

Standing Committee on Social Issues

Public Disturbances at Macquarie Fields

Tabled according to Standing Order 231

New South Wales Parliamentary Library cataloguing-in-publication data:

New South Wales. Parliament. Legislative Council. Standing Committee on Social Issues

Inquiry into public disturbances at Macquarie Fields : [report] / Legislative Council, Standing Committee on Social Issues. [Sydney, N.S.W.] : The Committee, 2006. – 109 p. ; 30 cm. (Report 38, June 2006)

“Tabled according to Standing Order 231”

“June 2006”.

Chair: Jan Burnswoods.

ISBN 9781920788162

1. Riots—New South Wales—Macquarie Fields.
- I. Title
- II. Burnswoods, Jan.
- III. Series: New South Wales. Parliament. Legislative Council. Standing Committee on Social Issues. Report ; 38

303.623 (DDC)

How to contact the committee

Members of the Standing Committee on Social Issues can be contacted through the Committee Secretariat. Written correspondence and enquiries should be directed to:

The Director

Standing Committee on Social Issues

Legislative Council

Parliament House, Macquarie Street

Sydney New South Wales 2000

Internet www.parliament.nsw.gov.au

Email socialissues@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Telephone 02 9230 3078

Facsimile 02 9230 2981

Terms of Reference

That the Standing Committee on Social Issues enquire into, and report on, the public disturbances at Macquarie Fields, and in particular on:

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

This Inquiry was referred to the Committee by the Hon Carl Scully MP, Minister for Police, on 17 March 2005. On 23 March 2005, the terms of reference were amended by the House (Item 9, Min No 96). The House subsequently issued an instruction to the Committee to delay the commencement of the Inquiry until the conclusion of any police operational review and police investigation into the emergency call response (Item 22, Min No 96). On 20 September 2005, the Chair informed the House that on 19 September 2005 the Committee resolved to commence its inquiry by calling for submissions (Item 11, Min No 116).

Committee Membership

| | | |
|---|------------------------|---------------------|
| Ms Jan Burnswoods MLC | Australian Labor Party | <i>Chair</i> |
| The Hon Robyn Parker MLC | Liberal Party | <i>Deputy Chair</i> |
| The Hon Dr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans MLC | Australian Democrats | |
| The Hon Kayee Griffin MLC | Australian Labor Party | |
| The Hon Charlie Lynn MLC | Liberal Party | |
| The Hon Ian West MLC | Australian Labor Party | |

Table of Contents

| | | |
|------------------|--|-----------|
| | Chair's Foreword | viii |
| | Executive Summary | ix |
| | Summary of Recommendations | xi |
| Chapter 1 | Conduct of Inquiry | 1 |
| | Establishment of the Inquiry | 1 |
| | Amendments to the Terms of Reference | 1 |
| | Conduct of the Inquiry | 1 |
| | Events of February 2005 | 3 |
| | NSW Police summary of public order incidents at Macquarie Fields | 3 |
| | Report Structure | 3 |
| Chapter 2 | Underlying causes of the disturbances | 5 |
| | Demographic profile of Macquarie Fields | 5 |
| | History of Macquarie Fields | 6 |
| | Social issues in Macquarie Fields | 7 |
| | Unemployment | 9 |
| | Isolation | 11 |
| | Housing | 12 |
| | Education and young people | 13 |
| | Family issues | 15 |
| | Impact of grief | 16 |
| | Health services | 16 |
| | Media | 17 |
| | Conclusion | 18 |
| Chapter 3 | Services and programs | 21 |
| | Services and programs provided in Macquarie Fields | 21 |
| | Government programs | 21 |
| | Non-government organisations and programs | 22 |
| | Best practice principles | 23 |
| | Place-based approach | 23 |
| | Macquarie Fields Community Action Plan 2005-2006 | 24 |
| | Availability of services | 25 |

| | | |
|-------------------|--|-----------|
| | Funding | 27 |
| | Short-term and recurrent funding | 27 |
| | Building relationships with and engaging the community | 28 |
| | Coordination of funding and programs | 32 |
| | Conclusion | 35 |
| Chapter 4 | Policing in the Macquarie Fields area | 39 |
| | Macquarie Fields Local Area Command | 39 |
| | Nature of crime in Macquarie Fields LAC | 39 |
| | Staffing at Macquarie Fields Local Area Command | 41 |
| | Specialist officers | 42 |
| | Policing strategies in Macquarie Fields | 43 |
| | Relationship with the community | 43 |
| | Relationship with local young people | 45 |
| | Factors contributing to the disturbances | 48 |
| | Community conferencing scheme | 51 |
| | Police resources in Macquarie Fields during the disturbances | 51 |
| | Equipment | 53 |
| | Communication | 54 |
| | Training | 55 |
| | Conclusion | 57 |
| | Lessons learned from the Redfern/Waterloo Inquiry and the Coburn report | 58 |
| Appendix 1 | Submissions | 61 |
| Appendix 2 | Witnesses | 63 |
| Appendix 3 | Map – Eucalyptus Drive, Macquarie Fields | 67 |
| Appendix 4 | Macquarie Fields Community Resources & Assets – Working Document April 2005 | 69 |
| Appendix 5 | Minutes | 83 |

Chair's Foreword

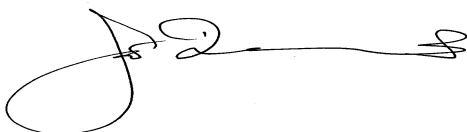
I am pleased to present the report of the Committee's Inquiry into public disturbances at Macquarie Fields. The terms of reference for this Inquiry arose out of the disturbances that occurred in Macquarie Fields in February 2005 and the report deals with matters related to the incidents, ranging from the complex social issues facing the local community, to policing strategies in the local area.

The Committee notes that the social issues examined in the current report are not exclusive to Macquarie Fields and also affect many other disadvantaged areas throughout NSW. The Committee examined many similar issues during its 2004 Inquiry into issues relating to Redfern and Waterloo. The Committee is aware that the disturbances that occurred in both Redfern/Waterloo and Macquarie Fields could have taken place in any other similarly placed community, given a significant triggering event. The Committee wishes to emphasise that the recommendations made in the report have a broader application to other areas of disadvantage throughout the state and that preventive rather than reactionary measures are needed with respect to these communities.

The Committee welcomed the opportunity to meet with members of the Macquarie Fields community, particularly the young people, and the government and non-government agencies who provide services to the area. The Committee heard that the available services struggle to meet the level of demand, and that the task of service providers is complicated by issues such as the short-term funding and coordination of programs. The Committee makes recommendations to assist agencies in providing those services and to reduce the administrative burden placed upon them, and to ensure that there is some measure of the real costs to the government and the community of preventive action to address social disadvantage, versus later remedial action. The Committee notes that its recommendations are also applicable to the provision of services in other communities throughout NSW.

The Committee also examines key issues of policing strategies that arose during the disturbances, and policing in the local area before and after the disturbances, including the relationship between the police, the community and young people. The Committee encourages the police to continue to develop and strengthen relationships with the local young people. The Committee recognises that while policing is an important aspect of addressing the problems arising in disadvantaged areas, it must be part of a greater, holistic approach.

On behalf of the Committee I would like to thank all of the participants for their time and expertise. I am grateful to my Committee colleagues and to the secretariat, particularly Ms Katherine Fleming, for the work they have undertaken on this Inquiry. I commend this report to the Government.



Jan Burnswoods MLC
Chair

Executive Summary

Chapter 1 – Conduct of the inquiry

The Inquiry addresses issues arising out of public order incidents that occurred in Macquarie Fields in February 2005. It was referred to the Committee by the Minister for Police in March 2005. The Committee was, however, instructed by the House to delay the commencement of the Inquiry until internal police reviews into the public disturbances were completed. The Committee consequently commenced its inquiry in September 2005.

The Committee received 23 submissions to the Inquiry and conducted four hearings, at which it heard evidence from 45 witnesses, including government departments such as Premier's, Police, Housing, Education and Training and Community Services, and non-government agencies such as NCOSS, UnitingCare Burnside, the Salvation Army, Mission Australia and the St Vincent de Paul Society. The Committee also heard evidence from local government and non-government service providers, local schools, residents and young people.

Chapter 2 – Underlying causes of the disturbances

This chapter provides a demographic profile of the Macquarie Fields area, a brief history of the district and examines social issues affecting certain areas in Macquarie Fields.

Macquarie Fields suffers from social disadvantage in a number of key areas that are considered in this chapter including unemployment, social isolation, a high proportion of public housing, limited educational opportunities, family issues and health issues. This Chapter also examines specific factors that contributed to the disturbances, including grief caused by the death of the two young men in the original incident and the exacerbation of the situation by the media. The Committee particularly notes that the social issues raised in the Chapter are not exclusive to Macquarie Fields and affect many other similar areas throughout NSW.

Chapter 3 – Services and programs

This chapter provides a brief overview of services and programs provided in Macquarie Fields, covering both government and non-government provisions, and examines the key issues facing those service providers.

Many issues similar to those arising from the Committee's Redfern/Waterloo inquiry were identified as affecting service providers in Macquarie Fields, including the ability to provide services sufficient to meet the high level of demand, and problems related to coordinating and adequately resourcing and funding the wide range of programs in the area.

The Committee makes eight recommendations in this chapter, to address the issues faced in Macquarie Fields via a place-based approach, as set out in the Macquarie Fields Community Action Plan of 2005-2007, and to ensure that the Plan is effectively implemented. The recommendations also cover the issues of coordination and adequate funding, the means of addressing the needs of the local young people, and the need for some measure of the real costs to the government and the community of preventive action to address social disadvantage, versus later remedial action.

Chapter 4 – Policing in the Macquarie Fields area

This chapter firstly addresses the Macquarie Fields Local Area Command, the nature of the crimes in the area, the Command's staffing levels and the availability of specialist officers.

Policing strategies in Macquarie Fields are also examined, particularly the relationship with the community during and since the disturbances, the relationship with local young people, factors contributing to the disturbances arising out of the local community's relationship with the police, and the outcomes of the trial of a community conferencing scheme for young adult offenders. The Committee makes a recommendation that the police continue to develop and strengthen relationships with the local young people.

Police resources in Macquarie Fields during the disturbances are also examined, particularly in the light of the internal police review report, *'Final report into Macquarie Fields Public Order Management Incidents'* of June 2005 and its recommendations. Key issues which the Committee examined included the training of police in public incident management at the time of the disturbances and thereafter, and related issues that arose during the disturbances with respect to equipment and communication.

The Committee also reviews the adequacy of procedures and strategies that have been implemented since the Committee's Redfern/Waterloo Inquiry, the police Coburn Report (July 2004) relating to the Redfern/Waterloo disturbances of February 2004, and the police review report of the Macquarie Fields disturbances.

The Committee makes three recommendations in this Chapter relating to police training and strategies, particularly the need to liaise with a local community in the event of public order incidents such as those occurring in Macquarie Fields.

Summary of Recommendations

- Recommendation 1** **page 36**
That the NSW Government adequately fund and resource the Macquarie Fields Community Action Plan 2005-2006, and investigate the continuation of the Plan beyond 2006.
- Recommendation 2** **page 36**
That the implementation of the Community Action Plan in Macquarie Fields involve a strategy to ensure adequate consultation with the community and involvement of the community in decision making processes.
- Recommendation 3** **page 36**
That the Macquarie Fields Community Action Plan review and develop community development strategies, the primary focus of which is community members and groups.
- Recommendation 4** **page 36**
That the NSW Government, through the Macquarie Fields Community Action Plan and the Campbelltown Coordination Group, take all possible steps to achieve genuine partnerships between government agencies at all levels of government.
- Recommendation 5** **page 37**
That the NSW Government, in liaison with non-government organisations in Macquarie Fields, recognise and resource a local body to act as the focal point in the planning and coordination of programs and funding in Macquarie Fields.
- Recommendation 6** **page 37**
That all levels of government work together, through the Macquarie Fields Community Action Plan Implementation Groups, to ensure appropriate facilities are available for the local young people.
- Recommendation 7** **page 37**
That the short-term nature of funding programs be reviewed with a view to ensuring that successful programs continue to be funded in Macquarie Fields and other communities throughout NSW.
- Recommendation 8** **page 37**
That the NSW Government urge the Federal Government to take all possible steps to achieve coordination with State and local Governments, and local non-government organisations, in providing and funding programs in Macquarie Fields and other communities throughout NSW.
- Recommendation 9** **page 37**
That research be undertaken to establish the real costs to the government and the community of preventive action to address social disadvantage, versus later remedial action.
- Recommendation 10** **page 48**
That the NSW Government and police continue to develop, support and adequately resource initiatives to strengthen relationships with local young people.

Recommendation 11

page 50

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

Recommendation 12

page 59

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

Recommendation 13

page 60

That the NSW Government and Police ensure the ongoing review of policing resources and strategy.

Chapter 1 Conduct of Inquiry

Establishment of the Inquiry

- 1.1 On 17 March 2005, the Chair tabled a letter to the Committee she had received earlier that day from the Hon Carl Scully MP, Minister of Police, referring an Inquiry into public disturbances at Macquarie Fields. The Inquiry was reported to the House on 22 March 2005.¹

Amendments to the Terms of Reference

- 1.2 The original terms of reference contained terms 1 to 7. On 23 March 2005, on a motion of Dr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans, the House amended the Terms of Reference to eliminate the requirement that the Committee inquire into and report in particular on

2. the extent to which the actions of any member of parliament who, behaving like “armchair generals”, compromised police operations in the Macquarie Fields area²

- 1.3 The revised terms of reference, 1 to 6, appear on page (iv) of this report.

- 1.4 That same day, 23 March 2005, on a motion of Mr Tingle, the House also resolved:

That it be an instruction to the Standing Committee on Social Issues that it not commence the inquiry into public disturbances in Macquarie Fields referred to the committee by the Minister for Police on 17 March 2005, until the conclusion of any:

- (a) operational review into the police response conducted by New South Wales Police, and
- (b) investigations by New South Wales Police into the Macquarie Fields emergency call response, oversights by the New South Wales Ombudsman.³

Conduct of the Inquiry

- 1.5 The Committee resolved on 17 March 2005 to advertise a call for submissions, and advertisements appeared on 26 March and 29 April 2005. Although some submissions were received the Committee took no further action on this Inquiry after the closing date in May 2005 because of the direction given to it by the House.

¹ Legislative Council, New South Wales, Minutes of Proceedings No 95, 22 March 2005, Item 16, p1285

² Legislative Council, New South Wales, Minutes of Proceedings No 96, 23 March 2005, Item 9, p1293

³ Legislative Council, New South Wales, Minutes of Proceedings No 96, 23 March 2005, Item 22, pp1297-1298

- 1.6** The Committee received a copy of the *Final Report into Macquarie Fields Public Order Management Incidents* from the Office of the Deputy Commissioner of Police (Operations) on 13 July 2005.
- 1.7** On 6 September 2005 the Committee received a letter from Mr Bruce Barbour, Ombudsman, regarding his office's investigation into the Macquarie Fields emergency call response. He advised that he had received the investigation report from the NSW Police Professional Standards Command and that the Office of the Ombudsman would review the adequacy of the investigation and any ensuing management outcomes "in due course". Mr Barbour also advised that s 34 of the *Ombudsman Act 1974* generally precludes his office from disclosing information received from a public authority and consequently he would be unable to provide a report at the completion of his oversight to the Committee.
- 1.8** As a consequence of the receipt of these two documents, on 20 September 2005 the Chair informed the House that the Committee was now satisfied that the instructions from the House had been met and, on the previous day, 19 September 2005, the Committee had resolved to commence its inquiry by advertising a further call for submissions.⁴
- 1.9** The Committee therefore re-advertised on Wednesday 28 September and 4 October 2005, calling for submissions and advising a closing date of Wednesday 9 November 2005. The advertisement included an explanation of why the Committee was re-advertising the inquiry.
- 1.10** Additionally, the Committee solicited submissions from relevant and interested individuals, agencies and community groups via correspondence.
- 1.11** In response to the call for submissions, the Committee received 23 submissions to the Inquiry. Major stakeholders from the Macquarie Fields area, including Members of Parliament, churches, community groups, councils, and local branches of political parties provided submissions. Submissions were also received from a number of individuals concerned about the disturbances at Macquarie Fields. The full list of public submissions and authors appears at Appendix 1.
- 1.12** There have been four days of hearings with a total of 45 witnesses, representing 16 different organisations and groups, as well as individual witnesses. Appendix 2 contains a list of witnesses.
- 1.13** The Committee conducted the third hearing, that of 13 December 2005, on location in Macquarie Fields, to gain an understanding of the impact of the disturbances on the Macquarie Fields district and surrounding areas. The Committee held a community forum with local agencies, and a confidential forum with local young people.

⁴ Legislative Council, New South Wales, Minutes of Proceedings No 116, 20 September 2005, Item 11, p1579

Events of February 2005

NSW Police summary of public order incidents at Macquarie Fields⁵

- 1.14** Strike Force Delage was formed to investigate a number of persons who were suspected of being involved in aggravated break, enter and steal offences. At 11pm on 25 February 2005 police from Strike Force Delage engaged in a short pursuit in Eucalyptus Drive, Macquarie Fields, with three of the suspects from the investigation. The pursuit ended when the vehicle being pursued collided with a tree killing two occupants of the vehicle while the driver escaped on foot. A map of the area in which the incidents took place is attached at Appendix 3.
- 1.15** During the early morning of 26 February 2005, as specialist police attempted to investigate the accident, a group of between 50 and 60 onlookers became increasingly violent and began to throw concrete blocks and bottles at police. Over the next two nights the unrest continued with violent confrontations throughout the evenings. The confrontations were characterised by well-planned sporadic violence involving police being pelted with missiles that the offenders had pre-positioned for that purpose.
- 1.16** The number of offenders fluctuated. Many members of the Macquarie Fields community who were not involved in the confrontations with police were themselves directly exposed to the violence as offenders made use of many small pedestrian access ways in the area. The incidents were interspersed with periods of relative calm where police were able to continue servicing the community, patrolling through areas and attending to service calls at locations that had been the scene of violence only hours before.
- 1.17** Offenders armed themselves with missiles, rocks, bottles and Molotov cocktails, throwing them at police in an attempt to injure officers and lure them into further confrontations. Offenders damaged public and private property in the process, and assaulted at least one representative of the media who was in the area. Members of the NSW Fire Brigades were also targeted by offenders, and missiles were thrown at fire tankers.
- 1.18** A detailed account of the incidents is provided in the NSW Police *Final Report into Macquarie Fields Public Order Management Incidents* which has been provided to the Standing Committee and is available on the Committee's website.

Report Structure

- 1.19** Chapter 2 provides an introductory demographic profile of the Macquarie Fields area and addresses **Term of Reference 5** by examining the underlying causes of the disturbances in the Macquarie Fields area, looking at a range of contributory factors related to social disadvantage, and the role of the media
- 1.20** Chapter 3 addresses **Terms of Reference 2 and 3** by examining both the government and non-government programs and service provision in the Macquarie Fields area and the issues faced by the agencies affecting the consistent provision of those services. This chapter also

⁵ Submission 19, The Cabinet Office NSW, p6

examines lessons learnt from the Social Issues Committee inquiry into issues relating to Redfern and Waterloo in accordance with **Term of Reference 4**.

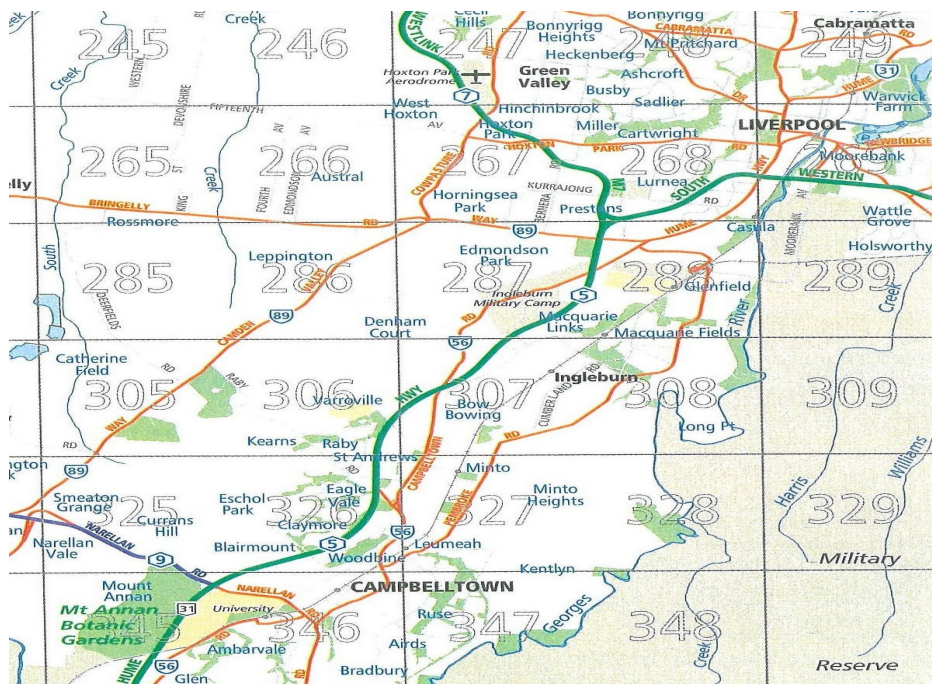
- 1.21** Chapter 4 examines **Term of Reference 1**, that is, the role of the Police in the Macquarie Fields area, the nature of the crimes they face, police training, and a comparison of the relationship between the police and the community, particularly the local young people, before and after the disturbances. The lessons learnt from the Redfern/Waterloo inquiry and the Coburn report are also considered, pursuant to **Term of Reference 4**.

Chapter 2 Underlying causes of the disturbances

This chapter provides introductory information about Macquarie Fields, and addresses Term of Reference 5 by examining the underlying causes and problems that contributed to the Macquarie Fields disturbances in February 2005.

Demographic profile of Macquarie Fields

- 2.1 Macquarie Fields is a suburb located within the Campbelltown Local Government Area in South West Sydney, at the northern end of the Macarthur region. It is located 15 kilometres north of the Campbelltown central business district and contains a mixture of public and private dwellings. Approximately 29% of dwellings in Macquarie Fields are occupied under public housing tenure, compared to 5% for Sydney as a whole. The public housing estate comprises 1,408 individual dwellings spread over an area of approximately 2.2 square kilometres, centred on Eucalyptus Drive, which was the scene of the public disturbances in February 2005.⁶ A map of the public housing estate area is attached as Appendix 3.
- 2.2 Macquarie Fields is serviced by four railway stations, at Glenfield, Macquarie Fields, Ingleburn and Minto, and private bus companies Busways and Interline provide local bus services. The largest shopping centre in the Campbelltown area is located at Minto, with other suburbs having local shopping centres. Macquarie Fields residents can access hospitals in Campbelltown and Liverpool, and a medical centre at Ingleburn.⁷



⁶ Submission 19, The Cabinet Office NSW, p9

⁷ Submission 19, The Cabinet Office NSW, p9

- 2.3** The total population of Macquarie Fields is 13,756 people, with children and young people comprising approximately 50% of the population, and 6% of the population is aged 65 and over.⁸
- 2.4** Lone parent families comprise 30% of all family households in Macquarie Fields, which is higher than the Sydney average (17%), with 85% of those households headed by women. The majority of households (66%) have a weekly income of less than \$1000, 20% have a weekly income of \$200-\$399, and 6% have a weekly income of less than \$200.⁹
- 2.5** The unemployment rate for Macquarie Fields is 11.3%, which is almost double the rate for Sydney as a whole. The percentage of unemployed young people (15-24 years) is 42%, which is also significantly higher than that of the population for Sydney as a whole (26.5%). Approximately 21% of people in Macquarie Fields did not complete schooling to year 10 or equivalent, and the proportion of people attaining a year 12 qualification (28.2%) is lower than for Sydney as a whole (44.4%). It is noted that the proportion of males aged 15 and over in Macquarie Fields with limited educational qualifications has remained virtually static for the past decade, despite general improvements in education attainment across Sydney during that time.¹⁰

History of Macquarie Fields

- 2.6** Mr Paul Power, Manger, Vincentian Social Action Centre, St Vincent de Paul Society, described the history of Macquarie Fields and the public housing estate. In 1973, under the *New Cities Structure Plan*, 500,000 people were encouraged to move to the Macarthur region to what were described as self-contained cities that had housing, infrastructure and jobs. Mr Power noted that while a mix of first public and then private housing was supplied, infrastructure and employment were not put in place until many years later, leaving a disillusioned community.¹¹ Ms Margaret Ballantine, a resident of Macquarie Fields for 30 years, commented that a collective loss of hope contributed to social problems such as domestic violence and alcoholism:

Although we were all very thankful for our lovely houses, we did not expect the complete isolation and the lack of services, even basic services. There was a bus service that ran Monday to Friday from six o'clock in the morning until 5.30 on Friday night. On Saturdays and Sundays a lot of families were left on the estate with nothing to do and no means of getting anywhere because they did not have their own transport. A lot of families had left their family support systems behind. Consequently, a lot of them had not honed their living skills, never mind their parenting skills. A lot of men who had jobs gave them up because there was always

⁸ Submission 19, The Cabinet Office NSW, p13

⁹ Submission 19, The Cabinet Office NSW, pp15-16

¹⁰ Submission 19, The Cabinet Office NSW, pp14-15

¹¹ Mr Paul Power, Manager, Vincentian Social Action Centre, St Vincent de Paul Society, Evidence 13 December 2005, p3

this big promise that the Ford company was going to build a big factory at Minto. That never materialised either.¹²

- 2.7 Many of the problems faced in Macquarie Fields centre on the public housing estate. There is a degree of diversity within the neighbourhood, and there are more affluent areas located at the nearby gated private housing estate of Macquarie Links and in the semi-rural area of Long Point.¹³

Social issues in Macquarie Fields

- 2.8 In the light of the demographics and history provided above, it is noted that Macquarie Fields suffers from socio-economic disadvantage across a number of key areas, including high unemployment rates, particularly among young people, a high concentration of public housing, a high proportion of young people with low levels of educational attainment, and higher than average levels of family violence, drug and alcohol issues and mental health issues.¹⁴

- 2.9 In his research Professor Tony Vinson identifies indices to measure social disadvantage, including:

- child accident
- child abuse
- disability and sickness support
- early school leaving
- low birth weight
- low income
- low skilled workers
- court convictions
- incomplete year 12
- prison admissions
- psychiatric admissions
- unemployment and long-term unemployment
- mortality ratio.¹⁵

¹² Ms Margaret Ballantine, Chair, Northern Campbelltown Community Action Group, Evidence 13 December 2005, pp27, 32

¹³ Submission 20, St Vincent de Paul Society, p2

¹⁴ Submission 19, The Cabinet Office NSW, pp17-18

¹⁵ Professor Tony Vinson, *Community adversity and resilience: the distribution of social disadvantage in Victoria and NSW and the mediating role of social cohesion*, The Ignatius Centre for social policy and research, Melbourne, March 2004, pp25-30

- 2.10** According to Professor Vinson's work, Macquarie Fields rates in the top 20% of disadvantaged areas in NSW.¹⁶ It is noted that this disadvantage is largely spread across the public housing estate, those at the bottom end of the home ownership market and those who live in private rental housing.¹⁷
- 2.11** Professor Vinson's research noted that people suffering from social and economic disadvantage struggle to raise families, maintain their homes and access services with limited facilities and income. They also live with an often subtle, yet strong, stigma attached to them and their community.¹⁸ In describing communities that have sunk into a cycle of disadvantage, Professor Vinson noted that limited infrastructure and access to services, run down housing, intergenerational unemployment and the negative image of the community build on each other to reduce motivation, maintain dependence, suppress community pride and ownership and limit opportunities for residents to gain education and employment.¹⁹
- 2.12** Mr Gary Moore, Director, NSW Council of Social Services ("NCOSS"), commented on the effect the combination of such social issues has had on the Macquarie Fields area:
- As with many disadvantaged areas, you tend to have an interaction of a range of social, economic and cultural factors ... some of the key elements of social disadvantage are long-term unemployment and underemployment, poor public transport access to jobs and services, a significant level of family breakdown and violence, and a significant level of alcohol and other drug abuse. So, what do some of these things considered together lead to? Certainly, for a section of the population a poorer quality of life and significant inequalities; poorer health; a sense of social exclusion and a lack of community engagement; and to a certain degree a sense of helplessness.²⁰
- 2.13** It is noted that people in low socio-economic areas, including Macquarie Fields, are caught in an ongoing, intergenerational cycle of disadvantage; without employment and without access to essential services, education, health, transport, the problems remain and become entrenched.²¹ The Committee notes that Macquarie Fields suffers from intergenerational

¹⁶ Professor Tony Vinson, *Community adversity and resilience: the distribution of social disadvantage in Victoria and NSW and the mediating role of social cohesion*, The Ignatius Centre for social policy and research, Melbourne, March 2004, CD rom attached to report

¹⁷ Mr Gary Moore, Director, NCOSS, Evidence 12 December 2005, p1

¹⁸ Professor Tony Vinson, *Community adversity and resilience: the distribution of social disadvantage in Victoria and NSW and the mediating role of social cohesion*, The Ignatius Centre for social policy and research, Melbourne, March 2004, p18

¹⁹ Professor Tony Vinson, *Community adversity and resilience: the distribution of social disadvantage in Victoria and NSW and the mediating role of social cohesion*, The Ignatius Centre for social policy and research, Melbourne, March 2004, p19

²⁰ Mr Gary Moore, Director, NCOSS, Evidence 12 December 2005, p1

²¹ Mr Owen Rogers, Chief Executive Officer, State Council, St Vincent de Paul Society, Evidence 13 December 2005, p2

unemployment, with up to three generations within families unemployed,²² and a continuing cycle of domestic violence, where the once victims of violence often become perpetrators.²³

- 2.14** The Committee notes that the problems faced in Macquarie Fields are not unique, and appear in many other disadvantaged areas in NSW. The Committee also notes the evidence that these disturbances could have occurred in any other disadvantaged area, given a sufficient trigger. Mr Paul Power, St Vincent de Paul Society, observed:

No-one could have predicted that the disturbances would occur in Macquarie Fields at the time they did. There was no indication in the community that I am aware of that anything was just about to blow, but anyone with the most basic knowledge of sociology would tell you that if you create situations such as we have in the public housing estates in south-western and western Sydney at some stage there is going to be some negative social consequences and really what we saw was an outcome 30 to 35 years down the track of some very poor planning decisions.²⁴

- 2.15** In its submission UnitingCare Burnside stated that the underlying factors contributing to the disturbances that occurred in Macquarie Fields include social disadvantage, lack of education, inadequate parenting, boredom and a lack of opportunities. Factors that related more directly to the incident include relationships with the police, the role of the media and the impact of grief.²⁵ While the social issues taken as a whole in Macquarie Fields contributed to fuelling the disturbances, certain key areas emerged during the course of the Inquiry, as discussed below.

