

The idea that you have a contract between yourself and the job network and that you cannot break that contract or that there are penalties and incentives, it is very hard for Aboriginal people to get around that.

I do not think in fact that we have sufficient training opportunities for Aboriginal people, particularly to gain formal accredited training.

The Hon. KAYEE GRIFFIN: I suppose leading on from that and some of the comments that you have made before about programs, particularly for Aboriginal people and young people. Would you care to comment on whether or not you see the number of government and non-government organizations providing services at the moment, whether you see those as adequate in the Redfern/Waterloo area, and then perhaps maybe comment on whether or not there is good or bad co-ordination between the three levels of government, local, state and federal?

Ms ELLA-DUNCAN: That was a very long question and you might have to pull me back on track. I do not think you have to be Einstein, I do not think we need a survey to understand that there are a tremendous number of organizations based in the Redfern/Waterloo area. I think we need to keep in mind that some of those organizations provide services to the entire Sydney area. For example, the Redfern Aboriginal Legal Service, is based in Redfern but it provides a legal service to the entire Sydney region, which includes up to the Blue Mountains, the Hawkesbury and down to the Illawarra.

We have always said that there is no co-ordination between services, I agree. I think that is critical. The community thinks that this service is supposed to do this particular thing and often what that service is set up to do and funded to do is really quite different. I think there is really a lack of understanding on behalf of the Aboriginal community about what services do do.

I think there is a tremendous burden on Aboriginal organizations in the area to have all the answers. For example, the Aboriginal Land Councils are predominantly organizations that are based around the goal of furthering the economic and social development of Aboriginal communities through the management of assets but we are constantly asking the Land Council for information about the social issues that are impacting, the law and justice issues.

Aboriginal organizations tend to want to meet that need and will do everything they can to do that, to meet that, so they often stray from what they are funded to do.

If I had a magic wand I would wipe away all the services and I would ask the community what it wanted and I would just mish mash them together and put them down. I think the trick is to get the right mix of services. Frequently we hear, for example, the Redfern/Waterloo project, which we have got two tiers of government but really has not engaged the Commonwealth in any effective way, but the Commonwealth does provide funding for significant services. The Aboriginal Legal Service, the Aboriginal Children's Service, we have funded, for example, the Aboriginal Housing Company, a significant level of funding over the last five years. So to leave the Commonwealth out of that equation is not good business.

I don't know if I have answered your question.

The Hon. KAYEE GRIFFIN: To a degree you did and I suppose part of it is also related to the fact that when you are talking about Commonwealth Government funding, and then there is the issue of employment and we are talking specifically about Redfern/Waterloo, whether or not there is good or bad co-ordination between the three levels and I suppose you said the Commonwealth has not been engaged in that and that is probably an issue for the Committee to look at and think about. Whether or not the way things work at the moment, given that there is some Federal funding, that you just said, whether there is a co-ordinated effort for any of the projects that you are involved in perhaps in that area?

Ms ELLA-DUNCAN: No. I think Redfern/Waterloo is really quite unique in that it has got the partnership project. I think there are tight controls at mid co-ordination. I know the Moonee Park area is reported to be the one that is operating most successfully in terms of addressing the needs of indigenous communities.

I think in the review of ATSIC and in the review - I don't know whether it was in the review - but we sort of had a look at the number of indigenous organizations there are in the country and those organizations in particular incorporated under the Commonwealth Act. I cannot remember the total but there is a phenomenal number of organizations, Aboriginal organizations and in my experience in an Aboriginal community if there is a problem and we attempt to deal with that problem by forming an organization and submitting for government funding to address that particular issue. Now in one instance that issue might be child protection. In dealing with child protection we will become aware of issues about the schools and issues with police and housing issues and we tend to take them on and pretty soon we have organizations that have got multiple sources of funding with multiple reporting requirements, we have deviated significantly from our original objective and

basically we have become quite overwhelmed with all the work that we have to do, and we tend to do that in a very insular way because it is our problem and we will deal with it.

So what we have seen is that we have got lots and lots and lots of Aboriginal organizations around and who does what and how well do we work together - we do not work together well. We are competing with each other for funding. We are trying to solve all sorts of problems and we tend not to access other services because we want to do it ourselves.

CHAIR: An area we have not yet touched on, our original question 6 about urban renewal, although in our question we did not say so, it relates specifically to our terms of reference about redevelopment of The Block. You may not want to go into all of those issues but do you have any comments to make about the models I suppose, suitable models of renewal for that area?

Ms ELLA-DUNCAN: I do not think I can give you any details about specific models but I would like to bring to your attention - I cannot give you too much detail, I might have to write to you about it - when I was working for the Attorney General's Department with the Aboriginal Justice Advisory Council, I attended a forum convened by the Crime Prevention Council and it was an address by an urban renewal expert from South Africa and they talked about some problems that they were experiencing in certain parts of the country following post apartheid and they talked about the issues of violence between young people, issues of racism, teenage pregnancies, increasing juvenile crime, things that I could really relate to and they embarked on an urban renewal program that was based around the school and it had phenomenal outcomes and while I was at the Council we tried in fact to look at ways that we could learn more about that model and how it worked, why it worked, how typical it was, and if there was scope for a trial somewhere.

We did not really pursue that and I left soon after but I was left wondering what could we have learnt from that, so I would suggest that internationally there may be some good models.

CHAIR: We can certainly follow any hints like that we get but if you have got material and ideas, if you would like to talk to the Committee staff about afterwards.

Ms ELLA-DUNCAN: I will certainly check my details.

CHAIR: We have got one last question, what would you like to see come out of our inquiry?

Ms ELLA-DUNCAN: I would like to see a long term commitment to police and Aboriginal relations.

CHAIR: What is long term?

Ms ELLA-DUNCAN: Forever. Anything under five years is short time. I think anything under five years is a pilot. We need to make a five, ten, fifteen, twenty year commitment to work together. I would like to see the Aboriginal community have far more say in the criminal justice system and to that end I have been advocating testing the water with the community about lobbying for a sentencing program in Sydney and particularly picking up Redfern and La Perouse.

I think things like community justice groups are possibly another way to empower Aboriginal communities to take control. Certainly it is a very adversarial relationship. We do not have any good outcomes in the criminal justice system and the further disempowerment of the community does not give a good outcome. I think we need to look at ways and processes and structures that increase the community's involvement in there because there is certainly a strong willingness on the community to take control, to be involved.

**(The witness withdrew)
(Short adjournment)**

DAVID BARRY MADDEN, Deputy Commissioner Operations, NSW Police, Elizabeth Street, Sydney;

MORRIS LANGLO WEST, Western Region Commander, Corporate Spokesperson for Aboriginal Issues, NSW Police, 148 Brisbane Street, Dubbo, and

ROBERT JAMES WAITES, Commander, Inner Metropolitan Region, NSW Police, Elizabeth Street, Sydney, sworn and examined:

CHAIR: As you are aware, we will be having more representatives of the police force both next week and then early in June, but we are starting with the senior officers. I understand that there may be, with some questions, issues that cannot be talked about publicly. Perhaps they will not come up, but if they do we can deal with them. We have provision, if necessary, to take in camera evidence, but it is very disruptive obviously to our proceedings. If it does become necessary, it is probably more sensible to do something like that in a block at the end of the session, but hopefully it will not be necessary.

Mr MADDEN: Certainly.

CHAIR: Would any of you like to make an opening statement?

Mr MADDEN: I would appreciate that opportunity.

Thank you for allowing us to come here today to present on behalf of NSW Police. I have introduced, by way of their names, the officers who appear with me; however, I would like to give a brief reference to what they represent.

Assistant Commissioner Waites is the Region Commander for the inner metropolitan region, which covers the Redfern local area command but also covers 22 other local area commands across the metropolitan area, which extends from the northern beaches in the north right through to Cronulla, Miranda and Sutherland in the south, and west as far as Campsie.

In terms of Assistant Commissioner West, he actually is the Region Commander for western region, which takes into account commands that go from basically the Blue Mountains right through to the western borders of the State. He is also our corporate spokesperson on Aboriginal issues.

I am the Deputy Commissioner Operations and, as you may be aware from the submission, New South Wales is divided into 80 separate local area commands which report through five region offices to my office. I have responsibility in addition to the local area commands for the State Crime Command, Traffic Services and a number of other operational commands. We are representing Commissioner Moroney who is available to attend the inquiry at a later date and has indicated in correspondence that he would be prepared to do that should the Committee feel it necessary.

You have the NSW Police submission and I will not specifically go over the areas and issues that it addresses. However, I would like to briefly take the opportunity to make a few introductory remarks. NSW Police is a large and diverse organisation. Our core business is to reduce crime through a range of strategies, many of which include a strong commitment to partnerships with communities as well as with government and non-government agencies. That same strong commitment exists at Redfern today.

