

Standing Committee on Social Issues

Inquiry into issues relating to Redfern and Waterloo

Final Report

Ordered to be printed by resolution of the House

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Terms of reference

1. That the Standing Committee on Social Issues inquire into and report on:
 - (a) policing strategies and resources in the Redfern/Waterloo areas,
 - (b) other existing government programs in the Redfern/Waterloo areas, including local, state and federal programs,
 - (c) non-government services and service provision in the Redfern/Waterloo areas,
 - (d) strategies under the current New South Wales Government “Redfern/Waterloo Partnership Project”, and the effectiveness in meeting the needs of local Indigenous and other members of the community,
 - (e) proposals for the future of the area known as “The Block”,
 - (f) any other matters arising from these terms of reference.
2. That the Committee table an interim report by 31 July 2004 and a final report by 30 November 2004.

These terms of reference were referred to the Committee by resolution of the Legislative Council 26 February 2004 [Item 12, Legislative Council Minutes No. 41].

Committee membership

- Jan Burnswoods MLC, Australian Labor Party (**Chair**)
- The Hon Robyn Parker MLC, Liberal Party (**Deputy Chair**)
- The Hon Dr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans MLC, Australian Democrats
- The Hon Kayee Griffin MLC, Australian Labor Party
- The Hon Greg Pearce MLC, Liberal Party
- The Hon Ian West MLC, Australian Labor Party

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Chair's foreword

I am pleased to present the Committee's Final Report on issues relating to Redfern and Waterloo. The Committee's Interim Report was tabled in August 2004. This Final Report, building on the significant issues raised in the Interim Report, deals with matters such as the relationship between police and Aboriginal people, the Human Services Review, the adequacy of government and non government services and the new Redfern Waterloo Authority.

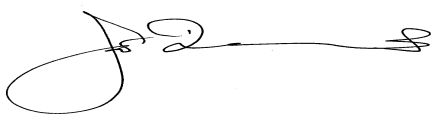
The issues facing Redfern and Waterloo are complex and challenging. During the Inquiry we have spoken to over a hundred people and conducted numerous meetings and hearings in the area. The evidence we gathered throughout this process informs the content of both Reports and I am very grateful to all the participants who gave us their time and expertise. The Committee has endeavoured to provide a comprehensive and balanced overview of the issues and produce practical and forward-looking recommendations.

On behalf of the Committee, I would particularly like to thank the representatives of the many non government agencies who contributed to the Inquiry. Despite its 'consultation fatigue', as one of our witnesses expressed it, the non government sector continues to seek improvements to service delivery in Redfern and Waterloo. We are also indebted to the many members of the Redfern and Waterloo communities who participated, including members of the Aboriginal community, tenants of the Waterloo housing estates, residents and activists of the area and the young Aboriginal people we spoke to.

This Report could not have been completed without the dedication of Committee members and I thank them for their commitment to this Inquiry. I particularly thank the members for their hard work in achieving this unanimous Final Report. On behalf of the Committee I also extend thanks to the Secretariat for their dedication throughout this Inquiry, and particularly to Julie Langsworth who will be leaving us after seven years of invaluable work.

This Inquiry came to the Social Issues Committee as a result of the tragic death of a young Aboriginal man and the subsequent riot in February this year. On behalf of Committee members, I reiterate our deep regret for the death of the young man. The Inquiry has highlighted issues that have been raised many times about the considerable disadvantage experienced by the Aboriginal community, as well as the non-Aboriginal community. The establishment of the Redfern Waterloo Authority, together with the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, presents the opportunity to tackle the significant social disadvantage in the area and make a real difference to the lives of people in Redfern and Waterloo. We urge the Government to adopt the recommendations in our Report in order to deal with the complex issues facing these communities. The Committee will follow with great interest the progress of the Government's activities in Redfern and Waterloo.

I commend this report to the Government.



Jan Burnswoods MLC

Chair

Executive summary

This Inquiry was referred to the Standing Committee on Social Issues by resolution of the Legislative Council on 26 February 2004. The terms of reference were very broad and required the Committee to examine a range of issues and government activities in Redfern and Waterloo. They also required us to table an Interim Report, released in August, and this Final Report.

The Interim Report covered a number of significant issues including the role and effectiveness of the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, the redevelopment of the Block, a number of policing matters and issues surrounding drug and alcohol facilities including the mobile needle and syringe service. It contained 22 recommendations, a number of which have resulted in recent Government initiatives.

In this Final Report we provide a brief update on the matters explored in the Interim Report, and examine and make recommendations on various issues including: policing; the Human Services Review; government and non government services; the Redfern Waterloo Authority, the Redfern Waterloo Plan and the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project (RWPP); and the future of the two suburbs. The two Reports should be read along side each other.

During the Inquiry we conducted 13 days of hearings, with a total of 139 witnesses. In addition, we received 94 written submissions. Having focussed on Redfern in the first stage of the Inquiry, in the second stage we made special effort to consult with residents of Waterloo, so as to address the issues facing both communities confidently. We also conducted a number of private hearings with residents and Aboriginal and non Aboriginal service providers, at the request of participants. We thank all the participants in this Inquiry for sharing with us their knowledge and expertise.

Chapter 2 - Policing issues

In our Interim Report the Committee examined several policing issues including violence against police and staffing. In Chapter 2 of this Final Report we provide a brief update on these matters and examine a number of other key concerns that arose during the Inquiry. One of the most important and challenging is the relationship between police and the Aboriginal community in Redfern and Waterloo. On the basis of evidence presented to us that this relationship is extremely troubled and a matter of great community concern, we have examined and made recommendations on a number of NSW Police strategies.

A great deal of evidence was presented to the Committee on Aboriginal cultural awareness training for officers at the Redfern Local Area Command (LAC), and the overwhelming view expressed to us was that more cultural awareness training is required. We note that additional training recently commenced at the Redfern LAC, and while we encourage this to continue, the Committee recommends that this training be reviewed in 2005 in order to develop the most appropriate program for the Redfern LAC. In addition, we recommend that the Minister for Police extend the Aboriginal cultural awareness education given to new recruits as part of their Diploma of Policing.

The Committee has also examined the effectiveness of the Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer (ACLO) program at the Redfern LAC, concluding that there are some deficiencies in the program that need to be redressed, although some steps have recently been taken. We recommend that the ACLO program at Redfern be reviewed within six months to determine whether additional changes need to be made. The Committee also recommends that the review of the support structures and training

programs available to ACLOs across NSW, promised by the Government as an outcome of the 2003 Alcohol Summit, be expedited.

Throughout the Inquiry the Committee heard from both police officers and community members about drug related crime in Redfern and Waterloo, particularly in and around the Redfern Railway Station and the Block. Whilst members of the local community expressed frustration at a perceived lack of arrests, police identified the considerable resources involved in policing drug related crime in the area and recent successes in targeting drug crime.

Chapter 3 - Human Services Review

In November the Government released the Report of the Human Services Review, a core initiative of the RWPP which will reshape the human services system in the area over the next ten years. In this chapter the Committee evaluates the Review Report prepared by the consultants Morgan Disney & Associates, in light of the evidence received from participants, primarily non government service providers. We also identify the major issues to be addressed to ensure the success of the forthcoming Human Services Plan. In response to widespread concerns about delays in the Review, we have recommended that this Plan be approved and publicly released on time, in May 2005.

Noting the exclusion of core government activities from the Human Services Review, we consider that a review of these services should occur in conjunction with the Human Services Plan. In response to concerns among non government agencies that the Review did not bring with it additional resources for service provision, we make further recommendations about potential outcomes of the Review in relation to funding, service amalgamations, resource reallocations and service facilities.

The chapter also addresses the issues of coordination and collaboration between services, service infrastructure and support, accountability requirements, and the implementation of the Human Services Plan. The Committee concludes by emphasising that the success of reforms will rest on the establishment of genuine partnerships between the RWPP, other government agencies and the non government sector. To assist this, we have recommended that the Government recognise and resource a local body to represent the non government sector and negotiate with Government in developing and implementing the Human Services Plan.

Chapter 4 - Government and non government services

While Chapter 3 focussed on reforms across the human services system as a whole, in this chapter the Committee documents the key concerns of inquiry participants in relation to a number of specific service systems in Redfern and Waterloo. The evidence gathered during this Inquiry did not enable an exhaustive analysis of all aspects of the service system, but where possible, the Committee has drawn conclusions and made recommendations.

A key concern among participants was the performance of the Department of Community Services (DoCS). Accordingly, the Committee recommends, as a priority, a number of actions on the part of DoCS' Eastern Sydney Community Service Centre to ensure much more effective action to protect children at risk, adequate training for caseworkers, and more effective relationships with other local agencies and with the Aboriginal community. In keeping with many participants' emphasis on the need to support the young people of Redfern and Waterloo, we have also recommended that the RWPP act to improve youth services by immediately reinstating the area's Youth Taskforce, addressing the poor facilities of some services, and ensuring adequate weekend and after-hours services.

One of the pivotal messages for the Committee from Aboriginal service providers was that the Government needs to recognise, show respect for and harness the community's strengths. A key way of doing this, they argued, is to support Aboriginal services. The Committee has encouraged the Government to come to grips with the challenge of developing funding and governance mechanisms that support autonomous services, and has recommended that the RWPP act on a suggestion of the Human Services Review to support a 'community healing strategy'. We return to the issue of respect in Chapter 6.

In subsequent sections of the chapter the Committee has considered and made recommendations in relation to drug and alcohol and mental health services, education, housing, employment, ageing and disability services, services targeting culturally and linguistically diverse communities, and community development programs. We conclude by identifying a number of important responsibilities to be addressed in the forthcoming review of core government services.

Chapter 5 - Redfern Waterloo Authority and Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project

This chapter examines the new Redfern Waterloo Authority (RWA). Although the Government only recently announced this initiative, the Committee has sought to provide an overview of the information available to us on the RWA, including the substantial parliamentary debate and public comment on it. The Committee considers the role of the RWA in relation to infrastructure and planning, the provision of affordable housing and employment. We make a number of recommendations in relation to the Redfern Waterloo Plan, including that the Authority produce a draft plan as soon as possible whilst ensuring appropriate consultation with the community, and that information gathered on the RED strategy be considered when developing the Plan. Further, the Committee recommends that the RWA conduct and publish an audit of government assets in the area, that redevelopment occur in consultation with the community, and that monies raised go directly to addressing the needs of the area. In line with this, we consider that the RWA should consult with Department of Housing tenants on any future plan to redevelop housing stock and ensure the provision of affordable housing. The Committee recommends that any future development be subject to a social impact assessment process.

This chapter provides a summary of issues raised in our Interim Report in relation to the future of the Block, and the responsibilities of the RWA in its redevelopment. The Committee recommends that the Government remain committed to its guarantee not to acquire the Block compulsorily, and to work with the Aboriginal Housing Company and the broader Aboriginal community in the redevelopment of the Block.

The Committee also examines the role of the RWPP in the context of the establishment of the RWA, noting the RWPP's extension until 2008 and additional resource allocation. In this section we reiterate the major themes that arose throughout the Inquiry in relation to the RWPP, including the effectiveness of the Project's consultation and communication processes, particularly in relation to the Aboriginal community, and the need for a strategic plan and performance accountability. Given its role in coordinating the implementation of the Human Services Review, the Committee recommends that the RWPP or a similar coordinating body be extended beyond 2008, and that it be adequately resourced, with appropriate performance measurement, so that the serious social issues facing the area are addressed. The Committee strongly believes that the RWA and RWPP must develop measures against which their performance can be assessed. The plans and objectives produced by the RWA and RWPP must undergo a regular process of evaluation and review, and be made public.

Chapter 6 - Future for Redfern and Waterloo

This chapter identifies the many long term issues that need to be addressed in Redfern and Waterloo, including social inclusion, urban renewal, affordable housing and employment opportunity. We note the Government's acknowledgment of the need for a long term strategy through the establishment of the RWA and initiatives such as the Jobs Plan. The Committee recommends that long term objectives and identifiable outcomes be developed and made public, and that the Government ensure that the Redfern Waterloo Plan be integrated into the broader Metropolitan Strategy.

The Committee also believes that the Government, through the RWPP and RWA, needs to conduct its operations with greater transparency, especially with the local community. Therefore we recommend that the Redfern Waterloo Plan, the RWPP Business Plan, the Jobs Plan, the Human Services Plan and strategic outcomes and objectives for the area, all be made public.

We are particularly concerned about the Government's relationship with non government organisations in Redfern and Waterloo, given the significant role that they play in the area. We reiterate our Interim Report recommendation that the RWPP and the RWA work on achieving genuine partnership between all levels of government, the non government sector and the local community in order to address the issues facing the two suburbs.

As noted throughout this Report, a number of significant Government initiatives aimed at addressing the issues in Redfern and Waterloo have only recently been announced. While we welcome the Government's response, it is too soon to know if these initiatives will successfully address the serious issues facing the area. The Committee believes that, in order to assess the effectiveness of these strategies, a further parliamentary inquiry should be conducted in 2006.

This Inquiry came to the Social Issues Committee as a result of the tragic death of a young Aboriginal man and the events surrounding the Redfern riot. In this final section of the Report, the Committee notes the statements made by all sides of politics acknowledging the serious disadvantage affecting Aboriginal people. We recommend that the NSW Government take a lead role in encouraging the ongoing commitment of all political parties and independents to address this social disadvantage.

Summary of recommendations

Recommendation 1

Page 26

That the Minister for Police extend the level of training received by new recruits in Aboriginal cultural awareness issues as part of their Diploma of Policing Practice.

Recommendation 2

Page 26

That the Minister of Police ensure that the Aboriginal cultural awareness training provided to officers at the Redfern Local Area Command is reviewed in 2005 in order to develop the most appropriate training program for the Local Area Command.

Recommendation 3

Page 33

That the Minister for Police ensure that the Redfern Local Area Command review its Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer program within six months to determine whether the new strategies that have been recently implemented have improved the program and whether any additional changes to the program need to be made. In addition, the results of that review should be included in the Government's response to this Report.

Recommendation 4

Page 34

That the Minister for Police expedite the promised examination of the support and training structures available to Aboriginal Community Liaison Officers, as contained in the Government's response to the NSW Alcohol Summit 2003, to determine whether additional support structures and training are required.

Recommendation 5

Page 51

That the Minister for Police undertake his six month review of the package of initiatives aimed at addressing policing issues in the Redfern LAC announced on 16 July 2004 as soon as possible after 16 January 2005. In addition, the findings of that review should be made public as soon as they are finalised.

Recommendation 6

Page 62

That the Government ensure that the Human Services Plan arising from the Human Services Review is approved and publicly released on time, that is, by May 2005.

Recommendation 7

Page 69

That the core activities of government agencies not included in the Human Services Review be formally reviewed in conjunction with the development of the Human Services Plan, in order to determine how those agencies need to change to improve the human services system of Redfern and Waterloo.

Recommendation 8

Page 71

That as part of the Human Services Plan, the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project:

- develop and use specific procedures for dealing with funded agencies in relation to reallocation of resources between agencies and the amalgamation of services
- approve and expedite a process for renovating or improving the facilities of services.

Recommendation 9*Page 72*

That where, during the implementation of the Human Services Plan, the need for additional resources is substantiated, funding be sought from the Federal, State and/or Local Governments.

Recommendation 10*Page 79*

That the Premier's Department act on the findings of the recent Grant Administration Review, to reduce the burden of funding and accountability requirements on non government agencies.

Recommendation 11*Page 84*

That the NSW Government, in liaison with the non government agencies in Redfern and Waterloo, recognise and resource a local body to represent the non government sector and act as a negotiation point with government in developing and implementing the Human Services Plan.

Recommendation 12*Page 93*

That the Department of Community Services' Eastern Sydney Community Service Centre take the following actions, as a matter of priority:

- establish a process for allocating and responding to level two and level three cases
- ensure adequate training and support for caseworkers, to optimise professional practice
- build its relationships with other agencies through better case coordination and interagency participation, including with non government agencies and at the caseworker level
- build its relationship with the Aboriginal community of Redfern and Waterloo through a more collaborative approach with Aboriginal families and service providers, and interagency participation.

Recommendation 13*Page 98*

That the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project immediately reinstate the Youth Taskforce and ensure that its membership includes representation of government and non government providers, as well as young people themselves.

Recommendation 14*Page 98*

That, in keeping with Recommendation 8 of this Report concerning the approval and expedition of a process for renovating or improving the facilities of services, the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project immediately consider the adequacy of accommodation for youth services in the area. In particular, the Partnership Project should ensure a speedy resolution of the issue of relocating the Fact Tree Youth Service to more appropriate facilities.

Recommendation 15*Page 98*

That in developing a Youth Services Plan, the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project and other members of the Youth Taskforce ensure that there is adequate provision for weekend and after hours youth services, including recreational activities.

Recommendation 16*Page 102*

That the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, as a matter of priority, make a formal commitment to actively supporting a 'community healing strategy' in the Redfern and Waterloo Aboriginal community, as proposed in the Human Services Review Report, and that it provide appropriate resources to support this. In addition, the Partnership Project should approach community leaders as soon as possible to ask the community to undertake the strategy.

Recommendation 17*Page 109*

That in establishing the community health facility in Lawson Street, the Central Sydney Area Health Service, ensure:

- the provision of a broad range of services at the facility
- the establishment of strong, ongoing links with existing services in the area
- full consultation with relevant stakeholders

and that consideration be given to the establishment of a formal consultation and governance mechanism such as a community board, and to the opportunity for research partnerships.

Recommendation 18*Page 109*

That in implementing the recommendations of the Human Services Review, the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project ensure the immediate development of a drug and alcohol services plan and a mental health services plan. Both must provide for adequate local services and culturally appropriate services.

Recommendation 19*Page 114*

That the Department of Education ensure, as a priority, that there are:

- comprehensive strategies in place in Redfern and Waterloo to address truancy, suspensions and exclusions
- adequate transport services to enable children from Redfern and Waterloo to attend Alexandria Park Community School.

Recommendation 20*Page 119*

That the Department of Housing continue to seek ways to address tenant concerns in relation to maintenance, the physical environment of the estate, estate and tenant management, and security and safety.

Recommendation 21*Page 119*

That the Redfern Waterloo Authority and the Department of Housing ensure that the process of redevelopment of public housing proceeds with extreme care in order to protect the rights of tenants and the Government's duty of care towards them. In particular, consultation, information sharing and maximum tenant choice must all be ensured.

Recommendation 22*Page 125*

That the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project and the City of Sydney Council, in consultation with the Redfern and Waterloo community, develop a community development strategy for the area, the primary focus of which is on community members and groups. The strategy should include provision for a small grants scheme to fund local community development activities.

Recommendation 23*Page 126*

That when implementing Recommendation 7 to formally review the activities of government agencies not included in the Human Services Review, the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project ensure that the following core government responsibilities are comprehensively considered:

- child protection services
- mental health services
- alcohol and other drug services
- education
- housing

- ageing and disability services.

In addition, the review should consider the cultural sensitivity of the full range of services, with regard to both the Aboriginal community and culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

Recommendation 24*Page 137*

That the NSW Government, through the Redfern Waterloo Authority, produce the draft Redfern Waterloo Plan as soon as possible and ensure that appropriate community consultation occurs in the development of the Plan. In addition, the Redfern Waterloo Authority should ensure that the consultation that has already occurred on the RED Strategy is considered in the development of the Plan.

Recommendation 25*Page 137*

That the NSW Government, through the Redfern Waterloo Authority, as a matter of urgency, conduct an audit of the Government assets in the Redfern and Waterloo area, and publish this audit including an itemised list identifying and describing the assets. The Redfern Waterloo Authority should ensure that any development of these assets is done in consultation with the Redfern and Waterloo communities, and that monies raised in the development of these assets go directly to addressing the needs of the area.

Recommendation 26*Page 140*

That the NSW Government, through the Redfern Waterloo Authority, consult with current public housing tenants on any future plans to redevelop public housing stock.

Recommendation 27*Page 140*

That the NSW Government, through the Redfern Waterloo Authority, consider measures to ensure the provision of affordable housing and allow for affordable housing targets.

Recommendation 28*Page 141*

That the NSW Government, through the Redfern Waterloo Authority, ensure that all future commercial or residential development applications of scale are subject to a comprehensive social impact assessment process.

Recommendation 29*Page 144*

That the NSW Government remain committed to its guarantee not to compulsorily acquire the Block at Redfern. In addition, the NSW Government, through the Redfern Waterloo Authority and the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, should work with the Aboriginal Housing Company, and the broader Aboriginal community, to enable the redevelopment of the Block.

Recommendation 30*Page 150*

That the NSW Government ensure that the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, or a similar coordinating body, is extended beyond 2008, is adequately resourced, with appropriate performance measurement, so that the long term social disadvantage in Redfern and Waterloo can be addressed.

Recommendation 31*Page 155*

That the NSW Government, through the Redfern Waterloo Authority and the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, ensure that the Redfern Waterloo Plan and the Human Services Plan contain an appropriate set of indicators and performance measurements by which the objectives of the

Plans can be assessed. In addition, the Plans should be made publicly available; and regular evaluation and review should be undertaken and made public.

Recommendation 32*Page 159*

That the NSW Government, through the Redfern Waterloo Authority and the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, establish short, medium and long term strategic objectives for the area and key outcomes associated with those objectives. In addition, the Government's performance against these objectives should be regularly reviewed and reported to the public.

Recommendation 33*Page 159*

That the NSW Government ensure that the Redfern Waterloo Plan 2004-2014 is integrated into the broader Metropolitan Strategy.

Recommendation 34*Page 159*

That the NSW Government, through the Redfern Waterloo Authority and the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, ensure that the strategic plans for the Redfern and Waterloo area identify and allow for the active involvement of local, State and Commonwealth Governments.

Recommendation 35*Page 161*

That the NSW Government, through the Redfern Waterloo Authority and the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, make a commitment to the Redfern and Waterloo community to make all plans, strategies, reports and accountability measures publicly available in a timely manner. In particular the NSW Government should release the following plans, strategies and documents as soon as they are completed:

- the Redfern Waterloo Plan 2004-2014
- the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project Business Plan
- the Jobs Plan
- the Human Services Plan
- strategic objectives and outcomes for the area as a whole.

Recommendation 36*Page 163*

That the NSW Government, through the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project and the Redfern Waterloo Authority, take all possible steps to achieve genuine partnership between State and Commonwealth agencies, the City of Sydney Council, the non government sector and the local community in order to address the issues facing Redfern and Waterloo.

Recommendation 37*Page 164*

That a further parliamentary inquiry into issues in Redfern and Waterloo and measures taken to address them be conducted in 2006.

Recommendation 38*Page 165*

That the NSW Government take the lead in encouraging all political parties and independents to adopt an ongoing commitment to Indigenous issues and work cooperatively with the Aboriginal community to address the serious social disadvantage affecting Aboriginal people.

Acronyms

ACLO	Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer
AHC	Aboriginal Housing Company
AMS	Aboriginal Medical Service Co-operative Ltd
ASD	NSW Police, <i>Aboriginal Strategic Direction 2003-2006</i>
ATSIC	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission
BOCSAR	NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research
CDEP	Community Development and Employment Projects scheme
COPS	Computer Operations Program System
CSAHS	Central Sydney Area Health Service
CSC	Community Service Centre
DoCS	NSW Department of Community Services
DVLOs	Domestic Violence Liaison Officers
LAC	Local Area Command
LACACC	Local Area Command Aboriginal Consultative Committee
NCOSS	Council of Social Service of New South Wales
NPSs	Needle and Syringe Programs
PACT	Police Accountability Community Team
RCADC	Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody
RED Strategy	Redfern Eveleigh Darlington Strategy
RWA	Redfern Waterloo Authority
RWPP	Redfern/Waterloo Partnership Project
RWADS	Redfern/Waterloo Anti-Drug Strategy
SCC	City of Sydney Council
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure

Chapter 1 Introduction

In August 2004 the Committee produced its Interim Report for this Inquiry. As directed by the terms of reference, the Final Report was due on 30 November 2004. On 18 November 2004 the Committee requested that the Legislative Council amend the terms of reference and set a new reporting date of Friday 17 December 2004. The reporting date extension was required to allow the Committee to consider the report of the Human Services Review and the announcements on the establishment of the Redfern Waterloo Authority. Both the Human Services Review and the Redfern Waterloo Authority are central to the terms of reference for this Inquiry and are dealt with throughout this Report.

This chapter briefly overviews the conduct of the Inquiry and provides an update on the other inquiries and investigations conducted into issues relating to Redfern and Waterloo, which were also dealt with in the Interim Report. The chapter concludes with an outline of the content and structure of this Report.

Conduct of the Inquiry

- 1.1 The terms of reference were referred to the Committee by resolution of the House on 26 February 2004. In the Interim Report we outlined the events of 14-16 February 2004 that led to this Inquiry.¹ We will not go over these events here except to reiterate the Committee's deep regret for the death of the young Aboriginal man and our sympathy to his family and friends, and the community. The Committee notes that the Department of Housing has offered to have a memorial erected on the site where he was injured. We understand the Government is in consultation with the family and community on this matter.²
- 1.2 As noted in the Interim Report, in the initial stages of the Inquiry the Committee called for submissions. While the closing date was 16 April 2004, the Committee has continued to accept new and supplementary submissions up until the final stages of drafting this Final Report. In total, the Committee received 94 submissions from a wide range of government and non government agencies as well as community representatives, individuals and academics.
- 1.3 In order to better inform those who participated in the inquiry process the Committee resolved to place all public submissions on our website. In addition, the Committee placed on the website a number of relevant documents including the Strike Force Coburn report and the report of the Human Services Review. As is usual practice, the uncorrected version of the transcript of public hearings was also placed on the website, usually within 24 hours of the hearing.
- 1.4 For this second stage of the Inquiry, the Committee held six days of hearings between September and November at which 79 witnesses appeared. In total, the Committee has held

¹ Standing Committee on Social Issues, *Inquiry into Issues Relating to Redfern/Waterloo: Interim Report*, August 2004, pp2-3 (hereafter *Interim Report*)

² Mr Mike Allen, Executive Director, Central Sydney Housing Services, NSW Department of Housing, Evidence, 2 November 2004, p10

13 days of hearings with 139 witnesses. These hearings were held at Parliament House and at various venues in Redfern and Waterloo. The Committee did conduct a number of hearings in private at the request of the participants. Some of the evidence provided at those private briefings has been used in this Report, after consideration by the Committee and in consultation with the individuals and organisations involved.

1.5 The Committee notes that in our Interim Report the focus was primarily on issues related to Redfern. In this second stage of the inquiry process the Committee has made a particular effort to consult with the Waterloo community. As witnesses raised with us many times, while Redfern and Waterloo share some characteristics, the two communities have important differences and very distinct concerns. In this Final Report we have tried to address the issues facing both communities.

1.6 Many of the issues, conclusions and recommendations in our Interim Report have progressed since the release of the Interim Report in August. In particular, Government announcements on the new primary health care facility and the further extension of the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project (RWPP) have occurred at least in part due to the evidence from inquiry participants and subsequent recommendations in our Interim Report. In his recent evidence to the Committee, Mr Michael Ramsey, Project Director of the RWPP suggested that the primary health care service, for example, addresses many of the issues raised by the Committee:

You raised that issue specifically in your Interim Report and this new facility responds exactly to the issues you raised in your Interim Report.³

1.7 A number of these issues are discussed in this Final Report, such as the establishment of the health facility and the extension and additional staffing and resources for the RWPP. In addition, the Committee briefly considers the issues raised in the Interim Report on the redevelopment of the Block and the Aboriginal Housing Company, and the implementation of the Government's announcements on 16 July 2004 aimed at addressing policing in the area. The Committee also deals with other significant Government announcements made since the Interim Report, such as the establishment of the Redfern Waterloo Authority.

1.8 The Committee thanks the participants in this Inquiry for sharing with us their knowledge and expertise, particularly given the 'consultation fatigue' being experienced by many members of the Redfern and Waterloo communities. We hope that you feel the process has been a useful one. The Committee notes the comments made by a number of witnesses that the negative stereotyping of the Redfern and Waterloo area by some of the media is counter productive, and expresses the hope that the media will take a responsible attitude to reporting future issues in relation to the area.

Other inquiries

1.9 The events of 14-16 February led to a number of inquiries and investigations. In our Interim Report we provided an overview of the scope and projected reporting dates for these inquiries. In this section we provide further information on their progress or completion.

³ Mr Michael Ramsey, Project Director, Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p20

NSW Police

- 1.10** In the weeks after the riot the New South Wales Police Commissioner requested an investigation into matters relating to the riot, called Strike Force Coburn. In early July the Committee wrote to the NSW Police Minister, the Hon John Watkins, requesting a copy of the Strike Force Coburn final report. In addition, the Committee recommended in the Interim Report that the Minister for Police release the Coburn report.⁴ On 17 August 2004 the Police Minister wrote to the Committee enclosing a copy of the *Strike Force Coburn: Final Report – Part A Analysis – Redfern Local Area Command Civil Unrest 15-16 February 2004* and an excerpt from the *Final Report – Part B NSW Police capacity to respond anywhere in NSW to incidents of violent disorder*. The documents were made available to the public and the media at the same time. As noted above, the Committee placed a copy of the Report on our website. Issues raised in the Coburn report relevant to the Inquiry are discussed in Chapter 2, Policing Issues.

NSW State Coroner

- 1.11** The NSW Coroner conducted an inquest for the purpose of clarifying the circumstances of the death of the young Aboriginal man to determine if any police misconduct occurred. After hearing from approximately 20 witnesses the Coroner handed down his findings on 17 August. In conclusion, the Coroner made the following finding:

Thomas James Hickey died at 1.20am on 15th February 2004, at Sydney Childrens' Hospital, Randwick, of penetrated injury of neck and chest sustained on the morning of 14th February 2004 when he fell from his bicycle and was impaled upon a steel fence at the rear of 1 Phillip Street, Waterloo, during police operations.⁵

- 1.12** The Coroner's report found that police were not responsible for the death of the young Aboriginal man. While raising some concerns about the reliability of some of the police evidence, he found that there was no evidence that police pursued or chased the young man. The Coroner noted that "I can say that the police vehicle was never tailgating the bike."⁶ A full version of the Coroner's report can be found at www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au.

NSW Ombudsman

- 1.13** As noted in the Interim Report, the NSW Ombudsman has a monitoring role in relation to the police investigation regarding the events of February 14 – 16. At the time of writing, the Ombudsman's oversight role relating to these investigations is ongoing. While the Ombudsman may produce a report and recommendations to the Police Commissioner about the conduct of the investigations, no report has been made to date.

⁴ See Recommendation 19, in *Interim Report*, August 2004, p106

⁵ John Abernethy, NSW State Coroner, *Inquest into the Death of Thomas James Hickey*, Glebe, NSW, 17 August 2004, p27

⁶ *Inquest into the Death of Thomas James Hickey*, p18

WorkCover NSW

- 1.14** WorkCover NSW is conducting an investigation in response to the riot, into the adequacy of the systems of work and other safety related controls applied by NSW Police. In response to a question without notice in November, the Minister for Industrial Relations, the Hon John Della Bosca MLC commented that:

The investigation is focusing on the systems of work in place at the time of the riot and includes the provision of training and personal protective equipment to police officers. WorkCover has met with representatives from the Redfern local area command and has conducted interviews with individual police officers, including ranking police officers, involved at the time of the riot.⁷

- 1.15** The Minister explained that discussions and interviews were continuing and WorkCover expected to complete the investigation 'later this month'.⁸

The structure of the Final Report

- 1.16** Chapter 2 considers the issues relating to policing strategies and resources not addressed in the Interim Report. Those issues include the relationship between the police and the local Aboriginal community, policing strategies and resources to deal with drug related crime in the area, the relationship between police and young people and the relationship between police and the Department of Community Services.
- 1.17** The Human Services Review, which will form the basis for a Government plan to reshape the human services system of Redfern and Waterloo, is the focus of Chapter 3. The chapter describes the landscape of need and service provision in the area before outlining the major findings and recommendations of the Review. It then critically evaluates those recommendations in light of the evidence before the Committee, identifying a number of important issues that the Government will need to address when developing and implementing its Human Services Plan.
- 1.18** While Chapter 3 deals with the human services system as a whole, Chapter 4 examines the adequacy of specific government and non government service systems. These include health services, child protection and family services, youth services, education, housing, employment, ageing and disability services, services for people of culturally and linguistically diverse communities, and the Aboriginal service system. The purpose of the chapter is to document the range of issues raised by inquiry participants and to identify priorities for the Government as it sets about the reform process.
- 1.19** Chapter 5 deals with the recent announcements made on the Redfern Waterloo Authority (RWA) and the extension of the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project. The chapter briefly examines the Parliamentary debate and public comment on the RWA and the legislation establishing the Authority. We consider the Authority as it relates to infrastructure planning,

⁷ Hon John Della Bosca MLC, Legislative Council, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 16 November 2004, p23

⁸ Hon John Della Bosca MLC, Legislative Council, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 16 November 2004, p23

affordable housing and employment. We outline briefly the information provided in our Interim Report on the redevelopment of the Block, and the impact of the recent announcements on its future redevelopment. The chapter also considers the new role for the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project within the structure of the RWA and the major issues for Redfern and Waterloo including consultation and communication, partnership planning and the need for performance accountability.

- 1.20** The final chapter of this Report, Chapter 6, considers some of the major issues to be addressed to ensure a sustainable future for Redfern and Waterloo. We look at the need for effective long term integrated planning, transparency in Government and the importance of working closely with the non government sector and the local community. The chapter concludes with a call for a future parliamentary review and for the continuation of broad political support in addressing issues facing Aboriginal people.

Chapter 2 Policing issues

The terms of reference require the Committee to examine policing strategies and resources in Redfern and Waterloo. Several issues associated with policing were examined in the Interim Report and an update on these is provided at the end of this chapter. The Committee examines further matters relating to policing in this Final Report. During the course of the Inquiry, many participants raised concerns about the relationship between the police and the Aboriginal community in Redfern and Waterloo. The Committee examines this relationship in some detail in this chapter. We also examine policing strategies and resources to deal with drug related crime in the area and briefly explore the interaction between police and the Department of Community Services.

Relationship between the police and the local Aboriginal community

- 2.1** The Committee considers it important to examine the relationship between the police and the Aboriginal community in Redfern and Waterloo for a number of reasons. First, the Committee received a large amount of evidence in submissions, hearings and forums about that relationship, much of which indicated that it was problematic and needed to be improved. Second, the terms of reference for this Inquiry were triggered by the riot that occurred in Redfern in February this year, involving a large number of Aboriginal people. The Committee is also aware that the relationship has a long history of turmoil in the area. In addition, as noted in a recent Parliamentary Library Research Service briefing paper, ‘the quality of the relationship between various Indigenous communities and the local police force is important as the police form the first point of contact with the criminal justice system. Indigenous persons are arrested at a much higher rate than non-Indigenous persons.’⁹
- 2.2** During the Inquiry the Committee sought the views of members of the local Aboriginal community and relevant Aboriginal organisations to ensure that the community had the opportunity to raise their concerns with us. Subsequently, submissions were received and oral evidence was taken from approximately 30 Aboriginal organisations and individuals. The Committee also held a private briefing with approximately 20 members of the Koori South Eastern Sydney Interagency (hereafter referred to as the Koori Interagency). The Committee is aware, however, that even the wide range of views expressed by these participants cannot be interpreted to cover everyone of Aboriginal background in the community and we have been mindful of this fact throughout our analysis.
- 2.3** The Committee also received a considerable amount of evidence from NSW Police in a number of hearings, including witnesses representing NSW Police State Command, the senior command at the Redfern Local Area Command (LAC) and three Aboriginal Community Liaison Officers. Submissions were also received from eight officers stationed at the Redfern LAC, as well as the NSW Police Association. The views of many members of the community and representatives of community organisations regarding the relationship between the police and Aboriginal people were also expressed in submissions and in oral evidence.

⁹ Drabsch T, *Indigenous Issues in NSW*, NSW Parliamentary Library Research Service, Briefing Paper 2/04, p29

Aboriginal community in Redfern and Waterloo

- 2.4** The history of the Block and the Aboriginal community in Redfern and Waterloo was examined in our Interim Report. In terms of population, in 2001 311 people from an Indigenous background lived in Redfern and 411 lived in Waterloo, which represents approximately 2.8 and 7.1 % of the population of those suburbs respectively.¹⁰ Redfern and Waterloo have a significantly larger Indigenous population living within their boundaries compared to the rest of Sydney, as Indigenous people account for only 1% of the total Sydney population.
- 2.5** Several inquiry participants emphasised the strength of the Aboriginal community in the area. For example, the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC) stated:
- Metro LALC feels that it is important to acknowledge that the community of Redfern & Waterloo is in fact a community with much to be proud of. The history of the community has heralded many significant political movements ... and maintains and honours both the traditional owners of the Sydney area and respects and honours the families that have long held historical links with the area.¹¹
- 2.6** The Committee also notes that the Aboriginal community is difficult to define, with its members coming from various traditional backgrounds. There is also a large transient population of Aboriginal people who visit the area frequently, but do not reside there, who are nonetheless considered to be part of the community in a number of ways.

Historical relationship between the Police and the Aboriginal community

- 2.7** The Committee considers that it is important to acknowledge that the historical relationship between the police and the Aboriginal community, which has largely been negative, has a significant impact on the current relationship, as noted by Talina Drabsch in her research paper:

The historical relationship between the police and Indigenous community has largely been negative. The report of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody described the genesis of a relationship that can at times be hostile: 'Police officers naturally shared all the characteristics of the society from which they were recruited, including the idea of racial superiority in relation to Aboriginal people and the idea of white superiority in general; and being members of a highly disciplined centralist organisation their ideas may have been more fixed than most; but above and beyond that was the fact that police executed on the ground the policies of government and this brought them into continuous and hostile conflict with Aboriginal people. The policeman was the right hand man of the authorities, the enforcer of the policies of control and supervision, often the taker of the children, the rounder up of those accused of violating the rights of the settlers.' [RCADC, National Report – Volume 1, Australian Govt Publishing Service, Canberra, 1991, p6] The relationship between the Indigenous community and the police in the past can have

¹⁰ *Redfern-Waterloo Community Safety Plan*, 10 March 2004, pp18-19 (information based on the 2001 Census)

¹¹ Submission 61b, Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council, p1

an impact on the way police are viewed by the Indigenous population today and vice-versa.¹²

- 2.8** Many inquiry participants called on the Committee to acknowledge this long history of conflict between the Aboriginal community and the police and, more broadly, the government. For example, one participant from the Koori Interagency stated that ‘what the government needs to do is to address colonisation, address the Stolen Generation, address those issues because it’s our past history that still affects us today.’¹³ Ms Tanya Plibersek MP, Federal Member for Sydney, emphasised that the current difficulties in the area must be viewed in context of the history of conflict between the two groups:

Policing issues must be approached with a thorough understanding of the long history of conflict between the local community and police. There is clear evidence that in the past some police have been racist and have harassed the Aboriginal community. Many people in the Aboriginal community mistrust the police because of past personal experiences with police, or because of issues such as black deaths in custody which have touched the whole community. This history combined with the entrenched racism experienced by the Indigenous community makes the development of positive relationships between the police and Aboriginal residents difficult but not impossible.¹⁴

- 2.9** Mr Kevin Smith, a member of the local Aboriginal community, described one aspect of the relationship between police and Aboriginal people in the seventies to illustrate the longstanding history of conflict between police and the community:

Towards the end of my apprenticeship I got involved with the Aboriginal land rights movement because of the continual arrests that were taking place outside the then Empress Hotel in Regent Street, Redfern, where the police wagons used to line up. There would be eight or nine of them. You would walk out of the pub and you would not even commit an offence and they would just grab you and throw you in the back of the van. Then they would not only charge you with the *Summary Offences Act*, which was in place then, they would also rob you of your weekly wages if you happened to be working. They charged you with being drunken and disorderly and took your wages. That was a common thing that took place, and everyone knew it. Everyone was aware of it.¹⁵

- 2.10** In 1990, as part of the National Inquiry into Racist Violence, Mr Chris Cuneen prepared a paper on Aboriginal/police relations in Redfern. His analysis is most instructive for an understanding of the history of the relationship, with many of the stories and experiences set out in his paper echoed in evidence before this Inquiry.¹⁶

¹² *Indigenous Issues in NSW*, p29

¹³ Participant, Koori South Eastern Sydney Interagency, 15 October 2004, p6

¹⁴ Submission 49, Ms Tanya Plibersek MP, Federal Member for Sydney, p10

¹⁵ Mr Kevin Smith, Evidence, 19 May 2004, p46

¹⁶ Cuneen C, *Aboriginal-police relations in Redfern: with special reference to the ‘police raid’ of 8 February 1990*, report commissioned by the National Inquiry into Racist Violence, Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, May 1990

- 2.11** The Committee also notes that there are long term attitudes held by some Aboriginal people toward police that are important to an understanding of how the relationship plays out today. In this regard, Assistant Commissioner Mark Goodwin, Operations Support Command, NSW Police, stated:

[W]hat I think the NSW Police struggles with is detractors who have an inbred hatred of police. They leverage on opportunistic incidents or jump on single inflammatory incidents. Unfortunately, the longer-term very good work that the police do down there—fuelled by alcohol particularly, and fuelled by highly volatile opportunistic inflammatory persons with a very long history of contacts in a negative manner with police—is overridden. I suppose a very good example is of the kids involved in the riot who were charged. A number of those were involved in PCYC programs at the South Sydney PCYC. In speaking to the police down there, they almost could not believe some of the footage that they saw because on a longer-term basis they have dealt with these kids in camps and in structured programs and in mentorship programs, and are dealing with that quite successfully. However, they are driven and fuelled by these opportunistic, single unit, inflammatory-type people that occupy the Block. That is what has fuelled the incident on the night there, I believe.¹⁷

- 2.12** The Chief Executive Officer of the Aboriginal Housing Company (AHC), Mr Michael Mundine, expressed similar views:

[T]here are always going to be our people who are negative towards the police situation. You still have the early seventies radicals that will just hate police for the rest of their lives.¹⁸

Current relationship between the police and the Aboriginal community

- 2.13** Over the nine months of this Inquiry, the Committee has heard a great deal of evidence about the current relationship between local Aboriginal people and the police, much of which was polarised. On the one hand, many witnesses, largely but not exclusively Aboriginal people, argued that the police commonly behave inappropriately towards Aboriginal people. On the other, some police officers and non-Aboriginal local residents argued that the police are merely responding appropriately to criminal behaviour. A summary of the range of views is set out below.

Overview

- 2.14** In May, one witness described the relationship between police and Aboriginal people in the area as being at ‘boiling point’, as distinct from the relationship several years ago:

It is at a bit of a boiling point at the moment I would say. I do not know why it has changed but back about eight years ago when we were doing the garbage run around the area if we found a bag that someone had stolen and discarded we would always pick the bag up with its contents, put it in a box and wait for the police to drive down the street. We would say, “Look, mate, someone has got ripped off. There are the

¹⁷ Assistant Commissioner Mark Goodwin, Assistant Commissioner Operations Support Command, NSW Police, Evidence, 24 September 2004, pp24-23

¹⁸ Mr Michael Mundine, Chief Executive Officer, Aboriginal Housing Company, Evidence, 19 May 2004, p22

particulars.” They would say, “Oh, good. Thanks mate. We will take it back up to the station and get in touch with these people.” We formed a relationship with these police ... When we get into a good relationship with the local police they move them on. I do not know why they do that. It starts all over again. Within the last two years our boys will not even pick up a bag any more. They have picked up a bag a couple of times and have given them to the police saying they have found it in a lane and all of a sudden the notebook comes out and, “What is your name? Have you got any ID? Where are you from?”¹⁹

2.15 The Redfern Legal Centre described a ‘generally hostile’ relationship:

Many people feel that there is generally a hostile relationship between the police and the community, especially among young people. This perception exists despite acknowledged attempts by police at some levels to improve the relationships. It was noted that for many young Aboriginal people, a police car is something to run away from.²⁰

2.16 The extent of the feeling among some Aboriginal people toward police was highlighted by Mr Lyall Munro who stated, ‘I think if you pull up any Aboriginal child, they will tell you they hate police, the majority of them. That is the sad reality.’²¹

2.17 In our Interim Report the Committee examined the issue of the high rate of turnover among police officers in the area. One of the impacts of this turnover is that relationships between members of the community and individual officers are difficult to establish and maintain, as one representative of an Aboriginal organisation noted:

I think it is a big turnover. I do not know why they move police on when they strike up a good relationship with the community. Years ago you would be on a first-name basis with several of the constables at Redfern police station but not now. They all seem to be cowboys when they come down here.²²

2.18 South Sydney Youth Services indicated that the problems in the relationship, and the way to remedy them, lay on both sides:

The relationship between police and the Aboriginal community, both historically and currently, is fraught with tension. This is very likely due to the vast majority of contact between the two groups being of a negative nature; the community only sees the punitive aspects of police activity, the police see only the criminal fringes of the community. Unless both groups are exposed to the substantial positive elements within the other, this situation is unlikely to change. Programs or events focussing on the helpful role of police delivered in conjunction with cultural awareness activities ... may prove beneficial for both parties.²³

¹⁹ Participant, Confidential evidence, 19 May 2004, p9

²⁰ Submission 50, Redfern Legal Centre, p2

²¹ Mr Lyall Munro, Evidence, 19 May 2004, p39

²² Participant, Confidential evidence, 19 May 2004, p10

²³ Submission 92, South Sydney Youth Services, pp3-4

- 2.19 Since the Interim Report, several inquiry participants have noted that the relationship between police and the local Aboriginal community has improved over the last few months, as discussed further in paragraph 2.39.

Police displaying inappropriate behaviour

- 2.20 The Committee heard from several witnesses who described inappropriate and at times racist behaviour on the part of police, particularly toward young Aboriginal people. For example, Ms Joyce Ingram, one of the Elders in the community, stated:

They are the law of the land but I think if they were fair dinkum with the people and the kids—we have got to show respect to the law and, in return, the police have also got to show a little of respect to us and not drive past in a car and back it down and then swear at a woman and call her filthy names. Now if that woman were to turn around and swear back at the police she would be arrested for abusive language, or whatever. Now that has happened but I cannot mention names.²⁴

- 2.21 Others did not share the view that some police officers display racist attitudes. For example, Ms Lesley Townsend, Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer, Redfern LAC, advised the Committee that in her experience none of the police at the Redfern LAC are ‘overly racist’:

I cannot put my finger on anything at Redfern—any of the police there who are overly racist. We did have one officer there who was, but he has been moved too ... I do not think anyone would be game enough to say or do anything racist in front of me because they know that I would not muck around, I would go straight to the boss about it. And they would not be in Redfern for much longer either.²⁵

- 2.22 Superintendent Smith has indicated to the Committee that there is no tolerance of racism among police officers in the Redfern LAC:

With 150-200 officers, if something like that happens, and it is brought to our attention, it will be stopped very quickly. We are quite clear in our stand on any type of racism. I have no evidence that it does happen. I have only had one complaint of racism in the past year in terms of people coming forward from any forum and complaining to me, and it could be through the Aboriginal Legal Service, the Medical Service, the courts or the Ombudsman and that person was a non-Aboriginal. In terms of data collection, there is no evidence in front of me to suggest that it is a problem.²⁶

Over-policing

- 2.23 Several inquiry participants described what they saw as ‘over-policing’ of Aboriginal people, particularly in the Block area. For example, the Mudgin Gal Aboriginal Corporation Women’s Centre (hereafter referred to as ‘Mudgin Gal’) expressed the view that the area was over-policed, but with unsatisfactory results:

²⁴ Ms Joyce Ingram, Evidence, 19 May 2004, p31

²⁵ Ms Lesley Townsend, Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer, Redfern Local Area Command, NSW Police, Evidence, 22 October 2004, p9

²⁶ Superintendent Dennis Smith, Redfern Local Area Commander, NSW Police, Evidence, 3 November 2004, p16

The local Redfern police are over-policing the 'Block' and the wider Redfern/Waterloo area. Despite the heavy presence of Police in the area there is no apprehension of drug dealers in the area. Police target drug addicts rather than drug dealers'.²⁷

2.24 The Redfern Aboriginal Corporation stated:

There is over-policing in Redfern and Waterloo. There is a tendency for Police Officers to search first and ask questions later. At time this has amounted to harassment and the targeting of Aboriginal community members. This would suggest a lack of cultural awareness and understanding in the Police Force.²⁸

2.25 The Redfern Legal Centre noted that 'the whole Block community experiences intense surveillance. There is a continuous police presence at Redfern Station end of Eveleigh Street and frequent police vehicle movements through the area.'²⁹ In addition, Mr Kevin Smith stated:

[T]he police could adopt a more decent approach to our community and towards our people as individuals. Right now we have this policing in your face situation. They are standing here 12 hours a day on the top of the Block watching us like they are prefects in a schoolyard. We are not children that are still going to school; we are adults. We are citizens of this community and we want to be treated as human beings, not like we are some germs under a microscope.³⁰

2.26 Other, more moderate views were also expressed. For example, the AHC stated that as long as criminals maintain a presence on the Block, a disproportionate level of security by the police would have to be tolerated:

Some criticism has been directed toward over-policing of the Block, but generally speaking those who have complained to the best of our knowledge have in one way or another attracted the attention of police due to their illegal or antisocial activities in the Block. From our perspective, we would eventually like to see a lessening of police activity on the Block, but we are mindful that as long as drug dealers and criminals maintain a presence on the Block we will all have to tolerate a disproportionate level of security by the police that are trying to remove them from our community. Generally, the Redfern command deserves to be applauded for their cooperative, proactive approach to policing in this area.³¹

2.27 As noted by the Committee in our Interim Report, there is some concern that the location of the new police station in the tower building near the Block may contribute to this feeling of over-policing.

²⁷ Submission 53, Confidential (quoted with permission)

²⁸ Submission 60, Confidential (quoted with permission)

²⁹ Submission 50, Redfern Legal Centre, p3

³⁰ Mr Smith, Evidence, 19 May 2004, p52

³¹ Submission 42, Aboriginal Housing Company, p2

Police relationships with young people

- 2.28** The relationship between young Aboriginal people and police in both Redfern and Waterloo was of considerable concern to many participants in this Inquiry. Young Aboriginal people were seen to be either suffering harassment from police or alternatively, as perpetrating petty crime without fear of punishment because of their juvenile and Aboriginal status.
- 2.29** The Redfern Legal Centre described inappropriate behaviour, especially towards young Aboriginal men on the part of police:

There have been reports to Redfern Legal Centre consistently over the past five years that suggests that at times police display inappropriate behaviour towards Aboriginal people, young men in particular. Several people spoke to us about threatening use of guns, excessive use of physical force and 'drive arounds' where a young person is placed in the rear of a police vehicle for a period of time before being released in an unfamiliar area perhaps some distance from home, without being charged with any offence or having any way to identifying the officers involved. We have also dealt with complaints involving the unnecessarily intrusive use of sniffer dogs, strip searches and video surveillance.³²

- 2.30** A great deal of frustration and dissatisfaction with the way police interact with young Aboriginal people was expressed to the Committee during our briefing with the Koori Interagency.³³ The forum the Committee held with young people at the Fact Tree Youth Service (hereafter referred to as the Youth Forum) also revealed negative experiences, particularly with young officers. One young person stated:

[A] lot of police around here are a lot of smart-arses. ... They do have respect for people in the community, but they don't have respect for us young people. They've got to understand that we're the next generation, we need confidence and all that, for them to allow us to complete what we do. They have been so negative towards us children, it's not funny. There have been racial slurs – it's mainly racial, what they say.³⁴

- 2.31** Ms Sharne Dunsmore, the Executive Officer of the Fact Tree Youth Service, described the relationship as strained, with ongoing tensions. She also noted that 'the darker of the Indigenous kids we deal with seem to find themselves in more difficult situations than the fairer Aboriginal kids that we work with'.³⁵ She suggested that police need more cultural awareness training and support. Ms Townsend noted that there are perceived problems with police displaying different attitudes towards Aboriginal young people and non-Aboriginal young people:

It has been said that four kids are walking down the road, two of them are white and two of them are black, and the police pull up and they send the white ones on their way yet they search and question the young black ones. That has been said over and

³² Submission 50, Redfern Legal Centre, p3

³³ Koori South Eastern Sydney Interagency, 15 October 2004, pp7-8

³⁴ Participant, Youth Forum, 22 October 2004, p1

³⁵ Ms Sharne Dunsmore, Executive Officer, Fact Tree Youth Service, Evidence, 26 May 2004, pp23-24

over again. I have not seen it personally. I have heard it does go on. But I have not seen it personally, so I cannot really comment on that.³⁶

- 2.32** Other inquiry participants, particularly those who live near the Block, detailed examples of a concerning level of petty crime perpetrated by young Aboriginal people and their perception that some young children are ‘untouchable’:

I have witnessed the behaviour of officers dealing with young children on the street. I would say they have a ‘hands off approach’. The children being young and Aboriginal, and the risk of a riot should they handle the situation wrong would be every present in their mind. Most of the children know that they are untouchable. Police and the law do not worry them whatsoever.³⁷

- 2.33** Other inquiry participants suggested that some Aboriginal people ‘use their Aboriginality and the reconciliation issue as a shield to hide behind’.³⁸

- 2.34** The Committee received further evidence about the basis of the tensions between police and young people. Ms Dunsmore noted that the issue lies with both groups:

[T]here needs to be answerability on both ends. The young people need to be able to answer for their behaviour and take responsibility for their behaviour. That also needs to happen in regards to the Police Service. They do a very, very difficult job. The police these days have to wear so many hats. They have to be social workers, community workers and law enforcers ... I think the difficulty for them is when they come in and try to interact, perhaps say hello, and then they have to turn around and possibly arrest someone for some sort of behaviour.³⁹

- 2.35** Ms Townsend noted the difficult job that police have in relation to young Aboriginal people and the historical nature of the tensions between the two groups:

In some areas maybe [young people are over-policed]. Nothing against the police, they are out to do the job. But Koori kids roam the streets at all hours of the night. The police come across them and as soon as the kids see the police, see a police vehicle their first instinct is to run. Then the police see them running so they think they are up to no good, or something like that. But it is just instinct in the kids. Then the police chase after them. They catch them. They ask them questions. The community starts to think that it is over-policing by the police ... But within the Aboriginal community it stems back to the Aboriginal Protection Board era and so forth. It is inbred in us about the Stolen Generations and so forth, and that is one of the reasons, and also because some of the kids are up to no good, so that is why they do run, but not all of them.⁴⁰

- 2.36** Superintendent Smith informed the Committee in November of his view that the relationship between police and Aboriginal people, particularly young people, has improved in recent months:

³⁶ Ms Townsend, Evidence, 22 October 2004, p8

³⁷ Submission 21, Confidential

³⁸ Submission 13, Mr Stephen Gale, p3

³⁹ Ms Dunsmore, Evidence, 26 May 2004, p23

⁴⁰ Ms Townsend, Evidence, 22 October 2004, p8

I certainly think there are some historical issues that have always, apparently, seemed to be there between young people and Redfern police. We are certainly working as hard as we can with the mentoring program, the PCYC and other activities that we have going to break down those relationships and talk to the kids about what the police role is in society as well. And they talk a bit about cultural training for police, which we are actioning and a perceived issue that the young people get spoken to more because they are of an Indigenous background. We talk to them about the police role and what that might be and why that perception is there. Again, it is ongoing and I think we are certainly making some inroads.⁴¹

- 2.37** Superintendent Smith advised that where once Redfern LAC had the highest rate of arrests of young people in the State, this rate has now dropped significantly:

I think you will see on some of the later questions that the youth officers and the part-time police on the mentoring program are really starting to make some inroads. Redfern did have some of the highest figures for charging young people, on an evidence base of course. And we have certainly dropped from being number one in the State to about 10 or 11, so that strongly suggests that young people are not getting into trouble as much. Police are using other options in terms of cautions or conferencing or warnings to the young people, so that is a positive step as well.⁴²

- 2.38** Police initiatives to promote a better relationship between officers and young people are examined later in this chapter.