Unemployment

- 2.16** During the course of the Inquiry the Committee met with a group of local young people, many of whom spoke about difficulty in obtaining employment, particularly with the stigma that is attached to living in Macquarie Fields. The majority of them had experienced constant rejection in making job applications, with the added indignity of having had the phone hung up on them or applications rejected by potential employers after revealing they lived in Macquarie Fields.²⁶ The difficulty raised by the stigma was also acknowledged by Ms Annette Lamb, Service Manager, Mission Australia Employment Services, who stated that they were working on breaking down that stigma with their potential employers.²⁷ The young people also noted that without any income from employment, and the accompanying lack of occupation and boredom, many turn to crime, alcohol and drugs.²⁸

²² Ms Margaret Ballantine, Chair, Northern Campbelltown Community Action Group, Evidence 13 December 2005, p27

²³ Mr John Sweeny, Superintendent, Local Area Commander, NSW Police, Evidence 5 December 2005, p25

²⁴ Mr Paul Power, Manager, Vincentian Social Action Centre, St Vincent de Paul Society, Evidence 13 December 2005, p3

²⁵ Submission 18, UnitingCare Burnside, p17

²⁶ Confidential evidence, Youth forum, 13 December 2005

²⁷ Ms Annette Lamb, Service Manager, Mission Australia Employment Services, Evidence 7 April 2006, p13

²⁸ Confidential evidence, Youth forum, 13 December 2005

- 2.17** The St Vincent de Paul Society noted in its submission that without employment people battle to maintain the most basic level of financial subsistence, and deep pessimism about education and employment can become rooted across several generations of many families, resulting in a feeling of social exclusion. Social exclusion creates an atmosphere in which some people have little stake in wider society and, in the worse case, will respond to a perceived outside threat with violence, with little concern for the consequences for themselves or others.²⁹
- 2.18** The Committee is aware of the valuable efforts of a large number of agencies in promoting employment in the Macquarie Fields and the surrounding region, and notes with approval the cooperation and collaborative approach taken by the agencies through the Partners in Employment network, which meets bi-monthly and provides a forum for agencies of the area.³⁰
- 2.19** The Committee also recognises with interest the efforts of the local primary and high schools to raise students' awareness of employment opportunities by having a vocational component in their education, and to raise confidence that it is possible to get a job when living in a community such as Macquarie Fields. In line with this thinking, a women's festival was held, targeting young women from 12 to 24 and particularly those who are parents and unemployed, to raise awareness of and provide information about job opportunities.³¹
- 2.20** It was noted that making young people aware of employment opportunities beyond the local community is particularly important when there is intergenerational unemployment. The Committee notes the mentoring program operating for some time between James Meehan High School and the Minter Ellison law firm, whereby year 10 students from the school receive mentoring from employees of the law firm every two weeks. The program has been successful in offering students life experiences, increasing their engagement in learning at school and resulted in higher school certificate results.³² The program gives students access to all aspects of a large organisation such as hospitality, IT, administration, paralegals, legal services etc – which has been highly successful in exposing students to different employment prospects. Many businesses and companies also donate time and expertise to work with the schools through the Australian Business Community Network system.³³
- 2.21** The Committee notes that the Government released its Metropolitan Strategy for Sydney in December 2005, which targets 15,000 new jobs in and around Liverpool and 100,000 across south-west Sydney in the next 20 to 25 years. Mr Gary Moore, NCOSS, stated that one of the issues facing this strategy is ensuring that people who live in those areas, such as Macquarie Fields, have fair access to these jobs, including the high-value jobs. Mr Moore commented that in order to encourage people to motivate themselves to find work, jobs must be available,

²⁹ Submission 20, St Vincent de Paul Society, p3

³⁰ Ms Annette Lamb, Service Manager, Mission Australia Employment Services, Evidence 7 April 2006, pp22, 23

³¹ Mr Kim Fillingham, Regional Director, South-western Sydney, Department of Education and Training, Evidence 7 April 2006, p33

³² Mr Bruce Sanders, Principal, James Meehan High School, Evidence 13 December 2005, p36

³³ Mr Kim Fillingham, Regional Director, South-western Sydney, Department of Education and Training, Evidence 7 April 2006, pp33, 36

and it is necessary to ensure that people in disadvantaged areas have equal access to the new employment options being created by the Strategy.³⁴

Isolation

- 2.22** Social isolation was identified as contributing to the issues faced by some members of the local community. Many families living in the public housing estate have low incomes, are unable to afford a car, and find that the estate's location and the cost of transport exacerbate their sense of isolation. Depending on where people live in the estate, facilities such as the railway station, swimming pool and sporting complex are more than 2 kilometres and up to 4 kilometres away.³⁵
- 2.23** Transport was identified as a key factor affecting the feeling of isolation. There are few transport services outside peak hours and many people who reside in the public housing estate find the private bus company fares expensive. A trip to Campbelltown to access, for example, health services, generally involves catching two buses and a train, a difficult and costly process.³⁶
- 2.24** Young people were also affected by the lack of public transport services in accessing employment, as the services frequently do not cover the times they must commute to and from work, and the trains are regarded as dangerous in the evenings. Many of the young people were unable to obtain a driver's licence, which would assist them in having access to greater employment opportunities, due to literacy issues, or had been banned from driving due to an accumulation of fines and were generally uninformed about the procedure to address and pay the fines.³⁷
- 2.25** It was noted that often the only outside people residents have contact with are teachers, health workers and community workers,³⁸ and that unless services are provided by way of outreach programs it is often difficult for people to physically access them.³⁹ Many people who need the services are also not aware of what help is available to them.⁴⁰ As well as the physical isolation witnesses commented upon the fact that the public housing estate is stigmatised and ostracised, due to the social issues residents face and the continued effects of the negative portrayal of the community.⁴¹

³⁴ Mr Gary Moore, Director, NSW Council of Social Services, Evidence 12 December 2005, pp3, 8, 9

³⁵ Submission 20, St Vincent de Paul Society, p3

³⁶ Ms Trish Fogarty, Coordinator, Glenquarie Neighbourhood Centre, Evidence – community forum, 13 December 2005, p2

³⁷ Ms Annette Lamb, Service Manager, Mission Australia Employment Services, Evidence 7 April 2006, p19

³⁸ Ms Bev Newitt, Principal, Guise Public School, Evidence 13 December 2005, p29

³⁹ Ms Julie Longland, Team Leader, Campbelltown Youth Services, Evidence 13 December 2005, p31

⁴⁰ Ms Julie Longland, Team Leader, Campbelltown Youth Services, Evidence 13 December 2005, p31

⁴¹ Ms Jan Watson, Facilitator, Schools as Community Centres, Evidence 7 April 2006, p72

2.26 Due to the isolation felt by the community, many people regarded the outside police who responded to the disturbances as invading their area; they were described as ‘people who were never interested in Macquarie Fields before but who came along to put us down and put us in our place’. It was felt by some witnesses that that sense of invasion contributed to the strong feelings during disturbances.⁴²

Housing

2.27 Macquarie Fields has a high level of public housing. Within the public housing estate there are two different types of residences; on the one side there are a large number of townhouses described as being small and cramped, and on the other side there are individual cottages and homes. The areas are described as having a very different feel. The housing estate is quite divided from private housing and many witnesses expressed the hope that a greater mix and integration of private and public housing could be achieved.⁴³

2.28 The Department of Housing has, through its community renewal and accelerated improvement program, carried out improvements and upgrades on approximately 1,000 dwellings in Macquarie Fields. This renewal is being carried out to rectify the problems caused by the now unsatisfactory original design of the housing estate. The Department is also obtaining separate title for many of the properties (350 to date) to allow tenants with the financial means to purchase those homes. The Department hopes to achieve a mix of private and public housing to create a more balanced community.⁴⁴

2.29 The demographic profile of public housing residents has changed dramatically. In the 1970s more than 70% of tenants were couples with children and 29% were elderly couples or single, and approximately half the tenants were receiving subsidised rent because of their low income. Today only 11% of tenants are couples with children, more than one-third are aged over 65 years, another third are single parents and a quarter have disabilities, with 90% of the tenants receiving a social security income.⁴⁵

2.30 The NSW Government is currently implementing a plan to reshape public housing. Under this plan priority for accommodation is given to those in urgent need and tenancy periods have been shortened.⁴⁶

2.31 The program to reshape public housing has been criticised as diminishing the number of low and modest income earners living in public housing, creating more welfare housing, and for

⁴² Mr Bruce Sanders, Principal, James Meehan High School, Evidence – community forum, 13 December 2005, p8

⁴³ Ms Jan Watson, Facilitator, Schools as Community Centres, Evidence 7 April 2006, p73

⁴⁴ Mr Mike Allen, Deputy Director-General – Operations, Department of Housing, Evidence 7 April 2006, p14

⁴⁵ Mr Mike Allen, Deputy Director-General – Operations, Department of Housing, Evidence 7 April 2006, p17

⁴⁶ NSW Government, ‘*The NSW Government’s Plan for reshaping public housing*’, accessed 19 May 2006, <www.housing.nsw.gov.au/news_publications/ReshapingPublicHousing>

not addressing the wishes of the Macquarie Fields community, in improving the integration of private and public housing and a greater mix of income levels.⁴⁷

- 2.32** The program is also criticised for removing positive role models from the housing estate. Once families have been strengthened and employment found, they will move to private housing and be replaced by urgent needs tenants.⁴⁸ This constant mobility creates instability in the community and concentrates disadvantage.

Education and young people

- 2.33** In its submission UnitingCare Burnside cites literature that identifies a range of factors contributing to youth crime and social disorder including unemployment, homelessness, school alienation, family breakdown, substance abuse, boredom and inactivity, low morale and poor self-esteem, inadequate community, family, youth support and legal services, and inappropriate treatment in the juvenile justice and welfare systems.⁴⁹ All of these issues are relevant to many of the young people in Macquarie Fields.
- 2.34** Macquarie Fields has a higher than average number of people with limited educational attainment. The submissions highlight the importance of education in providing individuals with social and economic mobility. It is noted that the chances of a student from a disadvantaged area reaching tertiary education are negligible.⁵⁰
- 2.35** The Committee was concerned to hear the evidence of Mr Jioji Ravulo, Youth Offender Support Programs Team Leader, Mission Australia, who runs a high-level intervention program in conjunction with the juvenile justice system to assist recently released young offenders directly by improving basic numeracy and literacy skills. Mr Ravulo noted that the education levels of the program participants are extremely low, as they were never engaged in the education process due to significant behavioural problems that often arise from the family dynamic. The family of the participants also does not generally reiterate the importance of education in achieving lifelong learning and resiliency. Mr Ravulo commented that once the participants are effectively engaged by the teacher and the class work, and adequate support systems that cater for specific behaviour are put in place, the behavioural problems are reduced. Mr Ravulo also noted that it is vital to let young people know that options exist for their future in order to provide them with the necessary motivation to become engaged.⁵¹
- 2.36** While the prospect of employment can give teenagers the motivation to improve their skills, Mr Ravulo identified that there is a gap where younger children, 12 to 13 year olds, have reached that age without adequate education, due to disengagement, truancy and limited places available in special education schools. Mr Ravulo noted that such children are left behind in a traditional classroom setting where education revolves around the notion of individual

⁴⁷ Mr Gary Moore, Director, NSW Council of Social Services, Evidence 12 December 2005, p10

⁴⁸ Ms Jan Watson, Facilitator, Schools as Community Centres, Evidence 7 April 2006, p73

⁴⁹ Submission 18, UnitingCare Burnside, p10

⁵⁰ Mr Owen Rogers, Chief Executive Officer, State Council, St Vincent de Paul Society, Evidence 13 December 2005, p2

⁵¹ Mr Jioji Ravulo, Youth Offender Support Programs Team Leader, Mission Australia, Evidence 7 April 2006, pp15, 16, 17

learning, and that higher intervention programs are needed to address the needs of these children.⁵² Many of the participants are also likely to be part of families that are very mobile through the housing estates, and have attended multiple schools, which makes it more likely that their learning difficulties have remained undetected.⁵³

2.37 The local schools (Curran Public School, Guise Public School and James Meehan High School⁵⁴) are well regarded for their efforts in providing education and social support, and have developed a positive and trusting relationship with the community.⁵⁵ The schools run a large number of innovative programs, as set out in Appendix 4, which cater to the needs of the local young people and their families. It is noted that the principals and teachers of the schools are extremely committed to providing services to the students – for example the 56 staff at the local high school run 88 different welfare programs.⁵⁶ Teacher turnover at the schools is low, which helps to ensure consistency for the students.⁵⁷ Of the school staff Mr Peter Phelps, School Education Director, Ingleburn Schools, Department of Education and Training remarked:

We have very skilled leaders, who are very committed. I also think we have a very skilled and committed staff in the schools who are working for the best interests of the kids.⁵⁸

2.38 During the time of the disturbances the local residents, including young people, viewed the schools as safe havens. The principal of James Meehan High School, Mr Bruce Sanders, commented:

During the period of civil unrest we adopted an attitude of sanctuary and we deliberately avoided dealing with the media and we deliberately avoided making any sorts of statements on either side. It was part of the image that I think we have tried to develop over the years with people who have worked in the community for a long time. We have a very high retention rate of staff, which is contrary to expectations of schools in potentially difficult areas. Throughout the civil unrest, throughout the period of two weeks while things were going on, the school was no more than 200 metres down the road from where the action was occurring. We suffered no vandalism and no graffiti. We took no extra steps to add security or to have security on site.⁵⁹

⁵² Mr Jioji Ravulo, Youth Offender Support Programs Team Leader, Mission Australia, Evidence 7 April 2006, pp16, 17

⁵³ Mr Kim Fillingham, Regional Director, South-western Sydney, Department of Education and Training, Evidence 7 April 2006, p30

⁵⁴ The Macquarie Fields High School is located in the area however it is a selective high school and is attended by few students who live in the public housing estate

⁵⁵ Submission 20, St Vincent de Paul Society, p4

⁵⁶ Mr Bruce Sanders, Principal, James Meehan High School, Evidence 13 December 2005, p36

⁵⁷ Mr Peter Phelps, School Education Director, Ingleburn Schools, Department of Education and Training, Evidence 7 April 2006, p29

⁵⁸ Mr Peter Phelps, School Education Director, Ingleburn Schools, Department of Education and Training, Evidence 7 April 2006, p29

⁵⁹ Mr Bruce Sanders, Principal, James Meehan High School, Evidence 13 December 2005, p28

- 2.39** It was noted that the young people in Macquarie Fields form a cohesive group, regardless of background, race or religion.⁶⁰ The young people with whom the Committee met informed the Committee that there were few facilities or programs for them in the area, and those that are available are generally not in working order. A local sports team has to travel to the neighbouring suburb of Minto to use the netball facilities. The Committee was informed that children as young as 15 and 16 had organised a large-scale petition with 3,000 signatures for a skate park in the area, which had been unsuccessful.⁶¹
- 2.40** The young people praised the Youth Off the Streets programs and football evenings, and indicated that they wished more similar activity evenings could be arranged. The young people also spoke of a significant lack of programs or activities for young women, who did not necessarily wish to be involved in the football competitions.⁶²
- 2.41** The local youth centre was the subject of great concern, as it has irregular hours, is not open on the weekends or in the evening, was frequently closed for prolonged periods and has broken equipment. As a result of funding restrictions affecting salary and working conditions, the centre has had a turnover of at least 19 workers in the past five to six years. Such high turnover does not allow staff to develop relationships and rapport with the young people and, as a result, the youth centre is not used to its full capacity or potential.⁶³ During and after the disturbances the youth centre was not available, and the local youth were upset that at the time they most needed access to youth workers and a safe haven in which to congregate there were no facilities.⁶⁴
- 2.42** The Committee is concerned that despite the efforts and dedication of staff at the schools, there are young people who have not been sufficiently engaged in the education process and have extremely low levels of basic skills. Also of concern is the lack of programs and facilities available to allow the young people to engage in the community. The Committee is not in a position to make specific recommendations about the education programs, but will make more general recommendations in Chapter 3 relating to agencies and programs that are available to help such young people.

Family issues

- 2.43** In discussing parenting issues, Ms Jo Alley, Policy Officer, UnitingCare Burnside, cited research indicating that poverty makes effective parenting difficult, which impacts on healthy parent-child relationships, and that it can also affect school performance, and increase the risk of mental health issues and substance abuse. Ms Alley noted that programs addressing parenting skills are very important.⁶⁵

⁶⁰ Ms Jenette Duckett, community worker, Evidence – community forum, 13 December 2005, p11

⁶¹ Confidential evidence, Youth forum, 13 December 2005

⁶² Confidential evidence, Youth forum, 13 December 2005

⁶³ Submission 8, Ms Jan Nicoll, Allawah House, p3; Submission 6, Northern Campbelltown Community Action Group, p3

⁶⁴ Submission 8, Ms Jan Nicoll, p5

⁶⁵ Ms Jo Alley, Policy Officer, UnitingCare Burnside, Evidence 12 December 2005, p48

- 2.44** Approximately 60% of students at the local high school come from single-parent households and 37% have parents who are unemployed.⁶⁶ Inadequate parenting skills have been identified as resulting in children commencing school with a high level of developmental delay,⁶⁷ children arriving at school hungry, and children bringing the trauma from their family experiences to school.⁶⁸ Wherever possible the families of the children are referred to programs such as Primary Connect, which runs parenting programs.⁶⁹
- 2.45** Many young people in Macquarie Fields are stigmatised and labelled as no-hopers, with this message frequently reinforced in the family environment,⁷⁰ and the main ways that some members of the community communicate are through violence and confrontation, with children learning that behaviour from their parents, siblings and peers.⁷¹

Impact of grief

- 2.46** The young men who were killed in the accident were part of a small community. One community worker, who dealt with some of the young people involved in the disturbances, noted that the young people felt disempowered in seeing police officers coming in and ‘taking over’ their part of the world when they were grieving the loss of friends, and that this, in part, contributed to their behaviour during the disturbances.⁷²

Health services

- 2.47** The whole of government submission to the Inquiry sets out the health services that are available to Macquarie Fields residents.⁷³ Mental illness, such as depression and diagnosable mental illnesses, was identified as a key issue in the public housing estate in Macquarie Fields and throughout the region. One worker commented ‘some adults are barely able to look after themselves, let alone raise children’.⁷⁴
- 2.48** NSW Health described the integrated approach that has recently been put in place to provide improved mental health services across the region, as well as a community mental health strategy that will interface with the national plan to be developed by the Coalition of

⁶⁶ Mr Bruce Sanders, Principal, James Meehan High School, Evidence 13 December 2005, p33

⁶⁷ Ms Bev Newitt, Principal, Guise Public School, Evidence 13 December 2005, pp35, 36

⁶⁸ Mr Owen Rogers, Chief Executive Officer, State Council, St Vincent de Paul Society, Evidence 13 December 2005, p1

⁶⁹ Ms Bev Newitt, Principal, Guise Public School, Evidence 13 December 2005, pp35, 36

⁷⁰ Mr Jioji Ravulo, Youth Offender Support Programs Team Leader, Mission Australia, Evidence 7 April 2006, pp15, 16

⁷¹ Ms Bev Newitt, Principal, Guise Public School, Evidence 13 December 2005, p29

⁷² Ms Jenette Duckett, community worker, Evidence – community forum, 13 December 2005, p10

⁷³ Submission 19, Cabinet Office NSW, p31

⁷⁴ Ms Bev Newitt, Principal, Guise Public School, Evidence 13 December 2005, p29

Australian Governments.⁷⁵ However, community workers commented on the lack of accessible services, such as counselling services, available in the Macquarie Fields area, the cost of such services being out of reach for the residents of the estates, and the waiting lists for, and difficulty in accessing, services that are located in Campbelltown.⁷⁶

- 2.49** Many residents, and particularly children, were reported as still suffering from the after-effects of the disturbances as they were not able to access counselling or other services at the time. At the time of the disturbances the schools provided a safe haven and community workers provided whatever services they could, but the need for adequate mental health services is ongoing.⁷⁷

Media

- 2.50** The Committee was interested to note that much of the evidence directed some blame for the disturbances towards the media. Residents reported being harassed by reporters going door to door and displaying unethical behaviour. As one witness commented:
- ... I am disgusted with the media. The media really inflamed an already very volatile situation ... They were very disrespectful; they were very intrusive; they hyped up situations that were so sensitive to people already vulnerable and disadvantaged ... They were also quite unethical.⁷⁸
- 2.51** Ms Alley, UnitingCare Burnside, observed that many residents felt that if the media had left the community alone to grieve the violence would not have continued. Residents were also distressed and angry about the negative portrayal of their community, selective reporting and the behaviour of journalists.⁷⁹
- 2.52** The allegations of unethical behaviour made against the media included providing underage children with money to buy alcohol and filming the transaction, offering minors money, alcohol and cigarettes in exchange for information or photo opportunities, and encouraging young people to participate in violent acts for the benefit of the cameras.⁸⁰
- 2.53** It was also felt that the media behaved inappropriately by invading the privacy of a family with very complex needs and depicting that family as the norm for Macquarie Fields residents,

⁷⁵ Dr Gregory Stewart, Acting Chief Executive Officer, Sydney South West Area Health Service, Evidence 7 April 2006, p1

⁷⁶ Ms Sue Dobson, Airs-Bradbury Neighbourhood Centre, Evidence – community forum, 13 December 2005, p9; Ms Jan Watson, Facilitator, Schools as Community Centres, Evidence 7 April 2006, p76

⁷⁷ Ms Jan Watson, Facilitator, Schools as Community Centres, Evidence 7 April 2006, p76

⁷⁸ Ms Jane McIvor, Coordinator/Manager, Macarthur Community Forum, Evidence 7 April 2006, p56

⁷⁹ Ms Jo Alley, Policy Officer, UnitingCare Burnside, Evidence 12 December 2005, p48

⁸⁰ Ms Jane McIvor, Coordinator/Manager, Macarthur Community Forum, Evidence 7 April 2006, p56; Ms Trish Fogarty, Coordinator, Glenquarie Neighbourhood Centre, Evidence 7 April 2006, p71

pretending to be students to gain access to the neighbourhood centre, harassing residents as they tried to access support services, and targeting groups of very young children.⁸¹

- 2.54** The negative media coverage has been on-going since the disturbances, which residents and community workers feel is ‘warping the perspective of outsiders about what the real people of Macquarie Fields are like’, and has increased the stigma and lack of self-worth that already exists on the public housing estate.⁸² One witness provided the example of disused homes due for demolition being filmed and depicted as homes where people live.⁸³ The St Vincent de Paul Society commented in its submission:

The negative media coverage of Macquarie Fields is part of the almost endless negative portrayal of public housing by sections of the media ... The endless denigration of public housing is a matter of deep concern ...⁸⁴

- 2.55** Due to its concern about the serious allegations made regarding unethical behaviour by members of the media, the Committee wrote to the Australian Communications and Media Authority (the body empowered to register industry codes of practice and investigate unresolved complaints between complainants and commercial television broadcasting licensees) requesting the Authority’s response to the allegations made. The Authority informed the Committee that it had received no formal complaints in relation to the reporting or portrayal of Macquarie Fields during the time of the disturbances. The Authority advised the Committee about the procedures for making complaints and brought the Committee’s attention to the industry codes of practice and ethics.⁸⁵
- 2.56** The Committee recognises and agrees with the strong feeling in the community about the role the media played during the disturbances, and notes the call by UnitingCare Burnside for a broad government inquiry into the role of the media in Australia, ethical conduct, and possible mechanisms to address unethical behaviour.

