

Review of the Aboriginal Community Justice Panel Program

*compiled by the Aboriginal
Community Justice Panel Review
Team*

FINAL REPORT

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We are also grateful to those people from the Koori community who were able to participate in the Open Forums conducted across the State. We are particularly grateful to these people as we acknowledge that there is a great deal of community consultation taking place at present in the wake of the Victorian Aboriginal Justice Agreement. The Review Team was aware that not all people who wanted to participate were able to attend on the arranged dates and times, but we trust that we were able to gain insight into the main issues impacting upon the operation of ACJP's and have been able to provide some solutions to problems faced in individual local communities in the following report.

We would also like to acknowledge the sad passing of Gerald Atkinson, who was undoubtedly, one of the 'pioneers' of the ACJP Program, as we know it today. We were most fortunate to have been able to draw upon Gerald's knowledge during the Review Team's visit to Mildura and know how he will be sadly missed. His life was lived in the true spirit of the Justice Agreement.

Thanks to Tarina Martyn from the Aboriginal Advisory Unit, Victoria Police for providing the team with documents, statistics and other information about the ACJP's, and other individuals who shared their knowledge of the history of ACJP's with the Review Team.

Abbreviations

ACJP	Aboriginal Community Justice Panels
AJWG	Aboriginal Justice Working Group
VAJA	Victorian Aboriginal Justice Agreement
ALO	Aboriginal Liaison Officer
AAU	Aboriginal Advisory Unit
RAJAC	Regional Aboriginal Justice Advisory Committee
ATSIC	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission
CORE	Public Correctional Enterprise
RCIADIC	Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody
VALS	Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service

Introduction

This report is based on the findings of the Review Team established under recommendation 4.6 of the Victorian Aboriginal Justice Agreement. The Review Team comprised of two Commissioned Police Officers, two representatives of the Victorian Aboriginal community and two consulting researchers from the Department of Criminology at Melbourne University. The combined experience of the police members demonstrated project skills, and previous working relations with Aboriginal people and communities. The two Aboriginal community representatives were comprised of experience as a CJP Chairperson of more than ten years standing, project work and ongoing efforts to reduce drug and alcohol abuse within Aboriginal communities. The two consultants from Melbourne University, Department of Criminology have extensive qualifications and background in Research. **(See Appendix III) The Review Team conducted their research with integrity and a balanced approach, acting as an Independent Review and reporting to the Chair of the Aboriginal Justice Working Group.**

The review methodology was developed jointly by team members, and meetings with Aboriginal communities and local police involved as many team members as possible (see Appendix II).

The team was required to undertake a number of tasks under the Terms of Reference for this review (see Appendix I). The Terms of Reference are based upon Recommendations 4.5 and 4.6 of the Victorian Aboriginal Justice Agreement, and were compiled by the Victorian Aboriginal Policy Reference Group. The Recommendations deal specifically with the issues of improving Aboriginal/police relations and strengthening the Aboriginal Community Justice Panel Program, first established in 1987.

A recent Review of Legal Services in Rural and Regional Victoria conducted by the Victorian Law Reform Committee included in its Recommendations that this Review be conducted as a matter of urgency¹. Access to legal services has long been acknowledged as extremely problematic for Aboriginal people, and this Review found overall that there was particular scope for improvement in terms of the liaison between Aboriginal people and police. This Review represents the commitment of the Victoria Police to that goal.

The Review Team wants to stress that the Review was not a critical assessment of each Panel throughout the State. Nor was it an in-depth analysis of the operations of each Panel or individuals involved. The Review Team sought input from police, Panels and the communities to obtain an 'overall general view' of how each Panel was operating within their area and a general opinion of the relationships involved. This information was then incorporated into the Review report to obtain the most beneficial recommendations for the future directions of the Panels.

The Review Team did not undertake an assessment of the relative performance of each Panel or person and believes that because of the 'individuality' of each Panel, community and geographical location, any assessment would be invalid.