Recent improvements

- 2.39** Since our Interim Report, several inquiry participants have noted that the relationship between police and the local Aboriginal community has improved over the last few months. For example, Mr Michael Ramsey, Project Director of the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project stated that the police 'have made some significant headway in actually addressing some of the concerns that have been raised by the Aboriginal community.'⁴³ Superintendent Smith also expressed optimism about the improving relationship when he appeared before the Committee in November:

Things are certainly on the mend since the issues of February, and properly getting back to where we were prior to those unfortunate incidents. I am confident that the relationships in the community between the police and the majority of the Aboriginal people are sound.⁴⁴

- 2.40** Superintendent Smith cited the example of a recent weekend in October where approximately 5000 people participated in an Aboriginal football event without any major incidents:

I think a couple of things are important there in relation to the overall cohesiveness of the area. We just had 5,000 Aboriginal people turn up to Redfern for four days in October for the Aboriginal Knock Out on the long weekend, which was perceived as

⁴¹ Superintendent Smith, Evidence, 3 November 2004, p4

⁴² Superintendent Smith, Evidence, 3 November 2004, p4

⁴³ Mr Michael Ramsey, Project Director, Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p22

⁴⁴ Superintendent Smith, Evidence, 3 November 2004, p4

going to be a troubled weekend far and wide. We worked with the Aboriginal planners for some three months on that, very tightly, and there was not one major incident to speak of out of that weekend in terms of crimes being committed in and around Redfern, any violence towards either party or anything. So I think that is testimony that relationships have improved.⁴⁵

Conclusion

- 2.41** The Committee remains concerned about the relationship between police and Aboriginal people in Redfern and Waterloo. Some disturbing evidence has been presented to the Inquiry. While the evidence indicates that in recent months there has been an improvement in Aboriginal/police relations in the area, it is clear that this troubled relationship is deep seated and that a consistent and long term approach to its improvement is needed. Against the backdrop of the historical conflict between the two groups, the Committee is aware of the pressing need to break the cycle of tension and disharmony.
- 2.42** The Committee endeavoured to establish whether the relationship between the police and the Aboriginal community is different in Redfern and Waterloo than other parts of New South Wales. During our meeting with the Koori Interagency, mixed views were expressed on this issue, with some participants saying that it is different, while others stated that the relationship is the same on the Block as it is 'in the bush'.⁴⁶ Assistant Commissioner Goodwin indicated that the transient nature of some of the Aboriginal community does make it a more difficult area for police.⁴⁷ The Committee notes that while there are other areas within the State where the interaction between the police and Aboriginal people is also a major concern, the Redfern and Waterloo areas have their own unique experiences and locally based solutions are required.
- 2.43** In the following section the Committee examines the current policing strategies and organisational structures designed to improve the police service's relationship with the Aboriginal community. Recommendations are made to address deficiencies highlighted in the evidence.
- 2.44** The Committee also notes that the relationship will only improve with the commitment of the Aboriginal community and its individual members, as well as that of the police. While the Committee has no capacity to make recommendations in relation to the community, we would like to strongly encourage community members to work toward a more constructive relationship with police, for example by joining police on the community committees and activities discussed in the next section.

⁴⁵ Superintendent Smith, Evidence, 3 November 2004, p4

⁴⁶ Participants, Koori South Eastern Sydney Interagency, 15 October 2004, p6

⁴⁷ Assistant Commissioner Goodwin, Evidence, 24 September 2004, p25

NSW Police approach to Aboriginal issues

Overview

2.45 NSW Police has introduced a range of strategies and organisational structures over the years to improve the relationship between police and the Aboriginal community, particularly since the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (RCADC). These strategies and structures include those noted below, some of which are examined in the context of the Redfern LAC later in this chapter:

- a statement of Aboriginal Reconciliation and the May 1998 apology to members of the Stolen Generations and all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people for the police's role in enforcing unjust laws on Aboriginal people⁴⁸
- the continued implementation of the recommendations of the RCADC
- the establishment of an Aboriginal Coordination Team within the Operational Policy and Programs Unit of the Operations Support Command⁴⁹
- the publication and implementation of three Aboriginal Strategic Direction documents⁵⁰
- various strategies to increase employment of Aboriginal people within NSW Police⁵¹
- the ongoing Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer program
- the establishment of Local Area Command Aboriginal Consultative Committees.

Review of the implementation of recommendations of RCADC

2.46 Several inquiry participants raised the RCADC, indicating its ongoing importance to the community and its understanding of policing.⁵² Assistant Commissioner Goodwin advised that NSW Police is currently conducting an audit of the implementation of the RCADC recommendations that relate to police:

The Aboriginal Coordination Team and the Audit Group are currently conducting a review of the implementation of the 82 recommendations that relate to police. The organisation is confident that the 82 recommendations have been addressed. However, the structure of NSW Police has changed significantly since the

⁴⁸ See NSW Police, *Aboriginal Strategic Direction 2003-2006*, pp3-4

⁴⁹ The role of the Aboriginal Coordination Team is set out in Appendix 3

⁵⁰ NSW Police, *Aboriginal Policy Statement and Strategic Plan 1997-2000*, NSW Police, *Aboriginal Strategic Direction 2003-2006*. Note that the 1997-2000 plan was evaluated in June 2000: Cuneen C, *Evaluation of the Implementation of NSW Police Service Aboriginal Strategic Plan*, commissioned by the NSW Police Service and the NSW Ombudsman, June 2003

⁵¹ For example, NSW Police, *Aboriginal Employment Strategy 2002-2005*, discussed later in this chapter

⁵² For example, Ms Brenda McDonnell, Co-ordinator, Aboriginal Catholic Ministry, Evidence, 7 June 2004, pp23-24 and Participants, Koori South Eastern Sydney Interagency, 15 October 2004, pp4-5 and 23

implementation, requiring a comprehensive review. The audit will determine how effective the implementation has been and whether there are any outstanding matters for NSW Police to address. The audit is expected to be completed in 2005.⁵³

Aboriginal Strategic Direction 2003-2006

- 2.47** In the Interim Report the Committee briefly discussed the NSW Police document titled *Aboriginal Strategic Direction 2003-2006* (hereafter referred to as the ASD), making two initial recommendations relating to its implementation.⁵⁴ We examine the ASD further in this Final Report.
- 2.48** The ASD was published in June 2003 and ‘represents the third document of this type developed by NSW Police to manage Aboriginal affairs’.⁵⁵ The document contains a statement on Aboriginal reconciliation and sets out several objectives for NSW Police, including strengthening communication between police and Aboriginal people, improving community safety by reducing crime and violence within the Aboriginal community, reducing Aboriginal peoples’ contact with the criminal justice system, increasing Aboriginal cultural awareness throughout NSW Police and targeting Aboriginal family violence and sexual abuse. The ASD then sets out 44 strategies relating to the objectives.
- 2.49** Various time frames are identified for the implementation of the ASD’s 44 initiatives. The ASD was ‘rolled out’ across 29 LACs in July/August 2003.⁵⁶ The Committee is aware that many strategies, such as the establishment of a Local Area Command Aboriginal Consultative Committee, are yet to be implemented in the Redfern LAC (see paragraph 2.110 for further discussion).
- 2.50** The evidence of several witnesses and forum participants indicates that there is a reasonable level of awareness within the Aboriginal community of the ASD, as well as frustration that it has not been fully implemented. For example, during our briefing with the Koori Interagency, one participant stated:

I would like to say in June 2003 the police in NSW brought out a policy on how to implement issues for the Aboriginal community and that was their plan on how to deal with working with the Aboriginal community and what I see as the trouble in Redfern is that if Redfern police implemented the policy and the strategies that they handed down, that they developed themselves in June 2003, I think TJ would have been alive today ... It is a good policy, but they don’t implement it.⁵⁷

⁵³ Answers to questions on notice taken during evidence 24 September 2004, Assistant Commissioner Goodwin, NSW Police, Question 12, p12

⁵⁴ NSW Legislative Council, Standing Committee on Social Issues, Report 32, *Inquiry into Issues Relating to Redfern and Waterloo: Interim Report*, August 2004, Recommendations 15 and 16, p95 (hereafter referred to as *Interim Report*)

⁵⁵ NSW Police, *Aboriginal Strategic Direction 2003-2006*, June 2003, p2. The document can be downloaded from: www.police.nsw.gov.au

⁵⁶ Answers to questions on notice taken during evidence 24 September 2004, Assistant Commissioner Goodwin, NSW Police, Question 7, p6

⁵⁷ Koori South Eastern Sydney Interagency, 15 October 2004, pp5-6. See also Ms McDonnell, Evidence, 7 June 2004, pp23-24

- 2.51** In our Interim Report the Committee recommended that the Minister undertake an audit of the implementation of relevant ASD initiatives within the Redfern LAC, and that where initiatives have not been implemented, the Minister make their implementation a matter of priority.⁵⁸ Superintendent Smith advised the Committee in November that the Minister's six month review of the initiatives he announced in July will include this audit:

The six-month review of the 32 initiatives for Redfern in the enhanced policing package will pick up this audit. I understand it has started. The enhanced policing packages were announced on 16 or 17 July, so the six-month review process will pick up the review on the Aboriginal Strategic Direction of 2003-06. I imagine the people doing that review will undertake the Redfern review of the project. I am not sure who that is.⁵⁹

- 2.52** The Committee has been advised that the ASD undergoes review by the Aboriginal Strategic Direction Steering Committee which 'is auditing/reviewing responses on the implementation of the ASD from all LACs'.⁶⁰ In addition, the NSW Ombudsman undertakes audits of its implementation in certain areas.⁶¹ The Committee hopes that the process of these audits and reviews, including the audit recommended by the Committee, will precipitate the full implementation of relevant initiatives in the Redfern LAC.

Employment of Aboriginal people within NSW Police

- 2.53** The Committee was advised that NSW Police employs approximately 138 sworn Aboriginal officers and 54 unsworn Aboriginal officers across the State.⁶² The NSW Police *Aboriginal Employment Strategy 2002-2005* aims to increase the number of Aboriginal people recruited and retained by NSW Police. Its goals are to 'enhance awareness of Aboriginal issues throughout NSW Police and increase the number of permanently employed Aboriginal women.'⁶³ Other strategies aimed at attracting Aboriginal persons to NSW Police are set out in Appendix 4.
- 2.54** Several inquiry participants commented on the number of Aboriginal officers within NSW Police and the lack of Aboriginal officers in the Redfern LAC.⁶⁴ For example, the Redfern Aboriginal Corporation stated that an 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander presence in the

⁵⁸ Recommendation 15, *Interim Report*, p95. The Committee also recommended that, as part of the Minister's six month review of the initiatives announced on 16 July 2004, the Minister should consider the impact of the initiatives on the local Aboriginal community with reference to the ASD: Recommendation 16, *Interim Report*, p95

⁵⁹ Superintendent Smith, Evidence, 3 November 2004, p13

⁶⁰ Answers to questions on notice taken during evidence 24 September 2004, Assistant Commissioner Goodwin, NSW Police, Question 8, p8

⁶¹ Answers to questions on notice taken during evidence 24 September 2004, Assistant Commissioner Goodwin, NSW Police, Question 8, p9

⁶² Submission 55, NSW Government, p302

⁶³ NSW Police, *Annual Report 2002-2003*, pp52-53

⁶⁴ The Committee notes that the number of Aboriginal police officers has also been raised in other forums in recent time, such as the NSW Alcohol Summit 2003, where several recommendations developed by the Summit referred to the need for more Aboriginal officers: New South Wales Summit on Alcohol Abuse 2003, *Communique*, 29 August 2003, paragraphs 2.16, 7.40 and 8.47

Police force is important'.⁶⁵ Ms Townsend stated that more Aboriginal officers were needed in Redfern:

Yes, right across NSW we need more Aboriginal police officers, especially in Redfern. At the moment we only have one and over the years we have only had the odd one or two. When I first started in 1997 it was just after the January riots and they seconded Aboriginal police from other areas to come into Redfern. They were only there on secondment for six months and that was a bandaid solution, which should not have been done. They need to bring more Aboriginal police into Redfern on a permanent basis.⁶⁶

2.55 The Committee is aware that Aboriginal police officers have experienced difficulties in their relationships with both non-Aboriginal police officers and the community. For example, in its submission, South Sydney Youth Services stated that Aboriginal officers have been subject to racism from other police officers:

In the past five years I have got to know four of the Aboriginal Officers stationed in Redfern and all of them have felt alienated and unsupported by other Police. Many have had to endure racism and taunts from Anglo workers.⁶⁷

2.56 The Committee also notes that the sole Aboriginal police officer stationed at the Redfern LAC in the past few years had to be relocated this year after being subject to threats from some people because of his position as an Aboriginal officer. The NSW Coroner commented on this issue in his findings in relation to the death of TJ Hickey:

It is sad to see an Aboriginal police officer, of which there are so few, virtually forced to leave a heavily populated Aboriginal area. He should now be given every chance to get on with policing.⁶⁸

2.57 The Committee was extremely concerned about this issue and raised the matter with Assistant Commissioner Goodwin, who told us:

I am advised that one Aboriginal police officer in Redfern was subject to threats and was transferred. Redfern LAC has one new Aboriginal police officer and he has not been threatened in any way. The LAC will closely monitor his wellbeing. NSW Police has several programs designed to assist officers experiencing difficulties on the job because of their Aboriginality. These include the peer support officer program, access to the Employee Assistance Program and the Aboriginal Employees Network.⁶⁹

⁶⁵ Submission 60, Confidential (quoted with permission)

⁶⁶ Ms Townsend, Evidence, 22 October 2004, p4

⁶⁷ Submission 92, South Sydney Youth Services, pp3-4

⁶⁸ John Abernethy, NSW State Coroner, *Inquest into the Death of Thomas James Hickey*, Glebe, NSW, 17 August 2004, p25. See also 'Wrong path leads to fiery requiem', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 18 August 2004

⁶⁹ Answers to questions on notice taken during evidence 24 September 2004, Assistant Commissioner Goodwin, NSW Police, Question 11, p11

Education and training of police officers in Aboriginal issues

- 2.58** The level and effectiveness of training that Redfern officers receive in Aboriginal cultural awareness issues was raised by several witnesses and in submissions. Given the degree of tension between the Aboriginal community and police, the Committee has explored the type and level of training provided to officers in the Redfern LAC to enable them to appropriately police and interact with the Aboriginal population in the area.

Diploma of Policing Practice

- 2.59** Dave Madden, Deputy Commissioner of Operations, NSW Police, informed the Committee that police recruits undertake cultural awareness training that addresses Aboriginal issues as part of their Diploma of Policing Practice:

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.⁷⁰

- 2.60** The Committee was advised that students attend lectures and tutorials in relation to inter-cultural communication and Aboriginal issues and that both sworn and unsworn Aboriginal staff from NSW Police assist in the delivery of the classes.⁷¹ The Committee notes, however, that the lecture and tutorial combined lasts only three hours.⁷² In relation to the amount of training new recruits receive, Assistant Commissioner Goodwin advised that the training is designed to provide a basic level of awareness that can be supplemented with local training:

It is designed to provide a basic level of awareness of the range of significant and complex issues facing Aboriginal communities in NSW, and the way in which NSW Police responds to these issues and the needs of the community. However, every Aboriginal community in NSW faces its own needs. In some LACs there is not a single, identifiable Aboriginal community as such, but several communities each with their own issues. It is therefore most effective for community-specific training to be organised at a local level so that it can deal directly with those issues and how local police might best respond to and work with the local community in dealing with the problems ... Local training appears to be effective and draws together local agencies, police and community members to address local issues.⁷³

⁷⁰ Deputy Commissioner Dave Madden, NSW Police, Evidence, 18 May 2004, p58

⁷¹ Answers to questions on notice taken during evidence 18 May 2002, Deputy Commissioner Madden, NSW Police, Attachment F7

⁷² Answers to questions on notice taken during evidence 24 September 2004, Assistant Commissioner Goodwin, NSW Police, Question 5, p3

⁷³ Answers to questions on notice taken during evidence 24 September 2004, Assistant Commissioner Goodwin, NSW Police, Question 5, p3

Specialist courses with an Aboriginal component

- 2.61 The Committee was informed that officers can also receive additional training in Aboriginal issues through specialist courses that have an Aboriginal component. Such courses include: Safe Custody; Detectives Education Program; Child Sexual Assault Investigator Course; Operations Refresher and Rejoinee Course.⁷⁴

Aboriginal cultural awareness workshops

- 2.62 The Committee was advised that Aboriginal cultural awareness workshops, facilitated wholly or in part by the Lecturer in Aboriginal and Multicultural Studies at the NSW Police College in Goulburn, Mr Barry Williams, are also available. These include a one- and two-day standard workshop and modified classroom/field based two-day workshops. The aims of the workshops are to recognise the effect of historical attitudes of non-Aboriginal people towards Aboriginal people, to examine and discuss contemporary attitudes between the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal community, and to examine NSW Police policies and strategies in relation to policing the Aboriginal community.⁷⁵

- 2.63 The workshops are provided to LACs that have been prioritised by the Aboriginal Coordination Team. Redfern has been recognised as a priority LAC:

The focus area for delivery of Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Workshops by Education Services to Local Area Commands is prioritised. This is based on those Commands which have been identified by the Aboriginal Coordination Team, Operational Support Command, for the implementation of the *NSW Police Aboriginal Police Statement and Strategic Plan 1997-2000*. Examples include Redfern, Mt Druitt, Shoalhaven, Orana, Barrier and Barwon ... Fifteen workshops are budgeted for each year. Optimum attendance is 15, but attendance ranges from 12 to 22 participants ... Discussion in the workshops is focused around a number of themes. These broadly speaking are: self-sufficiency; criminality of Aboriginal people, prejudice and racism, to and from the Aboriginal community; the Stolen Generation; social indicators and current programs, measures and initiatives.⁷⁶

- 2.64 Superintendent Smith advised the Committee in November that approximately 35-40% of Redfern officers have gone through that training and that he aims to have 100% of his staff attend.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ Answers to questions on notice taken during evidence, 18 May 2002, Deputy Commissioner Madden, NSW Police, Attachment F7

⁷⁵ Answers to questions on notice taken during evidence, 18 May 2002, Deputy Commissioner Madden, NSW Police, Attachment F7

⁷⁶ Answers to questions on notice taken during evidence, 18 May 2002, Deputy Commissioner Madden, NSW Police, Attachment F7

⁷⁷ Superintendent Smith, Evidence, 25 May 2004, p28. The Committee was been advised that four Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Workshops were conducted in October and November 2004: Answers to questions on notice taken during evidence 24 September 2004, Assistant Commissioner Goodwin, NSW Police, Question 6, p3

Induction training at Redfern LAC

- 2.65** Superintendent Smith advised the Committee that new officers undertake a four day induction period when they start at the LAC and that the induction includes ‘some hours spent talking to ACLOs about local Aboriginal issues.’⁷⁸ The training was explained by Ms Townsend who developed the package:

[W]hen I first started back in 1997, I put together an ACLO induction program for probationers and transfers. The probationers or transferred officers would come with the ACLOs for one or two days. We would talk to them, see what socioeconomic background they were from. We would give them a talk on what to expect at Redfern from the Aboriginal community, show them videos such as *The Secret Country*. We would also take them around to the community organisations, introduce them to key people within the organisations, such as housing, health, schools, preschools, and so on. They would get a talk from the key person, a spiel about what the organisation is about. At least in that way, the officer could go away—say, if he had an offender in custody, or a victim or whatever, and it was to do with housing, health or childcare, for example, they could contact the person they have met and tell them they have a problem. As far as I am concerned, that has been successful. It has gone by the wayside over the last 12 or 18 months, but we have got it back on track now.⁷⁹

Cultural awareness training at Tranby Aboriginal College

- 2.66** The Committee was also advised that Redfern LAC is undertaking further Aboriginal cultural awareness training with the Tranby Aboriginal College:

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.⁸⁰

- 2.67** The Committee visited Tranby College in September 2004 and received a briefing from its Chief Executive Officer, Mr Paul Knight. The Committee was impressed with the content of the course Mr Knight planned to deliver. We are aware that many Redfern officers have already attended the Tranby training, with several courses conducted in October and November. Superintendent Smith told us that ‘the remaining staff will be picked up early in 2005.’⁸¹ He also indicated that early feedback on the course was positive, with requests for more localised content to be taken up with Tranby.⁸²

⁷⁸ Superintendent Smith, Evidence, 25 May 2004, p28

⁷⁹ Ms Townsend, Evidence, 22 October 2004, p9

⁸⁰ Deputy Commissioner Madden, Evidence, 18 May 2004, p58

⁸¹ Superintendent Smith, Evidence, 3 November 2004, p9

⁸² Superintendent Smith, Evidence, 3 November 2004, p9

Effectiveness of training

- 2.68** Several inquiry participants expressed the general view that the level of understanding of Aboriginal cultural issues among officers in the Redfern LAC was insufficient and that further training was required. For example the AHC recommended that ‘a greater emphasis be placed on cultural training for new police recruits to Redfern command.’⁸³
- 2.69** The Committee was advised that the level of training received by police officers as part of their Diploma is viewed with some degree of cynicism among some members of NSW Police. In this regard, Mr Paul Knight of the Tranby Aboriginal College advised the Committee that the component relating to Aboriginal awareness issues is not viewed as ‘serious’ by some and a ‘non-core’ aspect of training.
- 2.70** Other inquiry participants were critical of the training new recruits received as part of their Diploma. Ms Marcia Ella-Duncan, Chairperson of the Regional Council of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission, commented that the training provided as part of the Diploma does not prepare new recruits adequately for a posting within an LAC with a large Aboriginal community:

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.⁸⁴

- 2.71** Similarly, Ms Townsend suggested that students should receive more intensive cultural awareness training:

I think that when the officers are students at the Academy they should have more intensive cultural awareness training ... It does not matter if they are going to the North Shore or where they are going, all officers will eventually go to a station where there is at least one Aboriginal family, and they should be put through intensive cultural awareness training at the Academy, even before they go into a station.⁸⁵

- 2.72** The NSW Police Association recommended that as well as an in-depth orientation, officers selected to work in areas such as Redfern should be trained in the unique policing strategies required:

Police new to the command should receive a reasonably in-depth orientation to the community and relevant issues. Selection of officers to police in an area with the specific problems of Redfern and Waterloo should ensure that those police are sensitive to the needs of the community and trained in the unique policing strategies that are required. These officers should have an understanding of the cultural differences of the local community. This strategy has been used successfully in other

⁸³ Submission 42, Aboriginal Housing Company, p2

⁸⁴ Ms Marcia Ella-Duncan, Chairperson, Regional Council of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission, Evidence, 18 May 2004, p40

⁸⁵ Ms Townsend, Evidence, 22 October 2004, p9

commands such as Cabramatta, where local community cultural mix requires particular understanding from police.⁸⁶

2.73 South Sydney Youth Services suggested that training should be on-going, rather than one-off:

One off training in cultural awareness is not adequate. It needs to happen on a regular basis, as do events and activities of a cultural nature. Developing respect for difference and embracing it as the way forward is crucial.⁸⁷

2.74 In terms of the kind of issues that should be included in the training, one representative of a local Aboriginal organisation stated that police training should address:

How to understand Aboriginal ways, like the transient population. I think it is inbred in the kids now. Once they can walk they seem to be fearful of coppers. If they were more friendly towards the kids that will grow and grow and grow and that will change the attitude. One of the main problems with police around this area is the undercover police. They just ride roughshod. They are real cowboys. There will be five in a car and drive down the street and see someone. The five of them will fly out of the car bang bang bang and it creates panic among the kids. That is when they start singing out and everyone gets involved in it.⁸⁸

2.75 The Committee notes that one of the findings of the Coburn Report is that ‘re-enforcement of cultural awareness for Redfern Police and continuation of partnerships with [the] local aboriginal (sic) community is essential’. The report recommended therefore: ‘Local Cultural Awareness programs, including issues associated with the Traditional Grievance process, to be continued with the assistance of Doreen Peters, State Coordinator for Aboriginal Community Liaison Officers.’⁸⁹ The evidence presented to the Committee during this Inquiry supports this recommendation.

Conclusion

2.76 The Committee acknowledges the comments of Assistant Commissioner Goodwin that the Diploma of Policing Practice is aimed at providing a basic level of training to be supplemented by local training. The Committee is mindful however of the views expressed to us that the level of training received (approximately three hours) leaves new recruits unprepared for policing in commands with large Aboriginal populations. While the problem of new recruits at the LAC having an insufficient amount of training in cultural awareness is currently assuaged by the 12 month suspension on probationary officers being stationed there,⁹⁰ this is only a temporary measure. The Committee is of the view therefore that more comprehensive training in Aboriginal cultural awareness should be incorporated into the Diploma to ensure

⁸⁶ Submission 59, Police Association of NSW, p8

⁸⁷ Submission 92, South Sydney Youth Services, pp3-4

⁸⁸ Participant, Confidential evidence, 19 May 2004, p10

⁸⁹ NSW Police, Strike Force Coburn, *Final Report – Part B: NSW Police capacity to respond anywhere in NSW to incidents of violent disorder*, 5 July 2004 (hereafter referred to as Strike Force Coburn Report), p17

⁹⁰ Standing Committee on Social Issues, *Inquiry into Issues Relating to Redfern and Waterloo: Interim Report*, Report 32, August 2004, p93 (hereafter *Interim Report*)

new recruits have a good understanding of the issues and also to reinforce the importance of such training to police practice.

Recommendation 1

That the Minister for Police extend the level of training received by new recruits in Aboriginal cultural awareness issues as part of their Diploma of Policing Practice.

- 2.77** A great deal of evidence was presented to the Committee about the effectiveness of training in Aboriginal issues at the Redfern LAC. The overwhelming view expressed to us was that more cultural awareness training is needed. The Committee is also of the general view that the strained relationship between police and Aboriginal people in Redfern noted in the preceding discussion points to some deficiencies in training.
- 2.78** Superintendent Smith stated that he encourages ‘as much Aboriginal cultural training as we can get’ and indicated that all Redfern officers will undertake the Tranby training course and the Aboriginal Cultural Awareness workshops run by Mr Barry Williams from the Goulburn Academy.⁹¹ The Committee notes that there does seem to be, in the last months of 2004, quite a considerable amount of training in cultural awareness being undertaken by Redfern officers; Ms Townsend even described it as ‘starting to feel like overkill’.⁹²
- 2.79** The Committee strongly supports this increase in training and believes it is crucial to the improvement of the relationship between police and Aboriginal people. The Committee is aware that the increase in training has come about due to the February riots and the subsequent review and inquiries, including this Inquiry. We encourage the Redfern LAC to continue with the training program it has now introduced to ensure that future recruits are inducted appropriately and trained in cultural awareness issues, and that longer-term officers are provided with refresher courses as required. The potential overlap in training between the Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Workshops and the Tranby training should also be examined in order to develop the best model for officers at Redfern.
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Recommendation 2

That the Minister of Police ensure that the Aboriginal cultural awareness training provided to officers at the Redfern Local Area Command is reviewed in 2005 in order to develop the most appropriate training program for the Local Area Command.

Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer program

- 2.80** One crucial role in relation to the interaction between police and Aboriginal members of the community in the Redfern LAC is that of Aboriginal Community Liaison Officers (ACLOs). The Committee has therefore examined this role in some detail. The Committee would like to thank the three current and former Redfern ACLOs who provided submissions and gave oral

⁹¹ Superintendent Smith, Evidence, 25 May 2004, p28

⁹² Ms Townsend, Evidence, 22 October 2004, p10

evidence. Their contribution has enabled us to gain a greater understanding of the role and experiences of ACLOs at the Redfern LAC.

Overview of the ACLO program

- 2.81** ACLOs are civilian officers of NSW Police and were first employed in Burke in December 1986. Following success there, ACLOs were introduced in other police commands with local Aboriginal communities including Batemans Bay, Lismore, Mt Druitt, Redfern and Wilcannia. There are 56 ACLO positions within NSW Police, with 52 ACLOs currently working in 27 LACs, seven of whom are women.⁹³
- 2.82** The role of an ACLO is to ‘assist police in resolving issues affecting Aboriginal people by establishing a positive partnership and maintaining rapport between police and Aboriginal people.’⁹⁴ ACLO responsibilities include: establishing effective communication between police and local Aboriginal communities; mediating disputes involving police and Aboriginal people; establishing and maintaining close personal rapport with Aboriginal community Elders; providing assistance on visiting procedures to relatives of Aboriginal prisoners; and fostering mutual understanding between police and the Aboriginal community.⁹⁵

ACLO program at Redfern LAC

- 2.83** ACLOs were first stationed at the Redfern LAC in the late 1980s.⁹⁶ There are currently four ACLO positions at the Redfern LAC, but for most of this year only one ACLO has been on active duty. The Committee has been advised that this is due to the fact that one position has been vacant for almost three years, one ACLO has been seconded to the Marrickville LAC since mid 2003 (and at the time of finalising this report is on leave without pay), and the other ACLO had been on extended sick leave since March 2004 (and at the time of finalising this report is now seconded to the Kings Cross LAC).
- 2.84** The lack of a full contingent of ACLOs in the Redfern LAC for some time was a source of concern to many inquiry participants. For example, frustration at the vacant ACLO positions and the delay filling them was expressed by members of the Koori Interagency, and some participants even called for ACLOs to be available on a 24 hour basis:

We need to start from the ground, we need to start within the Aboriginal community and we need the ACLOs 24 hours, seven days a week, because the kids get picked up at 1 or 2 o'clock in the morning, there is no one there, the mothers can't be found and so the kids get bashed up or whatever.⁹⁷

⁹³ Ms Doreen Peters, State Coordinator, Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer Program, NSW Police, Evidence, 24 September 2004, p32

⁹⁴ ‘Aboriginal Community Liaison Officers’, NSW Police Service Brochure

⁹⁵ ‘Aboriginal Community Liaison Officers’, NSW Police Service Brochure

⁹⁶ Email from Ms Cheryl McCoy, Director, Operational Policy and Programs, Operations Support Command, NSW Police, 26 November 2004

⁹⁷ Participant, Koori South Eastern Sydney Interagency, 15 October 2004, pp8, 5-6. The Committee notes that the number of ACLOs in NSW has also been raised in other forums, such as the NSW Alcohol Summit 2003, where several recommendations developed by the Summit referred to the

- 2.85** The need for a fully staffed ACLO program was also acknowledged by Superintendent Smith who stated that with a full contingent of four ACLOs ‘we will be able to roster at the peak times, which would be across the weekends, and Thursday night has been a bit of a problem for us. So we will have a specific roster for them, and four will be plenty.’⁹⁸
- 2.86** The Committee has been advised that the vacant position has now been filled and a new ACLO commenced in late November 2004. The Committee also understands that the remaining two positions will also be back-filled when suitable candidates are found.⁹⁹ The Committee is aware that the recruitment processes for ACLOs at the Redfern LAC have been difficult. In this regard, Superintendent Smith advised the Committee that previous recruitment processes earlier this year did not produce any applicants of sufficient standard. Also, in the most recent process in October/November, not enough suitable candidates were identified to fill the two temporary positions.¹⁰⁰
- 2.87** The Committee noted that the difficulty in recruiting ACLOs may have something to do with the lack of a career path in the role, as Mr Wilson, one of the ACLOs who worked at the Redfern LAC, acknowledged to the Committee.¹⁰¹ Mr Charlie Richardson, Coordinator of the Inner Sydney Regional Council for Social Development, also stated that one of the difficulties of the job may be that ‘the role is seen as a dead end as far as the ladder of potential promotion is concerned.’¹⁰²

Difficulty of the role

- 2.88** Each of the three ACLOs who presented evidence to the Committee discussed the inherent difficulties of a role that places them between the police service and Aboriginal people. As one ACLO put it:

[T]he ACLO is the meat in the sandwich. Some of the community mistrust the ACLOs. They think we are giving them up to the police and vice versa, and that is going to happen anywhere. We are there to do a job, and to do a job to the best of our capabilities. And that does not mean everyone is going to like us.¹⁰³

- 2.89** The difficult position of ACLOs was also acknowledged by other inquiry participants. For example, Mr Mundine, Chief Executive Officer of the AHC, stated that if ACLOs are seen working with the police they are considered to be ‘dogs’.¹⁰⁴ In addition, Mr Richardson stated:

need for more ACLOs, particularly females: NSW Government, *NSW Summit on Alcohol Abuse 2003: Communique*, 29 August 2003, paragraphs 2.16, 7.40 and 8.47

⁹⁸ Superintendent Smith, Evidence, 3 November 2004, p8

⁹⁹ Email from Superintendent Smith to Committee Secretariat, 29 November 2004

¹⁰⁰ Superintendent Smith, Evidence, 3 November 2004, p5 and email from Superintendent Smith to Committee Secretariat, 29 November 2004

¹⁰¹ Mr Derek Wilson, Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer, Redfern Local Area Command, NSW Police, Evidence, 24 September 2004, p11

¹⁰² Submission 70, Inner Sydney Regional Council for Social Development Co-operative, p2

¹⁰³ Ms Townsend, Evidence, 22 October 2004, p7; Mr Wilson, Evidence, 24 September 2004, p4

¹⁰⁴ Mr Mundine, Evidence, 19 May 2004, p21

Aboriginal Community Liaison Officers are in perhaps the most difficult position of any police officers. There is the potential to be seen as a traitor by the community or by other police or both. Some have stayed in place for only a few months.¹⁰⁵

- 2.90** One witness from Mudgin Gal expressed a view common to many people in the community, that the ACLOs are there to help the police ‘whereas we feel that they should be there to help us navigate problems with the police.’¹⁰⁶ Another difficulty of the role was identified by Ms Peters, who spoke of the diversity within the Aboriginal communities:

We talk about the Aboriginal people being able to help all Aboriginal people. What I would like the Committee to understand is that we are a very diverse group. Within a particular area, township whatever you like to call it—this is past history—Aboriginal people were just plonked into an area with a different language group, different ideas and different tribes. It is no different today. Even though we speak English, the Aboriginal language is our first language, of course. Some of us do still speak that language. The demands of different diverse Aboriginal groups can impinge on the role of the ACLOs. Expecting them, because they are Aboriginal people, to look at all Aboriginal issues shows a lack of understanding of the makeup of the Aboriginal people. That is one area.¹⁰⁷

Relationship between ACLOs and sworn officers

- 2.91** The Committee heard that ACLOs have also experienced difficult relationships with police officers in the Redfern LAC. For example, Superintendent Smith informed Strike Force Coburn (see from paragraph 2.100 below) that Redfern Police officers were sceptical of the ACLOs.¹⁰⁸ In November, Superintendent Smith advised the Committee, however, that the relationship between Redfern Police and the ACLO currently working at the LAC has improved:

There was some scepticism with some police about the role of the ACLO. We have been working on that with our remaining ACLO to improve the relations. She has been going out with police on particular jobs more often. I am confident that that has improved relations—maybe not to 100 per cent, but it has improved and will continue to improve relations once we get the other three ACLOs.¹⁰⁹

- 2.92** In evidence to the Committee, one former Redfern ACLO made allegations of violence perpetrated against him by members of the police force. While an allegation such as this does not fall within the Committee’s mandate, the Committee views the allegation very seriously and has consequently referred the evidence to the NSW Police Commissioner and the Police Integrity Commission.

¹⁰⁵ Submission 70, Inner Sydney Regional Council for Social Development Co-operative, p2

¹⁰⁶ Participant, Confidential evidence 19 May 2004, p8

¹⁰⁷ Ms Peters, Evidence, 24 September 2004, p35

¹⁰⁸ Strike Force Coburn Report, p84

¹⁰⁹ Superintendent Smith, Evidence, 25 May 2004, p7. See also Answers to questions on notice take during evidence 3 November 2004, Superintendent Smith, although the Committee notes that Ms Townsend has advised that she has not experienced the scepticism noted by Superintendent Smith: Ms Townsend, Evidence, 22 October 2004, p7

Effectiveness of the ACLO program at Redfern LAC

2.93 Evidence presented to the Committee casts doubt on the effectiveness of the ACLO program at the Redfern LAC. In particular, the Government's submission states that 'the overall effectiveness of the ACLO program is reported by NSW Police to be of concern to managers at Redfern LAC and is subject to ongoing review.'¹¹⁰ Superintendent Smith acknowledged in May that the program is not working at its capacity and outlined some measures designed to improve this situation:

It is a very difficult job though for Aboriginal people to work alongside police, and sometimes they receive mixed messages from other Aboriginal people. Having said that, we have asked the two ACLOs at Redfern for some increased productivity and we have gone a way to improving their skills in a few areas and we will continue to do that. When a third person comes along—they come under the leadership of Darren Bennet, who is here—basically we will just sit down and work out some productivity and improvements that we think we can achieve in Redfern and Waterloo. So it is probably not working to its capacity, and we can improve it and we will... I think I would like to see them interacting more amongst members of the community on a day-to-day basis and certainly providing the police with information about some of the issues that may not be reported directly to the police by Aboriginal people. So in some of the meetings that they attend, Aboriginal forums and so forth, I would like them to come back and just tell me what are the issues out there that may not be spoken to openly about the police that we can improve on, things like that.¹¹¹

2.94 The Committee also heard positive comments about the ACLO program from members of the community. For example, one witness from Mudgin Gal stated that her organisation works well with the ACLOs.¹¹²

2.95 While the Committee acknowledges that the effectiveness of the program is in some part dependent on the abilities of the particular people employed as ACLOs, there also seem to be more systemic reasons behind the limitations of the program in the Redfern LAC.

2.96 In part, this may be due to the fact that Redfern has not had its full contingent of four ACLOs for some time, as noted above. It is not reasonable to expect one or two ACLOs undertaking the work of four people to maintain an effective program.

2.97 It has also been suggested that the training received by the ACLOs may be insufficient. Mr Wilson, a Redfern ACLO currently on secondment to the Kings Cross LAC, informed the Committee of the training he received:

There was a course down at the Police Academy that I went to. It went for 4-5 days. It was more or less an intro to the Police Service. There would be one session on

¹¹⁰ Submission 55, NSW Government, p276. In terms of the 'ongoing review' Ms Peters stated that both the Redfern LAC and the Aboriginal Coordination Team provides monthly reports to the Deputy Commissioner's Office and that a six monthly review is also undertaken: Ms Peters, Evidence, 24 September 2004, p32. The Committee was unable to determine whether the reports and reviews referred to by Ms Peters are part of the normal reporting process for ACLO programs, or specifically required in relation to the Redfern LAC.

¹¹¹ Superintendent Smith, Evidence, 25 May 2004, pp34-35

¹¹² Participant, Confidential evidence, 19 May 2004, p7

domestic violence. So that was basically an intro to it. But it was not particularly effective at the time because I did not really know what they were talking about. Since then I have done the same course again as a refresher and it was more valuable in terms that I was able to understand it. But then I was able to pick a lot of holes in it as well...I have not had any training. They are the only two courses I have done in four years.¹¹³

2.98 Mr Wilson also noted that he had difficulty obtaining additional training at the Redfern LAC:

I have asked if I could do the custody management course, which custody managers do at the police station, so that I can learn the procedures and I know when things are legit and when they are not. But I have difficulty getting training. I would like to learn how to use the computer that sits on my desk.¹¹⁴

2.99 Ms Doreen Peters, the State Coordinator of the ACLO Program, advised the Committee in September of the local induction program now undertaken by ACLOs:

[T]o help the ACLOs to come into the role and focus in one direction, we have developed a two-week, local induction program for the ACLOs so that they are getting hands-on training in the police station they will be working from. Attached to that is a 12-month training and development plan as a guide for ACLOs and also for the local area command.¹¹⁵

Coburn Report

2.100 In reviewing the ACLO program at the Redfern LAC, it is necessary to consider the report of Strike Force Coburn (see below) which made a number of relevant findings and recommendations. The Strike Force found that there was an inability among ACLOs to identify unrest in the Block before the riot occurred and that there had been a breakdown in the relationship between Redfern Police and the ACLOs.¹¹⁶

2.101 The Coburn Report therefore recommended that the State Coordinator for ACLOs liaise with the Redfern Local Area Commander to upgrade their performance and direction.¹¹⁷ The Strike Force also recommended that the Redfern LAC devise strategies for the most effective use of ACLOs in forging community links, to ensure they complete their duties in compliance with the Standard Operating Procedures for Management of Aboriginal Incidents and promote a productive relationship with police.¹¹⁸

2.102 The Committee notes that concern has been expressed to us about the conduct of Strike Force Coburn in relation to the ACLOs stationed at the Redfern LAC. The Committee understands that the two ACLOs stationed at Redfern at the time of the riot did not make submissions to Coburn as they were unaware that they were able to; nor were they interviewed

¹¹³ Mr Wilson, Evidence, 24 September 2004, p9

¹¹⁴ Mr Wilson, Evidence, 24 September 2004, p9

¹¹⁵ Ms Peters, Evidence, 24 September 2004, p31

¹¹⁶ Strike Force Coburn Report, p90

¹¹⁷ Strike Force Coburn Report, p91

¹¹⁸ Strike Force Coburn Report, p91

as part of the process.¹¹⁹ The Committee was also advised that the Coburn Report was not distributed to the ACLOs; nor were they briefed on its findings.

- 2.103** Superintendent Smith advised the Committee that Strike Force Coburn and the ability of police employees to make submissions was communicated at ‘parades and briefings at Redfern LAC’ and that, further, ‘a state wide memorandum went out on the police computer system - and the ACLOs are part of the service - calling for anybody who wanted to make a submission, report or claims to do so’.¹²⁰ Superintendent Smith also indicated that he did not feel it to be his responsibility to provide the ACLOs under his command, whose performance was criticised in the Report, with a copy of it. He stated, ‘not being a [Strike Force Coburn] committee member, I am not privy to how copies of the Coburn Report were handed out.’¹²¹
- 2.104** The Committee is concerned that the senior management at the Redfern LAC did not speak specifically to the ACLOs about the Coburn investigation or provide them with support to make submissions. Since the Strike Force centred on the police response to a major incident involving Aboriginal people, it is clear to the Committee that the role and performance of ACLOs would be relevant to the investigation, and as such their input would be important.
- 2.105** The Committee finds it difficult to take on face value the findings of the Coburn Report in relation to the ACLOs as, without input from the ACLOs themselves, they are based on an unbalanced account of the events. We note that in evidence to the Committee, the ACLOs concerned have disputed several aspects of the Report’s findings.¹²² The Committee also notes that one ACLO told the Committee that she was not rostered on that entire weekend and was not recalled into work. The other stated that he was not briefed adequately when he arrived for his shift on the day of the death of the Aboriginal boy, and despite coming into work voluntarily on his day off the next day, he was told he was not required.¹²³ The finding that the ACLOs failed to identify unrest in the Block before the riot needs to be viewed in light of this information.

Conclusion

- 2.106** The evidence presented to the Committee indicates that the ACLO program has not been operating effectively in the Redfern LAC. The lack of a full contingent of ACLOs for several years, in what must be one of the most difficult LACs in New South Wales in terms of Aboriginal issues, is an important factor in this context. It also appears that improvements can be made by the Command’s senior management in the way that they communicate with and support the ACLOs.
- 2.107** The Committee notes that steps have been taken in the Redfern LAC in recent months to improve the ACLO program, including the recruitment of one additional ACLO, as noted above. In addition, the State Coordinator of the ACLO Program has visited the LAC as a

¹¹⁹ Ms Townsend, Evidence, 22 October 2004, p5

¹²⁰ Superintendent Smith, Evidence, 3 November 2004, p8

¹²¹ Superintendent Smith, Evidence, 3 November 2004, p8

¹²² Ms Townsend, Evidence, 22 October 2004, p12; Mr Wilkinson, Evidence, 24 September 2004, p2; Mr Wilson, Evidence, 24 September 2004, p8

¹²³ Ms Townsend, Evidence, 22 October 2004, p6; Mr Wilson, Evidence, 24 September 2004, p7

result of the recommendations of Strike Force Coburn and the following strategies are to be implemented:

- daily tasking/review by the Crime Coordinator - ‘we will provide them a number of tasks to complete each day, and at the end of the day they will sit down with the duty officer and go through those taskings and tick them off. So we will be tightening up the tasking and deployment’
- the Duty Officer is to take the ACLO on patrols each night and weekend that ACLOs are rostered – ‘the ACLOs will work with the duty officer on shift—who is basically the senior inspector on shift—so they can be tasked with the duty officer to go to certain functions’
- more project involvement
- more community involvement across the Command – ACLOs are to attend all major community meetings with Commander/Duty Officer and ‘they will be coming to many of the forums in the community that [the Superintendent of the Redfern LAC] attends, which are about that relationship and bonding’
- ACLOs will be assigned to particular community groups to have stronger connections with, for example, Mudgin Gal Women’s Centre.¹²⁴

2.108 The Committee strongly supports these strategies and believes their effectiveness should be reviewed within six months to determine whether any additional changes to the ACLO program should be made.

Recommendation 3

That the Minister for Police ensure that the Redfern Local Area Command review its Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer program within six months to determine whether the new strategies that have been recently implemented have improved the program and whether any additional changes to the program need to be made. In addition, the results of that review should be included in the Government’s response to this Report.

2.109 The Committee notes that the Government’s response to the recommendations of the NSW Alcohol Summit 2003 gave the undertaking that ‘NSW Police will examine what support structures and training programs are available to ACLOs and increase support services for these positions.’¹²⁵ The Committee encourages NSW Police to undertake this examination.

¹²⁴ Superintendent Smith, Evidence, 3 November 2004, p9 and answers to questions on notice taken during evidence 3 November 2004, Superintendent Smith, NSW Police, Question 3

¹²⁵ NSW Government, *Outcomes of the NSW Summit on Alcohol Abuse 2003: Changing the Culture of Alcohol Use in New South Wales*, May 2004, p191

Recommendation 4

That the Minister for Police expedite the promised examination of the support and training structures available to Aboriginal Community Liaison Officers, as contained in the Government's response to the NSW Alcohol Summit 2003, to determine whether additional support structures and training are required.

Redfern Local Area Command Aboriginal Consultative Committee

2.110 The establishment of Local Area Command Aboriginal Consultative Committees (LACACCs) was one of the many recommendations of the ASD.¹²⁶ The purpose of a LACACC is to facilitate regular meetings between Police and Aboriginal people, to identify and discuss issues of concern. Many of the other strategies contained in the ASD are to be conducted through the LACACCs.

2.111 In our Interim Report the Committee expressed support for the concept of LACACCs and we reiterate our support here. The Committee is aware that there is some support among the Aboriginal community for the establishment of a LACACC in the Redfern LAC. For example, one participant from the Koori Interagency stated:

What it is that we need in the community - and it is in that police strategy - is a committee of community people mixed with service providers, all Aboriginals, to address the issues, because until you do that there is no relationship going anywhere...¹²⁷

2.112 According to the ASD, LACACCs were to be established within two months of the ASD's rollout in June 2003.¹²⁸ The Committee notes that the Redfern LAC has not been quick to implement this strategy. We were advised by Superintendent Smith in November that the LACACC will be established by the end of the year after difficulties recruiting people to participate, and that it is likely to be a *senior* advisory committee:

The LACACC will probably be the senior advisory committee; it will be one and the same. We have had a little difficulty recruiting eight elders from the community for the senior team. We had a meeting date planned with some indication that eight would come, but only four intended to participate. We have now tried to recruit an additional four people so that I can start that committee. I have not started the senior advisory team. I will have it operational by the end of December this year. I have made approaches to other people in the community who have indicated that they will form part of the group. I have outlined the charter and they have indicated that they will come on board.¹²⁹

¹²⁶ *Aboriginal Strategic Direction 2003-2006*, p11

¹²⁷ Participant Koori South Eastern Sydney Interagency, 15 October 2004, p6

¹²⁸ *Aboriginal Strategic Direction 2003-2006*, p11

¹²⁹ Superintendent Smith, Evidence, 3 November 2004, p13

Youth strategies

- 2.113** There are a number of strategies in place at the Redfern LAC designed to improve the difficult relationship between young people and police, some of which are targeted at Indigenous youth. Many of the programs have a broader focus than just dealing with young offenders and try to address related and contributory issues, including school attendance and academic performance.

Youth Liaison Officers

- 2.114** There are currently two full time Youth Liaison Officers ('YLOs') stationed at Redfern LAC. The YLOs are charged with managing and coordinating the various youth programs. They also liaise with the community and service providers in order to build relationships with services that young people attend. As Superintendent Smith told the Committee:

[T]hat is what I have asked the youth officers to do: to go back to the various youth interagency groups and talk generally about the young people, have discussions and see if some of the local youth agencies can also give us some solutions, as well as some of the problems sometimes. They might give us some ideas about how we can move forward with the young people.¹³⁰

Youth Mentoring Program

- 2.115** The Youth Mentoring Program, established in December 2002, partners young people from Redfern and Waterloo who are 'at risk' with a police officer from the Redfern LAC who provides an ongoing one-to-one mentoring role.¹³¹ Superintendent Smith informed the Committee that approximately 12 police participate in the program part-time, and that the young people are mainly Aboriginal people from Redfern and Waterloo.¹³²
- 2.116** The aim of the program is to establish trust, improve school attendance and reduce the likelihood of the participating young people engaging in criminal behaviour. Deputy Commissioner Madden advised that the program includes 'camps and trips and other things and mentoring them to try to give them options.'¹³³ The camps, targeted at children from 7-12 years who have been identified as being at risk, aim to provide a neutral yet stimulating environment away from Redfern, in which young people and police can interact positively. Since January 2003 there have been three camps for young people from Redfern and Waterloo.
- 2.117** The Committee heard mixed reviews of these programs, the camps in particular, although overall, the response seems to be positive. For example, Ms Townsend advised the Committee that this initiative had improved the relationship between police and young Indigenous people:

I think they were very successful. Beforehand none of the kids in the area would even venture into the police station, not unless they were being brought in for getting up to no good or so forth. After our first camp, taking the kids to the football and all other

¹³⁰ Superintendent Smith, Evidence, 3 November 2004, p14

¹³¹ Submission 55, NSW Government, p157

¹³² Superintendent Smith, Evidence, 3 November 2004, p14

¹³³ Deputy Commissioner Madden, Evidence, 18 May 2004, p58

different activities that the Redfern police were doing with them we were actually having the kids come into the police station, come in and ask for any of the constables or anyone they wanted to talk to, and we were having a really good rapport with the kids.¹³⁴

- 2.118** One Aboriginal organisation commented that the success of the mentoring program is hampered by the lack of continuity among participating officers associated with the turnover of staff at Redfern LAC:

So the problem that we have ... is that the on-rolling, how they move in and out of the Redfern police station, as they get to know the community they are then pushed off and moved along. So you can set up and structure mentors but you are going to have to do it on an annual basis basically because the police are just rolling in and just moving on: bringing them into Redfern to train off their cadetships, give them the quick, fast-learning experience of dealing with the Aboriginal people in Redfern and then pushing them off to somewhere else. So the mentor process through the police I think is going to be very difficult to maintain, unless you keep a main structural police then for a number of years, or you target five or 10 years where they are going to be there, so the youth know that face, and get more familiar with that officer, with that face, and build up their trust with the police.¹³⁵

- 2.119** The Committee notes also that one of the participants in our Youth Forum indicated that while the camp itself was good, the friendly relationship with participating officers at the camp did not continue when they returned.¹³⁶
- 2.120** Superintendent Smith told the Committee that results from these programs are having an effect more generally, in a way that is difficult to quantify:

Probably the unmeasurable is that interface that cops are having with young people in Redfern, and it is not always on an antagonistic basis or a perceived harassment basis. We are actually trying to break down some of the barriers and talk to them and take them away.¹³⁷

Youth Advisory Committee

- 2.121** The Youth Advisory Committee (YAC) is a committee developed by the Redfern LAC involving police Youth Liaison Officers, ACLOs, Aboriginal Elders, representatives of ATSIC and the Premier's Department, and young people from schools within the community. The YAC is designed to provide a forum for communication between police and young Aboriginal people. It was established on 22 September 2004 and will meet bi-monthly through 2005.¹³⁸
- 2.122** Superintendent Smith advised the Committee in November that the first meeting of the YAC was very productive:

¹³⁴ Ms Townsend, Evidence, 22 October 2004, p8

¹³⁵ Mr Robert Welsh, Chairperson, Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council, Evidence, 25 May 2004, pp10-11

¹³⁶ Participant, Youth Forum, 22 October 2004, p1

¹³⁷ Superintendent Smith, Evidence, 3 November 2004, p15

¹³⁸ Superintendent Smith, Evidence, 3 November 2004, p13

The Youth Advisory Committee has started. It has met and we are using the PCYC as the venue. Aboriginal Elders come along and work with the young people. The first meeting was very productive. They want police to understand more about Aboriginal culture, which we are doing. They also want to work through perceived harassment. We are talking about the police role and what that means to the young people. I am happy that those issues have been raised. We can get to the crux of the issues. They will meet bi-monthly through 2005. The committee involves a cross section of young people—some go to school, some are street kids and some are employed.¹³⁹

South Sydney Police and Community Youth Club

- 2.123** A Police and Community Youth Club (PCYC) is ‘a state wide partnership between young people, the community and NSW police, to assist young people develop the qualities of responsible citizens and leaders and to avoid becoming offenders or victims of crime.’¹⁴⁰ The South Sydney PCYC provides a number of activities and programs for young people aged five to 16 from both Redfern and Waterloo, and provides opportunities to interact with police through various programs, including sporting activities.

Conclusion

- 2.124** Superintendent Smith expressed the view that the youth programs, as well as cultural awareness training being received by officers, will assist police to improve the current situation:

I am confident the cultural awareness training, the interaction with the mentor program, the greater interaction with the PCYC and the kids in general should provide police with a greater understanding of what the issues that these young people face are, and have greater appreciation of that fact.¹⁴¹

- 2.125** While it is clear that there are the beginnings of some very constructive youth programs developed by the police service, the Committee also notes the views expressed that some of the programs in place, such as the Youth Mentoring Program, have struggled to have a long-term impact. The Committee believes ongoing mentoring is an important part of maintaining and developing the constructive relationships developed during the camps.
- 2.126** The Committee believes that the police commitment to improving relations with young people in Redfern and Waterloo is extremely important. Although many programs are relatively new, with the ongoing support of police management, the Committee believes these initiatives will be of great future benefit to the community. Building a constructive relationship with young Aboriginal people should be a priority for police.

Interaction between NSW Police and DoCS

- 2.127** One government agency that attracted particular comment from inquiry participants in relation to policing was the Department of Community Services (DoCS). The Committee has

¹³⁹ Superintendent Smith, Evidence, 3 November 2004, p13

¹⁴⁰ Submission 55, NSW Government, p156

¹⁴¹ Superintendent Smith, Evidence, 3 November 2004, p16

therefore briefly examined the way police officers interact with DoCS in the Redfern and Waterloo area in this section. A further examination of the role of DoCS in Redfern and Waterloo, including police views about DoCS (which were largely critical), is contained in Chapter 4.