Conclusion

- 2.57** The Committee notes that the issues raised in this chapter are not exclusive to Macquarie Fields, and affect many other similar areas throughout NSW. The issues that created the factors contributing to behaviour displayed during the disturbances are complex and indicative of the broad, systemic problems facing many similarly placed areas, and while the Committee has identified key areas, it is beyond the Committee’s purview to make recommendations pertaining to specific areas of social need. The Committee will, however, address key issues and concerns relating to the provision of programs and services in the area that aim to alleviate the social disadvantage in the following Chapter.

⁸¹ Ms Jane McIvor, Coordinator/Manager, Macarthur Community Forum, Evidence 7 April 2006, p56; Ms Trish Fogarty, Coordinator, Glenquarie Neighbourhood Centre, Evidence 7 April 2006, p71

⁸² Ms Jane McIvor, Coordinator/Manager, Macarthur Community Forum, Evidence 7 April 2006, pp56-57

⁸³ Ms Jan Watson, Facilitator, Schools as Community Centres, Evidence 7 April 2006, p72

⁸⁴ Submission 20, St Vincent de Paul Society, p5

⁸⁵ Letter from Australian Communications and Media Authority to Chair, 2 June 2006

- 2.58** The Committee is also concerned about the alleged unethical behaviour displayed by the media during the disturbances. The serious concerns expressed by the majority of witnesses about the media and the role it played in inflaming the disturbances cannot be ignored. The Committee notes that the industry is regulated by codes of ethics and wishes to remind proprietors, managers and workers in the media of their responsibilities under the codes.
- 2.59** The Committee is grateful for the opportunity it had during the course of the Inquiry to meet with the local young people and resident representatives of Macquarie Fields and shares with community workers and service providers their high regard for the community.

Chapter 3 Services and programs

This chapter will address Terms of Reference 2 and 3 by examining government and non-government programs and service provision in the area. Term of Reference 4, concerning the lessons learned from the Committee's inquiry into the Redfern disturbance, will also be addressed in this and later chapters. Many of the issues raised in this chapter were examined by the Committee during its 2004 inquiry into issues relating to Redfern and Waterloo (the "Redfern/Waterloo inquiry"), and the Committee will address the relevant issues and recommendations made during that inquiry as appropriate.

Services and programs provided in Macquarie Fields

3.1 Attached as Appendix 4 is a document prepared by the Macquarie Fields-Ingleburn-Glenfield Interagency Group, which was tabled by UnitingCare Burnside at the hearing on 12 December 2005.⁸⁶ The document identifies all of the government and non-government agencies providing services in the Macquarie Fields area as at April 2005 and details the range of programs these agencies provide. The document provides a local perspective of the adequacy of the programs and identifies gaps in services and issues facing service providers. The Committee notes the large range of programs run in the area, and the difficulties presented with respect to the coordination and funding of programs, which will be examined in this chapter.

Government programs

3.2 Government programs are run in Macquarie Fields at the Federal, State and local level. The Commonwealth Government plays a key role in relation to employment, housing, families, the elderly, and people with disabilities.⁸⁷

3.3 The NSW Government programs are set out in detail in the whole of government submission; the various programs target the following areas:

- Families, largely through early intervention programs
- Children, including protection and out of home care
- Educational attainment for children and young people
- Young people
- The community (for example, redevelopment of public housing, crime prevention and domestic violence issues)
- Health, particularly with respect to mental health, disability, and drug and alcohol issues

⁸⁶ Macquarie Fields-Ingleburn-Glenfield Interagency Group, *Macquarie Fields Community Resources & Assets – working document April 2005*, April 2005, tabled by UnitingCare Burnside, 12 December 2005

⁸⁷ Dr Col Gellatly, Director-General, Premier's Department, Evidence 5 December 2005, p1

- Employment.⁸⁸

3.4 The Campbelltown City Council provides local infrastructure and services, such as library facilities, recreational areas and senior citizen, youth and neighbourhood centres to Macquarie Fields and the surrounding area. The Council stated that it also works in conjunction with residents, community organisations and government departments to organise and run community programs.⁸⁹

Non-government organisations and programs

3.5 During the course of the Inquiry the Committee heard from a number of organisations providing services to the local area including:

- Airds Bradbury Neighbourhood Centre
- Allawah House – female adolescent refuge
- Campbelltown Youth Services
- Glenquarie Neighbourhood Centre
- Junction Works Inc
- Macarthur Youth Commitment
- Macquarie Fields Women’s Action Group
- Mission Australia
- Northern Campbelltown Community Action Group
- Salvation Army
- St Vincent de Paul Society
- UnitingCare Burnside
- Uniting Church in Australia
- Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia
- Work Ventures.

3.6 The Committee notes that there are many other organisations working in the Macquarie Fields and larger Macarthur and Campbelltown areas that were not directly involved in the Inquiry, and wishes to acknowledge the valuable contribution that all of these organisations make to the community.

⁸⁸ Submission 19, The Cabinet Office NSW, pp19-45

⁸⁹ Submission 12, Campbelltown City Council, p2

Best practice principles

- 3.7** In its submission, UnitingCare Burnside cited recent research examining crime in public housing estates, which concluded that social interventions, such as social development programs, are associated with reductions in crime and anti-social behaviour. The submission stated that just as there are no primary causes of criminal behaviour, there are also no single solutions. Different methods are appropriate for different groups and different developmental phases during life, and the strongest, most durable effects appear to result from programs that have been implemented early in development pathways and have lasted several years.⁹⁰
- 3.8** UnitingCare Burnside also noted that within the literature there are a number of best practice recommendations for reducing crime in public housing estates, including the long-term funding of programs, providing a continuum of interventions, flexible service delivery modes, a more responsive service system, and engaging the local community.⁹¹ The issues facing service providers in Macquarie Fields will be examined bearing these best practice principles in mind.

Place-based approach

- 3.9** Many of the issues raised in this chapter are similar to those the Committee examined during its Redfern/Waterloo inquiry. In order to address the complex social needs of the Redfern/Waterloo area, the Committee supported the whole of government, whole of community place-based approach taken by the Redfern/Waterloo Partnership Project.⁹² The Committee noted in its Interim Report that a place-based approach aims to allow agencies to tailor their services to meet the needs of people in a specific location in a way that addresses the social, physical, economic and cultural characteristics of that place, and that such an approach has been successful in other locations in addressing issues facing disadvantaged communities. Place-based programs bring together the broad range of agencies and services, including Federal, State and local government agencies and non-government organisations. The characteristics of the place-based approach used in Redfern/Waterloo included: enhancing community participation and leadership; reducing crime and improving safety; enhancing services; improving health outcomes; enhanced education and employment opportunities; promoting enterprise development; and improving urban amenity.⁹³
- 3.10** In implementing a place-based plan (discussed below) to address issues arising in Macquarie Fields, many of the lessons learned from Redfern/Waterloo were taken into account, including those specifically identified by agencies providing evidence to the current Inquiry:
- the need to engage and involve the community in the design of programs, and to have sustainable programs put in place⁹⁴

⁹⁰ Submission 18, UnitingCare Burnside, p22

⁹¹ Submission 18, UnitingCare Burnside, p22

⁹² Standing Committee on Social Issues, *Inquiry into issues relating to Redfern and Waterloo – Interim report*, Report 32, August 2004

⁹³ Standing Committee on Social Issues, *Inquiry into issues relating to Redfern and Waterloo – Interim report*, Report 32, August 2004, pp9-10

⁹⁴ Dr Col Gellatly, Director-General, Premier's Department, Evidence 5 December 2005, p6

- the importance of interagency coordination, particularly with respect to identifying a lead agency and setting cooperative agreements in place with other agencies⁹⁵
- the need to identify key issues and prepare strategies to address them⁹⁶
- the need to have well thought through programs and initiatives, rather than hasty or hurried solutions.⁹⁷

Macquarie Fields Community Action Plan 2005-2006

- 3.11** The Committee heard evidence that since the disturbances in February 2005, the NSW Government has implemented the place-based Macquarie Fields Community Action Plan 2005-2006, which is described as ‘bringing together plans and community consultations undertaken by governments and other organisations with the people of Macquarie Fields over the last three years’.⁹⁸ A senior level Project Management Group and a local Implementation Group will implement the Plan. The Project Management Group comprises the Director General of the Premier’s Department, the local member of Parliament, two local residents, a representative of the local non-government organisations, the police local area commander, the regional directors of the Department of Education and Training, the Department of Housing and the Department of Community Services, the General Manager of Macquarie Health Centre and the General Manager of Campbelltown City Council. A representative of the Commonwealth Government, specifically the Department of Family and Community Services, is also involved. The local Implementation Group comprises community representatives, Commonwealth, State and Local Government representatives, and non-government agencies.⁹⁹
- 3.12** In March 2005 local residents and the then local member of Parliament convened a meeting with Dr Gellatly, Director-General, Premier’s Department, which gave rise to the formation of the Project Management Group (described in paragraph 3.11) in April 2005, as the first step in developing the Plan. Between April and December 2005 the Project Management Group met three times. A community forum was held in Macquarie Fields in October 2005, which was attended by over 55 local residents and local non-government organisations. The forum was the basis for preparing the action Plan, and addressed issues relating to young people, families, community safety and employment.¹⁰⁰
- 3.13** The Management Group decided that it should meet two or three times a year to ensure the Plan is being properly implemented, with the local group having a more active role in the day-

⁹⁵ Mr Kim Fillingham, Regional Director, South-Western Sydney, Department of Education and Training, Evidence 7 April 2006, p36

⁹⁶ Mr Kim Fillingham, Regional Director, South-Western Sydney, Department of Education and Training, Evidence 7 April 2006, p36

⁹⁷ Ms Annette Gallard, Deputy Director General Operations, Department of Community Services, Evidence 12 December 2005, p74

⁹⁸ Submission 19, The Cabinet Office NSW, p64

⁹⁹ Dr Col Gellatly, Director-General, Premier’s Department, Evidence 5 December 2005, p3

¹⁰⁰ Dr Col Gellatly, Director-General, Premier’s Department, Evidence 5 December 2005, pp2-3

to-day implementation. It is intended that the Plan be developed and modified in accordance with ongoing consultations with the Macquarie Fields community.¹⁰¹

- 3.14** While service providers in the area have welcomed the Plan, there has been some criticism of the implementation process to date. The progress of the Plan has been described as ‘frustratingly slow’,¹⁰² and concerns have been expressed that the Plan is not adequately funded or resourced with respect to its implementation, which has caused doubt in the community and service providers,¹⁰³ and that there has been reasonably limited consultation so far.¹⁰⁴ It is suggested that it would be useful to have a more extensive consultation process take place with a view to engaging a broader range of representatives from a more diverse community, particularly young people.¹⁰⁵
- 3.15** Service providers expressed frustration at the number of times the issues facing Macquarie Fields have been addressed with no outcome and they fear that this will again be the case. Ms Watson, Schools as Community Centres, stated in evidence:

People come in and do research programs, consult with the community and say that they will do a paper and have recommendations. Then there is nothing. I have a drawer full of statistics and information from key informant interviews and survey groups that people have done, that departments have done, that NGO’s have done over the years. They have sat there. It is not surprising that the same issues present year after year after year for the community.¹⁰⁶

- 3.16** The Committee will review the issues facing service providers and organisations providing services in the area within the context of the place-based approach being taken in the Macquarie Fields area and the issues the Committee addressed in its Redfern/Waterloo inquiry.

Availability of services

- 3.17** Due to their relative isolation, low levels of car ownership and the cost of public transport, residents of the Macquarie Fields public housing estate are highly dependent on services provided in the estate and the immediate environs.¹⁰⁷ The Committee heard evidence that there is a lack of services in general in the Macquarie Fields area. Ms Jan Watson, Facilitator, Schools as Community Centres, noted that while money and services have been provided to the area over the years, it has not translated into consistent service provision. Ms Watson

¹⁰¹ Dr Col Gellatly, Director-General, Premier’s Department, Evidence 5 December 2005, p4

¹⁰² Ms Jane McIvor, Coordinator/Manager, Macarthur Community Forum, Evidence 7 April 2006, p51

¹⁰³ Ms Jo Alley, Policy Officer, UnitingCare Burnside, Evidence 12 December 2005, pp42-43, 45

¹⁰⁴ Mr Paul Power, Manager, Vincentian Social Action Centre, St Vincent de Paul Society, Evidence 13 December 2005, p 11

¹⁰⁵ Ms Jo Alley, Policy Officer, UnitingCare Burnside, Evidence 12 December 2005, p45

¹⁰⁶ Ms Jan Watson, Facilitator, Schools as Community Centres, Evidence 7 April 2006, p64

¹⁰⁷ Submission 20, St Vincent de Paul Society, p4

stated that in the 11 years she has been working in the region there has been a decrease rather than an increase in services.¹⁰⁸ Ms Jan Nicoll, Allawah House stated:

The services that are available in the whole Macarthur area, particularly Macquarie Fields, are not comparable to the needs. It is at a level now where I believe it is beyond crisis point.¹⁰⁹

3.18 This view was supported by Ms Bev Newitt, Principal, Guise Public School, who observed:

... the problems, as I see them, are growing bigger exponentially, whilst the services, the solutions, are getting weaker at the same time. It does not make sense. Commonsense would expect that if the need is greater, then the services would be greater.¹¹⁰

3.19 Mr Jioji Ravulo, Youth Offender Support Programs Team Leader, Mission Australia, noted in evidence that while services such as recreational centres may be available, they are not funded to provide programs that will engage people, particularly young people. Mr Ravulo stated that providing funding alone will not address the issues faced in Macquarie Fields; the programs and services must have an effective context within which to appeal to the community.¹¹¹

3.20 It is also noted that Macquarie Fields suffers from its geographical position, being on the northern fringes of Campbelltown, so in some instances it is seen as being part of Liverpool, even though its services are supplied by Campbelltown. The Committee heard that programs are often funded for the whole of the Macarthur region or the whole of the Campbelltown local government area and, due to the high level of need throughout the region, services often peter out before reaching Macquarie Fields at the northern end.¹¹²

3.21 In accordance with best practice principles, the provision of adequate and enhanced services and programs is a necessary component in addressing the social issues faced by the Macquarie Fields community. While there are a large number of services provided in Macquarie Fields, as listed in Appendix 4, it appears that they are not sufficient to address the increasing level of need in the community. The Committee recognises that the issues faced in Macquarie Fields are replicated in many other disadvantaged areas in NSW, and that funding and resources must be equitably distributed throughout all of these areas. The Committee believes, however, that the delivery of the services that are currently available in Macquarie Fields can be improved in part by addressing the issues of funding and coordination.

¹⁰⁸ Ms Jan Watson, Facilitator, Schools as Community Centres, Evidence – community forum, 13 December 2005, p3

¹⁰⁹ Ms Jan Nicoll, Allawah House, Evidence – community forum, 13 December 2005, p11

¹¹⁰ Ms Bev Newitt, Principal, Guise Public School, Evidence 13 December 2005, p29

¹¹¹ Mr Jioji Ravulo, Youth Offender Support Programs Team Leader, Mission Australia, Evidence 7 April 2006, pp23-24

¹¹² Ms Jan Watson, Facilitator, Schools as Community Centres, Evidence – community forum, 13 December 2005, p3

Funding

3.22 Funding issues and lack of resources emerged as key themes of the Inquiry, particularly with respect to the availability of adequate, recurrent funding, the short-term nature of funding and problems with coordination. As discussed in paragraph 3.8, best practice principles recommend long-term funding of programs providing continuing intervention.

Short-term and recurrent funding

3.23 The Committee received evidence from many organisations and community workers regarding the difficulties posed by the short-term, generally three year, nature of funding for programs from both the State and Federal Governments.¹¹³ Mr Paul Power, Manager, Vincentian Social Action Centre, St Vincent de Paul Society, observed:

... people who are most disadvantaged are less likely to benefit from short-term programs. The community programs that last for quite some time, and that also have great stability of employment of staff, which is a big issue within the welfare sector, are the ones that will make a difference ... Some of the funding programs that I have seen ... give organisations significant amounts of funds for two or three years to produce miracles. Certainly a lot of things can improve through good community projects of that kind, but if you really want to make a long-term difference you have to look at longer timeframes.¹¹⁴

3.24 Mr Power stated that a central problem is the belief that long-running, entrenched social issues can be turned around in a short space of time, with political timeframes not allowing for longer term funding of projects.¹¹⁵ Mr Doug Taylor, Head of Community Partnerships, Work Ventures noted in evidence:

There is no quick fix. We must commit to work with communities for the long haul and not pretend that problems created over decades can be fixed in the short term. Neither is there a silver bullet. Any solution will require multiple, integrated interventions covering social as well as economic development. All three sectors of our society are critical; that is government, business and the citizen sectors must play an active role along with the community.¹¹⁶

3.25 The nature of short-term funding also reduces the possibility of recurrent funding for successful programs. Ms Jane McIvor, Coordinator, Macarthur Community Forum commented, 'it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to get recurrent funding at the moment', which in turn makes it difficult to map and build the capacity of services in the area.¹¹⁷

¹¹³ Submission 5, Macarthur Greens, p1; Mr Paul Power, Manager, Vincentian Social Action Centre, St Vincent de Paul Society, Evidence 13 December 2005, p6

¹¹⁴ Mr Paul Power, Manager, Vincentian Social Action Centre, St Vincent de Paul Society, Evidence 13 December 2005, pp6, 8

¹¹⁵ Mr Paul Power, Manager, Vincentian Social Action Centre, St Vincent de Paul Society, Evidence 13 December 2005, p6

¹¹⁶ Mr Doug Taylor, Head of Community Partnerships, Work Ventures, Evidence 7 April 2006, p39

¹¹⁷ Ms Jan McIvor, Coordinator/Manager, Macarthur Community Forum, Evidence 7 April 2006, p52

3.26 The St Vincent de Paul Society commented:

Too often, services which have made a real difference to community life have been cut or have struggled from year to year with long-term funding remaining uncertain ... Local people find it difficult to believe that services such as these can be lost while the State Government is making public statements about its commitment to supporting the Macquarie Fields community.¹¹⁸

3.27 The Northern Campbelltown Community Action Group reiterated this point and noted 'residents believe community programs which have proven their value must be given priority in funding decisions. Too many worthwhile programs are given short-term funding only'.¹¹⁹**Building relationships with and engaging the community****3.28** During the Redfern/Waterloo inquiry the Committee examined the importance of implementing strategies that focus on building the capacity and cohesiveness of the community, and engaging the community.¹²⁰**3.29** One of the greatest problems faced by service providers arising out of uncertain funding is the reduced ability and time available in which to establish relationships with service users and engage the community in order for programs to be effective. Ms Jan Watson, Schools as Community Centres, commented that it took her two to three years of the 11 she has been working in the area to establish a positive, working relationship with the community. She observed:

... when you have different workers coming in for an afternoon one week, two-week initiatives or four weeks the community tend to sit back and say, 'who are you? What's your agenda? Why are you really here? Is this a flash in the pan and then you are going to disappear?', which is more often than not the case.¹²¹

3.30 This view was supported by Mr Bruce Sanders, Principal, James Meehan High School, who observed:

I know that people get sick of studies being made of them. It is true that there are lots of really good ideas, but the funding seems to come along and I have seen so many people come in and promise so much only to disappear a year later, and that is universally true ... programs need a three-to-five year lifespan because it takes a long time to establish the relationships [with the community].¹²²

¹¹⁸ Submission 20, St Vincent de Paul Society, p4

¹¹⁹ Submission 6, Northern Campbelltown Community Action Group, p2

¹²⁰ Standing Committee on Social Issues, *Inquiry into issues relating to Redfern and Waterloo – Final report* Report 34, December 2004

¹²¹ Ms Jan Watson, Facilitator, Schools as Community Centres, Evidence – community forum, 13 December 2005, p3

¹²² Mr Bruce Sanders, Principal, James Meehan High School, Evidence 13 December 2005, p34

3.31 The St Vincent de Paul Society stated in its submission:

Among residents, there is a strong sense that most of the government service provision and the government funding of community services is short-term. There is much local cynicism about government services and government-funded services making promises or creating expectations which are not met, because of funding uncertainty and changes in service provision. Key services which operated in the past in community development and family support have lost funding, had funding reduced or have lacked outside support at times of crisis.¹²³

3.32 The loss of valued services and programs can have a devastating effect on the community and increase cynicism and distrust.¹²⁴ This point was frequently raised during the Inquiry as residents of Macquarie Fields faced losing two of their most prominent, successful and highly regarded programs: Schools as Community Centres (early intervention program for families with children aged 0 to eight years) and Primary Connect (support program for families with primary school aged children) as set out in the following case study.

Case study

Two successful and highly regarded programs in the Macquarie Fields area, namely the Primary Connect Program and the Schools as Community Centres Program, experienced funding issues during the course of the Inquiry.

The Schools as Community Centres is based at the local Curran Public School and has run successfully for 11 years, with funding being provided on an annual or biennial basis. Funding for this program is due to cease in June 2006. The program runs parenting programs, toy and book libraries, nutrition and lifestyle programs, and programs on communication and conflict resolution, however, it has had to reduce services due to funding restrictions. As one submission noted, 'the program runs on the smell of an oily rag but manages to see 60-80 families each week'.¹²⁵ Ms Watson, the facilitator of the program, explained that it is funded for her position only, without any program funding, and her role is to organise partnerships with other agencies in order to provide the 25 or 30 programs that are available.¹²⁶ Without the program and Ms Watson's work coordinating all of these programs it will difficult for them to continue to provide consistent services to the community.

Primary Connect has operated out of the Guise Public School for the past several years, running a large number of school holiday and after school programs, parenting support workshops and groups and programs for women and children, in partnership with other organisations. Funding for this program was scheduled to cease in December 2005, however a funding extension was granted immediately prior to its scheduled finishing date. In discussing the program its coordinator, Ms Fiona Bishop, stated that there was a great deal of distress, particularly for the families who were actively involved, at the prospect of the program being cancelled. The members of the community who were actively involved in the program also felt that they were losing their sense of empowerment, and the stability and backing they needed in order to be involved in organising events for the community.¹²⁷

¹²³ Submission 20, St Vincent de Paul Society, p4

¹²⁴ Ms Jo Alley, Policy Officer, UnitingCare Burnside, Evidence 12 December 2005, p42

¹²⁵ Submission 15, Macquarie Fields Women's Action Group, p3

¹²⁶ Ms Jan Watson, Facilitator, Schools as Community Centres, Evidence 7 April 2006, p67

¹²⁷ Ms Fiona Bishop, Coordinator, Primary Connect, Evidence – community forum, 13 December 2005, p5

The programs were described during the Inquiry as having achieved major positive outcomes, including trust and cooperation between home and school; partnerships developed with both government and non-government providers; access to on-site service provision for families, the establishment of a safe community space that is used for a variety of purposes; greater participation and involvement in school life and activities; empowerment and support for families working on projects to improve their school and local community; improved educational opportunities, and improved student and family welfare; reduced violence in the school and playground; support and counselling in crisis situations; school improvements, such as gardens, displays, and parent helpers; and the development of exit strategies.¹²⁸

- 3.33** In his research into disadvantaged areas, Professor Vinson provides details of a case study in which a disadvantaged community underwent a renewal program. The key elements for the success of the program were genuine community involvement, through committees, less formal working parties and informal consultations, community ownership of the program (residents reported feeling empowered by being asked to be involved), recognising the existing assets of the community, and building the skills and knowledge of local people.¹²⁹
- 3.34** In evidence Ms Watson praised the Macquarie Fields residents as being part of a proactive and committed community, who are working to strengthen the community and make it an environment in which they wish to live and raise their children.¹³⁰
- 3.35** The Committee notes with interest the operation of agencies such as Work Ventures, which has been effective in engaging members of the community in business development. Work Ventures is a not for profit organisation that operates commercial and community activities, by working in partnerships to create sustainable, income generating activities. Work Ventures operates, in partnership with Microsoft, a connect centre in Macquarie Fields to provide IT access and training to residents, as well as employment training programs. Many Work Ventures operations are funded through its commercial IT repair business, which started out as a small employment training program for disadvantaged people, teaching them how to repair computers, and has grown to a business with a large annual turnover that employs people from disadvantaged backgrounds.¹³¹

Lack of community consultation in decision-making processes

- 3.36** Many members of the Macquarie Fields community, particularly the residents of the public housing estate, feel that decisions are taken on a governmental level and the community is not involved in that decision making process. This point was highlighted by Ms Michelle White, Salvation Army, who advised that certain buildings on the public housing estate, located directly across the road from the Salvation Army community centre and near its child care centre, were being demolished. Ms White stated that notices were posted advising that the buildings contained asbestos, and that the demolition crew were wearing protective suits, but

¹²⁸ Ms Bev Newitt, Principal, Guise Public School, Evidence 13 December 2005, p30

¹²⁹ Professor Tony Vinson, *Community adversity and resilience: the distribution of social disadvantage in Victoria and NSW and the mediating role of social cohesion*, March 2004, The Ignatius Centre for social policy and research, pp18-22

¹³⁰ Ms Jan Watson, Facilitator, Schools as Community Centres, Evidence 7 April 2006, p62

¹³¹ Mr Doug Taylor, Head of Community Partnerships, Work Ventures, Evidence 7 April 2006, p41

that the local neighbourhood had not been advised or consulted about the demolition or the possible health risks. Ms White noted that residents commented to her ‘they probably just think it is Macquarie Fields so it does not matter’.¹³²

- 3.37** Mr Power, St Vincent de Paul Society, explained the success experienced in one of the other public housing estates whereby people who lived in the area were involved in the decision making process wherever possible, in order to increase the sense of social ownership and provide options for people to become involved in volunteering.¹³³ He stated:

While government decision makers might focus on broad community consultation in offices and halls, we have found over the years that the most effective way is to do it through lunches, barbecues and informal discussions, and by encouraging individuals to run with their ideas.¹³⁴

- 3.38** Mr Power stated there needs to be a more serious connection to, and more serious research regarding, the needs of the community for which programs and funding are intended.¹³⁵ This view was supported by Mr Kim Fillingham, Regional Director, South-Western Sydney, Department of Education and Training, who noted:

One of the risks is that there are lots of beautiful ideas that come out of the woodwork where people are very well meaning and want to bring them in. But they do not necessarily meet the specific needs of that particular group.¹³⁶

- 3.39** Local service providers also feel that they are excluded from the decision making process, to the detriment of the services provided. Ms McIvor, Macarthur Community Forum, observed that recent interventions from the Department of Community Services were at a State level, which meant that there was little knowledge of local networks, what organisations already existed and the presence of duplicative programs.¹³⁷

- 3.40** Given the length of time and effort required to build up supportive and trusting relationships with the community, many organisations felt that rather than introducing new programs to sceptical residents, it is sometimes more beneficial to top up existing services that have established the necessary rapport and can be built upon.¹³⁸

¹³² Ms Michelle White, Salvation Army, Evidence – community forum, 13 December 2005, p5

¹³³ Mr Paul Power, Manager, Vincentian Social Action Centre, St Vincent de Paul Society, Evidence 13 December 2005, p9

¹³⁴ Mr Paul Power, Manager, Vincentian Social Action Centre, St Vincent de Paul Society, Evidence 13 December 2005, p10

¹³⁵ Mr Paul Power, Manager, Vincentian Social Action Centre, St Vincent de Paul Society, Evidence 13 December 2005, p8

¹³⁶ Mr Kim Fillingham, Regional Director, South-Western Sydney, Department of Education and Training, Evidence 7 April 2006, p38

¹³⁷ Ms Jane McIvor, Coordinator/Manager, Macarthur Community Forum, Evidence 7 April 2006, p55

¹³⁸ Submission 13, The Junction Works Inc, p6; Submission 15, Macquarie Fields Women’s Action Group, p4

- 3.41** The Committee notes that the community uses and values many of the programs that are available, and that their cessation is to the detriment of users of the services and the larger community. The Committee also notes the desire of residents to be involved in the decision making processes and the strengths in the community identified by residents, including the very actively involved schools, people assisting each other, the lack of racism, the number of service providers in the area, and interest from local business and sporting groups in developing new opportunities. One community member is quoted as commenting ‘people are pretty resourceful once you show them their strengths’.¹³⁹ Many organisations are focusing on equipping and supporting local people in developing the sorts of things they would like to see in their community and encouraging volunteer outreach to allow people to feel that they are represented in their community.¹⁴⁰
- 3.42** Means of engaging the community and ensuring an adequate consultative process are in place are addressed at the end of this Chapter.