You would be aware that Commander Dennis Smith is the commander at Redfern, which covers the Redfern and Waterloo area. Dennis and his officers enjoy my full support. On the night of the riot in Redfern they showed the same strength, courage and bravery that they exhibit every day in and around the Redfern local area command. Commander Smith and his officers police a diverse and challenging command, which they do professionally and without fear or favour. Commander Smith and his officers have consistently - and I repeat, consistently - demonstrated a willingness to combine strong and traditional policing responses with alternative and perhaps more innovative responses. For

example, police at Redfern regularly conduct high visibility policing operations and conduct targeted arrests. They conduct proactive policing and use legislation such as controlled operations and drug-house legislation directed at ongoing drug supply, but they also, in addition to that, put in place community focused strategies through their crime prevention officers and police accountability community teams. Aboriginal community liaison officers help develop strategies aimed at enhancing relationships with the Aboriginal communities and extending the community development employment programme known as CDEP. Ongoing youth programmes are in place at the PCYC. The list goes on.

Police officers at Redfern are industrious, professional, resourceful and personally committed to undertaking a difficult task and I hope that I can show that today. They are generally supportive of the opportunities that this inquiry presents because they deal daily with the victims of crime and also the criminals. They see for themselves the physical and psychological damage caused by crime. Like the executive of NSW Police, they want to see things improve as much as those who live in Redfern and Waterloo.

You have heard this morning from Dr Col Gellatly and Mr Ramsey and about the Redfern/Waterloo project. Police cannot take sole responsibility for solving the intractable social problems that contribute to criminal activity in the area. Nor could NSW Police alone have achieved the positive outcomes already realised through this partnership. The partnership project remains as an important and positive contribution to addressing longstanding and difficult crime problems. It reinforces that government agencies, social agencies and the community must all play their part.

I must state that the death of Thomas Hickey, which preceded the riot in February, is subject to a coronial inquiry. Accordingly, my officers and I are limited in any comment that we can make at this time. It may be that questions relating to Mr Hickey's death need to be taken on notice or answered in camera. Accordingly, I will offer no further comment apart from extending my sympathies to his family and friends.

With regard to the riot specifically, there is an ongoing internal inquiry established by the Commissioner into what happened, how we responded and what can we do better to improve our service to the community and better protect the safety of our officers. I will not pre-empt the outcomes of that inquiry, but the Commissioner and I are committed to ensuring that our officers have the resources and equipment they need.

More generally, NSW Police is actively working to develop better understanding between police and all Aboriginal communities. The Aboriginal strategic direction has been developed to guide police in this endeavour. An important part of the Aboriginal strategic direction is the Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer programme, or ACLO, and the local area command Aboriginal consultative committees.

The condition of Redfern police station has been a longstanding issue of concern and I am pleased to tell the Committee that a lease on the former TNT tower at Redfern has been signed and will be the site of the new Redfern police station. The new station should be ready for occupation in early 2005.

In conclusion, let me reiterate the following points: Being a police officer is a challenging and sometimes thankless job. That is certainly true for police at Redfern, but I know that Commander Smith and his officers have and will continue to give their full commitment to the community they serve. I urge the Committee to consider carefully the full range of services that are already being provided in Redfern and Waterloo and consider how agencies can further improve the ways they work together to address the longstanding issues they are expected to address every day. The needs of Redfern and Waterloo, like all communities, require a partnership. As with any partnership, there will be successes. Equally there will be conflict, disagreement, disappointment, but there must be an enduring and shared commitment. I assure the people of Redfern and Waterloo that they have that commitment from NSW Police.

CHAIR: You have seen the questions that we have prepared. I might start, and other

members of the Committee will join in. Inevitably we get out of order because answers make people think of different questions, but we have tried to group them under a number of headings and we will try to go through all of them. If we do not get there, some of them you may need to take on notice.

Some of the issues that have been raised, of course, you have just mentioned in that statement, and I am glad you have answered question 2 about the timeframe for the establishment of the new police station as early 2005. A lot has been said about the overwhelming need for that. Can you comment about some of the issues which have been raised about the level of resources in Redfern/Waterloo and such issues as, say, media comments about the level of experience or lack of experience of many of the officers assigned to that command?

Mr MADDEN: Certainly, and could I work from initially describing the way in which we deliver services over to what is in support of Redfern and then back to the actual staffing at Redfern?

CHAIR: Yes.

Mr MADDEN: Across the State, as indicated, there are 80 local area commands and they are virtually identical to each other in terms of the structure that is located within the commands. NSW Police believes that the local area commands are the autonomous service delivery centre, that is, they are the hub of delivery of service to local communities because we are very supportive of local solutions to local issues. So we have a local area commander who is in charge, which we have already alluded to is Commander Smith. We then support him with five duty officers, which are inspector level, commissioned officers in one sense, albeit that there is no longer a commission but from what historically you would say is a commission. Those five duty officers are there around the clock and provide strategic and tactical support to the commander. In addition we have a crime manager, also at inspector level, who, as the role implies, is responsible for managing crime in terms of the response, tasking, deployment, investigation, coming up with new ideas to actually combat problems within any local area. Supporting the crime manager are people such as the crime coordinator, who looks at how crime is being responded to and makes sure it is being investigated, investigation managers who support the criminal investigators within any command and then there are obviously all the general duties officers who respond to issues and who are what you would consider to be the first response to any incident, and supported in the crime management unit are what we often refer to as the LOs. What I mean by that is the domestic violence liaison officers, the youth liaison officers, the crime prevention officers, the intelligence officers, field intelligence officers and all the officers that do not perform a specific first line duty but in fact are the ones who provide the intelligence analysis to support frontline activity.

That is our local area command in essence, and what they do is supply the strategic direction of the organization. So there are a whole range of strategies that are worked out, which are universal in one sense, that they are across New South Wales and the local area command then interprets those and applies them to the unique and specific problems.

Once you go beyond the local area command however, you go into the area of the region and within the metropolitan region there are a range of support groups that will back up the local area command. They might refer to people such as the target action groups, who are officers who can be deployed from City Central to respond to a range of issues, crime related and disorder related.

There are anti theft units who are stationed at Surry Hills who will again deal with crime across a number LACs, local area commands, so they are not specific, albeit they will be based in a local area command, they do not just service that local area command.

The Botany Bay highway patrol are tasked to cover the Redfern local area command. There are the transit police that are based at the Central railway station, that also cover the Redfern local area command and there are a range of other groups, including a specially formed metropolitan robbery unit that was created approximately eighteen months ago in response to robberies that were occurring within the inner and greater metropolitan commands.

We needed something between the state crime command, which was investigating violent

serial type robbery offences to those that were occurring on the streets, so the metropolitan robbery unit was one that came in the middle which investigated robberies across a number of local area command.

In addition to that there are then places like, once you go beyond the region, you then get into areas such as the state crime command, which provides criminal investigative support at the highest level. Forensic services group and a range of other organizations or part of the organization that respond to crime within the Redfern LACS, so the point I am trying to make here is whilst you have a nucleus or a hub at Redfern, it is supported by a whole range of specialist units/commands and specialist police.

If I come back to the Redfern command itself, and I do not want to get bogged down in a discussion about authorized and actual strengths, which is a common thing, but the Redfern local area command has an authorized strength of 164 officers. At the moment the strengths vary day to day with transfers and other things. It has an actual strength of 180. So as at today there are 180 officers providing front line service in the Redfern local area command.

They are then broken up into those groups that I explained at the beginning, in terms of general duties, CI and specialist support. They are all delivering policing services.

Now the fact is one of the points you raised there was related to experience. Of the officers in Redfern, approximately 35% of them would be probationary constables. That is officers at some point in their first twelve months of their service.

Interestingly if you look across Inner metropolitan region and greater metropolitan region, that is in fact the average. The Redfern command does not stand out as an area that has a large number of inexperienced police, nor does it come out as one that has very few inexperienced police. It has the same number on average as most other commands.

That is not surprising when you think of the massive recruitment that the organization has gone through in the last few years. We have recruited some two and a half thousand officers in just a few years to rebuild our strengths because we have been falling in strength.

So as a result these officers need to be trained and they do go to metropolitan commands and that is where the area of greatest need is.

I suppose the question is, are there a large number of young officers, inexperienced officers at Redfern. Probably the command and many others would argue that an officer in Redfern after a very short period of time is an experienced officer. They work alongside experienced officers. There are excellent supervisors within the commands. There are excellent field training officers. There are excellent detectives and there is good supervision and leadership in the command.

Whilst there may be a large number of probationary constables, I believe that a probationary constable who serves at Redfern will be a very experienced officer in a very short period of time.

CHAIR: We have also had put to us that there is a relatively high turnover amongst those experienced constables, more so at Redfern than at others, would that be right?

Mr MADDEN: I do not believe so Madam Chair but I could probably find out the exact statistics if you wish, I could take it on notice but I do not believe that is the case.

CHAIR: We are taking up some of the points that have been made in evidence and in commentary.

Mr MADDEN: We could certainly look at that Madam Chair and come back to you at a time convenient.

CHAIR: We have got a number of questions under the heading of policing and I will hand

over to other Committee members in a minute. They include the level and nature of crime, the issue of drug dealing, the issues of the State-wide strategies that are particularly relevant to that area and the number of comments that have been made about that particular example, if you like, of the bus service for example. So there are a number of separate questions. I am not trying to ask them all at once but there is a whole range of issues about particular kind of crime and police strategies, which, as you know, are part of the terms of reference.