2.128 The role of police officers in relation to DoCS was described by Dr Neil Shepherd, the Director General of the Department, as follows:

In terms of the reporting of matters to DoCS, police, as you would be aware, are the major mandatory reporters statewide; they put in 36 per cent of the reports that are made to DoCS statewide, and for Eastern Sydney Community Service Centre [CSC] the figure is 34 per cent in 2002-03. It is right on the State average so there is nothing that would suggest that they are not reporting in line with the State trends. Of course, they do not just report, they do a wide range of other things to assist DoCS: they provide support for home visits for staff and clients; they do joint work with case workers around warrants; they serve documents on behalf of the CSC; they provide excellent information to us under section 248 in relation to some of the risks that may be faced by staff or clients of DoCS in whatever situation they might be; they certainly obtain apprehended violence orders on behalf of children and on behalf of carers, and they respond very quickly if there are threats of violence to staff or to clients; and they also get involved jointly in seeking missing children when children have been notified as missing. So they do a wide range of things in conjunction with DoCS and independent of DoCS that would indicate that their commitment to child protection is very high.¹⁴²

2.129 Some inquiry participants criticised the way some police officers undertake their role as it relates to child protection, suggesting that some officers may not be trained sufficiently in welfare practices to understand their mandatory reporting obligations. For example, Barnardos, while expressing general support for the Redfern LAC and the work it does with community policing and young people, stated:

A source of difficulty however is that individual police officers frequently do not understand welfare practice and as a result do not know how to refer families to other agencies for assistance. This appears to be compounded by a belief that they cannot give personal information out about families (for example names and problems/reasons for referral) due to privacy laws. In the early days of the [Intensive Family Support Service], at a meeting between Redfern police, the Premier's Department and Barnardos, it was expressed that Barnardos knew nothing about these families, as a referral had not been received. It has also been Barnardos' experience that agency intervention plans with families have on occasion been overturned unexpectedly and without discussion. In one instance this occurred because police wanted a particular troublesome child temporarily moved out of the area, due to school holidays and potential problems with crime.¹⁴³

2.130 Ms Lyndal Gowland, Coordinator, Women's Domestic Violence Court Assistance Scheme at Redfern Legal Centre, advised that she is aware of some police officers making inappropriate comments to women in relation to DoCS:

¹⁴² Dr Neil Shepherd, Director General, Department of Community Services, Evidence, 7 June 2004, p8

¹⁴³ Submission 32, Barnardos, pp1-2

I should add that in relation to the issue of police and DoCS that it is reported to us that this fear of DoCS is used by some police as a deterrent to women making complaints about domestic violence crimes. It has been reported to us that on a number of occasions when the police have arrived, perhaps for a second, third or fourth time in response to a call of domestic violence crime, the police officer has said, “If you keep calling us, we will have to report this to DoCS.” Given the level of fear that the Aboriginal community has, rightly so, about interventions from state institutions, it is a great, great deterrent to women making a report, especially given that, in very close proximity, the old children’s court lurks toward the centre of Sydney.¹⁴⁴

- 2.131** Ms Gowland suggested that, in relation to these issues, police ‘need to be given much clearer guidelines about what to do.’¹⁴⁵ Reverend Bill Crews, Chairman of the Exodus Foundation, indicated that there are good and bad sides to the way police interact with DoCS, stating ‘I have seen some of the best social work I have ever seen from the police—some of the best—and I have heard some of the most ridiculous statements.’¹⁴⁶
- 2.132** The Committee raised the concerns of inquiry participants with DoCS and the Redfern LAC. When asked to comment on the level of awareness among officers about their reporting obligations and general welfare related issues, Dr Shepherd described the overall relationship between police and DoCS staff as ‘sound’. He reported that staff of the Eastern Sydney Community Service Centre, the Street Team and the Yallamundi service were also positive about the relationship they had with police. He also noted that ‘there are 150 police in that area command and there are 60-odd DoCS staff, so there will always be some individual tensions that arise, and they need to be sorted out very quickly.’¹⁴⁷
- 2.133** Similarly, Superintendent Smith was positive about the level of coordination between police and DoCS:

Certainly from the perspective of the management team or the command, I have weekly contact with the acting director of DoCS. If we have any issues they are resolved ... I think [police officer] feel they can put a notification in on a young person and obviously something happens quite quickly. Once you look at the workload and some of the issues that DoCS has to manage, and the priorities of young people they have to deal with, the reality is that sometimes things take time to get done, and there are others in greater need. I think that is something I can communicate back to the staff, after sitting through plenty of meetings of DoCS and getting an understanding of some of the difficulties and frustrations that they do have. Generally, we put in our notifications, we meet with DoCS and I, as the Commander, do not have any complaints at all.¹⁴⁸

- 2.134** The Committee notes the concerns expressed to it about the way police interact with DoCS. The Committee, did not, however, receive sufficient evidence to fully examine this matter or

¹⁴⁴ Ms Lyndal Gowland, Co-ordinator, Women’s Domestic Violence Court Assistance Scheme, Redfern Legal Centre, Evidence, 26 May 2004, pp46-47

¹⁴⁵ Ms Gowland, Evidence, 26 May 2004, pp46-47

¹⁴⁶ Reverend Bill Crews, Chairman, Exodus Foundation, Evidence, 26 May 2004, p10

¹⁴⁷ Dr Shepherd, Evidence, 7 June 2004, p8

¹⁴⁸ Superintendent Smith, Evidence, 3 November 2004, p15

make recommendations on it. Further discussion of the effectiveness of DoCS in Redfern and Waterloo is contained in Chapter 4.

Policing drug related crime

- 2.135** Over the ten months of this Inquiry the Committee heard a great deal of evidence relating to drug related crime in Redfern and Waterloo, particularly in and around Redfern Railway Station and the Block. This section examines the nature of drug related crime in the area and the policing strategies and resources to deal with it.
- 2.136** The analysis of robbery crime in the Interim Report is also relevant to this discussion as many robberies are perpetrated to fund drug habits. Other aspects of the drug problem in the area have also been examined during this Inquiry. The Interim Report discussed drug use in Redfern and Waterloo, the Redfern/Waterloo Anti-Drug Strategy and the mobile needle and syringe service. Government and non-government drug and alcohol services are examined in Chapter 4 of this report.

Overview of drug related crime in Redfern and Waterloo

- 2.137** Drug related crime includes drug dealing and ‘opportunistic and low-level [crime], such as bag snatching, theft, break and enters and vandalism.’¹⁴⁹ At the commencement of the Inquiry, the Committee heard that the main areas of concern are on and around the Block, near the Redfern Railway Station, and on the public housing estates of Waterloo. The Government’s submission described drug crime as representing a significant volume of crime in Redfern and Waterloo:

NSW Police has advised that a significant volume of crime in the Redfern area relates to interactions between drug dependence, drug supply on the Block, and its close proximity to the Redfern Station. The Police report that heroin addicts use the train to travel to Redfern to buy drugs at the Block and local and commuting addicts rob some train commuters and steal from local residents to fund their addiction. It is reported by NSW police that the majority of drug activity in the Redfern LAC seems to be at the street level rather than large-scale drug manufacture or distribution.¹⁵⁰

- 2.138** Similarly, the Deputy Commissioner Madden stated:

[T]here 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.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁹ Submission 55, NSW Government, p232

¹⁵⁰ Submission 55, NSW Government, p266

¹⁵¹ Deputy Commissioner Madden, Evidence, 18 May 2004, p69

- 2.139** Many submissions to this Inquiry voiced concern about drug use in the area and concomitant criminal activity. For example, Ms Mary Gillespie of the Vine and Hugo Action Group stated that ‘clearly drug dealing is a huge issue in that whole area at this particular point. That seems to bring hand-in-hand with it, property theft and crime’.¹⁵² The Government’s submission also noted the level of community concern over drug related crime:

In reporting on community consultations, McCallum (2003) has found that the communities consider there to be a high level of violence (particularly domestic and family disputes) and drug misuse in the area. McCallum also reported that drugs were seen to be the single biggest determinant of crime.¹⁵³

- 2.140** Evidence presented to the Inquiry seems to indicate that while a certain level has been there for decades, the problem of drug use and associated crime in the area has increased in the past few years. For example, one local resident observed that ‘in the last seven years, crime has increased in my opinion due to the growth of the drug selling/usage within the Block.’¹⁵⁴ In the same vein, Ms Gillespie noted that:

I actually moved into the area 11½ years ago and quite frankly when I moved in the drug problem on the Block was alcohol. There could well have been some heroin taking on some level, and possibly even some dealing, but it was certainly not at the level that we have seen come up. Five years ago things were certainly better than they are now ... [A]bout two years ago—and it was the ongoing group of events that triggered our formation—we really decided was probably some of the worst times that we had seen. There was widespread dealing. There were easily identifiable drug houses. The police appeared to be powerless or not making a great deal of the impact at that stage.¹⁵⁵

Policing strategies and resources

- 2.141** The Redfern LAC relies on general policing strategies, as well as specific drug crime strategies, to tackle drug related crime in Redfern and Waterloo. General policing strategies that are relevant to drug related crime include:

- high visibility policing
- surveillance operations
- assistance from State Crime Command
- public order management
- the Suspect Target Management Plan
- the Intelligence Response Team.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵² Ms Mary Gillespie, Vine and Hugo Action Group, Evidence, 24 September 2004, p38

¹⁵³ Submission 55, NSW Government, p232

¹⁵⁴ Submission 21, Confidential

¹⁵⁵ Ms Gillespie, Evidence, 24 September 2004, p38

¹⁵⁶ Submission 55, NSW Government, pp267-269

2.142 Specific strategies to deal with drug related crime in the area include:

- use of drug detection dogs
- the Heroin Early Warning Indicators Program (which monitors trends in heroin distribution and enables identified LACs such as Redfern to respond to heroin crime)
- various drug related operations such as Operation Players, Operation Fury and Operation Allunga conducted in 2002, 2003 and 2004 respectively that targeted the supply of heroin in and around the Block, resulting in several convictions
- SHARKX (an initiative of the Surry Hills, Redfern and Kings Cross LACs to share information and expertise in relation to drug operations).¹⁵⁷

2.143 The Committee notes that policing strategies are at times affected by other government policies and strategies, such as the cooperative arrangements between police and the NSW Health Department in relation to users of the mobile needle and syringe program which was examined in our Interim Report.¹⁵⁸ The Redfern/Waterloo Anti Drug Strategy (RWADS), an integrated drug strategy for the area that focuses on the Block, was also examined in the Interim Report. Relevant to the Committee's discussion of policing strategies to deal with drug related crime, RWADS includes 'proactive policing to target drug dealers and drug houses in Redfern and Waterloo and to 'build a wall' around the area to stop transient drug users from entering.'¹⁵⁹

Effectiveness of policing strategies and resources

Overview

2.144 Several submission authors argued that the police are not doing enough to combat drug related crime in Redfern and Waterloo and that more strategies and resources are needed for this purpose. For example, the NSW Police Association recommended in April that 'more attention needs to be given to the very serious drug trade that is operating in Redfern.'¹⁶⁰

2.145 Mr Ian Tomkins stated that 'consistently aggressive police action against the dealers is also needed to reduce their local drug business (multiply 1 million syringes by the price of one hit) the associated violence and to reduce their status and local influence.'¹⁶¹ In addition, the Aboriginal Medical Service stated:

A major strategic objective of policing in Redfern/Waterloo ought to be the arrest of local drug dealers, the identity of whom is known in many cases. In our view, there would be little point in a significant increase in police numbers in the Redfern/Waterloo area unless this happens.¹⁶²

¹⁵⁷ Submission 55, NSW Government, pp267-269

¹⁵⁸ *Interim Report*, pp115-118

¹⁵⁹ Submission 55, NSW Government, p247

¹⁶⁰ Submission 59, NSW Police Association, p8

¹⁶¹ Submission 7, Mr Ian Tomkins, p1

¹⁶² Submission 47, Aboriginal Medical Service, p5

- 2.146** Successes and improvements in the ‘fight against drug crime’ were also reported to the Committee. For example, the AHC noted in its April submission that in the months prior to the February riot, ‘police were very successful in discouraging those involved in drug activity from entering the Block from Redfern Station or approaching from Central Station. These operations have been so successful that reports from the Block indicate that the drug business has dropped by 50% from last year.’ The Government’s submission reported that:

There have been a significant number of gains in the last year in relation to drugs and crime through the actions of the Anti-Drug Strategy. A variety of NSW Police operations and activities are disrupting and deterring drug related criminal activity in the Redfern and Waterloo area, including Vikings operations, Operation Players and the use of drug detection dogs.¹⁶³

- 2.147** More recently, Superintendent Smith advised the Committee in November that ‘substantial inroads’ had been made in combating drug related crime in the area:

Since my last visit here we have made some substantial inroads into organised crime in and around the Redfern area, particularly in the drug trade predominantly in and around the Block. As I mentioned last time, Redfern and Waterloo were the two main suburbs where heroin supply was of some concern to us, and we have made some substantial inroads. We conducted a six-month undercover operation [Operation Allunga], which obviously I could not divulge on my last appearance because we were halfway through it. Through that operation we arrested approximately 35 drug suppliers in and around the Redfern and Waterloo area. That has placed a major dent on the drug trade in Redfern and Waterloo. We have subsequently returned to nearby locations and conducted another four search warrants, and we have found nowhere near the amount of drugs. We have found some small-level supply of heroin, but nowhere near the quantity and availability that was there six months ago.¹⁶⁴

- 2.148** In evidence to the Committee in November, Mr Michael Ramsey, Project Director of the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, noted the positive impact on the local community of Operation Allunga. The Operation was conducted over several months and including a series of raids on and around the Block in July:

Operation Allunga was widely praised by the Aboriginal community leaders as being a new day in Aboriginal and police relations in Redfern. The Aboriginal community had been saying for a long period of time that they wanted drug dealing dealt with effectively in Redfern and Waterloo, and they saw Operation Allunga as actually achieving that. The fact that there were five addresses on the Block that were identified and were actually targeted in that and 28 people were identified through controlled drug purchases, was actually really well received and in fact I am still hearing comments about that, and Aboriginal people are very responsive about the fact that police are actually taking action in terms of that.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶³ Submission 55, NSW Government, p248

¹⁶⁴ Superintendent Smith, Evidence, 3 November 2004, p1

¹⁶⁵ Mr Ramsey, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p22

The Block – a no-go area?

- 2.149** It was expressed to the Committee during the first part of the Inquiry that the Block, because of its drug related activities and the large Aboriginal population, is a ‘no-go area’ for police. In this regard, one local resident stated:

As a long term resident I also wish to comment on the ‘No Go Area issues’. Politicians and Senior police often publicly deny that Redfern is EVER a no-go area. I have often been told that police are unable to respond to my call due to some other incident that they ‘do not want to inflame’. This year’s NYE being a recent example. There was a stabbing in Eveleigh Street so no police would come to the area. It needs to be made clear at senior levels that in fact there are times when Police are directed to/choose to stay out of Redfern. This is terrifying to those of us who see the Police as a line of resistance between the criminal element and the majority of the law-abiding Redfern population.¹⁶⁶

- 2.150** The Committee raised this issue with NSW Police in May and senior police representatives stated categorically that the Block is *not* a no-go zone. For example, Superintendent Smith stated:

I want to state my position on that: there are no no-go zones in Redfern. Police will carry out their duties in all areas to the best of their ability. The Block itself has been mentioned; it can become quite a volatile place when police move in to arrest people. There is no question of that and I do not want to down play that at all. However, police will patrol the Block day and night if required.¹⁶⁷

- 2.151** The Committee is aware that the Block is a difficult place to police. For example, Sergeant Huxtable identified it as being a particularly difficult place to conduct drug operations:

The problem with dealing with drugs in the Block is that the Block is a bit of a fortress. At other commands I have worked at if someone says, “Bloggs is selling drugs from that house”, we would get a search warrant, send in a couple of police and do the job. Here it takes a couple of weeks to organise. You need 20 to 25 [Operation Support Group] police to act as bodyguards for the officers executing the search warrant. It is a monumental task. Rapid response or rapid reaction is non-existent in Redfern. You cannot do it; it is just too dangerous because of the level of violence and the fortress around the Redfern area. Frank touched on the case of the poor chap who got a \$50 fine for heroin dealing. He has since died from a heroin overdose. The system is failing everyone involved in this process, not just the police but the people on the Block and those who travel through it.¹⁶⁸

- 2.152** The Committee accepts that there is no official NSW Police policy of the Block being a no-go zone. The Committee also acknowledges that police officers must have concern for their own safety and that this will necessitate, at times, a decision not to enter a particular area in pursuit of a suspect. The Committee is concerned, however, that there seems to be a misconception

¹⁶⁶ Submission 11, Name suppressed, p2

¹⁶⁷ Superintendent Smith, Evidence, 25 May 2004, p18. See also Deputy Commissioner Madden, Evidence, 18 May 2004, pp61-62

¹⁶⁸ Sergeant Paul Huxtable, Branch Administrator, Redfern Branch, Police Association of NSW, Evidence, 8 June 2004, p9

within the local community and even among some officers themselves about the ability and willingness of police to move about on and around the Block at all times.

Community frustration at the lack of arrests and the release of offenders on bail

- 2.153** During our Inquiry several members of the local community expressed frustration that ‘known’ drug dealers are not being arrested. For example, Ms Brenda McDonnell, the coordinator of the Aboriginal Catholic Ministry stated:

From working in the area, I have seen the police parked and watching the Block. Everyone is aware of the problems around the Block, especially the drug problems, and the police do walk and drive around there. But I would like to see action taken. We all know who the drug dealers are—I am sure the police know who the drug dealers are—and it is now 2004 and it is still going on. It needs to be cleaned up ... I am talking about dealers on the Block. I am talking about dealers who come in and out of the Block. It is quite well known in the Aboriginal community who they are. Would that happen anywhere else? Would that happen in a non-Indigenous environment? Would police just sit and watch?¹⁶⁹

- 2.154** Mudgin Gal also expressed concern about the apprehension of known drug dealers:

Despite the heavy police presence in the area there I see no apprehension of drug dealers in the area. Police are targeting drug addicts rather than drug dealers ... Drug dealers continue to flaunt their presence in the community and it is very frustrating to see the Police do nothing to prohibit this and (perhaps knowingly) ignore dealers on the Block as they travel on and off the Block for deals.¹⁷⁰

- 2.155** In relation to this perception, Superintendent Smith stated in November that police *are* in fact acting on information provided about drug dealers:

Often when people provide us with information, it is just that: information. It is probably not put up to the next level, what we would perhaps call intelligence. After we receive information from members of the public, we then compile some evidence in our intelligence offices to see whether or not that particular information is worth following through. I might say that there is strong evidence to suggest that we do follow through on the information, because 90 per cent of the information we get about drug arrests does come from members of the community. Last year we arrested 36 people for drug supply in Redfern; so far this calendar year we have arrested over 100 people for drug supply, and there will be more to come before the end of December. I think that those quantitative figures themselves suggest that police are acting on the information that is provided to us.¹⁷¹

- 2.156** Frustration was also expressed that many of those people who are arrested for drug dealing are subsequently released on bail. For example, Mudgin Gal expressed concern about the bail practices of the Redfern Local Court:

The local Redfern Court is allowing for cultural connection bail applicants who claim a special connection to the Block. This process needs to be carefully verified and

¹⁶⁹ Ms McDonnell, Evidence, 7 June 2004, p23

¹⁷⁰ Submission 53, Confidential (quoted with permission)

¹⁷¹ Superintendent Smith, Evidence, 3 November 2004, p2

managed appropriately in consultation with appropriate community local organisations. Mudgin Gal is aware that in the past successful bail applications have focused on drug dealing and/or related charges and it believes these offenders should not be allowed on the streets of the Block.¹⁷²

2.157 Representatives of Mudgin Gal expanded on this issue in evidence before the Committee:

Even if they just barred them from the Block, that would be something but they do not even do that. The police say that they do: They say, “Well, we have spoken to them about it.” The police say, “We do. We put it down on the bail conditions that they are not allowed to be on the Block”, but the magistrates, once the dealers say, “Oh, I have cultural connections to the Block”, the magistrates say, “Okay, they are allowed on the Block.” ... They might very well have a family on the Block, but they are not there for the family; they are there to sell drugs. That is all, and that is true.¹⁷³

I think the thing is that they do bar some people from the area and from streets or from 500 yards away from certain streets, and they have done it to other people. They have certainly done it to some women that we know of, so we cannot really understand why drug sellers are using their claim that they have ties with the Redfern area to come back onto the Block.¹⁷⁴

2.158 In relation to offenders released on bail, Superintendent Smith advised the Committee that this is a court issue, rather than police one:

In terms of the people who are arrested for supplying drugs in Redfern, most are refused bail, or placed on conditional bail at the least. The people that the community believe to be on bail would be on bail from the various courts throughout the State, and the majority of police who come into contact with high-risk offenders will say that most of those people are on bail not from a police jurisdiction but from a court of some description.¹⁷⁵

Drug houses and shooting galleries on the Block

2.159 The Government submission to the inquiry, provided in April, states that it is implementing ‘a highly coordinated approach’ to the closure of known drug houses and shooting galleries on the Block and that:

The demolition of shooting galleries on the Block was a priority for the [Redfern Waterloo Anti-Drug Strategy]. While this is, in the immediate terms, a policing and safety issue, the demolition of these houses will, in the longer term, allow the redevelopment of the area to be realised ... The police view was that demolishing these derelict houses would substantially enhance policing on the Block, make it safer for their officers and seriously disrupt the drug trade.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷² Submission 53, Confidential, p4 (quoted with permission)

¹⁷³ Participant, Confidential evidence, 19 May 2004, pp5-6

¹⁷⁴ Participant, Confidential evidence, 19 May 2004, pp5-6

¹⁷⁵ Superintendent Smith, Evidence, 3 November 2004, p2

¹⁷⁶ Submission 55, NSW Government, p252

- 2.160** Superintendent Smith advised the Committee in November that the number of ‘drug houses’ on the Block had been substantially reduced:

[T]here probably would not be any under that definition of ‘drug house legislation’. There may still be one or two that people are using to supply a small amount of heroin. We raided the Block probably two weeks ago, and one of the houses that was selling a small amount of heroin was raided, and arrests were made and drugs were seized—but nowhere near the quantities that were moving from the Block six months ago.¹⁷⁷

Resources

- 2.161** The criticisms about the effectiveness of police measures to deal with drug related crime documented above point to the issue of adequate resourcing. In addition, Sergeant Frank Reitano, the Crime Coordinator at the Redfern LAC, stated in his submission to the Inquiry (provided in April 2004) that ‘there are inadequate resources to tackle robbery and drug related crime within the Redfern LAC’.¹⁷⁸ He argued:

Until recently the Redfern Drug Unit consisted largely of either one or two officers. Whilst both officers worked tirelessly to investigate drug matters the volume of drug cases was simply overwhelming. Recently a component of Operation Concertinas has been designated to investigate drug offences, however, this has caused staffing shortages within operation Concertinas. The Redfern LAC requires that Operation Concertinas becomes a permanent operation and that in addition a Drug Unit of about 8 police officers be created to deal specifically with Redfern’s drug issues ... The Redfern LAC is one of the five key indicator stations for heroin and as such deserves a significant resource allocation to enable proper investigation of drug matters.¹⁷⁹

- 2.162** With regard to resources, Superintendent Smith advised the Committee in November that as part of the initiatives announced by the Minister for Police in July, the additional officers now working on drug crime and in other areas place the LAC in a ‘strong position’ to tackle drug crime:

In relation to adequate resources, since our last appearance here the Minister has announced the 32 initiatives and strategies for Redfern LAC, and part of that enhanced policing package has provided the Command with additional resources in terms of material and also people. Six additional detectives have been seconded to work on drug and robbery crime in the area, five additional senior police have been recruited to the general duties staff, and Operation Concertina, which is high-visibility policing, has been expanded from 12 to 20 officers. They work basically around the clock in the CBD and the hotspot locations. Taking into account the work we have done and the enhanced policing packages, Redfern command has probably never been in a stronger position to tackle the issues that confront us. We have not dealt with all the problems yet, but we are certainly heading in the right direction.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁷ Superintendent Smith, Evidence, 3 November 2004, p2

¹⁷⁸ Submission 38, Sergeant Frank Reitano, Redfern Local Area Command, NSW Police, p1

¹⁷⁹ Submission 38, Sergeant Frank Reitano, Redfern Local Area Command, NSW Police, p21

¹⁸⁰ Superintendent Smith, Evidence, 3 November 2004, p1

We have three detective sergeant positions currently under advertisement, being interviewed and will be filled by Christmas. Those senior positions in that investigator's office places us in a much stronger position to tackle, basically, the serious crime of drug dealing and distribution, and of robberies. So, yes, much tighter and a more improved and efficient office.¹⁸¹

Conclusion

- 2.163** Throughout this Inquiry the Committee has been alarmed at the level of drug use and related criminal activity in the Redfern and Waterloo areas, particularly around the Block and the Redfern Railway Station. Evidence presented during the first stage of the Inquiry, both in submissions and oral evidence, highlighted drug use and related crime as a major area of concern for local residents and organisations. It appears that NSW Police have made some inroads into the drug problem in the area with the successful closure of drug houses and shooting galleries on and around the Block, along with an increase in resources to deal with drug related crime. We note that the RWPP has worked closely with police in the past to target drug use and crime in the area and we encourage the continuation of this work.

Update of other policing issues from the Interim Report

- 2.164** In our Interim Report the Committee examined several issues relating to policing strategies and resources in Redfern and Waterloo. Those issues included violence against police, the upgrade of the Redfern Police Station, the level and experience of officers at the Redfern LAC, a proposal to establish an Operational Support Group, and strategies to deal with robberies. A brief update is set out below.
- 2.165** In the Interim Report we noted with concern the incidence of violence against police within the Redfern LAC and recommended that the Minister for Police establish a system of recording such incidents.¹⁸² At the time of completing this Final Report, the Committee has not been advised as to the Minister's response to this recommendation and is unaware whether any steps have been taken to implement the system that we recommended. Superintendent Smith advised the Committee in early November, however, that in the Redfern LAC, incidents of violence against police and related injuries have reduced in recent months.¹⁸³ As for the reason behind this reduction, the Superintendent stated:

We have significantly cleared out a lot of the people who were not living on the Block at Redfern who perhaps were using the Block as a haven to distribute drugs. By removing the majority of those 35 people - most of who never lived on the Block - out of the area, that has left a majority of decent families residing there and going about their business. I suggest that a lot of the troublemakers at the moment are not in Redfern.¹⁸⁴

¹⁸¹ Superintendent Smith, Evidence, 3 November 2004, p3

¹⁸² Recommendation 10, *Interim Report*, p75

¹⁸³ Superintendent Smith, Evidence, 3 November 2004, p17

¹⁸⁴ Superintendent Smith, Evidence, 3 November 2004, p17

2.166 In our Interim Report the Committee noted that the Redfern Police Station is to be upgraded and is expected to be operational in early 2005.¹⁸⁵ On 9 November 2004, the Minister for Police advised the Legislative Assembly of the progress of the upgrade:

Six million dollars has been allocated to this project and I can today announce that a lease for seven floors of one of the TNT towers has been secured and the contract for its fit-out has been signed. I am advised that Redfern police should be able to move into their new home in early 2005—a station that will finally be as good as the police work that is done from it. Trinity Quality Interiors has been contracted to provide this modern headquarters, and work began yesterday. The new police station at Redfern will include secure undercover car parking; extended ground floor space, with security features including bullet-proof glass, airconditioning, a secure van dock, designated lifts for police and prisoners, and an external ramp entry for disabled access.¹⁸⁶

2.167 The Committee expressed concern about the impact of inexperienced officers on members of the local community in Redfern and Waterloo, particularly the Aboriginal community.¹⁸⁷ We also noted that the initiatives the Minister for Police announced shortly before the Interim Report was released included a 12 month suspension on the placement of probationary constables at the Redfern LAC, an initiative the Committee strongly supported. Superintendent Smith advised us in November that:

[P]robationers have ceased coming to Redfern. I think we have missed one or two classes already there so we are already gaining in our seniority obviously from the fact that we are not getting probationers. So that has stopped. There is a twelve-month cap on that, subject to further review.¹⁸⁸

2.168 In the Interim Report the Committee canvassed evidence presented by a number of Inquiry participants to the effect that the number of officers stationed at the Redfern LAC was insufficient. While we could not draw any definitive conclusions about this assertion, the Minister's initiatives included a number of new positions and secondments to the LAC.¹⁸⁹ An update on these initiatives was provided by the Minister in the Legislative Assembly in November:

At the time of the riot, Redfern Local Area Command had 170 officers working within it. Our plan is taking the number of officers available to the command to around 220. Much of the package has already been implemented, with a number of other initiatives ongoing. Since the Commissioner and I unveiled the Redfern plan in July, 12 additional officers commenced duties as part of the high-visibility Operation Concertinas, which patrols the railway precinct, and officers have begun operation support group training as part of the Vikings street crime unit, which will provide NSW Police with an enhanced public order capacity—24 hours a day, seven days a week ... Five new general duties positions and three new detective positions have been

¹⁸⁵ *Interim Report*, p79

¹⁸⁶ Legislative Assembly, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 9 November 2004, p12384

¹⁸⁷ *Interim Report*, p92

¹⁸⁸ Superintendent Smith, Evidence, 3 November 2004, p10

¹⁸⁹ *Interim Report*, pp82-83

created, and six additional criminal investigator positions have been seconded into the local area command.¹⁹⁰

- 2.169** The Committee examined the proposal put forward by the NSW Police Association for the establishment of an Operation Support Group (OSG) within the Redfern LAC. We also noted the Minister's announcement in July containing several 'enhanced incident response' initiatives that relate to the Police Association's proposal, including the establishment of a 24-hour, seven day OSG to operate through the Operation Vikings Street Crime Unit and centralised coordination of OSG Policy. In relation to those initiatives, the Minister recently advised that:

Reviews have also begun to assess future operation support group capacity. New and additional riot equipment has been provided to Redfern local area command, while regular inspection of the gear is now mandatory. At the end of October, 80 Redfern officers had undergone additional riot training, while exercises will now take place with police from adjoining commands ... A new command-and-control vehicle has been fitted out and has been used by police at five major incidents across Sydney in recent months.¹⁹¹

- 2.170** Finally, in our Interim Report the Committee examined policing strategies and resources in relation to robbery crime in the Redfern and Waterloo area. We were unable to determine whether existing resources were adequate to tackle robbery crime, due to inconsistent evidence presented to us, but we noted the Minister's announcement of additional resources dedicated to investigating robberies. In November, Superintendent Smith advised that the additional resources had been allocated, with some success:

Of the additional police who have been seconded, the detectives, most are working in the robbery unit. We now have the ability to isolate offenders and locations and improve the layout of some of the locations, where those offences were happening, with additional lighting, cutting down trees, and so forth. We have arrested a number of people who we believe were responsible for a few incidents; and the last two months were probably the lowest two months of robbery offences in Redfern for some significant time.¹⁹²

Conclusion

- 2.171** During this Inquiry the Committee has examined, in our Interim Report and this Final Report, several issues relating to our terms of reference to inquire into policing strategies and resources in Redfern and Waterloo. We have made a number of recommendations to improve various aspects of policing in the area. The Committee also notes that the Minister announced 32 initiatives on 16 July 2004 designed to improve policing in the area, some of which have been implemented, while others are either yet to be implemented or are ongoing.
- 2.172** The Committee notes, in particular, that the 32nd initiative announced by the Minister was a commitment to review the package of initiatives in six months, to determine whether any

¹⁹⁰ Hon John Watkins MP, Legislative Assembly, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 9 November 2004, p12384

¹⁹¹ Hon John Watkins MP, Legislative Assembly, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 9 November 2004, p12384

¹⁹² Superintendent Smith, Evidence, 3 November 2004, p17

additional strategies are needed. That review is therefore due to commence on 16 January 2005. The Committee encourages the Minister to undertake the review as soon as possible after that date and to make the findings of the review public.

Recommendation 5

That the Minister for Police undertake his six month review of the package of initiatives aimed at addressing policing issues in the Redfern LAC announced on 16 July 2004 as soon as possible after 16 January 2005. In addition, the findings of that review should be made public as soon as they are finalised.

2.173 In our Interim Report we also recommended that as well as a six month review of the initiatives, the Minister should also undertake an 18 month review.¹⁹³ In addition, Committee recommended that the Minister examine certain matters as part of both the six month review and the 18 month review, as follows:

- the impact of the increase in officers announced as part of the 32 initiatives on the ability of the Redfern LAC to investigate crime and also, the impact on the local community¹⁹⁴
- the actual and authorised strength of the Redfern LAC, the number of officers on leave and whether the new positions and secondments and the existing vacancies have been filled¹⁹⁵
- the level of experience among officers stationed at the Redfern LAC, including:
 - whether it is in the interest of the Redfern LAC and the local community to extend the suspension of the placement of probationary constables beyond the initial 12 month period
 - whether any ‘directed transfers’ have been made
 - whether any other measures or incentives to encourage officers to go to the Redfern LAC and/or to remain there for a constructive length of time are necessary¹⁹⁶
- the impact of the initiatives on the local Aboriginal community, with reference to the *Aboriginal Strategic Direction 2003-2006*¹⁹⁷
- an assessment as to whether sufficient resources at the Redfern LAC are dedicated to robberies, with regard to crime statistics and the views of the officers working to target robberies.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹³ Recommendation 18, *Interim Report*, p106

¹⁹⁴ Recommendation 13, *Interim Report*, p84

¹⁹⁵ Recommendation 13, *Interim Report*, p84

¹⁹⁶ Recommendation 14, *Interim Report*, p93

¹⁹⁷ Recommendation 16, *Interim Report*, p95

¹⁹⁸ Recommendation 18, *Interim Report*, p106

- 2.174** The Committee would like to stress, in conclusion, the importance of following through with both our recommendations and the initiatives announced by the Minister, in order to ensure that they have a long-term beneficial effect on policing in the area. The Committee encourages the Minister for Police and the Senior Management of the Redfern LAC in this regard.

Chapter 3 The Human Services Review

We need to look holistically at the systems that we are providing in an area like this and change our systems so that we can meet the needs of the community, not the community try to meet the needs of the systems.¹⁹⁹

The Review of the human services system operating in Redfern and Waterloo has been a core initiative of the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project and its implementation will be a major focus of the Partnership Project's work over several years. The reforms are intended to reshape the nature of human service delivery in the area, and thereby, the outcomes for people in Redfern and Waterloo.

Drawing on the evidence of a broad range of inquiry participants, this chapter critically evaluates the Human Services Review. The chapter begins by setting the scene of service delivery in Redfern and Waterloo by identifying the challenges and strengths existing there. It then outlines the scope and purpose of the Review, and its process, before summarising its key findings and recommendations. A detailed critique of the Review is presented, focusing on the key issues of service coordination and integration, accountability requirements, infrastructure and support, and funding. The Committee then identifies the major issues to be addressed to ensure the success of the Human Services Plan. Critical among these is for the RWPP and other government agencies to engage with non government service providers, to gain their trust, and to work with them in a model of shared power. The chapter is focused on the broad system-wide findings of the Review. In Chapter 4 we focus on a number of specific service areas within the broader system, such as child protection services, youth services, Aboriginal services, health services, education, housing, and services for culturally and linguistically diverse communities. In doing so, we refer to findings of the Review in relation to these 'service clusters'.

The landscape of human services in Redfern and Waterloo

3.1 As the Committee noted in our Interim Report, with the establishment of the RWPP, the suburbs of Redfern and Waterloo have been linked together, but there are significant differences between the two suburbs and they have their own distinct identities. At the same time, there are many similar issues. The Government's submission provides a detailed description of the social indicators for Redfern and Waterloo, documenting the major differences between the two communities.²⁰⁰ Principal among these is the concentration of public housing tenants in Waterloo, which manifests one of the highest concentrations of disadvantage and need in the State. Redfern, by contrast, is characterised by extreme disadvantage coexisting with socio-economic advantage associated with gentrification. Taken together, Redfern and Waterloo are marked by significant levels of need and by the presence of complex or multiple needs among many residents. Such needs are a key challenge for the service system of the area. This and other challenges for service providers sets the scene for the Partnership Project's Human Services Review.

¹⁹⁹ Participant, South Sydney Interagency, 3 November 2004, p15

²⁰⁰ Submission 55, NSW Government, pp33-50

Challenges for service providers

- 3.2** Inquiry participants emphasised the demands placed upon the human service system as a result of this environment of significant disadvantage and need in Redfern and Waterloo. As NCOSS stated in its submission:

In substantial parts of both suburbs there are large numbers of low income families (including sole parents), long term unemployed people, and vulnerable young people living alongside an ageing population. Evidence points to ongoing above average levels of domestic violence, child protection notifications and substance abuse in both the Indigenous and non Indigenous communities across the suburbs, with both data and front line human services and police experience confirming the prevalence of mental health issues, homelessness and anti social behaviour in key neighbourhoods.²⁰¹

- 3.3** Participants were also quick to point out that the picture of disadvantage within Redfern and Waterloo was becoming more complex with the demographic change going on in the area. An important aspect of this change was the increasing concentration of need among public housing tenants. As demand for public housing greatly outstrips supply, eligibility has become increasingly targeted to those with high needs such as people with intellectual disability, mental illness, drug and alcohol dependence, refugee trauma and so on; there is also a significant number of ageing residents requiring support services, along with culturally and linguistically diverse groups in the area.²⁰² The South Sydney Interagency explained this changing picture of need and the significant implications it has for service providers in the area:

It has to be recognised that Redfern and Waterloo are particularly difficult areas in which to operate. The huge population of public tenants is quite different to what it was years ago. At one time, public tenants were simply people with low incomes, not necessarily people wracked with social problems. However, over the past two decades, the NSW Department of Housing has necessarily targeted its allocation of dwellings more tightly to people with high needs. This means that there is a concentration of people who, as well as living in poverty, have high levels of physical, intellectual and psychiatric disability. There are also remnants of the original Department of Housing population who are now becoming very old and frail, as well as people recently released from prison. There are dysfunctional families and high levels of permanent truancy, and disaffected youth ... All of these factors have greatly increased the task of the community organisations in the area, while simultaneously reducing the more general population from which community organisations might expect to receive support.²⁰³

- 3.4** Issues raised in relation to public housing, including the impact that such change is having on tenants, are explored in greater detail in the following chapter.
- 3.5** In its submission, the Benevolent Society identified a further challenge that such a disadvantaged community poses for human services in the area: clients with high needs are often very difficult to engage. While the Benevolent Society identified a number of barriers to

²⁰¹ Submission 56, NCOSS, p1

²⁰² Submission 70, Inner Sydney Regional Council for Social Development Co-operative, p3; Mr Gary Moore, Director, NCOSS, Evidence, 18 May 2004, p29

²⁰³ Submission 46, South Sydney Interagency, p2

effective delivery of family support services in the area, in the Committee's view, the list could potentially apply to many other types of services in Redfern and Waterloo:

- Families will not seek assistance.
- Families do not understand their strengths, areas for improvement.
- Families often focused on their survival – there is a lack of sense of community.
- Workers often lack the support and skill to deal with very difficult families.
- Many families will always need a level of support – services often funded for a short time only or for short term intervention.
- The community is fractured because families are fractured.
- People find it difficult to trust anyone and it is difficult for service providers to develop trust with children and parents.²⁰⁴

3.6 Within this context of entrenched and escalating need, non government service providers such as those making up the South Sydney Interagency emphasised to the Committee that government funding has not kept pace with the increasing demands placed on them.²⁰⁵ The Department of Housing's Redfern Neighbourhood Advisory Board, which includes a number of tenant representatives, called for more adequate funding to address unmet need for a range of services including tenancy services, services for older people and young people, Aboriginal services, mental health services and drug and alcohol services.²⁰⁶ Likewise, Ms Norah McGuire, a local resident and member of the Waterloo Neighbourhood Advisory Board testified to the unmet need for services which could be remedied by more funding:

One of the things I have got to stress again - it is my favourite word - there are children, there are families, there are older people, people with disabilities, people with psychiatric problems, people with other health problems, and the one thing that is a big problem for all of them is the lack of resources ... If half of the money that was spent on researching the problems within the area was given to the area, particularly to people like us, to decide what to use them on, it would make a hell of a difference.²⁰⁷

3.7 The mismatch between demand and funding is further exacerbated by significant increases in costs to non government providers associated with public liability and workers' compensation insurance, as well as rising rents, for which organisations are not necessarily compensated. One service provider told us, for example, that while their insurance costs have risen from \$2,000 to \$10,000, their funding has not been increased in response.²⁰⁸ In addition, many non government inquiry participants reported a significant problem with onerous accountability requirements and associated administrative costs.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁴ Submission 33, The Benevolent Society, p2

²⁰⁵ Submission 46, South Sydney Interagency, p3

²⁰⁶ Submission 30, Redfern Neighbourhood Advisory Board, p1

²⁰⁷ Ms Norah McGuire, Waterloo Neighbourhood Advisory Board, Evidence, 15 October 2004, p11

²⁰⁸ Ms Sharne Dunsmore, Executive Officer, Fact Tree Youth Services, Evidence, 26 May 2004, p26

²⁰⁹ Participants, South Sydney Interagency, 2 November 2004, pp22-23

- 3.8** According to the Inner Sydney Regional Council for Social Development, even modest increases in funding to community based organisations could help them address identified need and increase their service delivery markedly.²¹⁰ While the Committee understands that large non government agencies do not face the same difficulties associated with service viability that smaller providers face, the Benevolent Society articulated a number of challenges associated with funding, governance and accountability in the non government sector:

The governance and management challenges facing all organisations have significantly increased in recent years. A range of factors are contributing to this including increased accountability and report requirements, legislative changes at both State and Federal levels, the administrative burden generated by multiple funding agreements, occupational health and safety issues, insurance concerns, information technology requirements and attracting and maintaining key staff. Some would also argue that government is expecting ‘more for less’ from service delivery organisations, particularly when funding agreements have expectations that services will be delivered in partnership with other organisations. It is very often the partnership building phase and the maintenance of these partnerships which are not funded by government. This can place significant stress on organisations.²¹¹

- 3.9** Linked to the challenge associated with funding and accountability is that of strategic and integrated planning across the service system. Tanya Plibersek MP, Federal Member for Sydney, stated in her submission:

I have some concerns that [some service providers’] effectiveness is being compromised by the fact that the service delivery system as a whole is not well coordinated and lacks overall planning. New services are sometimes developed in an ad hoc fashion while some existing providers lack the resources or flexibility to respond to new unmet needs. Many services seem to spend too much of their time scraping together running costs from a variety of funding sources. It is difficult to meet the evolving needs of clients, but the best service providers focus on these evolving needs rather than what it is that their service has “always” done. When services evolve in this way, they have to ensure that they still fit in with other service providers in the area.²¹²

- 3.10** Gary Moore of NCOSS explained the challenges facing many small providers in Redfern and Waterloo in the absence of effective government planning and support over time:

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 ... 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.²¹³

²¹⁰ Submission 70, Inner Sydney Regional Council for Social Development Co-operative, p4

²¹¹ Submission 33, The Benevolent Society, p9

²¹² Submission 49, Ms Tanya Plibersek MP, Federal Member for Sydney, p2

²¹³ Mr Moore, Evidence, 28 May 2004, p29

- 3.11** The Committee returns to many of these challenges later in this chapter, when analysing the strategies to take place under the forthcoming Human Services Plan.

Community and service strengths

- 3.12** In addition to the significant challenges outlined above, inquiry participants pointed to the strengths of the community and service providers to be harnessed in a process of reform.
- 3.13** Among the community strengths, according to the Benevolent Society, are a population made up of people in all stages of the life cycle, and which is culturally and linguistically diverse; a diverse economic mix; a robust history of diverse local organisations serving the community; and significant, increasing public and private resources within the community.²¹⁴
- 3.14** Participants such as the Inner City Regional Council for Social Development cited strong links between service providers, and between those providers and the communities they serve. Similarly, local residents Geoff and Lyn Turnbull identified the flexibility and responsiveness of small non government agencies to local needs as a key strength,²¹⁵ as did the Fact Tree Youth Service:

The strength of the NGO sector lies in the bond that the individual providers establish with particular constituencies, and how this bond translates into different support afforded by the NGOs to meet the needs of local residents at different stages of their life cycle. The different range of services, as well as the different operational styles of the various NGOs, provides for diversity and flexibility in meeting the challenges of the Redfern and Waterloo communities.²¹⁶

The purpose of the Review

- 3.15** Within this context of challenges and strengths, in January 2004 the Premier's Department's RWPP contracted the consultants Morgan Disney & Associates to undertake the Human Services Review. The Review ran from January to June 2004, culminating in a report released to the Committee and the public in November 2004. At the time of the release of the report, the Government announced that a Human Services Plan would be developed in response to the recommendations of the Review, and that the plan would be presented to Cabinet by May 2005 for endorsement.²¹⁷ The Plan is discussed in greater detail later in this chapter.
- 3.16** The Government's submission to the Inquiry states that the Human Services Review encompassed all Government and non government human services that serve the Redfern or Waterloo population, whether they are funded, licensed, contracted or provided. It included agencies located within the two suburbs, as well as those located outside but which deliver

²¹⁴ Submission 33, The Benevolent Society, p6

²¹⁵ Submission 65, Geoff and Lyn Turnbull, p12

²¹⁶ Submission 69, Fact Tree Youth Services, p9

²¹⁷ Hon Frank Sartor MP and Hon Carmel Tebbutt MLC, 'Government Announces Jobs Plan for Redfern Waterloo', *Media Release*, 10 November 2004; the Hon Carmel Tebbutt MLC, *Hansard*, Legislative Council, 11 November 2004

services to Redfern or Waterloo residents.²¹⁸ The Review Report clarifies that excluded from the Review was:

the core business of the State departments such as child protection, schools, hospitals and Police but all their ancillary services are included, eg. After School programs, Domestic Violence Liaison Officers and health services including drug and alcohol services and mental health services except hospital based mental health services.²¹⁹

3.17 The Review had a broad and ambitious purpose: ‘to provide guidance as to how to reshape the delivery of services in the area to ensure that resources are matched to need.’²²⁰ Accordingly, it involved:

- assessing the level of need in the Redfern and Waterloo communities and how that need could best be met
- mapping current services
- examining the spread of services, including the appropriateness of their location
- assessing the quality of services in light of need
- identifying service gaps
- documenting ways to strengthen services by building capacity.²²¹

3.18 The Government submission stated that the final Report of the Review would make recommendations on:

- how best to structure the service network to better meet the needs of the community
- a methodology to improve cross agency planning mechanisms across the human service delivery system
- an implementation strategy which considers both service design and a model for funding, monitoring and reviewing human services located within or provided to the area covered by the Redfern /Waterloo Partnership Project.²²²

3.19 Appearing before the Committee in May, Mr Michael Ramsey, Project Director of the RWPP, indicated the outcomes the Government was seeking from the Review:

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

²¹⁸ Submission 55, NSW Government, pp311-312

²¹⁹ Morgan Disney & Associates, *Making Connections: Better Services, Stronger Community – Report on Review of the Human Services System in Redfern and Waterloo*, Report for the Premier’s Department, November 2004, p20 (hereafter Morgan Disney & Associates). The full Review Report can be downloaded at www.redfernwaterloo.nsw.gov.au

²²⁰ Submission 55, NSW Government, pp311-312

²²¹ Submission 55, NSW Government, p312

²²² Submission 55, NSW Government, p312

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.²²³

Stakeholder expectations

3.20 Prior to the release of the Review Report, various inquiry participants indicated to the Committee that they were hopeful about the outcomes of the Human Services Review. As the Review Report was released very late in our Inquiry, the Committee was not able to canvass comprehensively the views of inquiry participants on the Review's findings and recommendations.

3.21 The Committee observed much apprehension about the Review's findings on the part of non government providers and some community members in the area. While some non government providers feared that they might lose funding, many such as the Eastern Sydney Multicultural Access Project were concerned that:

the Review did not bring with it any additional resources and instead had the aim of looking at reallocating existing resources. Growth money for existing service providers is a key way of improving the delivery of human services in the area. The waitlists ... of organisations are lengthy and are unable to be alleviated due in part to the lack of clients leaving services.²²⁴

3.22 Some participants could not see how the Review could adequately take account of, and develop appropriate recommendations for, services that did not fit neatly within the geographical area, or within the boundaries of State government responsibilities. A major concern expressed to the Committee by non government representatives was that the Review might yield simplistic solutions based around service coordination and cooperation. This is discussed in detail in a later section.

3.23 Residents Geoff and Lyn Turnbull reported that the Review was initially met with some suspicion on the part of some residents and non government agencies, partly because of the RWPP's earlier interactions with those agencies and the way the Redfern Eveleigh Darlington (RED) Strategy had been handled. (The RED Strategy is discussed in Chapter 5). Also, according to the Turnbills, the community was not given advance information about the Review, and was initially told it would be an audit, when it later became a much bigger initiative. These reservations were inflamed by a less than ideal consultation process, as is discussed in a later section. The Turnbills also reported community apprehension that the findings of the Report might be a foregone conclusion: 'there is community concern that the RWPP may be endeavouring to obtain a report which will be supportive of their solutions for

²²³ Mr Michael Ramsey, Project Director, Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, Evidence, 18 May 2004, p16

²²⁴ Submission 57, Eastern Sydney Multicultural Access Project, p1

the area.²²⁵ Again, the Committee observed this concern among many of the people we spoke with.

3.24 On the other hand, many service providers indicated a guarded openness to the findings of the Review, while residents such as Mr Ross Smith anticipated a substantial gain from the potential outcomes of the Review such as:

the establishment of mechanisms whereby the community can control the development and delivery of services and facilities that the community itself has identified the need for ... This will result in a massive empowerment of the community for its own benefit and will be of such a nature as to be self-sustaining in the long term.²²⁶

3.25 In the Committee's view, the apprehension and resistance of non government agencies in relation to the Human Services Review represents a significant challenge, but one that must be addressed. This will be a critical responsibility for the RWPP, and is discussed in detail at the end of the chapter.

The Review process

3.26 According to the consultants' report, the Human Services Review process involved a range of strategies. Key aspects of the consultants' information-gathering included:

- community consultation strategy involving two community forums, three service provider workshops, three focus groups with residents, six focus groups with clients, a specific Aboriginal consultation strategy through which 43 Aboriginal people were interviewed and surveyed, two community events attended by 85 residents, a street survey, a 12,000 letter box drop of a residents' survey, of which 159 were returned, and the creation of a Review website
- an organisational survey distributed to over 200 services delivering services to residents of the two suburbs, of which 108 were returned
- 'key informant interviews' with over 65 people from various stakeholder groups
- 61 service visits including 'in-depth follow up and face to face interviews' with services identified as core services to the area.²²⁷

3.27 Overall, the consultants reported that approximately 105 services were assessed in the Review, while 550 individuals participated in it, of whom 20% were Aboriginal and 80% non-Aboriginal, including around 9% from culturally and linguistically diverse communities.²²⁸ Of the 550 individual participants, around 200 were residents and 80 were service providers. Around 50 people participated in the client focus groups.²²⁹

²²⁵ Submission 65, Geoff and Lyn Turnbull, pp5-6

²²⁶ Submission 17, Mr Ross Smith, p20

²²⁷ Morgan Disney & Associates, pp121-122

²²⁸ Morgan Disney & Associates, p122

²²⁹ Morgan Disney & Associates, p122

- 3.28** The consultants also documented a number of limitations to the project including:
- difficulties identifying services and establishing accurate contact and service information
 - delays in receiving data from funding bodies, with some still not having provided information by the time the report was written
 - the exclusion of core services of key government departments
 - several Aboriginal agencies refused to participate in the Review
 - ‘the short time frame did not allow for the most desirable level of community and client involvement in the project’
 - completion of the survey varied across agencies.

Perceptions of the process

- 3.29** In our Interim Report the Committee documented inquiry participants’ criticisms in relation to the consultation process of the Human Services Review and other projects of the RWPP. In summary, some participants were concerned by the delayed engagement of the consultants, and saw the consultation process as rushed, less systematic than it could have been, and therefore that it did not necessarily capture as much information as it should have. In addition, there was concern that the Aboriginal community was not well engaged. As indicated above, the consultants documented these limitations in their Report. Some stakeholders were suspicious that the processes were more random than systematic, and a number of service providers commented on how onerous and time consuming the survey process was for them.²³⁰ On the other hand, participants such as the Turnbills indicated that the consultants did endeavour to consult widely given the time available, that the consultants showed genuine interest in the views of residents, and that the follow-up forums to feed back the initial findings were valuable.²³¹
- 3.30** While the Review occurred from January to June 2004, the consultant’s Report was not released until November. In our Interim Report, released in August, the Committee noted that at the time of writing, the Government was expecting to receive the consultant’s Report ‘soon’. On that basis, the Committee recommended that the RWPP expedite the completion of the Review and that the Government provide the Committee with a copy of the Review Report as soon as it was completed. We also recommended that the Government’s plans arising from the Review be communicated to all Redfern and Waterloo partners as well as the Committee as soon as possible.
- 3.31** The Committee has observed that the apprehension of some non government stakeholders grew as a result of the delayed release of the Report. As one service provider told us:

Can I say because substantial time and effort has been invested in participating in the consultation with the Partnership Project and more recently the Morgan Disney

²³⁰ Participants, Koori South Eastern Sydney Interagency, 15 October p26; Participants, South Sydney Interagency, 3 November; Submission 46, South Sydney Interagency, p5

²³¹ Submission 65, Geoff and Lyn Turnbull, p6

exercise, out of which, without explanation and contrary to written assurances which were given up front to the participants, no report back has been made available. Leaving people with the obvious question, well, what are they actually planning to do and why is it a secret, and therefore, although it may be incorrect, the perception that there is a potential threat to the funding security to those who speak out in a way which may be unpopular, is based on that fact.²³²

- 3.32** Clover Moore, Mayor of Sydney, stated in her submission that the Human Services Review and the RED Strategy were ‘seriously undermined by delays in agreed time lines and flawed community consultation processes. This has led to community frustration and suspicion, which may hamper the outcomes of both these processes.’²³³
- 3.33** In addition, while such a comprehensive Review was always going to be expensive - Dr Gellatly, Director General of the Premier’s Department, reported that it cost \$149,000²³⁴ - it is not unexpected that cash-strapped community agencies might begrudge the expense.
- 3.34** The Committee notes that when the Report was finally released, it was immediately placed on the RWPP website for members of the public to access, and was also sent out to all government and non government agencies in the area.
- 3.35** In the Committee’s view, the delays associated with the commencement of the Review and the release of its Report underscore the need for prompt action with regard to its recommendations, and fulfilment of the Government’s intention to develop a Human Services Plan based on the Review findings by May 2005. This will be a crucial step in rebuilding the trust and commitment of the community and the non government sector.

Recommendation 6

That the Government ensure that the Human Services Plan arising from the Human Services Review is approved and publicly released on time, that is, by May 2005.

The Review’s findings and recommendations

- 3.36** In this section the Committee summarises the major findings and the recommendations of the Human Services Review, as well as the major needs it has identified. In doing so, we refer extensively to the Review Report prepared by the consultants, Morgan Disney & Associates. In the following section we critically evaluate key aspects of its findings and recommendations in light of evidence taken from a range of participants in our Inquiry, primarily non government service providers. The focus here is on those aspects of the Review that deal with the service system as a whole.
- 3.37** In summarising and critiquing the Review, the Committee is mindful of the importance of focusing on areas where we can make the greatest contribution, given the evidence we have

²³² Participants, South Sydney Interagency, 3 November 2004, p5

²³³ Submission 84, Ms Clover Moore MP, Lord Mayor, City of Sydney, p15

²³⁴ Dr Col Gellatly, Director General, Premier’s Department, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p17

received. Thus the following section is not exhaustive. Rather, it is intended to inform key stakeholders, especially residents, clients and service providers, of the major aspects of the Review, and also to assess the Review in terms of the major issues raised by those stakeholders. In addition, we seek to identify ways to ensure the best outcomes are achieved from the Review for the communities of Redfern and Waterloo.

Major findings

3.38 The Review Report delineates its findings into three sets: those focused on the needs of the area; those focused on developing the capacity of the service system as a whole; and those focused on improving the capacity of ‘service clusters’ and individual services. On this basis, the Report puts forward a ‘coherent approach to systemic change and improvement’ at each of these three levels at once.²³⁵

3.39 It establishes a ‘locality renewal approach’ as the fundamental plank of reform, articulating its main finding as follows:

The Review has found that the human services system requires significant change based on a locality renewal approach. The NSW Government should facilitate the reshaping of the human services system in Redfern/Waterloo by:

- Strengthening the human services system as one element of a broader locality approach to address the issues in Redfern/Waterloo
- Implementing a community leadership and capacity building strategy for the community in Redfern/Waterloo including the government and non-government services
- Addressing, as a matter of priority, the restructuring and modification of services in certain areas/service clusters
- Approving the development, as a matter of priority, of strategies in priority areas of human service delivery based on Action Plans contained in the Review Report.²³⁶

3.40 Both the Review Report and the Government announcements since that time firmly establish the partnership or collaborative approach as the vehicle for reform. The Report includes a planning and implementation framework as the first step in ‘a 10 year, locality-based commitment to Redfern and Waterloo.’ The Review Report states:

The framework is based on a local collaborative partnership approach to address the problems of the area and involves effective engagement of key stakeholder groups of the local community i.e. service users, residents, community organisations (including e.g. local business organisations, residents groups and church groups etc), the three levels of government, and government and non government service providers ... No one group will be able to achieve the necessary change on their own and the evidence

²³⁵ Morgan Disney & Associates, p83

²³⁶ Morgan Disney & Associates, p94

from around the world confirms the importance of partnerships to change communities.²³⁷

3.41 The eleven service clusters identified in the Review Report, around which important aspects of reform are to be implemented are:

- family and children's services
- young people's services
- services for Aboriginal people
- services to address domestic and family violence
- health services
- employment support and training services
- services for people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds
- services to address crime prevention and community safety
- housing support and services to address homelessness
- services for people who are ageing
- services for people with disabilities.²³⁸

Identified needs

3.42 Drawing on existing demographic and socio-economic profiles, as well as survey data from residents and government and non government service providers, the Review Report documents the following needs as arising from the Review's needs analysis:

- **The need for more supports for parents, families and children** – based on widespread concern for the future of young people, a perceived lack of support for parents, and the need for more after school and school holiday programs
- **The need to strengthen coordination and quality of service provision** – identifying these as 'amongst the highest priority issues to be addressed', and emphasising a stronger focus on outcomes for clients, rather than those for organisations or programs
- **The need for community leadership and opportunities for capacity building** – based on reported needs for both these issues to be addressed
- **The need for strategies to ensure safety of individuals and the community** – with young people highlighted as a focus of community concern
- **The need to improve services for Aboriginal people, people from CALD backgrounds and people with mental health issues or dual diagnosis** – based on the expressed need for cultural awareness and sensitivity across services and for

²³⁷ Morgan Disney & Associates, p94

²³⁸ Morgan Disney & Associates, pp29-79

more workers from diverse cultural backgrounds, both Aboriginal and CALD, along with a range of specific needs identified in relation to the Aboriginal community.²³⁹

System-wide improvements

3.43 In addition to these needs, the Report identifies a large number of issues common to all services that require improvement across the system, whether government or non government. These issues included outcome based reporting, accountability, governance capacity, client focus, capacity to meet demand, cultural responsiveness, planning, staffing, training, service models, collaboration, value for money, leadership, integrated service delivery and sector development.²⁴⁰

3.44 After detailing its findings in relation to each of these issues, the Review Report observes that ‘the challenges facing the whole human service system are considerable’ and identifies a number of systemic problems for the human services system of Redfern and Waterloo:

- Services are uncoordinated and fragmented
- Complex social needs identified by the community are not well addressed
- Service provision emphasis is currently output not outcome based
- A mismatch between clients expressed needs and perceptions of need by service providers
- Limited sensitivity to cultural diversity among service providers
- No systemic leadership/partnership structure exists to ensure locality based planning, decision making, community engagement or capacity building
- Service delivery models are isolationist, delivered on the basis of historical decisions in the absence of evidence based need and agreed outcomes and objectives.²⁴¹

Review recommendations

3.45 The consultants identify three options for reform, recommending Option 3:

1. To consider a radical and major competitive funding regime which might attract a different range of providers and services to the area and might reduce the number and range of providers receiving NSW Government funding.
2. To consider a selective tendering process for some specific services which might establish a different range of provided and might reduce the number of providers receiving NSW Government funding. This approach would be more incremental.