Coordination of funding and programs

- 3.43** Problems in coordinating funding were frequently highlighted during the Inquiry. Many organisations receive their funding from multiple sources, for example, Macarthur Youth Commitment informed the Committee that it receives both Federal and State funding from various different agencies.¹⁴¹
- 3.44** The lack of collaboration between State and Federal Government agencies in providing funding to organisations can result in numerous agencies operating duplicative programs, difficulties in mapping and coordinating services on the ground, and additional demands placed on already overstretched community workers in keeping up with the various organisations and partnerships.¹⁴² Agencies are also required to spend a great deal of time on funding submissions and applications, with one witness observing ‘you are spending all your time writing submissions, which becomes painful’.¹⁴³ It was also noted that there is often no clear information as to where and when funding will be available, with organisations relying on local papers and the internet to find out, with one witness stating ‘you have to run from pillar to post to find out what funding is coming out’.¹⁴⁴ Mr Power, St Vincent de Paul Society, stated in evidence that governments frequently develop particular funding programs that are ‘flavour of the month’ and organisations hoping to obtain funding for programs are forced to try to match their programs accordingly, even if it does not necessarily reflect the needs of the

¹³⁹ Submission 18, UnitingCare Burnside, p24

¹⁴⁰ Mr Paul Power, Manager, Vincentian Social Action Centre, St Vincent de Paul Society, Evidence 13 December 2005, p4

¹⁴¹ Mr Adrian Parente, Macarthur Youth Commitment, Evidence – community forum, 13 December 2005, p2

¹⁴² Ms Jane McIvor, Coordinator/Manager, Macarthur Community Forum, Evidence 7 April 2006, p50

¹⁴³ Mr Bruce Sanders, Principal, James Meehan High School, Evidence 13 December 2005, p34

¹⁴⁴ Ms Jane McIvor, Coordinator/Manager, Macarthur Community Forum, Evidence 7 April 2006, p52, 54

community.¹⁴⁵ The St Vincent de Paul Society also stated that state and local government services in or near the Macquarie Fields area have been heavily affected by constantly changing government funding priorities.¹⁴⁶

3.45 Mr Power believed a review of funding strategy needs to take place, so that locally run community services are given the support they need to avert long-term difficulties, and to ensure that small, locally managed organisations that do not have the same resources as large, professionally run agencies, are still funded and involved in supporting community needs.¹⁴⁷

3.46 Ms Alley, UnitingCare Burnside, noted in evidence that the non-government organisations are effective in reaching disadvantaged populations, in that they have the right sort of outreach and soft entry points, such as the mobile playgroups that are very non-threatening for residents to access, but are constrained by lack of resources.¹⁴⁸

3.47 The Committee heard evidence that there is a very strong commitment among service providers in Macquarie Fields to provide the best services possible by taking a coordinated and collaborative approach. Ms Deborah Hinchcliffe, Coordinator, UnitingCare Burnside, advised that most of the programs Burnside operates in Macquarie Fields are provided in partnership, which enables better services to be provided to a greater number of people:

A large number of the service providers in Macquarie Fields are poorly funded and resourced, and are often very small services or may just comprise one staff member. Working in partnership is often the most effective means of delivering services and programs, and for some of them it is about their survival or their sustainability into the future.¹⁴⁹

3.48 It was noted, however, that most local agencies do not have the resources to dedicate a position to planning and coordinating local interventions, leaving over-stretched staff to assume the time-consuming and work-heavy task of creating and maintaining partnerships.¹⁵⁰ Further difficulty is faced if, during a partnership venture, one of the partners loses funding or closes, as has occurred recently in Macquarie Fields, with seven programs having been discontinued.¹⁵¹ Difficulties are also created by the differing Federal, State and local Government service boundaries.¹⁵²

3.49 In discussing the collaboration between organisations, Mr Taylor, Work Ventures, observed that an adequately resourced and funded place management program can optimise partnerships between organisations:

¹⁴⁵ Mr Paul Power, Manager, Vincentian Social Action Centre, St Vincent de Paul Society, Evidence 13 December 2005, p4

¹⁴⁶ Submission 20, St Vincent de Paul Society, p4

¹⁴⁷ Mr Paul Power, Manager, Vincentian Social Action Centre, St Vincent de Paul Society, Evidence 13 December 2005, p11

¹⁴⁸ Ms Jo Alley, Policy Officer, UnitingCare Burnside, Evidence 12 December 2005, pp42-43

¹⁴⁹ Ms Deborah Hinchcliffe, Coordinator, UnitingCare Burnside, Evidence 12 December 2005, p41

¹⁵⁰ Submission 18, UnitingCare Burnside, p25

¹⁵¹ Ms Jo Alley, Policy Officer, UnitingCare Burnside, Evidence 12 December 2005, p42

¹⁵² Mr Paul Tosi, General Manager, Campbelltown City Council, Evidence 12 December 2006, p30

... there has been good collaboration amongst agencies in Macquarie Fields for some time. But it could realise its potential a lot more with dedicated resources to manage and co-ordinate it ... if collaboration is everybody's responsibility, in effect, it becomes nobody's responsibility. Having a dedicated resource, whether it is through a lead agency or a funded program, makes a significant difference.¹⁵³

- 3.50** Two local groups currently provide a focus for collaboration. The Northern Campbelltown Community Action Group is supported by the Department of Housing and is a network of local residents and agencies ensuring that there is active community participation in issues and services within the area. The Macquarie Fields-Ingleburn-Glenfield Interagency group works to consistently develop partnerships and improve communication between nearly all of the organisations that provide services directly into the Macquarie Fields public housing estate, as well as reviewing services to identify outstanding areas of need, and organising local activities. It was described as being a very strong, active and cohesive group.¹⁵⁴

Coordination of government agencies

- 3.51** With respect to government programs the Campbelltown City Council stated in its submission that there is a need for better coordination between government agencies at all levels in the planning, funding and delivery of services. To this end the Council chairs the Campbelltown Coordination Group, comprising government service agencies at all levels, to improve coordination and collaboration.¹⁵⁵ Mr Paul Tosi, General Manager, Campbelltown City Council, advised in evidence that the Coordination Group benefits from having the Council operating at a local level and being aware of issues facing the community, that it can then raise with the other levels of government. Mr Tosi described it as a well-attended and useful forum.¹⁵⁶
- 3.52** The Coordination Group operates under the Council's Social Plan 2004-2009. Ms Jo Alley, UnitingCare Burnside, described in evidence Burnside's involvement in developing the plan and noted that it appeared that significant progress had been made in each of the nine identified focus areas for the Campbelltown region, particularly with respect to crime and safety, health, employment, education and training, and strengthening local communities.¹⁵⁷
- 3.53** It is noted that in certain areas, such as education, there is also a high degree of coordination between government agencies and non-government organisations, particularly with respect to the large number of programs run out of the three main schools, many of which have been operating for many years. As noted in Chapter 2, much of this coordination is testament to the dedication of the staff of the schools and agencies involved.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵³ Mr Doug Taylor, Head of Community Partnerships, Work Ventures, Evidence 7 April 2006, p46

¹⁵⁴ Ms Jane McIvor, Coordinator/Manager, Macarthur Community Forum, Evidence 7 April 2006, p51

¹⁵⁵ Submission 12, Campbelltown City Council, p3

¹⁵⁶ Mr Paul Tosi, General Manager, Campbelltown City Council, Evidence 12 December 2006, pp28-29

¹⁵⁷ Ms Jo Alley, Policy Officer, UnitingCare Burnside, Evidence 12 December 2005, p44

¹⁵⁸ Mr Kim Fillingham, Regional Director, South-Western Sydney, Department of Education and Training, Evidence 7 April 2006, p33

Conclusion

- 3.54** The Committee believes that the most effective way to address the social issues faced in Macquarie Fields, in accordance with best practice principles, is through a place-based approach, as recommended in the Redfern/Waterloo inquiry and set out in the Macquarie Fields Community Action Plan 2005-2006.
- 3.55** The Committee recalls its discussion during the Redfern/Waterloo inquiry of the need for the coordination of the broad range of services in the area, in order for partnerships between government and non-government agencies to reach their full potential and to ensure the delivery of services in the most integrated and comprehensive manner possible. The Committee notes that coordination and collaboration will be particularly beneficial in ensuring that services meet the requirements of the community, as the locally based agencies are best placed to assess need and communicate that to the government agencies. Effective partnerships will also assist the smaller agencies to continue their valuable work.
- 3.56** The Committee recognises the difficulties posed by the current short-term funding structure used by the State and Federal Governments, particularly as the Federal Government is increasingly providing direct funding to agencies. These difficulties include the burden of constant tendering by agencies for funding, the lack of recurrent funding, the loss of successful programs, and the loss of consistency in services. The Committee recommends that the funding structure be reviewed in conjunction with local agencies.
- 3.57** The Committee recognises the criticism of the consultation process with respect to the Community Action Plan to date, and the importance of actively involving the community in decision-making processes. The Committee recalls its discussion from the Redfern/Waterloo inquiry of the importance of ensuring an effective communication strategy is in place,¹⁵⁹ and recommends that community consultation be a matter of priority in implementing the Action Plan and in the making of any other decisions relating to the Macquarie Fields area.
- 3.58** As with the Redfern/Waterloo area, the Committee recognises the value of community development programs to engage residents in community life and engender a sense of pride and ownership of changes within the area. The Committee recognises that many such programs are already being carried out and encourages all agencies, particularly government agencies, to continue to resource and implement such programs to develop community pride and help to remove the stigma attached to Macquarie Fields.
- 3.59** The Committee recalls its examination in Chapter 2 of issues specific to young people and recommends that the provision of greater facilities and services to the local youth be a priority.
- 3.60** The Committee also believes that targets should be set to address indices of social disadvantage, with explicit plans for how this will be achieved. Longitudinal studies need to be created to look at the probability of certain outcomes, given the different indices of

¹⁵⁹ Standing Committee on Social Issues, *'Inquiry into issues relating to Redfern and Waterloo - Interim report'*, Report 32, August 2004, pp29-30

disadvantage as defined by Professor Tony Vinson.¹⁶⁰ From its previous inquiries the Committee is aware of the evidence to indicate the effectiveness of preventive action to address the root causes of social disadvantage, as compared to inaction and to strategies that focus on end points such as crime. We consider that research should be undertaken to establish the real costs to the government and the community of preventive action to address social disadvantage, versus later remedial action.

- 3.61** The Committee recognises that the issues raised and recommendations made in this Chapter are not exclusive to Macquarie Fields, and should be borne in mind in dealings with other areas of social disadvantage in NSW. All of the recommendations address issues relevant to Macquarie Fields, and recommendations 7 to 9 are also applicable to the provision of services throughout communities in NSW.
-

Recommendation 1

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

Recommendation 2

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

Recommendation 3

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

Recommendation 4

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

¹⁶⁰ Professor Tony Vinson, *Community adversity and resilience: the distribution of social disadvantage in Victoria and NSW and the mediating role of social cohesion*, The Ignatius Centre for social policy and research, Melbourne, March 2004

Recommendation 5

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

Recommendation 6

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

Recommendation 7

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

Recommendation 8

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

Recommendation 9

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

Chapter 4 Policing in the Macquarie Fields area

This chapter will address Terms of Reference 1 and 4, namely policing strategies and resources in Macquarie Fields and the lessons learned from the Redfern/Waterloo Inquiry and the Coburn report. The Coburn report, which was issued in July 2004, details the internal police review of the incidents that occurred in Redfern/Waterloo in February 2003.

Macquarie Fields Local Area Command

- 4.1** Macquarie Fields local area command (“LAC”) is a level one command (of which there are 14 out of 80 commands in NSW), whereby the command deals with significant amounts of crime, and has a different rank structure, being headed by a Chief Inspector as opposed to an Inspector and having senior sergeants in key positions.¹⁶¹
- 4.2** The Macquarie Fields local area command covers an area of 84 square kilometres and a population of 77,634, encompassing 13 complete suburbs and parts of seven other suburbs. The LAC contains three large public housing estates and a number of smaller ones, and the residents of these estates comprise 24% of the population of the command.¹⁶² As previously discussed in Chapter 3, Macquarie Fields faces a range of socio-economic issues including low income and high unemployment.
- 4.3** The Macquarie Fields public housing estate, where the disturbances took place, comprises 1,408 high-density houses, within an area of less than 2.2 square kilometres. The estate is centred in Eucalyptus Drive, which is an irregular circular road with 13 streets directly running of it and 31 cul-de-sacs, and numerous pedestrian access routes linking the two. The estate contains ten parks or reserves within, and three on its boundaries. The area is described as having very poor street and common area lighting.¹⁶³ Attached as Appendix 3 is a map of the public housing estate area.

Nature of crime in Macquarie Fields LAC

- 4.4** Superintendent Stuart Wilkins, Local Area Commander, Macquarie Fields, NSW Police, observed in evidence that ‘crime is on a downturn’ in the Macquarie Fields LAC.¹⁶⁴ This downturn has been attributed to the proactive police work that has been done in the area since the time of the disturbances in February 2005.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶¹ Superintendent Stuart Wilkins, Local Area Commander, Macquarie Fields, NSW Police, Evidence 13 December 2005, p15

¹⁶² Office of the Deputy Commissioner of Police (Operations), ‘*Final report into Macquarie Fields Public Order Management Incidents*’, June 2005, pp11-12

¹⁶³ Office of the Deputy Commissioner of Police (Operations), ‘*Final report into Macquarie Fields Public Order Management Incidents*’, June 2005, p14

¹⁶⁴ Superintendent Stuart Wilkins, Local Area Commander, Macquarie Fields, NSW Police, Evidence 13 December 2005, p15

¹⁶⁵ Commissioner Ken Moroney, NSW Police, Evidence 5 December 2005, p32

4.5 The main areas of crime are set out below, including the difference in incidents between January to April 2004, and January to April 2005, and State ranking out of the 80 local area commands (where the lower the number the lower the crime), where applicable:

- Break and enter – reduced by 25%; ranked 22nd in the State
- Robbery – reduced by 21%; ranked 14th in the State
- Stealing – remained on the same level; ranked 46th in the State
- Stolen vehicles – reduced by 18%; ranked 30th in the State
- Assaults – slightly increased; ranked 19th in the State
- Drug detection – reduced by 58%
- Person searches – four times higher
- Move on directions – four times higher.¹⁶⁶

4.6 The Committee recognises that residents in the LAC experience a significant level of crime and also of anti-social behaviour. The Committee notes the comment made by Mr Michael Weston:

Maybe it would be interesting to look at other areas like social disorder. By this I mean crimes that generally go unreported or have low reporting rates. Such things as: street brawls; malicious damage (vandalism/graffiti); riots; public drunkenness; offensive behaviour; anti-social behaviour.¹⁶⁷

Domestic violence

4.7 The Macquarie Fields LAC attends to almost 200 domestic violence disputes per month, which is twice the recorded average for NSW. Almost half of the reported assaults within the Macquarie Fields command have a domestic violence background, many of them fuelled by alcohol and drugs.¹⁶⁸ Macquarie Fields LAC has a domestic violence liaison officer who is part of the crime management unit of the LAC, which forms across the board responses and strategies to deal with crime.¹⁶⁹

4.8 The Macquarie Fields LAC is involved in the pilot *Domestic Violence Intervention Court Model*, which aims to improve the response of agencies to domestic violence offences at each stage of the criminal justice process.¹⁷⁰ Senior Constable Sarah Clark, Domestic Violence Liaison Officer, Macquarie Fields, NSW Police, explained that the program is designed to deal with

¹⁶⁶ Superintendent Stuart Wilkins, Local Area Commander, Macquarie Fields, NSW Police, Evidence 13 December 2005, pp14-15; Office of the Deputy Commissioner of Police (Operations), *Final report into Macquarie Fields Public Order Management Incidents*, June 2005, pp16-20

¹⁶⁷ Submission 2, Mr Michael Weston, p4

¹⁶⁸ Deputy Commissioner Andrew Scipione, Field Operations, NSW Police, Evidence 5 December 2005, p23

¹⁶⁹ Assistant Commissioner Denis Clifford, Regional Commander, Greater Metropolitan Region, NSW Police, Evidence 5 December 2005, p29

¹⁷⁰ Submission 19, Cabinet Office NSW, p43

domestic violence matters quickly through the court, by carefully documenting victims' injuries through photographic evidence, to ensure an early guilty plea by the perpetrator. The program operates in close liaison with the Victims Advocacy Group, which ensures that victims have the correct referrals and services they need.¹⁷¹

- 4.9 The police also work in conjunction with the Department of Community Services in the joint investigation and response team model that investigates physical and sexual abuse of children when it is thought that the investigation might lead to criminal charges being laid.¹⁷²

Staffing at Macquarie Fields Local Area Command

- 4.10 The Macquarie Fields LAC was noted to be typical of other commands within the Greater Metropolitan Region in relation to staffing numbers. At the time of the disturbances in February 2005 the LAC had an authorised strength of 156 officers, with 159 officers actually attached to the command.¹⁷³
- 4.11 Superintendent Wilkins explained that while the authorised strength of the command is 156 officers, this figure varies on an almost daily basis due to promotions and transfers, maternity and sickness leave, and secondments to other agencies. Superintendent Wilkins estimated that there would be approximately 130 officers on the ground and available at any given time in the LAC, which is comparable to other commands in NSW.¹⁷⁴
- 4.12 The general minimum tenure of an officer's service at any police station throughout NSW is three years. Superintendent Wilkins observed that the officers stationed at Macquarie Fields had a range of experience from 22 years down to less than five years, as well as probationary constables from the police academy, with officers having been stationed at the LAC for 15 years down to months. He stated that Macquarie Fields is similar to any other command in NSW in terms of staffing numbers, experience and turnover.¹⁷⁵
- 4.13 Of the general duties staff stationed at the LAC at the time of the incidents, 76% had less than five years of service.¹⁷⁶ The *Final Report into Macquarie Fields Public Order Management Incidents* (the "Police review report") noted that, at the time of the report, the proportion of officers

¹⁷¹ Senior Constable Sarah Clark, Domestic Violence Liaison Officer, Macquarie Fields, NSW Police, Evidence 13 December 2005, p17

¹⁷² Ms Annette Gallard, Deputy Director General Operations, Department of Community Services, Evidence 12 December 2005, p71

¹⁷³ Assistant Commissioner Denis Clifford, Regional Commander, Greater Metropolitan Region, NSW Police, Evidence 5 December 2005, p21

¹⁷⁴ Superintendent Stuart Wilkins, Local Area Commander, Macquarie Fields, NSW Police, Evidence 13 December 2005, p14

¹⁷⁵ Superintendent Stuart Wilkins, Local Area Commander, Macquarie Fields, NSW Police, Evidence 13 December 2005, p14

¹⁷⁶ Assistant Commissioner Denis Clifford, Regional Commander, Greater Metropolitan Region, NSW Police, Evidence 5 December 2005, p21

with less than five years experience at Macquarie Fields was 45%.¹⁷⁷ Assistant Commissioner Denis Clifford, Regional Commander, Greater Metropolitan Region, NSW Police, noted in evidence that the numbers of less experienced officers attached to any LAC fluctuate throughout the year.¹⁷⁸ Commissioner Moroney, NSW Police, stated that a further issue relevant to the numbers of probationary constables, in the context of their learning experience, is that their average age is currently 28.5 years, which allows them to bring a range of life skills to the position that was not previously the case.¹⁷⁹ The issues of experience and training will be further addressed in the section concerning lessons learned from the Redfern/Waterloo Inquiry and the Coburn report.

- 4.14** Mr Bob Pritchard, President, NSW Police Association, stated that due to officers from local area commands being seconded to other groups and agencies within the police, it is difficult to place enough police on the street for front-line policing within the respective LACs. The Police Association believed that the numbers of police needed to be increased throughout NSW.¹⁸⁰ Commissioner Moroney addressed this issue:

... the solutions for a Macquarie Fields type community are not solely rested in more police and more police and more police. There are so many issues there. I agree, though, with the tenor of the questions that the police certainly have a vital role to play in bringing about significant change.¹⁸¹

- 4.15** Superintendent Wilkins stated 'the numbers we run on the street and the cars we deploy on a daily basis are appropriate'.¹⁸²

Specialist officers

- 4.16** Every LAC has specialist police officers in place to deal with specific areas or issues. Of particular note in the Macquarie Fields LAC are the youth liaison officer and domestic violence liaison officer. As well as the training received at the academy and during their careers the specialist officers receive training in their particular area of expertise. These specialist officers comprise part of the crime management unit, which takes a whole-of-command approach to such issues, as well as interacting with government and non-government agencies.¹⁸³

¹⁷⁷ Office of the Deputy Commissioner of Police (Operations), *'Final report into Macquarie Fields Public Order Management Incidents'*, June 2005, p15

¹⁷⁸ Assistant Commissioner Denis Clifford, Regional Commander, Greater Metropolitan Region, NSW Police, Evidence 5 December 2005, p22

¹⁷⁹ Commissioner Ken Moroney, NSW Police, Evidence 5 December 2005, p22

¹⁸⁰ Mr Bob Pritchard, President, NSW Police Association, Evidence 12 December 2005, p51

¹⁸¹ Commissioner Ken Moroney, NSW Police, Evidence 5 December 2005, p42

¹⁸² Superintendent Stuart Wilkins, Local Area Commander, NSW Police, Macquarie Fields, Evidence 13 December 2005, p16

¹⁸³ Assistant Commander Denis Clifford, Regional Commander, Greater Metropolitan Region, NSW Police, Evidence 5 December 2005, pp24, 25

- 4.17 NSW Police also introduced in August 2005 an induction package for probationary constables training them in youth issues and cultural awareness issues relevant to the various LACs in NSW.¹⁸⁴
- 4.18 It was noted in evidence that officers specialising in domestic violence and youth liaison can achieve a highest ranking office of senior constable.¹⁸⁵

Policing strategies in Macquarie Fields

- 4.19 This section will examine the relationship between police and the Macquarie Fields community, with particular reference to young people. Factors related to the interaction between police and the community contributed in part to the disturbances. The Committee notes that the majority of the residents of Macquarie Fields were not involved in the disturbances, and that out of a population of over 13,000 people only a small number were arrested in connection with the disturbances.