Mr MADDEN: If I could respond and give a general description of the crime problem within the Redfern local area command. The thing that stands out in terms of Redfern's specific crimes are robberies. It is ranked number one in the State for robberies. The way in which I examine robberies is obviously through business plans and targets and Redfern in the latter part of 2003 was not number one but it has become number one in more recent months.

The nature of the robberies are such that it is street robberies, particularly of young victims walking in and around The Block area or around the Lawson Street area, many of them on their way back from the universities or local colleges.

That is the young people who are out on the street, traveling along and often preyed upon in the form of making it stealing from the person. That is the biggest issue and you will notice from the BOCSAR stats that it shows whilst robbery with a weapon has declined over a period, over the five year period, robbery without a weapon has in fact increased by over 50%.

That is the nature of the problem in terms of robbery. It is not the violent bank robberies that we are talking about, we are talking about robberies upon the person and most of the offences are robbery with aggravation, that is pushing, shoving, punching the victim and removing their bag or removing their wallet, things that can be easily used, such as cash or cards or mobile phones.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: The statistics you are talking about, are they for the local area command or are they for Redfern itself?

Mr MADDEN: They have picked up four post code areas which include Chippendale, Waterloo, the heart of Redfern and one other which just eludes me at the moment.

CHAIR: Darlington may be one of them, we heard about that this morning.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Do you have the specific figures for each of those?

CHAIR: I think they took that on notice this morning actually.

Mr MADDEN: What the director of crime stats has done, Don Weatherburn in his report produced a reference to Redfern in terms of those crimes. I think we included those within our submission.

CHAIR: It certainly was I think Col Gellatly undertook to break those down for us if that was not already done.

Mr MADDEN: If I pass over for just one moment the issue of drug crime and I will come back to it, once you move away from the robbery crime and in terms of ranking, there is this comparison of say Redfern with other local area commands, conscious that there are eighty within the State, Redfern does not seem to figure prominently. In fact, if you looked at for instance, break and enter, it is about the 29th. This is based on OCR data that we used around February this year, somewhere in the vicinity of being 29th out of 80 local area commands or for instance, steal motor vehicle was down at 36 out of the 80 local area commands.

Again the point I am making here is that whilst it sits as number one for robbery, when you look at the other volume crimes, it moves down the list quite markedly. But that is not surprising if you link it to the drug problem that exists and this is where I come back to the drug problem

Redfern does have a drug problem. That has been shown over the last few years where we

have focused on the drug suppliers. In terms of our response to the drug problem and how we manage it, how we investigate it, it is one of those issues in terms of our actual practice in trying to investigate drug crimes, that I would ask that we do so in camera with your permission Madam Chair because I would be talking about the nature of the drug problem and how we respond to it. How we investigate it, how we try and stop it and to do so in the public forum would jeopardize on going and current investigations.

CHAIR: As I said, I suggest what we do is do as much as we can in public and narrow down whatever we may need to do and it is obviously a great deal easier if we do need to have an in camera session, to have it as short of possible at the end of today, so we can note the things that we need to come back to, but we appreciate it if we can talk as generally as possible so that we do not need to divulge the in camera part of things.

Mr MADDEN: I understand that. All I ask is that we refer to the drug investigation in that closed session or that in camera session.

The other nature of the crime there is things such as steal from the person. We know that there is a significant number of thefts from the individual, that is without any violence, which is known as steal from the person and also thefts from cars such as opening a car and taking a handbag, something that is out of a car. Many of these offences occur in and around The Block area so we are looking at roads that pass what is known as The Block. These are significant and in fact they were so much so earlier last year that we created Operation Castings, which was a specific operation where local area command staff worked with the metropolitan robbery unit to focus on robberies that were occurring on taxi drivers. That operation went for a few months and resulted in a number of arrests of people who were responsible for conducting that form of crime.

The break and enters, as indicated, it is not high on the list in terms of ranking but certainly in terms of if you were a resident of Redfern or Waterloo it would be of concern. Again, I make the point in terms of ranking, not to indicate that it is not a problem for that command but in comparison with other commands across the 80 local area commands it does not figure prominently.

But again what you find there is removal of property, computers, jewellery, cash, things that are easily disposed of through windows, through doors, first floor apartments to about the fourth floor apartments or even in some of the commercial premises that they are taking from.

The commonality to all of that is easily disposable items, as I indicated in the steal from person and robbery, things that can be used to purchase drugs or things that can be used to support lifestyles. That is the commonality.

In terms of the responses by the command to the crimes that exist, there are organizational strategies which are then adopted and changed to suit local area command. The first organizational priority is what we refer to as high visibility policing, so we are actually referring to uniformed police, marked cars in and around the areas of trouble, so wherever we can we put uniformed police because not only does it deter offenders, but it also gives that reassurance and the people of New South Wales deserve that in terms of having constant reassurance of police presence.

We also have partnerships with councils and others in terms of CCTV. So again I am referring to the use of State-wide strategies that are then deployed in the local area commands. For instance, if you take a crime prevention officer at Redfern, there is an organizational commitment to environmental design. That is, we try and design through change in buildings, locations, lighting, design crime out of areas and the local crime prevention officer works with the councils and works in terms of safety audits to look at areas around Redfern where they can design out potential for crime, so, alleyways that are poorly lit or other things that they can get to to actually try and reduce that problem.

The crime prevention officer identifies repeat victims, that is people from universities and does things such as leaflets or talks to women's groups or talks to different groups, many of the colleges, Taylor College and stuff. They will go to and provide crime prevention advice.

In addition to that you then get into the area of domestic violence liaison officers who will target repeat victims and repeat offenders.

One of the best strategies we have adopted is Operation Concertinas, which commenced in June 2003, which is the provision of additional officers, eight additional officers from neighbouring commands, specifically in Redfern to target robberies and high visibility policing around the top of The Block area and in The Block area.

There are a range of organizational strategies. I will just finish on this one Madam Chair. We target repeat offenders, repeat victims and repeat locations. Under the repeat offenders title we use a program called Suspect Target Management Plan. That is based on the principle that a small number of offenders are responsible for a large amount of crime that exists.

The STMP allows officers to go through, again, certain criteria, to identify high risk offenders, those people who are continuing to perpetrate crime and they are then targeted by the command. Indeed, Redfern has adopted the STMP the HRO strategy and has at least seven offenders as we speak who are targeted by teams within their command because they are prolific offenders.

As indicated, we then move into the areas of repeat victims, where we give advice and counsel and then locations, by saturating those areas with police or using high visibility policing. There are vikings, there are arrangements with the metropolitan robbery unit, there is support given by the State crime command. Indeed, there has been something like 26 requests for assistance to the State crime command in a little over eighteen months, which have been responded to on all but one occasion, which was withdrawn.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Assistant Commissioner Waites, I just wonder if you could tell us, prior to coming here today, did you speak to the Minister or other senior police about what evidence you might present?

Mr WAITES: I have not spoken to the Minister but certainly the three officers you see here today and I have discussed and I have also discussed, not the evidence we are going to give, but all of the issues surrounding Redfern, the policing issues surrounding the inner city area of Sydney. As well as that, I have also met with my predecessor, the former commander, I replaced him, Senior Commissioner Adams and the management team, or part of the management team from Redfern local area command, that is to make sure that I am aware and the Deputy is aware of all the issues that they have.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Did you contribute to the Government submission?

Mr WAITES: In the form of the police submission, our police submission was forwarded and was incorporated in the Government submission.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Turning to the riot, I wonder if you could tell us what intelligence you received in the days prior to the riot that there was going to be some trouble?

Mr WAITES: Personally, I did not receive any intelligence. In fact the first I became aware of the situation at Redfern was just before 6 p.m. on Sunday, the 15th, and I had been talking to the commander at Redfern in relation to the issues leading up to that, that was in relation to the incident involving Hickey, and at that time certainly there was no understanding or no information given to me that there were any issues developing at Redfern.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Prior to the riot?

Mr WAITES: Prior to the Sunday evening.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: So there was no knowledge of posters?

Mr WAITES: No, I was not made aware of those until after the riot.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: You said that you were informed at 6 p.m.?

Mr WAITES: Just before 6 p.m., about 5.50 it was on the Sunday evening. I received a call to say that there was an incident developing in Lawson Street, outside the railway station, which involved throwing missiles at police officers. I was also told that that was at that time not an uncommon occurrence and that it was being dealt with and the police were managing it.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Who called you to let you know that?

Mr WAITES: Commander Smith.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Did you get other calls during the night?

Mr WAITES: I received a number of calls from Superintendent Smith during the course of the evening updating me on what was occurring at Redfern and also a call at one stage from my staff officer operations who had had a call from a duty officer at Redfern as well, right up until 1.15 when I made a decision that I needed to go and see what was actually happening and then I left my home and went to Redfern.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Why did you wait until 1.15 to go?

Mr WAITES: Because at that stage I was continually reassured that the matter was being managed, it was under control and there was no need for me to attend.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: When you got there, where did you set up your command post?

Mr WAITES: I actually set up a command post in Lawson Street to the east of Gibbons Street.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Who decided - who was handling the riot - what tactics were going to be used and on what basis?