²³⁹ Morgan Disney & Associates, pp11-13

²⁴⁰ Morgan Disney & Associates, pp19-28

²⁴¹ Morgan Disney & Associates, p29

3. To embark on a radical and developmental strategy which builds on the existing strengths; encourages more integrated service models and approaches, voluntary mergers, amalgamations and collocations; and includes the community in finding solutions.

3.46 Appearing before the Committee after the Review Report's release, Mr Michael Ramsey explained that Option 3 was really the only viable option as it emphasised strengths and supported agencies to work towards a more effective service delivery model. By contrast, Options 1 and 2 carried an enormous risk of alienating service providers and undermining the very objectives the RWPP seeks from reform:

I think there is a willingness within services in Redfern and Waterloo to change and I think we will end up with a strong, vibrant, resilient service delivery system if we work down through Option 3. If we picked up options 1 or 2 we would have a totally dysfunctional service delivery system because it would cause anarchy, to be perfectly honest. It would not achieve the outcomes that we all want. Option 3 is the only viable option that was given to us by Morgan Disney.²⁴²

3.47 The Review Report concludes with a table setting out five overarching recommendations of the Review, each with identified tasks, mechanisms and system outcomes. This table is included at the end of our Report at Appendix 5. The recommendations are summarised as follows:

- **Recommendation 1 – Planning framework for service system improvement:** That the NSW Government approves a Redfern Waterloo planning framework within which service system improvement occurs through a ten year commitment linked to a locality based model, reorganising the human services system on a locality basis. Tasks include: implementing an engagement process for community stakeholders to develop agreed outcomes for the locality and the human services system; achieving agreement on principles and objectives to underpin the human services system; and evaluating the Human Services Plan using identified outcomes.
- **Recommendation 2 – Implementation framework:** That the NSW Government approves a framework (set out in the Report) for implementing changes to the human services system in Redfern and Waterloo. This will involve the development of a Human Services Plan and the establishment of a leadership, planning and consultative structure made up of a Redfern Waterloo Human Services Senior Officers Group, an Implementation Working Group, and a Taskforce for each service cluster (see section below on implementation).
- **Recommendation 3 – Community leadership and capacity building strategy:** That the NSW Government implements a community leadership and capacity building strategy for the Redfern/Waterloo human services system that involves three elements: staff skills development; professional development on new service models and approaches; and a community leadership strategy for stakeholder groups.
- **Recommendation 4 – Priority strategies and action plans:** That strategies be developed in priority areas of human services delivery, based on action plans set out in the Review Report. Year 1 priorities are identified as: youth services; family and children's services; services for the Aboriginal community; a locality based health

²⁴² Mr Ramsey, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p25

service providing mental health, drug and alcohol and dual diagnosis services; and domestic violence and family services. Year 2 priorities are: improving access for people from CALD backgrounds; and future planning for people with disabilities and people who are ageing.

- **Recommendation 5 – Restructure and modification of services:** That the NSW Government immediately considers the range of actions to improve the coherence, effectiveness and accessibility of services. Identified actions are: rationalisation or merger of some services; co-location of some services; exploration of the feasibility of a ‘back office’ facility to support merged and co-located services; exploration of more possibilities for ‘outsourcing’; renovation or improvement of facilities for a number of services; performance review of a small number of services; and service improvements in some specific services.²⁴³

3.48 Mr Ramsey advised the Committee that the Government had adopted the Review Report,²⁴⁴ and gave a further indication of some of the strategies being considered as part of the Human Services Plan:

That service delivery model will be built around some of the elements that everybody in this room would agree, I think, were good elements for a service delivery system ... things like a common assessment and referral system; information provision, which actually goes across the whole service system, electronic network that goes across the whole service system; resource-sharing between services so, rather than having services being strapped because they do not have resources, making sure that they can share them. We are looking at again creating a virtual pool of funding so that instead of having funding across a number of government agencies you link that to monitoring and evaluation of services, so you monitor and evaluate services on the basis of the total amount of money that they have actually received. In some instances, in partnership with the services on the ground, it may involve some reorganisation of management structures; it may involve physical co-location of services. Some of these services are actually at present in poor facilities. You cannot sustain the level of facilities across the whole area. Maybe we need to co-locate those services so that, in effect, if somebody comes in, they can have a suite of services operating out of the same room or the same facility to meet their needs ...²⁴⁵

The Committee’s critique

3.49 The Committee has identified a number of key, interconnected issues around which our critique of the Human Services Review, its findings and recommendations are structured:

- the exclusion of core government activities
- funding
- coordination and collaboration
- service infrastructure, support and sector development

²⁴³ Morgan Disney & Associates, pp95-102

²⁴⁴ Mr Ramsey, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p24

²⁴⁵ Mr Ramsey, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p25

- accountability and integrated planning
- implementation.

3.50 Two important and related themes emerge from our discussion, both of which the Committee sees as key messages to the RWPP as it leads the process of implementing the Review's recommendations. They are also key measures against which the success of reforms will be judged. First, non government agencies must be valued and engaged in the process of change. Second, and equally, government agencies need to be engaged, to take up their responsibilities in relation to change, and to find new ways of working with non government services. These themes are discussed at the conclusion of the chapter, in the section on implementation.

The exclusion of core government activities

3.51 The Committee acknowledges the substantial work that has gone into the Human Services Review and the comprehensiveness of its findings. As the consultants pointed out, it was a major undertaking, with no known precedent for a Review of the whole human service system in a location of comparable size, either in Australia or overseas. Thus we also acknowledge the innovative nature of the initiative, and commend the explicitly evidence-based approach it employed.

3.52 At the same time, the Committee commends the vision for Redfern and Waterloo that this Review Report embodies. Our reading of the consultants' Report is that there is a genuine commitment to address the difficult and complex issues currently undermining the effectiveness of the human service system in that area. Broadly speaking, we see value in the Review's recommendations: they provide a clear way forward, with important tools to assist the implementation process. We also acknowledge the magnitude of the task ahead.

3.53 On the other hand, the Committee is concerned that the activities of core government agencies were not included in the Review. The consultant's Report acknowledges this as a limitation of the project:

Whilst the core services of some key government departments [were] excluded from the Review, issues relating to service delivery of these core services was raised constantly during the Review.²⁴⁶

3.54 When asked by the Committee why this occurred, representatives of the Premier's Department explained that it was because the Review was extremely large and complex already, and that the inclusion of the core government services would have made it much more so, and would have resulted in significant delays. They clarified that it was only the statutory government responsibilities which were excluded, with a range of health, school community programs, police liaison positions, and so on included in the Review.²⁴⁷

3.55 While we understand the imperative not to delay the Review's completion, the Committee is concerned about the exclusion of government services on a number of counts. The first relates to the ambit of the Review: it is not as comprehensive as it might have been and does

²⁴⁶ Morgan Disney & Associates, p122

²⁴⁷ Mr Ramsey, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p23

not furnish information on how key elements of the human services system such a housing, education and child protection need to be improved. These services make up a major portion of the human services system and have a major impact on the lives of residents. Second, the decision not to include core government activities focuses the problems on the non government sector which the Committee has observed is already feeling disempowered, misunderstood and unappreciated by government. It implies that a different standard applies to government and non government agencies.

- 3.56** In evidence Mr Ramsey reassured the Committee that this ‘does not mean there are not issues about some of those core statutory responsibilities ... that may need to be addressed and that will be the next step along the process.’²⁴⁸ The Committee was eager to learn more about the Government’s plans to review government services, but no further information has been made available at this stage.
- 3.57** We note that the Review Report makes it explicit that government agencies will be key participants in the implementation of recommendations. We also note that during government announcements regarding the Human Services Plan, the clear message was given that government agencies needed to engage in the reform process, that they ‘needed to change as well.’²⁴⁹ In a later section we deal with the strong message from both large and small non government agencies regarding poor collaboration on the part of government agencies in Redfern and Waterloo.
- 3.58** In the Committee’s view, the active engagement of government agencies in the process of reform – including reform of their own practices – will be critical to the success of the Human Services Plan. Not only will it be necessary to improve the effectiveness of funding and service delivery; it will also be vital to ensuring the engagement of non government agencies in reform.

Recommendation 7

That the core activities of government agencies not included in the Human Services Review be formally reviewed in conjunction with the development of the Human Services Plan, in order to determine how those agencies need to change to improve the human services system of Redfern and Waterloo.

Funding

- 3.59** As discussed earlier in this chapter, many of the community organisations we spoke with were very concerned that the Review did not bring with it any additional resources for service provision, and that it might result in the reallocation of resources between agencies. Many agencies operate from a very low resource base, and for many providers, unmet need for services is readily apparent. The Inner Sydney Regional Council for Social Development

²⁴⁸ Mr Ramsey, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p23

²⁴⁹ Hon Carmel Tebbutt MLC, *Hansard*, Legislative Council, 10 November 2004, p12458

submission embodied the frustration of community-based service providers with government when it stated, ‘They starve us of funds, then blame us for being skinny.’²⁵⁰

3.60 Community-based agencies were also apprehensive about the possibility of forced amalgamations in order to create greater efficiencies, arguing that this might reduce service diversity and thereby, reduce flexibility and responsiveness to local needs, as well as client choice.²⁵¹

3.61 The consultants stated that in their view, Redfern and Waterloo are comparatively well resourced:

This Review has confirmed that there is a substantial investment in human services in Redfern and Waterloo and that compared with many suburbs, these two suburbs are very well served.²⁵²

3.62 The Review Report is also clear that increased funding is not a first-order priority in relation to the bulk of services at least, but it does flag the need for funding increases in some identified areas:

The service system as a whole, and the service clusters, require significant strengthening and capacity building before any decisions on additional resources for the area should be considered. The exceptions to this relate to potential new funding opportunities for family and domestic violence, men’s services and any new funding for disability and /or aged care services.²⁵³

3.63 Nevertheless, the Review team argues for funding only to be increased subject to the strong proviso that the need to do so is well substantiated. It recommends:

That the Strategies be developed from the Action Plans in the Review and from the position that before any increase in resources could be considered the Strategies would need to clearly demonstrate that following reshaping and restructuring the current level of resources cannot provide adequate services to address the agreed outcomes.²⁵⁴

3.64 The Committee also notes as positive the indications given in the Report that additional resources may be spent, for example, on the ‘renovation or improvement of facilities for a number of services’ flagged in its Recommendation 5. We are aware of the overdue promises made by the RWPP in relation to some services and the impact this has had on service delivery in the meantime, as well as on relations between non government agencies and the RWPP. We believe it vitally important that the Government act on this aspect of the Review Report. Doing so will go some way to re-establishing the trust of NGOs and ensuring their participation in the reform process.

²⁵⁰ Submission 70, Inner Sydney Regional Council for Social Development, p3

²⁵¹ Submission 55, South Sydney Interagency, p2; Participants, South Sydney Interagency, 3 November 2004, p19

²⁵² Morgan Disney & Associates, p79

²⁵³ Morgan Disney & Associates, pp79-80

²⁵⁴ Morgan Disney & Associates, p81

3.65 As a result of the apprehension we observed among service providers about the possibility of funding cuts, the Committee sought reassurance from the RWPP that funding to non government agencies would not be reduced as a result of the Review. Dr Gellatly responded:

We cannot give a concrete undertaking that there will never be any defunding of things. All we can say is that the process we have been undertaking under the direction of Government is to look at ways of improving the allocation of the money, not to look at trying to achieve savings, but we cannot give a categorical commitment, that is a matter of the budget process and appropriations and that sort of thing. I am not in a position to do that.²⁵⁵

3.66 The Review Report is careful not to flag the defunding of individual services, but does note the urgent need to review some services, and that more detailed information and recommendations have been provided to the Government on this.²⁵⁶ The Report also states that strategies in service clusters ‘may require that savings are found or that reshaping and restructuring can lead to distribution of resources to cover the arrangements for the respective cluster strategy.’ In addition, the Report recommends actions including ‘rationalisation or merger of specific services’.²⁵⁷

3.67 In the interests of ensuring an effective system and the responsible use of public funds, the Committee accepts that some of these measures might be required, but is concerned to ensure that funding is only taken from an agency as a last resort, with the reasons made very clear to the services involved. In addition, every effort must be made to minimise any negative impact on staff and service users. Similarly, amalgamations must as far as possible be voluntary, with care to ensure that an appropriate diversity of services within all clusters be retained. We recommend that the RWPP develop and use specific procedures to ensure that such decisions and actions are handled with due care.

3.68 More broadly, the Committee recognises that many of the issues facing the human service system in Redfern and Waterloo are mirrored throughout the State, and that in the interests of equity new funds cannot be poured into any one community. Nevertheless, where need for additional resources is substantiated, we urge all levels of government to provide the appropriate funds.

Recommendation 8

That as part of the Human Services Plan, the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project:

- develop and use specific procedures for dealing with funded agencies in relation to reallocation of resources between agencies and the amalgamation of services
 - approve and expedite a process for renovating or improving the facilities of services.
-

²⁵⁵ Dr Gellatly, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p19

²⁵⁶ Morgan Disney & Associates, p80

²⁵⁷ Morgan Disney & Associates, p102

Recommendation 9

That where, during the implementation of the Human Services Plan, the need for additional resources is substantiated, funding be sought from the Federal, State and/or Local Governments.

Coordination and collaboration

- 3.69** The issue of funding is linked to that of coordination and collaboration, and the Committee observed markedly different perceptions of this issue on the part of non government agencies and the consultants who undertook the Review.
- 3.70** Prior to the release of the Review Report there was a very strong message from non government inquiry participants that the Review should not rely on simplistic assumptions that improved coordination and collaboration would solve the problems of Redfern and Waterloo. This was perhaps one of the strongest concerns of non government services expressed to the Committee. In its submission, the Redfern Legal Centre stated:

There seems to be a perception in government that the major problem facing clients and potential clients is that they face a lack of information about services, or that there is no system whereby clients are referred from one service to another. It does not seem to occur to government that its own reform processes are debilitating the services, or that its funding of services is inadequate for the growth of the community sector to meet expanding local needs ... Though there may be a lack of formal arrangements between services, there are strong informal links between them that make referrals easy, casual and fast ... The informal systems work well, provided there is the capacity in the organisation receiving the referral to provide a service.²⁵⁸

- 3.71** Similarly, when he appeared before the Committee, Shane Brown, Director of South Sydney Youth Services argued that in his experience, there is reasonable coordination already, saying: 'I think it is a [perception] from outside of the community that our people do not talk enough and do not collaborate enough, but I think that is a convenient notion.'²⁵⁹ In his submission, Mr Brown cited various ways that collaboration occurs in the youth services system:

Much of the work of our service relies on the good will and collaboration of others, the hundreds of volunteers who contribute time and the joint projects such as Street Beat with the Aboriginal Resource Centre. The sharing of space with the PCYC and our Education programs, The Youth Matter Project (a coalition of youth service providers) and others. The joint work with the Department of Housing and young people with mental illness. The many corporate bodies who support our programs with funding and volunteers. The sharing of resources between services including transport, staff, space. The hours of joint casework and case management that occurs between our service, the Fact Tree, Settlement, Girls Centre, PCYC, Centre Link, DoH, DoCS, Juvenile Justice – the list is extensive.²⁶⁰

²⁵⁸ Submission 50, Redfern Legal Centre, p6

²⁵⁹ Mr Brown, Evidence, 15 October 2004, p4

²⁶⁰ Submission 92, South Sydney Youth Services, p5

3.72 By the same token, non government agencies were adamant that government services had much more trouble collaborating with other agencies, with members of both the Koori Interagency and the South Sydney Interagency singling out the Department of Community Services as a particular offender.²⁶¹ Large NGOs such as Barnardos also highlighted a problem with government agencies.²⁶² NCOSS's submission calls for much greater coordination between Government and non government agencies assisting people in Redfern and Waterloo.²⁶³ The Benevolent Society sees the problem of collaboration and coordination this way:

The issue for organisations working in these communities is not (as is sometimes the case in high need communities), to increase their networking – in some senses there is almost a sense of organisations being 'over-networked' in Redfern/Waterloo. Rather, the challenge appears to be how to use this networking for collective action and how to help staff and residents maintain a sense of energy and hope in the face of the daily challenges with which they [live].²⁶⁴

3.73 Nevertheless, service providers also showed an openness to improvements in relation to collaboration and coordination.²⁶⁵ Focusing more on the specialised end of service delivery, participants such as Tanya Plibersek MP did see the need for a more holistic and coordinated approach to service provision for clients with complex needs, with services working together in a 'wrap-around model' perhaps through intensive case management, but she also suggested that this should receive additional funding.²⁶⁶

3.74 Strategies in relation to improving coordination and collaboration are indeed a key focus of the Human Services Review's recommendations, listing among the objectives to underpin its improved human services system, 'to develop effective planned collaborative approaches' and 'to develop effective integrated service delivery approaches.'²⁶⁷ Substantiating this recommendation, when discussing the need to improve collaboration across the whole system, the consultants made a very strong statement about 'distrust' and 'disrespect' within Redfern and Waterloo's human services:

There are pockets of good collaborative effort across all service clusters and almost every organisation expressed a keen desire for improved collaboration across the human services system. The Review team was struck by the high level of distrust and the lack of respect which permeated the human services system in the area. This is sometimes strong between individual organisations in any service system. It is often seen in child protection or mental health, where few organisations understand the pressures and demands on government services in complex service delivery areas. However in this area we would describe this culture of disrespect as almost endemic. There are very few organisations allowed to provide effective leadership or modelling

²⁶¹ Participants, Koori South Eastern Sydney Interagency, 15 October 2004 p17; Participants, South Sydney Interagency, 3 November 2004 p10

²⁶² Submission 32, Barnardos, p3

²⁶³ Submission 56, NCOSS, p3

²⁶⁴ Submission 33, Benevolent Society, p8

²⁶⁵ Participants, South Sydney Interagency, 3 November 2004, p19

²⁶⁶ Submission 49, Ms Tanya Plibersek MP, Federal Member for Sydney, pp4-5

²⁶⁷ Morgan Disney & Associates, p96

of collaborative skills and practice. This also manifests in some clients not being referred on to appropriate services.

Development of collaboration is a core strategy required in every service cluster and across the system and needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency particularly with modelling effective collaboration from key leaders.²⁶⁸

- 3.75** Working at the coalface of Redfern and Waterloo, non government service providers deal constantly with the difficulties of service delivery to people with significant needs. It seems that they are frustrated by unmet need, and that their hackles are raised by messages that they could address it by working differently. They also report that their informal networks have been devalued and depleted since the Partnership Project itself was established.²⁶⁹
- 3.76** In the Committee's view, the RWPP will need to work very carefully with the non government sector in relation to the objective of improving collaboration and cooperation. Agencies need recognition for what they are doing well, along with clear messages about how and why things could be done differently. Service providers need to believe in the benefits of working collaboratively, both for themselves, and for their clients.
- 3.77** This is also an area where the RWPP must ensure that no double standard applies to the government sector. It is imperative that government agencies improve their practices around collaboration, both to ensure better outcomes for clients, and to gain credibility with the non government sector.
- 3.78** The consultants' Report recommends that as part of the community leadership and capacity building strategy to be implemented in response to the Review, staff throughout the Redfern and Waterloo human services system be trained in partnership skills. In addition, professional development should be provided on areas including integrated service models, integrated case management, out-servicing approaches to integration and co-location.²⁷⁰
- 3.79** The Report states that integrated and coordinated service delivery is based on shared responsibility, an agreed common strategy and service model, and joint training for the workers involved in coordinated work.²⁷¹ A key vehicle through which collaboration and cooperation will be achieved is the service clusters recommended by the Review, and we consider it valuable and prudent that the Taskforces are to develop the strategy for their cluster. It will be very important for all parties - whether government, non government or community members - to come to the Taskforces with a commitment to working together in new ways, for the good of the system and their clients. It will also be vital for the RWPP to support agencies' collaborative efforts through measures such as training and infrastructure support, and to ensure that true partnerships are established and modelled in the Implementation Working Group. Leadership on this issue will necessarily come from the Redfern Waterloo Services Senior Officers Group.

²⁶⁸ Morgan Disney & Associates, p26

²⁶⁹ Participants, 15 October 2004

²⁷⁰ Morgan Disney & Associates, p100

²⁷¹ Morgan Disney & Associates, p86

Service infrastructure, support and sector development

- 3.80** As outlined earlier in this chapter, a number of service providers raised with the Committee the burdens they face in terms of tendering for contracts, governance and accountability requirements, administration, and so on, emphasising the way that these issues detract from the core business of service delivery to clients. The Committee is aware of the difficulties that many small agencies across the State face with maintaining their viability, and of the growing challenges that all funded agencies face in terms of increasing expectations around service management, together with the growing complexity of client needs.
- 3.81** The Review Report identifies a range of measures to address these difficulties as part of its ‘Community leadership and capacity building strategy’ (Recommendation 3). These include staff skills development and professional development, along with:
- A community leadership development strategy across the community stakeholder groups and including the RWPP focusing on community leadership
 - A capacity building strategy for the non-government sector on governance and mutual accountability.²⁷²
- 3.82** In addition, Recommendation 5 refers to ‘Exploration of the feasibility of a back office facility to support merged and co-located services.’
- 3.83** Early in our Inquiry, NCOSS argued the value of both a community leadership development program and a ‘back office’ model in order to build the capacity of and support non government agencies in their role:
- Opportunities do exist to develop and operate a highly engaging community leadership program, which brings together current and future leaders from the different neighbourhoods and encourages them to confront their differences and align their efforts for a better future. The effectiveness of such an initiative, if scoped and implemented with careful thinking and sufficient resources, could be substantial over a few years.²⁷³
- [The plan for Redfern and Waterloo should include] a non government organisations risk management advice and support service, which particularly works with the myriad of small and medium [services] to encourage and deliver shared services and pooled purchasing in the “back office”. This service should be owned by the NGO sector and managed through one of its existing peak networks.²⁷⁴
- 3.84** In the Committee’s view, there is considerable value in the directions and strategies recommended in the Review Report in relation to service infrastructure, support and capacity development. As well as directly helping a potentially large number of agencies to achieve the objectives of the forthcoming Human Services Plan, these strategies will also afford a measure of the effectiveness of the RWPP in providing practical assistance in areas where agencies themselves have sought support.

²⁷² Morgan Disney & Associates, p100

²⁷³ Submission 56, NCOSS, p3

²⁷⁴ Submission 56, NCOSS, p3

Accountability and integrated planning

3.85 Many service providers told us that they would greatly appreciate measures that simplify their accountability requirements. Key issues include the non-compatibility of data requirements across programs, the time that data keeping consumes for seemingly little result, and correspondingly, the fact that it diverts resources from service development and delivery.²⁷⁵ One coordinator told us that that he has to keep statistics in four different formats, estimating that about ten percent of funding time is consumed by these requirements.²⁷⁶

3.86 Participants also raised the issue that government agencies need to be accountable for what they achieve as well. As Geoff and Lyn Turnbull stated:

In the same way that NGOs report to their community on their projects and activities, Government departments delivering services in Redfern and Waterloo should report on their projects and activities to the community that they are seeking to service so that these projects can be accountable to the community in the same way as NGO projects.²⁷⁷

3.87 The Committee heard from the Premier's Department about measures to address data compatibility and more user-friendly reporting at the State level:

In the Premier's Department we have just finished a Review right across the Government called the Grants Administration Review. We have been looking at those and we are developing some protocols which the Auditor General mentioned recently in reports about having a common database and having common application forms and reporting requirements, and probably trying to lessen a few of those shorter term lower amount ones, because we have found that some of the reporting requirements for a grant of \$60,000 might be the same as for a few million, so there has to be a bit of risk analysis, saying that we only need the basic facts for the lower one.²⁷⁸

3.88 Dr Gellatly also indicated that there had been discussion between the State and Commonwealth regarding the possibility of achieving uniformity in data collection and reporting.²⁷⁹ While an undertaking was given by Dr Gellatly to provide further advice on this work, at the time of completing this report, no further information has been received by the Committee.

3.89 Mr Ramsey also addressed the Government's plan to move towards 'single agency accountability' in Redfern and Waterloo, indicating that government agencies would be equally accountable under the proposed model:

One of the outcomes of the Human Services Review and one of the things that we will be implementing as part of this new Human Services Plan, is we are moving to one agency Review and monitoring of service delivery, so instead of having

²⁷⁵ Submission 46, South Sydney Interagency, p4; Submission 50, Redfern Legal Centre, pp8-9

²⁷⁶ Mr Brown, Evidence, 15 October 2004, p3

²⁷⁷ Submission 65, Geoff and Lyn Turnbull, p13

²⁷⁸ Dr Gellatly, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p13

²⁷⁹ Dr Gellatly, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p21

accountability across four or five government agencies, we are moving to single agency accountability across the whole of Government.

That will actually address some of the fundamental issues you are saying, so instead of having to report to different government agencies we will have one agency evaluating on behalf of all government agencies. That will streamline the process quite significantly.

What it will also do, which is perhaps even more significant, is it will ensure that community outcomes are delivered rather than program outcomes, so it will break down those silos where the focus is actually on programs ... The single monitoring of services allows that to actually occur. Equally though, what it does is put in another benchmark in terms of increased accountability, and this is accountability of both government and non government services in Redfern and Waterloo. It is all well and good to talk about non government services, but government services in Redfern and Waterloo should also be accountable.²⁸⁰

3.90 The consultants also developed a monitoring and assessment framework for the reformed system, which will include a ‘simple low cost data collection tool’:

The proposed Human Services Delivery Plan will require a simple, low cost and manageable monitoring and assessment framework which provides local data and enables an assessment of the restructured human services system.²⁸¹

A simple and low cost data collection tool would be provided which would complement existing reporting requirements and provide improved local data without compromising existing data collections or imposing onerous new requirements.²⁸²

3.91 The Report states that the data collection tool would be completed annually, would focus on outcomes, with some basic output data, and would be ‘Developmental in that it would encourage services to think in an evaluative framework and to improve their consumer feedback and participation processes.’²⁸³ The monitoring and assessment framework in the Report is replicated on the following page.

3.92 When the Committee asked service providers their thoughts about pooled funding and a single accountability mechanism, prior to the release of the Review Report, the response was cautious, with people wary of a system that might be adopt a ‘one size fits all’ model that did not offer flexibility to respond to the differences between services.²⁸⁴ There was some confusion as to whether and how it might apply to services funded by the Federal and Local Governments as well. The Committee also observed among some inquiry participants apprehension about the move towards outcome based reporting, which they feared might not adequately reflect their work,²⁸⁵ and which will potentially impact on their funding base.

²⁸⁰ Mr Ramsey, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p13

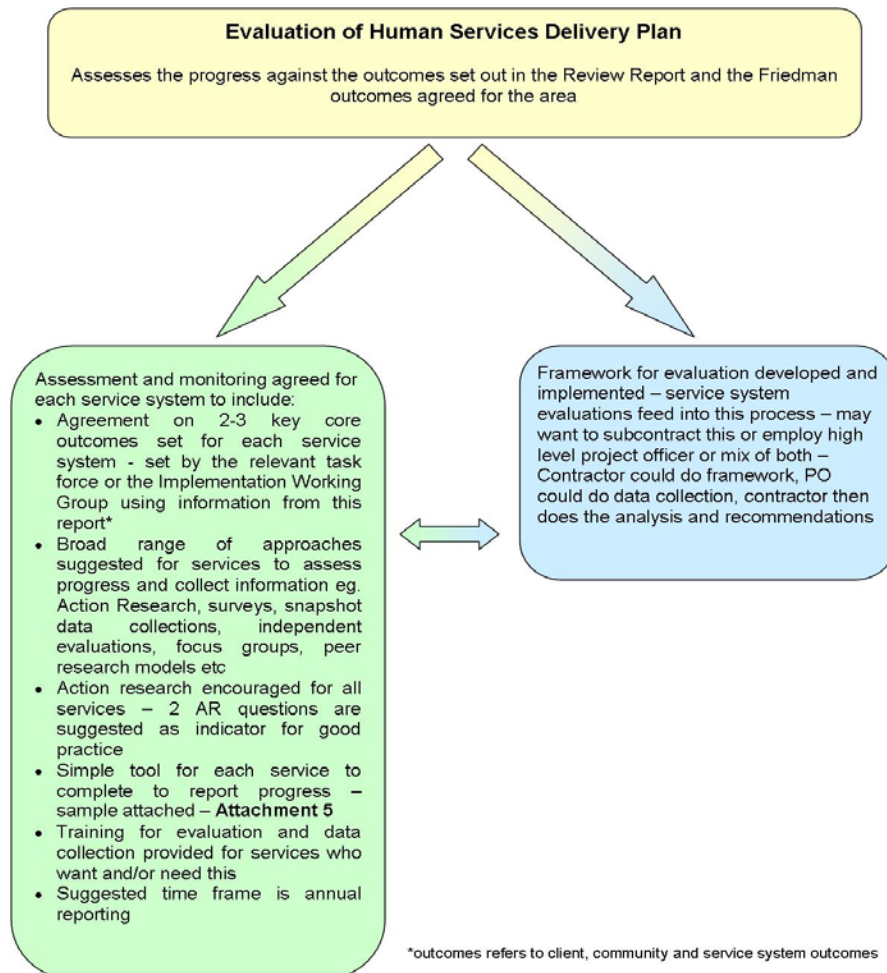
²⁸¹ Morgan Disney & Associates, p90

²⁸² Morgan Disney & Associates, p90

²⁸³ Morgan Disney & Associates, p91

²⁸⁴ Participants, South Sydney Interagency, 3 November 2004, p23

²⁸⁵ Participants, South Sydney Interagency, 3 November 2004, p25

Figure 3.1 Monitoring and assessment framework proposed in the Human Services Review²⁸⁶

3.93 In the Committee’s view, the pooled funding and accountability model implies a whole new way of thinking about the funding, delivery and evaluation of human services that will take some time for both government and non government agencies to understand and feel comfortable with. We consider that the Government’s plans for staff skills development in relation to evaluation, continuous improvement and outcomes (as part of Recommendation 3)²⁸⁷ will be vitally important to ensuring a smooth transition towards this brave new world. Both government and non government agencies will require good information, sound leadership and patience as they come to grips with such a radical new funding and accountability regime.

3.94 Few participants raised integrated planning with the Committee but those such as the Eastern Sydney Multicultural Access Project saw an approach that compelled government agencies to plan in relation to each other as very desirable:

²⁸⁶ Morgan Disney & Associates, p93

²⁸⁷ Morgan Disney & Associates, p100

The fact that health facilities are closed without community transport being allocated additional money for medical transport is one such example of where better and more coordinated planning could have been done to meet the needs of local residents. The necessity for various government departments to communicate with one another would also be facilitated by the creation of a human services department. For example when the Department of Housing groups people from the same language group in particular residences they could share a certain amount of information with other government departments who fund language specific programs to enable them to outreach more effectively while respecting client privacy.²⁸⁸

- 3.95** The Committee sees value in the move towards integrated planning, and again we foresee that education for service providers will be a very important aspect of reform.
- 3.96** Over and above these strategies which are specific to Redfern and Waterloo, the Committee considers that further action to address the issue of accountability requirements needs to be addressed at the State and Commonwealth levels, as a priority. Whilst accountability requirements were a major concern for participants in this Inquiry, they have also been raised in other inquiries we have undertaken. While we have not seen the report of the Premier's Department's Grants Administration Review, we do see merit in the directions arising from it, as flagged in evidence by Dr Gellatly (see quote after paragraph 3.87). These directions involved the streamlining of grants administration, including the creation of a common database, common reporting requirements and uniform application forms, and ensuring that accountability requirements are kept proportional to the funding concerned. We strongly urge the Government to take action on these matters, including through further negotiation with the Commonwealth on achieving uniformity in data collection and reporting.

Recommendation 10

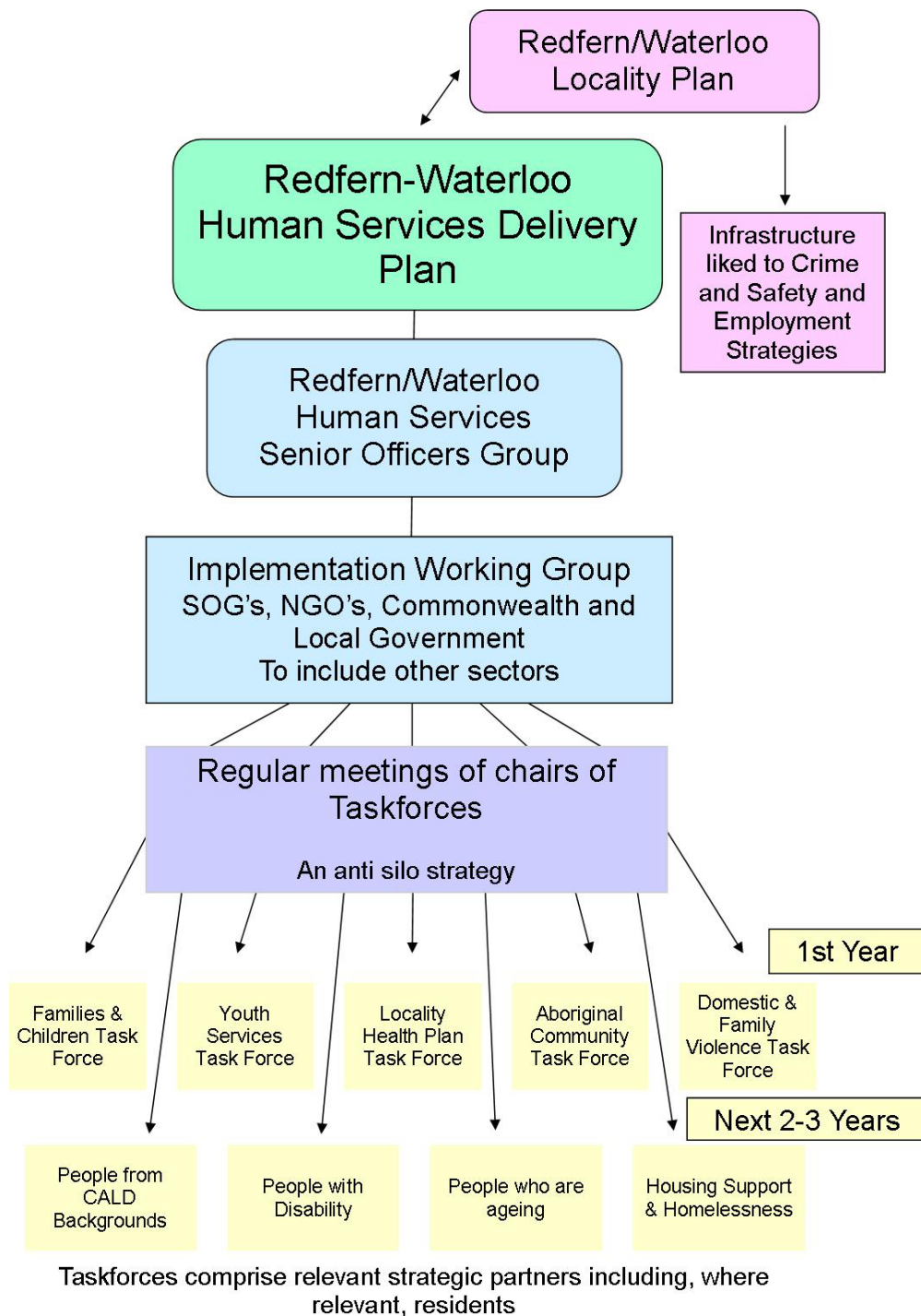
That the Premier's Department act on the findings of the recent Grant Administration Review, to reduce the burden of funding and accountability requirements on non government agencies.

Implementation

- 3.97** As noted above, the recommendations of the Human Services Review will be used to help design a Human Services Plan for Redfern and Waterloo, to be presented to Cabinet by May 2005.
- 3.98** Figure 2 on the following page provides an overview of the various levels of the Government's strategy for reforming the human service system of Redfern and Waterloo, including how implementation is to be driven.
- 3.99** The consultant's Report includes an implementation framework, captured in their Recommendation 2, which identifies the following structures as driving implementation:

²⁸⁸ Submission 57, Eastern Sydney Multicultural Access Project, p1

Figure 3.2 Outline of the implementation of the Human Services Plan proposed in the Human Services Review Report²⁸⁹



²⁸⁹ Morgan Disney & Associates, p89

- The Redfern Waterloo Human Services Senior Officers Group ... provides oversight and monitors the development of the Human Services Delivery Plan
- An implementation Working Group (IWG) made up of representatives of key human service agencies and community stakeholders ... and supported by the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project develops the plan. The IWG will report to the Redfern Waterloo Human Services Senior Officers Group
- Taskforces involving government, non-government and resident representatives work on service clusters as set out in the Review
- The existing [Redfern Waterloo] Consultative Council provides a mechanism for two way communication with representatives of community stakeholder groups
- The role of other existing consultative mechanisms are engaged to assist in two way communication with the wider community.²⁹⁰

3.100 When he appeared before the Committee shortly after the release of the Report, Mr Ramsey indicated that as a first step towards implementation, the RWPP was arranging meetings with community and service stakeholders on the findings of the Human Services Review.²⁹¹ The Committee understands that in keeping with this commitment, in mid December the consultants Morgan Disney & Associates held a number of sessions with members of the public, management committees and service providers.²⁹²

3.101 At the hearing towards the end of the Inquiry, the Premier's Department undertook to provide further information on the development and implementation of the Human Services Plan. At the time of completing this Report, the information has not been provided.

3.102 In the Committee's view, this implementation framework reflects the need for reform to be driven at a number of levels simultaneously. Prioritising some clusters for the first year and leaving others for years two and three would concentrate energy in those areas that need it most urgently. As discussed below, the success of implementation will rest on real partnership at every level.

The way ahead: genuine partnerships

3.103 The tasks ahead in developing a Human Services Plan and successfully implementing it, are massive. The Committee considers that the success of the Plan will rest on the partnerships which are central to the rhetoric and framework of the Human Services Review's findings. As Geoff and Lyn Turnbull have stated:

Putting time into building a partnership with the community and the capacity for the community to be an equal partner are not optional extras for the RWPP to achieve its

²⁹⁰ Morgan Disney & Associates, p99

²⁹¹ Mr Ramsey, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p9

²⁹² Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, 'Invitation to Community meetings', www.redferwaterloo.nsw.gov.au/oldsite/pdf/community_meetings.pdf (accessed 10 December 2004)

goal; it is the key to its success. Without a genuine partnership with the community the problems of Redfern and Waterloo will not be solved.²⁹³

3.104 Genuine partnership will require active collaboration on the part of government, the community and the non government sector at each level of implementation. It will necessarily involve an active commitment on the part of all involved to an entirely new way of working and wholesale cultural change. Genuine partnership will rest on change on the part of government agencies - both the RWPP and the various government agencies operating in Redfern and Waterloo - to genuinely engaging with their community and service provider partners. It will mean equal partnership and the sharing of power.

Table 3.1 The new approach to community renewal²⁹⁴

Previous approach	Evolving approach
Centralised or regional planning which is delivered to the local area	A locality based partnership <i>develops</i> a coherent plan to address the social issues and challenges facing the community at the locality level and negotiates with the central government agencies and regional bodies to achieve the horizontal integration and the use of resources to achieve the local goals
Single program or issue funding delivered as vertical interventions into the locality	Horizontal integration and coordination negotiated by the locality partnership across the various funding programs to achieve an integrated service strategy and integrated service models in the locality
Predominance of a top-down view of the locality - a sense that the State level of government 'owns' the locality rather than a balance between a 'top down' and 'bottom up' perspective	Facilitative leadership by the State level of government to build and model partnership with the other 'owners'/stakeholders in the locality - the people who live and work there, businesses, community organisations, Local Government and the Commonwealth Government. These groups are recognised as owners of the area too and as bringing vital resources to the total resource pool
State government level decision-making with consultation with a variety of uncoordinated local parties	State government decision-making involves negotiation (not just consultation) with the locality body. Negotiation is on a win/win basis for the parties
State government and the community focus primarily on state government resources	The wide range of resources in a locality are identified particularly across the three levels of government, and 'virtually' pooled to enable the locality strategic partnership to develop coherent, integrated strategies.

²⁹³ Submission 65, Geoff and Lyn Turnbull, p3

²⁹⁴ Morgan Disney & Associates, p85

- 3.105** The Government faces an enormous challenge in living up to the messages of the Human Services Review Report. Table 3.2 on the previous page, taken from the Report, conveys the genuine power sharing that will be vital to gaining the trust of non government stakeholders and achieving reform over time. The commitment to involving community stakeholders in the development of plans, both the overall Human Services Plan and the cluster action plans, along with the notion of local decision making which is negotiated, not just consulted upon, are very positive. Time will tell if this ‘new approach to community renewal’ is put into practice. Several of the mechanisms recommended by the Review, including its leadership, planning and consultative structure and its community leadership and capacity building strategy, will greatly assist the task, but ultimately, reform will rest on a genuine commitment to working differently.
- 3.106** The RWPP and other government agencies need to work to restore the trust of the non government sector and the community. This will necessarily take time and will be an evolving process. For their part, the community and non government sector also need to be open to change and a new way of working, and to the gains that can flow from reform. They need to be prepared to trust government, to embrace the possibilities of change, and help create a new future for human service delivery in the area.
- 3.107** As Gary Moore of NCOSS stated when he appeared before the Committee in May, change will only occur when people see the benefits of it.²⁹⁵ This means that the RWPP will need to communicate effectively with its partners, and to make the process as positive as possible. In an informal conversation since the release of the Review Report, Mr Moore talked about the idea of building pride among service providers in the work that they do, and the enhanced outcomes that they can achieve for the residents of Redfern and Waterloo through this new regime. He also talked about the importance of equipping the non government sector to sit at the table as an equal partner.²⁹⁶
- 3.108** To this end, Mr Moore suggested that government agencies in the area contribute funds to establish a local body to represent the non government sector of Redfern and Waterloo in the development and implementation of the reforms. The body would be a kind of ‘local peak’ that would represent the entire sector and become a negotiation point with government. He suggested that this could be based on the ‘Region Assist’ model developed by the Premier’s Department, combining the ‘back office’ infrastructure function flagged in the Review Report with this negotiation and representation role.²⁹⁷
- 3.109** In the Committee’s view, this suggestion has great potential as a means of demonstrating a real and practical commitment to partnership with non government agencies. We consider that the non government sector must be equipped and resourced to sit at the negotiation table with government, with its status as equal partner formalised. It may be that an existing agency

²⁹⁵ Mr Moore, Evidence, 18 May 2004, p29

²⁹⁶ Telephone conversation between Mr Gary Moore, Director, NCOSS and Principal Council Officer, 25 November 2004; NSW Premier’s Department, *Non Government Organisation Capacity Building, Region Assist, Project Report, 2002*

²⁹⁷ Telephone conversation between Mr Gary Moore, Director, NCOSS and Principal Council Officer, 25 November 2004; NSW Premier’s Department, *Non Government Organisation Capacity Building, Region Assist, Project Report, 2002*

could take on this umbrella role, drawing on and supported by the expertise of the interagency groups that already exist in the area.

Recommendation 11

That the NSW Government, in liaison with the non government agencies in Redfern and Waterloo, recognise and resource a local body to represent the non government sector and act as a negotiation point with government in developing and implementing the Human Services Plan.

Chapter 4 Government and non government services

The terms of reference to this Inquiry required the Committee to examine government and non government services in Redfern and Waterloo. In the previous chapter we evaluated the Government's findings and recommendations of the Human Services Review, to be implemented over the next ten years. In doing so, our focus was on the reforms to occur across the human services system as a whole. In this chapter the Committee focuses on a number of service systems within that whole such as the child protection system, youth services, Aboriginal services, health services, education, housing, and services for culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

This chapter does not set out to provide an exhaustive analysis of all aspects of the service system; nor does it examine in detail the findings of the Human Services Review in relation to each of Redfern and Waterloo's 'service clusters'. Rather, the purpose of the chapter is to document the key concerns and issues raised by inquiry participants in relation to a number of service types. We also report on Government action to address those issues, where we have taken evidence on this. The chapter provides a summary of the priorities identified by inquiry participants, particularly non government agencies and local residents. As such, the Committee considers that it will be an important resource for the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project and other stakeholders as they develop and implement the Human Services Plan.

A complex system

- 4.1 As noted in the previous chapter, Redfern and Waterloo have both similarities and differences that in turn shape the picture of need in the area. While the State Government, through the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, is leading the process of shaping the human services system as a whole, responsibility for various elements of the system is shared among the three levels of Government, and reform will necessarily require partnership across each of these levels.
- 4.2 As in every area of the State, the involvement of each tier of government makes for a very complex system. The Commonwealth is responsible for portfolios such as income support, employment and Aboriginal health, while the State administers a broad range of services such as health, housing, education, community services, and ageing and disability services. Local Government plays a major role in areas such as children's services, youth services, and a range of other community services and facilities. Adding further complexity to the system are the joint funding responsibilities of the Federal and State Governments for services such as health, housing, education and disability services, as well as a range of joint programs.
- 4.3 In the previous Chapter, the Committee noted that core government responsibilities were excluded from the Human Services Review. The fact that a range of government services dominated inquiry participants' concerns underscores the importance of the NSW Government acting on its commitment to undertake a formal review of government services in the area.
- 4.4 The Committee is conscious that in undertaking this Inquiry we have not been able to examine many aspects of government and non government services thoroughly, nor to develop conclusions and make recommendations on them. Nevertheless, the Committee feels

strongly that the matters raised by inquiry participants should be fed into future planning processes for government and non government services in Redfern and Waterloo. We urge the RWPP and other agencies to consider the evidence documented in the chapter when developing the forthcoming Human Services Plan and the action plans for each of the human services clusters in the area.

Child protection

- 4.5 Of all the concerns raised in relation to specific service systems during this Inquiry, those relating to child protection and the work of the Department of Community Services (DoCS) were among the most prominent. Many of the matters raised in our consultations with people in Redfern and Waterloo echoed those expressed to the Committee when we undertook our Inquiry into Child Protection Services in 2002. That Inquiry examined DoCS' effectiveness in relation to its statutory responsibilities, policy, programs, planning and operational systems.²⁹⁸
- 4.6 The key issues raised during the present Inquiry fell into five interrelated categories: DoCS workers' practices in relation to children and families; collaboration with other agencies; prevention and early intervention; staffing; and working with Aboriginal children and families.
- 4.7 A number of inquiry participants raised issues in relation to services that are linked to child protection, such as the need for domestic violence services and additional family support services such as the Yallamundi service run by DoCS and the Barnardos Intensive Family Support Service. The former is dealt with briefly in Chapter 2 concerning policing, and family support services are mentioned in various parts of this chapter. The Committee has chosen to focus on the major concerns raised by participants, that is, DoCS and child protection.

Practices in relation to children and families

- 4.8 A number of participants testified to cases of serious abuse which were reported to DoCS where no subsequent action was taken to investigate the matter or remove the child.²⁹⁹ Redfern Legal Centre also reported that DoCS is perceived to be inconsistent and unfair in statutory interventions: that it does not take action where children have experienced significant harm, but does intervene on more minor matters.³⁰⁰
- 4.9 Participants also told the Committee that DoCS takes an unnecessarily defensive approach to liaising with families and removing children. A representative of one agency told us:

DoCS workers in general - and I am not saying they are all bad, there are some very good workers there, but in South East Sydney they don't have a relationship with the community, they don't visit families, they are not open, they don't support families. This would be things that I've evidenced, this would be information I've fed back to DoCS. They are very poor at attending joint interagency meetings. They don't involve

²⁹⁸ For more information see Standing Committee on Social Issues, *Care and Support: Final Report on Child Protection Services*, Report 29, Legislative Council, Sydney, December 2002

²⁹⁹ Ms Kirrillie Moore, Solicitor, Redfern Legal Centre, Evidence, 26 May 2004, p45; Participant, Koori South Eastern Sydney Interagency, 15 October 2004, p14

³⁰⁰ Ms Moore, Evidence, 26 May 2004, p45

families in plans, what they do is they dictate to families, so they are not asking parents what their views are and they are not listening to parents very well.³⁰¹

- 4.10** Similarly, Ms Deirdre Cheers of Barnardos reported a pattern of unwillingness to work with the members of the Aboriginal community and engender their trust. Both she and Ms Kirrillie Moore, a solicitor with Redfern Legal Centre, pointed to a heavy-handed approach to removing children on the part of DoCS, and linked to this, to an over-reliance on police to accompany them when they do consider it necessary to enter a family's home or remove a child.³⁰² Ms Lesley Townsend, an Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer (ACLO) with the Redfern Police emphasised the invidious position of DoCS workers, but also suggested that this over-reliance affects the police's own relations with the Aboriginal community.³⁰³ Issues concerning police handling of child protection matters were explored in Chapter 2.