¹ See Recommendation 31, *Review of Legal Services in Rural and Regional Victoria*, Parliament of Victoria Law Reform Committee, May, 2001.

Executive Summary

TERMS OF REFERENCE

This Review was established to examine the policy basis and operations of Aboriginal Community Justice Panels in Victoria. The six Terms of Reference for the review were:

1. *Review the Aboriginal Community Justice Panels Program objectives and scope with a view of continued development of the program in accordance with the Victorian Aboriginal Justice Agreement recommendations 4.5 and 4.6.*
2. *Review the geographical distribution of Aboriginal Community Justice Panels in accordance with the needs of the Aboriginal communities and Victoria Police.*
3. *Analyse the recruitment practices, training and support for Aboriginal Community Justice Panels Program volunteers in the service delivery of the program.*
4. *Review current funding arrangements to ensure the program meets its objectives and provides for future growth and development.*
5. *Review the effectiveness of individual Aboriginal Community Justice Panels as to their structure, interaction and impact on their communities and Police/Aboriginal relations.*
6. *Examine systemic issues and policy developments across Government, which impact on Aboriginal Community Justice Panels, and make recommendations where appropriate*

The findings and recommendations in this report are organised around the Terms of Reference of the Review. It should be noted that the ordering of recommendations in this Executive Summary is slightly different to that in the main body of the report.

Local Autonomy

One of the key features of the ACJP program is its dependence on the support of local communities. A basic principle adopted by the Review Team was that the recommendations made in this Report should be consistent with local control over the Program's operations. The recommendations of this Review are designed to facilitate a model within which local Panels might operate with as much autonomy and coordinated support as possible. No recommendations have been made which are area specific or intended to alter the structure of any existing Aboriginal Community Justice Panels directly.

Recommendation 1: Regional Aboriginal Justice Advisory Committee's (RAJAC's) should become involved in supporting local ACJP initiatives within their areas. The RAJAC's should assist in developing strategies to minimise Aboriginal people coming into the Justice system and develop a 'team' approach and partnership to enhance the relationships between police and Aboriginal communities through this committee.

Recommendation 2: A Formal Charter should be established between the AAU, RAJAC's and Statewide ACJP Chairpersons in consultation with the Victoria Police Aboriginal Policy Reference Group. This Charter should establish a base "Operating Procedures" for ACJP's, which will include standards for recruitment of volunteers to the Program.

objectives and scope

The Review established that there is much room for development in terms of the capacity of the ACJP's to be proactive in their efforts to improve Aboriginal/police relations, and develop diversionary programs for Aboriginal youth. It found that currently, ACJP volunteers are not well resourced to fulfil the full range of tasks originally envisioned for them. Attendance to Aboriginal people at the police station is currently given priority. This situation should be reassessed.

Recommendation 3: ACJP's should receive induction and resourcing to become more proactively involved with community youth projects, crime-prevention programs and diversionary strategies. There should be appropriate professional development programs.

It is noted that this expansion of role may require additional funding of Panels to support it (see below).

Geographical distribution

The Review considered the geographical distribution of the Panels in accordance with their ability to service the needs of Aboriginal communities and police. Three core issues of concern emerged:

Firstly, there are several unserved areas where the establishment of an ACJP could be entirely appropriate, including some in the Metropolitan region. However, given the current funding arrangements, establishing these would impact on the funding for other seventeen, already established ACJP's. This re-assessment of funding should also consider issues relating to the equitable distribution of funding between Panels.

Secondly, areas can be identified where Justice Panels have ceased to operate because of a perception that the role was fulfilled by workers from drug and alcohol centres (or 'sobering-up centres') set up by local cooperatives. This highlights the current perception of the scope of the panels as purely reactive and concerned only with the removal of Aboriginal people from police custody to more appropriate venues for their care.