Mr WAITES: The decisions about what was happening up until that point of time were made by, firstly, Inspector Emery and then, on the arrival of Dennis Smith, by Superintendent Smith up until I arrived. When I arrived I sought out and spoke to Superintendent Smith and discussed what he had done to that point of time. I then took a command position leaving him as the forward commander and started to organise additional resources in order to overcome the problems and issues that were there.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Is it true that you put yourself directly behind the first line?

Mr WAITES: At one stage, after having conversation with the then supervisor of our operational support group, and the fact of his discussion with me about the level of experience of his officers and what they were being subject to, I walked along and spoke to several of those officers by way of reassuring them of the fact that there were more resources on the way and that we were actually starting to take control and manage the situation.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Was that standard operating procedure?

Mr WAITES: As in a commander looking after his people, yes. Given that I was confronted with a situation that was different from what had been described to me, yes. If I had my time over again and I had more understanding of the situation that had arisen during the evening, I may not have even attended the scene, I would have gone to the police operations centre, but, given the information that had been relayed to me, that was the choice I made.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: So the standard operating procedure would have been that you would not have been there?

Mr WAITES: If had been aware of the violence and the size of the riot, I would have in fact gone to the police operations centre and commenced from there.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: So you would have had your command post remote from the actual line?

Mr WAITES: That is correct.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: But you did not?

Mr WAITES: No.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Is it standard operating procedure that if things are bad you do not go to the site yourself?

Mr WAITES: No.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Is it not a bit dangerous that, if you were not getting the correct information until you went there, going to a remote location and directing it from there with intelligence or information that was not correct may have made the situation worse?

Mr WAITES: It may have, yes. I took the decision to go to the scene simply because I was getting mixed messages about what the situation was and that is why I actually left my home and went there. Had I been getting different information, I would have made other decisions.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Ms Parker mentioned posters accusing the police I think of having it in for TJ. Obviously they were very inflammatory. Does this suggest a breakdown of relationships between police and the community? Why do you think those posters were there?

Mr WAITES: It is difficult to give an opinion because I was not aware of them until afterwards. I also was not aware of where they had been actually displayed or what their intent was. Having seen the posters after the event, I can only give an opinion and my opinion - and only my opinion - would be that it was about trying to stir up, inflame the situation in Redfern.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Has there been an improvement or a worsening of relationships between Aboriginals and police, would you say, in the last few years?

Mr WAITES: I cannot make a reference point to the past. I only took up the position on 1 February, two weeks before the riot, and my only references to Redfern go back 10 years beyond that when I was stationed in the city, but to me there does not seem to have been a worsening over that 10 year period, but what has happened in the intervening period I cannot say.

Mr MADDEN: I think one of the things to understand is that police have been doing a lot of things to build relationships with the community. If you look at the ACLO programme or even the mentoring programme which has been run by frontline officers with young children to mentor them and try to encourage them to lead good lives and help them through their upbringing within the Redfern local area command. So relationships were building but they always suffer. Little things will happen which people will take a different view on. For instance, it was clear with the death of young T J Hickey that there were those who felt the police were responsible, and that has clearly come out in the media and other things post that date, and clearly, once that matter is raised, relationships will sour for a period of time with certain individuals. I do not think it is the whole community, but there will be those who believe that the police were at fault and as a result will be trying to encourage people to be anti-police.

Post the riot, is the relationship shot, has it gone forever? The answer is No, because the programmes continue. The PCYC continues to run its programme, the mentoring programme continues and, if relationships had ceased or were so bad, none of those things would happen. Police are still going to The Block, every day they walk down there and talk to people, so the relationships continue. Like all relationships, they will take a beating at different times, but they continue on.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Do the police have cultural sensitivity training for Aboriginals and, if so, what is that and how does it affect what happens?

Mr MADDEN: Whilst the recruits are going through the police college they undertake generic cultural awareness training specifically targeting Aboriginal issues, which is based on the Redfern design education programme, the induction package, so prior to leaving the college they have undertaken a degree of cultural awareness training but, more specifically, in trying to achieve their diploma they do a whole lot of study on societal relations, sociology, psychology and a whole range of things in dealing with what we would call vulnerable communities, and so they undertake that training and education.

Once they arrive at Redfern, as is currently the case, they undertake an induction package. Again, it is a corporate strategy for induction packages and it will change based on the local area command. So at Redfern they talk to the ACLOs and they actually go down The Block and meet elders, each group of probationary constables that come out, so they receive an induction package which is localised to the specific needs of Redfern.

What was identified following a visit by the Commissioner and a discussion with Superintendent Smith and the Aboriginal elders and people from Tranby College early this year was that there was an opportunity for even additional Aboriginal awareness training to be provided. The matter is being coordinated through Barry Williams, who is the Aboriginal officer working through the police college, the Tranby College and the local area command and in April a number of officers undertook that specific training, so that is an ongoing training course in Aboriginal awareness.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: How long does that go for?

Mr MADDEN: I am sorry, I cannot tell you at the moment. I think it is a day, I am not 100 percent sure. I would be more than happy to get that information and provide it to you.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: If they have this cultural awareness training of the way Aboriginals look at things, do the laws and procedures that they have to enforce come into conflict with that, such that if you see one episode you might say, well, that kid has a few problems and we can overlook it or discuss it with his family, but at the time you have to either arrest them or not arrest them, so in a sense the cultural training may not fit in with your other duties. Is that issue addressed?

Mr MADDEN: If you look at the Aboriginal strategic direction, the code of practice in terms of the crime legislation about how you deal with people who have committed offences and even the police handbook, it refers to arrest being the last resort, that is, that where there is an alternative to arrest and the identity of the person who has committed a crime is known, there are a range of other options available. That includes currently criminal infringement notices. If it is a juvenile, there are a whole lot of cautions and warnings. There are field cans, there are bail cans, there are a whole range of issues that police officers can adopt which do not necessarily bring the person straight to the court, so there are alternatives to arrest. Nowhere does it say that you should do nothing. What all those handbooks and regulations prescribe is that police officers should use their discretion in determining what action to take and there are a whole range of options available to them, but I stress that it does not actually indicate anywhere that they should take no action, so I do not believe there is a conflict between strategic direction that says, look, we need to find diversionary programmes because we know that Aboriginal people are over-represented within the prison system, and particularly youth detention centres, so there are a range of options available to officers in carrying out their work.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Some of the case histories, particularly those critical of the police, would be kids with many cautions and many convictions and basically they have got to the point that nothing makes any difference. Are there extensive programmes? You have targeted offender programmes, which presumably means targeting them for arrest. Do you have targeted offender programmes for other alternatives?

Mr MADDEN: We do. When we identify a person who we want to arrest, they are high-risk offenders. We also have targeted programmes being run by the PCYC in concert with the youth liaison officers where they will identify at risk offenders, young kids who are committing crime, so the PCYC, up until the night of the riot or the day of the riot, had five people, young children, three from The Block and two from Waterloo, who had been targeted as high-risk individuals, so there were specific programmes for them. In addition to that, the police at Redfern, through the local area command, run the mentoring programme, so again they are identifying young kids who are at risk and who they want to make sure they can try to deter or divert from the criminal justice system by delivering programmes such as camps and trips and other things and mentoring them to try to give them options.

The point I am making is that we are targeting pre-crime, we are targeting ones that have committed crimes, because we use youth conferencing, cautions, warnings, all the things that are available to us under the Young Offenders Act to keep the kids out of the criminal justice system and, once they go past all of that and if they go into the criminal justice system, again there are a range of strategies that are adopted by the courts and others to try to deter them.

The Hon. IAN WEST: Perhaps I could ask Assistant Commissioner West how the policing issues experienced at The Block differ from other crime hot spots?

Mr WEST: Well, the issues at The Block in many ways are very similar to lots of locations throughout New South Wales, particularly in areas with high concentrations of Aboriginal people. When you have issues of family breakdown, domestic violence, unemployment and all those things that inter-agencies, including us, are looking at all over the State, we can say that the issues at Redfern, the background issues and the environment, are similar in many areas of New South Wales and we have our Aboriginal strategic direction that is looking at the issues and trying to make it better in all the areas that Mr Madden was speaking about.

CHAIR: Do you want to go into a little detail about that?

Mr WEST: The Aboriginal strategic direction is a document that came from our Aboriginal strategic plan. In 2000 the Ombudsman and the police department got together to look at the plan and what it was was a plan and from the plan came directions. What we are doing now is trying to give a direction and I am in charge of a working party that is looking at implementation, over the last 12 months, of this direction and report back to the Commissioner, because quite often we do have plans and there are lots of organisations doing lots of things, but we have to try to get it structured and see where we are going. We have 29 local area commands that have the Aboriginal strategic direction directly applicable and we are working with the Ombudsman to see how they are going. The Ombudsman's Office has conducted so far 13 audits of commands where we have this direction applicable. Looking at those audits which I am doing at the moment, some have not come before me yet and calling for reports from the local area commanders, which I have done over the last four weeks, ending in fact tomorrow, to see where in fact we are going with the direction policy. So it is still an ongoing thing because there are lots of things we have to do, but we have to stage them at different times. We cannot obviously do everything at one moment.

I am quite happy with this direction which is going away from the policy and we are working with the Aboriginal communities of New South Wales and indeed in the Redfern/Waterloo area to try and make it better with the things that we are already doing.

The Hon. IAN WEST: Are there any specific policing strategies for The Block?