Interagency collaboration

- 4.11** As noted in the previous chapter, participants highlighted poor collaboration on the part of DoCS in relation to other agencies, for example around shared clients, or at interagency meetings. Members of the South Sydney Interagency and the Koori Interagency both expressed frustration about this,³⁰⁴ with the former group reporting an absence of referrals from DoCS to their services, unwillingness to share information about clients (notwithstanding privacy laws), and poor communication post-referral.³⁰⁵
- 4.12** Ms Cheers reported that DoCS does not comply with the child protection interagency guidelines which are government policy, stating that caseworkers are not using them and that managers report that there has been no ongoing training initiative on them. In line with this, she also noted a number of problems around interagency 'protective planning meetings', which are not held as often as they should be, may be poorly chaired, and do not involve the degree of shared decision-making that is emphasised under the child protection legislation.³⁰⁶
- 4.13** Also of concern to the Committee were the widespread reports of poor commitment on the part of DoCS staff to interagency meetings. Members of the South Sydney Interagency told us that this was a long-term problem, an example of not being able to engage DoCS in a local interagency of around 25 early childhood and family agencies, and pointing to the lack of respect that this shows for the professional services of those agencies.³⁰⁷ The Koori Interagency also raised this issue, noting the difference between the DoCS approach and that

³⁰¹ Participant, Koori South Eastern Sydney Interagency, 15 October 2004, p21

³⁰² Ms Deirdre Cheers, Senior Manager, South East Sydney, Barnardos Australia, Evidence, 4 June 2004 p8; Moore, Evidence, 26 May 2004, p45

³⁰³ Ms Lesley Townsend, Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer, Redfern Local Area Command, Evidence, 22 October 2004, p10

³⁰⁴ Participant, South Sydney Interagency, 3 November 2004, p11 and 15; Participant, Koori South Eastern Sydney Interagency, p22

³⁰⁵ Participant, South Sydney Interagency, 3 November 2004, p15

³⁰⁶ Ms Cheers, Evidence, 4 June 2004, p4

³⁰⁷ Participant, South Sydney Interagency, 3 November 2004, p11

of agencies such as Barnardos, whose workers go out to the community, liaise with Aboriginal workers, and participate in interagency meetings.³⁰⁸

Prevention and early intervention

- 4.14** Participants also called for DoCS to focus more on prevention and early intervention. The Koori Interagency called for greater provision for and referral to intensive family support, to prevent the need to remove children. They also sought casework practice that is ‘child-centred’, with case planning that supports and empowers families, rather than setting them up to fail.³⁰⁹
- 4.15** Agencies reported that there is no system in place for cases which are assessed as level two, three and four to be referred to family support and other early intervention services. They also spoke of DoCS’ practices which do not adequately assist families, such as paying for only 12 weeks of childcare for a child assessed as at risk, after which the child’s case is closed, as though the family is no longer experiencing difficulties. They called for a much more genuine and long term approach to early intervention.³¹⁰ Participants from the Police Service also called for a more proactive approach on the part of DoCS, to assist children and families well before they reached the stage of risk.³¹¹

Staffing

- 4.16** Related to all the concerns documented above is the inexperience of caseworkers reported by several participants. Members of the South Sydney Interagency stated that this inexperience leads to a disproportionate focus on child protection, with a lack of appreciation for the importance of supporting and working with the strengths of parents. They also reported a lack of continuity in the caseworkers allocated to a family, which makes case conferencing time consuming, frustrating and less effective than it might be.³¹² These concerns were echoed by the Redfern Legal Centre:

The caseworkers are extremely junior. There is a very high turnover of staff. Every time we call DoCS on behalf of our client, there is a different caseworker on the case. They seem to be ill-informed as to the statutory framework in which they are working and there is inconsistency between officers at each level of supervising that the junior DoCS officers receive. So I would say absolutely that it is certainly a matter of training and funding for DoCS.³¹³

³⁰⁸ Participant, Koori South Eastern Sydney Interagency, 15 October 2004, p11

³⁰⁹ Participant, Koori South Eastern Sydney Interagency, 15 October 2004, p21

³¹⁰ Participant, Koori South Eastern Sydney Interagency, 15 October 2004, p22; Participant, South Sydney Interagency, 3 November 2004, pp11-12

³¹¹ Submission 29, Sergeant Paul Huxtable, Redfern Local Area Command, NSW Police, p10; Submission 59, NSW Police Association, p9

³¹² Participant, South Sydney Interagency, 3 November 2004, p11

³¹³ Ms Kirrillie Moore, Solicitor, Redfern Legal Centre, Evidence, 26 May 2004, p47

Aboriginal children and families

- 4.17** The need to work more effectively with the Aboriginal community underpinned all of the issues outlined above. Various participants highlighted the Aboriginal community's distrust of DoCS, borne out of the past policies and practices so culturally and personally damaging to the Aboriginal community. A member of the Koori Interagency stated:

I would like to make a statement ... about the stolen generation. You have got to remember that it was the Aboriginal Welfare Board that made all these Acts, put all our people on missions, and it is actually DoCS today. That agency is actually DoCS. That is where DoCS was born. We are still offended and controlled. That is why there are a lot of issues about DoCS.³¹⁴

- 4.18** This distrust inevitably affects DoCS' capacity to work with the Aboriginal community, and a number of participants pointed to the importance of funding non government agencies to work with Indigenous families.³¹⁵ Some also noted a failure to place Aboriginal children with Aboriginal families, which they saw as acting out of a preference for non-Aboriginal placements.³¹⁶

DoCS' comments

- 4.19** Appearing before the Committee in June and then November, Dr Neil Shepherd, Director General of DoCS, acknowledged the difficulties that the Department has had in delivering effective child protection services. He explained that between 1996 and 2002, with the introduction of mandatory reporting, there had been a massive increase in the number of child protection reports, and that the Department's resources did not increase in line with this demand. At the same time, the systems enabling the Department to fulfil its role, for example its records management system, were functioning poorly. In this context, the Department elected to prioritise only the most serious cases (level one cases), while not allocating or responding to those assessed as level two or three. In recognition of the need to address these serious systemic problems, in late 2002 the Government announced an injection of \$1.2 billion to DoCS. Dr Shepherd emphasised that these funds are to be rolled out over a six year period, commencing 2003-2004, with the bulk of the money coming in the following three years. He told the Committee, 'There will be improvements and they will be significant, but they will take some time.'³¹⁷ As part of the reforms, a total of 875 additional caseworkers are to be employed across the State. At the present time there are 52 full time equivalent staff at the Eastern Sydney CSC, of whom 34 are caseworkers. Over the two years 2004-2005 and 2005-2006, 11 new staff (caseworkers and casework managers) will be recruited for DoCS' Eastern

³¹⁴ Participant, Koori South Eastern Sydney Interagency, 15 October 2004, p22

³¹⁵ Participant, Koori South Eastern Sydney Interagency, 15 October 2004; Townsend, Evidence, 22 October 2004, p11

³¹⁶ Participant, Koori South Eastern Sydney Interagency, 15 October 2004, p17

³¹⁷ Dr Neil Shepherd, Director General, Department of Community Services, Evidence, 7 June 2004, p2

Sydney office. Dr Shepherd told us that he was aiming to have four of these positions filled by the end of the 2004 calendar year.³¹⁸

- 4.20** Dr Shepherd acknowledged the perception that the Department is not responding to children that others consider at significant risk of harm, explaining:

... certainly some of the cases ... fall into the basket of level two and level three cases. That does not mean that they do not require a service from government or from non government organisations. Level two and level three cases are serious cases that require intervention, but we have not been able to get to those cases given the massive increase in numbers and the very high numbers of level one cases that we are now dealing with ... The thing about the levels that is important to understand is that level one cases are cases that require urgent intervention; there is something that requires essentially immediate or very quick action by DoCS. The underlying causes of whatever it is there may be equally serious for a level one or a level two case; it is just that for level one, for whatever reason we need to do something in a very short space of time.³¹⁹

- 4.21** On the other hand, Dr Shepherd challenged the allegation that DoCS was inconsistent in its removal of children, or that it might remove them for relatively minor reasons:

The first thing is that we cannot just remove children willy-nilly; you need the approval of the Children's Court to do that. Secondly, there is extensive training and procedural support for caseworkers around removal; it is the most serious thing we do. Thirdly, the caseworker does not actually have the delegation to remove a child; the Manager Casework has that delegation. All the Managers Casework in Eastern Sydney [whose catchment includes Redfern and Waterloo] are experienced, long-serving officers. They seek other specialist advice from casework specialists, legal officers, and so on, and if it is complex they take it to a Manager Client Services. There is simply not room for inconsistent behaviour by DoCS in relation to the removal of children.³²⁰

- 4.22** While Dr Shepherd also acknowledged the relatively low experience of caseworkers in Eastern Sydney (just under two years) compared with the State as a whole, he emphasised that they are closely supervised by casework managers, who on average, have seven years experience. He also assured the Committee that the interagency guidelines are a core element of initial caseworker training.³²¹

- 4.23** In relation to coordination, the Director General reported that Eastern Sydney DoCS staff acknowledged that they could coordinate better with other agencies, for example in relation to shared cases. He and Ms Anne Maree Sabellico, Regional Director for the Metro Central

³¹⁸ Dr Neil Shepherd, Director General, Department of Community Services, Evidence, 3 November 2004, p18

³¹⁹ Dr Shepherd, Evidence, 7 June 2004, pp4-5

³²⁰ Dr Shepherd, Evidence, 7 June 2004, p5

³²¹ Dr Shepherd, Evidence, 3 November 2004, pp 16 and 21; Dr Shepherd, Evidence, 7 June 2004, p16

Region, flagged that the RWPP's case coordination project and the recommendations of the Human Services Review will help to address this problem.³²²

4.24 With regard to the Aboriginal community, Dr Shepherd reported that in Eastern Sydney, 57% of Aboriginal children are placed with Aboriginal foster carers, noting that that this is well below the State average of 87%. He explained that it is largely because of the Department's difficulty recruiting Aboriginal foster carers.³²³ Ms Sabellico told the Committee that in finding placements for Aboriginal children, DoCS staff first try to identify an appropriate family member to take on the substitute care role, and failing that, they look to Aboriginal foster carers, either attached to the Department or to an agency. They will also liaise with regional staff and with other Aboriginal services before non-Aboriginal options are considered.³²⁴

4.25 Dr Shepherd stated that the Department is seeking to reduce the proportion of Aboriginal children in out-of-home care (the rate is about 25% of all children at present), and to improve its relationship with the Aboriginal community through a number of mechanisms including:

- genuine consultation with individual communities about the services required and the best way to deliver them
- efforts to establish and effectively support services that are run by and for Aboriginal communities
- recruitment and support for Aboriginal foster carers
- recruitment and more effective support for Aboriginal staff in the Department itself
- and continued cultural awareness training for non-Aboriginal staff.³²⁵

4.26 Dr Shepherd reported that the Department recently established the Aboriginal Services Branch to progress major policy and operational issues across the Department, and noted the creation of services such as the Yallamundi Aboriginal Intensive Family Based Service within the Metro Central Region.³²⁶ Ms Sabellico also reported on a number of local strategies intended to build relationships with the Aboriginal community.³²⁷

³²² Dr Shepherd, Evidence, 7 June 2004, p9; Ms Anne Maree Sabellico, Regional Director, Metro Central, Department of Community Services, Evidence, 7 June 2004, p9

³²³ Dr Shepherd, Evidence, 3 November 2004, p30

³²⁴ Ms Sabellico, Evidence, 3 November 2004, p31

³²⁵ Dr Shepherd, Evidence, 7 June 2004, p2 and 6

³²⁶ Dr Shepherd, Evidence, 3 November 2004, p25

³²⁷ Ms Sabellico, Evidence, 3 November 2004, p27

The Committee's view

- 4.27** The Committee notes that the development of a Families and Children Strategy will be a first year priority under the Human Services Plan, and that the Strategy is to address intake practices, referral protocols, case coordination and promotion of integrated service models.³²⁸
- 4.28** The Committee acknowledges the substantial investment that the Government has made in child protection, and the work that DoCS is doing on a number of fronts to address many of the problems highlighted by participants.
- 4.29** While we appreciate that reform takes time, we are nevertheless extremely concerned that many children who are notified to the Department as having experienced serious abuse receive no further investigation or action by DoCS. The need to ensure that these children and young people are duly protected was a matter of great anxiety for inquiry participants, and we urge the Department to ensure that real progress is made in this area as a matter of priority.
- 4.30** With the creation of new caseworker positions within the Eastern Sydney CSC, we also urge the Department to establish, as a priority, a process for allocating and responding to level two and level three cases, including by referring them on to agencies such as Barnardos and Yallamundi for family support. Given the relatively low professional experience of many caseworkers and our expectation that this experience will reduce, on average, as large-scale recruitment occurs, we strongly urge the Department to ensure adequate ongoing professional development and support in order to optimise caseworker practice. Use of the interagency guidelines should be a key aspect of this work.
- 4.31** In addition, given the strength of non government agencies' opinion in relation to DoCS' poor collaboration and case coordination, we also encourage the Department to make relationship-building and coordination with other agencies a priority. While interagency work is occurring at the executive and management level, it appears to be mostly with other government agencies. Relationships also need to be built with non government agencies, and need to occur at the caseworker level. As noted in the previous chapter, this is critical to rebuilding the trust so essential to the partnership approach.
- 4.32** Similarly, we encourage the Eastern Sydney Community Service Centre to supplement the work going on at the State level and continue to invest in building its relationship with the Aboriginal community of Redfern and Waterloo. The Committee also considers that child protection services should be included in the formal review of government services that the Government has undertaken to conduct in the area. This final point is reflected in a recommendation at the end of this chapter.

³²⁸ Morgan Disney & Associates, *Making Connections: Better Services, Stronger Community – Report on Review of the Human Services System in Redfern and Waterloo*, Report for the Premier's Department, November 2004, pp31 and 34. The full Review Report can be downloaded at www.redfernwaterloo.nsw.gov.au

Recommendation 12

That the Department of Community Services' Eastern Sydney Community Service Centre take the following actions, as a matter of priority:

- establish a process for allocating and responding to level two and level three cases
 - ensure adequate training and support for caseworkers, to optimise professional practice
 - build its relationships with other agencies through better case coordination and interagency participation, including with non government agencies and at the caseworker level
 - build its relationship with the Aboriginal community of Redfern and Waterloo through a more collaborative approach with Aboriginal families and service providers, and interagency participation.
-

Youth services

4.33 Throughout this Inquiry the Committee has heard from a wide variety of participants emphasising the need for the young people of Redfern and Waterloo to have the benefit of opportunities that have not been available to them in the past. Young people were often cited as the primary reason for change to occur, in order to help this 'new generation' to break free of the entrenched disadvantage so common in the area, and to realise its potential. The urgency of realising this potential was a message that was particularly strong within the Aboriginal community.

4.34 The Committee held a private briefing session with a group of young people from the Waterloo area so that we could hear directly from them about the issues they thought were important for this Inquiry. During that session, the group highlighted a number of issues:

- police targeting of young people, particularly young Aboriginal people
- some youth services do not have adequate facilities
- suspension from school occurs frequently and is a damaging experience
- there are not enough sports programs and activities for young people in the area
- more services are needed to address drug use amongst young people
- a youth service that is open 24 hours a day is needed
- the Street Team needs more Aboriginal workers
- the area needed more youth services, so young people can access both leisure facilities and counselling.³²⁹

4.35 In this section the Committee explores the evidence taken from a range of inquiry participants on several of the key issues highlighted by these young people: youth service facilities; the

³²⁹ Participants, Youth Forum, 22 October 2004

Street Team; and need for a 24 crisis service. Participants' views regarding police relationships with young people are explored in detail in Chapter 2.

Youth service facilities

4.36 Inquiry participants told the Committee that the majority of youth services in the area did not have adequate facilities. In particular, many told us that the Fact Tree Youth Service was very poorly accommodated. The Fact Tree is in a small building located at a busy intersection and across from a pub. It has no outdoor area for sport and recreational activities, and limited indoor space as well. Ms Sharne Dunsmore, Executive Officer of the service, told the Committee:

[T]he entry and exit point to our service is directly in front of a bus stop. The 355 stops right in front which is very difficult if kids are coming in and out and you have the elderly or anybody getting on and off the buses. There are no outdoor facilities, not to mention that the place is falling down. There is no outdoor space where we can supervise young people kicking a football, playing cricket. I know for a fact that the police have been called on a number of occasions to young people in the area and what they are doing is kicking a football across the road. That is dangerous, it can be a nuisance and the police are called. But if we had a space that was attached to our centre we could supervise that space as well as offering them activities.³³⁰

4.37 During the Committee's visit to the service, it was obvious that the small space did not fully accommodate the young people using the drop-in service, let alone lend itself to other programs staff are keen to implement. Ms Dunsmore described to the Committee the difficulties of providing a range of programs such as job search, the young mothers' group and one-to-one support at the same time as the drop-in, given that the service has such limited space.³³¹

4.38 The NSW Government had also identified the need for more appropriate accommodation for the Fact Tree and some time ago the RWPP advised the service it had allocated funding to enable them to move to a more appropriate location.³³² The RWPP engaged Residential Technologies Australia (RESITECH) to scope out a potential site for relocation, however they were unable to secure an appropriate site by June 2003 and the funding offer expired.³³³

4.39 Representatives of the Fact Tree told the Committee they had received no information as to whether the relocation was still going ahead or whether the funding was no longer available.³³⁴ The delay in providing alternative accommodation, particularly after creating the expectation with staff, the Fact Tree Board and the young people who utilise the service, has undermined the RWPP's relationship with youth services in the area.

³³⁰ Ms Sharne Dunsmore, Executive Officer, Fact Three Youth Service, Evidence 26 May 2004, p20

³³¹ Ms Dunsmore, Youth Forum, 22 October 2004, p22

³³² Ms Dunsmore, Evidence, 26 May 2004, p16

³³³ Submission 55, NSW Government, p260

³³⁴ Ms Dunsmore, Evidence, 26 May 2004, p16

- 4.40 When he appeared before the Committee in November, Mr Ramsey explained that the decision to relocate the Fact Tree had been postponed, pending the outcome of the Human Services Review. The rationale behind this decision was that the needs of one youth service could not be addressed in isolation and that the youth services system as a whole required assessment, to produce an effective distribution of those services.³³⁵
- 4.41 The Human Services Review Report's section on youth services states that 'There are a number of issues in relation to premises that need to be addressed. Some services have premises that are too small, run down, in very poor condition; and unsafe in one case...'.³³⁶ Though the Committee cannot be sure that the Fact Tree is one of the 'five centres' the Review Report is referring to, it seems highly likely, given the profile this issue has had in the Redfern Waterloo community. The report also urges consideration of 'Opportunities for a radical rethinking of the physical infrastructure needs of youth centres'.³³⁷
- 4.42 Consistent with the evidence documented here, in the previous chapter the Committee recommended that as part of the Human Services Plan, the RWPP approve and expedite a process for renovating or improving the facilities of services. The Committee understands that while many human services operate on an outreach basis, youth services generally work from a centre based model, bringing young people together and offering recreational and other activities on-site. It is therefore critical that they have appropriate facilities.

The Street Team

- 4.43 The Street Team is an integrated service made up of several government and non government services working in partnership.³³⁸ It aims to provide 'an outreach service which engages children and young people who are congregating in public space and engaging in anti-social and risk taking behaviour in Redfern, Waterloo and Darlington'.³³⁹ It was established in October 2002 and is led by the Department of Community Services.³⁴⁰
- 4.44 Despite its innovative approach to addressing the needs of children and young people, inquiry participants raised questions about the effectiveness of the Street Team. In particular, some suggested that by introducing the Street Team rather than resourcing existing agencies, and by not adequately consulting with agencies about identified needs, the RWPP had 'a very expensive service that is struggling to find a place in the community and do the work it needs to do ... because it is an imposed service; it did not grow with the community'.³⁴¹ The Committee also heard from a number of witnesses that the service needs more Aboriginal

³³⁵ Mr Ramsey, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p26

³³⁶ Morgan Disney & Associates, p38

³³⁷ Morgan Disney & Associates, p41

³³⁸ Mr Ramsey, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p6

³³⁹ Submission 55, NSW Government, p159

³⁴⁰ Department of Community Services, *Annual Report 2002-03*

³⁴¹ Mr Brown, Evidence, 15 October 2004, p5

workers.³⁴² Employing more Indigenous staff may assist the Street Team to engage more effectively with one of its key target groups, the Aboriginal community.

- 4.45** Dr Neil Shepherd, Director General of DoCS, told the Committee that an evaluation of the Street Team has recently been conducted and that the results of that evaluation would help improve the Street Team's service provision:

We have just done a review of how the Street Team operates and we intend to provide an enhanced service from the Street Team, with more direct assistance ...³⁴³

- 4.46** The Human Services Review Report flagged a number of actions in relation to 'services related to crisis intervention and street contact', which the Committee assumes includes the Street Team.³⁴⁴ These actions include considering similar services that have effectively implemented integrated programs for young people at risk, developing agreed client outcomes, and increasing communication of service achievements to the wider community.³⁴⁵

24 hour crisis service and after hours services

- 4.47** The Committee heard mixed opinions on the value of a 24 hour crisis service for young people in the Redfern and Waterloo community. Some witnesses felt that there was a need for such a service because of the limited opening times of existing services and the sometimes urgent needs of young people in an area where a number of social problems co-exist.³⁴⁶ Members of the Koori Interagency supported the establishment of such a service.³⁴⁷

- 4.48** Conversely, the Committee was also told that a crisis centre would not be useful because it offers only a temporary solution to problems that are usually ongoing. Mr Shane Brown, Director of South Sydney Youth Services argued:

If you provide crisis services, you create crisis. I think medium to long term accommodation is really vital and my comment is that the New South Wales Government has not done enough to provide more Department of Housing accommodation.³⁴⁸

- 4.49** Ms Anne Maree Sabellico of DoCS told the Committee that the Department was looking at providing a crisis service and was considering a range of options, in consultation with the community:

In relation to the issue of a crisis centre, I believe there is a need to look at providing a safe environment after hours for children and young people. What form that might take, of course, there is a range of options that you could consider, and we need to

³⁴² Participant, Youth Forum, 22 October 2004, p12

³⁴³ Dr Shepherd, Evidence, 7 June 2004, p1

³⁴⁴ Morgan Disney & Associates, p42

³⁴⁵ Morgan Disney & Associates, p42

³⁴⁶ Ms Dunsmore, Evidence, 26 May 2004, p18

³⁴⁷ Participant, Koori South Eastern Sydney Interagency, 15 October 2004, pp16-17

³⁴⁸ Mr Brown, Evidence, 15 October 2004, p16

look at the pros and cons of all those models. Effectively, you could look at a register of Indigenous carers specifically for Aboriginal children and young people. We could look at a safe house option. We could also look at supporting a Supported Accommodation and Assistance Program service to extend the support it may give to children and young people in a crisis situation or in an immediate situation where we need to find a safe environment. So there is a range of options that we looked at. The significant thing we need to do is talk with the community a lot more about what is needed and how we develop that.³⁴⁹

- 4.50** The Committee is also aware that there has been an issue around weekend opening hours in youth services. In the financial year 2002-2003 the Fact Tree received additional funding through the RWPP which enabled the service to open on weekends for a twelve month period. The following financial year, this funding was not reallocated and the Fact Tree no longer provides weekend services, despite the urgent need identified for them by service providers, young people and recently, the Human Services Review. The Government submission to our Inquiry states that the funding for the youth services enhancement projects, under which the Committee understands that the Fact Tree had received this grant, has been 're-prioritised to brokerage funding ... attached to the case coordination model which will target at risk young people and children in the area.'³⁵⁰ The Committee is mindful that there is an important distinction between the crime prevention focus of after hours services such as the Street Team, and the need for after hours services with a recreational focus.

Findings of the Human Services Review

- 4.51** The Committee notes that the Human Services Review Report does not mention a need for a youth crisis service and does not identify a need for any additional youth services for the Redfern Waterloo areas. It strongly states that the area 'is very well resourced for youth services, especially when compared with many other suburbs and areas'.³⁵¹
- 4.52** Nevertheless, services for young people were identified in the Review Report as a priority area. The consultants emphasised the need for enhanced collaboration between youth services in order to improve service delivery across the youth services cluster. The Review recommended the establishment of a Youth Taskforce to improve cooperation between services and stated that until this lack of collaboration is addressed 'no new resources should be considered'.³⁵² The development of a youth services plan for the area will be a priority for year one of the Human Services Plan.
- 4.53** Prior to the release of the Review Report, a number of inquiry participants told the Committee that collaboration between youth services in Redfern and Waterloo was good and provided examples of collaboration strategies.
- 4.54** As the Committee understood that there was already a Youth Taskforce made up of government and non government providers in existence, we sought clarification on this aspect

³⁴⁹ Ms Sabellico, Evidence, 7 June 2004, p14

³⁵⁰ Submission 55, NSW Government, p149

³⁵¹ Morgan Disney & Associates, p40

³⁵² Morgan Disney & Associates, p41

of the Report's recommendations. The Project Director of the RWPP, Mr Michael Ramsey, explained that the Youth Taskforce has been in suspension, awaiting the outcome of the Review:

There was a Youth Taskforce in place. One of the priorities that we identified that the task force would need to address is the outcomes of the Human Services Review. We said this very early in terms of the terms of reference. We have been just literally waiting for the outcomes of the Human Services Review ... We knew there would be a significant number of recommendations flowing out of the Human Services Review around human services and the taskforce.³⁵³

The Committee's view

4.55 In the Committee's view, strategies that help to increase the life chances of young people in Redfern and Waterloo, and assist them to fulfil their potential, are absolutely critical. The role of the education system in achieving this is explored in a later section. The Committee supports the Review Report's suggestion to make youth services a year one priority, and that the Youth Taskforce be immediately reinstated. In addition, we consider that accommodation for youth services must be addressed as soon as possible, particularly those of the Fact Tree. Finally, the Committee considers that the need for adequate provision of weekend and after hours youth services, including recreational activities, must be considered as a priority under the forthcoming Youth Services Plan.

Recommendation 13

That the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project immediately reinstate the Youth Taskforce and ensure that its membership includes representation of government and non government providers, as well as young people themselves.

Recommendation 14

That, in keeping with Recommendation 8 of this Report concerning the approval and expedition of a process for renovating or improving the facilities of services, the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project immediately consider the adequacy of accommodation for youth services in the area. In particular, the Partnership Project should ensure a speedy resolution of the issue of relocating the Fact Tree Youth Service to more appropriate facilities.

Recommendation 15

That in developing a Youth Services Plan, the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project and other members of the Youth Taskforce ensure that there is adequate provision for weekend and after hours youth services, including recreational activities.

³⁵³ Mr Ramsey, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p27

Services for Aboriginal people

- 4.56** Clearly, one of the most critical and challenging tasks for Redfern and Waterloo is the creation of culturally appropriate and long term solutions to the difficulties facing the local Aboriginal community. To be effective, these strategies will need to be driven by the community itself, with judicious and sensitive support from government and the broader community.
- 4.57** A key obstacle to this is the deep, palpable and understandable cynicism within the Aboriginal community towards government that has been borne out of white settlement, racist policies and longstanding political, economic and social exclusion. The cynicism is inflamed by a failure on the part of successive State and Commonwealth Governments to address well documented problems, for example in relation to deaths in custody, Aboriginal health, the stolen generation and so on.
- 4.58** In the final chapter of this Report, we address the issue of finding a new way forward with the Aboriginal community in Redfern and Waterloo. In this section we document the issues that Aboriginal service providers raised with the Committee regarding how services for Aboriginal people need to be empowered and supported both in order to meet community needs in the present, and to help bring about long-term solutions in Redfern and Waterloo.

Supporting Aboriginal services: respect in practice

- 4.59** The Committee took evidence from a number of Aboriginal community members and service providers, and we also held a forum with members of the Koori South Eastern Sydney Interagency in order to hear what they saw as the priorities for Redfern and Waterloo. A pivotal message was that government needs to recognise, show respect for and harness the community's strengths. A key way of doing this, they argued, is to support Aboriginal services.
- 4.60** Numerous participants, both from Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal services, raised the issue of 'imposed services', criticising, for example, the RWPP decision to award the contract for the intensive family support service to Barnardos. While they explicitly stated what a good job Barnardos is doing assisting both Indigenous and non Indigenous families, from the perspective of Aboriginal service providers it seems unfair that 'white' agencies receive significant funding when Aboriginal agencies are struggling to meet great need. As one service provider from the Koori Interagency stated:

In this community people live well below the poverty line, Aboriginal people. So you have got all those problems and all those issues and that encompasses everything, housing, education, employment, health. We have a lack of appropriate places for services. People come to us at [my service], as I said before, with lots of problems. We have places for people ... but there is such a waiting list. Mudgin Gal needs houses to house the women. Safe houses for children are needed. We all work here and we work with very little, we have very little money and human resources, and most of us work hard. It is not a nine to five job either. It is well ongoing there. Like Dr Naomi Mayers said, \$7 million that went into the Redfern/Waterloo Partnership Program, as people have said here, why didn't it go to these services here that work hard on the ground with very little resources to meet the needs. We never meet the needs. You feel

inadequate at times when you can't meet some of those needs because there is a multiplicity of needs.³⁵⁴

- 4.61** Another Aboriginal worker emphasised that many agencies are simply not funded well enough to meet the massive challenges that exist in the community, and called for greater investment in professional support for workers, as well as adequate facilities. In relation to professional support, this Koori Interagency member stressed the need for infrastructure that equips and supports individual workers, and that supports team work and collaboration. In addition, mainstream agencies need to better support and utilise their own Aboriginal staff, and to create mechanisms to ensure that information and feedback from Aboriginal clients reaches senior management, thereby helping to change policy and service delivery over time. The Committee also heard that attitudinal change, through cultural and racism awareness is required at all levels of government agencies, including among executive staff.³⁵⁵
- 4.62** In addition to these system-wide needs, some participants identified the need for certain Aboriginal-specific services including an Aboriginal women's refuge, an Aboriginal youth service located in Redfern and a drug and alcohol rehabilitation service.³⁵⁶ They also called for even greater investment in intensive family support services.³⁵⁷

The Human Services Review's findings

- 4.63** The Human Services Review Report is very cautious in its findings and suggested actions in relation to services for Aboriginal people. It gives three reasons for this: because several key Aboriginal agencies did not participate in the Review, although invited to do so, so that the consultants had an 'incomplete picture' of the system; because Aboriginal services need to determine their system's needs for themselves; and because the consultants were reluctant to detract from the need for action across the entire human service system to ensure services are culturally appropriate, accessible and responsive to Aboriginal community needs.³⁵⁸
- 4.64** Within this cautious framework, the Review identified a need for two key strategies in this area. The first, as with other service clusters, is the development of an Aboriginal Human Services Plan, linked to the broader Redfern Waterloo Human Services Plan, in order to ensure both Aboriginal specific and mainstream services are working to benefit Aboriginal people in optimal ways. The Review Report states that Aboriginal services 'should be encouraged to take a leadership role in this initiative' and that 'Recognition of the Aboriginal services network in any future strategies is essential.' The Report states that the initiatives are to be driven firstly, by strengths-based and culturally appropriate approaches, and secondly, by evidence-based information.³⁵⁹ It notes:

³⁵⁴ Participant, Koori South Eastern Sydney Interagency, 15 October 2004, pp27-8

³⁵⁵ Participant, Koori South Eastern Sydney Interagency, 15 October 2004, p24-25

³⁵⁶ Participants, Koori South Eastern Sydney Interagency, 15 October 2004, p25; Mr Brad Freeburn, Coordinator, Drug and Alcohol Unit, Aboriginal Medical Service, Evidence, 4 June 2004, p34

³⁵⁷ Participant, Mudgin Gal Aboriginal Corporation Women's Centre, Evidence, 19 May 2004, p2

³⁵⁸ Morgan Disney & Associates, p49

³⁵⁹ Morgan Disney & Associates, p51

The human services system needs to sit within a wider community plan which addresses economic, cultural, employment and educational outcomes for all Aboriginal families in the area.³⁶⁰

- 4.65** The second strategy proposed in the Review with regard to services for Aboriginal people is ‘community healing’, that is, a ‘community-controlled strategy which recognises the importance of the community being supported to find its own solutions ... within its own services, families and networks’.³⁶¹ The Report notes that Redfern and Waterloo currently lack a community development strategy of the scale of some communities such as Cape York, and others in Queensland and Western Australia, and that such a strategy would necessarily involve training and support for community leaders and role models. It states:

Addressing entrenched and longstanding problems associated with dispossession take time, commitment, wisdom and patience. Finding creative ways of working with the community on a healing strategy is more likely to achieve better outcomes for everyone. This needs to be undertaken as a foundation on which to improve the human services system. Until the need for healing is addressed it is the Review Team’s very strong view that very little will change ... We do not have the answers and would argue against non-Aboriginal people putting forward the detail of the solutions or the process. This must be done by and with the Aboriginal population. The government’s role should be to facilitate discussions on this with the community and assist them to find a way forward.³⁶²

Funding ‘imposed services’

- 4.66** In light of the concerns raised by participants, the Committee asked the RWPP about recent decisions to fund agencies that until that time did not provide services within Redfern and Waterloo. In relation to the decision to fund Barnardos to provide the intensive family support service, Mr Ramsay explained that an open tendering process was used that necessarily met government guidelines to ensure fair and transparent decision-making. He reported that the selection panel, which included an independent member from NCOSS and an Aboriginal member, determined that Barnardos was the organisation that best met the tender selection criteria, especially in relation to demonstrating a capacity to assist families with ‘high end’ needs.³⁶³ Mr Ramsey emphasised that it was a matter of matching up the demonstrated skill set of the agency with the selection criteria. He also reported that a number of smaller agencies from within the community had been selected on the same basis to receive other funding.³⁶⁴

The Committee’s view

- 4.67** In much the same way as we did in relation to the Human Services Review as a whole, the Committee sees significant potential in the Review’s suggestions for a way forward in relation

³⁶⁰ Morgan Disney & Associates, p50

³⁶¹ Morgan Disney & Associates, p46

³⁶² Morgan Disney & Associates, p47

³⁶³ Mr Ramsey, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p6

³⁶⁴ Mr Ramsey, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p12

to Aboriginal services. Again, we believe that it is critical that there be a genuine commitment on the part of government to the sentiments expressed in the Review Report, and a genuine commitment to working differently – including more respectfully – with the Aboriginal community. Re-establishing trust with the Aboriginal community of Redfern and Waterloo will take time, but is essential. It is also critical that this be matched by genuine partnership with the Aboriginal community on the part of the Redfern Waterloo Authority, as is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 5. The Committee considers that the community healing strategy proposed in the Review report, if actively and sensitively supported by the RWPP and other government agencies, has great potential both for the Aboriginal community itself, and in helping to rebuild the relationship between the Government and the Aboriginal community. We encourage the RWPP to pursue this matter as soon as possible by formalising its commitment and by approaching community leaders to ask the community to undertake the strategy.

- 4.68** In relation to the issue of ‘imposed services’, the Committee accepts the RWPP’s explanation for the decision to award the contract to Barnardos. We also note the excellent job that very many inquiry participants, including those that criticised the decision, report that Barnardos is doing in delivering this service. At the same time, we encourage the RWPP and other government agencies to come to grips with the difficult task of developing funding and governance mechanisms that actively support Aboriginal communities to deliver autonomous services. A commitment to empowering services in this way will mean a great deal to the community in Redfern and Waterloo, and others across the State.

Recommendation 16

That the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, as a matter of priority, make a formal commitment to actively supporting a ‘community healing strategy’ in the Redfern and Waterloo Aboriginal community, as proposed in the Human Services Review Report, and that it provide appropriate resources to support this. In addition, the Partnership Project should approach community leaders as soon as possible to ask the community to undertake the strategy.

Drug and alcohol services and mental health services

Drug and alcohol services

- 4.69** Drug and alcohol use and misuse was the focus of some debate in this Inquiry, particularly during its early stages. Various inquiry participants recognised the multifaceted impact that alcohol and other drugs are having on the Redfern and Waterloo communities, in terms of the health of the person involved, the well-being of their family, and the health and safety of the broader community.³⁶⁵ Participants also emphasised that alcohol problems in the area should not be overlooked. In Chapter 2 the Committee considered the implications of this issue for law enforcement, and in our Interim Report we dealt in detail with the issue of the mobile needle and syringe service, making a comprehensive recommendation which included that the

³⁶⁵ See for example Ms Cheers, Evidence, 4 June 2004, pp6-7

service be relocated to a nearby industrial area within three months. We also recommended that there be adequate treatment services for Aboriginal people with drug and alcohol problems. In response to the Committee's recommendations, the Government has announced that a new facility to replace the van would be opened in Redfern.³⁶⁶ In this section we focus on that facility and on the case that participants made for detoxification and rehabilitation services in the area.

The new community health facility

4.70 On 24 October 2004 the Premier announced that in response to community concerns over the needle van and the need for enhanced health services in Redfern and Waterloo, the Government was establishing a new community health facility near the Block. The Premier stated that the facility will replace the needle van and provide a range of measures including drug and alcohol services, psychosocial support services, enhanced Aboriginal health services, and specialist visiting services, including HIV/AIDS, hepatitis C screening and antenatal and postnatal care.³⁶⁷

4.71 A fact sheet on the facility produced by the RWPP emphasises that the facility is aimed at all people in the Redfern and Waterloo area, and that it will take a holistic approach to care:

The community health facility aims to provide a fundamental range of service for people who may not usually access mainstream health services. This facility will include provision of services such as health assessments, treatment and care of drug related injuries, provision of sterile injecting equipment, drug and alcohol assessments and referrals, welfare support, counselling and family support services.³⁶⁸

4.72 The fact sheet states that the new facility is scheduled for completion by the middle of 2005 and will be located on Lawson Street, Redfern. It will cost approximately \$1.5 million to set up, with a \$550,000 annual funding commitment. The facility will work in conjunction with existing services such as Royal Prince Alfred Hospital and complement Aboriginal services already operating in the area.³⁶⁹

4.73 As the service was announced late in our Inquiry, the Committee was not able to widely canvass views on it. Nevertheless, some participants were able to comment, and we are aware of the Aboriginal Medical Service's (AMS) concerns that they were not consulted about the facility, and that it might duplicate existing services. Members of the South Sydney Interagency had a range of views: one member reported that she was pleased to have learned that the service was not being set up to compete with or replace existing Aboriginal services, but rather, that it was intended to enhance the range of services in the area. She also reported that the Minister for Health's office had advised her the AMS would be consulted about the

³⁶⁶ Correspondence from the Hon Morris Iemma MP, Minister for Health, to Chair, 3 December 2004

³⁶⁷ Hon Bob Carr MP, Premier, 'Redfern Mobile Needle Exchange Van to Close and New Primary Health Care Facility to Open', *Media Release*, 24 October 2004

³⁶⁸ Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, 'Community Health Facility', Fact Sheet # 1, November 2004, p1

³⁶⁹ Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, 'Community Health Facility', Fact Sheet # 1, November 2004, pp1-2

facility, and that the needle van would not be closed until the new service was open. Another member was not sure that the service would be used by the broader Aboriginal community who did not have a drug and alcohol problem, given the substantial history and new facilities of the AMS. A further participant registered his disagreement with concerns among some local residents that the facility meant that a needle exchange would remain in a residential area, noting that this is common and acceptable in other parts of Sydney.³⁷⁰

- 4.74** Dr Andrew Byrne, a medical practitioner specialising in drug and alcohol in Redfern, appeared before the Committee just after the announcement was made and gave detailed comment on it. Dr Byrne was very positive about the initiative, which he predicted would meet a community need:

As I understand it, I have only read a press release but it certainly sounds extremely encouraging ... Certainly that is exactly what we need - a primary health care facility with all the services that the local community need. I do not know what all of those are. I know what some of them are - it may be a child vaccination service, a geriatric service. It certainly would involve drug addiction services, counselling and needle exchange. It should probably have a research arm because this is a hot bed of urban problems. Sydney university is only five or six blocks away and there should be someone investigating. I know there are people involved in Aboriginal health and community health so I think it sounds like an excellent suggestion, and I have been calling for this for years.³⁷¹

- 4.75** Dr Byrne emphasised the value in having a range of health care services in the community, welcoming a primary health care service that involved no cost to the consumer, and that provided a broad range of interventions. He noted that the Kirketon Road Centre in Kings Cross might serve as a worthwhile model, and suggested that a community board be established to oversee it. Dr Byrne also expressed a concern that the mobile van might be closed down prematurely, suggesting that as long as it was being used by a reasonable number of people, it should remain in operation. In principle, Dr Byrne argued for a range of needle and syringe program options, explaining that some people may prefer not to use the facility because it would offer less anonymity than a van, or that they may want nothing more than a needle.³⁷² He also stated that the location sounded positive:

The closer it is to the Block the better and I believe it is going to be in Lawson Street which is ideal from all of our points of view. For some people walking five blocks with two children is insurmountable. Yet, they may have pneumonia, a terrible headache, a substance abuse problem, domestic violence and all of that so the closer a service is, the better for the local residents.³⁷³

- 4.76** When he appeared before the Committee in November, Mr Michael Ramsey, Project Director of the RWPP, emphasised that the facility was not an Aboriginal specific service but was intended to assist the whole community, with a focus on those who may not usually access mainstream health services. He assured the Committee it is not intended to duplicate, but to

³⁷⁰ Participant, South Sydney Interagency, 3 November 2004, p8

³⁷¹ Dr Andrew Byrne, Medical Practitioner, Redfern, Evidence, 2 November 2004, p19

³⁷² Dr Byrne, Evidence, 2 November 2004, pp19-20

³⁷³ Dr Byrne, Evidence, 2 November 2004, p22

complement what is already on the ground.³⁷⁴ He also assured us that there would be no gap in the provision of needle and syringe program services.³⁷⁵ In a letter to the Committee, the Minister for Health stated:

To ensure effective transition of clients of the outreach service to the primary health care service, an education campaign will be undertaken with clients prior to its removal off the Block.³⁷⁶

Detoxification and rehabilitation services

- 4.77** Throughout the Inquiry, the need for detoxification and rehabilitation services close to Redfern was widely reported, to ensure adequate and accessible treatment for people with alcohol as well as drug dependence. Alcohol misuse was noted by various participants to be a significant but often overlooked problem in the area.
- 4.78** Participants told us that it is very difficult to access these services at present, especially since the detoxification units at the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital and Langton Centre ceased operation. Inpatient detoxification is now provided at Rozelle Hospital, but will again be available at the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital when the appropriate facilities are rebuilt there.³⁷⁷ The Committee understands that this will occur in two or three years time.
- 4.79** As we noted in our Interim Report, several Aboriginal community representatives, including Mr Brad Freeburn of the Aboriginal Medical Service, Ms Brenda McDonnell of the Aboriginal Catholic Ministries, and Ms Shirley Lomas, a local resident, all highlighted the need for Aboriginal-specific rehabilitation services.³⁷⁸ According to NSW Health, there are eight such services in the State, with one operating in the metropolitan area.³⁷⁹ Ms Karen Becker, Director of Drug Health Services with the Central Sydney Area Health Service, indicated that the area health service would support the establishment of an Aboriginal specific rehabilitation service in the area if the appropriate resources are provided.³⁸⁰
- 4.80** In light of this evidence, in our Interim Report the Committee recommended that the RWPP liaise with the Central Sydney Area Health Service, relevant Aboriginal organisations and representatives of the Aboriginal community, to ensure that there are adequate referral services for Aboriginal people with drug and alcohol problems in Redfern and Waterloo. We

³⁷⁴ Mr Ramsey, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p20

³⁷⁵ Mr Ramsey, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p20

³⁷⁶ Correspondence from the Hon Morris Iemma MP, Minister for Health, to Chair, 3 December 2004

³⁷⁷ Ms Karen Becker, Director, Drug Health Services, Central Sydney Area Health Service, Evidence, 8 June 2004, p46

³⁷⁸ Mr Freeburn, Evidence, 4 June 2004, p34; Ms Brenda McDonnell, Aboriginal Catholic Ministry, Evidence, 7 June 2004, p21; Ms Shirley Lomas, 26 May 2004, p52

³⁷⁹ Ms Becker, Evidence, 8 June 2004, p46

³⁸⁰ Ms Becker, Evidence, 8 June 2004, p48

noted that particular consideration should be given to the feasibility of establishing detoxification and other drug and alcohol related services, especially for Aboriginal people.³⁸¹

- 4.81** Since that Report, participants have continued to highlight the need for adequate detoxification and rehabilitation facilities close to the area. Ms Helen Campbell, Director of the Redfern Legal Centre, for example, noted that this will be especially important with the opening of the community health care facility at the Block, given the heightened demand for treatment that it will presumably create:

I am a bit concerned that [the Premier's media release about the new facility] refers to ... referrals into rehabilitation and counselling which raises the big question: What rehabilitation and counselling? ... Can we restate the urgent need for appropriate rehabilitation and detoxification facilities. We need culturally appropriate facilities, we need to not forget that alcohol is still a problem and we also, particularly for women with children, need residential facilities that you can take your children with you to.³⁸²

- 4.82** Again, Dr Byrne stressed the importance of a range of treatment options to cater to the needs and preferences of community members. He also emphasised the successes available in those options, and the need for timely access to detoxification and rehabilitation:

I think that a caring society should have access. If your doctor wants you or your sister or kid to go to a detox ward - like going to a hospital with a broken leg or to go for an x-ray with a chest infection - that doctor should be able to make one or two simple phone calls, write out a note saying that the patient has a major alcohol problem and has requested detox or rehab, tear that off and give it to the person to take up the hall or call an ambulance or tell the person to get themselves to such and such a facility and be quite sure that that person will be looked after. That no longer happens in New South Wales. As I said, sometimes it is very difficult, sometimes it takes 25 phone calls.³⁸³

- 4.83** The Committee sought further advice from the Minister for Health about future plans for other drug and alcohol services in the area, besides the new facility. The Minister advised that the Redfern Community Health Centre will be redeveloped, and that drug and alcohol counselling services, and the Magistrates Early Referral Intro Treatment (MERIT) program will be run from this site.³⁸⁴

- 4.84** The Human Services Review does not make a detailed analysis in relation to drug and alcohol services but does state:

The Redfern/Waterloo Anti-Drug Strategy plays a role in addressing health for the people living in the area. It is primarily about supply and demand and a justice and policing strategy which is addressing the symptoms. There is an urgent need for a

³⁸¹ Standing Committee on Social Issues, *Inquiry into Issues Relating to Redfern and Waterloo: Interim Report*, Report 32, Legislative Council, August 2004, p136

³⁸² Participant, South Sydney Interagency, 3 November 2004, p8

³⁸³ Dr Byrne, Evidence, 2 November 2004, p25

³⁸⁴ Correspondence from the Hon Morris Iemma MP, Minister for Health, to Chair, 3 December 2004

more holistic drug and alcohol health strategy for the local area which tackles some of the underlying causes.³⁸⁵

- 4.85** The Review Report proposes that the action plan to be developed for health services should involve the ‘immediate development’ of a drug and alcohol services plan for the area. We also note that a ‘Locality Health Plan’ to be developed by a Taskforce is one of the five first year priorities under the proposed Health Services Plan.³⁸⁶

Mental health services

- 4.86** Various inquiry participants called for enhanced mental health services, especially in relation to the significant group of people with a mental illness living in the public housing estates. While the Department of Housing is meeting a significant need for accommodation among this group, the concentration of people in Redfern and Waterloo, and the seriousness of their illnesses, engenders a sizeable demand for community mental health services in the area.
- 4.87** The Committee understands that there is a joint guarantee of service between the Department of Housing and NSW Health to provide mental health supports to people living in the public housing estates,³⁸⁷ however both the Redfern and Waterloo Neighbourhood Advisory Boards (NABs) reported serious concerns about these services. Unmet need for mental health services was verified by a range of participants including Councillor Tony Pooley of the City of Sydney,³⁸⁸ and members of the South Sydney Interagency. One member stated, ‘We have a very small number of community mental health workers ... who have to cope with a very big workload.’³⁸⁹ Another testified that there is a three week wait for crisis mental health services: ‘Crisis is three weeks and that is them trying really hard.’³⁹⁰
- 4.88** Resident members of the Waterloo NAB told the Committee that calls made to the crisis mental health team often receive a delayed response, and that the Police are more sympathetic to and effective with people who have mental health conditions.³⁹¹ They reported that people with mental illness might receive support as they settle into the estate, but that there is poor follow-up and ongoing support.³⁹² Members of the Waterloo NAB also told the Committee with some consternation that earlier this year the mental health team asked a group of residents to supervise the medication of their neighbours who have a mental illness:

³⁸⁵ Morgan Disney & Associates, p59

³⁸⁶ Morgan Disney & Associates, p60 and 89

³⁸⁷ Mr Richard Gilbert, Director, Health Services Planning, Central Sydney Area Health Service, Evidence, 8 June 2004, p36

³⁸⁸ Submission 45, Councillor Tony Pooley, City of Sydney, p8

³⁸⁹ Participant, South Sydney Interagency, 3 November 2004, p16

³⁹⁰ Participant, South Sydney Interagency, 3 November 2004, p16

³⁹¹ Mr Ross Smith and Ms Betty Bullivant, Waterloo Neighbourhood Advisory Board, Evidence 15 October 2004, p5

³⁹² Ms Norah McGuire, Waterloo Neighbourhood Advisory Board, 15 October 2004, p6

Ms McGuire: The suggestion was that because of the lack of resources for people with mental health problems, that perhaps the neighbours could help. We were not told we had to, but making sure they took their medication. Now, that is just not on.

Ms Hillbrink: It is not our responsibility.

Ms McGuire: The lack of resources means that those are the type of silly things they are coming up with.³⁹³

- 4.89** In its submission, the Redfern NAB called for a mental health needs assessment to be carried out in the area to establish the resources necessary to meet demand, and for increased funding to ensure adequate staffing levels at the Redfern Community Health Centre, as well as for outreach and after hours services.³⁹⁴
- 4.90** The Human Services Review Report does not deal comprehensively with mental health services, and makes somewhat contradictory statements on them. It acknowledges, 'Whilst there is a range of mental health services, the adequacy of these services was seriously questioned or noted by every stakeholder group identified', but then calls for this 'perception ... to be viewed in the context of public expenditure on mental health across Australia', as well as the balance that the community is seeking between care for people with high needs and early detection and support for others. The Review Report concludes, 'Until the broader improvements are made to the service system it is too difficult to assess the extent of unmet need and the need for additional mental health services, except with respect to dual diagnosis services.'³⁹⁵ Nevertheless, as with drug and alcohol, it proposes the 'immediate development of a mental health services plan.'³⁹⁶
- 4.91** Few inquiry participants raised a need for dual diagnosis services (for people with mental illness and a drug and alcohol problem) with the Committee.

The Committee's view

- 4.92** The Committee welcomes the announcement of the new community health facility, and the assurances of the RWPP that there will be an appropriate transition between the opening of the facility and the closure of the mobile service. We note the importance of offering a broad range of services at the facility, of ensuring good links with the range of complementary services in the area, and of undertaking strong consultation when designing and developing the service. We also encourage the Central Sydney Area Health Service to consider a formal consultation and oversight mechanism such as a community board, as well as the opportunity for research partnerships.
- 4.93** In addition, we consider it vitally important that the Government, through the RWPP, fulfil its commitment in relation to the Locality Health Plan Taskforce, including that it act on the advice of the Human Services Review to immediately develop a drug and alcohol services plan

³⁹³ Ms Norah McGuire and Ms Barbera Hillbrink, Waterloo Neighbourhood Advisory Board, Evidence 15 October 2004, pp5-6

³⁹⁴ Submission 30, Redfern Neighbourhood Advisory Service, p7

³⁹⁵ Morgan Disney & Associates, pp58-59

³⁹⁶ Morgan Disney & Associates, p58

and a mental health services plan. In relation to drug and alcohol, this plan must provide for adequate local detoxification and other treatment services, and ensure appropriate attention to the often overlooked problem of alcohol. In relation to both drug and alcohol and mental health, it must provide for culturally appropriate services.

- 4.94** The Committee considers that the level of need for mental health services reported to us is not reflected in the Human Services Review Report. We were greatly concerned by participants' evidence about inadequate supports for people with mental health conditions living in the public housing estates. We strongly urge the Government to properly consider the need for adequate mental health services in the area. This should be done as part of the formal review of government services that the NSW Government has indicated it will undertake. Similarly, we consider that drug and alcohol services must be included in this review. A recommendation capturing all of the areas we believe should be addressed in the review is made at the end of this chapter.

Recommendation 17

That in establishing the community health facility in Lawson Street, the Central Sydney Area Health Service, ensure:

- the provision of a broad range of services at the facility
- the establishment of strong, ongoing links with existing services in the area
- full consultation with relevant stakeholders

and that consideration be given to the establishment of a formal consultation and governance mechanism such as a community board, and to the opportunity for research partnerships.

Recommendation 18

That in implementing the recommendations of the Human Services Review, the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project ensure the immediate development of a drug and alcohol services plan and a mental health services plan. Both must provide for adequate local services and culturally appropriate services.

Education

- 4.95** A quality education provides the tools for children and young people to fulfil their potential, helping to circumvent the cycle of disadvantage that is reflected in parts of both Redfern and Waterloo. In this section the Committee explores several issues raised by inquiry participants in relation to school education.
- 4.96** There are three Government schools operating in the Redfern and Waterloo communities:
- Alexandria Park Community School, for children from kindergarten to year 12
 - Darlington Public School, which accepts students from pre-school level to year 6

- Green Square School, a special purpose school for children with behavioural difficulties, which takes a very small enrolment of 21 students annually.

4.97 At the end of the 2002 school year, Redfern Public School, Waterloo Public School and Cleveland Street High School were closed, and along with Alexandria Public School were amalgamated to form the Alexandria Park Community School, which commenced at the beginning of 2003.³⁹⁷ Other important education programs in the area include the Waratah Program run by South Sydney Youth Services.

Truancy

4.98 The issue of school attendance is a primary concern for many members of the community, particularly in relation to Aboriginal children. When they are not at school, children seem to be highly visible in the Redfern and Waterloo communities and other members of the community felt a strong sense of responsibility and duty of care toward them. The Committee heard from many inquiry participants that not enough was being done to manage this problem. The Committee also understands that a related problem is that of ‘parent-condoned absence’, where a child is absent from school with their parents’ permission.³⁹⁸

4.99 There are a number of programs operating in the area that aim to improve school attendance and support children to stay engaged in the school community. The Director General of the Department of Education and Training (DET), Mr Andrew Cappie-Wood explained the role of the Home School Liaison and Aboriginal Liaison Officers:

It is the same technique in terms of identifying where there is a pattern of truancy, and the home school liaison officer is working with schools to identify that pattern. In so doing the home school liaison officer has undertaken with the Aboriginal student liaison officer how to tackle those issues—is it a repeat process? Is it a new form of behaviour?—to try to work through what is it that is not engaging these kids. If it is truancy it is not a behavioural issue. What is it? Is it that they are having difficulties and they feel that they are not keeping up, hence can we introduce support programs in their literacy or numeracy catch-up programs targeted to their specific needs? Is it other forms? It might be a learning difficulty that is being exhibited that we need to try to focus on. All of this means that we have to do individualised target assessments wherever possible to make sure that we can tailor whatever it is to get these kids back, but we are not always successful.³⁹⁹

Suspensions

4.100 The issue of suspensions or exclusions also loomed large for inquiry participants, including young people themselves.⁴⁰⁰ The Director General told the Committee that the decision to

³⁹⁷ Questions on Notice, Mr Cappie-Wood, Department of Education and Training, 8 June 2008, p1

³⁹⁸ Dr Phil Lambert, Regional Director (Sydney), Aboriginal Education, Department of Education and Training, Evidence, 8 June 2004, p57-58

³⁹⁹ Mr Andrew Cappie-Wood, Director General, Department of Education and Training, Evidence, 8 June 2004, p57

⁴⁰⁰ Participant, Youth Forum, 22 October 2004, p4

suspend a student from school was not taken lightly, but is weighed against the principle that all students and teachers have a right to be ‘treated fairly and with dignity, and particularly in an environment that is free from disruption, where there is no intimidation, harassment or discrimination’.⁴⁰¹

- 4.101** In their evidence to us, young people explained the negative impact of suspension on their future contact with the school and also on the wider school environment. They emphasised that students who were suspended felt distanced from their peers and stigmatised.⁴⁰² From a service provider perspective, Ms Deirdre Cheers of Barnardos explained that apart from the gap in their education, suspensions also placed the child at risk as they were more likely to be unsupervised and may engage in dangerous activities while away from school. She also said that other children can observe from suspended students that they do not have to go to school and in turn, model their behaviour.⁴⁰³
- 4.102** In their submission, Barnardos highlighted the major difficulties for both children and parents inherent in long term suspensions from school, and pointed to inadequate efforts on the part of the Department of Education and Training to make alternative arrangements for children excluded for long periods, or to support them adequately when they return to school. They gave an example illustrating these issues:

In early November 2003 Barnardos was referred three primary school aged boys from separate Aboriginal families ... who had been excluded from school. We were asked to coordinate an activity/education program for them for the duration of the school exclusion. Investigation revealed that these young boys spend more time away from school than at school, either through family not sending them to school, or exclusions due to behavioural issues. A 6-8 week education exclusion in early November effectively meant that the children would be out of school for 3 months until school resumed in February 2004, as the 6 week suspension time frame is generally followed by meetings for reintegration at the end of the period, and the end of the 6 weeks would be the last week of school for 2003. This is an obviously grossly inadequate means of ensuring positive re-introduction to the school environment and ensuring school attendance. Barnardos worked with other local agencies including the police, and employed casual staff using [Intensive Family Support Service] brokerage funds, to develop an appropriate alternative day program for these boys. Simultaneously undertaking intensive family support intervention with their families and coordinating other agency involvement. Referrals were made for specialist health and behaviour assessment, activity programs were maintained throughout the January school holiday period, and direct support provided to assist school reintegration at the beginning of 2004. Whilst 2 out of these 3 boys are mostly attending school daily at present, there continues to be ongoing difficulty in the Education Department maintaining sufficient support to children such as these in order to contain them within either the mainstream or available special school environment.

Aboriginal children such as these boys are not catered for adequately within the mainstream education curriculum, nor are proper funded educational alternatives available. Barnardos believes that until schools themselves radically change or an

⁴⁰¹ Mr Cappie-Wood, Evidence, 8 June 2004, p55

⁴⁰² Participant, Youth Forum, 22 October 2004, p4

⁴⁰³ Ms Cheers, Evidence, 4 June 2004, p5

alternative educational facility with Indigenous input is set up, Aboriginal children will continue to be poorly catered for.⁴⁰⁴

- 4.103** This case study highlights the complexity of need among some children in Redfern and Waterloo and the importance of programs which can respond to such needs. In addition, like Barnardos, other inquiry participants raised the broader issue of culturally appropriate education as central to ensuring the engagement of Aboriginal children in education.⁴⁰⁵
- 4.104** It is clear to the Committee that long suspensions have detrimental effects on the student involved, both in the short and longer term. Though Alexandria Park Community School has a Home Liaison Officer and an Aboriginal Liaison Officer to try to maintain a connection between the child and the school, the Committee heard that far more intensive assistance was needed for children who were frequently suspended.⁴⁰⁶
- 4.105** Some intensive reintroduction programs to assist children who have long term suspensions to re-enter mainstream education are available in the area, such as the intensive Waratah Program run by South Sydney Youth Services in conjunction with Alexandria Park Community School, along with the Green Square School, which is a special purpose school for children with behavioural difficulties and mental health support needs. The latter will open a Suspension Centre in 2005 for children who have been suspended from school for long periods of time.⁴⁰⁷ Inquiry participants told us that the Waratah service was very successful, though a lack of resources did not allow the programs to cater to the level of demand in the community.⁴⁰⁸ The Committee also heard about the Exodus Program, a comprehensive service run by Reverend Bill Crews in Ashfield that supports children who 'are in danger of falling away from school and from home and ending up on the street' as well as children who are homeless.⁴⁰⁹
- 4.106** The Committee considers there is a need to ensure that children who have been suspended from school have access to intensive services which will assist their reintegration into the school system, further education such as TAFE, or employment. Without such services, children and young people from Redfern and Waterloo who have disengaged from the education system are likely to have much greater difficulty negotiating their way into adulthood. In addition, there need to be adequate measures in place to intervene early to prevent long-term suspensions.

The closure of Redfern Public School and Cleveland Street High School

- 4.107** Numerous community representatives raised the issue of the closure of the Redfern Public School and Cleveland Street High Schools. Although the amalgamated Alexandria Community Park School was generally seen to have good programs and services, its relative distance from

⁴⁰⁴ Submission 32, Barnardos, p4

⁴⁰⁵ Participant, Koori South Eastern Sydney Interagency, 15 October 2004, p19

⁴⁰⁶ Participant, Koori South Eastern Sydney Interagency, 15 October 2004, pp17-18

⁴⁰⁷ Mr Cappie-Wood, Evidence, 8 June 2004, p56

⁴⁰⁸ Participant, Koori South Eastern Sydney Interagency, 15 October 2004, p20

⁴⁰⁹ Reverend Bill Crews, Chairman, Exodus Foundation, Evidence, 26 May 2004, p2

Redfern and Waterloo (and consequently from the homes of some of its most vulnerable students) was of considerable concern to various participants.

- 4.108** Councillor Tony Pooley of the City of Sydney, for example, reported that Alexandria Park is well regarded, but that the 'loss of social capital linked to the closure of Waterloo and Redfern Public Schools and the continued uncertainty over the future of the latter site remains an issue of concern to the community'.⁴¹⁰
- 4.109** Before the closure occurred the Legislative Council's General Purpose Standing Committee No. 1 examined the closure of Redfern School in its Inquiry into the Proposed Closure and Restructuring of Inner City Schools. That Committee's report, released in July 2002, notes both the Department's rationale that enrolment numbers were rapidly dropping, as well as the community's concern that relocation to a site some distance away would reduce even further the number of children attending school. The Report recommended that the Government defer closure until the RWPP investigated the issue further, citing the Partnership Project's responsibilities in relation to children's services, education and employment opportunities and urban and public space.⁴¹¹
- 4.110** In evidence to our Committee, the Director General of DET explained that re-opening Redfern Public School was not an option being considered by the Department. He indicated that the potential to use parts of the school for other educational purposes had been mooted, with the remaining parts of the site to be sold and the proceeds reinvested in other schools including Alexandria Park.⁴¹²
- 4.111** Transportation to and from Alexandria Park is of special importance for children in Redfern and Waterloo, who must now travel some distance, and across three main roads, to attend school. Our Committee heard that the number of buses taking children to Alexandria Park School was not sufficient and that children from Redfern were missing out on this critical service.⁴¹³

The Committee's view

- 4.112** The Committee understands the closure of local schools in Redfern and Waterloo is still a contentious issue. Given that the provision of a comprehensive, adequately resourced bus service is integral to the success of the new school, we strongly urge the Department of Education and Training to address this issue. In an area with high levels of disadvantage, in which many families may struggle to take children to school themselves, the Committee considers that it is essential that adequate transport be provided to ensure that all children can attend school without difficulty.
- 4.113** We also encourage the Department to ensure adequate provision to address truancy, suspensions and exclusions, as well as other programs to ensure that the children and young

⁴¹⁰ Submission 45, Mr Tony Pooley, Councillor, City of Sydney, p6

⁴¹¹ General Purpose Standing Committee No 1, *Proposed Closure and Restructuring of Government Schools in Inner Sydney*, Report 19, pp109-109

⁴¹² Mr Cappie-Wood, Evidence, 8 June 2004, p53

⁴¹³ Participant, South Sydney Interagency, 3 November 2004, p25-26

people of Redfern and Waterloo are given maximum opportunity to fulfil their potential. All of these issues should be considered during the review of government services in Redfern and Waterloo referred to in the recommendation at the end of this chapter.