A third and related problem in terms of the distribution of the panels was found in areas where, although ACJP's currently operate, they do so exclusively of some sectors of the community. There is consequently a perceived need for separate Justice Panels to be in operation in some local areas.

Recommendation 4: The AAU and the relevant RAJAC's should investigate the need for an ACJP in areas currently not serviced by a Panel. Priority areas for consideration are Dandenong, Healesville and Bairnsdale.

Recruiting and training volunteers

The Review also analysed the recruitment practices of ACJP's as well as the training and support received by volunteers in delivering services to their local communities. No specific recruitment practices were found, with many Panels comprising of members of one family. Some of the problems outlined above are related to this circumstance. The recruitment of effective Justice Panel volunteers is very much linked to the issue of funding and resourcing for Panels, as is appropriate training and support for the volunteers. The voluntary structure of the ACJP Program was a key issue of concern for this review, and its retention was found to be supported by most of those participating. In terms of the provision of a community service, this structure has several advantages over a paid model (explored in the Issues section of this Report) and the Review found that it should remain a voluntary program.

Recommendation 5: The ACJP Program should remain based upon a voluntary model.

In terms of suggesting recruitment strategies though, most communities felt that it was inappropriate to push people too hard to join their local panel for a range of reasons. These did relate predominantly to the voluntary nature of the position, and also to the demanding nature of ACJP participation in terms of the mental, physical and emotional requirements upon the person. These include: call outs in the middle of the night to attend the police station, transporting offenders, finding care for children and also being able to deal effectively with police despite the well documented problems existing in terms of Indigenous/police relations, past and present.

Individuals who can fulfil all these roles are unique, and finding those amongst the indigenous community who are in a position to offer all these services to police and their communities on a voluntary basis is not easy. The resolution of this problem will take time and is well beyond the capabilities of the current Review. Local, well-coordinated strategies for encouraging young people to become involved in the ACJP will be most effective, and local RAJAC's must work towards this goal. At the same time, the role of the ACJP must be made more attractive for those who participate. This could be achieved by broadening both the scope of the role and the support provided to those who participate.

Recommendation 6: There should be greater formal recognition of the role and achievements of ACJP members. It is noted that processes giving formal identification to Panel members were implemented during the course of the review.

This report recommends that an induction package for ACJP's be developed for two important reasons. Firstly, it is clear from the original charter that trained individuals would be needed to undertake the activities envisioned for an ACJP volunteer. Secondly, there was agreement amongst those consulted during the Review process that it was necessary. The package ought to be such that it could be locally delivered by ALO's in conjunction with local Panel members. It should encompass issues such as Roles and Responsibilities of the ACJP, Police Procedures and Protocols, Stress Management and Conflict Resolution. First Aid skills and Drug and Alcohol training were also considered important. It is suggested that ACJP's be networked into appropriate sources for such training through their RAJAC.

Recommendation 7: An induction package suitable for local adaptation and delivery should be developed for ACJP volunteers. As part of this package, consideration should be given to providing panel members with appropriate development and support to help them deal with the psychological stress associated with their role.

Supporting volunteers - supporting ALO'S

In terms of the support received by ACJP's, it was found that the Aboriginal Advisory Unit is insufficiently resourced to fully administer the program. The AAU is operated by a team of professional and dedicated people. However, because of its under-resourcing, it is incapable of meeting the desires of the ACJP's, Aboriginal community members and ALO's to the necessary extent.

Recommendation 8: A review of the Aboriginal Advisory Unit should be conducted to allow staff members to be more proactive in their involvement with Aboriginal communities, and assisting with the ACJP program's operation by visitations.

The conventions for establishing a new ACJP are extremely vague and must be refined. The Statewide Chairpersons Incorporated exist to provide a supportive network for those involved in the program, but have no administrative role. With the under-resourcing of the AAU, there is clearly a role for RAJACS in providing support and advice not only for existing Panels but prospective volunteers.