Mr WEST: Mr Madden mentioned some of them. We are looking at issues like the

mentoring program, where the youth liaison officer is mentoring a young person from that area. I am very pleased with the PCYC. The fact that they are doing lots of programs. Children are taken down in the warmer months to the beach at Maroubra to the Nippers program. Good fun. Other issues where police are contacting parents of children and initially taking them home and that has been done in the past under the Child Protection Act, particularly in Bourke, when I was there in the early nineties, now it is the same sort of program where we take the kids home when they are found wandering the streets late at night.

These sorts of programs are exciting and obviously can be developed. The ACLO at Redfern is a very important part in the whole issue. We have got issues that deal with cultural awareness that Mr Madden has already mentioned and the fact that we have got the Tranby Aboriginal school working with us with I think a cultural awareness seminar next month, so that will be a local issue and this local issue is something that we are looking at, not just the cultural awareness seminars at the Academy and what we are doing down there, and what Barry Williams from the Academy is taking out to the local areas, it is run by local people, local solutions for local problems and that is part of the Aboriginal teaching direction policy, we do enhance awareness of courses and seminars to have them more diversified.

The Hon. IAN WEST: There were some submissions that we received that indicated that The Block is a no-go area with police. Is that right or wrong?

Mr WEST: Not knowing the area, in general terms that is not correct.

Mr MADDEN: Could I answer your first question, about some of the difficulties. There are quite clearly structural and cultural difficulties with the police in The Block. If you look at the structural problems in terms of the mere way in which The Block is built, which allows often offenders who are being pursued, to gain access to one of the buildings, to use the alleyways, to use the demolished buildings and places like that to hide following pursuits. There are in addition to that cultural issues and if I could cite an example.

On the night of the riot police were lined up and fighting in Lawson Street. The decision was taken to move the line forward to the corner of Eveleigh Street. At that time they were fighting a set number of rioters, so let us say there were fifty to sixty rioters. When they got to the corner of Eveleigh Street to push the people back into Eveleigh Street, what happened was, the number went from sixty to something like two hundred. So automatically we found that you were not only dealing with a set of people who were anti police or anti authority at that point in time, but there was actually buy-in by people on The Block to contribute, you know it was like, now you have come onto our territory in many respects and now we are going to take on the police as a result. That culture creates operational difficulties for us.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Just on that Commissioner, is there an instruction or understanding that police not go into The Block to arrest offenders or that they not engage in hot pursuit if they see an offence by someone who runs into The Block?

Mr MADDEN: Could I just seek, Madam Chair, which question do you want me to answer?

CHAIR: Well, perhaps take that on board because you are obviously answering Mr West's question.

Mr MADDEN: Mr West's question was whether if there was a no-go zone and your question was are there any SOPs in relation to that? The SOPs in relation to The Block which were prepared in about 1998 by Superintendent Perrin at that time. There was a section there where it dealt with, if you pursue a person into The Block and you know the offender and it becomes riotous or large numbers of people gather round, then the SOP at that time was to withdraw. Once you had identified the offender, withdraw until you can marshal the resources to go back in.

The SOP at that time was designed not to endanger police lives by having them maintain a

position inside The Block should they be surrounded. Those SOPs have been modified and the most recent example Mr Waites has worked on, actually we still allow officers the discretion. Obviously we do not want to keep officers there and have them injured simply if they can see the offender in front of them, but there are a whole range of SOPs developed by Mr Waites and his people which now bring other police in.

The predecessor SOP was withdraw, gather resources, then re-enter. The SOPs now are get on the radio straight away and bring in resources to actually combat--

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: They are in writing, are they?

Mr MADDEN: They are and they have just been applied.

CH AIR: I think we should get back to our questions. Question number 12 specifically deals with this issue and we actually ask you to provide the Committee with a copy of certain standard operating procedures. Is that what we are now onto? I suspect it is. Mr West's question is basically question 17 and particularly relating to perceptions of the no-go area and the children. Can I just clarify whether that is one thing or two?

Mr MADDEN: Question number 12 Madam Chair refers to incidents involving Aboriginal people, so it is a set of operational procedures that have been developed with the Aboriginal co-ordination team, which deal with Aboriginal people across the State, so there is a generic role in terms of how to deal with Aboriginal issues and what is required.

There is a separate set of SOPs relevant to police entering The Block to overcome this notion of a no-go zone and the best example I can give Madam Chair of--

CHAIR: Would it be possible for us to get copies of the 1998 one that you mentioned and we can come back and talk more about these draft ones?

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: They are not drafts.

CHAIR: They are Mr Pearce. I think it would probably be simpler if we went back to Mr West's question. Deputy Commissioner Madden specifically referred to a 1998 SOP and then you came in and asked for a copy, so that is why I referred back to our question 12, which refers to different ones. Let us go back to Mr West's question and by all means we can ask, I assume there is no problem getting a copy of the 1998 one you are referring to.

Mr MADDEN: In answering your question Madam Chair, the only concern I have in delivering the SOP is that it describes methodology to be adopted by police should they go to an incident in The Block.

CHAIR: Should we come back to that in the in camera session at the end?

Mr MADDEN: Yes, because if that is released, then we have to revise our methodology. Mr West's question, in relation to the no-go zone, there is no no-go zone and the best example, and I am sure when I say that people say, that is rhetoric. The reality is in the April Police News, which is the Police Association's magazine released by the Police Association, they have interviewed a number of officers within that magazine to talk about experience on The Block. Contained in that is reference to a constable who says we daily go down The Block. We go there every day. If it was a no-go zone those officers would in fact not write that. They would not have said "We go in there every day, we talk to people in The Block every day".

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Do they go in there to arrest people and do they go in there in hot pursuit if they see someone who has committed a crime?

Mr MADDEN: No. The article makes reference to beat type patrols only, and I am sure you have got a copy of it.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: They do not go in there to arrest people and they do not go in there obviously--

Mr MADDEN: No, the article does not refer to them going in to arrest people. The article refers to community policing, making the point they go into--

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Do they go in there to arrest people and do they go in there in hot pursuit?

CHAIR: Mr West, I think you need to be more assertive about the rest of your question.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: We will come back to the question until we get an answer.

CHAIR: Perhaps Mr Madden if you come back to Mr West's question and finish that. Mr Pearce was actually the next question.

Mr MADDEN: Madam Chair, there is no no-go zone in The Block.

CHAIR: Would you like to go on to the follow up part about the perception about Aboriginal children feeling they are untouchable, because these are two issues that have been raised together.

Mr MADDEN: Obviously if the young people themselves have the perception - I do not think they are untouchable at all. The officers at Redfern regularly make arrests of young people in and around The Block. They make arrests for people responsible for a range of crimes down in that area and I do not believe that the individuals perceive that they are untouchable. The officers are there making those arrests. They are putting in intelligence reports. They are doing the move alongs. They are doing the searches and in fact it has generated some complaint in one sense, albeit it not formal, that we have heard about people who say that we are over policed or harassed but in fact police are doing their job and dealing with young people in and around the railway station.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: I will just go back to the question. Is it the case that officers go into The Block to arrest people and is it the case that they follow offenders in when they are in hot pursuit when they have seen them commit an offence?

Mr MADDEN: Yes, they go into The Block to arrest people. Yes, they follow in hot pursuit.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: In what numbers?

Mr MADDEN: In numbers of police or number of offenders?

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: If two police are patrolling around the station and they see an offence, a bagsnatch, are they likely to go into The Block and make an arrest, follow the offender?

Mr MADDEN: Yes, there is evidence of them actually making arrests of that. What they will do though in accordance with the SOPs is, should they be surrounded, they will get on their radio and call for assistance and police will respond appropriately.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: So it is not so much a no-go zone as sort of a no-stay zone?

Mr MADDEN: If we are talking about the hot pursuit scenario as against the community policing scenario?

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Yes.

CORRECTED

Mr MADDEN: In terms of the community policing scenario, they go in, they talk to people, they do all their community policing activities. If it is in terms of the hot pursuit, then in fact the SOPs say once you have arrested the offender, move out of the area because their continued presence, that is holding the offender in that location can create confrontation. So the idea is grab the offender and move that person from the area. It will reduce confrontation.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Can I just go back to Assistant Commissioner Waites, what time did you first become aware that a police had been formed?

Mr WAITES: I was never aware that a police line formed until I had arrived at the scene. My understanding was that there were a number of skirmishes involving police. It was not until I arrived at the scene--

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: When was the police line first formed?

Mr WAITES: I am not, because I am not privy to the review that is being undertaken, that is Coburn, which is being undertaken on behalf of the Commissioner, I am not able to tell you exactly when the police line was formed as such.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Weren't you on the phone to Mr Smith?

Mr WAITES: I was.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: And he did not tell you?

Mr WAITES: He did not refer to a police line as such, no.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: What arrangements for calling out the operational support group police, when was that done?

Mr WAITES: There was a call across the police radio section for OSG police at some time shortly after 7 pm.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: And how many were available within half an hour or an hour of that?

Mr WAITES: Again, I cannot answer that because I was not there and I was not managing it and the inquiry that is being conducted into it, obviously I cannot interfere with that, I should not be seen to interfere with it at all, so I have not got involved in that sort of detail.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Were there any operational support group police available when you arrived at 1.15 or 1.30, whatever it was?