Recommendation 19

That the Department of Education ensure, as a priority, that there are:

- comprehensive strategies in place in Redfern and Waterloo to address truancy, suspensions and exclusions
 - adequate transport services to enable children from Redfern and Waterloo to attend Alexandria Park Community School.
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Housing

4.114 In Chapter 3 the Committee documented the increasing concentration of need among residents of the housing estates in Redfern and Waterloo, and the concomitant demand for a range of human services. In Chapter 5 we discuss how under the Commonwealth State Housing Agreement, funds for housing have fallen in real terms for over 15 years, significantly affecting the capacity of the Department of Housing to build new housing and to maintaining existing stock, especially ageing properties. At the same time the demand for public housing has risen. The waiting list for public housing in New South Wales is now around 80,000 households.⁴¹⁴ At present there are 4,133 public housing properties in Redfern and Waterloo (1,605 in Redfern and 2528 in Waterloo), housing a total of 6,147 residents (2,157 in Redfern and 3990 in Waterloo).⁴¹⁵

4.115 In Chapter 5 we also discuss the Government's plans concerning social housing in the area under the Redfern Waterloo Plan. Media reports have indicated that the Government intends to redevelop the tower blocks in Waterloo,⁴¹⁶ but the RWPP website states that there are no such plans at this time.⁴¹⁷ As these reports came to light at the very end of our inquiry, the Committee has not been able to seek the views of residents and other stakeholders, however we note that a rally was held in relation to the issue in early December. In the absence of evidence before the Committee on these matters, in this section we document a range of concerns raised by public tenants in relation to their present housing arrangements, and then document the Department of Housing's response to these concerns. We conclude with a number of considerations for those aspects of the Redfern Waterloo Plan dealing with public housing.

⁴¹⁴ Mr Mike Allen, Executive Director, Central Sydney Housing Services, Department of Housing, Evidence, 2 November 2004, p3

⁴¹⁵ Answers to questions on notice taken during evidence 2 November 2004, Mr Allen, Department of Housing, p2

⁴¹⁶ Jopson D and Ryle G, 'Towers to be demolished as aid to social levelling', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 29 November 2004

⁴¹⁷ Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, 'Frequently asked questions prepared for residents of Redfern-Waterloo', www.redfernwaterloo.nsw.gov.au/#plan2 (accessed 8 December 2004)

Tenant concerns

- 4.116** During the inquiry the Committee met with tenant representatives from the Waterloo Neighbourhood Advisory Board (NAB), as well as a group of people from the Russian community on the estate. We also received a comprehensive submission from the Redfern NAB. Participants raised a number of issues in relation to maintenance, the physical environment of the estate, estate and tenant management, and security and safety, all of which profoundly affect their quality of life. As noted in Chapter 3 and earlier in the present chapter, there was also a strong concern among tenants about the need for more support services for their co-residents, especially mental health services.
- 4.117** Maintenance was a major concern raised by participants, both in terms of their own dwellings and in shared spaces. As some of the Russian people stated:
- Ms LIPKINA:** We have problems with lifts. They do not work very often. They break and also the lighting inside the houses, in the corridors. ...
- Mr SHAPIRO:** The entrance doors to the buildings do not work properly and they also break very often.
- Mr FAINSHTEIN:** It used to be that there was one manager, an on-site manager looking after one or two buildings, and it was all right, they looked after the buildings, but now there is no-one there and we do not know who these people were. So things are left unattended for a long time, rubbish and the doors and the lifts and everything. Now what is happening is, if we have a problem, we go back to the Department of Housing here and we tell them about the problem and they tell us to call the call centre, and in the call centre they do not do anything now and when we call there no-one actually comes and does anything. ...
- CHAIR:** Would everyone agree that maintenance is a big problem?
- INTERPRETER:** Maintenance, many people say yes.⁴¹⁸
- 4.118** Ms Norah McGuire of the Waterloo NAB reported that the maintenance contractor and subcontractors engaged by the Department are not closely supervised, and often their work is not done properly.⁴¹⁹ The broader environment in and around the estate was also a key issue. People wanted more outdoor seating, saw a need for more play areas for children, and told us they had been trying to get a letter box on the estate for ten years.⁴²⁰ They sought better planning around the estates to ensure reasonable access to essential services such as banks, a

⁴¹⁸ Ms Lidiya Lipkina, Mr Michael Shapiro and Mr Mihail Fainshtein, Russian Community, Evidence 15 October 2004, pp1-2

⁴¹⁹ Ms Norah McGuire, Waterloo Neighbourhood Advisory Board, Evidence 15 October 2004, p14

⁴²⁰ Ms Betty Bullivant and Ms McGuire, Waterloo Neighbourhood Advisory Board, Evidence 15 October 2004, pp4 and 8

post office and health facilities.⁴²¹ In addition, both NABs emphasised the need for better and more accessible public and community transport, including better public bus routes.⁴²²

- 4.119** Participants indicated that there is some dissatisfaction with the way the estate, including ‘nuisance tenants’ are managed: Mr Ross Smith asserted that the Department of Housing is too reluctant to use its powers to remove some people, despite the major effect they have on others.⁴²³ Similar issues included a lack of action in relation to dealers living on the estate, and poor decisions around security that affected amenity and leisure space.⁴²⁴ The local Department of Housing office is reported to be understaffed.⁴²⁵ In addition, safety and security loomed large for residents, especially the Russian community: they wanted a much stronger approach taken with regard to children and young people on and around the estates.⁴²⁶

Department of Housing response

- 4.120** The Committee sought the response of the Department of Housing to these issues in a hearing with Mr Mike Allen, Executive Director of the Department’s Central Sydney Housing Services, which covers the area of Redfern and Waterloo.
- 4.121** Mr Allen reported that safety and security was a priority for the Department in respect of all its buildings in the area, and that over the past few years the Department had ensured secure access at the front entry of buildings to try to ensure that only residents can access them. He also stated that fencing had been put in around the perimeter of the estates, with the full support of tenants.⁴²⁷ Mr Allen acknowledged that there are problems from time to time around security, but that the Department is working to address them. He explained the after-hours security service operating on the estates, and stated that the Department consults with residents ‘to ensure that we are addressing any hot spots’. He told the Committee that he was aware of concerns among the Russian-speaking residents about security, and that the Department had run sessions with the Police and tenants in recent weeks on broader safety and security education.⁴²⁸ In response to a question about fear of young people among older residents, Mr Allen stated:

There are certainly problems in the Redfern-Waterloo area, both in reality and in perception. We work closely with the local police to identify whether any public housing tenants are involved in those activities and take some action with the tenant

⁴²¹ Ms Diana Whitworth, Waterloo Neighbourhood Advisory Board, Evidence 15 October 2004, pp2 and 14

⁴²² Ms Diana Whitworth, Mr Harry Hardy, Mr Ross Smith, Ms Marlene Newton, Ms Norah McGuire, Waterloo Neighbourhood Advisory Board, Evidence 15 October 2004, pp2-3 and 11; Submission 30, Redfern Neighbourhood Advisory Board, p11

⁴²³ Mr Ross Smith, Waterloo Neighbourhood Advisory Board, Evidence 15 October 2004, p7

⁴²⁴ Participants, Waterloo Neighbourhood Advisory Board, 15 October 2004, p7

⁴²⁵ Mr Smith, Waterloo Neighbourhood Advisory Board, Evidence 15 October 2004, p14

⁴²⁶ Participants, Russian community, 15 October 2004, p1

⁴²⁷ Mr Allen, Evidence, 2 November 2004, pp3-4

⁴²⁸ Mr Allen, Evidence, 2 November 2004, p6

to address them. We also work with a number of local government and non government human service agencies to see what other support might be provided to families in the area if they are having any difficulties or challenges with the younger members of those households to ensure there is active engagement with them if they are getting into trouble. Hopefully we can help them to resolve some of those problems.⁴²⁹

4.122 In relation to maintenance, Mr Allen explained that the Department has a 24-hour maintenance service accessed via a call centre, with the maintenance done by a contractor. Urgent work has a four hour response time, and less urgent work that is still considered a priority, is to be responded to by close of business the next day.⁴³⁰ More minor repairs are to occur within several weeks, and the performance of contractors against those targets is monitored. He also stated that the Department has been piloting a handyman service in Redfern and other locations around the state 'to see whether we can work more closely with tenants around some of the much more minor day-to-day maintenance issues that might come up for them.' In addition, he explained that the Department provides support to the volunteer 'Odd-Jobbers' group established by local tenants.⁴³¹

4.123 In answers to questions on notice from the hearing, the Department acknowledged an estimated maintenance backlog of \$8.5 million for Redfern and \$8 million for Waterloo. Performance against maintenance targets is as follows:

- 92% of maintenance orders are completed before the target date.
- 98.9% of R1 category orders (these require action within four hours) are completed before the target time.
- 89.6% of R2 category orders (these orders should be completed by the end of the next working day) are completed before the target.
- 92.8% of P1 orders (these orders should be completed within 40 days) are completed by the target date.
- 96.3% of P2 orders (these are significant works and can take up to three months for completion) are completed by the target date.⁴³²

4.124 Mr Allen also told the Committee of the Department's strategies to support clients with complex needs, such as the joint guarantee of service with NSW Health and other agencies intended to ensure access to appropriate services for people with mental health conditions. The Department has also established new specialist officer positions (which require social work or welfare qualifications) within its client service teams to work one on one with high needs clients or to support other officers in their work with them. Mr Allen reported that his staff

⁴²⁹ Mr Allen, Evidence, 2 November 2004, p6

⁴³⁰ Mr Allen, Evidence, 2 November 2004, p5

⁴³¹ Mr Allen, Evidence, 2 November 2004, pp12-13

⁴³² Answers to questions on notice taken during evidence 2 November 2004, Mr Allen, Department of Housing, p4

work closely with the local mental health team, as well as other non government agencies to ensure 'as much as we can' that appropriate supports are provided to tenants.⁴³³

- 4.125** Finally, in relation to estate management, Mr Allen reported that staff are based on-site at Waterloo and Surry Hills with the latter also servicing the Redfern estates.⁴³⁴ In addition, the Department provided information on the Intensive Tenancy Management Service on-site at Redfern which aims 'to improve tenant satisfaction by improving the housing management performance of problem estates'. Key elements of this service are: an on-site housing management team; a flexible local allocations policy; a smaller ratio of tenancies to managers than other areas; a local handyman for small maintenance work; and support for local community development work to enhance community cohesion.⁴³⁵

The Committee's view

- 4.126** Like anyone else, the public tenants of Redfern and Waterloo wish for a peaceful, amenable, secure and pleasant place to live, and the Committee sympathises with the frustration they feel over the lack of control over their quality of life that so many of us take for granted. While we are concerned by the estimated maintenance backlog, and the apparent need for monitoring of the quality (not just quantity) of maintenance, the Committee is satisfied the Department of Housing is listening and genuinely seeking to respond to tenant concerns. We encourage it to seek further improvements in each of the areas raised by inquiry participants. We also note that the Commonwealth has a major role to play in the funding of public and community housing through the Commonwealth State Housing Agreement, and that declining Commonwealth funds have directly affected the Department's ability to ensure adequate maintenance. As discussed in Chapter 5, the Committee believes that the State and Commonwealth Governments should work together to ensure that there are adequate funds available for affordable housing in Redfern and Waterloo.
- 4.127** We are also concerned that these endeavours remain a priority in the lead up to redevelopment of the housing estates under the proposed Redfern Waterloo Plan: estate and tenant management, as well as safety and security, will remain critical during this time. In addition, tenants must be assured of an optimal physical environment in the interim, with maintenance and repairs necessarily continuing as a key focus of the Department's work. It would be wrong for properties identified for redevelopment to be allowed to fall into disrepair while ever tenants are living in them.
- 4.128** In addition, the Committee considers that given the frustrations of tenants, as well as their rights as consumers, and indeed their vulnerability in many cases, the Redfern Waterloo Authority and the Department of Housing must necessarily proceed with extreme care and caution as it undergoes the process of redeveloping the estates and relocating tenants. Consultation, information sharing and maximum tenant choice will all be essential to this task. The outcome of improved housing for public tenants will be a valuable one, but the

⁴³³ Mr Allen, Evidence, 2 November 2004 p5

⁴³⁴ Mr Allen, Evidence, 2 November 2004, p12

⁴³⁵ Answers to questions on notice taken during evidence 2 November 2004, Mr Allen, Department of Housing, p4

Government needs to ensure that the process is careful and constructive as well. Issues in relation to future financing of affordable housing are discussed in Chapter 5.

Recommendation 20

That the Department of Housing continue to seek ways to address tenant concerns in relation to maintenance, the physical environment of the estate, estate and tenant management, and security and safety.

Recommendation 21

That the Redfern Waterloo Authority and the Department of Housing ensure that the process of redevelopment of public housing proceeds with extreme care in order to protect the rights of tenants and the Government's duty of care towards them. In particular, consultation, information sharing and maximum tenant choice must all be ensured.

Employment

- 4.129** Employment was recognised by numerous inquiry participants as fundamental to addressing the disadvantage that exists in Redfern and Waterloo. The Government has also recognised employment as a major plank of the forthcoming Redfern Waterloo Plan, as discussed in Chapters 5 and 6.
- 4.130** The Government submission contains a detailed summary of the employment statistics for Redfern and Waterloo. Notable among these is the high proportion of people in Waterloo who are not in the labour force, that is, who are living on age, disability or sole parent pensions, the well below average rate of employment, and the well above average rate of unemployment in that suburb. Also noteworthy are the high rates of Aboriginal people not in the labour force in both suburbs, matched with the comparatively low rate of employment among Indigenous people in the area.⁴³⁶
- 4.131** The Committee heard from a number of service providers that employment opportunities for young people in the Redfern and Waterloo areas were scarce, and that it was particularly important to pursue strategies to assist this group. As Councillor Tony Pooley stated, 'Longer term support for training and employment placement remains a key priority particularly for children and young people from families where there exists several generations of unemployment.'⁴³⁷
- 4.132** Primary responsibility for employment strategies, programs and funding lies at a Commonwealth level. The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) is responsible for the administration and coordination of the Commonwealth government's employment policy. DEWR administers a range of programs including the Job Network, Work for the Dole, the Community Development Employment Program (CDEP), and

⁴³⁶ Submission 55, NSW Government, p35

⁴³⁷ Submission 45, Councillor Tony Pooley, p6

Indigenous Employment Centres.⁴³⁸ We note that despite requests for input to this Inquiry, the Commonwealth did not provide a submission on issues including employment.

- 4.133** Mr Michael Ramsey emphasised to the Committee the importance of the Commonwealth Government's role in employment initiatives as part of the broader work of the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project:

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.⁴³⁹

- 4.134** Vocational education and training are a State Government responsibility, and the Committee understands that Alexandria Park Community School runs vocational education programs. The Director General of DET told the Committee:

We cannot generate the job opportunities but what we can do is prepare them. We work with a wide range of agencies, Federal, State, local, private industry, et cetera, to give those children who are doing vocational education and training in their secondary school work placement, work experience opportunities so that they can see the links between what they are learning and a real job environment. We have to say that for many Aboriginal kids that linkage is not always clear and evident. We have to continue to reinforce that. There are a number of programs available to us and we employ those programs so that those children, be they Aboriginal or otherwise, can see what job opportunities are and the benefit of education and how that can lead them through to work and employment.⁴⁴⁰

- 4.135** Shane Brown, Director of the South Sydney Youth Services, noted the positive effects of the traineeships run at Alexandria Park Community School:

Aboriginal young people are disadvantaged in the work force and need creative opportunities to work within the business sector. Alexandria Park Community School has provided mentorship within this sector in the part, raising young peoples' expectations and giving them greater skills and vision.⁴⁴¹

- 4.136** While the Human Services Review Report considers that employment services in the area are adequate, it notes the current absence of local employment opportunities in Redfern and Waterloo, and calls for a comprehensive employment strategy for the area involving a wide range of stakeholders including industry groups and business representatives, 'as a matter of urgency'.⁴⁴² The Report states:

Access to employment was raised constantly, by all stakeholders, throughout the Review as a fundamental structural issue facing this area and impacting on the human services system. Local residents, providers, policy makers, the Aboriginal population,

⁴³⁸ www.workplace.gov.au/Workplace/WPDisplay.html (accessed 3 December 2004)

⁴³⁹ Mr Ramsey, Evidence, 18 May 2004, p17

⁴⁴⁰ Mr Cappie-Wood, Evidence, 8 June 2004, p58-59

⁴⁴¹ Submission 92, South Sydney Youth Services, p2

⁴⁴² Morgan Disney & Associates, p65

central agencies from both NSW and Commonwealth Governments, businesses, young people, older people and parents all raised the significance of employment to the future of the area ... In every international initiative we examined where locality renewal is occurring in impoverished communities with the characteristics and challenges identical to Redfern and Waterloo, employment is a key component.

We cannot overstate the significance of this to the future of the human services system. Employment remains one of the best routes out of poverty; it is being increasingly examined as an intervention for people with mental health issues, for people with other disabilities and for sole parents living on low incomes and with minimal education.⁴⁴³

- 4.137** The Government's recognition of the importance of employment to the prosperity of Redfern and Waterloo and its residents is reflected in the recently announced Redfern Waterloo Plan, which itself will involve a Jobs Plan for the area. We note that the Jobs Plan is expected to include 'use of Government Procurement contracts for construction projects to create Aboriginal and local training and employment opportunities'.⁴⁴⁴ The Committee understands that the Department of Aboriginal Affairs has developed guidelines for Aboriginal participation in employment, but it is unclear to what extent various State agencies comply with them. While we acknowledge the practical difficulties in engaging skilled Indigenous workers, we encourage all levels of government to adopt such guidelines in a genuine effort to improve employment among Aboriginal people in Redfern and Waterloo.
- 4.138** The role of the Redfern Waterloo Plan in addressing unemployment and the need to engage the Commonwealth in the Plan are discussed in Chapters 5 and 6.

Ageing and disability services

- 4.139** In comparison with other issues, ageing and disability services were not a major focus for inquiry participants, but the Committee is aware from past inquiries of the need to enhance these services across the State.
- 4.140** Ms Norah McGuire and other residents on the Waterloo Neighbourhood Advisory Board highlighted a lack of resources in this area, as in others, noting that community transport and other Home and Community Care services are vital and in high demand.⁴⁴⁵ A number of participants such as one member of the South Sydney Interagency called for a nursing home to be established in the area, for example on the Rachel Forster Hospital site.⁴⁴⁶ Similarly, Mr Ross Smith, a member of the Waterloo Neighbourhood Advisory Board called for nearby medical services to support the ageing population in the housing estates:

We are in the centre of a huge population of aged people. You have two 30-storey towers over here filled with people who are 55 and older, plus the other ones scattered

⁴⁴³ Morgan Disney & Associates, p61

⁴⁴⁴ Hon Frank Sartor MP and Hon Carmel Tebbutt MLC, 'Government Announces Jobs Plan for Redfern Waterloo', *Media Release*, 10 November 2004

⁴⁴⁵ Ms McGuire, Mr Smith and Ms Whitworth, Waterloo Neighbourhood Advisory Board, Evidence 15 October 2004, pp2-3 and 13

⁴⁴⁶ Participant, South Sydney Interagency, 3 November 2004, p9

through the area. There is no close medical facility, whether it was just an emergency service where they would shift them on to a local hospital or not. [The Rachel Forster Hospital] site has sat empty for years now and no one will tell us what they are doing with it, we can't find out what is happening with it, and that could supply immediate access to medical services for such a large population group to use.⁴⁴⁷

4.141 In its submission, the Redfern Neighbourhood Advisory Board called for the following actions to address the needs of frail older people and people with disabilities in the area:

- Develop Rachel Forster as a nursing home so that frail aged residents can remain living in the area
- Build a purpose built aged and disabled community facility that also meets the needs of members from CALD backgrounds
- Fund existing services to employ community outreach workers on the estates ... to address issues of isolation and to provide information and referral to local services
- Fund existing Neighbour Aid services to support the aged and disabled to access their finances.⁴⁴⁸

4.142 In relation to services for frail older people and people with disabilities, the Human Services Review Report concluded that the area is 'reasonably well served' but also noted that the most urgent needs for older people are for nursing home beds, mental health services and respite care. It found that 'the existing system requires little change at present' but recommends that an ageing strategy be developed over the next four years to address the future needs of older residents in the area.⁴⁴⁹ For people with disabilities, the Report documents gaps in relation to respite care, services for those with intellectual disabilities and supported accommodation. Nevertheless it concluded, 'the disability service cluster is not in need of substantial reform or development. It rated very low for most people interviewed and no major issues regarding access, service models, gaps (unique to this area), or problems were identified.'⁴⁵⁰

4.143 As noted in other sections of this chapter, the Committee considers that it will be important for the review of government services in Redfern and Waterloo to address ageing and disability services, including health and aged care services for older people.

Culturally and linguistically diverse communities

4.144 The Committee is aware that Redfern and Waterloo have richly diverse populations. The Government submission to the Inquiry states that 37% of people in Redfern and 43% of people in Waterloo were born overseas. In addition, a markedly greater proportion of its

⁴⁴⁷ Mr Smith, Waterloo Neighbourhood Advisory Board, Evidence 15 October 2004, p3

⁴⁴⁸ Submission 30, Redfern Neighbourhood Advisory Board, p8

⁴⁴⁹ Morgan Disney & Associates, pp78-79

⁴⁵⁰ Morgan Disney & Associates, p79

residents than those in Sydney as a whole do not speak English at home. The major languages spoken in the area are Russian, Chinese, Greek, Arabic, Spanish and Vietnamese.⁴⁵¹

4.145 Issues relating to the human service needs of culturally and linguistically diverse communities were raised by only a few participants, perhaps because so much of the focus for this Inquiry was on more controversial topics. The key issues raised concerned interpreters and information about services, so as to ensure access to services.

4.146 Ms Helen Campbell of Redfern Legal Centre reported that people attending Redfern Court have poor access to interpreters, and that this is a particular issue for Chinese, Vietnamese, Spanish and Arabic speakers. She pointed to the way that the justice system is compromised when people have no understanding of what is being said about them in court.⁴⁵² Another worker from a multicultural provider reported that bilingual staff of her service are regularly called on to fulfil an interpreter role, even though they are not qualified or funded to do so. In addition, she reported:

We also have health facilities in the area who don't make usage of the health care interpreter service when they need to, so people are not understanding sometimes and then are reluctant to keep going in for appointments because they have had negative experiences where people have refused to provide interpreters, where they have actually initiated some dental procedures, for instance, without actually telling them about it and understanding what is going on, so it makes them very reluctant to utilise those health services and can lead to conditions worsening because they are not getting early treatment.⁴⁵³

4.147 In terms of information, participants stated that while some groups in the community such as Russian speakers were quite active in making use of services, others such as those from Asian countries were often less aware of what services were available. Service providers saw that information in a range of languages was essential to ensuring access:

I met a lot of people who could not speak English and because of the people's lack of communication and because they cannot speak English they just don't go back to any other agencies in the area, so I think it would be good to organise or advertise information for them so they will get more of what they want.⁴⁵⁴

4.148 The Human Services Review Report observed that despite their significant presence in this community, 'The needs of people from CALD backgrounds have emerged as one of the least developed aspects of the overall human services system in Redfern and Waterloo.'⁴⁵⁵ The Report stresses the value of enhancing the capacity of mainstream agencies to better respond to CALD communities, for example through cultural awareness training, better use of interpreters, translation of promotional materials, and volunteer programs that focus on recruiting volunteers from CALD backgrounds.⁴⁵⁶ It identifies among other strategies:

⁴⁵¹ Submission 55, NSW Government, pp17-18

⁴⁵² Ms Helen Campbell, South Sydney Interagency, 3 November 2004, p14

⁴⁵³ Participant, South Sydney Interagency, 3 November 2004, p14

⁴⁵⁴ Participant, South Sydney Interagency, 3 November 2004, p15

⁴⁵⁵ Morgan Disney & Associates, p66

⁴⁵⁶ Morgan Disney & Associates, p67

Proactive recruitment of bi-lingual and CALD workers in all sectors must be a priority and mainstream workers also need to develop their cultural competency skills – this could be part of the capacity building strategy for the service system.⁴⁵⁷

- 4.149** In the Committee's view it is important to ensure that all groups in the community have access to the services they need, and we encourage the RWPP and the range of government and non government service providers to find practical ways to ensure that their services are accessible and culturally sensitive. We see merit in the Human Services Review's suggestion that cultural awareness training occur as part of the broader capacity building strategies sponsored by the RWPP as part of the Human Services Plan.

Community development programs

- 4.150** Finally, a number of participants called for greater attention to strategies that seek to build the community of Redfern and Waterloo. Participants such as the Redfern Neighbourhood Advisory Board, the Benevolent Society and the City of Sydney, all saw a need not just for investment in services that address the needs of community members, but also, for investment in strategies that seek to build the capacity of, and cohesion within, the broader community.⁴⁵⁸
- 4.151** The Benevolent Society, citing Professor Tony Vinson's Community Adversity and Resilience study, noted the special significance that community building strategies can have in disadvantaged areas such as Redfern and Waterloo.⁴⁵⁹ Professor Vinson's report provides evidence that community cohesion can serve as a buffer against the profoundly negative effects of poverty, unemployment, limited education and so on, and it concludes that 'strengthening the connectedness or social cohesion of disadvantaged areas is an integral part of renewing the life opportunities of people.'⁴⁶⁰
- 4.152** The Committee is aware of a number of strategies already existing in the area, such as the University of New South Wales' Waterloo Community Development Project based on the Waterloo housing estate, and its Waterloo Community Garden and weekly multicultural cooking group for tenants. We are also aware of the City of Sydney's contributions to community development, arising from the work of the former South Sydney Council, through community events and facilities such as the Redfern Community Centre. The Kidspeak Program run through the Barnardos Intensive Family Support Service also has a capacity building focus. All of these initiatives seek to bring community members together, to establish opportunities for mutual support, and to build a greater sense of community. Nevertheless, participants sought a more wholesale commitment to capacity-building in the area.

⁴⁵⁷ Morgan Disney & Associates, p69

⁴⁵⁸ Submission 30, Redfern Neighbourhood Advisory Board, p2; Submission 33, Benevolent Society, p2; Submission 84, City of Sydney, p2

⁴⁵⁹ Submission 33, Benevolent Society, p2

⁴⁶⁰ Vinson, T, *Community Adversity and Resilience: The Distribution of Social Disadvantage in Victoria and New South Wales and the Mediating Role of Social Cohesion*, The Ignatius Centre for Social Policy Research, Melbourne, March 2004, p15

- 4.153** The Redfern NAB's submission calls for better funding for initiatives that will build social capital such as community development grants and other initiatives to support tenants.⁴⁶¹ The City of Sydney goes further, pointing to the role that capacity-building strategies have in engaging the community in real partnership, and empowering community members to drive change.⁴⁶²
- 4.154** The Human Services Review did not assess current provision for community development, but the Committee notes that its recommendations did include a 'community leadership development and capacity building strategy' for the area. While the major focus of the strategy is on service providers, it also includes a 'community leadership strategy for community stakeholder groups'.⁴⁶³
- 4.155** In the Committee's view, strategies which focus on building the capacity and cohesiveness of the Redfern and Waterloo communities are critical to renewal of those areas. While infrastructure redevelopment and reform of the human services system are essential, so too are strategies that seek to strengthen community relationships and engage people in community life, especially given the massive changes that the suburbs are about to undergo. On this basis we urge the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project and the City of Sydney, in consultation with key community groups, to develop a community development strategy for the area, the primary focus of which should be community members and community groups. As part of this strategy, we also see merit in the establishment of a small grants program to fund community development activities.

Recommendation 22

That the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project and the City of Sydney Council, in consultation with the Redfern and Waterloo community, develop a community development strategy for the area, the primary focus of which is on community members and groups. The strategy should include provision for a small grants scheme to fund local community development activities.

Conclusion

- 4.156** In Chapter 3 the Committee recommended that the Government fulfil its commitment that the activities of government not included in the Human Services Review be formally reviewed in order to determine how they need to change, so as to improve the human services system of Redfern and Waterloo. Throughout this chapter we have identified several areas that we consider must be addressed in this task: child protection services, mental health services, drug and alcohol services, education, housing, and ageing and disability services. In addition, we consider that the review must necessarily consider the cultural appropriateness of services with regard to Aboriginal people and CALD communities.

⁴⁶¹ Submission 30, Redfern Neighbourhood Advisory Board, p2 and 6

⁴⁶² Submission 84, City of Sydney, pp3 and 9-10

⁴⁶³ Morgan Disney & Associates, p100

4.157 As noted at the beginning of this chapter, the Committee is conscious that given the breadth of issues in Redfern and Waterloo, and the fact that significant announcements were made very late in the Inquiry, we were not able to take evidence on and thoroughly examine many aspects of government and non government service delivery in the area. Thus we were also unable to develop conclusions and make strong recommendations on them. Nevertheless, in this chapter we have sought to reflect the key concerns and issues raised by inquiry participants, and we strongly encourage the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project and other stakeholders to consider the evidence documented here when developing the forthcoming Human Services Plan and the action plans for each of the human services clusters in the area.

Recommendation 23

That when implementing Recommendation 7 to formally review the activities of government agencies not included in the Human Services Review, the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project ensure that the following core government responsibilities are comprehensively considered:

- child protection services
- mental health services
- alcohol and other drug services
- education
- housing
- ageing and disability services.

In addition, the review should consider the cultural sensitivity of the full range of services, with regard to both the Aboriginal community and culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

Chapter 5 Redfern Waterloo Authority and the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project

The Government has made a number of major announcements relating to Redfern and Waterloo in recent months. Several of these announcements, including the soon to be established community health facility, are discussed in earlier chapters. This chapter deals with arguably the most significant announcements: those regarding the establishment of the Redfern Waterloo Authority and the Redfern Waterloo Plan (2004-2014) and the extension of the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project. Given that the announcements were made in late October and early November, only limited detail has been available to the Committee and we have had limited opportunity to take evidence on these matters. Despite this, we have attempted to gather as much information as possible and to provide an overview in the sections below. In particular, we consider the announcement of the new Authority and Parliamentary debate and public comment on the proposed legislation establishing the Authority. We look at the role of the Authority in relation to infrastructure planning, affordable housing and employment. We briefly overview the information provided in our Interim Report on the redevelopment of the Block, and consider the impact of the Authority on the future of the Aboriginal Housing Company and the Block. The Committee then examines the new role for the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project and some of the major issues including consultation and communication processes, partnership planning and the need for performance accountability.

The establishment of the Redfern Waterloo Authority

The announcement of the new Authority

- 5.1** On 26 October 2004 the Premier announced the establishment of the Redfern Waterloo Authority (RWA) as part of a ten year plan for ‘community renewal and to upgrade infrastructure in the area.’⁴⁶⁴ The Premier’s media release states that the plan is designed to ‘shake-up’ the area and provide a framework to renew the last part of the city fringe. The Government announced that the Redfern Waterloo Authority would be established through legislation as a statutory authority. The Redfern Waterloo Authority Bill 2004 passed by both Houses on 9 December 2004, after considerable debate and with a number of amendments.
- 5.2** The Government also announced that the Hon Frank Sartor, Minister for Energy and Utilities, Minister for Science and Medical Research, Minister Assisting the Minister for Health (Cancer), and Minister Assisting the Premier on the Arts, will have responsibility for the new Authority. Minister Sartor was thus established as the single spokesperson for the NSW Government on all matters and issues relating to Redfern and Waterloo.⁴⁶⁵ According to a Government fact sheet, this new Ministerial position will provide ‘greater accountability to the community and ensure that the NSW Government can respond to issues as they emerge.’⁴⁶⁶

⁴⁶⁴ Hon Bob Carr MP, Premier, ‘Premier announces 10-year Redfern-Waterloo Plan’, *Media Release*, 26 October 2004

⁴⁶⁵ Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, *The Redfern-Waterloo Plan #1*, November 2004, p2

⁴⁶⁶ Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, *The Redfern-Waterloo Plan #1*, November 2004, p2

The Minister will have final approval on all NSW Government funding allocated within Redfern and Waterloo under the ten year plan.⁴⁶⁷

5.3 The Premier expanded on the intended focus of the RWA during Question Time on 28 October 2004:

I believe that the urban renewal that this area needs presents many opportunities to achieve private-public partnerships that offer clear benefits to the community. The focus of this exercise – establishing a distinct Redfern Waterloo Authority – is to achieve community renewal as much as physical regeneration of this area.⁴⁶⁸

5.4 In relation to the projects to be undertaken by the RWA, the Premier noted the upgrade of the Redfern railway station, including the development of the town centre, the redevelopment of the Block in consultation with the Aboriginal Housing Company, access to private and public housing and establishing a bridge to link the Australian Technology Park with North Eveleigh. In relation to the broad focus of the RWA, the Premier noted that:

While the model used is similar in design to the Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority, I make it clear that the Redfern Waterloo Authority will not be a development corporation. The Minister for Energy and Utilities has been charged with leading the renewal process and has already commenced discussions with some leading stakeholders.⁴⁶⁹

5.5 The RWPP fact sheet provides this summary of why the Redfern Waterloo Authority has been established:

- to develop and manage infrastructure, land and properties in parts of the Redfern and Waterloo area
- to provide and promote housing choices in its operational areas (including for Aboriginal residents)
- to promote the local community, cultural development, and local employment
- skill development.⁴⁷⁰

5.6 In evidence to the Committee on the genesis of the Authority, the Director General of the Premier's Department, Dr Col Gellatly, explained that 'Governments make decisions about policy and then introduce legislation to drive it along.'⁴⁷¹ In response to questioning on where such policy decisions come from, Dr Gellatly explained it is a 'Cabinet process':

Government response to the Redfern/Waterloo situation is evolving. It is another step down the path of human services, as was the initial establishment a couple of years ago of the Partnership, and for the first time we have concentrated resources there. My own personal view is that we are not making it up on the run. It has been

⁴⁶⁷ Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, *The Redfern-Waterloo Plan #1*, November 2004, p2

⁴⁶⁸ Hon Bob Carr MP, Legislative Assembly, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 28 October 2004, p12271

⁴⁶⁹ Hon Bob Carr MP, Legislative Assembly, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 28 October 2004, p12271

⁴⁷⁰ Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, *The Redfern-Waterloo Plan #1*, November 2004, p2

⁴⁷¹ Dr Col Gellatly, Director General, Premier's Department, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p3

an evolving process where there has been input obviously from the community, from this Committee, from everyone, from Government when Cabinet makes the decision, and that is the way forward.⁴⁷²

Debate on the Redfern Waterloo Authority Bill 2004

5.7 On 11 November 2004, Minister Sartor introduced the Redfern Waterloo Authority Bill 2004 to the Legislative Assembly. Minister Sartor provided further detail on the Bill in his Second Reading speech. Various Lower House members spoke during the debate and then in Committee proposing amendments. The debate continued on 17 and 19 November. To view the full debate and the amendments made to the Bill by the Government, the Opposition and Ms Clover Moore MP go to www.parliament.nsw.gov.au and view the Hansard records for these dates.

5.8 On 16 November 2004, the Parliament's Legislation Review Committee produced its Legislation Review Digest, No.16, which included discussion on the Redfern Waterloo Authority Bill. The Legislation Review Committee, a joint statutory committee, has two broad functions set out in sections 8A and 9 of the *Legislation Review Act 1987*: to scrutinise all bills introduced to Parliament and all regulations subject to disallowance according to the criteria set out in those sections. It is not the function of the Committee to conduct a policy review with analysis and recommendations. The Committee produces a Digest which runs through the major features of the Bill and then raises issues considered important to the Committee. In relation to the Redfern Waterloo Authority Bill, the Legislation Review Committee made comment on Section 45, which provides that regulations may amend, omit, alter or entirely replace Schedule 1 of the Act, which describes the boundaries of the operation area:

The Committee refers to Parliament the question as to whether allowing the Regulations to amend, omit, alter or replace any matter in Schedule 1 of the Act, is an appropriate delegation of legislative power.⁴⁷³

5.9 The Bill came before the Legislative Council on 7 December 2004, and debate continued on 8 and 9 December. The Bill was finally passed in the Upper House on 9 December and then in the Lower House later that day. The Hon Tony Kelly MLC led the debate for the Government in the Legislative Council and numerous members spoke and proposed amendments. This debate can also be viewed at the above web address.

5.10 It is fair to say that the announcement of the RWA met with some controversy among both Parliamentarians and the broader community. In the Legislative Assembly, the Opposition expressed concern about the preparation of the Bill, and in particular the lack of consultation with the community. Opposition shadow Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Mr Brad Hazzard MP, raised concerns about the lack of detail in the Bill, stating that:

Much of the detail of its implementation has been left to the regulations, and at this stage members of this House have no way of knowing what will be covered by the regulations.⁴⁷⁴

⁴⁷² Dr Gellatly, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p4

⁴⁷³ Legislation Review Committee, *Legislation Review Digest*, No 16, 16 November 2004, p54. To view the full Digest, go to www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/legislationreview

- 5.11** The Member for Bligh, Ms Clover Moore MP, was particularly critical of the Bill, stating that she was not convinced of the need for it. Ms Moore expressed her disappointment with the Bill:

We now have the Bill, and I am rather surprised and disappointed that there seems to be a big gap between the Government's stated intention and what appears in the Bill. While the Minister's second reading speech talked about the social challenges faced by disadvantaged communities, which appears to be the primary justification for the establishment of the authority, the human services issues are not addressed in the Bill.⁴⁷⁵

- 5.12** During debate in the Upper House on Tuesday 7 December 2004, the Hon Don Harwin MLC, leading the debate for the Opposition, said the Coalition were not opposing the Bill, but did propose an amendment in relation to Section 45 governing the operational area. On the day the Bill was debated in the Upper House, the Opposition Leader, Mr John Brogden MP, was quoted in the media as providing tentative support for the Authority and the plans for Redfern and Waterloo. While concerned about the extent of the powers given to Minister Sartor, Mr Brogden was quoted in the *Herald* as saying:

I said the day after the riot at Redfern that the real solution to this was to bulldoze the Block ... I can hardly argue when the Government comes forward to do that and so much more.⁴⁷⁶

- 5.13** The Greens and Democrats were critical of the Bill and proposed numerous amendments. In her comments during the Second Reading speech in the Legislative Council, Ms Sylvia Hale MLC said the Greens were of the opinion that the Bill will not fix the serious social disadvantage in Redfern and Waterloo.⁴⁷⁷ In addition, the Greens expressed concern about the lack of consultation on the plans for the area. Mr Ian Cohen MLC said:

While I acknowledge the printed material that has been part of the debate on this issue so far, it is important to point out that there has been a total lack of consultation with not only the Aboriginal community but also the wider Redfern-Waterloo community regarding the Government's proposed redevelopment of the area.⁴⁷⁸

- 5.14** On 8 December the Greens were also successful in calling for the Government to table documents in relation to plans for Redfern and Waterloo. The Government must provide any documents to the Parliament within 14 days of the date of passing of the resolution.⁴⁷⁹

⁴⁷⁴ Mr Brad Hazzard MP, Legislative Assembly, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 17 November 2004, p13036

⁴⁷⁵ Ms Clover Moore MP, Legislative Assembly, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 17 November 2004, p13036

⁴⁷⁶ Mr John Brogden MP, NSW Opposition Leader, quoted in Lisa Pryor, 'Labor councillors want to limit Sartor power', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 7 December 2004, p4

⁴⁷⁷ Ms Sylvia Hale MLC, Legislative Council, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 7 December 2004, Daily Galleys, p59

⁴⁷⁸ Mr Ian Cohen MLC, Legislative Council, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 8 December 2004, Daily Galleys, p2

⁴⁷⁹ Ms Sylvia Hale MLC, Legislative Council, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 9 December 2004, Daily Galleys, p2

- 5.15** In his speech during the Second Reading, the Hon Dr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans MLC of the Australian Democrats expressed his concern about the extension of power given to the Minister under the proposed legislation:

The Minister is given enormous and unqualified discretions under the Act, for example, regarding appointment to the board, expanding the operational area, trumping planning laws and so on. The Bill overrides other State laws, including heritage and planning laws, with potentially significant consequences for public participation and buy-in of any solutions flowing from the work of the authority in the plan.⁴⁸⁰

- 5.16** There has also been considerable concern expressed by groups and individuals in Redfern and Waterloo. REDWatch⁴⁸¹ prepared a briefing paper on their views on the Bill. In summary they made this key recommendation:

We have concerns that the Authority's goals are not properly defined, too much power is vested in both the Authority and the Minister, there is little provision for local involvement or consultation and there is a lack of transparency. We recommend that the Bill be referred to committee (sic) for further investigation.⁴⁸²

- 5.17** On 29 November 2004 *The Sydney Morning Herald* ran a series of articles with information on the Redfern Waterloo Authority. The paper claimed to have sighted Cabinet papers with details of redevelopment plans for the area. Included in the *Herald* articles were suggestions that the Government was intending to 'tear down residential towers in Waterloo and privatise \$540 million worth of public assets in a bid to double the area's population to 40,000, create 20,000 new jobs and give the central business district room to expand.'⁴⁸³ There was considerable community comment as a result of the *Herald* articles, with some support for the plans but also considerable concern, particularly around privatisation of public assets and the redevelopment of the Block. These issues are discussed further below. A number of people, as well as the *Herald's* editorial, expressed concern that the Government's plans were 'a fait accompli' and had been drawn up without consultation with the community:

For reasons best known to itself, the Government has decided the public is not to be trusted in discussing the issues involved with such an ambitious plan, which will feed concerns, possibly ill-founded, that the Government does in fact have a secret agenda – to force out many of the socially disadvantaged living in the area.⁴⁸⁴

- 5.18** In his response to the *Herald* articles, Minister Sartor was reported as saying the plan to renew Redfern was 'still a work in progress and no final decisions had been made.' He said:

⁴⁸⁰ Hon Dr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans MLC, Legislative Council, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 8 December 2004, Daily Gallies, p2

⁴⁸¹ REDWatch is a group of residents living in Redfern and Waterloo, including Lyn and Geoff Turnbull

⁴⁸² REDWatch, 'Redfern-Waterloo Authority Bill 2004: Briefing Note', in email from Turnbull family, 16 November 2004, p3

⁴⁸³ Debra Jopson, Gerard Ryle & Darren Goodsir, 'Revealed: how Redfern will be reborn', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 29 November 2004, p1

⁴⁸⁴ Editorial, 'Redfern and social engineering', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 30 November 2004, p12

‘The Premier had asked me to think outside the square, to come up with new ideas and that is exactly what we are doing.’⁴⁸⁵

5.19 Recent information placed on the RWPP website, which appeared after the *Herald* articles, stated:

There is no final or completed plan. There are working documents which have explored options. The draft plan, when prepared, will be made public so residents can have their say before being adopted.⁴⁸⁶

5.20 As the announcement was made late in our hearing schedule, the Committee was not able to comprehensively canvass the views of the organisations and individuals in the Redfern and Waterloo areas. A number of witnesses to the Inquiry were shocked by the announcement of the Authority and would have liked to see a higher degree of community consultation prior to the announcement and the introduction of the Bill to the Parliament. In evidence to the Committee, Mr Charlie Richardson from the South Sydney Interagency said:

I think we were a little bit – well ‘surprised’ is too mild a word, we were bewildered and quite astonished, I would say at the Premier’s announcement of the establishment of the Redfern-Waterloo Authority.⁴⁸⁷

5.21 NCOSS was particularly concerned that the Bill had no provision for social impact assessments for future development proposals:

Promoting genuine sustainable development in Redfern Waterloo will require the RWA to conduct robust specific social impact assessments [SIA] on all significant development proposals, alongside its obligations under the 1979 Environmental Planning and Assessment Act. The SIA process is critical to ensure that the objectives of any long term year (sic) Redfern-Waterloo urban renewal and community regeneration plan are being met in the key development decisions.⁴⁸⁸

5.22 On 7 December 2004, NCOSS put out a press release on behalf of 13 peak and local organisations, calling for the Government to establish a parliamentary committee to review the Bill. According to the release, while the organisations believe a 10-20 year commitment to appropriate urban renewal is a priority for the area, they have serious doubts that the RWA as outlined in the Bill can deliver on the vision required:

The Bill contains several unacceptable elements with Statewide significance. These include the lack of mandatory social impact assessment for all new major developments, the erosion of public participation in the planning process and the potential for major conflicts within the Authority itself as it tries to delineate its roles as a developer, planner, funder and a regulator.⁴⁸⁹

⁴⁸⁵ Hon Frank Sartor MP, quoted in Debra Jopson, Gerard Ryle & Darren Goodsir, ‘Tunnels, towers and trains: how they will breathe life into Redfern’, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 30 November 2004, p1

⁴⁸⁶ Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, ‘Frequently asked questions prepared for residents of Redfern-Waterloo’, www.redfernwaterloo.nsw.gov.au (accessed 6 December 2004)

⁴⁸⁷ Mr Charlie Richardson, South Sydney Interagency, 3 November 2004, p3

⁴⁸⁸ Email from Mr Gary Moore, Director, NCOSS to Director, 7 December 2004

⁴⁸⁹ NCOSS, ‘Closer Look Needed at Redfern-Waterloo Authority Bill’, *Media Release*, 7 December 2004, p1

5.23 The RWPP's Michael Ramsey told the Committee on 12 November that the Government had only received general feedback on the announcement of the RWA and that formal sessions will occur after the Authority is established:

There is clearly interest from the community about how they envisage the Authority will work and what we are trying to do is actually make people as aware as possible that the Bill is going through Parliament at the present time, so we have a fact sheet already on our web site describing the Authority.⁴⁹⁰

5.24 The Committee understands that organisations such as NCOSS and REDWatch have had input into the amendments to the legislation proposed by Parliamentarians during the passage of the legislation through the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council. In summary, the concerns about aspects of the Bill, and the basis for many of the proposed amendments, include:

- the concentration of power with one Minister
- the lack of detail in the Bill, particularly in relation to its functions, which will be determined by the Redfern Waterloo Plan (RWP)
- the capacity for changes to be made to boundaries by regulation
- the provisions of the RWA to override Heritage laws
- the capacity to override established environmental planning processes that apply elsewhere in NSW
- limited public participation provisions and therefore no guaranteed role for community involvement
- the inclusion of economic and environmental objectives but not social objectives, with the possibility that infrastructure objectives will out-rank social objectives
- no provision for regular public reporting on the progress of the RWP.

5.25 The Redfern Waterloo Authority Bill as passed by both Houses, while it does not incorporate all the proposed amendments, is somewhat different from the Bill presented by Minister Sartor on 11 November 2004. In particular, the Government made ten amendments in the Upper House on a range of matters including:

- specifying 'Objects of the Act' (inserted as a new Clause 3)
- heritage matters (Clause 29)
- development contributions (other than for affordable housing) (Clause 31)
- matters relating to environmental planning (Clause 32)
- preparation of an annual report on the Authority (inserted as a new Clause 38).

5.26 The Government also accepted an Opposition amendment in relation to the operational area (Clause 49) and two amendments from the Christian Democratic Party in relation to the

⁴⁹⁰ Mr Michael Ramsey, Project Director, Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p3

appointment of advisory committees (Clause 12) and matters affecting the Aboriginal Housing Company and the Block (new Clause 33). As mentioned above, the Lower House agreed to amendments proposed in the Upper House and, on 9 December the Bill was agreed to. At this time Mr Brad Hazzard MP, on behalf of the Liberal-Nationals, said:

We have given the Government the opportunity to try to address some of these longstanding social and infrastructure problems in the area. We trust that the Government will not abuse this opportunity. The Liberals-Nationals want to see local community involvement in the process. We want consultation. We did not believe it was necessary to further amend the Bill. We expect the goodwill of the Government to extend to discussion with the people who live in the area and to reflect in particular the concerns of Aboriginal people in the area.⁴⁹¹

5.27 Also at this time, Minister Sartor told the Parliament about the next stage of the process:

The next step will be to appoint a board and hire staff. In the new year I want to establish a consultative process, which I believe will be comprehensive, for this authority, particularly in the preparation of a plan. Appropriate advisory committees will be appointed and there will be very significant community involvement. I want to bridge the gap between various agency staff and members of the community in a systemic way that overcomes the deficiencies that have been alleged in respect to the process over the past couple of years.⁴⁹²

5.28 For the full transcript of debate and amendment, go to www.parliament.nsw.gov.au and view the Hansard records for the dates mentioned above. Specific aspects of the Redfern Waterloo Authority and community comment will be further explored in the following sections, and again in Chapter 6.

Infrastructure, housing and employment

5.29 Central to the Redfern Waterloo Authority is the Redfern-Waterloo Plan 2004-2014. The Plan will focus on three key strategies, which address infrastructure, jobs and human services. In this section we deal with the issues of infrastructure planning, housing including the redevelopment of the Block, and employment. We overview the role of the Authority in relation to these strategies. The role of the RWA and the RWPP in relation to human services is dealt with in the following section.

Infrastructure planning

5.30 In his Second Reading speech on the Redfern Waterloo Authority Bill, Minister Sartor explained that the Authority will manage public infrastructure, land and properties in the area and promote the social and economic development of the community. Minister Sartor emphasised the importance of infrastructure development to improving the circumstances of Redfern and Waterloo:

⁴⁹¹ Mr Brad Hazzard MP, Legislative Assembly, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 9 December 2004, Daily Galleys, p58

⁴⁹² Hon Frank Sartor MP, Legislative Assembly, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 9 December 2004, Daily Galleys, p58

Infrastructure development in Redfern and Waterloo is one of the keys to creating a sustainable and strong community. The New South Wales Government is the largest landowner in the area, with prime assets such as the Australian Technology Park, the railway station, Rachel Foster Hospital and Redfern Public School sites and the public housing estates. The development of these government assets in Redfern and Waterloo must deliver significant social and economic returns. It is important that the Government maximises its returns on these assets if the urgent needs in the area are to be addressed.⁴⁹³

5.31 As noted in the Interim Report, the Government was previously developing a plan for infrastructure development known as the Redfern Eveleigh Darlington Strategy, (RED Strategy). The RED Strategy was being managed by the RWPP and was intended to ‘provide a holistic approach to urban renewal, strengthening the local community and improving urban amenities.’⁴⁹⁴

5.32 There has been some criticism from community groups that the RED Strategy has never been released, making it difficult to know the purpose of the RWA in relation to infrastructure planning. REDWatch argues that:

In the absence of the details of the [Redfern Waterloo Plan] it is difficult to decide how the [Redfern Waterloo Authority] would be best constituted and hence care is required. Ideally the Government should have undertaken the process it started with the Redfern Waterloo community and established the Draft RED Strategy which could have become the Redfern Waterloo Plan for a new Authority.⁴⁹⁵

5.33 In relation to what will happen to the RED Strategy, the Committee was unable to establish anything more than the fact that the RWA will be responsible for infrastructure. In evidence to the Committee, Dr Gellatly said:

I think it is in the legislation in terms of the plan that the infrastructure will be part of the Authority’s functions. That was always an issue in terms of how you get all the bits of infrastructure and we talked about that before I think in terms of the infrastructure strategy, by bringing it together, and some of the planning issues, that we have one Authority which is responsible for all the infrastructure direction and the planning issues and give it some Authority rather than having to deal with individual agencies all the time.⁴⁹⁶

5.34 One of the major concerns put forward regarding the Authority is that it is largely a real estate plan. There has been concern expressed through the media and in Parliament⁴⁹⁷ about the privatisation of public assets. According to media reports, some of the sites earmarked for sale

⁴⁹³ Hon Frank Sartor MP, Legislative Assembly, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 11 November 2004, p12740

⁴⁹⁴ Submission 55, NSW Government, p183

⁴⁹⁵ REDWatch, ‘Redfern-Waterloo Authority Bill 2004: Briefing Note’, in email from Turnbull family, 16 November 2004, p3

⁴⁹⁶ Dr Gellatly, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p3

⁴⁹⁷ See, for example, Ms Clover Moore MP, Legislative Assembly, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 17 November 2004; Ms Lee Rhiannon MLC, Legislative Council, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 7 December 2004

are the Redfern police station, Redfern Public School and the Rachel Foster Hospital site.⁴⁹⁸ In its media release prior to the debate on the Bill in the Upper House, NCOSS said:

In the current version of the Bill, the incentive is clearly to sell public assets to pay for new public and community assets as well as entering into joint ventures with private sector interests.⁴⁹⁹

- 5.35** The Committee is unclear of the validity of the claims made by the *Herald* that the Government is intending to sell these and other sites. The Committee notes the comments made by the Government as quoted above, that no plan had been completed and a draft will be prepared for public comment prior to being adopted.⁵⁰⁰
- 5.36** The Committee recognises that infrastructure planning is a significant issue for the Redfern Waterloo area. We welcome the announcement of the Redfern Waterloo Authority and the intention of the Government to substantially address the infrastructure issues in the area. However, we acknowledge the concerns of the community that until a Plan is substantially developed, it is difficult to know exactly how the Government intends to address the infrastructure planning and development of Redfern and Waterloo. At the same time we support the community's call that they be given adequate opportunity to comment before the plan is finalised. We would therefore encourage the Government to produce the draft Redfern Waterloo Plan as soon as possible and to publicly release the draft Plan. In addition, we urge the Government to ensure that appropriate community consultation occurs in the development of a completed Plan. The Committee also believes that as some consultation has already occurred in relation to the RED Strategy, the Government should consider the information gathered during these consultations in drafting plans for infrastructure development. This issue is addressed further in Chapter 6, along with the need for infrastructure to be integrated with other key aspects including human services to ensure the issues in Redfern and Waterloo are addressed in the long term.
- 5.37** In relation to public assets, the Committee believes that the RWA should, as a matter of priority, conduct and publish an audit of the Government assets in the area, including an itemised list identifying and describing the assets. We believe that the Redfern Waterloo Authority should ensure that any development of these assets is done in consultation with the Redfern and Waterloo communities, and that monies raised in the development of these assets go directly to addressing the needs of the area.

⁴⁹⁸ Debra Jopson, Gerald Ryle and Darren Goodsir, 'Revealed: how Redfern will be reborn', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 29 November 2004, p1

⁴⁹⁹ NCOSS, 'Closer Look Needed at Redfern-Waterloo Authority Bill', *Media Release*, 7 December 2004, p1

⁵⁰⁰ Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, 'Frequently asked questions prepared for residents of Redfern-Waterloo', www.redfernwaterloo.nsw.gov.au (accessed 6 December 2004)

Recommendation 24

That the NSW Government, through the Redfern Waterloo Authority, produce the draft Redfern Waterloo Plan as soon as possible and ensure that appropriate community consultation occurs in the development of the Plan. In addition, the Redfern Waterloo Authority should ensure that the consultation that has already occurred on the RED Strategy is considered in the development of the Plan.

Recommendation 25

That the NSW Government, through the Redfern Waterloo Authority, as a matter of urgency, conduct an audit of the Government assets in the Redfern and Waterloo area, and publish this audit including an itemised list identifying and describing the assets. The Redfern Waterloo Authority should ensure that any development of these assets is done in consultation with the Redfern and Waterloo communities, and that monies raised in the development of these assets go directly to addressing the needs of the area.