Relationship with the community

- 4.20 The relationship between the police and certain segments of the Macquarie Fields community has traditionally been strained. Ms Jan Nicoll, Allawah House, commented that in the past there was a frequent turnover in the position of Local Area Commander, which contributed to a lack of cohesion with the community and did not provide an opportunity to build a relationship of familiarity and trust. Ms Nicoll stated that this led to a culture of ‘the police and the policed’, which was the basis of a negative relationship.¹⁸⁶ The Macquarie Fields Women’s Action Group believed that many of the police stationed at Macquarie Fields lacked a cultural awareness of the difficult social issues and stresses facing residents.¹⁸⁷ UnitingCare Burnside cited responses it had had from residents highlighting the strained relationship between sections of the community and the police. The submission stated that many residents perceive that police have neglected their community, that policing in the area is erratic and aggressive and that there is an unwillingness to respond to call-outs.¹⁸⁸

Effect of the disturbances

- 4.21 Many of the residents of Macquarie Fields who lived in the area affected by the disturbances reported that living through the disturbances was like ‘being in a war zone’ and that they were all treated like criminals. There has also been continued negativity towards the police, contributing to a poor relationship between some residents and the LAC.¹⁸⁹ This relationship

¹⁸⁴ Assistant Commander Denis Clifford, Regional Commander, Greater Metropolitan Region, NSW Police, Evidence 5 December 2005, p26

¹⁸⁵ Senior Constable Sarah Clark, Domestic Violence Liaison Officer, Macquarie Fields, NSW Police, Evidence 13 December 2005, p17

¹⁸⁶ Ms Jan Nicoll, Allawah House, Evidence – community forum, 13 December 2005, p11

¹⁸⁷ Submission 15, Macquarie Fields Women’s Action Group, p1

¹⁸⁸ Submission 18, UnitingCare Burnside, p13

¹⁸⁹ Submission 6, Northern Campbelltown Community Action Group, pp1-3

has been exacerbated by the fact that many residents, and particularly children, continue to suffer untreated trauma and distress since the disturbances. One nine-year-old child is reported as saying ‘the helicopter lights came on my window and I thought they were going to shoot me’.¹⁹⁰ Ms Deborah Hinchcliffe, Coordinator, UnitingCare Burnside, commented on the impact of the disturbances upon the community:

The public disturbances in Macquarie Fields have had an absolutely devastating impact on that community. Immediately after the disturbances my program worked with a large number of families in the area, most of which were suffering from symptoms of trauma. The immediate presenting issues from most of these families included fear and anxiety of further violence and disturbances, disturbed sleep and behaviour patterns for their children, issues of grief and loss, children and young people refusing to attend school or being fearful to attend school, increased violent behaviour from children, and children and young people using violence as a problem-solving strategy.¹⁹¹

- 4.22** Mr Bruce Sanders, Principal, James Meehan High School, stated that immediately after the disturbances there was a decline in the level of community support for the police, due to the perceived use of heavy-handed tactics by the non-local police who attended the disturbances. Mr Sanders commented that it took the local police some time to overcome the damage caused to the local relationship.¹⁹²

Relationship since the disturbances

- 4.23** Commissioner Moroney believed that the relationship between the police and the Macquarie Fields community had improved since the disturbances, and commented that ‘the overwhelming majority of people in that community and in the nearby communities have a strong working relationship with the police’.¹⁹³ Superintendent Wilkins advised that the police now consult considerably with the community and that he serves on a number of committees, including the local non-government organisation interagency group (Macquarie Fields-Ingelburn-Glenfield group).¹⁹⁴ Superintendent Wilkins stated:

My push is to put us out in the community and to have the cops on the street all the time, so it is not unusual to see the police in the Macquarie Fields environment.¹⁹⁵

- 4.24** Commissioner Moroney commented on the importance of working with the community to resolve law and order issues, and provided the example of a murder that had occurred in the nearby area of Minto. Commissioner Moroney stated that the circumstances surrounding the murder could have evolved into a serious situation, but the local police and community elders and leaders were able to stem the potential for violence by working together to address the

¹⁹⁰ Submission 8, Ms Jan Nicoll, p8

¹⁹¹ Ms Deborah Hinchcliffe, Coordinator, UnitingCare Burnside, Evidence 12 December 2005, p49

¹⁹² Mr Bruce Sanders, Principal, James Meehan High School, Evidence 13 December 2005, p29

¹⁹³ Commissioner Ken Moroney, NSW Police, Evidence 5 December 2005, p34

¹⁹⁴ Superintendent Stuart Wilkins, Local Area Commander, Macquarie Fields, NSW Police, Evidence 13 December 2005, p19

¹⁹⁵ Superintendent Stuart Wilkins, Local Area Commander, Macquarie Fields, NSW Police, Evidence 13 December 2005, p18

issues raised.¹⁹⁶ Superintendent Wilkins emphasised the importance of giving the community some of the ownership of the problems in the area and consulting with the community to resolve issues faced.¹⁹⁷

4.25 The Committee heard evidence that since the disturbances the police have been building relationships with the local community, and that there has been an improvement in community relations, due to active police involvement in community activities, such as barbecues and expos, and the efforts of Mr Chris Cotter, youth liaison officer, in introducing new officers to the community and the young people. The efforts of the Local Area Commander, Superintendent Wilkins, have been praised, however, witnesses highlighted the importance of having the commander remain in the position for a significant period of time, as frequent changes in command cause instability for the community.¹⁹⁸ Witnesses also felt it important that the police receive training for working in disadvantaged areas.¹⁹⁹

4.26 Ms Alley, UnitingCare Burnside commented on the relationship between police and the local community:

... in terms of best practice principles around public housing and crime prevention, it is really important that the police develop good relationships with local residents and that they are seen to be proactive in their policing. Recently there has been a new local area commander [Mr Wilkins] appointed to Macquarie Fields and there seems to be some positive steps in the direction. For example, he has undertaken cultural awareness training with police officers and has started initiatives to build police relationships with young people.²⁰⁰

Relationship with local young people

4.27 Macquarie Fields LAC has a dedicated Youth Liaison Officer, Senior Constable Chris Cotter, who is held in high regard by the community. Senior Constable Cotter described his role as providing a vital link that assists the youth of the area to understand what the police do and why. Senior Constable Cotter commented:

A lot of them have the inability to understand why they have been moved on and why they have been asked to do certain things as part of our duties in responding to calls from the community that a certain incident is happening at a certain location. They fail to understand who has complained about that and how it has come about. They always see the police coming and asking them to move along. It is a linkage that affords me the opportunity to get out into the community to discuss some of these issues and put to rest some of the problems in regard to our policing issues. It gives them a voice ... I try to liaise with the kids and the schools ... to explain why we do

¹⁹⁶ Commissioner Ken Moroney, NSW Police, Evidence 5 December 2005, p33

¹⁹⁷ Superintendent Stuart Wilkins, Local Area Commander, NSW Police, Macquarie Fields, Evidence 13 December 2005, p19

¹⁹⁸ Ms Jan Watson, Facilitator, Schools as Community Centres, Evidence 7 April 2006, p75

¹⁹⁹ Ms Jane McIvor, Coordinator/Manager, Macarthur Community Forum, Evidence 7 April 2005, p58

²⁰⁰ Ms Jo Alley, Policy Officer, UnitingCare Burnside, Evidence 12 December 2005, pp47-48

things and make the process of whatever steps we take – arresting, charging and going before the court – understood by victims and the children involved.²⁰¹

- 4.28** The relationship between young people and the police is frequently strained. During the course of the Inquiry the Committee met with a group of young people from Macquarie Fields. Many of the young people felt that they were constantly being harassed by the police, that they were not being given a chance, were frequently asked to move on when they are congregating with friends – the example was provided of a football game where a large group was asked to move on – and are often provoked by the police into acting inappropriately.²⁰² The Committee is aware that the young people are affected by the more proactive policing approach described in paragraph 4.5, which includes an increased rate of move-on orders.
- 4.29** One of the young people stated ‘if the coppers have some respect for us, we’ll give it back. It’s simple as that. We don’t like coppers because they don’t like us’. The general feeling expressed was that it was up to the police, as adults, to take the first step towards establishing a relationship with the young people. The young people also expressed concern that if a better working relationship was not established it will impact on the younger generation and the discontent will continue.²⁰³
- 4.30** The Committee heard that local police, particularly through the youth liaison officer, were attempting to cultivate an improved relationship with local young people. One of the most positive steps was the recent establishment of a Youth Advisory Council to allow police officers and representatives of a diverse range of young people to be able to meet and discuss issues of importance relating to the policing of Macquarie Fields LAC. Young people from the local Youth Off the Streets programs, the local high school and some known by the youth liaison officer will be representing young people on the Council, which will meet bi-monthly.²⁰⁴ The young people with whom the Committee met expressed hope that the Council would provide them with a voice concerning issues of policing and local youth resources.²⁰⁵
- 4.31** As a result of the disturbances the police established Camp Impact whereby seven police officers took nine young men involved in the disturbances and the criminal justice system on a camp for recreation and to address issues as to why they behaved a certain way during the disturbances, and to allow them to become familiar and develop a relationship with officers in the LAC with whom they may not have had previous contact. Senior Constable Cotter, Youth Liaison Officer, advised that the camp was a success in that positive relationships were established with the young men, most of them did not re-offend, and those who did were more able to deal with the police and handed themselves in.²⁰⁶

²⁰¹ Senior Constable Chris Cotter, Youth Liaison Officer, Macquarie Fields, NSW Police, Evidence 13 December 2005, p20

²⁰² Confidential evidence, youth forum, 13 December 2005

²⁰³ Confidential evidence, youth forum, 13 December 2005

²⁰⁴ Superintendent Stuart Wilkins, Local Area Commander, Macquarie Fields, NSW Police, Evidence 13 December 2005, p22

²⁰⁵ Confidential evidence, youth forum, 13 December 2005

²⁰⁶ Senior Constable Chris Cotter, Youth Liaison Officer, Macquarie Fields, NSW Police, Evidence 13 December 2005, p20

- 4.32** The Macquarie Fields LAC operates the Positive Choices program to run interventions through the schools, the community or any other organisation for young people at risk of offending. The program engages the young people in activities involving trust, self-esteem and building trust with the police.²⁰⁷ The police also operate a process of case management with regard to identifying young people at risk of becoming involved in the criminal justice system and referring them to the appropriate government or non-government agency for assistance.²⁰⁸ The local PCYC, in conjunction with the youth liaison officer, conducts blue light discos six times a year, and offers various other programs, particularly for young people who have been referred to the programs by the local police.²⁰⁹
- 4.33** The Committee notes with concern that the youth liaison officer does not have a dedicated vehicle in order to carry out his outreach work, and is reliant on a pool of shared cars. One witness indicated that some of the local organisations had attempted to source a vehicle for Senior Constable Cotter to use, as they appreciated the value of and wished to support his work with local young people.²¹⁰
- 4.34** The Committee notes that local agencies, the police and particularly the local schools are very active in providing support for young people. The issues faced by local young people were also addressed in Chapter 2. The Committee is hopeful that the new incentives put in place will assist in improving relations between the police and the local youth, and that the spirit of cooperation and consultation will continue. The Committee is heartened to note the comments of one witness:

My impression is that the young people I have spoken to really do want to have a good relationship with the police, but they are not going to lose their pride to build that relationship; they need to keep their integrity and their identity. There is such a strong sense of identity with these young people, and that is really important to them.²¹¹

- 4.35** The Committee notes that while the relationship between police and the local community is improving, it will require a continued commitment from both residents and the police to overcome the historical tension and mistrust. The Committee wishes to encourage the police and the community to continue its efforts towards increased communication, consultation and understanding. The Committee notes the comments of Commissioner Moroney:

It is important in examining the events of February 2005 and, perhaps, even more importantly, identifying the solutions and the way ahead there must be an address to the totality of the social issues impacting on the Macquarie Fields community for enhanced community and individual living, of which law and order is an important aspect. Coupled with the importance of identifying and monitoring a range of holistic

²⁰⁷ Senior Constable Chris Cotter, Youth Liaison Officer, Macquarie Fields, NSW Police, Evidence 13 December 2005, pp22-23

²⁰⁸ Superintendent Stuart Wilkins, Local Area Commander, NSW Police, Macquarie Fields, Evidence 13 December 2005, p19

²⁰⁹ Senior Constable Chris Cotter, Youth Liaison Officer, Macquarie Fields, NSW Police, Evidence 13 December 2005, p23

²¹⁰ Ms Jan Watson, Facilitator, Schools as Community Centres, Evidence 7 April 2006, p75

²¹¹ Ms Jenette Duckett, community worker, Evidence – community forum, 13 December 2005, p10

solutions comes the equally compelling point of the acceptance of individual and community responsibility.²¹²

- 4.36** The Committee particularly notes the importance of a holistic approach to address the issues in Macquarie Fields, and the role the police can play in fostering positive relationships with local young people, in order to provide stability for future generations, and recommends that the NSW Government and the police continue to develop and support initiatives to that end. The Committee also encourages the local community to support the positive relationships that are being formed.

Recommendation 10

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

Factors contributing to the disturbances

- 4.37** Arising out of the local community's relationship with the police are several factors that were identified as contributing to the disturbances. As previously noted there is a historically strained relationship between the community and the police. Many of the local young people with whom the Committee met expressed the view that the disturbances were 'waiting to happen' due to the ongoing and mounting tension between the police and the community.²¹³ This view was supported by Ms Nicoll, community worker, in her submission, which noted that the tensions between the police, young people and their families in Macquarie Fields contributed to the frustration that was expressed through the disturbances.²¹⁴
- 4.38** Other witnesses commented on the tension between some local residents and the police and described the feeling of some residents as an 'us-and-them' situation:
- Some of the things that the police do to do their job are the very sorts of things that are going to inflame people, because they come from such a disadvantaged background, with very limited support, very limited understanding, with people treating them with such disrespect, and their lack of trust, that heavy-handed policing will actually work contrary to benefiting that local community.²¹⁵
- 4.39** Ms Watson, Schools as Community Centres, also described the relationship between the local community and police prior to the disturbances:

Prior to the disturbances there was very much a siege mentality between the community and the police service. I think there was a sense, particularly amongst the

²¹² Commissioner Ken Moroney, NSW Police, Evidence 5 December 2005, p20

²¹³ Confidential evidence, youth forum, 13 December 2005.

²¹⁴ Submission 8, Ms Jan Nicoll, p3

²¹⁵ Ms Jane McIvor, Coordinator/Manager, Macarthur Community Forum, Evidence 7 April 2006, p57

youth, that they were being unfairly harassed and targeted. There was also a sense within the community that when they were presenting at the police station they were not treated with the respect that they felt they deserved, and that their concerns were not taken seriously. I think there was that sense of being discounted. So the relationship prior to the disturbances was not a healthy one. It had not been healthy for quite a while.²¹⁶

4.40 The Macquarie Fields Women's Action Group noted in its submission that prior to the disturbances there was increased police activity around the area where the driver of the vehicle resided, which heightened the existing negative relationship between police and some members of the local community.²¹⁷ Ms Jane McIvor, Coordinator, Macarthur Community Forum, noted that during the period before the disturbances there had been an increase in drug raids around the local area, which also heightened tension between the community and police.²¹⁸

4.41 There was a strong feeling amongst some members of the community that the police had been over-zealous in their car chase of the offenders and had been the cause of the accident that killed the two local young people, which largely contributed to the behaviour of people involved in the disturbances. Ms Jan Nicoll, community worker, made the following observation in her submission:

The strongest [group] felt they had reason enough to openly express that they have just had enough ... [there was] an individual and collective build up of resentment of the local policing and rage that two young people were dead.²¹⁹

4.42 Senior Constable Cotter, Youth Liaison Officer, commented on the reaction of many of the young people to the fatal car accident:

... in regards to the riots they told me that on the very first night some of them acted out of pure emotion, a belief or perception that somehow the police had hit the car and pushed it off the road intentionally ... It was not until one week later that we able to respond to some of that. I went to the schools and youth centres to try to put to rest the perception that police were actively involved in hitting them and pushing the car off the road ... I gave my guarantee to the young people that the police did not touch the car.²²⁰

4.43 It is noted that many of the young people involved in the disturbances were also reacting to the stigma attached to them and the area. Mr Jioji Ravulo, Youth Offender Support Programs Team Leader, Mission Australia also commented on behaviour of some of the young people who became involved in the disturbances:

²¹⁶ Ms Jan Watson, Facilitator, Schools as Community Centres, Evidence 7 April 2006, p74

²¹⁷ Submission 15, Macquarie Fields Women's Action Group, p1

²¹⁸ Ms Jane McIvor, Coordinator/Manager, Macarthur Community Forum, Evidence 7 April 2006, p55

²¹⁹ Submission 8, Ms Jan Nicoll, p4

²²⁰ Senior Constable Chris Cotter, Youth Liaison Officer, Macquarie Fields, NSW Police, Evidence 13 December 2005, p21

... a lot of the time they are only rebelling against the constant profiling and the strategic community policing that is in place in regards to tracking known young offenders. That creates issues of labelling with young people and their understanding of self-identity ... A lot of the time they are internalising the fact that if they are followed by the police, they are bad; 'so that means that I must be bad', so they live up to that expectation ... One of the other interesting things, though, with it being a year on is the fact that some of those young offenders are proud that they are from Mac Fields; they were part of that activity. But that is only indicative of the fact that they have nothing else really to be proud of, to a certain degree ... Again you cannot just generalise with all young people, but with the young offenders with whom we are working that is the case a lot of the time with what is happening.²²¹

- 4.44** A further issue raised was the lack of information available to the community regarding the accident. Many people, particularly young people, did not understand what had happened during the disturbances. In discussing their reaction it was observed:

...the police had come into Macquarie Fields over those days, they did not know those police, those police did not understand them, and no-one told them why they were there. For instance, no-one told them that the reason they could not go to the accident scene was that it was a crime scene. No-one explained that to them. They said to me ... that if someone had explained to them that they could not go to where the car was because it was a crime scene, they would have accepted that ...²²²

- 4.45** The Committee notes with concern the evidence provided during its meeting with the young people that, during the time of the disturbances, they were not able to have contact with Senior Constable Cotter. The Committee was informed that Senior Constable Cotter was not available to the young people for approximately five months during the critical time of the disturbances, due to an operational decision taken by the LAC. The young people felt strongly that 'he should not have been taken away from them'.²²³

- 4.46** The Committee is hopeful that the factors raised as having contributed to the disturbances will be addressed by the improving relationship between local police, residents and young people. It is also hoped that if such events should occur again in the future, that there will be strategies in place to ensure adequate communication with the community and young people concerning the policing operations.

Recommendation 11

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

²²¹ Mr Jioji Ravulo, Youth Offender Support Programs Team Leader, South-West Youth Services, Mission Australia, Evidence 7 April 2006, pp22-23

²²² Ms Jenette Duckett, community worker, Evidence – community forum, 13 December 2005, p10

²²³ Confidential evidence, 13 December 2005

Community conferencing scheme

- 4.47** In September 2005 a trial of a community conferencing scheme for young adult offenders aged between 18 and 24 years commenced, with Liverpool Local Court being one of the trial sites. A community conference is a forum, which brings together the offender and victim with a facilitator, the police officer and other support people, to discuss the harm caused by the offence and to prepare an intervention plan for the offender. Intervention plans are developed at a conference by consensus, if possible; items included in the plan must have the minimum agreement of the offender and the victim. The outcomes of the conferences are put to a magistrate, for a final sentencing decision.²²⁴
- 4.48** The first referrals to the program through the Liverpool court included seven offenders who were charged with offences relating to their participation in the disturbances. Police and community members attended the conferences, together with the offenders and their support people to discuss the impact of the offences on them and their families and how they could redress the harm caused. No agreement was reached on an intervention plan at any of the seven conferences and the matters were referred to a magistrate. The magistrate is able to consider the report from the conference, and sentence offenders in the normal manner. The Committee was advised that as at December 2005 (when five of the offenders had been through the conferencing system), four of the five offenders were sentenced to imprisonment for 12 months with a three-month non-parole period, and the fourth was sentenced to nine months imprisonment, and that the five offenders had appealed the sentences.²²⁵
- 4.49** Mr Pritchard, President, NSW Police Association stated that the Police Association supports conferencing for non-violent offenders, for people with a first offence and juveniles. However, the Association did not support the use of conferencing for young people involved in the disturbances and believed that they should go through the court process. Mr Pritchard stated that those young people had committed serious offences and, as such, the Association believed that a custodial sentence was appropriate.²²⁶
- 4.50** Commissioner Moroney stated:

So, variously, through the application of discretion, through the application of the laws, it is always our intention, where possible, to deal particularly with young people, to divert them out of the criminal justice system.²²⁷

Police resources in Macquarie Fields during the disturbances

- 4.51** The Committee notes the *Final report into Macquarie Fields Public Order Management Incidents*, June 2005, prepared by the Office of the Deputy Commissioner of Police (Operations), which provides a comprehensive review of events during the disturbances and makes recommendations concerning the issues raised. The Committee also notes the whole of

²²⁴ Submission 19, Cabinet Office NSW, p42

²²⁵ Dr Col Gellatly, Director General, Premier's Department, Evidence 5 December 2005, p13; Letter from the Hon Bob Debus, Attorney-General, NSW, to Chair, 30 May 2006

²²⁶ Mr Bob Pritchard, President, NSW Police Association, Evidence 12 December 2005, p62

²²⁷ Commissioner Ken Moroney, NSW Police, Evidence 5 December 2005, p33

Government submission, which indicates that all of the recommendations made in the report have been implemented in full.²²⁸ The recommendations made in the police review report are set out as follows:

- Where a significant public order incident occurs a specialist Major Incident Response Team, as detailed within this Report, be deployed to assume command of the incident allowing the Local Area Commander to coordinate routine local issues
- A Major Incident Response Team be comprised of an accredited Forward Commander, Investigation Coordinator, Operations Support Group Commander, Logistics Coordinator, Planning Coordinator, Traffic Coordinator, Public Information Coordinator, Traffic Coordinator, Public Information Coordinator, Intelligence Coordinator and any other person deemed appropriate by the Forward Commander
- As a priority, Local Area Commanders undertake the Major Incident (Public Order) Management Course which incorporated an assessment of the Commanders ability to manage a public order incident
- At all significant public order incidents an appropriate command post must be established using either the Emergency Operations Centre for the Region, Mobile Command Post or other suitable premises
- At all significant public order incidents form briefings and debriefings must occur and be appropriately documented, to ensure the free exchange of information. Such material shall be treated confidentially
- At planned or recurring significant public order incidents operational orders must be prepared
- At all public order incidents where Operations Support Group police are deployed an Operations Support Group Commander and Tactical Advisor be deployed
- Successful completion of the formal training programs and subsequent accreditation be a prerequisite to deployment as an Operations Support Group Commander or Tactical Advisor
- At all public order incidents a comprehensive and contemporaneous command log be maintained and filed at the command where the incident occurred
- The Operations Support Group trial arm bands or tabards to facilitate the identification of personnel during deployments
- The 700 'Camelbak' Hydration Systems recently ordered by NSW Police be issued to all Operations Support Group police
- Continued development of mass arrest procedures for every Local Area Command incorporating appropriately resourced arrest kits
- The training of police in Public Order Management Protective Equipment be continued with a priority on frontline officers

²²⁸ Submission 19, Cabinet Office NSW, p46

- A new Public Order Management Committee be formed and chaired by the Deputy Commissioner (Operations). The committee shall absorb the *Operations Support Group and Public Order management Steering Committee* and the *Operations Support Group Coordination Committee*
- The Public Order Management Committee shall include the Inner Metropolitan Region Commander as the Corporate Spokesperson on Public Order and also as a representative of Region Commanders

4.52 The Committee does not intend to re-review police activities during the disturbances, however it will examine key issues relating to resources and strategy that emerged during the Inquiry.

Equipment

4.53 The NSW Police Association stated *inter alia* that officers during the disturbances were under-equipped in terms of crowd and riot equipment, that there was an inadequate supply of food and water to officers in the field and that there was no designated equipment officer to oversee equipment location and distribution.²²⁹

4.54 In response to criticism that there was not sufficient equipment available to officers during the disturbances Regional Commander Clifford stated:

... I dispute the fact that there was not sufficient equipment. On each of the nights that the OSG [Operations Support Group] was deployed to Macquarie Fields there was sufficient equipment available for the officers out there. There were some breakages of equipment, breakages of shields, and those issues were raised in the debrief for officers who were concerned that the shields were breaking. But the shields did their job ... the number of kits available was sufficient for the number of OSG on the ground.²³⁰

4.55 In commenting on the criticism relating to inadequate food and water, Superintendent Gregory Rolph, Hawkesbury LAC, NSW Police, observed that the supply of food and water is always an issue during operations. Superintendent Rolph commented that perhaps the supply could have been better managed, but noted that officers were not in the field for lengthy periods of time.²³¹

4.56 The police review report found that the equipment issued to both Operations Support Group and General Duty Police was sufficient to respond to the incidents and in many cases the amount of equipment exceeded the number of officers at the scene. However, the report stated there were some incidents where officers experienced problems with equipment, and that in the early stages of the unrest there was no logistics or equipment officer appointed so the commanders did not know the exact location and quantity of equipment available.²³²

²²⁹ Submission 14, NSW Police Association, pp10-12

²³⁰ Assistant Commissioner Denis Clifford, Regional Commander, Greater Metropolitan Region, NSW Police, Evidence 5 December 2005, p28

²³¹ Superintendent Gregory Rolph, Hawkesbury LAC, NSW Police, Evidence 5 December 2005, p30

²³² Office of the Deputy Commissioner of Police (Operations), *'Final report into Macquarie Fields Public Order Management Incidents'*, June 2005, pp51, 53

- 4.57** On the first night of the unrest general duty police were not equipped with helmets, which were available and could have been supplied if requested by the Incident Commander. Some officers stated that more upper body protective equipment should have been available, although other officers who were consulted felt that such equipment restricted movement and increased weight and heat. The report noted that there were incidents of shields breaking, despite the shields being of operational standard. The report also found that some officers reported difficulty in readily accessing water.²³³
- 4.58** In response to the findings, the police review report made recommendations concerning additional equipment that should be made available to officers during major incidents.²³⁴ In accordance with those recommendations the NSW Government advised that additional equipment has been supplied, including Camelbak hydration systems to overcome problems accessing water supplies, riot helmets, including some with in-helmet communication systems, riot shields, leg and arm protectors, and lightweight protective riot gear.²³⁵ Mr Pritchard, NSW Police Association, stated in evidence that while officers suffered from equipment shortages during the disturbances due to recommendations made after the Redfern incidents not being implemented, there have been improvements in the quality and amount of equipment since February 2005, but that there is still work to be done.²³⁶
- 4.59** The police review report also noted that the relatively new Public Order Management Protective Equipment Training course is being implemented across NSW for all general duty officers and new recruits.²³⁷

Communication

- 4.60** The Police Association stated that the free flow of information between the command post and officers on the ground was restricted by the command post due to concerns that the information could be leaked. The Police Association also stated that a specific Police Operations Centre was not set up, that expert radio services were not immediately sought and that officers had difficulty in communicating as they were not equipped with modern riot helmet communications systems.²³⁸ The police review found that there were difficulties with radio channels, which were eventually resolved on the second night of unrest.²³⁹
- 4.61** Deputy Commissioner Scipione, Field Operations, NSW Police, advised in evidence that NSW Police is currently converting its radio system from analogue to a more advanced digital

²³³ Office of the Deputy Commissioner of Police (Operations), *Final report into Macquarie Fields Public Order Management Incidents*, June 2005, p52

²³⁴ Submission 19, Cabinet Office NSW, pp47-48

²³⁵ Submission 19, Cabinet Office NSW, p46

²³⁶ Mr Bob Pritchard, President, NSW Police Association, Evidence 12 December 2005, p52

²³⁷ Office of the Deputy Commissioner of Police (Operations), *Final report into Macquarie Fields Public Order Management Incidents*, June 2005, p52; Submission 19, Cabinet Office NSW, p47

²³⁸ Submission 14, NSW Police Association, p8

²³⁹ Office of the Deputy Commissioner of Police (Operations), *Final report into Macquarie Fields Public Order Management Incidents*, June 2005, p29

network, which will increase quality, security and the number of channels available.²⁴⁰ As previously noted, additional police helmets containing in-helmet communication systems have also now been made available.²⁴¹

Training

4.62 The NSW Police Association stated in its submission that, with respect to the command and control of police operations during the disturbances, there was confusion as to the line of command, that the command post was set up in a poor location, and that appropriate and timely decisions were not made.²⁴² The submission also stated that due to the command team's lack of training and understanding regarding Operation Support Group tactics, decisions were made that adversely affected the safety of officers.²⁴³

4.63 Superintendent Rolph stated that there was an issue in coordinating the different police groups that attended at the scene of the disturbances, and observed:

We are operating in a dynamic and fluid environment. We try to utilise our training and our SAPs but we have to be fluid in our tactics and in our deployment. We managed it with the resources we had.²⁴⁴

4.64 The police review report made extensive recommendations concerning the training of police officers of all ranks in public order management, and the way in which major public order incidents should be addressed and overseen in the future. Deputy Commissioner Scipione stated:

The arrangements as they were in February 2005, no longer exist. I am now responsible for this area and I can assure you that on my watch these new arrangements are the ones that we will bring to any incident.²⁴⁵

4.65 In accordance with the recommendations in the report the following courses have been developed and implemented: Major Incident (Public Order) Commanders course, for all local area commanders and duty officers; Operations Support Group Commanders course; Tactical Advisors course; Public Order Management Equipment Training for all general duty police and new recruits. The specific details of each course are set out in the police review report.²⁴⁶

²⁴⁰ Deputy Commissioner Andrew Scipione, Field Operations, NSW Police, Evidence 5 December 2005, p40

²⁴¹ Submission 19, Cabinet Office NSW, p48

²⁴² Submission 14, NSW Police Association, p7

²⁴³ Submission 14, NSW Police Association, p9

²⁴⁴ Superintendent Gregory Rolph, Hawkesbury LAC, NSW Police, Evidence 5 December 2005, p30

²⁴⁵ Deputy Commissioner Andrew Scipione, Field Operations, NSW Police, Evidence 5 December 2005, p39

²⁴⁶ Office of the Deputy Commissioner of Police (Operations), *Final report into Macquarie Fields Public Order Management Incidents*, June 2005, pp55-59

- 4.66** Commissioner Moroney stated he was confident that the level of training that has been provided to commanders and other subordinate staff is now appropriate in all circumstances to handle public disturbances. He commented:

The level of training provided to commanders and subordinate staff regarding our response arrangements, both the initial response to a particular incident and if it escalates to the level of a Macquarie Fields type incident, I am satisfied that we are able to respond accordingly.²⁴⁷

- 4.67** Mr Pritchard, NSW Police Association, observed that it was unfortunate that a lot of the training courses were not implemented until after the Macquarie Fields disturbances, despite these issues being identified in the Coburn report. Mr Pritchard commented:

There has certainly been an increase in the number of training courses available; more police are being trained. In fact, the commanders are beginning to get the training required to be able to handle these situations. It is unfortunate that over the years we have let that slip. The commanders are put in a position to have to handle these incidents of public disorder and are not suitably trained.²⁴⁸

- 4.68** In addition to training, the police review report also made recommendations concerning the oversight of public order incidents. The specific areas are discussed as follows.