Another of the most crucial factors impacting upon ACJP's in their delivery of services to Aboriginal people is a good working relationship with their local Aboriginal Liaison Officers (ALO's). The Review found the levels of support available to ACJP's from their ALO varied across the state². The importance of this role for the success of any local ACJP is paramount. Victoria Police must reinforce their support for this function by ensuring, through the Aboriginal Advisory Unit, that each community is appropriately served by local police liaison.

Victoria Police has a commitment to the implementation of the VAJA, where it is acknowledged that the appropriate selection and training of ALO's will assist in alleviating current problems. The VAJA recommends that ALO's should be at the rank of Sergeant or above. They should be selected according to their suitability for the task, based on cultural awareness, liaison ability and acceptance by the local Aboriginal community.

Recommendation 9: Continued Training of ALO's by the Aboriginal Advisory Unit should be a priority. In consultation with local communities, ALO's should also receive appropriate cross-cultural training to ensure a good understanding of local Aboriginal history, family relationships and customs. This training should be ongoing.

Recommendation 10: The position of ALO should be voluntary and not nominated. Victoria Police should give consideration to upgrading the ALO to a gazetted position. The ACJP Chairperson should have input into the appointment.

² This was also reported in the Law Reform Committee's Review of Legal Services.

Recommendation 11: Commissioned Officers and Sub-Officers in giving priority to that portfolio should support members holding the ALO portfolio. Officers and Local Officers' in Charge should also have a satisfactory level of involvement with RAJAC's and with the ACJP.

Recommendation 12: ALO's should report to RAJAC's on a quarterly basis.

Funding the program

This report argues for an expansion in the role of ACJP's, and for the possible expansion in the number of Panels to give greater coverage within the state. To achieve these goals, funding to the ACJP Program must be increased. Since funding for the panels was first announced in 1987, no increases have occurred, and so careful consideration of the costs involved in running a successful panel was undertaken by the Review.

To review the individual effectiveness of each ACJP currently in operation was included in the Terms of Reference of this report. However, the Team encountered difficulties in drawing concrete conclusions about such matters. Answers sought to questions regarding the 'effectiveness' of particular panels were dependant upon a number of variables, and prioritised in a number of different ways by the parties consulted, police, volunteers and community representatives. As a result of further consultations, specifically from a forum conducted at ATSIC on 6th May 2002, it was agreed by the Forum and Review Team to remove the 'summaries' of individual areas from the report.

We have included in this report an overview of locations visited (without specific individual reference), intended to describe the kinds of problems and issues related to the operation of the Program across the State. This makes it possible to see why the Review Team has chosen to highlight certain issues in its recommendations. Many problems are area specific, and so outside of the scope of this Review process to address, as discussed earlier. RAJAC's represent the best avenue for those involved in the Program, or who want to be involved, to resolve local issues.

Recommendation 13: Department of Justice funding should be re-assessed for the ACJP Program to allow for expansion to areas currently not served by a Panel.

Recommendation 14: The Department of Justice, Aboriginal Justice Working Group, RAJAC representatives and ACJP Statewide Chairperson representatives should develop an equitable funding scale relative to individual ACJP operations. Assistance should also be given in seeking funding from other sources for proactive initiatives.

other issues impacting on the acjp

The Review also examined some of the systemic issues and policy developments across government impacting on the operations of the ACJP Program. A broad range of issues was encountered.

In terms of Victoria Police Policy, there is a tendency for the ACJP Program to be subsumed by tasks which inadvertently reinforce public order policing strategies which are not necessarily in the interest of Indigenous people. The concentration upon the removal of people from police custody can reduce the focus on the need to reduce the number of people being arrested, especially for minor public order offences.

The VAJA has noted that data collection regarding Indigenous contact with the Criminal Justice System requires enhancement. In assessing the statistical data available, the Review found that little of the data was useful in terms of measuring the impact or effectiveness of individual panels³.