Affordable housing

- 5.38** Two clear issues relating to affordable housing for Redfern and Waterloo have emerged during this Inquiry: the redevelopment of public and community housing in the area, and the creation of public and private affordable housing options for low to middle income earners. This section looks briefly at these issues. Issues relating to housing are also addressed in Chapter 4.
- 5.39** In relation to the role of the RWA, the Redfern Waterloo Authority Bill specifically provides for affordable housing. Clause 30 entitled Development contributions for affordable housing allows for, among other things, the development of the former Carlton and United Breweries (CUB) site. The Minister said:
- The capacity of the Authority to raise affordable housing contributions on this site will deliver a range of housing choices to the disadvantaged communities in Redfern and Waterloo.⁵⁰¹
- 5.40** While acknowledging Ms Clover Moore MP's objections to this Clause on the basis that the CUB site is outside the area overseen by the Authority,⁵⁰² the Committee welcomes the commitment of the Government to the provision of affordable housing in the area. However, we note that there are a number of issues concerning peak organisations and some in the local community.
- 5.41** During the recent debate on the Authority, and media articles in *The Sydney Morning Herald*, a number of people expressed deep concern about the loss of their housing in Redfern and Waterloo. On 6 November 2004 about 150 Waterloo residents, many of them Russian-

⁵⁰¹ Hon Frank Sartor MP, Legislative Assembly, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 19 November 2004, p13272

⁵⁰² For full version of the debate see Ms Clover Moore MP, Legislative Assembly, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 19 November 2004, p13272

speaking residents from the public housing tower blocks, attended a rally to protest against the Government plans for the area. In response, Minister Sartor expressed his concern that residents had been misled about his plans for the area.⁵⁰³ According to the RWPP website, no public housing tenant will have to leave their home:

[T]here are no plans to redevelop any public housing at this time, with the exception of the proposed Elizabeth Street development which has been the subject of extensive community consultation.⁵⁰⁴

5.42 Many other witnesses to this Inquiry have expressed their concern about the provision of affordable housing in the area for middle to low income earners. The Planning Institute of Australia, for example, lists it as one of the key challenges facing Redfern and Waterloo.⁵⁰⁵ In its submission for the Metropolitan Strategy⁵⁰⁶, NCOSS suggests that across metropolitan Sydney there should be a general reduction in the number of households in housing stress by 10% in the next five years and thereafter by five per cent every five years. On affordable housing, NCOSS argues:

15% of total housing units delivering public and social housing, low cost private rental and lower income home ownership. NCOSS considers more effective benchmark would be 30%, to reflect the current undersupply of affordable housing in Sydney.⁵⁰⁷

5.43 NCOSS strongly support measures aimed at ensuring the provision of affordable housing for the area.⁵⁰⁸ These measures include targets or benchmarks, financed by a mixture of mechanisms, including:

- inclusionary zoning that should be a specific developer levy
- public sector financing
- joint ventures which could include private public partnerships and superannuation scheme investment.

5.44 In its submission, the Redfern Neighbourhood Advisory Board (NAB) argues that the Government should ensure a significant percentage of both public and affordable housing is

⁵⁰³ Lisa Pryor, 'Labor councillors want to limit Sartor power', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 7 December 2004, p4

⁵⁰⁴ Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, 'Frequently asked questions prepared for residents of Redfern-Waterloo', www.redferwaterloo.nsw.gov.au (accessed 6 December 2004)

⁵⁰⁵ Mr Peter Laybutt, Chair, Metropolitan Policy Sub Committee, Planning Institute of Australia (NSW Division), Evidence, 22 October 2004, p5

⁵⁰⁶ The Government is currently developing its Metropolitan Strategy, a long term plan to guide the development and future sustainability of the Greater Metropolitan Region. This is discussed further in Chapter 6.

⁵⁰⁷ NCOSS, 'Social sustainability benchmarks for the Metropolitan strategy', document provided to the Committee 7 December 2004, p1

⁵⁰⁸ Submission 56, NCOSS, p4

included in any new developments. The NAB proposed the provision of a minimum of 6% public housing and 6% affordable housing in all new private housing developments.⁵⁰⁹

- 5.45** Numerous inquiry participants were concerned that the Government stand by its commitment to existing public housing and guarantee public tenants future homes. In addition, Ms Moore proposed that a 10% housing levy be applied to ensure the provision of affordable housing:

I hope that the new Authority will require a 10 per cent affordable housing levy, as I have requested, to ensure that ordinary people like nurses, teachers and hospitality staff can afford to live in the inner city.⁵¹⁰

- 5.46** As discussed in Chapter 4, Mr Mike Allen from the Department of Housing explained that the Department has approximately 32,000 properties in the central Sydney division,⁵¹¹ and 4,133 in Redfern and Waterloo (1,605 in Redfern and 2,528 in Waterloo).⁵¹²

- 5.47** In evidence to the Committee, given prior to the announcements of the RWA and plans for housing in the area, Mr Allen suggested that the Department would like to see some private-public partnerships for public housing:

We would like to see an increase in affordable housing in the area, both rental and purchased houses. The Department has recently announced a couple of pilot projects dealing with affordable rental housing focusing on retaining key workers in areas who the private market may have priced out of the location. I see some good opportunities to do that in the Redfern-Waterloo area.⁵¹³

- 5.48** In answers to questions on notice, Mr Allen said that the Department had only one redevelopment project planned for the Redfern and Waterloo area. This proposed project involved the demolition of some existing public housing and the 'construction of both new public and private sector accommodation.'⁵¹⁴ According to Mr Allen, under the bilateral agreement with the Commonwealth as part of the Commonwealth State Housing Agreement (CSHA), Redfern and Waterloo are priority suburbs:

Redfern-Waterloo is one of the communities identified by New South Wales as a priority community. During the term of the current agreement the Department will continue to build on the work performed during the 1990s to improve the physical

⁵⁰⁹ Submission 30, Redfern Neighbourhood Advisory Board, p5. This information was provided prior to the Government announcements on the redevelopment of the area, and therefore the figures provided by the NAB may now differ, depending on the details of the plans for affordable housing in the area.

⁵¹⁰ Ms Clover Moore MP, Legislative Assembly, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 19 November 2004, p13272

⁵¹¹ Mr Mike Allen, Executive Director, Central Sydney Division, Department of Housing, Evidence, 2 November 2004, p2

⁵¹² Answers to questions on notice taken during evidence 2 November 2004, Mr Allen, Department of Housing, p3

⁵¹³ Mr Allen, Evidence, 2 November 2004, p2

⁵¹⁴ Answers to questions on notice taken during evidence 2 November 2004, Mr Allen, Department of Housing, p4

living environment and work with other agencies to improve the quality of life for social housing tenants in the area.⁵¹⁵

- 5.49** The Committee notes that the Federal Government has a significant role in relation to affordable housing. According to Mr Allen, Commonwealth contributions to New South Wales via the CSHA have been falling over the past 15 years. The Committee also notes that NSW Government contributions to public and community housing have fallen over the past few years.
- 5.50** The Committee notes the dimensions of this problem for New South Wales and urges the Minister for Housing to continue to work with the Commonwealth to ensure that appropriate levels of funding are provided to public and social housing. The Committee strongly believes that addressing affordable housing issues in Redfern and Waterloo should be a major priority for both the State and Federal Governments. The Committee encourages the State Government to work with the Commonwealth on ensuring there is adequate funding for capital works for public and community housing. This issue, and other matters relating to maintenance, security and residents' support needs are dealt with in Chapter 4.
- 5.51** While many inquiry participants argued that affordable housing is a major issue for Redfern and Waterloo, the Committee did not receive extensive evidence on measures to address this complex issue, particularly in relation to funding affordable housing provision. Nevertheless, the Committee believes the Government must address affordable housing for the area both for existing public housing tenants and in terms of the provision of public and private affordable housing options for low to middle income earners. In relation to current tenants, we are pleased that the Government has given its assurance that there will be no moving out of public housing tenants. We urge the Government to consult with current tenants on any future plans to redevelop public housing stock. The Committee also urges the Government to consider measures to ensure the provision of affordable housing, and allow for affordable housing targets financed through a mixture of mechanisms. In addition, the Redfern Waterloo Authority should ensure that all future commercial or residential development applications of scale should be subject to a comprehensive social impact assessment process.

Recommendation 26

That the NSW Government, through the Redfern Waterloo Authority, consult with current public housing tenants on any future plans to redevelop public housing stock.

Recommendation 27

That the NSW Government, through the Redfern Waterloo Authority, consider measures to ensure the provision of affordable housing and allow for affordable housing targets.

⁵¹⁵ Answers to questions on notice taken during evidence 2 November 2004, Mr Allen, Department of Housing, p2

Recommendation 28

That the NSW Government, through the Redfern Waterloo Authority, ensure that all future commercial or residential development applications of scale are subject to a comprehensive social impact assessment process.

Redevelopment of the Block

- 5.52** The terms of reference require the Committee to examine the future of the Block. During the first stage of the Inquiry, the Committee concluded that the future of the Block lay in the redevelopment of housing for Aboriginal people by the owners of the land, the Aboriginal Housing Company (AHC). In the Interim Report the Committee examined the AHC's Pemulwuy Redevelopment Project and related issues, making several recommendations.
- 5.53** The Committee first examined the financial and management status of the AHC, which had been identified as an impediment to the provision of Government funding for the redevelopment. The Committee recommended that the Government expedite the completion of the audit of the financial affairs of the AHC and the valuation of its properties, which were initially due for completion in the first half of this year.⁵¹⁶ Dr Col Gellatly advised the Committee in November that the audit and the valuation have been completed and that they have been 'prepared for the workings of Cabinet and there are still deliberations going on'.⁵¹⁷ At the time of finalising this Report the Committee had not received a copy of those reports.
- 5.54** In terms of funding for the redevelopment, the Committee recommended that the Government make a substantial funding contribution to enable the AHC to complete the project, subject to certain requirements relating to the management of the project and other matters. The Committee also recommended that the RWPP continue the provision of in-kind assistance to the AHC. Dr Gellatly advised in November that the NSW Government has not yet made a decision about a funding commitment to the redevelopment.⁵¹⁸ He described the involvement of the Government with the redevelopment since the Interim Report as follows:
- Clearly we have had ongoing discussions with the AHC to try to clarify what the options are so we could actually start to progress the position in terms of the Block, but it is only informal discussion. State Government agencies have still been working with the Aboriginal Housing Company to facilitate the redevelopment. For instance, the Government Architect has spent a significant amount of time working with the Aboriginal Housing Company to look at what the options are around the Block. That work will continue. There has been ongoing work, but there is no resolution and, until such time as Cabinet makes a decision, there is nothing further we can do.⁵¹⁹
- 5.55** The Committee notes that the Government's announcement of its intention to establish the Redfern-Waterloo Authority contained brief reference to the redevelopment of the Block. For

⁵¹⁶ See Recommendation 6 in Standing Committee on Social Issues, *Inquiry into issues relating to Redfern and Waterloo: Interim Report*, Report 32, August 2004, p65 (hereafter *Interim Report*)

⁵¹⁷ Dr Gellatly, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p15

⁵¹⁸ Dr Gellatly, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p17

⁵¹⁹ Dr Gellatly, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p17

example, it was stated that 'Mr Sartor will discuss potential opportunities for the site known as the Block with various community groups'.⁵²⁰ Very little information about how the new Authority intends to deal with the Block was known at the time of drafting this Report. The Premier stated in the Legislative Assembly that:

The redevelopment of the Block stands at the centre of the challenges we face. It will of course be undertaken in consultation with the owners of the site, the Aboriginal Housing Company. ... As I said, we will co-operate with the Aboriginal Housing Company to fix the Block. I hope that, in co-operation with that company, we can boost Aboriginal home ownership in the area. It would be an important achievement if we could reach that goal.⁵²¹

5.56 The Committee commends the Government for this commitment but notes the lack of consultation with the AHC over the role that the new Authority might play in relation to the Block. Shortly after the announcement, news programs quoted the CEO of the AHC, Mr Michael Mundine, as stating that while the AHC would work with the new Authority it was disappointing that the AHC was not consulted over the plans.⁵²²

5.57 In our Interim Report, the Committee also recommended that the NSW Government approach the Federal Government to make a substantial funding commitment to the redevelopment project. Dr Gellatly has since advised the Committee that a formal approach had not been made by the State Government to the Federal Government:

We had some informal discussions, Michael [Ramsey] and I, with some Commonwealth Government staff, but that was before the election, so they were in caretaker mode, and it was just a general background discussion. Really it is an issue that needs to be taken up. There are things happening on broader policy framework and what happens after ATSIC and also the type of funding arrangements that they are going to have with Aboriginal communities, what that would mean for the Block and so on, so I think there is a number of issues floating around at the national level as well that need to be taken into account and worked out over time.⁵²³

5.58 The Committee also recommended that the City of Sydney Council make a substantial contribution to the redevelopment project, for example, through in-kind assistance. The Committee is not aware of any formal commitment being made by the Council to date.

5.59 In relation to our recommendation that the RWPP provide assistance to the AHC to keep the local Aboriginal community, as well as the wider community in Redfern and Waterloo, informed as to the progress of the redevelopment, the Committee is unaware of any action to date. The Committee is disappointed that in the four months since our Interim Report was released little progress has been made on the redevelopment of the Block. The Committee reiterates the comments we made in the Interim Report that the redevelopment of the Block is an important and iconic project for Aboriginal people in the area and throughout NSW and

⁵²⁰ Hon Bob Carr MP, Premier, 'Premier announces 10-year Redfern-Waterloo Plan', *Media Release*, 26 October 2004

⁵²¹ Hon Bob Carr MP, Legislative Assembly, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 28 October 2004, p12271

⁵²² For example, News, 2BL, 26 October 2004, 5pm

⁵²³ Dr Gellatly, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p18

Australia, and one that needs to commence as soon as possible. The assistance of all three tiers of Government is crucial to the success of the project.

5.60 The Interim Report also noted the comments made by the AHC that the Company was established as a housing provider, not as a social support service. Nevertheless, the AHC told the Committee, significant time and resources are taken up with providing support and referral services to members of the local Aboriginal community that should be provided by government and non government services.⁵²⁴ The issue of the adequacy of government and non government services for Aboriginal people is dealt with in Chapter 4.

5.61 Finally, we note that the recent articles in *The Sydney Morning Herald*, which claimed the RWA will ‘take control of Aboriginal lands on the Block’ caused considerable concern amongst the Aboriginal community.⁵²⁵ According to the Herald:

The Redfern-Waterloo Authority will commit \$27 million to redeveloping the troubled precinct centred on Eveleigh Street, but only if the Indigenous owners hand the authority exclusive possession of lands through a 10-year lease.⁵²⁶

5.62 Indigenous leaders such as Marcia Ella-Duncan responded angrily, suggesting that any plans to take control of Aboriginal-owned housing ‘would help only a few black people while sweeping aside self-determination.’⁵²⁷ Minister Sartor responded by saying the options for the Block were ‘not about dispossessing Aboriginal people and sending them off somewhere else.’ Minister Sartor was reported as saying:

Certainly there is no plan at the moment to use any compulsory powers to take control ... The current model and our approach has been to consult and to see if we can gain agreement out of people.⁵²⁸

5.63 In early December 2004, an alliance of 9 Aboriginal organisations calling itself the Redfern Organisation of Aboriginal Unity released a statement in relation to the issues facing Aboriginal people in Redfern and Waterloo, including the future of the Block. The group expressed particular concern about suggestions that the land currently owned by the Aboriginal Housing Company ‘could be forcibly acquired by the Government’:

Aboriginal people would regard any forced acquisition as once again the dispossession of our people and occupation of our land. We would fiercely resist this in a unified, determined but peaceful manner.⁵²⁹

⁵²⁴ See *Interim Report*, p41

⁵²⁵ Debra Jopson & Gerard Ryle, ‘Fixing the Block: \$27m development planned’, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 29 November 2004

⁵²⁶ Debra Jopson & Gerard Ryle, ‘Fixing the Block: \$27m development planned’, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 29 November 2004

⁵²⁷ Ms Marcia Ella-Duncan, Chairperson, ATSIC Sydney Regional Council, quoted in “‘Revamp helps only a few’, says black leader’, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 30 November 2004, p6

⁵²⁸ Hon Frank Sartor MP, quoted in “‘Revamp helps only a few’, says black leader’, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 30 November 2004, p6

⁵²⁹ Redfern Organisation of Aboriginal Unity, ‘Proposed Redfern Waterloo Redevelopment’, *Media Release*, 2 December 2004, p1

5.64 The Committee notes that the recent information placed on the RWPP website clearly states that:

No decisions have been made about the future of The Block. The Aboriginal Housing Company and the Minister for Redfern and Waterloo are working together to establish a sustainable vision for the area. **There is no intention by the State Government to compulsorily acquire the Block.**⁵³⁰ [our emphasis]

5.65 The Committee welcomes the Government's unequivocal statement that it has no intention to compulsorily acquire the Block. We note too, the acceptance by the Government of an amendment to the Redfern Waterloo Authority Bill made by the Christian Democratic Party.⁵³¹ The Act now requires that the Minister consult with the Aboriginal Housing Company and other relevant members of the Aboriginal community on issues and strategies affecting, or the long term strategic vision for, the Block.

5.66 The Committee strongly believes the future of the Block is a decision for the Aboriginal community and we would be extremely concerned by any Government plans to take control of the Block. As noted in our Interim Report, the Block is a place of political, spiritual and cultural significance for Aboriginal people and is often described as the 'Black Heart' of Australia.⁵³² We urge the Government to stand by its commitment not to compulsorily acquire the Block, and ensure that the Block remains in Aboriginal ownership and control. As noted in our Interim Report, we acknowledge that the RWPP has been working with the Aboriginal Housing Company in relation to its financial difficulties, governance and management issues. We encourage the NSW Government, through the RWA and the RWPP, to continue to work with the AHC, and the broader Aboriginal community, to enable the redevelopment of the Block.

Recommendation 29

That the NSW Government remain committed to its guarantee not to compulsorily acquire the Block at Redfern. In addition, the NSW Government, through the Redfern Waterloo Authority and the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, should work with the Aboriginal Housing Company, and the broader Aboriginal community, to enable the redevelopment of the Block.

Employment strategies

5.67 The problems associated with unemployment in Redfern and Waterloo were raised many times during our Inquiry. Witnesses such as the former Mayor of South Sydney Council and current councillor with City of Sydney Council raised it as one of the major issues to be

⁵³⁰ Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, 'Frequently asked questions prepared for residents of Redfern-Waterloo', www.redfernwaterloo.nsw.gov.au (accessed 6 December 2004)

⁵³¹ Reverend the Hon Fred Nile MLC, Legislative Council, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 9 December, Daily Galleys, p2

⁵³² See Chapter 3, *Interim Report*, August 2004, p34; see also Australian Heritage Commission, Place Details of the Block, Redfern, NSW: www.ahc.gov.au

addressed.⁵³³ Similarly, Mr Shane Brown from South Sydney Youth Services highlighted this as a major issue facing young people living in Redfern and Waterloo.⁵³⁴ These issues are discussed in detail in Chapter 4.

5.68 One of the core roles for the Government under the Redfern Waterloo Plan is to increase employment in the area.⁵³⁵ While there are some employment programs and services for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people already operating in the area, the Committee understands that the Redfern Waterloo Plan will seek to specifically increase employment for residents of the area. The Premier noted that a ‘core challenge in Redfern is unemployment – 60 per cent of the adult population are unemployed’.⁵³⁶

5.69 A little more detail on the Jobs Plan was provided in a joint media release from Minister Sartor and Minister Tebbutt. In it, the Ministers noted the high unemployment rates in Waterloo with up to 74% of the general population not in the workforce. According to the release, the Jobs Plan will focus on the creation of additional jobs and strategies to address labour market barriers faced by local people. The proposals set out in the Jobs Plan include:

- increasing employment through targeted development of State owned land
- encouraging new commercial activity
- establishment of an Aboriginal Business Hub
- use of Government Procurement contracts for construction projects to create Aboriginal and local training and employment opportunities
- strengthen Aboriginal employment partnerships
- development of a complementary education and training strategy
- a focus on increasing participation of young people in transition employment programs.⁵³⁷

5.70 In evidence to the Committee, Dr Col Gellatly could only provide minimal additional information on the Jobs Plan, suggesting that the detail will depend on the Authority and Minister Sartor. Dr Gellatly was able to say the additional jobs would come through increasing the supply of employment and ‘enterprise development land’ in Redfern and Waterloo. He also mentioned the creation of Aboriginal training and employment opportunities:

The concept has been floated of an Aboriginal business hub to attract Aboriginal craft and business enterprises to the area and create jobs, and exploring ways in which human services organisations could employ local people as well.⁵³⁸

⁵³³ Submission 45, Mr Tony Pooley

⁵³⁴ Submission 92, South Sydney Youth Services

⁵³⁵ Hon Bob Carr MP, Legislative Assembly, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 28 October 2004, p12271

⁵³⁶ Hon Bob Carr MP, Legislative Assembly, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 28 October 2004, p12271

⁵³⁷ Hon Frank Sartor MP and Hon Carmel Tebbutt MLC, ‘Government announces jobs plan for Redfern Waterloo’, *Media Release*, 10 November 2004

⁵³⁸ Dr Gellatly, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p29

- 5.71 NCOSS welcomed the Jobs Plan, suggesting it provides an opportunity to facilitate new and sustainable jobs for the long term unemployed. NCOSS stated that it would like to see local employment and training targets introduced to development approvals and Government purchasing contracts in Redfern and Waterloo. Director Mr Gary Moore also argued that:

The Redfern Waterloo Authority and the City of Sydney Council must be given the regulatory power and the financial incentives to make new jobs for local Aboriginal people, disadvantaged young people, poverty stricken sole parent families and the working poor in private rental a reality.⁵³⁹

- 5.72 The Committee agrees with the stakeholders that one of the urgent issues to be addressed in the area is the high level of unemployment, both in Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities. The Committee notes that the Government has identified this issue as a priority in its recent announcements on the RWA. However, it is difficult to comment on the adequacy of the Government's response without seeing the details of the Jobs Plan. The Committee urges the Government to develop and release the details of a draft Jobs Plan as soon as possible. The public release of a draft Plan will allow for the appropriate level of consultation and consideration by relevant government and non government stakeholders, as well as the local community. We urge the Government to ensure that the Plan addresses employment issues for residents in both suburbs, Redfern and Waterloo. We also note that the Commonwealth Government has a significant role to play in relation to employment issues. The Committee encourages the State and Commonwealth Governments to work together on job creation and on the delivery of employment programs and services to residents in the area. In particular, the NSW Government should consult with the Federal Government in the development of its Jobs Plan. The issue of employment, including Commonwealth responsibilities, is addressed in Chapter 4. The public release of the Jobs Plan is addressed in Chapter 6.

The Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project

- 5.73 The Committee addressed many of the issues relevant to the RWPP in the Interim Report, especially in Chapter 2. Since the release of the Interim Report, the Committee has heard further evidence from a range of government and non government agencies and individuals on the effectiveness of the RWPP. In this section the Committee provides an overview of the new role for the Project under the Redfern Waterloo Authority. We also revisit some of the issues raised in the Interim Report, particularly in relation to communication and consultation. In addition this section looks at issues raised in the second stage of the Inquiry, such as the lack of clarity of the role and objectives of the RWPP, the need to develop and publicly release these objectives and the need for a performance framework to assess the effectiveness of the Project.

The extension of the RWPP to 2008

- 5.74 Since the release of our Interim Report, numerous witnesses, particularly from the non government sector, remain sceptical about the capacity of the RWPP to operate effectively in the community, especially in relation to its role in communication and consultation. Despite

⁵³⁹ NCOSS, 'Walking the talk in Redfern and Waterloo', *Media Release*, 10 November 2004, p1

this, there is still no overwhelming desire to abandon the RWPP and begin again. In the Interim Report the Committee recommended that the Government continue the RWPP, despite the criticisms made about it, and make a long-term financial commitment to the Project beyond the funding already committed up to 2006.⁵⁴⁰ As noted in the Interim Report, some Committee members believed the RWPP had not been successful, that it was not appropriately resourced, and was not the appropriate lead agency to coordinate service delivery in Redfern and Waterloo.⁵⁴¹

5.75 On 26 October 2004 the Government announced that the RWPP will be extended until 2008. In evidence to the Committee, Mr Michael Ramsey said:

The Premier, I think in his announcement a few weeks ago about the Redfern Plan, made a statement that the Redfern/Waterloo Partnership Project will extend. The Government has actually said that the Project will be extended to 2008. As I said, as part of that they have also agreed to actually restructure the Partnership Project so that we can actually have the resources that the community is demanding, in terms of giving us the capacity to deliver on what the community has demanded.⁵⁴²

5.76 As discussed below, the RWPP will be given additional resources and staffing to allow it to undertake its role in the coordination of services and to enhance its communication and consultation functions. The RWPP and the RWA will be co-located within the same office. Dr Gellatly explained that while Minister Sartor will be responsible for the overall activities in the area, the RWPP will continue and will be distinct from the Authority.⁵⁴³

5.77 Minister Sartor, in his Second Reading speech on the introduction of the Redfern Waterloo Authority Bill, suggested that the Authority will build on the work that has been undertaken by the RWPP since 2002. Minister Sartor suggested that the RWPP would be essential to the process of ensuring social, economic, ecological and other sustainable development:

The Authority and the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project will work hand in hand to ensure that the Government delivers long-term and sustainable solutions that these two communities need and want. The Authority and the RWPP are complementary.⁵⁴⁴

5.78 The Minister went on to make the distinction between the Authority and the RWPP:

The RWPP will lead the Government's reform of the human services review system in Redfern and Waterloo, whilst the focus of the Authority is job creation, urban renewal, improved public amenity and enhanced commercial activity. Together this will create a strong and viable community.⁵⁴⁵

⁵⁴⁰ See Recommendation 1, *Interim Report*, p32

⁵⁴¹ See *Interim Report*, p12 and also Statement of Dissent by the Hon Robyn Parker MLC and the Hon Greg Pearce MLC, *Interim Report*, pp189-190

⁵⁴² Mr Ramsey, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p5

⁵⁴³ Dr Gellatly, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p2

⁵⁴⁴ Hon Frank Sartor MP, Legislative Assembly, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 11 November 2004, p12740

⁵⁴⁵ Hon Frank Sartor MP, Legislative Assembly, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 11 November 2004, p12740

The new role of the RWPP

- 5.79** According to its own fact sheet, the RWPP will lead the implementation of the initiatives contained in the ten-year plan and drive the establishment of the new Authority. In particular, the fact sheet says, the RWPP will work on ‘community safety, crime prevention, reshaping the human service system and cross agency coordination’.⁵⁴⁶ In addition to these medium to long term objectives, the RWPP will continue to be involved in crisis management where issues arise from time to time, for example, when families are in crisis.⁵⁴⁷
- 5.80** The Committee has received little additional information on the continued role of the RWPP in terms of community safety and crime prevention. The Government submission provided early in the Inquiry outlines its role in relation to these matters.⁵⁴⁸ We understand that the RWPP is working closely with the NSW Police and Sydney of City Council in establishing appropriate crime prevention strategies. For more information on policing see Chapter 2.
- 5.81** In relation to the RWPP’s role in reshaping the human service system, the Committee understands that the Project will be responsible for implementing the recommendations in the report of the Human Services Review.⁵⁴⁹ At the time of the release of the Morgan Disney report, the Hon Carmel Tebbutt MLC explained that the recommendations from the review will be used to help design a Human Services Plan for coordinated service delivery in the area:

The Review makes it clear there are adequate resources in the area, but services are uncoordinated, lack community engagement and are not focussed on outcomes.⁵⁵⁰

- 5.82** According to Minister Tebbutt, the Plan will develop agreed community outcomes and address ways of working with the community, and will include strategies concerning capacity building for government and non government organisations and community leadership development.⁵⁵¹ There are a number of priority areas for the Human Services Plan including services for families, children and young people, and Aboriginal people, addressing domestic violence, drug and alcohol misuse and mental health issues. An Implementation Working Group will be established to develop the Plan, with representation from both government and non government sectors, including Aboriginal organisations. The Committee understands that the Human Services Plan will be presented to Cabinet by May 2005.⁵⁵² The findings and

⁵⁴⁶ Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, ‘The Redfern-Waterloo Plan’, Fact Sheet #1, November 2004, p2

⁵⁴⁷ Mr Ramsey, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p24

⁵⁴⁸ See Part 6 Community Safety and Justice, in Submission 55, NSW Government, pp231-282

⁵⁴⁹ For more information see Morgan Disney & Associates, *Making Connections: Better Services, Stronger Community, Report on Review of the Human Services System in Redfern and Waterloo*, Report for the NSW Premier’s Department, November 2004. To view the report, go to www.redfernwaterloo.nsw.gov.au

⁵⁵⁰ Hon Carmel Tebbutt MLC, Legislative Council, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 10 November 2004, p12458

⁵⁵¹ Hon Carmel Tebbutt MLC, Legislative Council, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 10 November 2004, p12458

⁵⁵² Hon Carmel Tebbutt MLC, Legislative Council, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 10 November 2004, p12458

recommendation of the Human Services Review are dealt with comprehensively in Chapter 3 of this Report.

5.83 Cross agency coordination is identified by the RWPP in its recent fact sheet as another of its core roles. As discussed in the Interim Report, since its establishment the RWPP has had as core objectives, the coordination of government and non government services in Redfern and Waterloo and the development and maintenance of partnerships. As noted in the recent Government announcements on the Human Services Review, the coordination of services in the area is very poor.

5.84 Further, in our Interim Report we noted the role of the RWPP in establishing and maintaining effective and genuine partnerships between the government and non government sectors, and with the local community. The Interim Report concluded that the full potential of establishing effective partnerships is yet to be realised. This was also raised with us in this second stage of the inquiry process. At a private briefing with the Committee, a number of members of the South Sydney Interagency raised concerns about the RWPP consultation processes and its commitment to partnerships:

The other thing we say is we are suffering from consultation fatigue and some of the comments I got is I would go there again and say it again because there is a sense that it has already been said and nothing has happened and there is a high risk in my view at this stage of a loss of faith in the concept of partnership with the community organizations in this area.⁵⁵³

5.85 In his evidence to the Committee, Dr Gellatly suggested that coordination between various sectors of the local community has improved since the release of the Interim Report. Dr Gellatly told the Inquiry that the recent rugby league tournament held over the October long weekend was a good example of Government coordination and partnership arrangements between government and non government services, and the community. According to Dr Gellatly, the event:

... involved a lot of preparation in terms of working between the agencies and working with the community toward what eventually turned out to be a very successful weekend.⁵⁵⁴

5.86 While acknowledging Dr Gellatly's comments, the Committee believes, based on the majority of evidence to this Inquiry, that substantial work is still required to ensure effective coordination and partnerships. The Committee welcomes the additional resources and staffing provided to the RWPP and we are hopeful that this will assist the RWPP in its work in cross agency coordination and in the establishment of effective partnerships. The Committee believes that the cooperation between government and non government agencies, and the successful engagement of community members, will be critical to achieving significant reform in the area. Dr Gellatly agreed that this would be necessary and suggested that the establishment of the RWA with a dedicated Minister will go a long way to achieving the level of coordination required:

⁵⁵³ Participant, South Sydney Interagency, 3 November 2004, p5

⁵⁵⁴ Dr Gellatly, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p1

[W]e now have an active minister for the area who will, I am sure, help us bang a few heads together ... I think it is a serious attempt to try to get the coordination and the drive behind to fix it. I mean there is no simple solution and it is being worked on from a number of fronts, as we have talked about up-front in our submission, and I think we are not establishing any new group of CEOs, there is already a human services cluster. The fact that there is a Minister now solely focused on that place recognises that the Government is obviously indicating that that is an important issue to get things solved there and it just gives more impetus if a Minister has that as a specific responsibility.⁵⁵⁵

- 5.87** The Committee notes that there has been unanimous support for a long term response to social disadvantage in Redfern and Waterloo. The Government's own submission states that need for long term commitment from the government and non government sector.⁵⁵⁶ The recent announcements on the RWA and the Redfern Waterloo Plan (2004–2014) suggest that the Government recognises the need for long term solutions. Despite this, the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, the body charged with coordinating the response to the serious social issues facing the area, has been extended only until 2008. Importantly, the RWPP will lead the implementation of the Human Services Review plan. The Committee believes that, given the important role of the RWPP in overseeing the implementation of the Human Services Review, the Government should commit to the RWPP, or a similar coordinating body, beyond 2008 so that continuity is ensured and the long term social disadvantage in the area is finally addressed. The RWPP, or similar body, should be adequately resourced, with appropriate performance measurement and have appropriate powers to allow it to perform its important role in addressing the complexity of issues facing people living in Redfern and Waterloo.

Recommendation 30

That the NSW Government ensure that the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, or a similar coordinating body, is extended beyond 2008, is adequately resourced, with appropriate performance measurement, so that the long term social disadvantage in Redfern and Waterloo can be addressed.

- 5.88** The Committee believes that the RWPP must improve in a number of its key areas of responsibility, including communication and consultation, coordinating service delivery and the development of effective partnerships. In addition, the Committee believes the RWPP must develop clear objectives and performance indicators. These issues are discussed below.

Communication and consultation

- 5.89** As already mentioned, our Interim Report was extremely critical of the communication and consultation processes of the RWPP. In relation to communication, the Committee found that there was an inadequate level of communication between the RWPP and the local community. Witnesses suggested that there was little or no follow up on reporting back to organisations on decisions made by Government. Other witnesses complained about the

⁵⁵⁵ Dr Gellatly, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p31

⁵⁵⁶ Submission 55, NSW Government, p55

RWPP website and lack of updated information, while a number of inquiry participants suggested that the RWPP did not have adequate resources to allow it to communicate effectively.⁵⁵⁷ In relation to consultation, witnesses were critical of the manner in which the consultations were conducted, suggesting the sessions were simply information-giving rather than genuine consultations. Inquiry participants noted the failure of the RWPP Taskforces to meet regularly and engage meaningfully with the members. The conduct of the consultation processes has continued to receive criticism since the release of our Interim Report. As noted above, many agencies and individuals are experiencing ‘consultation fatigue’ and do not feel that the consultations have resulted in real change for the area.

5.90 A number of witnesses both prior to and since the Interim Report commented favourably on the consultation processes undertaken by Morgan Disney for the Human Services Review.⁵⁵⁸ As noted in Chapter 3, Morgan Disney held further community meetings in mid December to report back on its Review of the Human Services System.

5.91 In our Interim Report, the Committee recommended that the RWPP develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to ensure there is effective consultation and communication with the Redfern and Waterloo communities. In the initial round of hearings, Dr Gellatly acknowledged that the criticisms of the RWPP communication strategies were valid and he committed the Government to developing and implementing a more effective communication strategy.⁵⁵⁹ In recent evidence, Dr Gellatly again accepted the criticisms and reiterated Government plans to address them:

Criticisms about the communication and lack of consultation by the Partnership during the first 18 months or so we have accepted, and we are trying to find ways to improve that, including putting some resources into that. There are some explanations about why that was the case but I think that is a very legitimate concern and we are going to address it.⁵⁶⁰

5.92 Mr Ramsey told the Committee that he felt the RWPP had done extensive consultations; he argued that the community had been over consulted and wanted to see the outcomes of those consultations. Mr Ramsey acknowledged that what they have not done well was communicate back to the community:

Again I emphasise that I think we have done consultation well. What we have not done is communication, and they are fundamentally different things.⁵⁶¹

5.93 Mr Ramsey said that a communication strategy has been developed and is in the process of being implemented, supported by the appointment of personnel with expertise in the area of communication:

We are just in the process of implementing that, and I acknowledge we are still grappling with it, but that communication strategy is actually going to be built around

⁵⁵⁷ See *Interim Report*, August 2004, p27

⁵⁵⁸ See *Interim Report*, August 2004, pp22-26

⁵⁵⁹ Dr Gellatly, Evidence, 18 May 2004, p4

⁵⁶⁰ Dr Gellatly, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p4

⁵⁶¹ Mr Ramsey, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p5

some elements related to community engagement. We want to meet with all stakeholders and actually identify with them what the key issues are that they want addressed and how they want to be communicated with. This will come out as we have the communication person on, we will have the capacity to do this. We want to develop a meeting strategy and have that published well and truly in advance, almost giving people three months or six months in advance and saying: This is what our meeting schedule is going to be and these are the issues, so we actually give people advance notice of what we are doing.⁵⁶²

5.94 In addition, Mr Ramsey said the RWPP is trying to address the communication issue in specific ways with regular updates of the website, email contact with agencies in the area and the distribution of fact sheets to the community with information on Government announcements such as the community health facility in Redfern and the establishment of the Redfern Waterloo Authority.⁵⁶³

5.95 While acknowledging changes were needed, Dr Gellatly expressed his support for Mr Ramsey and the RWPP, suggesting that much of the communication and consultation done in the area is on an informal basis:

I think that there is an incredible amount of informal consultation and communication happening and I agree with the comments that it is not just about newsletters and particularly access to the web site and all of that, but it is a matter of on-the-ground talking to people on a daily basis when you see them in the street and that sort of thing, having community meetings and meeting with community leaders. I know that that does happen and I think Michael is underestimating it, but there is always going to be criticism that it is not enough and it is a matter of trying to find smarter ways to do it and get to more people.⁵⁶⁴

5.96 The Committee believes that while there has been some improvement to the communication and consultation with local services and the community, the RWPP must continue to find appropriate ways to engage with these groups. The Committee has noticed a distinct lack of trust between the non government sector, community members and the RWPP. In Chapter 6, the Committee further considers the relationship with the non government sector, community engagement and Government transparency.

Relationship with the Aboriginal community

5.97 In our Interim Report we also examined the effectiveness of the RWPP in dealing with the Aboriginal community and recommended that the RWPP work at improving its relationship.⁵⁶⁵ In November Mr Ramsey told the Committee that the RWPP has tried to work cooperatively with the Aboriginal community on a number of events over the past months. He noted the Aboriginal rugby league tournament held in Redfern over the October long weekend and Operation Allunga, a police operation undertaken on and around the Block in late July 2004. According to Mr Ramsey:

⁵⁶² Mr Ramsey, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p9

⁵⁶³ Mr Ramsey, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p9

⁵⁶⁴ Dr Gellatly, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p11

⁵⁶⁵ See Recommendation 3 in *Interim Report*, p33

Operation Allunga was widely praised by the Aboriginal community leaders as being a new day in Aboriginal and police relations in Redfern. The Aboriginal community had been saying for a long period of time that they wanted drug dealing dealt with effectively in Redfern and Waterloo, and they saw Operation Allunga as actually achieving that. The fact that there were five addresses on the Block that were identified and were actually targeted in that and 28 people were identified through controlled drug purchases, was actually really well received and in fact I am still hearing comments about that, and Aboriginal people are very responsive about the fact that police are actually taking action in terms of that.⁵⁶⁶

- 5.98** While there is support amongst the Aboriginal community for specific police operations such as Operation Allunga, some members of the Aboriginal community do not necessarily support the action of the police⁵⁶⁷ or the work of the RWPP. In a briefing with the Committee, one member of the Koori Interagency said:

With the Redfern/Waterloo Partnership Program, it has been going for two or three years now. When it first came into this area it went through community organisations, went to the community people, they picked our brains on what we wanted on domestic violence, on education, on everything, and we have seen very, very little come out of what they have taken away, yet the money is rolling into the Redfern/Waterloo Partnership Program - and I am talking millions of dollars - but this community has only seen a pittance out of it because all these consultants are getting paid the big bucks and the community is getting nothing out of it. When are we going to start to benefit from the Redfern/Waterloo Partnership Program? That is one question I think everyone in this room wants to know.⁵⁶⁸

- 5.99** The Redfern Organisation of Aboriginal Unity expressed their concern that the Authority ‘could undermine the work that is currently being carried out by our community controlled organisations.’⁵⁶⁹ While agreeing that the Government has to take a coordinated approach, the group stressed that it should be done in partnership with Aboriginal people. The group acknowledged the Government’s commitment to consultation and assurances that no decisions had been made on the future of the area:

We hope that the Minister’s understanding of consultation is the same as our own. Consultation in our sense of the word means sharing ideas with an open mind to come up with a joint agreement on the best way forward. It means listening as well as speaking. It does not mean telling our people what is happening after decisions have already been made.⁵⁷⁰

- 5.100** The Committee believes that much more needs to be done to engage with the Aboriginal community. As noted in our Interim Report, the RWPP has done considerable work with the Aboriginal Housing Company and has formed an effective working relationship with

⁵⁶⁶ Mr Ramsey, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p22

⁵⁶⁷ The relationship between police and Aboriginal people is dealt with extensively in Chapter 2

⁵⁶⁸ Participant, Koori South Eastern Sydney Interagency, 15 October 2004, p25

⁵⁶⁹ Redfern Organisation of Aboriginal Unity, ‘Proposed Redfern Waterloo Redevelopment’, *Media Release*, 2 December 2004, p1

⁵⁷⁰ Redfern Organisation of Aboriginal Unity, ‘Proposed Redfern Waterloo Redevelopment’, *Media Release*, 2 December 2004, p1

members of the Company. However, evidence to this Inquiry from Aboriginal non government service providers and individuals indicates that many Aboriginal people are not satisfied with the RWPP's consultation and communication processes. The Committee urges the RWPP to continue to engage with the Aboriginal community and ensure there is culturally appropriate consultation and communication. In Chapter 4 the Committee considers strategies in relation to Indigenous issues, and in Chapter 6 we further discuss the need to address issues facing the Aboriginal community in Redfern and Waterloo.

Performance accountability

- 5.101** Numerous witnesses throughout this Inquiry have expressed their concern that, despite having been established since 2002, the RWPP did not appear to have a clear, transparent and publicly available strategic plan. In her evidence to the Committee, Ms Elizabeth Rice of the Planning Institute of Australia raised her concerns about the apparent lack of a strategic plan:

But we have not seen any comprehensive strategy to address these [outcomes]. It may be that there is a strategy and it has not been made public, but to PIA's knowledge there is no publicly available strategic plan for the Redfern-Waterloo Partnership as a whole. There are no publicly available action plans which indicate how the Partnership as a whole is addressing the objectives, how the inputs it is sponsoring relate to the achievement of the objectives, how it will know whether it has achieved the outcomes, and how it will report these results annually preferably to the Government and the community.⁵⁷¹

- 5.102** Witnesses to this Inquiry suggested that in addition to the need for clear and publicly available strategic objectives, it was vital that there be a comprehensive set of performance indicators by which the objectives could be assessed. Witnesses argued that without clear performance measurements, it was difficult to gauge the effectiveness of the Project. As Ms Rice pointed out, while there appear to be indicators for separate projects in the Redfern and Waterloo area, there was not 'a set of indicators that relates to the lot':

So you have a collection of activities trying to achieve outcomes rather than a broad strategic direction that is specifically directing how those projects will work to achieve the outcomes.⁵⁷²

- 5.103** In his evidence, Dr Gellatly acknowledged that performance measurement and benchmarking are important issues, although often difficult to determine particularly in the area of human services. However, he accepted that just because it is a complex area, 'it does not mean that we should not be trying to do them, that we should not be trying to measure performance.'⁵⁷³ Dr Gellatly told the Committee that the RWPP is currently establishing a business plan, which will include appropriate performance measures:

⁵⁷¹ Ms Elizabeth Rice, Member, Planning Institute of Australia (NSW Division), Evidence, 22 October 2004, p9

⁵⁷² Ms Rice, Evidence, 22 October 2004, p9

⁵⁷³ Dr Gellatly, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p4

There is a framework in the human services area that is quite popular at present, the Freidman framework, which we are trying to work on and get some measures out of that.⁵⁷⁴

- 5.104** Dr Gellatly said the business plan will be completed by June 2005 and will be made public. The Committee urges the Government to ensure that this plan is completed by the promised date and that it is made public. This issue is addressed in recommendations in Chapter 6.
- 5.105** The Committee strongly believes the Redfern Waterloo Authority and the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project must ensure that there is a focussed strategic framework to guide their work in the area. We believe that the recent announcements made by the Government, particularly in relation to the development of the Redfern Waterloo Plan and the Human Services Plan, are positive steps towards developing broad strategic objectives aimed at addressing the issues facing Redfern and Waterloo. We urge the RWA and the RWPP, in the development of these Plans, to ensure that the Plans contain an appropriate set of indicators and performance measurements by which the objectives of the Plans can be assessed. We also believe that the Plans should be made publicly available and there should be a regular process of review. The RWPP should be regularly evaluated to ensure that its objectives are met, and real progress is made in Redfern and Waterloo.

Recommendation 31

That the NSW Government, through the Redfern Waterloo Authority and the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, ensure that the Redfern Waterloo Plan and the Human Services Plan contain an appropriate set of indicators and performance measurements by which the objectives of the Plans can be assessed. In addition, the Plans should be made publicly available; and regular evaluation and review should be undertaken and made public.

⁵⁷⁴ Dr Gellatly, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p7

Chapter 6 Future for Redfern and Waterloo

A point we would like to make in relation to world competitiveness is that successful global cities require attractive living and working environments and they require social, stable, equitable social settings. It is really incongruous to have a prosperous city with social isolation and non-cohesion of local communities. Getting the balance right in Redfern-Waterloo and getting the balance right across Sydney are very much key elements of keeping Sydney a competitive world city.⁵⁷⁵

The Committee has heard throughout this Inquiry that the priority issues for Redfern and Waterloo are also the issues creating the greatest challenges. While there are many short to medium term issues facing the area, the substantial concerns are longer term, requiring a far sighted strategic response. The long term issues that need to be addressed include social inclusion, urban renewal, affordable housing and employment opportunity. The recent establishment of the Redfern Waterloo Authority and the extension and increased resourcing of the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project provide a structure to guide a long term response for the area. However, without appropriate measures, the Committee believes there will only be limited success in addressing the issues confronting Redfern and Waterloo. In this chapter we canvass what we believe these measures to be. We consider the importance of strategic planning, performance evaluation, and transparency in government, and the need for joint work with the non government sector and the community. The chapter ends with a call for a future parliamentary committee review and for the continuation of broad political support in addressing the social disadvantage in the Aboriginal community of Redfern and Waterloo.

A sustainable future

6.1 One of the key issues facing the Government is ensuring a sustainable future for Redfern and Waterloo. The Planning Institute of Australia's 2004 policy document, *Liveable Communities*,⁵⁷⁶ sets out in detail the indicators that should be taken into account to ensure social, economic and environmental sustainability. Ms Elizabeth Rice from the Institute suggested that indicators for social sustainability in Redfern and Waterloo are:

- access to a quality public transport service
- tolerable divergence in socio-economic indicators
- comparable living standards in Aboriginal communities
- accessible urban public domain per capita
- alleviation of housing stress.⁵⁷⁷

⁵⁷⁵ Mr Peter Laybutt, Chair, Metropolitan Policy Sub Committee, Planning Institute of Australia (NSW Division), Evidence, 22 October 2004, p6

⁵⁷⁶ Planning Institute of Australia, *Liveable Communities: How the Commonwealth can Foster Sustainable Cities and Regions - a National Policy Statement by the Planning Institute of Australia*, February 2004

⁵⁷⁷ Ms Elizabeth Rice, Member, Planning Institute of Australia (NSW Division), Evidence, 22 October 2004, p2

6.2 Ms Rice told the Committee:

[A]lthough we have listed those areas of sustainability separately, we stress that in practice there are many inter-relationships among them. They need to be reflected in the planning budgeting and evaluations associated with them.⁵⁷⁸

6.3 At a private briefing with the Committee, members of the South Sydney Interagency also stressed the importance of ensuring there is an inter-relationship between the social and physical development of the area. One participant said:

I just wanted to revisit the first question which was about the establishment of the Redfern-Waterloo Authority to say that I believe it would be helpful if this inquiry recommended that the Authority work in combination with the Redfern/Waterloo Partnership Project ... I think keeping the social side and the physical development side separate will be a bad outcome for community development in this area and that the combination of those two things might give the social development access to the resources that are being freed up by the physical development so that we could actually get that dividend back into the community in terms of that social capital ...⁵⁷⁹

6.4 Mr Peter Laybutt, Chair of the Planning Institute's Metropolitan Policy Subcommittee, argued that the Redfern and Waterloo communities need a strategic plan to drive the Government's vision for the area, and that this local plan must be integrated into the broader strategy being developed for the whole of metropolitan Sydney.⁵⁸⁰

6.5 The Government, through the Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources, is currently developing a Metropolitan Strategy to guide planning and decision making in the greater metropolitan region over the next 30 years. At the Sydney Futures Forum and the Local Government Forum held in mid 2004, eight key issues were identified for the Metropolitan Strategy to address. These included urban growth, housing, employment and infrastructure. Under the Strategy, nine directions for managing the changing region have now been identified to respond to these issues. They include: Direction 5, to renew existing areas; Direction 6, to strengthen employment centres and precincts; and Direction 8, to target infrastructure. The directions form the basis of a discussion paper which invites comment up until 31 December 2004, and the Metropolitan Strategy is expected to be released in early 2005.⁵⁸¹

6.6 Another of the key planning issues is to ensure that all three levels of government are involved. Again, the Planning Institute suggested why a tripartite approach is so necessary:

The tripartite approach is important because all three levels of government contribute to the factors that influence social, environmental and economic sustainability, and they all carry out activities that impact on the use of space and whether the space can be used for the activities the community has decided it wants. The role of the State and local government are often recognised here partly because they are such big

⁵⁷⁸ Ms Rice, Evidence, 22 October 2004, p2

⁵⁷⁹ Participant, South Sydney Interagency, 3 November 2004, p26

⁵⁸⁰ Mr Laybutt, Evidence, 22 October 2004, p6

⁵⁸¹ Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources, *Planning for a Better Future: Metropolitan Strategy - Discussion Paper*, www.metrostrategy.nsw.gov.au (accessed 6 December 2004)

service providers, but the Commonwealth also has a critical role because it controls major policy areas affecting how liveable and sustainable our cities will be. Those areas include economic policy, taxation policy, income security policy, immigration policy—which has a huge effect on settlement patterns—major infrastructure proposals and considerable funding for hospitals and schools.⁵⁸²

6.7 In its submission to the Inquiry provided to the Committee in April, New South Wales Council of Social Services (NCOSS) proposed a number of elements that it believed should be contained in a plan aimed at urban regeneration in Redfern and Waterloo:

- an agreement to retain a sizable portion of affordable housing in the public and private sectors in the future (possibly as high as 40% of all stock)
- an agreement to redevelop the Block with mixed housing, services and open space
- the redevelopment of Redfern railway station and its surrounds with a focus on creating an expanded retail precinct
- a Redfern Waterloo enterprise and employment development strategy which assists local businesses to expand, targets new job opportunities to unemployed and underemployed local residents
- a Redfern Waterloo non government organisation risk management advice and support service
- the use of key surplus NSW Government owned properties in the suburbs, by new, relocated or co-located human services and community facilities.⁵⁸³

6.8 As noted in the previous chapter, NCOSS has also stressed that genuine sustainable development in Redfern and Waterloo will require the conduct of specific social impact assessments on all significant development proposals.⁵⁸⁴

6.9 The Committee notes that a number of these elements are contained in the Government announcements on the establishment of the Redfern Waterloo Authority and the Jobs Plan.⁵⁸⁵ We encourage the NSW Government to continue to work with peak organisations such as NCOSS in devising the details of its plans for Redfern and Waterloo, including the Redfern-Waterloo Plan 2004-2014, the Human Services Plan and the Jobs Plan.

6.10 The Committee strongly believes that the Government must establish short, medium and long term strategic objectives for the area, along with key outcomes associated with those objectives. As raised early in the Report in the context of the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, effective planning and a formal performance evaluation process will be essential to ensuring that the issues facing the area are addressed. It is also crucial that the various Plans

⁵⁸² Ms Rice, Evidence, 22 October 2004, p7

⁵⁸³ Submission 56, NCOSS, pp2-3

⁵⁸⁴ Email from Mr Gary Moore, Director, NCOSS, to Director, 7 December 2004

⁵⁸⁵ Hon Frank Sartor MP, Legislative Assembly, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 11 November 2004, p12740; Hon Frank Sartor MP and Hon Carmel Tebbutt MLC, 'Government announces jobs plan for Redfern Waterloo', *Media Release*, 10 November 2004

are integrated, so as to ensure a cohesive approach to the long term social, environmental and economic sustainability of Redfern and Waterloo. Correspondingly, as discussed in Chapter 5, the set of indicators to be established by the Government must relate not only to individual programs and services, but also to the broad vision for the area. The Government's performance against its strategic objectives and key outcomes should be regularly reviewed and, as discussed in the section below, made publicly available. In addition, the Committee calls for the redevelopment plan for Redfern and Waterloo to fit within the broader Metropolitan Strategy.

- 6.11** In relation to the involvement of all levels of government, the Committee recognises that it is difficult to achieve an overarching policy framework which encompasses all levels of government. Nevertheless, we strongly believe that every effort should be made to ensure that a broad strategic plan is in place that allows for appropriate contributions from the Commonwealth and local governments.

Recommendation 32

That the NSW Government, through the Redfern Waterloo Authority and the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, establish short, medium and long term strategic objectives for the area and key outcomes associated with those objectives. In addition, the Government's performance against these objectives should be regularly reviewed and reported to the public.

Recommendation 33

That the NSW Government ensure that the Redfern Waterloo Plan 2004-2014 is integrated into the broader Metropolitan Strategy.

Recommendation 34

That the NSW Government, through the Redfern Waterloo Authority and the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, ensure that the strategic plans for the Redfern and Waterloo area identify and allow for the active involvement of local, State and Commonwealth Governments.

Transparency in government

- 6.12** Throughout this Inquiry, considerable criticism has been made of the Government's slowness or failure to release particular plans, strategies, reports and accountability measures. In our Interim Report we made 22 recommendations, a number of which called for the completion and release of particular strategies, reports or other documents.
- 6.13** The Committee believes that a major problem is the lack of trust the community has in the Government and in particular the RWPP. One of the reasons for this lack of trust is that information is not being made available to relevant stakeholders, particularly the non government sector and the general community. The failure to release information, particularly information promised to the community, gives the impression that the Government has something to hide or has a secret agenda.

6.14 The Human Services Review is one example, but there are numerous others. While the report of the Human Services Review did eventuate in November, there was a considerable delay in its release. There was very little communication with the community about the reasons for the delay or projected release dates. The lack of communication led many people to believe that the report would never be made public. Many witnesses told us about their fears, with some people deeply concerned that the silence from Government on the Human Services Review could only mean bad news for local services. While some of this concern may, with hindsight, have been misguided, the Committee understands the reasons for the anxiety. As we reported in Chapter 3, a member of the South Sydney Interagency, giving evidence prior to the release of the report on the Human Services Review, explained it this way:

Can I say because substantial time and effort has been invested in participating in the consultation with the Partnership Project and more recently the Morgan Disney exercise, out of which, without explanation and contrary to written assurances which were given up front to the participants, no report back has been made available. Leaving people with the obvious question, well, what are they actually planning to do and why is it a secret, and therefore, although it may be incorrect, the perception that there is a potential threat to the funding security to those who speak out in the way which may be unpopular, is based on that fact.⁵⁸⁶

6.15 The Committee strongly believes that the Government, through both the RWA and the RWPP, must be more transparent in its operations and workings with stakeholders, including the general community. This will be central to the development and maintenance of partnerships between the various parties involved in the area. We acknowledge that the Government has a difficult task in coordinating service delivery in the area and that, on occasion, difficult decisions must be made. We also note that many decisions will not be to the satisfaction of all sections of the community. We believe, however, that without a higher level of transparency and therefore accountability to the community, very little will change in the Government's relationship with the community and other stakeholders. The RWA and RWPP must earn the trust of the community, and respect the right of the community to information and a share in decision-making processes.

⁵⁸⁶ Participant, South Sydney Interagency, 3 November 2004, p5

Recommendation 35

That the NSW Government, through the Redfern Waterloo Authority and the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, make a commitment to the Redfern and Waterloo community to make all plans, strategies, reports and accountability measures publicly available in a timely manner. In particular the NSW Government should release the following plans, strategies and documents as soon as they are completed:

- the Redfern Waterloo Plan 2004-2014
 - the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project Business Plan
 - the Jobs Plan
 - the Human Services Plan
 - strategic objectives and outcomes for the area as a whole.
-

Working with the non government sector and the community

- 6.16** Related to the issue of transparency, the Committee believes that the Government must significantly improve its relationships and partnerships with the non government sector and the communities in Redfern and Waterloo. One of the clearest messages provided to the Committee, particularly in the second stage of the inquiry process, is that non government agencies feel disenfranchised from decision-making processes for service delivery in the area. The Committee is left with the impression that non government organisations do not believe their role is valued.
- 6.17** In our dealings with the sector throughout this Inquiry, we have witnessed the profound commitment of non government agencies to the Redfern and Waterloo community. Many of these services are striving to meet significant levels of need on extremely tight budgets, sometimes in less than adequate premises, with a complex range of reporting and accountability requirements.
- 6.18** As we emphasised in Chapter 3, the Government, both through the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project and the Redfern Waterloo Authority, must find better ways to engage with the non government sector. The Government has now established two coordinating bodies with access to considerable resources, and the Committee can see no reason why appropriate consultation and communication should not occur, notwithstanding the right and indeed the responsibility of government to make decisions and ensure that action occurs. We welcome the comments made by Minister Sartor during the debate on the Redfern Waterloo Authority Bill 2004 that:

[T]he communities of Redfern and Waterloo want to see some progress. As I said, much more consultation will be conducted, but we must monitor progress.⁵⁸⁷

⁵⁸⁷ Hon Frank Sartor MP, Legislative Assembly, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 19 November 2004, p13275

- 6.19** The Committee strongly supports these comments made by the Minister and emphasises that the Government must do more than consult. The Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project has consulted widely, so much so that some non government agencies told us they were suffering ‘consultation fatigue’. The consultation process is only useful where the participants’ views are considered and responded to.
- 6.20** Engagement and consultation with non government agencies is not simply important for the democratic process, but it will also help ensure the effectiveness of the Government’s plans. The Committee believes that given the significant role that non government services play in Redfern and Waterloo, the RWA and the RWPP must establish genuine partnership arrangements with them. Without the inclusion and support of all agencies, and particularly those from the non government sector, tackling the significant social disadvantage will be seriously hampered. This is addressed in the Recommendation below.