Major Incident Response Team

- 4.69** A Major Incident Response Team, comprising various officers bringing together specialist skills and experience from within NSW Police, will be deployed to all significant unplanned public order events, with the exact composition of the team depending on the specific circumstances of the event. Such a team may comprise officers from the LAC however the Commander must be sourced from a different LAC, to allow the regular LAC Commander to coordinate routine local issues.²⁴⁹

Major Incident Management System

- 4.70** The response team will operate under the Major Incident Management System, to expand the existing integrated command and control system to further major incidents where the use of the team would be appropriate. This will ensure that when major incidents occur, highly trained incident management specialists can be deployed to resolve the situation, where appropriate, according to relevant criteria.²⁵⁰
- 4.71** Deputy Commissioner Scipione advised that the major incident response arrangements that have now been put in place provide a much better way to manage the commander control during incidents, and is based on the methods used in major overseas police operations.

²⁴⁷ Commissioner Ken Moroney, NSW Police, Evidence 5 December 2005, p27

²⁴⁸ Mr Bob Pritchard, President, NSW Police Association, Evidence 12 December 2005, p52

²⁴⁹ Submission 19, The Cabinet Office NSW, p46

²⁵⁰ Office of the Deputy Commissioner of Police (Operations), 'Final report into Macquarie Fields Public Order Management Incidents', June 2005, p61

Deputy Commissioner Scipione added that the arrangements have been trialled on two occasions, and that it is hoped they will be introduced nationally.²⁵¹

Public order management committee

- 4.72** The Major Incident Response Team will be supported by a Public Order Management Committee, chaired by the Deputy Commissioner (Operations).²⁵² The role of the committee is to oversee issues such as training, equipment, advances overseas, and to coordinate responses across the police organisation.²⁵³

Public order and riot squad

- 4.73** The squad commenced operation in January 2006 and comprises a permanent, full-time, stand-alone team of 45 specially trained officers.²⁵⁴ The charter for the squad is to carry out public order policing, as opposed to the Vikings unit, which predominantly provides proactive, high visibility policing.²⁵⁵
- 4.74** In response to criticism concerning the length of time taken to compile and put in place such a squad, Commissioner Moroney observed ‘the recruitment, selection, training, equipping and accommodation associated with the creation of a squad takes, understandably, some logistical preparation’.²⁵⁶
- 4.75** Mr Pritchard, NSW Police Association, expressed the Association’s concern that the number of officers in the squad is insufficient, and recommended that the squad comprise 103 officers.²⁵⁷ The Police Association also noted that this recommendation had been made to the Coburn report.²⁵⁸

Conclusion

- 4.76** In discussing the differences of opinion regarding the action the police took during the disturbances Commissioner Moroney stated:

... during the incident at Macquarie Fields that polarisation was identified by the views in some quarters that we needed to be stronger, harder and tougher with the promotion of the use of water canons, mace, spray and the charge of police on a

²⁵¹ Deputy Commissioner Andrew Scipione, Field Operations, NSW Police, Evidence 5 December 2005, p39

²⁵² Office of the Deputy Commissioner of Police (Operations), ‘*Final report into Macquarie Fields Public Order Management Incidents*’, June 2005, p67

²⁵³ Superintendent Gregory Rolph, Hawkesbury LAC, NSW Police, Evidence 5 December 2005, p38

²⁵⁴ Submission 19, The Cabinet Office NSW, p47

²⁵⁵ Acting Commander Mark Noakes, Operation Vikings, NSW Police, Evidence 5 December 2005, p38

²⁵⁶ Commissioner Ken Moroney, NSW Police, Evidence 5 December 2005, p27

²⁵⁷ Mr Bob Pritchard, President, NSW Police Association, Evidence 12 December 2005, p52

²⁵⁸ Submission 14, NSW Police Association, p13

number of people gathered in assembly at Macquarie Fields, ranging through to the other polarised views that we were perhaps even being too hard. It is necessary then for operational commanders to make decisions based on the intelligence and the tactics they need to resolve a particular situation at a given point in time. What we saw at Macquarie Fields at that point in time was information gleaned from the intelligence they had as to how they deployed and applied the tactics that were used.²⁵⁹

4.77 Mr Pritchard, NSW Police Association, commented:

... I think the police at this time have started to rectify the problems and again that is training, supply of equipment and upgrading of the same equipment. I do not think the commanders had enough training prior to that incident. I do not think they should be held out to dry. I think the whole operation and to be looked at in its entirety and the problems that came out of it were rectified. So I think we are on the right track.²⁶⁰

4.78 The Committee notes that the recommendations made in the police review report of the Macquarie Fields incidents have been implemented in full. The Committee will now examine the recommendations made and lessons learned from the Redfern/Waterloo inquiry.

Lessons learned from the Redfern/Waterloo Inquiry and the Coburn report

4.79 The Coburn report, which was issued in July 2004, details the internal police review of the incidents that occurred in Redfern/Waterloo in February 2003. Mr Pritchard, NSW Police Association, stated that the issues raised in the Police Association's submission to the current Inquiry were fundamentally the same as those made to the Coburn report approximately 12 months earlier, and that the Association was disappointed the recommendations were either not implemented or were not sufficiently implemented in time to adequately deal with the Macquarie Fields disturbances. Mr Pritchard added that there have been major improvements since the Macquarie Fields disturbances, and that the Association was currently pleased with the progress of implementation, but that efforts have to continue as incidents such as the disturbances will continue to occur.²⁶¹

4.80 Commissioner Moroney stated:

Let me indicate in so far as each of the recommendations arising out of the Coburn report in relation to Redfern, each and every one of those recommendations relevant to Redfern has been implemented and was implemented. The issue of the particular response to Macquarie Fields was, I regard, appropriate in the circumstances. I believe with the benefit of hindsight some things could have been done differently.²⁶²

4.81 In its Interim Report into issues relating to Redfern and Waterloo, the Social Issues Committee examined the level of experience of police officers stationed in areas of high crime, and the level of their training to deal with cultural issues. The Committee felt that there was a benefit in police in such areas having a higher level of experience, and recommended

²⁵⁹ Commissioner Ken Moroney, NSW Police, Evidence 5 December 2005, p31

²⁶⁰ Mr Bob Pritchard, President, NSW Police Association, Evidence 12 December 2005, p58

²⁶¹ Mr Bob Pritchard, President, NSW Police Association, Evidence 12 December 2005, pp51, 60

²⁶² Commissioner Ken Moroney, NSW Police, Evidence 5 December 2005, p28

that the Minister for Police re-examine the level of experience among officers stationed at the Redfern Local Area Command and possible initiatives to ensure that such police were encouraged to remain at the Command for a constructive length of time.²⁶³ The Committee also made recommendations concerning the training of officers and new recruits in Aboriginal cultural awareness.²⁶⁴

- 4.82** The Committee notes that while Macquarie Fields Local Area Command is described as being comparable to any other command in the State in terms of staffing numbers, experience and turnover, it is also a level one command in a disadvantaged area facing social complex issues, with a sometimes high number of relatively inexperienced officers, and therefore recommends that training in awareness of cultural and social issues be a continuing part of officer training. The Committee is pleased to note the introduction of induction packages to raise cultural awareness as well as on-going training, particularly of specialist liaison officers.

Recommendation 12

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

- 4.83** The Committee also recalls its recommendation in the Redfern/Waterloo interim report, in which it recommended the careful examination of the number of officers based at Redfern LAC and whether that number was sufficient.²⁶⁵ The Committee notes the evidence received from the Macquarie Fields Commander that officer numbers are currently sufficient.
- 4.84** The Committee notes the evidence of the Police Association and the police that several of the methods and strategies employed during the disturbances were not as effective as they could otherwise have been had the recommendations of the Coburn report and the Redfern/Waterloo Inquiry been fully implemented at that time. The Committee is pleased to note that the recommendations arising out those reports and the police review of the Macquarie Fields disturbances have now been implemented. The Committee recognises the need for the review of policing resources and strategy to be on-going and continuous, and that any recommendations arising out of such reviews are implemented in a timely fashion, to ensure that any future disturbances such as those in Macquarie Fields are suitably handled. The Committee has also made an additional recommendation (recommendation10) that, in the event of any future disturbances, strategies be put in place to ensure that there is adequate liaison with and dissemination of information to, the affected local community.

²⁶³ Standing Committee on Social Issues, *'Inquiry into issues relating to Redfern and Waterloo – Interim report'*, Report 32, August 2004

²⁶⁴ Standing Committee on Social Issues, *'Inquiry into issues relating to Redfern and Waterloo – Final report'*, Report 34, December 2004

²⁶⁵ Standing Committee on Social Issues, *'Inquiry into issues relating to Redfern and Waterloo – Interim report'*, Report 32, August 2004, p84

Recommendation 13

That the NSW Government and Police ensure the ongoing review of policing resources and strategy.

Appendix 1 Submissions

| No | Author |
|----|--|
| 1 | Mr John McAuley |
| 2 | Mr Michael J Weston |
| 3 | Mr Dick Bennett |
| 4 | Dr Nita Smith King (Ingleburn Uniting Church Council) |
| 5 | Ms Julie Bourke (Macarthur Greens) |
| 6 | Northern Campbelltown Community Action Group (NAB) Inc |
| 7 | Mr H Mouritz (Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia) |
| 8 | Ms Jan Nicoll (Allawah House) – partially confidential |
| 9 | Mr Peter Raymond (Macarthur Youth Commitment Inc) |
| 10 | Name suppressed |
| 11 | Mrs Sue Dobson (Airds Bradbury Neighbourhood Centre) |
| 12 | Mr Paul Tosi (Campbelltown City Council) |
| 13 | Ms Maree Mullins (The Junctions Works Inc) |
| 14 | Mr Greg Chilvers (Police Association of New South Wales) |
| 15 | Macquarie Fields Women's Action Group |
| 16 | Confidential |
| 17 | Ms Sherian McKay |
| 18 | Ms Sandra Simmons (UnitingCare Burnside) |
| 19 | Mr Roger B Wilkins (The Cabinet Office New South Wales) |
| 20 | Mr Owen Rogers (St Vincent de Paul Society) |
| 21 | Mr Steven Chaytor MP (State Member for Macquarie Fields) |
| 22 | Mr Rodney Edwards |
| 23 | Mr Alan McKinnon (AFL NSW/ACT) |

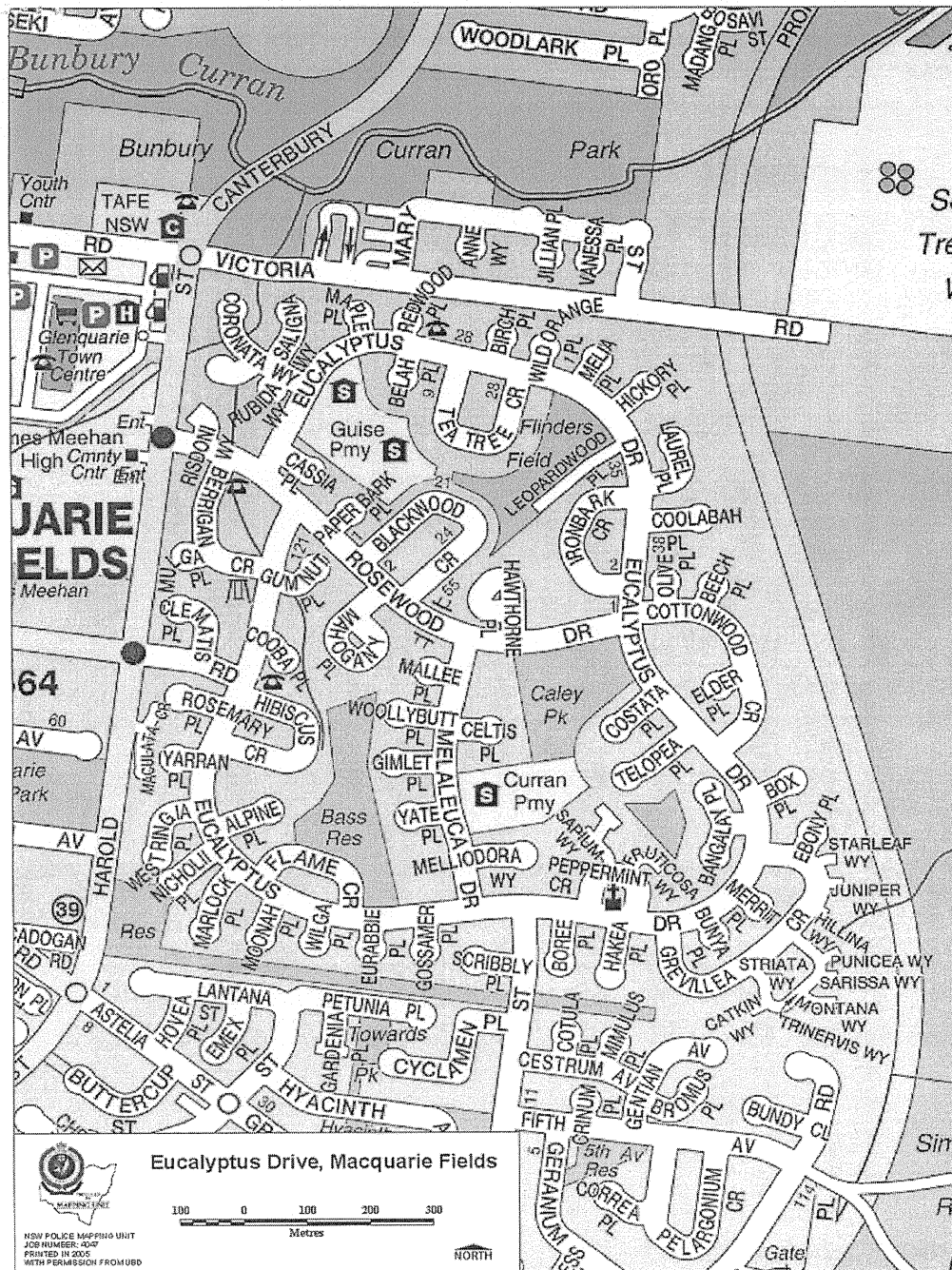
Appendix 2 Witnesses

| Date | Name | Position and Organisation |
|---|--|---|
| Monday 5 December 2005 Parliament House | Dr Col Gellatly | Director General, Premier's Department |
| | Ken Moroney | Commissioner of Police, NSW Police |
| | Denis Clifford | Assistant Commissioner & Commander, Greater Metropolitan Region, NSW Police |
| | John Sweeney | Superintendent & Commander, Rose Hills Local Area Command (former Macquarie Fields Local Commander), NSW Police |
| | Greg Rolph | Superintendent & Vikings Commander, NSW Police |
| | Mark Noakes | Chief Inspector, Operation Support Command, Vikings Unit, NSW Police |
| Monday 12 December 2005 Parliament House | Gary Moore | Director, Council of Social Services of NSW (NCOSS) |
| | Mike Allen | Deputy Director General, Department of Housing |
| | Cliff Haynes | General Manager, Greater Western Sydney Housing Services Division, Department of Housing |
| | Paul Tosi | General Manager, Campbelltown City Council |
| | Lindy Deitz | Director, Community Services, Campbelltown City Council |
| | Jo Alley | Policy Officer, UnitingCare Burnside |
| | Deborah Hinchcliffe | Coordinator, Minto Family Centre, UnitingCare Burnside |
| | Bob Pritchard | President, Police Association of NSW |
| | Luke Hannon | Executive Member, Police Association of NSW |
| | Bob Morgan | Occupational Health and Safety Coordinator, Police Association of NSW |
| | Annette Gallard | Deputy Director General, Operations, Department of Community Services |
| Anne Campbell | Regional Director, Metro South West, Department of Community Services | |
| Tuesday 13 December 2005 Macquarie Fields TAFE | Paul Power | Manager, Vincentian Social Action Centre, St Vincent de Paul Society, Campbelltown |
| | Owen Rogers | CEO, NSW/ACT State Council, St Vincent de Paul Society |

| Date | Name | Position and Organisation |
|---|---------------------|--|
| | Stuart Wilkins | Superintendent, Commander Macquarie Fields LAC |
| | Darrin Wilson | Chief Inspector, Macquarie Fields Duty Officer |
| | Christopher Cotter | Senior Constable, Macquarie Fields Youth Liaison Officer |
| | Sarah Clark | Senior Constable, Macquarie Fields Domestic Violence Liaison Officer |
| | Alan White | Crime Coordinator, Macquarie Fields |
| | Bruce Sander | Principal, James Meehan High School |
| | Margaret Ballantine | Chairperson, Northern Campbelltown Community Action Group |
| | Julie Longland | Team Leader, Campbelltown Youth Service Inc |
| | Beverley Newitt | Principal, Guise Public School |
| | Roy Danielson | Campbelltown Youth Centre |
| Community Consultation | Adrian Parente | Macarthur Youth Commitment Inc |
| | Peter Raymond | Macarthur Youth Commitment Inc |
| | Jan Nicoll | Allawah House |
| | Annette Rogers | Community Worker |
| | Fiona Bishop | Primary Connect |
| | Jenette Duckett | |
| | Sue Dobson | Airds Bradbury Community Centre |
| | Julie Alley | The Salvation Army |
| | Michelle White | The Salvation Army |
| | Helen Tana | |
| | Maree Mullins | The Junction Works |
| | Trish Fogarty | Glenquarie Neighbourhood Centre |
| | Jan Watson | Schools as Community Centres Program |
| Friday 7 April 2006 Parliament House | Dr Greg Stewart | Acting Chief Executive, Sydney South West Area Health Service, NSW Health |
| | Amanda Larkin | General Manager, Macarthur Health Service, Sydney South West Area Health Service, NSW Health |
| | David McGrath | Acting Director, Centre for Drug & Alcohol & Mental Health, NSW Health |
| | Annette Lamb | Service Manager, Mission Australia, Campbelltown |
| | Jioji Ravulo | Team Leader, Youth Offender Support Programs, Mission Australia |

| Date | Name | Position and Organisation |
|-------------|-------------------|---|
| | Karen Kemp | Operations Manager South, Mission Australia |
| | Steve Fowler | NSW State Manager, Mission Australia |
| | Kimble Fillingham | Regional Director, South Western Sydney, Department of Education and Training |
| | Peter Phelps | School Education Director, Ingleburn Schools, Department of Education and Training |
| | Doug Taylor | Division Manager, Community and Partnerships, Work Ventures |
| | Jane McIvor | Corporate Coordinator, Macarthur Community Forum |
| | Patricia Fogarty | Glenquarie Neighbourhood Centre, member Macarthur Ingleburn Glenfield (MIG) Interagency Group |
| | Jan Watson | Schools as Communities, member MIG Group |

Appendix 3 Map – Eucalyptus Drive, Macquarie Fields



Appendix 4 Macquarie Fields Community Resources & Assets – Working Document April 2005²⁶⁶

CONTENTS

- ❖ **What is Working at Macquarie Fields**
- ❖ **Gaps**
- ❖ **Issues**
- ❖ **Service Attrition**
 - Services Discontinued
 - Services Relocated
 - Services Reduced due to insufficient or static funding, and increased need/demand in the community
 - Current Services Time-Limited by non-recurrent funding
- ❖ **Physical Community Assets**
- ❖ **Service Providers Based at Macquarie Fields**
- ❖ **Service Providers Providing Outreach Programs to Macquarie Fields**
- ❖ **Community Groups Active in Macquarie Fields**
- ❖ **Sporting Groups in Macquarie Fields**
- ❖ **Current Programs at Macquarie Fields**
 - Children 0-8 years and their families
 - Parenting/Family Support
 - Children 8 –12 years and their families
 - High School and Youth
 - Women
 - Senior Citizens
 - Disability
 - Employment and IT
- ❖ **Material Assistance - Food/Electricity etc**
- ❖ **Community Development Activities**
- ❖ **Appendix A**
 - Department of Housing
- ❖ **Appendix B**
 - Department of Education & Training

What Is Working at Macquarie Fields

- **Locally** based services that are easily accessible and non-threatening.
- Macquarie Fields, Ingleburn & Glenfield Interagency (MIG)
- promotes partnerships and strong linkages for service providers.
- Services where there is a high level of community participation in planning.
- Outreach services that have strategies in place to actually cover geographical areas that they are funded for.
- Schools

Gaps:

- Mental Health Services/Programs
- Adequate youth services and resources
- Services for Aboriginal and CALD residents
- Family worker positions based **on** the estate

Issues:

- Co-ordination of services and facilitation of strategic planning and best use of resources.
- Effective locality planning with Council, government departments and NGOs.
- Paucity of funding to non-government agencies that leads to competition for resources.
- Short term funding for programs, which do not produce sustainable long-term community change.
- Decline in real incomes of non-government organizations with small CPI additions, which do not meet increase in liability, OHS, resources and salary costs eg. programs under SAAP and CSGP.
- Complexity of issues around attracting and retaining experienced and skilled workers.
- Government funded services such as Schools as Community Centres (SaCC) which are unable to apply in their own right for grants, leaving them dependent on the ability or desire of NGO's to auspice a program.
- There is no meeting space/facility based on the estate where the community can drop in, meet, and access outreach services. The community has identified this need repeatedly.
- Intergenerational issues which impact on the capacity of services to make real changes
- Changes in resident profile.
- Transport for elderly frail and disabled members of the community.
- Accessible transport for the community.

Service Attrition:

Discontinued Services at Macquarie Fields:

- HCAP – Housing Communities Assistance Program (DoH)
 - negatively impacting on community activities and groups for example the NAB, Safe Women's Group (disbanded), community clean-ups.
- Early Childhood Worker Home Visiting - (SaCC)
 - provided home visits and support to young and inexperienced parents
- Coffee and Creative Kids – (SaCC)
 - play and coffee morning held weekly in different streets, to promote positive neighbourhood relations, as well as accessing hard-to-reach families
- Outreach Counselling – (Burnside)
- After School Program – (YMCA)
- Women's Support Group – (Macarthur Health Service)
- Eucalyptus Cottage programs facilitated by Family Support and HCAP (prior to the IT Centre commencing).

Relocated Service:

- Glenquarie Family Support – moved to Minto.

Reduced Services due to insufficient or static funding, and increased need/demand in the community:

- Salvation Army
 - after school program
 - vacation care
 - long day care
- Macquarie Fields Youth Centre (Campbelltown Youth Services)
- Scarba (Benevolent Society)
 - funding has not increased to meet the escalating demand for services waiting lists are growing longer.
- Schools as Community Centres Program (SaCC)
 - community preschool reduced from two sessions to one.

Current Services Time-Limited by non-recurrent funding:

- Curran Public School
 - Family worker position
- Minto Family Centre (Burnside)
 - Family worker position

Physical Community Assets:

Schools

- Curran Public School
- Guise Public School
- Macquarie Fields Public School
- James Meehan High School
- Macquarie Fields High School
- Macquarie Fields TAFE

Community

- Glenquarie Neighbourhood Centre
- Salvation Army Centre
- Eucalyptus Cottage
- Senior Citizens Centre
- Youth Centre
- Samaritan House
- Glenquarie Branch Library
- Macquarie Fields Swimming Pool and Leisure Centre

Halls:

- Glenquarie Community Hall
- Macquarie Fields Scout Hall

Service Providers Based at Macquarie Fields:

Government

- Schools as Community Centres (SaCC)
- Primary Connect
- Dept. of Housing – see Appendix A
- Dept. of Health Early Childhood Centre
- Macquarie Fields Police Service
- Dept. of Education and Training

Campbelltown City Council

- Library Services
- Wombat Willows Long Day Care Centre
- Immunisation
- Fitness classes
- Community development
- Cultural development

Non-government

- Glenquarie Neighbourhood Centre
- Salvation Army
- St Vincent de Paul
- Work Ventures – (Eucalyptus Cottage) non profit provider focusing on IT and employment programs
- Smith Family – Learning for Life providing scholarships to families to support their children's continuing education.

Early Childhood

- Macquarie Fields Preschool
- Salvation Army Long Day Care Centre
- Mulberry Cottage Long Day Care Centre
- Little Smarties Long Day Care Centre

Emergency Services

- Macquarie Fields Police Station
- Macquarie Fields Ambulance
- Macquarie Fields Fire Station

Service Providers Providing Outreach Services/Programs to Macquarie Fields:

Government

- Macarthur Health Service
 - Early child hood nurses
 - Ante-natal clinic
 - Spot Chatz - speech and occupational therapists come to preschools
 - Home nursing
 - Child, Adolescent & Family Team – counselling, parenting programs

Non-government

- Campbelltown Youth Services
- Burnside
 - Minto Family Centre
 - Northern Campbelltown Family Support

- Benevolent Society
 - SCARBA
 - First Five Years
- St. Vincent de Paul
 - Animation Program
- Macarthur Diversity Services Inc
- Northcott Society
- Campbelltown Family Support
 - SCOPE
- Macarthur District & Temporary Family Care
- Red Cross Breakfast Program
- Kindergarten Union
- Myrtle Cottage
 - provides support services and day activities for frail/aged/physically disabled persons
- Campbelltown Christian Fellowship
 - Soup Kitchen
- HACC
 - Home Care
 - Community Transport
 - Meals on Wheels
 - Home Modifications etc

Community Groups Active in Macquarie Fields:

- Neighbourhood Advisory Board
- Neighbourhood Watch
- School P&Cs
- Macquarie Fields, Ingleburn and Glenfield Interagency (MIG)
- Glenquarie Hall Committee
- Blue Light Disco Committee
- Scouts

Sporting Groups in Macquarie Fields:

These groups are often not accessible to DoH residents due to costs of registration fees, uniforms and transport.

- Football
- Soccer
- Netball
- Little Athletics

Current Programs at Macquarie Fields

Children 0-8 years and their families:

- Schools as Community Centres Program (SaCC) – an early intervention program based at Curran PS, providing a range of services, information and referral, and promotes linkages between families, school and the community.
- Playgroups – Structured, Aboriginal, Multicultural, Mobile (Wheely Good Fun)
- Book and Toy Library
- Transition to School (Kindergarten) Programs
- Parent Connect – a parents social group focussing on their and their children's needs.
- Early Childhood Health Services
- SCOPE – outreach family support early intervention program.
- Vacation Activity Programs – limited

Parenting/Family Support:

Some programs may be held only once or twice a year dependent on available funding.