Recommendation 15: In general, data collection processes associated with the identification and processing of Aboriginal people should be enhanced. More specifically, ACJP Registers should be introduced in all police stations with an operating panel and ALO's should be required to forward reports to the AAU quarterly for the purpose of performance monitoring.

In addition there are a range of initiatives introduced under the VAJA impact on the ACJP charter. In particular, the Aboriginal Official Visitors Program being introduced by the Department of Justice, whose volunteers could potentially fulfil most of the tasks in relation to liaison with the Office of Corrections. This was originally proposed for ACJP volunteers. This development is well in line with the Recommendations of the Review which are designed to allow for more proactive, diversionary activities for ACJP volunteers, already overburdened in terms of the expectations of their role.

Some of the ACJP volunteers across the state have also participated in the Bail Justice Program, recently run by the Department of Justice in Victoria, which was also an initiative of the VAJA. The Bail Justice program is a new initiative and it is not yet clear whether there is an inherent conflict between this role and that of ACJP member. However, the Review Team notes that there is potential for these roles to place conflicting demands on these volunteers.

Recommendation 16: In the medium term there should be an evaluation of the roles of ACJP member and Bail Justice to determine whether these roles involve conflicting responsibilities.

Finally, this review was the first such since the ACJP's were established in 1988. It was evident to the review team that some of the issues brought to the team's attention during consultations have been present for many years.

Recommendation 17: The role and operations of ACJP's should have regular monitoring and be reviewed by December 2005.

As part of further and better consultation involving the Review Process, specifically issues raised at the Forum conducted at ATSIC on 6th May 2002, it was requested by participants at the Forum for better and further consultations to take place, including re-visiting some areas. This request was subject to continued involvement and funding from the consultants involved in the Review from Melbourne University. **This funding was not forthcoming.**

The Review Team independently assessed that their commitment to the Review Process had been addressed. Further consultations had been called for by various groups and this was acceded to by the Team; again further consultations were requested and again the Team conceded to these requests. The forum of the 6th May made further requests for more consultations. As advised, this was subject to further funding. Despite many unfunded hours provided by the consultants, further funding did not eventuate.

³ This was because statistics are recorded by police in raw numbers and must be compared to population percentages in order for any conclusions regarding over-representation can be made.

The Review Team were firmly decided that their obligations in conducting the Review had been met and exceeded. The Team had concerns that the various factions were seeking to influence the outcomes and decisions of the Review Team for their own ends. While the Review Team sees issues raised and the need for consultations to take place for specific reasons to meet those issues, the Review Team assessed that these consultations would have little impact on the recommendations made. These issues can be more efficiently addressed as 'Agenda Items' progressed by the relevant committee or forum, such as the Aboriginal Working Group.

***Recommendation 18:* Issues raised and consultations requested from the meeting at ATSIC on 6th May 2002, be listed as Agenda Items for progression by the appropriate committee or forum.**

History of Aboriginal Community Justice Panels

The Aboriginal Community Justice Panels project was initiated in 1987 as a direct result of concerns from the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody. The program was a joint initiative of the Victorian Aboriginal Community, the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service and the Victorian Government. In 1994, the program won the Victorian State Government Anti-crime and Community Safety Award. In general, it has had an extremely positive impact on the problems faced by Aboriginal people who feel disempowered by the Justice System.

The Government of Victoria endorsed the project as a means to meet their commitment to address the problems highlighted by the Royal Commission's Report into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody. It sought alternatives to reduce the high levels of imprisonment of Aboriginal persons and to ensure the welfare of Aboriginal people caught up in the Criminal Justice system. Victorian criminal justice agencies have made a commitment to assist and work with Community Justice Panels. These agencies include Police, Courts, the Department of Justice, the Office of Corrections and the Department of Human Services.