Mr WAITES: Just after 1.30. I was informed when I arrived that the police that were on the line at that time were all operational - OSG police.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: All?

Mr WAITES: Yes.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Approximately how many of them were there at that stage?

Mr WAITES: Twenty five.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Did they have all their equipment that they needed?

Mr WAITES: Yes, those that were on the line were all fully equipped with all the

equipment.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Are you aware of any direction or any call at any stage for a number of operational police, twenty or so, which the message did not get out? Are you aware of that?

Mr WAITES: I am aware there was confusion at around about 9.20, 9.30 pm. In fact my operations manager rang me at that time and specifically indicated that they were calling for OSG equipment. It was as a result of that call that I then asked if the commander was on the scene and he was then arranged to come into it.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: At that stage how many OSG police were available?

Mr WAITES: As I say, I have not gone into that detail, nor should I with this under inquiry.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Shouldn't you have done it on the night? Wouldn't you have asked that question on the night? You were on the phone being told how serious the situation was and you did not ask whether you had the properly trained police there.

Mr WAITES: I was aware the police officers from Redfern had undertaken what we call riot control training as such. It would therefore be that that equipment could well be going to those particular officers. I was also aware, although I was not aware how much, there was some riot control equipment on hand at Redfern police station. My concern at that time was they were asking for that much OSG equipment and not asking for OSG personnel.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: At 7 o'clock you did not whether there were OSG police available and at 9 o'clock you were told that there was a call for equipment but you did not ask how many OSG police were there?

Mr WAITES: My question was, if they were calling for equipment why didn't they also want personnel?

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: What was the answer to that?

Mr WAITES: The answer to that was "I am not sure", when I said to check the local area commander, that they are there and they know what to do.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: At 9 o'clock they were not sure whether they wanted OSG police?

Mr WAITES: No 9.30 when I got the call. The message I received was that they were calling for equipment, not personnel.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: But you asked whether they needed the police?

Mr WAITES: That is right.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: And they could not tell you at that stage?

Mr WAITES: That is right.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Did they come back to you at some stage and tell you?

Mr WAITES: Superintendent Smith rang me back and told me that the matter was under control.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Approximately how much later was that?

Mr WAITES: He rang me just on, I think it was 11.30.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: So at 11.30 you were still being told that the situation was under control?

Mr WAITES: That is right.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: And you did not know whether there were operational support group police there or not?

Mr WAITES: No. Well, I knew there were some--

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: You did not know there was a line there?

Mr WAITES: No.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: At that stage were you told whether the equipment that was needed had arrived?

Mr WAITES: Again, I did not go into detail because I was told it was under control. There was no need for me to enquire as to what was there given that I had information that it was under control.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: So it was not until 1.15 when you made the call that you were told that it was not under control?

Mr WAITES: No, the call at 1.15 was for more resources in the form of more OSG and more assistance by numbers of police. It was then that I asked what was going on and was told and indicated that I would come in, and then I actually went there and on the way there spoke to the duty operations inspector to ensure that there were more resources coming from right across Sydney.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: At that stage were you told what resources were there in terms of the number of OSG police who were there?

Mr WAITES: Not the number of OSG police. I was told how many police were there.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: And how many was that at 1.15?

Mr WAITES: At 1.15 when I got the call I was told that there were about 70 police there.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: And you do not know whether they were OSG or not?

Mr WAITES: No, I do not know how many of those were OSG, but certainly when I got there, which was some 15 minutes later, those on the line were OSG trained officers.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: And that was 25?

Mr WAITES: Yes.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: And by that stage they had the equipment?

Mr WAITES: They had all that equipment, yes.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Did you do a report? Have you done a report on the evening's events?

Mr WAITES: I have done a report to the review Coburn, yes.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: That is to the police task force itself?

Mr WAITES: That is right.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: What is the status of that report?

CHAIR: Can we perhaps have Ms Griffin?

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Can I just finish my questions?

CHAIR: Well, we have a series of specific questions which you have now got to, the first one of which is: Could you advise the Committee of the status of the various inquiries, et cetera, Strike Force Timepiece, Strike Force Coburn and so on. We can get on to that now certainly, but I think perhaps if we have Ms Griffin's question, then we can get into that whole series of questions.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Well, I have asked the question and I would like an answer to it before we move on.

CHAIR: Well, the trouble is that the form in which you have asked it--

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: I have only had 10 minutes of questioning in this session and I have a lot of questions.

CHAIR: Which session is that?

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Since the police officers arrived. I have been very patient.

CHAIR: Well, I do not know that anyone else has had any more.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Well, the time has gone, madam Chair, and I would like an answer to the question that I have already asked.

CHAIR: I am trying to suggest that it is probably more logical, if you are going to get into question 19 and the following questions under a new heading, that we--

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Well, it may be your logic, but I would like an answer to the question I have already asked.

CHAIR: Perhaps I could suggest that Commissioner Waites or whoever of you answer the question in that broader form because we have asked it obviously--

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Well, it is a very direct, detailed question.

CHAIR: Answer Mr Pearce's question, but in the context of the written question that we sent you.

Mr MADDEN: There are a range of inquiries being conducted in relation to events of that weekend, 15 and 16 February.

Strike Force Jensen was a critical incident team set up to investigate the death of Thomas Hickey. That has been in concert with the Coroner and the coronial hearing will commence, I believe, in July of this year.

Strike Force Timepiece was formed to investigate the criminal activity of people involved in

the riot on 16 February. Strike Force Timepiece involved 14 investigators and an analyst and to this point has made 35 arrests for a range of offences, most of them affray, riot, violent disorder and throw missile. There are at least four people who remain wanted as a result of that inquiry.

Strike Force Coburn was formed at the Commissioner's and my request to investigate the decision-making, the activities, the response, the resources used on the night of the riot. I then added to Coburn's scope of activity to examine the capacity of the entire State, that is police wherever they may be located, to respond to incidents of a similar nature, my purpose being to make sure that we were ready, irrespective of what was thrown at us, anywhere in the State.

I am also aware that a WorkCover investigation has been commenced to investigate the resources supplied to police during the night to ensure that there have been no breaches of occupational health and safety.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: What is the status of Assistant Commissioner Waites' report?

Mr MADDEN: I can answer that: His report has gone to Assistant Commissioner Laycock, who is heading up Strike Force Coburn. Strike Force Coburn called for reports right across the State of officers who were interested in putting forward submissions and Mr Waites was one of those. Strike Force Coburn - we anticipate the report due at the end of this month. It was delayed because of the complexity of the task by me asking them to look at the State level, that is to take in the whole State. That has delayed its initial response to us.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Could we have a copy of Assistant Commissioner Waites' report, please?

CHAIR: Do we need to take advice on that?

Mr MADDEN: If I could take it on notice and consult externally, I am happy to come back and indicate that. There are things in there in terms of strategies again that I just want to be careful of publicising.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: I am sure we could keep those confidential.

CHAIR: Well, that would be something new. Perhaps we could come back to that in the in camera session.

Mr MADDEN: If we could.

CHAIR: And you could explain perhaps all or part that may or may not need to be confidential and not come to us or whatever. If the report is going to be out at the end of May that may make a difference given that we are still having hearings into June. Ms Griffin, you had a question?

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Well, I was not finished, but I am happy to allow another member to ask questions, but I would just put you on notice that we have not finished.

The Hon. KAYEE GRIFFIN: We had some evidence given previously today in relation to the needle van which is stationed in The Block and several submissions have commented to the inquiry that it encourages the drug problem in the area. I would like to seek your views on it.

Mr MADDEN: The NSW Police are committed to agreements made with the department of health and to enforcing government policy, which is about harm minimisation in terms of responding to drug issues, and clearly there are difficulties operationally in complying with that in the sense that the harm minimisation strategy and the presence of the needle van, and adopting the consideration that it is all about harm minimisation, but at the same time police have difficulty in enforcing the law. We are charged with the enforcement of the law.

What happens in terms of the needle exchange is that there is ongoing consultation between NSW Police and the department of health, and indeed it is an issue that has appeared in the Redfern/Waterloo project in terms of two competing views, but each understanding the other's needs, so whilst I understand totally the need for an exchange van or a supply van to try to stop the spread of infectious diseases, the fact that it is located in The Block causes an issue in terms of a honey pot effect, and that is that there are large numbers of needles exchanged, as you would be aware. Originally its location in Hugo Street near the kids' playground area during the entire day was, from a police perspective, very difficult because what it did was allow people, the transients who come in off the railway, to come down to The Block to where the kids were playing and to engage in their drug dealing, getting needles and actually shooting up in the area.

Police with the department of health agreed to move the van for two hours a day and it has been moved down to Abercrombie Street, near the Hudson Street area, which is an industrial area, but it still remains a problem operationally in a sense because we are encouraging officers to do everything they can to stop people using drugs and to enforce rules and legislation about suppliers, people who may be in possession of drugs, so in effect people are getting off the railway and are being stopped, people are being searched, names are being taken, move-alongs are occurring, but people can then go to the needle exchange van or needle supply van and obtain syringes which facilitate drug use in and around the area.