- Triple P – positive parenting held at different times during the year.
- 123 Magic – behaviour management held at different times during the year.
- Exploring Together
 - children & their parents working on communication and strengthening family relationships.
- Family Support – home visits & support.
- Parenting Teens – support and information for parents bringing up teenagers.

Children 8 –12 years and their families:

- Primary Connect – based at Guise PS provides a range of services, information and referral. Promotes relationships between families, school and the community.
- Vacation Activity Programs – limited.
- SPIN – (Seeing Positives Instead of Negatives) - a self-esteem program for children at Curran and Guise Schools.
- Boys and Girls Social Skills Group – at Curran and Guise Schools.
- Boys Mentoring Program – Guise PS.
- Fitness After School Program.
- Blue Light Disco
- Breakfast Clubs – Guise and Curran Schools.

High School and Youth:

- Youth Centre – drop in and limited programs
- Mac Thing Tutorial Centre – alternate education program
- Youth Art
- Anger Management Program
- Blue Light Disco
- Holiday Programs – limited
- Allawah House – Crisis accommodation for young women

Women:

- Mothers' Craft/Social group
- Women's Fitness
- Ante-natal clinic
- Sewing Group

Senior Citizens:

- Older Women's Support Group
- HACC eg. Meals on Wheels, Home Care, Neighbour Aid, Community Transport
- Senior Citizens' Centre – varied activities and Arabic Seniors Group

Disability:

- Macarthur Disability Services
 - Post School Options
 - adult training learning and support
- Special Needs Family Resource Program – Northcott Society, providing outreach support to families with young children who have a disability

Employment and IT:

- Macquarie Fields TAFE
- Work Ventures
 - non-profit provider focusing on IT programs and employment
 - Internet Cafe
 - Computer courses

Material Assistance - Food/Electricity etc:

- St Vincent de Paul Op Shop
- Salvation Army
- Anglican Church
- Dairy Run – Dairy Farmers provide near to date dairy products to be distributed free to the community through a designated community group.
- Soup Kitchen - Campbelltown Christian Fellowship, held on Friday nights for families

Community Development Activities:

- St Vincent de Paul Animation Project – focus on working with public housing estate residents, building on their strengths, experiences and knowledge of the local community.
- Neighbourhood Centre
- Schools as Community Centres (SaCC)
- Primary Connect
- Campbelltown City Council

Appendix A

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING ACTIVITIES ON THE MACQUARIE FIELDS HOUSING ESTATE

Past

- HCAP Worker - Housing Communities Assistance Program
- Provided financial support and assistance to Cover-up Curtain

Present

- Local office is providing day to day tenancy management
- Community Renewal is providing support to partnerships and community building activities ie. Neighbourhood Advisory Board, Macquarie Interagency Meeting, community celebrations/events
- Continue physical renewal (NIP) program at Grevillea Precinct
- Continue to provide support to the Neighbourhood Technology Centre
- Landscaping Traineeship with Mission Employment
- Community Development and Resourcing Grants Program 2003/2004, \$4,000 was allocated to Glenquarie Neighbourhood Centre, for a Community Newsletter Project
- Organised periodic Foodshare deliveries.

Future Potential

- Place Management position
- A variety of employment & training programs to improve opportunities for social housing tenants ie. Work for the Dole, outreach employment service
- Master Plan exercise for the remaining townhouses

Appendix B

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION & TRAINING PROGRAMS

1. *Breakfast Programs* – Both Curran Public School and Guise Public School provide breakfast programs at school. These programs are organized and run by community members with assistance from teaching staff.
2. *Family Contact Program* – From their Priority Action School Program funds Curran Public School employs a community worker, who is based at the school, to make links with difficult to contact families and assists parents to develop and implement strategies to address home based issues that are impacting on student attendance and behaviour. In addition, this worker supports teachers by liaising with parents, assisting with behaviour plans and facilitating teacher in-servicing with regard to student and community welfare issues.
3. *Anti-bullying programs* – James Meehan High school, Curran Public School and Guise Public School all provide programs designed to raise awareness of and eliminate bullying within the schools.
 James Meehan High School has developed a series of "home grown" workshops (Stop All Violence in Education – SAVE) to pro-actively promote an anti-bullying culture in the school. Students involved in violent incidents work through this supervised program.
 Curran Public School have their "Bugs (Being Ultra Good Students) not Bullies program. The BUGS program is a positive reinforcement program that rewards children with tokens for displaying appropriate school behaviours, both in the classroom and the playground.
 Guise Public School's program is "Bullies Beware" and has a K-6 focus and is developed through a weekly social skills program.
4. *Schools as Community Centre Program* – This inter-agency funded project (Department of Education and Training, Department of Housing, Department of Community Services and the Department of Health) is based in Curran Public School and serves the whole Macquarie Fields community. It is a community information resource that has been running successfully for almost 10 years. An average of 60 families participate each week in the program.
 Its activities include:
 - a. A free community preschool for one session per week at Curran Public School
 - b. Three structured playgroups per week
 - c. Provision of a community book and toy library
 - d. Provision of child care studies in conjunction with TAFE. (An accredited course to give access to further education opportunities and employment opportunities
 - e. Providing a full range of parenting and skill building programs in association with Community Health and other service providers

- f. Parenting newsletter and community service directory
 - g. Referral and Information service to the community
 - h. Community development initiatives
 - i. Family health and nutrition programs in partnership with Health Promotions.
 - j. A Dad's program on Saturday mornings to encourage fathers to develop positive models for interacting and playing with their children.
5. *Primary Connect* – A program employing a community worker, based at Guise Public School, targeting K - 6 students and their parents. It provides a wide variety of community and student centred activities that are accessed by students and parents from both Guise and Curran Public Schools. The Primary Connect worker, in addition to developing and coordinating many school based activities, supports the schools in encouraging parental and community participation. Activities that are organised include:
- a. An after school sporting and fitness program run in conjunction with TAFE which attracts between 80 and 100 students.
 - b. Girls Groups and Boys Groups, where targeted students meet with Primary Connect staff, Aboriginal Education Assistant, assistant principal in groups ranging from 9 to 30 students to discuss current issues and work on social skills.
 - c. Seeing Positives in Negatives (SPIN) is a program run by Burnside targeting boys who are considered to be at risk of developing ant-social behaviours.
 - d. A TAFE computer course for parents and community members who wish to upgrade their computer skills. A group of 25 adults are attending this course.
 - e. Exercise classes for mothers.
 - f. After school art and dance classes for K – 6 students.
6. *Blue Light Discos* – These are organized in a partnership between James Meehan High School and the local Police Youth Liaison Committee. Over the last six years these have been run without disruption and attract attendances of between 120 and 200 students.
7. *Boys Programs* – James Meehan High School has, for the past two years, been running the "Rock and Water" program, a specific boys program to deal positively with boy related social issues and aggression.
8. *Peer Counselling Program* – James Meehan High School has developed their own positive peer counselling program to meet the unique needs of their students. Senior students who have themselves experienced, and overcome, personal difficulties are trained to work closely with younger students on matters relating to relationships, violence and social behaviour.
9. *Year 7 mentor/coaching program* – Every teacher on the Year 7 team at James Meehan High School mentors four to five students. This means that every student in Year 7 has a member of staff known to them who will assume the responsibility of coaching and mentoring them to assist them in their commitment to their education.

10. *After School Homework Centre* – A supportive homework centre is available free of charge for Year 10 to 12 students at James Meehan High School. There are four teachers providing support for students with their school work two days per week.
11. *Mac Thing Tutorial Centre* – James Meehan High School operates a part time tutorial centre at the local youth centre, three days per week providing literacy and vocational education for post compulsory age students who have left full time schooling. The aim for these students is a return to school, enrolment at TAFE or entry into the work force. Over 200 students have been through this program since its inception in 1999.
12. James Meehan High School is conducting an alternative curriculum delivery and learning structure for Year 7 students. The aim is to provide greater engagement in the learning process through a fully integrated approach to learning involving team teaching in what is described as a Rich Task Experience. The features of the rich task experience are:
 - a. Segregation of Year 7 into a transition area of the school
 - b. Division of the learning curriculum into three unique courses, designed within the school
 - c. Provision of teaching by teams of teachers operating in unison
 - d. Integration of learning in all courses into discrete themes defined each term
 - e. Learning experiences developed around and focused on rich task engagement
 - f. Development of a strong group and team identity within students and a foundation of choice and student centred responsibility for learning.
13. James Meehan High School also offers a home reading tutor program to encourage Year 7 and 8 students to develop their reading skills. James Meehan High School provides and trains the reading tutors who go into the students' homes once a week to work with them on a structured reading program. This is financed through the school's Priority School Funding Program and is supporting approximately 40 year 7 students.
14. *Business Links* – James Meehan High School has developed an excellent business/school link with the city law firm of Minter Ellison. This innovative program allows students to broaden their life experiences and career horizons by providing opportunities for students to gain work experience and business mentoring. Twenty-two employees of Minter Ellison have linked up as mentors with twenty-two students from James Meehan High School and have made a commitment to work with the students for one hour per fortnight for the whole of the year.
15. James Meehan High School also offers a wide range of multicultural programs and activities. With 36 different English as a Second Language (ESL) groups in the school they organize a multicultural day each year, run multicultural dance groups, organize a multicultural food day.

16. James Meehan High School, Guise Public School and Curran Public School all have Aboriginal Education Assistants who assist in the development of support programs for indigenous students.
17. Macquarie Fields TAFE offers a range of vocational and educational courses to the community including the Outreach program which works in partnership with a variety of agencies to provide innovative programs focusing on community engagement, education and skill acquisition.

Appendix 5 Minutes

Minutes No 54, 16 March 2005
Room 814/815, Parliament House, 9.45am

1. Members present

Ms Jan Burnswoods (Chair)
 Ms Robyn Parker (Deputy Chair)
 Ms Kayee Griffin
 Mr Ian West
 Dr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans
 Mr Charlie Lynn

2. Minutes

Resolved, on the motion of Mr West, that the minutes of meeting number 53 be adopted.

3. Correspondence

...

4. Deliberative – Inquiry into Teacher Recruitment and Training

...

5. Hearing – Inquiry into Teacher Recruitment and Training

...

6. Deliberative – New Inquiry

The Chair tabled a letter dated 16 March 2005, from Minister Scully referring an Inquiry into public disturbances at Macquarie Fields to the Committee.

The Committee adjourned at 4.55pm to reconvene at 9.45am, Thursday 17 March 2005.

Victoria Pymm
Senior Council Officer

Minutes No 55, 17 March 2005
Jubilee Room, Parliament House, 9.45am

1. Members present

Ms Jan Burnswoods (Chair)
 Ms Robyn Parker (Deputy Chair)
 Ms Kayee Griffin
 Mr Ian West
 Dr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans
 Mr Charlie Lynn

2. Deliberative – New Inquiry

The Chair tabled amended terms of reference from Minister Scully referring to the Committee an Inquiry into public disturbances at Macquarie Fields.

Mr West moved:

that the closing date for submissions be 29 April 2005 and advertisements be placed in the Sydney Morning Herald, the Daily Telegraph, the Police News and other papers if required; and that a letter from the Chair to relevant and interested individuals, agencies and the community be sent as soon as possible.

Debate ensued.

The question was put. The Committee divided:

Ayes:

Ms Burnswoods

Ms Griffin

Mr West

Noes:

Ms Parker

Dr Chesterfield-Evans

The Chair declared the motion carried.

Dr Chesterfield-Evans moved:

that the Committee accept the reference from Minister Scully concerning the situation and incidents in Macquarie Fields, but request clause (b) be removed from the terms of reference and that the Chair write to the Minister to request this.

Debate ensued.

The question was put. The Committee divided:

Ayes:

Ms Parker

Dr Chesterfield-Evans

Noes:

Ms Burnswoods

Ms Griffin

Mr Ian West

The Chair declared the motion defeated.

Ms Parker moved that the Committee seek the written advice of the Clerk on clause (b) of the Minister's reference.

Debate ensued

The question was put. The Committee divided:

Ayes:

Ms Parker

Mr Lynn

Dr Chesterfield-Evans

Noes:

Ms Burnswoods

Ms Griffin
Mr West

There being an equality of votes, the Chair cast her vote with the noes and the motion was defeated.

3. Hearing – Inquiry into Teacher Recruitment and Training

...

4. Adjournment

The Committee adjourned at 5.15pm.

Victoria Pymm
Senior Council Officer

Minutes No 56, 8 April 2005
Room 814/815, Parliament House, 9.35am

1. Members present

Ms Jan Burnswoods (Chair)
Ms Robyn Parker (Deputy Chair)
Ms Kayee Griffin
Mr Ian West
Dr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans

2. Minutes

Resolved, on the motion of Mr West, that the minutes of meeting number 54 and 55 be adopted.

3. Correspondence

...

Item 5 – Letter dated 29 March 2005 to Mr Ken Moroney, Commissioner of Police, advising that the Inquiry into the public disturbances at Macquarie Fields will be deferred until the conclusion of any reviews conducted by New South Wales Police, and requesting a timeframe for the conclusion of those reviews.

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Griffin to note the above correspondence.

4. Inquiry into the disturbances at Macquarie Fields

The Committee noted the instruction received from the House to defer the commencement of the Inquiry until the NSW Police had concluded the inquiries currently underway.

5. New Inquiries – Funeral Industry and Dental Services in New South Wales

...

6. Hearing – Inquiry into Teacher Recruitment and Training

...

7. Adjournment

The Committee adjourned at 5.05pm.

Victoria Pymm
Senior Council Officer

Minutes No 58, 14 June 2005

Jubilee room, Parliament House, 9.30am

1. Members present

Ms Jan Burnswoods (Chair)
Ms Robyn Parker (Deputy Chair)
Dr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans
Ms Kayee Griffin
Ms Charlie Lynn
Ms Ian West

2. Public Hearing – Inquiry into Recruitment and Training of Teachers

...

3. Minutes of meetings nos 56 and 57

Resolved on the motion of Ms Griffin: That the draft minutes of meetings nos 56 and 57 be adopted.

4. Correspondence

...

Item 2 – Letter dated 26 April 2005 from Hon Carl Scully MP, Minister for Police, informing the committee that the current operation review into the disturbances at Macquarie Fields is due to be completed in June 2005.

...

Resolved on the motion of Ms Parker: That the committee note the correspondence.

5. Hearing - Inquiry into Teacher Recruitment and Training

...

6. Inquiry into the Funeral Industry

...

7. Inquiry into the Dental Services in New South Wales

...

8. Public Hearing – Inquiry into the Funeral Industry

...

9. Adjournment

The committee adjourned at 4.35 pm.

Susan Want
Acting Director

Minutes No 59, 29 June 2005

Jubilee Room, Parliament House, 1:30 pm

1. Members present

Ms Jan Burnswoods (Chair)
Ms Robyn Parker (Deputy Chair)
Dr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans
Ms Kayee Griffin
Mr Charlie Lynn
Mr Ian West

2. Correspondence Out

The Chair tabled a letter dated 24 July 2005 to the Minister for Police, the Hon Carl Scully MP, relating to the inquiry into public disturbances at Macquarie Fields.

Resolved on the motion of Mr Lynn: That the committee note the correspondence.

3. Inquiry into Dental Services in New South Wales

...

4. Public Hearing – Inquiry into Dental Services in New South Wales

...

5. Inquiry into public disturbances at Macquarie Fields

The Chair tabled a letter from the Minister for Police, the Hon Carl Scully MP, advising that NSW Police had completed its review and was providing an edited copy of the Final Report into Macquarie Fields Public Order Management Incidents. The Minister also advised that a copy of the report of the investigation of the emergency call response would be provided as soon as it was to hand.

Resolved on the motion of Mr Lynn: That the report be made public.

6. Minutes of Meeting no. 58

Resolved on the motion of Mr Lynn: That the draft minutes of meeting no. 58 be adopted.

7. Sub-Committee

...

8. Future hearings and witnesses

...

9. Public hearing – Inquiry into Dental Services in New South Wales.

...

10. Adjournment

The committee adjourned at 5.10pm until Tuesday 5 July 2005 at 9.30 am.

Susan Want
Acting Director

Minutes No 63, Tuesday 23 August 2005

Renaissance Room, Panthers, Port Macquarie, 10.00am

1. Members present

Ms Jan Burnswoods (Chair)
Ms Robyn Parker (Deputy Chair)
Dr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans
Ms Kayee Griffin
Mr Ian West

2. Apologies

Mr Charlie Lynn

3. Inquiry into dental services in New South Wales

...

4. Inquiry into public disturbances at Macquarie Fields

Ms Parker moved: that the Committee request formal advice from the Minister for Police as to the status and progress of the investigations by NSW Police into the Macquarie Fields emergency call response, oversights by the NSW Ombudsman.

Ms Griffin moved: that the motion be amended by omitting all words after 'that' and inserting instead the words 'that the Director get advice from the Clerk in relation to procedures for contacting the Minister for Police and/or the Ombudsman regarding progress of the investigation by NSW Police into the Macquarie Fields emergency call response.

Debate ensued.

The Committee divided:

Ayes: Ms Burnswoods, Ms Griffin, Mr West

Noes: Dr Chesterfield-Evans, Ms Parker

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Original motion, as amended, put.

The Committee divided:

Ayes: Ms Burnswoods, Ms Griffin, Mr West

Noes: Dr Chesterfield-Evans, Ms Parker

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Dr Chesterfield-Evans moved:

That the Director seeks the advice as resolved today (23rd August 2005).

The Committee divided:

Ayes: Dr Chesterfield-Evans, Ms Parker

Noes: Ms Burnswoods, Ms Griffin, Mr West

Question resolved in the negative.

5. Public hearing – inquiry into dental services in NSW and inquiry into the funeral industry

...

6. Adjournment

The Committee adjourned at 4.02pm until 2.00pm on Tuesday 31 August 2005 (Broken Hill public hearing and site visit)

Rachel Simpson
Director

Minutes No 65, Wednesday 31 August 2005
Broken Hill Council Chambers, Broken Hill NSW, 9.30am

1. Members present

Ms Jan Burnswoods (Chair)
 Dr Chesterfield-Evans
 Ms Kayee Griffin
 Mr Ian West

2. Apologies

Mr Charlie Lynn
 Ms Robyn Parker

3. Public hearing – Inquiry into the Funeral Industry

...

4. Deliberative meeting

Confirmation of minutes

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Griffin, that Minutes No 62 and 63 be confirmed.

Inquiry into public disturbances in Macquarie Fields

The Director briefed the Committee on advice received regarding the procedures for contacting the Minister for Police and/or the Ombudsman in relation to the progress of the investigation by NSW Police into the Macquarie Fields emergency call response.

Resolved, on the motion of Dr Chesterfield-Evans, that the Chair write to the Minister for Police and the NSW Ombudsman regarding the likely timeframe for completion of the NSW Police investigation into the Macquarie Fields emergency call response.

...

5. Adjournment

The committee adjourned at 3.15pm until 9.30am Monday 5 September 2005 (public hearing, Parliament House).

Rachel Simpson
Director

Minutes No 66, Monday 5 September 2005
Jubilee room, Parliament House, 9.30am

1. Members present

Ms Jan Burnswoods (Chair)
 Ms Robyn Parker (Deputy Chair)
 Dr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans
 Mr Charlie Lynn
 Ms Kayee Griffin
 Mr Ian West

2. Public hearing – Inquiry into the Funeral Industry

...

3. Deliberative meeting*Correspondence Sent*

Letter from Chair dated 2 September 2005 to the Minister for Police and the NSW Ombudsman regarding the likely timeframe for completion of the NSW Police investigation into the Macquarie Fields emergency call response.

...

4. Adjournment

The committee adjourned at 5.30pm until 9.00am Monday 19 September 2005 (public hearing, Parliament House).

Rachel Simpson
Director

Minutes No 67, Monday 19 September 2005
Jubilee room, Parliament House, 9.30am**1. Members present**

Ms Jan Burnswoods (Chair)
Ms Robyn Parker (Deputy Chair)
Mr Charlie Lynn
Ms Kayee Griffin
Mr Ian West

2. Apologies

Dr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans

3. Public hearing – Inquiry into the Funeral Industry

...

4. Deliberative meeting

...

Confirmation of minutes

Resolved on the motion of Mr West that Minutes No 66 be confirmed.

...

5. Inquiry into public disturbances at Macquarie Fields

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Lynn that:

- (a) The Committee commence its inquiry into public disturbances at Macquarie Fields
- (b) advertisement calling for submissions be placed in the *Daily Telegraph* on Wednesday 27 September 2005, relevant local newspapers and *Police News*, including an explanation why the Committee is re-advertising the inquiry
- (c) The closing date for submissions be Wednesday 9 November 2005
- (d) The Chair write to relevant and interested individuals, agencies and the community inviting a submission to the Committee's inquiry

6. Inquiry into the funeral industry

...

7. Inquiry into dental services

...

8. Adjournment

The committee adjourned at 11.45am, *sine die*.

Rachel Simpson
Director

Minutes No 68, Wednesday 19 October 2005
Room 1153, Parliament House, 1.10pm

1. Members present

Ms Jan Burnswoods (Chair)
 Ms Robyn Parker (Deputy Chair)
 Mr Charlie Lynn
 Ms Kayee Griffin
 Mr Ian West

2. Apologies

Dr Chesterfield-Evans

3. Correspondence

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Parker, that the following correspondence be noted:

Received:

...

- Hon Carl Scully MP, Minister for Police, 29 September 2005, letter to Chair regarding timeframe for the completion of the investigation by NSW Police into the Macquarie Fields emergency call response.

4. Inquiry into dental services

...

5. Inquiry into teacher recruitment and training – consideration of Chair’s draft report

...

6. Next meeting

Monday 14 November 2005, 2-5pm, Room 1153

Victoria Pymm
Senior Council Officer

Minutes No 69, Monday 14 November 2005
Waratah room, Parliament House, 2.00pm

1. Members present

Ms Jan Burnswoods (Chair)
 Ms Robyn Parker (Deputy Chair)
 Dr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans
 Mr Charlie Lynn
 Ms Kayee Griffin
 Mr Ian West

2. Deliberative meeting

Confirmation of minutes

Resolved, on the motions of Mr West and Ms Griffin, that Minutes No 67 and 68 be confirmed.

Correspondence

...

Macquarie Fields

Received

1. Mr Steven Chaytor MP, Member for Macquarie Fields, 8 November 2005, email to Director requesting extension for a submission to the Macquarie Fields inquiry.
2. Ms Jo Alley, Policy Officer, Uniting Care Burnside, 4 November 2005, letter to Chair advising will submit a submission by 18 November 2005 to the Macquarie Fields inquiry.
3. Ms Annette Gallard, Acting Director, General NSW Department of Community Services, 26 October 2005, letter to Chair advising that the Department will be contributing to whole of government response to the Macquarie Fields Inquiry, to be coordinated by the Cabinet Office.
4. Ms Gillian Calvert, Commissioner, NSW Commission for Children and Young People, 13 October 2005, letter to Chair advising that the Commission is unable to prepare a submission for the Macquarie Fields Inquiry.

3. Inquiry into recruitment and training of teachers

...

4. Inquiry into dental services

...

5. Inquiry into the funeral industry

...

6. Inquiry into public disturbances at Macquarie Fields

Resolved, on the motion of Mr West, to accept and make public submissions 1, 1a – 7, 9 and 11-15, with the omission of names of individuals in submissions 2 and 13.

The Committee discussed future witnesses and hearings and requested the secretariat to start organising hearings to be held in Sydney and Campbelltown.

7. Public hearing – Inquiry into dental services in NSW

...

8. Adjournment

The committee adjourned at 6.15 pm until Monday 5 December 2005, 9am, Room 1153 (funeral industry report deliberative).

Katherine Fleming

Principal Council Officer

Minutes No 70, Tuesday 29 November 2005

Members' Lounge, Parliament House, 6.45pm

1. Members present

Ms Jan Burnswoods (Chair)

Ms Robyn Parker (Deputy Chair)

Dr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans
 Mr Charlie Lynn
 Ms Kayee Griffin
 Mr Ian West

2. **Inquiry into public disturbances at Macquarie Fields**

Ms Griffin moved: that the Committee accept and make public submission 19, and defer its decision concerning the publication of submissions 17, 18, 20 and 21 until the Committee's next meeting.

Debate ensued.

The Committee divided:

Ayes: Ms Burnswoods, Ms Griffin, Mr Lynn, Ms Parker, Mr West
 Noe: Dr Chesterfield-Evans

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Griffin, to suppress names in submission 15, at the request of the author, received after the Committee resolved to accept and publish the submission at its meeting held on 14 November 2005.

Resolved, on the motion of Dr Chesterfield-Evans, to make public submission 10, with the author's name and identifying information suppressed.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr West, to make public submission 8, with the exception of certain portions of the submission.

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Parker, to hold oral hearings on Monday 12 December 2005 in Sydney, and Tuesday 13 December 2005 in Macquarie Fields.

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Parker, to approve the list of proposed witnesses for oral hearings on 12 and 13 December 2005 and forum participants on 13 December 2005.

3. **Adjournment**

The committee adjourned at 7.25 pm until Monday 5 December 2005, 9.30am, Jubilee Room (Macquarie Fields public hearing followed by deliberative meeting to review the funeral industry report).

Katherine Fleming
Principal Council Officer

Minutes No 71, Monday 5 December 2005 Jubilee Room, Parliament House, 9.30am

1. **Members present**

Ms Jan Burnswoods (Chair)
 Ms Robyn Parker (Deputy Chair)
 Dr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans
 Mr Charlie Lynn
 Ms Kayee Griffin
 Mr Ian West

2. Public hearing – inquiry into public disturbances at Macquarie Fields

Dr Col Gellatly, Director General and Ms Helen Boyton, Regional Coordinator, South Western Sydney, Premier's Department, were affirmed and examined.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr West, that the document tendered by Dr Gellatly be accepted.

Questioning concluded, the witnesses withdrew.

Mr Ken Moroney, Commissioner of Police, Mr Andrew Scipione, Deputy Commissioner Field Operations, Mr Denis Clifford, Assistant Commissioner and Commander, Greater Metropolitan Region, Mr John Sweeney, Superintendent and Commander Rose Hills Local Area, Mr Greg Rolph, Superintendent and Vikings Commander, and Mr Mark Noakes, Chief Inspector Operation Support Command, Vikings Unit, NSW Police were affirmed and examined.

Resolved on the motion of Ms Griffin that the Committee proceed to take evidence from witnesses in camera.

The public and the media withdrew.

The Committee proceeded to take in camera evidence.

[Persons present other than the Committee: Ms Rachel Simpson, Ms Katherine Fleming, Ms Rebecca Main, Ms Dora Oravec, Mr Ian Pringle and Hansard Reporters]

Questioning concluded, the witnesses withdrew.

...

3. Publication of transcript

Resolved on the motion of Ms Griffin that Mr Moroney's closing statement given in camera be published.

4. Confirmation of minutes

Resolved on the motion of Mr West that Minutes No 69 and 70 be confirmed.