When first implemented in 1987, there were twenty Aboriginal Community Justice Panels within Victoria. These Panels now total 17 and are known as Aboriginal Community Justice Panels in some locales and Programs in others (ACJP). The groups of volunteers are overseen by the Chairperson, Statewide Community Justice Panel Aboriginal Advisory Body (Aboriginal Corporation) Incorporated under the Commonwealth act, dated 30th September 1991. Each Justice Panel has a Chairperson, and the Advisory Body comprised of Chairpersons from each ACJP around the State, with a Statewide Chairperson at its head. This Chairperson has remained the same since the inception of the Program.

The Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service originally provided administrative support for the Program. This was moved over to the Ministry for Police and Emergency Services, via Victoria Police in 1991, when it was announced that funding for the program would be available directly through the Ministry. It is assumed that this was intended to provide greater accountability to government for the Programs' operations. Victoria Police then established the Community Justice Panels Unit with a vast range of tasks, which involved support, and development of the Program and its volunteers. This unit existed separately from their Aboriginal Advisory Unit, but the two Units were merged in 1999. It is clear from consultations that there has been some deterioration in the support for ACJP volunteers provided by the central administrative body since then. These issues will receive some comment later.

ACJP Charter

While the lack of a formal ACJP Charter was amongst one of the most prominent complaints of both volunteers and community members, the intentions for the program when originally devised have been captured in some of the early documentation procured by the Review Team.

The original mandate of the local area panels as articulated in the Policy and Procedures Document is very broad, encompassing mainly proactive strategies to deal with the issues identified by the Royal Commission which made clear links between the over-representation of Aboriginal people in the justice system, alienation from the justice system and deaths in custody. In light of this, the ACJP Program had the following aims and objectives: -

- To work with all legal and welfare agencies to maximise the delivery of services to Aboriginals in the Criminal Justice System
- To minimise the contact of Aboriginal persons with the Criminal Justice System throughout Victoria by working with Police and other agencies on appropriate diversionary programs
- To assist Police in assuring the safety of Aboriginals in police custody
- To provide assistance to Aboriginals involved in court procedures
- To advise and participate in the supervision of community based orders, pre-release programs and parole orders
- To provide advice to courts on sentencing matters, in relation to Aboriginals and cultural matters
- To assist prison and Youth Training authorities in ensuring the welfare of Aboriginals in custody
- To assist Aboriginals in the post custodial stage.
- To increase awareness in the Aboriginal community about the Criminal Justice System and sensitise Criminal Justice Agencies to Aboriginal cultural issues
- To seek funding through various agencies
- To provide advice to the Statewide Incorporated Body
- To promote self-determination within local communities and self-management
- To assist Aboriginals with warrants for non-payment of fines to approach the court or the Office of Corrections to obtain more time to pay or to convert to a Community based Order
- Have input into sentencing decisions by giving advice on appropriate punishment for offences which have been committed
- Give advice and information to Aboriginal witnesses who may be unfamiliar with court processes

This is an extremely broad mandate for a voluntary base Program to fulfil. Many of these roles are nonetheless performed by ACJP's to a greater or lesser extent across the State. However, the overall impression of the Program as a whole at present, is that it is largely reactive and responsive to the needs of Aboriginal people requiring assistance at the police station. There is insufficient resources to attend to those aspects of their role which might bring them into contact with other

Criminal and Social Justice Agencies. The degree to which individual Panels, consisting of an average of four volunteers, can meet these demands in future, will be largely determined by the funding allocated to them and the manner in which this is utilised.

It was common for ACJP's to report that their funding is adequate only for the provision of mobile phones and petrol for cars, with little or no scope for community redevelopment projects, diversionary schemes or social gatherings for police and Koori people. The report of the Victorian Aboriginal Issues Unit of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody argued in 1991 that for programs and services to "be oriented towards prevention at every stage cannot be overemphasised".