What we have identified is that through our heavy policing at either end of The Block people are now obtaining their drugs in The Block and actually shooting up in The Block at places like Caroline Street, so the fact that the needle exchange van is there, the large numbers of needles that are supplied and intelligence we have received which says that some of the dealers will actually supply the drug plus the needle so it is effectively a pack that is supplied as an exchange for funds, does create problems for us and we continue to work with the department of health to try to find solutions to that exact issue. Again, we are talking of competing priorities: Department of health and police. One is law enforcement; one is harm minimisation, and they often conflict.

CHAIR: Do the police know about the users of the needle van, where they come from, how far out of Redfern, Waterloo and so on the users come from?

Mr MADDEN: We collect intelligence from the people we do speak to, those we do search. It is our belief that the large proportion of those people who obtain needles do not come from the Redfern/Waterloo area, they do not come from The Block, they are actually coming in from other areas and obtaining needles, and the sheer numbers of needles that are supplied would support that assertion.

CHAIR: Do we have a sense of what geographical areas they are coming from or is it simply Sydney?

Mr MADDEN: It is very hard, because of the number of people that do come in. We have anecdotal evidence of people coming from Campsie, Campbelltown, Bankstown, the southern suburbs, the northern suburbs. We do not stop every person, so it is very difficult for me to say that 20 percent come from south-western or along those lines, but clearly they are coming from a large number of areas and indeed there is even some intelligence that would suggest they come from Kings Cross to obtain their needles in the area.

CHAIR: It does seem that the answer to that question is related to the issue about the most desirable location of the van; where people are coming from and its location are inter-related.

Mr MADDEN: Yes, it is interrelated, and that is one of the reasons we wanted to move it out of Hugo Street around to Abercrombie because if we can actually move it to a point where we are not getting through traffic through The Block or in the areas we may be able to achieve the needs of the department of health in terms of harm minimisation and allow police enforcement practices, but at a moment there is a memorandum of understanding with the department of health about what is appropriate and we cannot target people who are using the needle exchange van and we cannot, for want of a better term, harass but target in the sense of speaking to them and getting names, details,

searching and doing what we would as police officers do normally.

The Hon. KAYEE GRIFFIN: How long has the memorandum of understanding that the police have with the department of health been in operation?

Mr MADDEN: The MOUs were created at the time that the concept of needle exchange or needle supply was created, so I cannot give you an exact date for that. It has not been updated in one sense, it just remains an issue that is being discussed between Redfern local area command and the department of health, but I cannot tell you a date, I am sorry.

The Hon. KAYEE GRIFFIN: There have been other needle vans operating around the city of Sydney. I recall one at Campsie.

Mr MADDEN: Yes.

The Hon. KAYEE GRIFFIN: Do you have any idea whether some have been stopped because of some of the issues you have been talking about?

Mr MADDEN: Not specifically about that one. The needle exchange van at Redfern actually came from Kings Cross, so it was moved at a point in time I believe in 2002, although I would have to check exactly, but it was moved from Kings Cross to Redfern and now supplies from Redfern. We have met with the department of health through my office to see if there are any alternatives and some of those seem to be that what was proposed at the time was back-pack exchanges, that is department of health officers going in with back-packs with syringes to exchange, or vending machines or whatever else may be appropriate, but I am not sure that will work in terms of the large numbers that exist at the moment.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: You have said more or less that the harm minimisation approach and the criminalisation of hard drugs are effectively in competition, they are opposites and you are negotiating the places and so on so that you can basically have two contradictory approaches. Is the fact that hard drugs are illegal a major driving force of crime in that area?

Mr MADDEN: The fact that people purchase drugs in the area drives a whole lot of crime in the area.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Bag snatching and so on?

Mr MADDEN: Yes, so it is the availability of trying to obtain funds to make purchases. If you moved out of Redfern and looked at some of the other locations where we have trouble with methadone clinics, where people are committing crime around methadone clinics, it is the same type of thing where people are looking for funds to make purchases, so there is no doubt in my mind, and I am sure that Commander Dennis Smith would agree, that the drug problem in Redfern is driving a considerable amount of their crime and the point I tried to make earlier is that if you look at the nature and type of crime, street robberies, steal from person and particularly the smashing of windows of cars and removal of available goods which can then be exchanged either for drugs or for money for the purpose of purchasing drugs.

The Hon. Dr Arthur CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: The illegality of drug use is a major problem for crime, is that what you are saying?

Mr MADDEN: I think if they were not illegal--

The Hon. Dr Arthur CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: It would not cost so much money.

Mr MADDEN: Well, people would still have to make purchases, whether it be legal or not it is an industry in terms of people making a profit, and whether they were legal or not - and that is not a decision for the New South Wales Police I stress.

The Hon. Dr Arthur CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: I did not say it was.

Mr MADDEN: They would still have to make purchases and then there is all the crime associated with people who are drug affected and the ongoing, so there is a huge impact of the drug trade and drug use.

The Hon. Dr Arthur CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Would you say this is a failure of the prohibition ethos in the approach to drug policy?

Mr MADDEN: No, I do not think there is a failure of prohibition. I think that you have two policies that are running beside each other and often there is conflict between them. It is not so much a failure of prohibition because we do see when we target people and work on different operations, we see decline in the drug trade but equally we are very conscious of the need for harm minimization strategies.

The Hon. Dr Arthur CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: If you target an area though and that drug problem goes away, doesn't it just go away to somewhere else or it is suppressed until new passage ways or new pathways for drug supply are developed and then it springs up again. Is that it?

Mr MADDEN: I would not like to make comments for Dr Don Weatherburn but I am sure that having read some of his research, he indicated that with the heroin drought that occurred, so there is a sense of it is not available. What happened was, there was a reduction in the number of users. Albeit, the cost went up and for some people they continued to make their purchases but I am sure he would argue that there was actually a reduction in the number of users at the time of the heroin drought.

The Hon. Dr Arthur CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: But that was a drought in Thailand or something wasn't it, it was not an operational police matter in New South Wales?

Mr MADDEN: The heroin drought was caused by a number of things, including issues in Thailand, Afghanistan, significant seizures by Customs, significant seizures by New South Wales Police, so a whole lot of contributing factors brought us to a point where the cost of heroin went up, the purity went down and the availability went down.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: I just wanted to explore further on the van. You said something about them going away into The Block to inject. Would that be in laneways, did you say in laneways?

Mr MADDEN: Yes, what we discovered, conscious that there have been a number of operations targeting drugs in Redfern particularly since 2001 when we saw significant numbers, there have been a range of operations that have continued on and what we found in late 2002 was that people were coming in by train, they were going into The Block and making purchases and then they were leaving with their drugs in fact on their person.

As a result of Operation Player at that time, which was a series of investigations which resulted in a number of arrests, and significant high visibility policing at the two ends of The Block. We now find ourselves in the situation where people are coming into The Block, making their purchases and then shooting up in the area, so they are actually using places like, at the moment we know that Caroline Lane is a problem for us.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: So it is a shooting gallery really, isn't it?

Mr MADDEN: It is a lane. Whether you call it a gallery or not, it is not a house, it is a lane, so people are finding other places to use their drugs on site.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Are they shooting up in the houses as well?

Mr MADDEN: We are not 100 per cent sure how big that is or whether it is occurring to a large degree. Again, when we did the operations we ran, over the last few months and last year, we believe that is actually declining.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: You said before you have got some sort of hands off memorandum of understanding with the Health Department not to target heroin users. How do you then fight the crime that you are talking about that is associated with heroin?

Mr MADDEN: The hands off is, and that is where the difficulties arise, is the MOU would suggest that we do not target offenders that are using the needle supply van or going to the needle supply van, but what is a reasonable distance in terms of for a police officer to make a decision about how far is that away from the van not to target an individual, and so we find those sorts of decisions being placed upon police officers to say, well, that is okay and having been advised by Superintendent Smith, he has received comments by Department of Health officials, about you may have breached some of the MOUs, in other words, you might have come too close to the van in terms of talking to people or getting names or searching people close to the van.

I think that is the point I am trying to make, is that there is a difficulty in trying to determine what is a safe area? When do you target a person? When someone comes off the railway they are not in the vicinity of the van, so we can target them, but once they get closer to the van we cannot target them because of the agreement in terms of the harm minimization.

I think that is the point I am trying to make, it is a very difficult line for police on the street to make out in the field and that is what started this entire discussion about the challenges for officers is that they are caught in two competing ideologies in one sense.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: If someone had twenty syringes you would think that that would be something you would want to address, if they were issued with twenty syringes at a time?

Mr MADDEN: Well, obviously anyone with twenty syringes would be obviously a target for us.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Just to go back to the shooting up, do you agree with the Government submission that there are no known shooting galleries or drug houses on The Block?

Mr MADDEN: Madam Chair, I am entering into a difficult area here in terms of ongoing investigations.

CHAIR: We could come back to that.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Have some popped up since the Government submission, have they?

Mr MADDEN: I do not believe there are shooting galleries, that is houses where they are shooting up. What I did say though was that street shooting, such as Caroline Lane is the emerging problem. It is the second part of your question that I am avoiding at this point.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Just one final question in terms of Strike Force Timepiece I think it was called. You mentioned about 35 people were arrested, was that right?