Community engagement

- 6.21** Perhaps one of the greatest challenges facing the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project and the Redfern Waterloo Authority is engaging the incredibly diverse communities in the area. As has been pointed out by us and others, there is an extremely diverse social mix in the area, across ethnicity, age and income level.
- 6.22** There are many communities in the area and during our relatively short Inquiry we heard from a small representation of those communities, including people living in public housing, Indigenous people, the Russian-speaking community, young people and community action groups. While acknowledging the difficult task ahead for the Government, we urge the RWA and RWPP to continue to engage with the local communities in the area. The provision of clear and regular information on the Government’s intentions, plans and decisions, matched with accessible and regular consultations, will go a long way to ensuring that community members are engaged in the process of change to the suburbs in which they live. Again this is a matter of both democracy and effectiveness. As Ms Rice of the Planning Institute noted, community engagement is an important ethical requirement but also a practical one, due to the considerable local knowledge and experience in the community:

Unless this expertise is drawn upon, valuable local perspectives on the causes of problems in the area and the most effective local ways of meeting them are lost. There is nothing worse than coming up with the right answer to the wrong problem.⁵⁸⁸

- 6.23** The Committee notes that there are many active community groups in the Redfern and Waterloo area. These include the Waterloo and Redfern Neighbourhood Advisory Boards (NABs), REDWatch and the Vine and Hugo Action Group. These groups have all made a considerable contribution to this Inquiry and provide useful forums through which to reach the Redfern and Waterloo communities. As the Redfern NAB said in its submission:

Community consultation and active involvement in decision making processes is a crucial step in identifying issues of concern to the community and as a means to ensure that change implemented meets community need.⁵⁸⁹

⁵⁸⁸ Ms Rice, Evidence, 22 October 2004, p2

⁵⁸⁹ Submission 30, Redfern Neighbourhood Advisory Board, p3

- 6.24** Despite her considerable criticism of the RWA, Ms Clover Moore MP was optimistic about changes in community perceptions occurring in Redfern and Waterloo. Ms Moore told the Parliament in October:

For the first time since 1999, community feedback tells me that things are beginning to improve. I urge the Government to ensure that the proposed new Redfern Waterloo Authority builds on this progress.⁵⁹⁰

- 6.25** The Committee acknowledges the comments made by Minister Sartor that community consultation is a significant issue for the RWA and will be a ‘pretty vital part of this exercise’:

The Government is committed to ensuring that the community will be consulted on, for example, development of the Redfern-Waterloo Plan.⁵⁹¹

- 6.26** In relation to the involvement and engagement of all stakeholders in Redfern and Waterloo, the Committee reiterates Recommendation 2 in our Interim Report.

Recommendation 36

That the NSW Government, through the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project and the Redfern Waterloo Authority, take all possible steps to achieve genuine partnership between State and Commonwealth agencies, the City of Sydney Council, the non government sector and the local community in order to address the issues facing Redfern and Waterloo.

Future parliamentary committee review

- 6.27** Since the Inquiry began, a number of important and ambitious initiatives have been announced that seek to carve out a new future for Redfern and Waterloo. During the year, the Government has announced a range of strategies on policing, planning and infrastructure and human service delivery. The issues facing the area, along with measures proposed to address the problems, have been the subject of this Inquiry and our two reports.
- 6.28** The Committee commends the Government for its response to the complex issues facing the area. While the Committee has been able to make a number of recommendations on specific issues, we have not been able to fully assess the impact or the efficacy of the new strategic framework for the area. Initiatives such as the RWA, the Redfern Waterloo Plan and the Human Services Plan are all in their embryonic stages and it will be some time before their effectiveness can be assessed. Given the valuable role that a Legislative Council committee can play in the review of the Government’s legislative and policy initiatives, we believe that it would be appropriate for a further review to be conducted by a parliamentary committee in 12 to 18 months time.

⁵⁹⁰ Ms Clover Moore MP, Legislative Assembly, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 28 October 2004, p61

⁵⁹¹ Hon Frank Sartor MP, Legislative Assembly, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 19 November 2004, p13272

Recommendation 37

That a further parliamentary inquiry into issues in Redfern and Waterloo and measures taken to address them be conducted in 2006.

Broad political commitment to Aboriginal people

- 6.29** This Inquiry came to the Social Issues Committee as a result of the tragic death of a young Aboriginal man. The events of 14-16 February including the ‘Redfern riot’ shed light on the degree of unrest among some in the Aboriginal community, particularly in the Redfern area. This Inquiry has highlighted issues that have been raised many times about the considerable disadvantage experienced by the Aboriginal community. The statistics on unemployment, morbidity and mortality, drug and alcohol misuse, imprisonment and so on among Aboriginal people in Redfern and Waterloo, and across New South Wales, should be deeply disturbing to us all.
- 6.30** Just as the Government needs to find a new way forward with non government agencies and the broader community, it must establish a new relationship with the Aboriginal people of Redfern and Waterloo.
- 6.31** The Committee notes that Government, Opposition, Cross Bench and Independent members of Parliament throughout the recent debate on the RWA have acknowledged the serious social disadvantage affecting Aboriginal people and the need to address this disadvantage. In his Second Reading speech on the Redfern Waterloo Authority Bill, Minister Sartor said:
- Social disadvantage is also a problem in the Aboriginal communities of Redfern and Waterloo. The New South Wales Government is committed to delivering the long-term changes needed in the area and delivering an improved quality of life for all residents.⁵⁹²
- 6.32** In his speech on the same Bill, Mr Brad Hazzard MP said:
- As shadow Minister for Aboriginal Affairs for about nine years, I have regularly raised in this place social disadvantage issues affecting Aboriginal people. ... It is my view, which I have carried through with the Opposition for nine years now, that as far as is practicable there should be bipartisan support for measures to address issues that disadvantage Aboriginal people.⁵⁹³
- 6.33** Thus both major parties have acknowledged the difficulties facing Aboriginal people, and the Committee believes that the time has come for us all to acknowledge and harness the Aboriginal community’s strengths. During a private briefing with the Committee, members of the Koori South Eastern Sydney Interagency challenged all parties to find a new level of respect for the Aboriginal community, including the recognition of its strengths. Pastor Ray Minniecon spoke of how the Government had said after the riot that it would give ‘110

⁵⁹² Hon Frank Sartor MP, Legislative Assembly, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 11 November 2004, p12740

⁵⁹³ Mr Brad Hazzard MP, Legislative Assembly, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 17 November 2004, p13036

percent support' to the police in Redfern. Pastor Minniecon emphasised, 'what I'm asking for ... is 120 percent support for the Aboriginal community and those organisations that are represented here today.'⁵⁹⁴

- 6.34** Given the circumstances surrounding the referral of this Inquiry to our Committee, we consider that there is a tremendous imperative to seek a commitment from all sectors of politics in New South Wales to work together with the Aboriginal community to address the issues facing their community. Redfern and Waterloo have a particular significance for the Indigenous community, as suggested by the only Aboriginal member of the NSW Parliament, Ms Linda Burney MP:

Redfern holds a special place in the hearts and minds of Indigenous people, not just throughout Sydney and New South Wales but right across the whole country. It is a symbolic place, and regard should be paid to its symbolism and history, not only to its social circumstances that are so clearly evident. The Redfern-Waterloo area is truly the birthplace of self-determination in Australia.⁵⁹⁵

- 6.35** The establishment of the Redfern Waterloo Authority together with the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project presents an opportunity to take a lead in reversing the significant social disadvantage, making a positive difference to the lives of Aboriginal people in the area, and creating a new future for Aboriginal people in this State. Of course, the Aboriginal community must be directly involved in determining the necessary action. However, without broad political agreement, very little can be achieved. As Aboriginal elder Ms Joyce Ingram told the Committee in May:

[W]hat I want to see is decent houses, backyards and clotheslines for all people, and especially for our children, because they are our future.⁵⁹⁶

Recommendation 38

That the NSW Government take the lead in encouraging all political parties and independents to adopt an ongoing commitment to Indigenous issues and work cooperatively with the Aboriginal community to address the serious social disadvantage affecting Aboriginal people.

⁵⁹⁴ Pastor Ray Minniecon, Koori South Eastern Sydney Interagency, 15 October 2004, p27

⁵⁹⁵ Ms Linda Burney MP, Legislative Assembly, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 17 November 2004, p13036

⁵⁹⁶ Ms Joyce Ingram, Evidence, 19 May 2004, p33

Appendix 1 Submissions

No	Author
1	Mr James Walsh
2	Ms Rachel Williams
3	Ms Carol O'Donnell
4	Ms Marcia Neilson
5	Mr Brian Charlton, Life Engineering
6	Ms Two Tone
7	Mr Ian Tomkins
8	Confidential at request of author
9	Dr Alex Wodak, Australian Drug Law Reform Foundation
10	Mr Jon Phillips
11	Name suppressed at request of author
12	Ms Julie Druce, SDN Children's Services
13	Mr Stephen Gale
14	Name suppressed at request of author
15	Ms Kristina Keneally MP, State Member for Heffron
16	Ms Brenda McDonnell, Aboriginal Catholic Ministry
17	Mr Ross Smith
18	Mr Desmond Lambley
19	Mr Ian Thomson
20	Mr Ian Thomson, Redfern Oval Action Group
21	Confidential at request of author
22	Confidential at request of author
23	Mrs Joyce Ingram
24	Name suppressed at request of author
25	Confidential at request of author
26	Professor Mick Dodson, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies
27	Vine and Hugo Action Group
28	Name suppressed at request of author
29	Mr Paul Huxtable
30	Ms Chris Bath, Redfern Neighbourhood Advisory Board
31	Mr Neil Hills
32	Ms Louise Voigt, Barnardos

33	Mr Richard Spencer, The Benevolent Society
34	Mr Con Panayotopoulos
35	Ms Clover Moore MP, State Member for Bligh
36	Confidential at request of author
37	Confidential at request of author
38	Mr Frank Reitano, NSW Police, Redfern LAC
39	Confidential at request of author
40	Name suppressed at request of author
41	Ms Cathy Duncan, Aboriginal Employment Strategy
42	Mr Michael Mundine, Aboriginal Housing Company
43	Confidential at request of author
44	Name suppressed at request of author
45	Councillor Tony Pooley, City of Sydney
46	Mr Charlie Richardson, South Sydney Interagency
47	Dr Naomi Mayers, CEO, Aboriginal Medical Service
48	Mr Rob MacGregor
49	Ms Tanya Plibersek MP, Federal Member for Sydney
50	Ms Helen Campbell, Redfern Legal Centre
51	Mr Nick Juradowitch, Planning Institute of Australia (NSW Division)
52	Ms Caroline O'Brien
53	Confidential at request of author
54	Ms Elizabeth Rice
55	Dr Col Gellatly, Premiers' Department
56	Mr Gary Moore, Council of Social Services of New South Wales (NCOSS)
57	Ms Samantha Ngui, Eastern Sydney Multicultural Access Project
58	Ms Rose Tracey, Redfern Australian Labor Party Committee
59	Mr Ian Ball, Police Association of New South Wales
60	Confidential at request of author
61	Confidential at request of author
62	Mr Ian Tuit, Hornsby Area Residents for Reconciliation
63	Dr Raymond Williamson, New South Wales Ecumenical Council
64	Ms Sharon Price, Conference of Leaders of Religious Institutes of New South Wales
65	Mr Geoffrey and Ms Lyn Turnbull
66	Confidential at request of author
67	Ms Deborah Sharp, Community Justice Centres
68	Rev Bill Crews, Exodus Foundation

69	Mr Stuart Rosewarne, Fact Tree Youth Service
70	Mr Charlie Richardson, Inner Sydney Regional Council for Social Development Co-op
71	Mr Peter Rodgers
72	Name suppressed at request of author
73	Submission withdrawn
74	Confidential at request of author
75	Mr Michael Cottier
76	Ms Eva Toth
77	Name suppressed at request of author
78	Emeritus Professor Tony Vinson, School of Social Work and Policy Studies, University of Sydney
79	Dr Wendy Shaw, The University of New South Wales
80	Mr Clive Small
81	Confidential at request of author
82	Senior Constable Shannon White
83	Confidential at request of author
84	Ms Clover Moore MP, Lord Mayor, City of Sydney
85	Mr John Ryan, Anex
86	Mr John Collins
87	Mrs Diane Cairncross
88	Name suppressed at request of author
89	Mr Derek Wilsen and Mr Paul Wilkinson
90	Mrs Sarah Mitchell, Woman's Christian Temperance Union
91	Mr Ray Jackson, Indigenous Social Justice Association Inc
92	Mr Shane Brown, South Sydney Youth Services
93	Dr Andrew Byrne
94	Confidential at request of author

Appendix 2 Witnesses

Date	Name	Position and Organisation
18 May 2004 Jubilee Room, Parliament House	Dr Col Gellatly	Director General, NSW Premier's Department
	Mr Michael Ramsey	Director, Redfern/Waterloo Partnership Project, NSW Premier's Department
	Mr Gary Moore	Director, Council of Social Services New South Wales (NCOSS)
	Ms Marcia Ella-Duncan	Chairperson, Regional Council of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission
	Deputy Commissioner David Madden	Operations, NSW Police
	Assistant Commissioner Morris West	Western Region Commander, Corporate Spokesperson for Aboriginal Issues, NSW Police
	Assistant Commissioner Robert Waites	Region Commander, Inner Metropolitan Region and Corporate Aboriginal Spokesperson, NSW Police
	Witness A	
	Mr Michael Mundine	Chief Executive Officer, Aboriginal Housing Company
	Ms Lani Tuitavake	Property Manager, Aboriginal Housing Company
19 May 2004 Redfern Community Centre, Redfern	Mr Peter Valilis	Project Manager, Aboriginal Housing Company
	Mr Colin James	Director, Ian Buchan Fell Housing Research Centre, University of Sydney
	Mr David Liefer	Lecturer in Facilities Management, University of Sydney
	Ms Angela Pitts	Urban/Social Planning Consultant, Aboriginal Housing Company
	Mr Richard Green	Youth Liaison Officer, Elouera Gym
	Witness B	
	Witness C	
	Witness D	
	Mrs Joyce Ingram	Aboriginal Elder

Date	Name	Position and Organisation
25 May 2004 Jubilee Room, Parliament House	Mr Lyall Munro	Aboriginal community representative
	Mr Kevin Smith	Aboriginal community representative
	Mr Shane Phillips	Aboriginal community representative
	Mr Robert Welsh	Chairperson, Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council
	Mr Paul Coe	Chief Executive Officer, Metropolitan Aboriginal Land Council
	Mr Lindsay Hardy	Manager, Tunggarra News
	Superintendent Dennis Smith	Commander, Redfern Local Area Command, NSW Police
	Mr Darren Bennett	Detective Inspector, Crime Manager, Redfern Local Area Command, NSW Police
	Ms Georgina Owens	Senior Constable, Crime Prevention Officer, Redfern Local Area Command, NSW Police
	Mr Charlie Richardson	Coordinator, Inner Sydney Regional Council for Social Development Co-op
	Mr Tony Pooley	Councillor, City of Sydney
	Ms Linda Burney, MP	Member for Canterbury
	Ms Clover Moore, MP	Member for Bligh and Lord Mayor of the City of Sydney
26 May 2004 Redfern Town Hall, Redfern	Rev Bill Crews	Chairman, Exodus Foundation
	Mr Richard Boyd	Treasurer, Exodus Foundation
	Mr Stuart Rosewarne	Chairperson, Fact Tree Youth Service
	Ms Sharne Dunsmore	Executive Officer, Fact Tree Youth Service
	Ms Jody Broun	Director General, Department of Aboriginal Affairs
	Ms Helen Campbell	Director, Redfern Legal Centre
	Ms Lyndal Gowland	Coordinator, Women's Domestic Violence Court Assistance Scheme, Redfern Legal Centre
	Ms Kirillie Moore	Solicitor, Redfern Legal Centre
	Ms Shirley Lomas	Aboriginal community representative

Date	Name	Position and Organisation
4 June 2004 Jubilee Room, Parliament House	Ms Deirdre Cheers	Senior Manager, South East Sydney Barnardos Australia
	Ms Tanya Plibersek MP	Member for Sydney
	Dr Naomi Mayers	Chief Executive Officer, Aboriginal Medical Service
	Dr John Daniels	Medical Director, Aboriginal Medical Service
7 June 2004 Jubilee Room, Parliament House	Mr Brad Freeburn	Coordinator, Drug and Alcohol Unit, Aboriginal Medical Service
	Dr Neil Shepherd	Director General, Department of Community Services
	Ms Anne-Maree Sabellico	Regional Director Metro Central, Department of Community Services
8 June 2004 Jubilee Room, Parliament House	Ms Brenda McDonnell	Coordinator, Aboriginal Catholic Ministry
	Mr Bob Pritchard	President, Police Association of NSW
	Mr Greg Chilvers	Director, Research and Resource Centre, Police Association of NSW
	Mr Paul Huxtable	Branch Administrator, Redfern Branch, Police Association of NSW
	Mr Frank Reitano	Delegate, Redfern Branch, Police Association of NSW
	Mr Russell Taylor	Chief Executive Officer, Aboriginal Housing Office
	Dr Greg Stewart	Deputy Director General, Public Health and Chief Health Officer NSW Health
	Mr Richard Gilbert	Director, Health Services Planning, Central Sydney Area Health Service
	Ms Karen Becker	Director, Drug Health Services, Central Sydney Area Health Service
	Mr Andrew Cappie-Wood	Director General, Department of Education and Training
	Dr Phil Lambert	Regional Director (Sydney), Aboriginal Education, Department of Education and Training
	Ms Kristina Keneally, MP	Member for Heffron
	Ms Monica Barone	Director, Community Living, City of Sydney Council
Mr John Maynard	Community Safety Officer, City of Sydney Council	

Date	Name	Position and Organisation
24 September 2004 Jubilee Room, Parliament House	Mr Derek Wilson	Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer, Redfern Local Area Command
	Mr Paul Wilkinson	Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer, Marrickville Local Area Command
	Assistant Commissioner Mark Goodwin	Operations Support Command, NSW Police
	Ms Doreen Peters	State Coordinator, Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer Program, NSW Police
	Ms Mary Gillespie	Vine and Hugo Action Group
	Mr Geoffrey Turnbull	Resident
	Ms Lyn Turnbull	Resident
15 October 2004 Alexandria Town Hall Waterloo Neighbourhood Centre	Private briefing	Members of the Koori South Eastern Sydney Interagency
	Ms Betty Bullivant	Waterloo Neighbourhood Advisory Board
	Mr Harry Hardy	Waterloo Neighbourhood Advisory Board
	Ms Barbera Hillbrink	Waterloo Neighbourhood Advisory Board
	Ms Alice King	Waterloo Neighbourhood Advisory Board
	Ms Norah McGuire	Waterloo Neighbourhood Advisory Board
	Ms Marlene Newton	Waterloo Neighbourhood Advisory Board
	Mr Ross Smith	Waterloo Neighbourhood Advisory Board
	Ms Diana Whitworth	Waterloo Neighbourhood Advisory Board
	Mr Shane Brown	Director, South Sydney Youth Services
	Mr Mihail Fainshtein	Representative of the Russian community - Waterloo Estate
	Ms Bella Fainshtein	Representative of the Russian community - Waterloo Estate
	Mr Solomon Gutman	Representative of the Russian community - Waterloo Estate
Ms Colina Khait	Representative of the Russian community - Waterloo Estate	

Date	Name	Position and Organisation
	Mr Lev Khait	Representative of the Russian community - Waterloo Estate
	Ms Lipkina Lidiya	Representative of the Russian community - Waterloo Estate
	Ms Nina Shapiro	Representative of the Russian community - Waterloo Estate
	Mr Michael Shapiro	Representative of the Russian community - Waterloo Estate
	Ms Frida Shinderman	Representative of the Russian community - Waterloo Estate
	Ms Fanya Tesler	Representative of the Russian community - Waterloo Estate
	Mr Ilya Vaitsman	Representative of the Russian community - Waterloo Estate
Friday 22 October 2004 Room 814/815, Parliament House	Mr Peter Laybutt	Chairperson, Metropolitan and Environment Sub-Committee, Planning Institute of Australia (NSW Division)
	Ms Elizabeth Rice	Member, Metropolitan and Environment Sub-Committee, Planning Institute of Australia (NSW Division)
	Ms Lesley Townsend	Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer, Redfern Local Area Command, NSW Police
	Youth Forum	Fact Tree Youth Services
Tuesday 2 November 2004 Jubilee Room, Parliament House	Mr Mike Allen	Executive Director, Central Sydney Division, Department of Housing
	Dr Andrew Byrne	General Practitioner, Redfern
Wednesday 3 November 2004 The Redfern Centre	Private briefing	Members of the South Sydney Interagency
Jubilee Room, Parliament House	Superintendent Dennis Smith	Commander, Redfern Local Area Command
	Dr Neil Shepherd	Director General, Department of Community Services
	Ms Trina Whitton	Manager, Client Services, Eastern Sydney
	Ms Anne-Marie Sabellico	Regional Director, Metropolitan Central, Department of Community Services

Date	Name	Position and Organisation
Friday 12 November 2004	Dr Col Gellatly	Director General, Premier's Department
Room 814/815, Parliament House	Mr Michael Ramsey	Director, Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project

Appendix 3 NSW Police Aboriginal Coordination Team

The Aboriginal Coordination Team's role is to:

- Coordinate, support and provide professional development for ACLOs;
- Develop, implement and review the Aboriginal Strategic Direction (in consultation with the Corporate Spokesperson and other stakeholders);
- Provide advice on programs and policy issues to the Corporate Spokesperson, operational police, the Assistant Commissioner, Operations Support Command, Commissioner's Office, and Ministry;
- Coordinate, provide support and advice to the Police Aboriginal Strategic Advisory Committee (PASAC) which meets twice a year and comprises community members and government representatives and is chaired by the Commissioner;
- Establish Regional Aboriginal Advisory Committees (chaired by Region Commanders and meet every two months);
- Participate in meetings with the Anti-Discrimination Board's Aboriginal Advisory Committee, the NSW Attorney General's Department, the Aboriginal Justice Advisory Council, the Department of Aboriginal Affairs, ATSIC, the NSW Aboriginal Land Council and other committees/stakeholders in relation to Aboriginal justice matters;
- Act as a point of contact for both internal and external enquiries regarding a range of Aboriginal justice issues;
- Collect and analyse data and report on trends in policing and their impact on Aboriginal communities; and
- Investigate improved methods of service delivery with regard to NSW Police and the Aboriginal community with particular emphasis on fostering improved relationships.

Source: Answers to questions on notice taken during evidence, 24 September 2004, Assistant Commission Mark Goodwin, Assistant Commissioner, NSW Police.

Appendix 4 Strategies for employment of Aboriginal police officers

NSW Police has implemented a number of culturally specific marketing strategies aimed at attracting Indigenous persons to a career in policing.

- We run an Aboriginal Access to further Studies Course (this is a bridging program developed to support Indigenous applicants in meeting the academic entry requirements for the DPP) and are currently working on the development of the program into a distance education program via OTEN.
- Policing as Career Days specific to the Indigenous community are run at various locations across NSW with high Indigenous populations, usually in tandem with other community events that are being staged. Another strategy is participation at Indigenous specific career markets and festivals, including CROC, GROW, NAIDOC, and regional career markets.
- I am advised that Recruitment Branch conducts mail outs of recruitment information to community groups including land councils, CDEP, government and non-government employment agencies and Aboriginal Community Liaison Officers.
- In addition, NSW Police has secured \$60,000 in funds from the Treasurer to provide 5 ATSI students with \$12,000 in guaranteed scholarship/study funds.
- As to the number of ATSI recruits, advice from the Recruitment Branch is that our current target for 2003-2005 is 20 new Aboriginal officers per annum, which we are meeting.
- The initial strategy was developed between 1995-2000 and set a target of 10 ATSI recruits per annum. The new strategy was developed in 2003 and is headed by Elizabeth Casey, Human Resources. \$20,000 was spent on research and external consultants were also employed, to devise new recruitment strategies.
- I am advised that the current class that started approximately 5 weeks ago has 3 ATSI students. Some classes have more, some have less.
- There is presently an 18 month waiting list to join NSW Police; however, as part of our strategy, potential ATSI recruits are progressed up the list as appropriate.

Source: Answers to questions on notice taken during evidence, 24 September 2004, Assistant Commissioner Mark Goodwin, Assistant Commissioner, NSW Police.

Appendix 5 Recommendations of the Human Services Review, copied from the Review Report prepared by Morgan Disney & Associates⁵⁹⁷

4.5 The coherent set of recommendations for reform

The following chart presents in a summary form the set of recommendations that address the need for a coherent human services system in Redfern and Waterloo.

Human services system strategies and framework for Redfern and Waterloo

Main Finding of the Review

The Review has found that the human services system requires significant change based on a locality renewal approach. The NSW Government should facilitate the reshaping of the human services system in Redfern/Waterloo by:

- Strengthening the human services system as one element of a broader locality approach to address the issues in Redfern/Waterloo
- Implementing a community leadership and capacity building strategy for the community in Redfern/Waterloo including the government and non-government services
- Addressing, as a matter of priority, the restructuring and modification of services in certain areas/service clusters
- Approving the development, as a matter of priority, of strategies in priority areas of human service delivery based on Action Plans contained in the Review Report.

The Meaning of 'Community' is Essential to Making a Difference

The Review is recommending a Human Services System implementation and planning framework as the initial step of a strategy to commence a 10 year, locality-based commitment to Redfern and Waterloo. The framework is based on a local collaborative partnership approach to address the problems of the area and involves effective engagement of key stakeholder groups of the local community i.e. service users, residents, community organisations (including e.g. local business organisations, residents groups and church groups etc.), the three levels of government, and government and non government service providers. In this framework therefore it is essential that this broad definition of 'community' is understood and embraced. No one group will be able to achieve the necessary change on their own and the evidence from around the world confirms the importance of partnerships to change communities.

⁵⁹⁷ Morgan Disney & Associates, *Making Connections: Better Services, Stronger Community – Report on Review of the Human Services System in Redfern and Waterloo*, Report for the Premier's Department, November 2004. The full Review Report can be downloaded at www.redfernwaterloo.nsw.gov.au

RECOMMENDATION ONE: REDFERN WATERLOO PLANNING FRAMEWORK FOR SERVICE SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT

That the NSW Government approves a Redfern Waterloo planning framework within which service system improvement occurs through a ten year commitment linked to a locality based model. Reorganising human services system on locality basis

Tasks	Mechanisms	System outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Achieve agreement within State Government on the scope, context and linkages of the system to cover the Redfern, Waterloo, Eveleigh and Darlington precincts o Facilitate agreement with and amongst the locality based community stakeholder groups about the scope of the RW human services system o Implement a Friedman based community stakeholders engagement process to develop agreed community outcomes for the locality and the human service system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Implementation as part of the establishment of the IWG o Community process to develop community outcomes for the locality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Clarity of accountability for RW in local, regional, state and commonwealth context o Active stakeholder engagement with the locality scope
<p>Achieve local agreement on PRINCIPLES which will underpin the human services system: the following is an initial set for the first two years:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o A systemic focus on achievement of outcomes for clients rather than outputs o Accountability to service users, residents and government o Commitment to consumer participation, broader community involvement and accessibility o Mutual understanding of and respect for each others' roles and responsibilities o Cultural appropriateness for all cultural and linguistic groups in the area and embracing diversity o Commitment to evaluation and review and evidence based and evidence generating services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o IWG endorses these principles and uses them to implement and evaluate the first two year human services plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The service system is driven by shared and agreed principles

Tasks	Mechanisms	System outcomes
<p>Achieve agreement on OBJECTIVES which will underpin the human services system: the following is an initial set for the next two years</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o To build an effective local human services system to meet identified agreed local needs o To develop effective planned collaborative approaches to provide services and contribute to community outcomes o To pursue mainstreaming initiatives which negotiate the redirection of the use of mainstream resources to achieve the agreed local community outcomes o To develop effective integrated service delivery approaches o To build community capacity and leadership, and the capacity of the human service system, through initiatives that include building personal efficacy and leadership skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o IWG endorses or develops these objectives to guide the implementation for the first two years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The service system is guided by clear measurable objectives
<p>Evaluate the human service plan over the next two years using the following OUTCOMES</p> <p>1. Improved collaboration is indicated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o the establishment of the human services planning mechanism for the area o organisations talk with respect about each other's roles, responsibilities and work o the establishment of agreed collaborative strategies for five priority clusters o joint training having occurred on 3-4 key training needs including collaboration and integration, working in CALD and Aboriginal communities, strengths-based approaches, developing client outcomes o residents and people who use services report evidence of improved collaboration and improved services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o IWG commissions and oversees an evaluation framework for the next two years. o Taskforces use the outcomes to guide strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Second Human Services Plan informed by evidence of the effectiveness of the first plan

Tasks	Mechanisms	System outcomes
<p>2. Improved service provision is indicated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o progress towards the identification of 'specialist' areas for youth services as indicated in the Action Plan in the Review Report o services can identify better client and community outcomes in at least 2-3 key areas o data indicates improved employment outcomes for young people and Aboriginal people o services have increased the numbers of people employed from Aboriginal and CALD backgrounds o increased skills of all staff in providing culturally appropriate services o service models being implemented are strengths-based and supported by training 	As above	As above
<p>3. Improved community relationships are indicated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o improved relationships between Aboriginal, CALD and Anglo-Australian communities in the area which have been supported by opportunities for developing shared understandings of culture, values and community aspirations o decreased incidence of complaints regarding the failure of services to assist and support young people and people with mental health issues o progress is being made to address issues related to drug and alcohol and dual diagnosis services o less complaints about the needle and syringe exchange program and evidence that more people in the community understand its public health role 		

Tasks	Mechanisms	System outcomes
<p>4. Improved sense of community safety is indicated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o a range of community development activities which are building a stronger sense of community and connectedness o a broad range of people are participating in community development activities o older residents report less fear and increased willingness to venture out into their community o residents and businesses are aware of effective interventions with young people, people with drug and alcohol issues, efforts to increase youth employment locally, and the services available for people with both drug and alcohol and mental health issues o petty crime continues to decrease 	As Above	As above

RECOMMENDATION TWO: IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

That the NSW Government approves the following framework for implementing changes to the human services system in Redfern Waterloo

Task	Structure	Mechanism	System outcomes
Establish a leadership, planning and consultative structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The Redfern Waterloo Human Services Senior Officers Group (RWHSSOG) provides oversight and monitors the development of the Human Services Delivery Plan o An Implementation Working Group (IWG) made up of representatives of key human service agencies and community stakeholders (as defined for this framework) and supported by the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project develops the plan. The IWG will report to the Redfern Waterloo Human Services Senior Officers Group o Taskforces involving government, non-government and resident representatives work on service clusters as set out in the Review o The existing RW Consultative Council provides a mechanism for two way communication with representatives of community stakeholder groups o The role of other existing consultative mechanisms are engaged to assist in two way communication with the wider community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The main Local, State and Commonwealth (if possible) Government agencies identify representatives for the IWP o Representation on the IWG of the non-government sector is negotiated through NCOSS o Representation on the IWG of other community stakeholder groups is negotiated through the RW Consultative Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o A human services system planning structure across two and, if possible, three levels of government, and the community as the foundation of the Redfern Waterloo local planning framework o The community engagement that occurred during the Review process continues during the implementation phase o Productive relationships are consolidated between government and non-government service providers and residents o Shared solutions are developed with the community which also maximises use of resources from the wide range of sources across government and non-government

RECOMMENDATION THREE: COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AND CAPACITY BUILDING STRATEGY FOR REDFERN WATERLOO

That the NSW Government implements a community leadership development and capacity building strategy for the Redfern Waterloo human services system that involves three elements: staff skills development; professional development on new service models and approaches; a community leadership strategy for community stakeholder groups.

Task	Mechanism	System outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Staff skills development for staff throughout the RW human services system on: o partnership skills o a client and community outcome focus o strength-based approaches o evaluation and continuous improvement 	IWG supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o An increase in the capacity of staff in the area to o develop and contribute to partnership and collaborative approaches o achieve client and community outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Professional development on new service models and approaches in the areas of: o integrated service models to address the service needs of the population group and issue areas above o integrated case management o out-servicing approaches to integration and co-location o contemporary models for addressing dual diagnosis and domestic and family violence o improved access for and relevance to CALD communities. 	IWG in conjunction with the RWPP and each Taskforce Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Improved ability to work in collaboration with other services o Different and improved service models o Improved referral processes and case coordination
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o A community leadership development strategy across the community stakeholder groups and including the RWPP focusing on community leadership o A capacity building strategy for the non-government sector on governance and mutual accountability 	IWG in conjunction with RWPP and Taskforce Chairs and the RW Community Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Clear and agreed leadership which supports and builds services and community engagement and ownership

RECOMMENDATION FOUR: PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTION PLANS

That strategies be developed in priority areas of human service delivery, based on Action Plans contained in the Review Report

Tasks	Mechanism	Systems outcomes	
<p>To commence during the first six months as a priority, strategies for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Youth services o Family and children's services o Services for the Aboriginal community o A locality based health service with a priority for mental health, drug and alcohol and dual diagnosis services o Domestic and family violence services 	<p>Taskforces working closely with the government and non-government service providers involved in each service cluster, and working as a key starting point from the cluster analyses and Actions Plans contained in the Review Report</p> <p>In relation to the employment strategy - RWPP should work to continue the proposed development of a strategy for the area</p>	<p>Improvement in community and client outcomes for Redfern Waterloo</p> <p>All services working collaboratively, with distribution of services negotiated and agreed, specialities established where relevant, integrated case coordination models in place, improved skills and training strategies in place</p>	
<p>Monitoring of the progress on crime prevention and community safety should occur throughout the first 12 months</p>			
<p>Progress on the ideas underlying an employment strategy should inform the thinking and the work of the RWPP and all community stakeholder groups</p>			
<p>In relation to housing support and homelessness, the homelessness strategy with a focus on Aboriginal homelessness should be progressed</p>			
<p>Priorities during the second 12 months following completion of the first 12 month strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Improved access for people from CALD backgrounds o Future planning of services for people with disabilities o Future planning for services for people who are ageing 			

RECOMMENDATION FIVE: RESTRUCTURE AND MODIFICATION OF SERVICES

That the NSW Government immediately considers the range of actions to improve the coherence, effectiveness and accessibility of services

- o Rationalisation or merger of some specific services
- o Co-location of some services
- o Exploration of the feasibility of a back office facility to support merged and co-located services exploration of more possibilities for outsourcing
- o The renovation or improvement of facilities for a number of services
- o The performance review of a small number of services in the next 12 months
- o Service improvements in some specific services.

Appendix 6 Minutes

Standing Committee on Social Issues

Meeting 42, 24 August 2004, Room 1108, Parliament House, 10.10am

1. Members present

Jan Burnswoods (Chair)
The Hon Robyn Parker MLC (Deputy Chair)
The Hon Ian West MLC
The Hon Kayee Griffin MLC
The Hon Greg Pearce MLC
The Hon Dr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans MLC

2. ...

3. Inquiry into issues relating to Redfern and Waterloo

The Chair briefed the Committee on the status of the Coburn Report received by the Committee and recent correspondence on this issue.

The Committee deliberated.

Resolved, on the motion of Dr Chesterfield-Evans, that the Chair write to the Minister for Police to:

- express the Committee's concern that the copy of the Coburn report we received is marked confidential when it also appears to have been given to the media
- express the Committee's concern in relation to some omissions in the copy of the Coburn report we received.

4. Adjournment

The Committee adjourned at 1.15pm *sine die*.

Meeting 43, 24 September 2004, Tranby Aboriginal College, Glebe, 11.15am – 12.30pm and Jubilee Room, Parliament House, 2pm

5. Members present

Jan Burnswoods (Chair)
The Hon Robyn Parker MLC (Deputy Chair)
The Hon Ian West MLC
The Hon Kayee Griffin MLC (from 2pm)
The Hon Greg Pearce MLC
The Hon Dr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans MLC

6. Site visit to Tranby Aboriginal College - Inquiry into issues relating to Redfern and Waterloo

Mr Paul Knight, Executive Officer of Tranby Aboriginal College briefed the Committee on the role of Tranby and Cultural Awareness Training for Redfern police.

There was a short adjournment for lunch, to reconvene at 2pm.

7. Confirmation of Minutes 40, 41, 42

Resolved, on the motion of Mr West that the Committee adopt Minutes 40, 41 and 42.

8. Correspondence

The Chair tabled the following items of correspondence –

Correspondence received

Item 1 – To Chair from Aboriginal Medical Service, 20 August 2004

Item 2 – To Chair from Dr Shergold, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, 13 September 2004

Correspondence sent

Item 3 – To Dr Mayers, Aboriginal Medical Service, 1 September 2004

9. Deliberative – Inquiry into issues relating to Redfern and Waterloo

Submissions

The Chair tabled submissions 87, 88, 89 and 90, received in relation to the inquiry into issues relating to Redfern and Waterloo.

Submissions 87 and 90 – Resolved, on the motion of Mr West, that in order to better inform all those who are participating in the inquiry process, the Committee make use of its powers granted under paragraph 16 of the resolution establishing the Standing Committees, and sections 4(2) of the *Parliamentary Papers (Supplementary Provisions) Act 1975* to publish the submission in full.

Submission 88 – Resolved, on the motion of Mr West, that in order to better inform all those who are participating in the inquiry process, the Committee make use of its powers granted under paragraph 16 of the resolution establishing the Standing Committees, and sections 4(2) of the *Parliamentary Papers (Supplementary Provisions) Act 1975* to publish the submission subject to the authors request for name suppression.

Submission 89 - Resolved, on the motion of Mr West, that in order to better inform all those who are participating in the inquiry process, the Committee make use of its powers granted under paragraph 16 of the resolution establishing the Standing Committees, and sections 4(2) of the *Parliamentary Papers (Supplementary Provisions) Act 1975* to publish the submission with the deletion of names and event numbers.

10. Public Hearing - Inquiry into issues relating to Redfern and Waterloo

Mr Derek Wilson and Mr Paul Wilkinson, Aboriginal Community Liaison Officers were sworn and examined.

Resolved on the motion of Dr Chesterfield-Evans that the Committee accept the Duty Book provided to the Committee by Mr Wilson.

Questioning concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

Assistant Commissioner Mark Goodwin, Operations Support Command, NSW Police was sworn and examined.

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Parker that the Committee accept *Make a Difference and Feel Proud* Aboriginal Information Kit, tendered by the Assistant Commissioner.

Questioning concluded and the witness withdrew.

Ms Doreen Peters, State Coordinator, Aboriginal Community Liaison Officers, NSW Police was affirmed and examined.

Evidence concluded and the witness withdrew.

Ms Mary Gillespie of the Vine and Hugo Action Group was affirmed and examined.

Questioning concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

Mr Geoffrey Turnbull and Mrs Lynn Turnbull were sworn and examined.

Questioning concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

11. Deliberative – Inquiry into issues relation to Redfern and Waterloo

Submission 88 - Resolved, on the motion of Ms Griffin, that in order to better inform all those who are participating in the inquiry process, the Committee make use of its powers granted under paragraph 16 of the resolution establishing the Standing Committees, and sections 4(2) of the *Parliamentary Papers (Supplementary Provisions) Act 1975* to publish the submission in full.

12. Adjournment

The Committee adjourned at 6.00pm until 15 October 2004.

Meeting 44, 15 October 2004, Alexandria Town Hall, Waterloo, 10.50am – 12.30pm and Waterloo Neighbourhood Centre, Waterloo, 2pm – 5pm

1. Members present

Jan Burnswoods (Chair)
The Hon Robyn Parker MLC (Deputy Chair) (from 11:30 – 3.00pm)
The Hon Kayee Griffin MLC
The Hon Greg Pearce MLC (to 11:30am)
The Hon Dr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans MLC

2. Apologies

The Hon Ian West MLC

3. Private Briefing - Inquiry into issues relating to Redfern and Waterloo

The Committee participated in a private meeting with the Koori South Eastern Sydney Interagency.

Questioning concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

There was a short adjournment for lunch, to reconvene at 2pm.

4. Private Briefing – Inquiry into issues relation to Redfern and Waterloo

The Committee participated in a private briefing with the Waterloo Neighbourhood Advisory Board.

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Griffin, that in accordance with section 4 of the *Parliamentary Papers (Supplementary Provisions) Act 1975* and under the authority of Standing Order 223 the Committee authorises the Director to publish the transcript of evidence taken at this hearing with the Waterloo Neighbourhood Advisory Board.

Questioning concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

Mr Shane Brown, Director, South Sydney Youth Services was affirmed and examined.

Resolved on the motion of Dr Chesterfield-Evans that the Committee accept a briefing paper and a book entitled *Our Place*, provided to the Committee by Mr Brown.

Resolved, on the motion of Dr Chesterfield-Evans, that in accordance with section 4 of the *Parliamentary Papers (Supplementary Provisions) Act 1975* and under the authority of Standing Order 223 the Committee authorises the Director to publish the transcript of evidence taken at this hearing with the South Sydney Youth Service, subject to the removal of certain sensitive information identified by the witness.

Questioning concluded and the witness withdrew.

The Committee participated in a private briefing with representatives of the Russian residents on the Waterloo estate.

Resolved, on the motion of Dr Chesterfield-Evans, that in accordance with section 4 of the *Parliamentary Papers (Supplementary Provisions) Act 1975* and under the authority of Standing Order 223 the Committee authorises the Director to publish the transcript of evidence taken at this hearing with the Russian residents of the Waterloo estate.

Questioning concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

5. Adjournment

The Committee adjourned at 5.00pm until 22 October 2004.

Meeting 45, 22 October 2004, Room 814-815, 11.30 - 1.45pm and Fact Tree Youth Services, Waterloo, 4.30pm – 6.00pm

1. Members present

Jan Burnswoods (Chair)
The Hon Robyn Parker MLC (Deputy Chair)
The Hon Kayee Griffin MLC
The Hon Greg Pearce MLC (to 12.30pm)
The Hon Dr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans MLC
The Hon Ian West MLC (to 1.00pm)

2. Public hearing - Inquiry into issues relating to Redfern and Waterloo

Mr Peter Laybutt, Chairperson and Ms Elizabeth Rice, Member, Metropolitan and Environment Sub-Committee, Planning Institute of Australia (NSW Division), sworn and examined.

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Griffin, to accept a document from Ms Rice.

Questioning concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

3. In camera hearing – Inquiry into issues relation to Redfern and Waterloo

The public and media withdrew.

Ms Lesley Townsend, Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer, sworn and examined.

Resolved, on the motion of Dr Chesterfield-Evans, that in accordance with section 4 of the *Parliamentary Papers (Supplementary Provisions) Act 1975* and under the authority of Standing Order 223 the Committee authorises the Director to publish the transcript of Ms Townsend's evidence at today's hearing.

Questioning concluded and the witness withdrew.

There was an adjournment, to reconvene at 4.30pm.

4. Private Briefing – Inquiry into issues relation to Redfern and Waterloo

The Committee participated in a private briefing with young people at the Fact Tree Youth Services, Waterloo.

5. Adjournment

The Committee adjourned at 6.00pm until 27 October 2004 at 2pm in the Antechamber next to the LC Chamber.

Meeting 46, 27 October 2004, Members' Lounge, 2.00pm

1. Members present

Jan Burnswoods (Chair)
The Hon Robyn Parker MLC (Deputy Chair)
The Hon Kayee Griffin MLC
The Hon Greg Pearce MLC
The Hon Dr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans MLC
The Hon Ian West MLC

2. Minutes

Resolved, on the motion of Mr West, that the minutes of meeting numbers 43, 44 and 45 be adopted.

3. Correspondence

The Chair tabled the following items of correspondence:

Received

Item 1 – To Chair from Australasian Society for HIV Medicine Inc, dated 26 August 2004

Item 2 – To Chair from Jumbunna House of Learning, dated 26 August 2004

Item 3 – Media Release – Redfern Mobile Needle Exchange Van to Close and New Primary Health Care Facility to Open, dated 24 October 2004

4. ...

5. Deliberative - Inquiry into issues relating to Redfern and Waterloo

The Secretariat briefed the Committee on the upcoming hearing program for 2 and 3 November 2004.

The Committee deliberated.

6. Adjournment

The Committee adjourned at 2.30pm until 9.30am, Tuesday 2 November in the Jubilee Room.

Meeting 47, 2 November 2004, Jubilee Room, 9.30am

1. Members present

Jan Burnswoods MLC (Chair)
The Hon Robyn Parker MLC (Deputy Chair)
The Hon Kayee Griffin MLC
The Hon Greg Pearce MLC
The Hon Dr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans MLC
The Hon Ian West MLC

2. Public hearing - Inquiry into issues relating to Redfern and Waterloo

Mr Mike Allen, Executive Director, Central Sydney Division, Department of Housing, sworn and examined.

Questioning concluded and the witness withdrew.

Dr Andrew Byrne, General Practitioner, affirmed and examined.

Questioning concluded and the witness withdrew.

The media and the public withdrew.

3. Confirmation of Minutes

Resolved, on the motion of Mr West, that the minutes of meeting no. 46 be adopted.

4. Deliberative meeting – Inquiry into issues relating to Redfern and Waterloo

Submissions

The Chair tabled submissions 91, 92 and 93, along with supplementary submissions 17 and 54, received in relation to the inquiry into issues in Redfern and Waterloo.

Submissions 91, 92 and 93 and supplementary submissions 17 and 54 - Resolved, on the motion of Ms Griffin, that in order to better inform all those who are participating in the inquiry process, the Committee

make use of its powers granted under paragraph 16 of the resolution establishing the Standing Committees, and sections 4(2) of the *Parliamentary Papers (Supplementary Provisions) Act 1975* to publish the submissions in full.

The Committee deliberated.

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Parker, that the Chair write on behalf of the Committee to the Commissioner of Police and the Police Integrity Commission regarding matters raised in evidence by witnesses on 24 September 2004, and forward a copy of the letter to the Minister for Police and Mr Paul Wilkinson.

The Chair advised the Committee of a request from representatives of the Premier's Department to reschedule their hearing of 3 November 2004 to a later date, due to the illness of a witness.

The Committee deliberated.

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Parker, that the Chair write on behalf of the Committee to the Director General of the Premier's Department proposing a new hearing date of 12 November, reiterating the Committee's written request on 22 July 2004 for a copy of the report of the Human Services Review.

The Committee deliberated.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Pearce, that the Secretariat contact the Commissioner of Police to clarify the Commissioner's request to provide additional evidence in relation to the Inquiry into issues related to Redfern and Waterloo at a date closer to the end of public hearings, as per his correspondence in May 2004.

5. Adjournment

The Committee adjourned at 12 noon until 3 November at 10.00am at the Redfern Centre, Redfern.

Meeting 48, 3 November 2004, The Redfern Centre, Redfern, 10.00am to 12.15pm and Jubilee Room, Parliament House, 1.30pm to 4.30pm

1. Members present

Jan Burnswoods MLC (Chair)
The Hon Robyn Parker MLC (Deputy Chair)
The Hon Kayee Griffin MLC
The Hon Greg Pearce MLC
The Hon Dr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans MLC
The Hon Ian West MLC (from 1.30pm)

2. Private Briefing – Inquiry into issues relating to Redfern and Waterloo

The Committee participated in a private meeting with members of the South Sydney Interagency.

Questioning concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

There was a short adjournment for lunch, to reconvene at 1.30pm.

3. Public hearing - Inquiry into issues relating to Redfern and Waterloo

Superintendent Dennis Smith, Commander, Redfern Local Area Command, NSW Police, on former oath, examined.

Questioning concluded and the witness withdrew.

Dr Neil Shepherd, Director-General, Department of Community Services, and Ms Anne-Maree Sabellico, Regional Director, Department of Community Services, on former affirmation, and Ms Trina Whitton, Manager Client Services, Eastern Sydney Community Service Centre, Department of Community Services, affirmed and examined.

Questioning concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The media and the public withdrew.

4. Adjournment

The Committee adjourned at 4.30 until 12 November at 10.00am, Room 814/815, Parliament House.

Meeting 49, 12 November 2004, Room 814/815, Parliament House, 2.00pm to 4.07pm

1. Members present

Jan Burnswoods MLC (Chair)
The Hon Robyn Parker MLC (Deputy Chair)
The Hon Kayee Griffin MLC (from 2.25pm)
The Hon Greg Pearce MLC
The Hon Dr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans MLC
The Hon Ian West MLC

2. Public Hearing – Inquiry into issues relating to Redfern and Waterloo

The media and the public were admitted.

Dr Col Gellatly, Director General, Premier's Department, and Mr Michael Ramsey, Project Director, Redfern/Waterloo Partnership Project, on former oath, examined.

Questioning concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The media and the public withdrew.

3. Adjournment

The Committee adjourned at 4.07pm.

Meeting 50, 17 November 2004, Room 1153, Parliament House, 10.30am to 11.00am

1. Members present

Jan Burnswoods MLC (Chair)
The Hon Robyn Parker MLC (Deputy Chair)
The Hon Kayee Griffin MLC (from 2.25pm)

The Hon Greg Pearce MLC
The Hon Dr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans MLC
The Hon Ian West MLC

2. Minutes

Resolved, on the motion of Mr West, that the minutes of meeting numbers 47, 48 and 49 be adopted.

3. Correspondence

The Chair tabled the following item of correspondence:

Received

Item 1 – To Chair from Dr Col Gellatly, Director General, Premier's Department, dated 4 November 2004 regarding a medical certificate for Mr Michael Ramsey.

4. Deliberative meeting – Inquiry into issues relating to Redfern and Waterloo

The Chair tabled submission 94, received in relation to the inquiry into issues relating to Redfern/Waterloo.

Submission 94 – Resolved, on the motion of Mr Pearce, that in order to better inform all those who are participating in the inquiry process, the Committee make use of its powers granted under paragraph 16 of the resolution establishing the Standing Committees, and sections 4(2) of the *Parliamentary Papers (Supplementary Provisions) Act 1975* to publish the submission subject to the author's request for the suppression of the author's name and other information, whilst noting that the submission had been forwarded by the author to other parties without this material suppressed.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr West, that the Chair seek leave from the House to extend the reporting date to 17 December 2004.

The Chair provided Committee Members with a proposed outline for the Committee's final report.

The Committee deliberated.

5. Adjournment

The Committee adjourned at 11.00am.

Meeting 51, 13 December 2004, Room 1153, Parliament House, 10.00am to 4.00pm

1. Members present

Jan Burnswoods MLC (Chair)
The Hon Robyn Parker MLC (Deputy Chair)
The Hon Kayee Griffin MLC
The Hon Greg Pearce MLC
The Hon Dr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans MLC
The Hon Ian West MLC (from 11:30am)

2. Minutes

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Pearce, that the minutes of meeting number 50 be adopted.

3. Correspondence

The Chair tabled the following items of correspondence:

Received

Item 1 – To Chair from T P Griffin, dated 15 November 2004, regarding the issue involving the Aboriginal Community Liaison Officers

Item 2 – Email correspondence to Victoria Pymm from Redfern Youth Liaison Officer, Redfern LAC, with information for the Final Report

Item 3 - Questions on Notice from NSW Police (Evidence from Mark Goodwin), dated 22 November 2004

Item 4 - Questions on Notice from DoCS, dated 22 November 2004

Item 5 - Questions on Notice from NSW Police (Evidence from Dennis Smith), dated 24 November 2004

Item 6 - Questions on Notice from NSW Department of Housing (Evidence from Mike Allen), dated 25 November 2004

Item 7 - Correspondence from Morris Iemma MP, Minister for Health to Chair regarding the primary health care facility, provided on 3 December 2004

Item 8 - NCOSS, Social sustainability benchmarks for the Metropolitan strategy, provided on 7 December 2004

Item 9 - Email from Gary Moore, NCOSS with information for the Final Report, provided on 7 December 2004.

Sent

Item 10 - To Dr Gellatly, Director General Premier's Department, dated 2 November 2004 regarding the release of the final report of the Human Services Review

Item 11 – T P Griffin, Police Integrity Commissioner, dated 4 November 2004

Item 12 - To Ms Karen Becker, NSW Health, dated 8 November 2004 requesting details on the community health facility

4. ...

5. Deliberative – Inquiry into issues relating to Redfern and Waterloo

The Committee considered the Chair's Draft Final Report, which had been previously circulated.

Chapter One read.

The Committee deliberated.

Chapter Three read.

The Committee deliberated.

Chapter Five read.

The Committee deliberated.

Resolved, on the motion of Dr Chesterfield-Evans, that Recommendation 2 read as follows:

‘That the NSW Government, through the Redfern Waterloo Authority, as a matter of urgency, conduct an audit of the Government assets in the Redfern and Waterloo area, and publish this

audit including an itemised list identifying and describing the assets. The Redfern Waterloo Authority should ensure that any development of these assets is done in consultation with the Redfern and Waterloo communities, and that monies raised in the development of these assets go directly to addressing the needs of the area.'

There was a short adjournment for lunch, to reconvene at 2:30pm.

Chapter Two read.

The Committee deliberated.

Mr Pearce moved that paragraph 2.16 be deleted.

Question put.

Ayes: Ms Parker
 Mr Pearce
 Dr Chesterfield-Evans

Noes: Ms Burnswoods
 Ms Griffin
 Mr West

There being an equality of votes, the Chair used her casting vote.

Question resolved in the negative.

Chapter Four read.

The Committee deliberated.

Chapter Six read.

The Committee deliberated.

6. Adjournment

The Committee adjourned at 4:00pm, to reconvene at 11:30am on Tuesday 14 December 2004 in Room 1153 at 11:30am.

Meeting 52, 14 December 2004, Room 1153, Parliament House, 11am

1. Members present

Jan Burnswoods MLC (Chair)
The Hon Robyn Parker MLC (Deputy Chair)
The Hon Kayee Griffin MLC
The Hon Greg Pearce MLC
The Hon Dr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans MLC
The Hon Ian West MLC

2. Minutes

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Parker, that the minutes of meeting no.51 be adopted.

Resolved, on the motion of Dr Chesterfield-Evans, that the Committee note in the Minutes that he voted incorrectly on Mr Pearce's motion that paragraph 2.16 be deleted (recorded in Minutes 51).

3. Deliberative – Inquiry into issues relating to Redfern and Waterloo

Consideration of Chapter One resumed.

The Committee deliberated.

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Parker, that Chapter One be adopted.

Consideration of Chapter Two resumed.

The Committee deliberated.

Resolved, on the motion of Dr Chesterfield-Evans, that Chapter Two be adopted.

Consideration of Chapter Three resumed.

The Committee deliberated.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Pearce, that Chapter Three be adopted.

Consideration of Chapter Four resumed.

The Committee deliberated.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr West, that Chapter Four be adopted.

Consideration of Chapter Five resumed.

The Committee deliberated.

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Griffin, that Chapter Five, as amended, be adopted.

Consideration of Chapter Six resumed.

The Committee deliberated.

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Parker, that Chapter Six, be adopted.

Appendices 1 to 6 read.

The Committee deliberated.

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Griffin, that Appendices 1 to 6 be adopted.

Executive Summary read.

The Committee deliberated.

Resolved, on the motion of Dr Chesterfield-Evans, that the Executive Summary be adopted.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Pearce, that pursuant to Standing Order 229 the Committee consider the Chair's Foreword for approval.

Chair's Foreword read.

The Committee deliberated.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr West, that the Chair's Foreword be adopted.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr West, that the draft Committee report as amended be the report of the Committee and be signed by the Chair and presented to the House in accordance with Standing Orders 230 and 231.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Pearce, that pursuant to the provisions of section 4 of the Parliamentary Papers (Supplementary Provisions) Act 1975 the Committee authorises the publication of all non-confidential minutes, correspondence, submissions and table documents.

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Parker, that in accordance with Standing Order 233 the Committee authorises the publication of those excerpts from confidential transcripts that appear in the report.

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Griffin, that the Committee Secretariat be permitted to correct typographical, stylistic and grammatical errors in the report prior to tabling.

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Griffin, that Mr Greg Pearce be thanked for his contribution to this Inquiry as he is now leaving this Committee.

4. Adjournment

The Committee adjourned at 12.30pm sine die.