5. Correspondence

The Committee noted the following correspondence:

...

Macquarie Fields***Received:***

- Ms Louise Voigt, CEO and Director of Welfare, Barnardos, 1 November 2005, letter to Director in response to invitation to make submission to inquiry.

Sent:

- Letter dated 25 November 2005 from Chair to Minister for Housing advising of Macquarie Fields public hearing.
- Letter dated 25 November 2005 from Chair to Premier advising of Macquarie Fields public hearing.
- Letter dated 25 November 2005 from Chair to Minister of Police advising of Macquarie Fields public hearing.

6. Inquiry into dental services

...

7. Inquiry into public disturbances at Macquarie Fields

Resolved on the motion of Ms Griffin that Ms Paola Totaro (Sydney Morning Herald) not be permitted to attend the confidential youth consultation on 13 December 2005.

Resolved on the motion of Ms Griffin to accept and make public submissions 17, 18, 20 and 21.

8. Inquiry into the funeral industry

...

9. Adjournment

The committee adjourned at 4.00pm until 9.30am Monday 12 December 2005, Jubilee Room, Parliament House.

Rebecca Main
Senior Council Officer

Minutes No 72, Monday 12 December 2005
Jubilee Room, Parliament House, 9.30am

1. Members present

Ms Jan Burnswoods (Chair)
Ms Robyn Parker (Deputy Chair)
Dr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans
Mr Charlie Lynn
Ms Kayee Griffin
Mr Ian West

2. Public hearing – inquiry into public disturbances at Macquarie Fields

Mr Gary Moore, Director, Council of Social Services of NSW was affirmed and examined.

Questioning concluded, the witness withdrew.

Mr Mike Allen, Deputy Director General, and Mr Cliff Haynes, General Manager, Greater Western Sydney Housing Services Division, Department of Housing, were affirmed and examined.

Questioning concluded, the witnesses withdrew.

Mr Paul Tosi, General Manager, Campbelltown City Council, was affirmed and examined.

Questioning concluded, the witness withdrew.

Ms Jo Alley, Policy Officer, and Ms Deborah Hinchcliffe, Co-ordinator Minto Family Centre, UnitingCare Burnside, were affirmed and examined.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr West, that the document tendered by Ms Alley be accepted.

Questioning concluded, the witness withdrew.

Mr Bob Pritchard, President, Mr Luke Hannon, Executive Member, Mr Bob Morgan, Occupational Health and Safety Co-ordinator, and Mr Paul Hannen, Occupational Health and Safety Officer, Police Association of NSW, were affirmed and examined.

Questioning concluded, the witnesses withdrew.

Ms Annette Gallard, Deputy Director General, Operations, and Ms Anne Campbell, Regional Director, Metro South West, Department of Community Services were affirmed and examined.

Questioning concluded, the witnesses withdrew.

3. Adjournment

The committee adjourned at 4.50pm until 10.00am Tuesday 13 December 2005, Macquarie Fields TAFE, Macquarie Fields.

Rachel Simpson
Director

Minutes No 73, Tuesday 13 December 2005

Macquarie Fields College, SWSI TAFE, Macquarie Fields, 10.00am

1. Members present

Ms Jan Burnswoods (Chair)
Ms Robyn Parker (Deputy Chair)
Dr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans
Mr Charlie Lynn
Ms Kayee Griffin
Mr Ian West

2. Public hearing – inquiry into public disturbances at Macquarie Fields

Mr Owen Rogers, CEO, NSW/ACT State Council, and Mr Paul Power, Manager, Vincentian Social Action Centre, St Vincent de Paul Society were affirmed and examined.

Questioning concluded, the witnesses withdrew.

Mr Stuart Wilkins, Superintendent, Commander Macquarie Fields LAC, Mr Darrin Wilson, Chief Inspector, Macquarie Fields Duty Officer, Mr Christopher Cotter, Senior Constable, Macquarie Fields Youth Liaison Officer, Mr Alan White, Crime Coordinator, Macquarie Fields and Ms Sarah Clark, Senior Constable, Macquarie Fields Domestic Violence Liaison Officer, NSW Police, were sworn and examined.

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Griffin, that the document tendered by Mr Cotter be accepted.

Questioning concluded, the witnesses withdrew.

Public forum

Ms Bev Newitt, Principal, Guise Public School, Mr Bruce Sanders, Principal, James Meehan High School, Ms Margaret Ballantine, Northern Campbelltown Community Action Group, Mr Roy Danielson and Ms Julie Longland, Campbelltown Youth Services and Youth Support and Outreach Programme, were affirmed and examined.

Questioning concluded, the witnesses withdrew.

Private community consultations

Resolved on the motion of Ms Griffin that the Committee proceed to take evidence from witnesses in camera.

The public and the media withdrew.

The Committee proceeded to take in camera evidence.

[Persons present other than the Committee: Ms Rachel Simpson, Ms Katherine Fleming, Ms Rebecca Main, Ms Natasha O'Connor, Mr Maurice Rebecchi and Hansard Reporters]

Documents tabled.

Questioning concluded, the witnesses withdrew.

3. **Adjournment**

The committee adjourned at 4.50pm.

Rachel Simpson
Director

Minutes No 74, Thursday 16 February 2006 **Jubilee Room, Parliament House, 9.30am**

1. **Members present**

Ms Jan Burnswoods (Chair)
Ms Robyn Parker (Deputy Chair)
Dr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans
Mr Charlie Lynn
Ms Kayee Griffin
Mr Ian West

2. **Public hearing – inquiry into dental services in NSW**

...

3. **Inquiry into dental services**

...

4. **Confirmation of minutes**

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Griffin that Minutes No 71, 72 and 73 be confirmed.

5. **Correspondence**

The Committee noted the following correspondence:

Public disturbances at Macquarie Fields

Received

1. Letter from Ms Annette Gallard, Deputy Director-General Operations, Department of Community Services, 11 January 2006, providing response to questions taken on notice at hearing on 12 December 2006.
2. Letter from Mr Mike Allen, Deputy Director-General Operations, Department of Housing, 11 January 2006, providing response to questions taken on notice at hearing on 12 December 2005.
3. Letter from Mr Luke Hannon, Police Association of NSW, 11 January 2006, providing copy of Associations submission on Apprehended Domestic Violence.
4. Letter from A S Smith, Acting Director General, Premier's Department, 5 January 2006, to Director, providing response to questions taken on notice at hearing on 5 December 2005.

5. Letter from Mr Paul Power, St Vincent de Paul Society, 4 January 2006 to Director, providing further information requested.
6. Letter from Mr Paul Tosi, General Manager, Campbelltown City Council, 22 December 2005, to Committee, additional information requested at the hearing on 12 December 2005.
7. Letter from Mr Mike Allen, Deputy Director-General Operations, Department of Housing, 15 December 2005, to Director, providing copy of his opening statement for the hearing on 12 December 2005.
8. Letter from Ms Sonja Stewart, Executive Director Communities Division, Department of Community Services, 12 December 2005, to Director advising that Ms Deb Ryan, Families First, would not be attending the public forum on 13 December 2005.
9. Letter from Ms Jan Nicoll, Allawah House, 12 December 2005, to Committee regarding attendance at the community consultation session on 13 December 2005 (CONFIDENTIAL).
10. Letter from Mr Ken Moroney, Commissioner of Police, 9 December 2005, to Chair providing copy of review of the Macquarie Fields Local Area Command (CONFIDENTIAL).
11. Letter from Ms Jan Nicoll, Allawah House, 8 December 2005, to Committee regarding attendance at the community consultation session on 13 December 2005 (CONFIDENTIAL).
12. Letter from Mr Terry Barnes, Director-General, Department of Housing, 7 December 2005, advising names of representatives to appear at hearing on 12 December 2005.
13. Memorandum from the Hon Charlie Lynn MLC, 5 December 2005, to Committee members regarding witnesses for the Inquiry.
14. Submission dated 6 December 2005, from Mr Rodney Edwards to the Inquiry into public disturbances at Macquarie Fields.

Sent

1. Letter to Mr Steven Chaytor MP, Member for Macquarie Fields, from Chair, 7 December 2005, regarding hearing program for the Inquiry.
2. Letter to Hon. Reba Meagher MP, Minister for Community Services, Minister for Youth, from Chair, 2 December 2005, regarding appearance of Department of Community Services at hearing on 12 December 2005.
- ...

6. Inquiry into the funeral industry

...

7. Inquiry into public disturbances at Macquarie Fields

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Griffin to make public the transcript of the forum with representatives of community and non-government organisations, held on 13 December 2005.

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Griffin to accept and make public the documents tendered at in camera hearing of the forum with representatives of community and non-government organisations, on 13 December 2005.

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Griffin to accept and make public documents tendered at public hearings on 5 and 12 December 2005

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Griffin to accept and make public submissions 22 and 23.

Resolved on the motion of Ms Parker to hold a public hearing on 7 or 10 April 2006, subject to Members' availability, and to invite the following witnesses:

- Department of Education and Training
- Department of Health
- Australian Press Council
- Local work placement agency

- Macarthur Community Forum
- Macquarie Fields, Ingleburn and Glenfield Interagency (MIG)

Resolved, on the motion of Dr Chesterfield-Evans to inform the House of the Committee's intent to table the report for the inquiry into public disturbances at Macquarie Fields by 9 June 2006.

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Griffin to defer consideration of Mr Lynn's letter to the Committee until the next meeting.

8. Government response to report on Inebriates Act 1912

...

9. Adjournment

The committee adjourned at 5.20pm until 9.30am 24 March 2006, Room 1153.

Rachel Simpson
Director

Minutes No 75, Friday 24 March 2006
Room 1153, Parliament House, 9.30am

1. Members present

Ms Jan Burnswoods (Chair)
 Ms Robyn Parker (Deputy Chair)
 Dr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans
 Mr Charlie Lynn
 Ms Kayee Griffin
 Mr Ian West

2. Confirmation of minutes

Resolved, on the motion of Mr West, that Minutes No 74 be confirmed

3. Correspondence

...

4. Chair's draft report

...

5. Inquiry into public disturbances at Macquarie Fields

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Lynn: that consideration of issues raised in his letter be deferred until the Committee's next meeting.

6. Adjournment

The Committee adjourned at 2.00pm *sine die*.

Katherine Fleming
Principal Council Officer

Minutes No 78, Friday 7 April 2006
Room 814/815, Parliament House, 9.30am

1. Members present

Ms Jan Burnswoods (Chair)
Ms Robyn Parker (Deputy Chair)
Dr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans
Ms Kayee Griffin
Mr Ian West

2. Public hearing – inquiry into public disturbances at Macquarie Fields

Dr Greg Stewart, Acting Chief Executive Officer, Sydney South West Area Health Service, NSW Health, was sworn and examined.

Mr David McGrath, Director, Mental Health and Drug and Alcohol Programs, NSW Health, was sworn and examined.

Ms Amanda Larkin, General Manager, Sydney South West Area Health Service (Macarthur), NSW Health was sworn and examined

Questioning concluded, the witnesses withdrew.

Mr Jioji Ravulo, Youth Offender Support Programs Team Leader, South-West Youth Services, Mission Australia, was sworn and examined.

Ms Annette Lamb, Service Manager, Mission Australia Employment Services, was sworn and examined.

Mr Stephen Fowler, Employment Services Manager, NSW and ACT, Mission Australia, was sworn and examined.

Ms Karen Kemp, Operations Manager, Southern NSW and ACT, Mission Australia, was sworn and examined.

Questioning concluded, the witnesses withdrew.

Mr Peter Phelps, School Education Director, Ingleburn Schools, Department of Education and Training, was sworn and examined.

Mr Kimble Fillingham, Regional Director, South-Western Sydney, Department of Education and Training, was affirmed and examined.

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Griffin, that the document tendered by Mr Phelps be accepted.

Questioning concluded, the witnesses withdrew.

Mr Doug Taylor, Head of Community Partnerships, WorkVentures, was sworn and examined.

Questioning concluded, the witness withdrew.

Ms Jane McIvor, Co-ordinator/Manager, Macarthur Community Forum, was affirmed and examined.

Questioning concluded, the witness withdrew.

Ms Janet Watson, Facilitator, Schools as Community Centres Program, Macquarie Fields, was affirmed and examined.

Ms Patricia Fogarty, Co-ordinator, Glenquarie Neighbourhood Centre - the Junction Works, Glenquarie, was affirmed and examined.

Questioning concluded, the witnesses withdrew.

...

3. Confirmation of minutes

Resolved, on the motion of Mr West, that Minutes No 75, 76 and 77 be confirmed

4. Correspondence

The Committee noted the following correspondence:

...

Macquarie Fields inquiry:

Received

Letter dated 24 March 2006 from Australian Press Council to Director, concerning appearance at hearing.

...

5. Inquiry into dental services in NSW

...

6. Inquiry into public disturbances at Macquarie Fields

Resolved, on the motion of Dr Chesterfield-Evans, that the Chair provide extracts of relevant evidence containing allegations against the media to the relevant monitoring body and request a response thereto.

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Griffin, in considering the memo of Mr Lynn regarding further hearings for the Macquarie Fields inquiry, that the hearings have been concluded.

7. Impact of WorkChoices legislation inquiry:

...

8. Adjournment

The Chair thanked the outgoing Director of the Social Issues Committee, Ms Rachel Simpson for her assistance in the work of the Committee, and welcomed the new Director, Mr John Young.

The Committee adjourned at 4.45pm *sine die*.

Katherine Fleming
Principal Council Officer

Minutes No 79, Friday 2 June 2006
Room 1108, Parliament House, 1 pm

1. Members present

Ms Burnswoods (Chair)
Ms Parker (Deputy Chair)
Dr Chesterfield-Evans
Ms Griffin
Mr Lynn
Mr West

2. Confirmation of minutes

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Griffin, that Minutes No 78 be confirmed

3. Correspondence

The Committee noted the following correspondence:

...

Inquiry into public disturbances at Macquarie Fields***Received***

1. Letter from Ms Robyn Kruk, Director General, NSW Health, to Director, 5 May 2006, response to questions on notice.
2. Letter from Mr Rodney Edwards to Chair, 15 May 2006, concerning author's submission.
1. Letter from the Hon Bob Debus MP, Attorney-General, to Chair, 30 May 2006, containing information on the community conferencing scheme for young adult offenders.

Sent

1. Letter to Dr Col Gellatly, Director General, Premier's Department, from Chair, 12 April 2006, requesting further information.
2. Letter to Media, Entertainment & Arts Alliance, from Chair, 9 May 2006, requesting response to allegations made in evidence against the media.
3. Letter to Australian Communications & Media Authority, from Chair, 9 May 2006, requesting response to allegations made in evidence against the media.
2. Letter to the Hon Bob Debus MP, Attorney-General, from Chair, 24 May 2006, requesting further information on community conferencing scheme for young adult offenders.

...

4. Inquiry into the Inebriates Act 1912

...

5. Chair's draft report on inquiry into public disturbances at Macquarie Fields

The Chair tabled the draft report, which had been previously circulated.

Chapter 1 read.

Dr Chesterfield-Evans moved: That paragraph 1.8 be amended by inserting the following words at the end of the paragraph:

"While all the delays waiting for the Police Report seem to sound reasonable in retrospect, these inquiries had minimal bearing on our Inquiry and it is difficult to believe that this was not a delaying tactic to push the Inquiry further away from the event itself after the Marrickville and Liverpool by-elections."

Ms Parker moved: That the motion be amended by omitting the words "after the Marrickville and Liverpool by-elections" and inserting "and to divert public interest".

Question: That the amendment of Ms Parker be agreed to – put and negatived.

Original question put and negatived.

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Griffin, that Chapter 1 be adopted.

Chapter 2 read.

Ms Parker moved: That the word "disturbances" be changed to "riots" throughout the report.

Question put and negatived.

Mr Lynn moved: That the introductory paragraph of Chapter 2 be amended by inserting the following words at the end of the paragraph:

“To assist the public in understanding the context of the report in regard to what was known in the wider public area as the ‘Macquarie Fields riots’ but is now determined by the Government to be a disturbance, the following definitions are provided:

Disturbance: 1) the act or an instance of disturbing, the process of being disturbed 2) a tumult, an uproar 3) agitation, worry 4) an interruption 5) law: interference with riots or property; molestation.

Riot: 1) a disturbance of the peace by a crowd; an occurrence of public disorder 2) be involved in suppressing riots (riot police, riot shield) 3) uncontrolled revelry, noisy behaviour.”

Question put.

Committee divided.

Ayes: Ms Parker
Mr Lynn

Noes: Ms Burnswoods
Dr Chesterfield-Evans
Ms Griffin
Mr West

Question resolved in the negative.

Mr Lynn moved: That paragraph 2.13 be amended by inserting the following words at the end of the paragraph:

“The Committee notes that this has been common knowledge in the general Campbelltown community for at least a decade.”

Question put and negatived.

Mr Lynn moved: That paragraph 2.14 be amended, by inserting the following words at the end of the paragraph:

“The Committee notes that this was a reaction to a police action that blew out of control due to police inaction and mismanagement.”

Question put and negatived.

Mr Lynn moved: That paragraph 2.23 be amended by inserting the following words at the end of the paragraph:

“The Committee notes the lack of adequate public transport.”

Question put and negatived.

Resolved, on the motion of Dr Chesterfield-Evans, that the first sentence of paragraph 2.35 be amended by removing the word ‘directly’ and reinserting it after the words ‘young offenders’.

Mr Lynn moved: That paragraph 2.44 be amended by inserting the following words at the end of the paragraph:

“The Committee notes that the breakdown of the traditional family structure has contributed to the social problems in Macquarie Fields.”

Question put and negatived.

The Chair advised that responses to letters relating to media involvement in the Macquarie Fields disturbances which would form the substance of paragraph 2.56 were expected to be received that afternoon and would be circulated to Members.

Dr Chesterfield-Evans moved: That a new paragraph be inserted after paragraph 2.59 reading:

“The Committee notes that targets must be set for the indices of social disadvantage. There should be plans for each index and costing attached to the programs. Staff need to be recruited and people who are disadvantaged need to be engaged and helped.

Longitudinal studies need to be created to look at the probability of certain outcomes, given the different indices of disadvantage as defined by Vinson. Multivariate analysis could give weightings to the factors. The cost of inaction also needs to be costed in comparison; for example, the percentage of each group likely to be incarcerated and the cost and duration thereof, and the cost of any crimes likely to be committed. While there will always be a fairly large margin of error in social projections, it is a far better approach than to research nothing, analyse nothing and simply increase sentences of police power in an un-costed manner in response to anecdotes or current affairs commentators.”

The Chair advised that the Committee would defer this question until the appropriate time when considering Chapter 3 of the report.

Dr Chesterfield-Evans moved: That a recommendation be inserted into Chapter 2 to read:

“That the government fund social research to measure the costs of social policy actions and compare these to the cost of lack of action.”

The Chair advised that the Committee would defer this question until the appropriate time when considering Chapter 3 of the report.

Chapter 3 read.

Resolved, on the motion of Dr Chesterfield-Evans, to amend paragraph 3.10 by inserting further chronological detail concerning the Macquarie Fields Community Action Plan 2005-2006.

Mr Lynn moved: That paragraph 3.11 be amended by inserting the following words at the end of the paragraph:

“The Committee notes that the population of Macquarie Fields is 13,756 and considers the attendance of only 55 people at a public forum to be indicative of problems beyond the expertise of this Committee to address.”

Question put.

The Committee divided.

Ayes:

Ms Parker

Mr Lynn

Noes: Ms Burnswoods
Dr Chesterfield-Evans
Ms Griffin
Mr West

Question resolved in the negative.

Mr Lynn moved: That paragraph 3.23 be amended by inserting the following words at the end of the paragraph:

“The Committee notes that the recurrent funding referred to by Ms McIvor is a State Government responsibility.”

Question put and negatived.

Mr Lynn moved: That paragraph 3.41 be amended by inserting the following words at the end of the paragraph:

“The Committee notes that coordination of social services is primarily a state government responsibility.”

Question put and negatived.

Mr Lynn moved: That the first sentence of paragraph 3.57 be amended by inserting the words “non-government after the words “providing direct funding to”.

Question put and negatived.

Ms Parker moved: That the first sentence of paragraph 3.57 be amended by deleting the words “particularly as the Federal Government is increasingly providing direct funding to agencies”.

Question put and negatived.

Mr Lynn moved: That paragraph 3.57 be amended by inserting the following words at the end of the paragraph:

“The Committee accepts that it is a state government responsibility to fill the breach and co-ordinate the operations of social services in the Macquarie Fields area.”

Question put.

The Committee divided.

Ayes: Ms Parker
Mr Lynn

Noes: Ms Burnswoods
Dr Chesterfield-Evans
Ms Griffin
Mr West

Question resolved in the negative.

Mr Lynn moved: That a new recommendation be inserted prior to Recommendation 1 reading:

“That the NSW Government acknowledge its responsibility to take a leadership role in coordinating non-government programs to meet the social needs of the area.”

Question put.

The Committee divided.

Ayes: Ms Parker
 Mr Lynn

Noes: Ms Burnswoods
 Dr Chesterfield-Evans
 Ms Griffin
 Mr West

Question resolved in the negative.

Ms Parker moved: That Recommendation 5 be deleted.

Question put.

The Committee divided.

Ayes: Ms Parker
 Mr Lynn

Noes: Ms Burnswoods
 Dr Chesterfield-Evans
 Ms Griffin
 Mr West

Question resolved in the negative.

Resolved, on the motion of Dr Chesterfield-Evans, that Recommendation 6 be amended by deleting the word “a” and inserting the word “the”.

Dr Chesterfield-Evans moved: That Recommendation 7 be amended, by inserting the following words at the end of the recommendation:

“and that such assessments continue to be based and assessed on hard data.”

The Committee considered this question together with the motion of Dr Chesterfield-Evans deferred from the review of Chapter 2.

Resolved, on the motion of Dr Chesterfield-Evans, that a new paragraph 3.6 and recommendation 9 based on the language proposed by Dr Chesterfield-Evans be circulated to the Committee for consideration.

Mr Lynn moved: That an additional recommendation be inserted after Recommendation 8 reading:

“That a task force comprising Federal, State and Local Governments, non-government organisations and residents review legislation which has an impact on the ability of organisations to address social problems and on law enforcement agencies to enforce the law.”

Question put and negatived.

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Griffin, that Chapter 3 await adoption until proposed modifications have been circulated to Members.

Chapter 4 read.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Lynn, that paragraph 4.6 be amended by inserting the following words at the end of the paragraph:

“The Committee notes the comment of Mr Michael Weston:

“Maybe it would be interesting to look at other areas like social disorder. By this I mean crimes that generally go unreported or have low reporting rates. Such things as street brawls; malicious damage (vandalism/graffiti); riots; public drunkenness; offensive behaviour; anti social behaviour.”

Mr Lynn moved: That paragraph 4.36 be amended by inserting the following words at the end of the paragraph:

“The Committee notes that the primary role of the police is the enforcement of public order to ensure public safety”.

Question put and negatived.

Mr Lynn moved: That paragraph 4.51 be amended by inserting the following words after the second sentence:

“The Committee notes that the Director-General of the Premier’s Department who co-ordinated the whole of government submission stated to the Committee that he had not read the report of the Office of the Deputy Commissioner.”

Question put and negatived.

Mr Lynn requested that his support for the motion be noted.

Mr Lynn moved: That paragraph 4.61 be amended by inserting the following words at the end of the paragraph:

“The Committee notes that faults identified by the Police Association reflect poorly on the Police command and control structure. This poses the question as to whether there is too much effort spent in the police acting as a social agency rather than a law enforcement agency.”

Question put and negatived.

Mr Lynn requested that his support for the motion be noted.

Mr Lynn moved: That paragraph 4.67 be amended by inserting the following words at the end of the paragraph:

“The Committee notes that the Police Commanders have been negligent in not ensuring that police officers were properly trained and equipped for riot control.”

Question put and negatived.

Mr Lynn moved that paragraph 4.75 be amended by inserting the following words at the end of the paragraph:

“The Committee supports the NSW Police Association recommendation for a riot squad consisting of 103 officers.”

Question put and negatived.

Mr Lynn moved: That the words “disadvantaged communities” in Recommendation 11 be deleted and replaced with the words “areas with high levels of crime”.

Question put and negatived.

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Griffin, that Chapter 4, as amended, be adopted.

The Chair indicated a meeting would need to be arranged during the next sitting week to consider proposed changes to Chapters 2 and 3, and issues relating to the WorkChoices inquiry.

The Chair tabled correspondence from the Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance in response to the letter sent by the Chair dated 9 May 2006.

6. Adjournment

The Committee adjourned at 3.45 pm *sine die*.

Katherine Fleming
Principal Council Officer

Minutes No 80, Thursday 8 June 2006
Members' Lounge, Parliament House, 1.15 pm

1. Members present

Ms Burnswoods (Chair)
Ms Parker (Deputy Chair)
Dr Chesterfield-Evans
Ms Griffin
Mr Lynn
Mr West

2. Confirmation of minutes

Resolved, on the motion of Mr West, that Minutes No 79 be confirmed.

3. Chair's draft report on inquiry into public disturbances at Macquarie Fields

The Committee continued to consider the draft report and amendments, which had been previously circulated.

Chapter 2, as amended, read.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Lynn, to amend paragraph 2.56 by inserting the words 'and agrees with' after the word 'recognises'.

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Griffin, that Chapter 2, as amended, be adopted.
Chapter 3, as amended, read.

The Committee deliberated on the amendments to paragraphs 3.60, 3.61 and Recommendations 7 to 9, as circulated by the secretariat.

Resolved, on the motion Ms Parker, that Chapter 3 as amended, be adopted.

Chapter 4, as amended, read.

The Committee noted, on the motion of Mr Lynn, the amendments made to paragraphs 4.5 and 4.6 of Chapter 4 pursuant to the resolution taken at the deliberative meeting on 2 June 2006.

The Chair's foreword and draft Executive Summary were circulated.

Resolved, on the motion of Dr Chesterfield-Evans, that the Executive Summary be adopted.

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Parker, that the Committee extend the reporting date for the Inquiry to 16 June 2006.

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Griffin, that the report, as amended, be adopted by the Committee, signed by the Chair and presented to the House.

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Griffin, that the secretariat be authorised to make any typographical or grammatical changes to the report prior to the tabling of the report.

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Griffin, that, pursuant to section 4 of the Parliamentary Papers (Supplementary Provisions) Act 1975 and under the authority of Standing Order 223, the Committee publish all non-confidential tabled documents, correspondence, answers to questions taken on notice, minutes, submissions and transcripts.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr West, that dissenting reports be submitted to the secretariat by 9.00 am on Tuesday 13 June 2006.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr West, that Committee members be advised of the anticipated time that the report will be tabled on 16 June 2006 and, after the report has been tabled, that the Committee be provided with an electronic copy of the report and the media release.

4. Correspondence

...

5. Inquiry into the impact of the Commonwealth WorkChoices legislation

...

6. Adjournment

The Committee adjourned at 2.15 pm *sine die*.

Katherine Fleming
Principal Council Officer