Mr MADDEN: Yes.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: And how many of those are on bail?

Mr MADDEN: I could not tell you off the top of my head, I would have to get that data for you and provide that at a later stage.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: And you could at the same time give us the information on

how many are repeat offenders as well?

Mr MADDEN: Yes. You are not after names, you are just after numbers?

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: No, we are not after names, just numbers.

The Hon. KAYEE GRIFFIN: Some submissions to the inquiry stated there is a high incidence of violence against police in the Redfern area. Could you comment on the level of violence against police and advise how the police force is addressing the issue?

Mr MADDEN: Let me just take the statistics on assault police, which is a good gauge in terms of violence against police. Redfern features alongside of other city commands such as Kings Cross, City Central and Surry Hills. Indeed, City Central experiences a higher rate of assault police than does Redfern and has consistently over a number of months. But if you take into account the area in which the central CBD and the areas that we are talking about, Kings Cross, the city, Surry Hills and Redfern, and the difficulties in terms of policing that area, the type of clientele you deal with on a regular basis, the influence of alcohol, the influence of drugs, police get called to confrontational situations and that is what they are doing, they are arriving and they are being assaulted in the course of their duty.

We try and prepare officers to deal with that type of event right from their training at the New South Wales Police College in terms of defensive tactics. In terms of the provision of the best equipment we can possibly have, and that includes the extendable batons, which each officer carries, it includes OC spray as an alternative to the lethal force which is provided by the Glock. Other preventative tactics, training and techniques which are as each officer undertakes a mandatory component every year. So every officer in New South Wales, operational officer, undertakes a mandatory package of defensive package training, and that includes the use of their weapon, OC, the baton and various spontaneous knife defences, etcetera, defending themselves against people attacking them with knives.

So we give them the equipment, we give them the training. In Redfern specifically we have identified that they will be exposed to or could be exposed to riotous behaviour and as a result over the last twelve months we have commenced in undertaking a riot training course. It is not the full operation support group course, which goes for two weeks, but it is a familiarisation with riot techniques, crowd behaviour, crowd psychology, familiarity with the equipment, the shields, the batons, the helmets and other equipment that are available to them.

We then have the back up of supervisors and a range of other people with the best radio communication we can provide. Recently there was a criticism that there was a black spot in and around The Block and within a very short time we had our technicians down to identify that there was no black spot, so we are trying to ensure the best possible officer safety for those officers in the field.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Assistant Commissioner Waites, I just want to continue to explore some of those issues I was talking about before. When you arrived at about 1.30 or 1.40 was it in the morning, there were twenty five police on the line and they were all OSG trained and fully equipped?

Mr WAITES: Yes.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Then you sent out or you wanted to send out a message then for further OSG trained police, is that what you said before?

Mr WAITES: No, there was a message that had gone out prior to my arrival for further OSG police and in fact I then confirmed with the OSG co-ordinator, I telephoned him that he was actually in the process of calling those out.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: They arrived when?

Mr WAITES: They arrived between, or some had already arrived when I was arriving and others arrived right up until 3 am.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: How many OSG trained police did you have by 3 am?

Mr WAITES: I cannot give you the exact count because I did not go along and count the line. I can supply that later on but I cannot give you the exact count. The front line were OSG from the time I arrived, the front line got up to over fifty police.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Were they all fully equipped?

Mr WAITES: Yes.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Was it the case that some of those on the front line ended up being on that front line for in excess of four or five hours?

Mr WAITES: I have had reports of that but I am not able to ascertain that at this stage, as I said, because of the involvement of this ongoing review, that will be information that will come from that. My understanding of it is that there were many officers who were there earlier in the night, as the OSG were arriving they were moved from the line and others in the line were actually allowed to stand down for breaks and then come back into the line.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: You had your command position just behind the line at that stage still, didn't you?

Mr WAITES: That is right.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: When did you move your command position away from the line?

Mr WAITES: When you say just behind the line, I was beyond - the line was probably, it was to the western side of Gibbons Street, part way down towards the railway station. My command post was in Lawson Street, to the east of Gibbons Street, and when I say I was behind the line, walking up behind the line was only for about ten or fifteen minutes and then I was back at the command post. The command post was then not - there was another line formed back from the front line, there was a secondary line formed of general duties police officers, this line was on the actual eastern side of Gibbon Street.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: And they did not have riot gear?

Mr WAITES: Those who were in that line were issued with helmets and shields, in the front of that line but we did not have enough shields to go to all those. They were well out of reach of the missiles, etcetera, at that stage.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: They were out of reach of the missiles?

Mr WAITES: The second line well and truly was.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Were you aware at any stage when you needed equipment that there was riot equipment. There was a suggestion that there were twenty sets of riot gear left at other stations, including Canterbury for some time?

Mr WAITES: Yes, and there was in fact, there was riot equipment at stations right throughout metropolitan Sydney. I had called for some of that. In the end we did not need it because we were able to get sufficient from the Sydney Police Centre. It was about accessing that equipment and getting it up there because of some misunderstandings amongst some of the other OSG co-ordinators, there was more than enough equipment available at the end of the night, it was getting it

there at the time that was important.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: What do you categorise as the end of the night?

Mr WAITES: By the time that we had struck 3 am and the police were moving forward, every officer, from the time I arrived there, every officer on the front line had equipment. There was nobody passed through the line and nobody who did not have equipment was required to go on the line. That was probably from 1.30 on. After that, up till 3 am, as we kept bringing in more resources, those who were going into the line to make it stronger were all OSG trained or given full equipment and the surplus equipment, those who were second in line who were out of reach, were given equipment for their own, I suppose really self confidence.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Whose decision was it to adopt the tactics of leaving the police standing there being stoned?

Mr WAITES: When I arrived there my primary concern was firstly to identify what level of decision making had occurred. It was then that I realized that organizationally in some respects we had failed to give the right level of training to our commanders and our field commanders. There was a very obvious lack of understanding of that sort of situation from the officers who were around. They had not been trained for it, they had not been prepared for it. I am talking about those in command positions.

I looked about for persons that I knew there and I was only new to the area, but I was the only officer that I was aware of there that had actually previously been through riots.

Whilst those police were in place, I made a decision to keep them there at that point for two reasons, one, I was not going to move forward. I had to look after the safety of those officers so therefore they needed to be protected. I also was conscious of the need not to injure the people who were involved in the riot. Many of those were children and any sort of tactics we were going to apply had to be conscious of the fact that they were probably being led by crowd psychology as opposed to any other malice, and therefore there was a need to look after their safety as well.

The decision to keep the line where it was from my arrival was simply the fact that it was a way of securing the township as such. The officers who were on it were all protected and it was about maintaining the line because until we had sufficient resources to be able to safely move the line forward and then at the same time ensure that we did not injure other people.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: That lack of training and experience and disorganization was actually compounded by your own mistake when you got there wasn't it, in not following standard procedures where you set up your command post?

Mr WAITES: I don't know that I did not follow standard procedures.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: You said so earlier on.

Mr WAITES: No, I said that what I did, I made decisions going by what information I had from there, decisions that I would have made differently had I had more information.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Was it the case that the police video unit was called to the scene to help identify law breakers without adequate video camera batteries? Was that true?

Mr WAITES: No. When I arrived there, the police in Redfern were in fact using their own video and that was the one there was an issue of batteries with. When the video unit arrived as a support, they were fine, but there was a video camera being operated by a constable from Redfern when I arrived and that had power problems.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: I was concerned about mental health and forensic patients. Is that any worse in the Redfern area than in other areas?

Mr MADDEN: I do not have any data on it, sir, I am not exactly familiar. In terms of the demographics, some of the demographic material that was provided earlier, my understanding is that with the low socioeconomic index, considerable unemployment, alcohol problems and drug problems, you would normally find associated problems in terms of mental health.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: But it is not a thing that your police particularly complain about or have problems with?

Mr MADDEN: Understand, sir, that I am talking to 80 local area commanders. It has not been an issue that has been specifically raised with me, but Superintendent Smith would be clearly able to answer your questions in relation to the problems that exist in Redfern.

CHAIR: And we will be talking to the health department later. Before we finish and clear the room so that we can have our short in camera session, there are two things: We gave two weeks from today to witnesses earlier as a deadline to produce documents and answers to questions on notice. Would that be suitable for you?

Mr MADDEN: Off the top of my head, madam Chair, I do not know exactly all of the issues, but obviously they have been written down for me, so if you would not mind if I could have a look at that list in due course and provide advice back to you?

CHAIR: Well, roughly, if we say two weeks, but if there is a problem, as there was with one item this morning.

The other thing is could I say, perhaps particularly to the media but to others who may wish to come to our second day of hearing tomorrow, as you will know from what we have put on the web site and said elsewhere, our hearing tomorrow in Redfern is confidential until 3 p.m. at the request of the people who are giving evidence and then from 3 p.m. it is a public hearing like this one. Could I request that anyone who wishes to come tomorrow not come until 3 p.m.? It would be a great help - we will have a break - if we could set up, whether it is microphones or whatever it is, all together so that we are not interrupting the different witnesses who will come after 3 p.m.

We will now have our brief in camera session.

(Evidence continued in camera)

(The witnesses withdrew)

(The Committee adjourned at 4.25 p.m.)