Community Justice Panels Today

The ACJP respond differently in various areas. The panels usually consist of a small number of people but there are locations where there is only one person. Smaller Panels have a difficult time meeting the very broad mandate originally proposed for their role. The large group of enthusiastic volunteers has diminished to a 'hard core' group of dedicated people, not surprising given the demands of the job and the often-difficult intra-political environment in which the Program operates. These issues are addressed in the discussion of Volunteer Burnout in the Issues section.

Funding to the ACJP's has not changed since their inception in 1987. Each Panel receives \$16,000 per annum⁴. \$32,000 per annum is also made available for Special Grants for ACJP activities. Details of ACJP funding and expenditure have been included in the discussion section of this Report.

The ACJP have a Protocol with Public Correctional Enterprise (CORE) which includes the monitoring of prisoner movements, liaison with CORE Aboriginal Liaison Unit, liaison between prisoners and families, responding to inquiries from various service providers, advise on funeral arrangements for family connections and regular up-dates of Chairpersons. As previously mentioned, this protocol was not widely known amongst volunteers and little adherence to it in place.

The Review Team conferred with CORE. It was advised that there is an Indigenous Services Unit within their Enterprise, which picks up some of the elements that the ACJP, was to undertake. A formal liaison takes place between the ACJP Chairpersons and CORE at the quarterly Statewide Chairpersons meetings.

CORE staff cited examples of inability to be able to contact ACJP personnel and that their internal Indigenous Services Unit fulfils the role required. CORE has a commitment to indigenous issues and is increasing their liaison personnel in this area. CORE staff considered that it would be better served by the Victoria Police Aboriginal Advisory Unit acting as a formal liaison point between ACJP and CORE. The increased staff by CORE alleviates and replaces the need for ACJP members to fulfil this function.

⁴ With some variances which have been coordinated by the Aboriginal Advisory Unit

Overview of Findings

In conducting this Review, the Team combined the expertise of police, Indigenous people and criminological researchers, each bringing their unique point of view to the process. This ensured that the results would reflect a broad range of the issues that needed to be considered in reaching the best conclusions for the success of the Aboriginal Community Justice Panels Program.

A Workplan was devised for the process in the early stages by police, so that as much notice as possible could be provided to local communities that the Review would be conducted and that it would involve community consultations. The Review Team organised to visit each of the seventeen areas with ACJP's currently in operation and also made inquiries in several areas where the Program was desired.

Consultations also took place with other significant parties involved in the Program, such as the Statewide Chairperson, CORE, the manager of the Aboriginal Advisory Unit, the Regional Aboriginal Liaison Officer, past Community Justice Panel Unit workers and CORE.

The results of the consultations were compiled into a draft report, which was circulated amongst the Team for review. Following this, the draft was circulated amongst the Chairpersons of each ACJP for comment. Without objection, the report was then circulated to various stakeholders. This report was then compiled including submissions from the various organisations and individuals. As a result, a further draft report was compiled and circulated to various committees and again ACJP members and stake holders for further comment. Further consultations took place and at a meeting at ATSIC on 6th May 2002, requests by stake holders for further consultations were made. As no further funding for the consultants on the Review Team was available, the fact that the Review Team believed that while these consultations were needed as part of the 'broader process', there would be little impact on the recommendations made by the Team. The consultants were involved in many hours of unfunded work within the Review process.

Recommendations made by the meeting of the 6th May, and the further submissions, were 'taken on board' by the Review Team and the Report modified to meet some of those recommendations, as considered appropriate by the Review Team. The obligations of the Review Team were met and exceeded and this report compiled as a result. It is noted that some sections saw the need for more consultations to continue. The Review Team agrees with some of those views, but believes that these can be undertaken more efficiently by the committees involved with the ACJP's. The Review Team is of the firm view that the Review is completed and further consultations would compromise the integrity of the Team and of the Review. The team concedes that outstanding issues need to be addressed, as 'Agenda Items' to be progressed by the various committees or forums.

Open forums

The Review team was split into two groups, each conducting Open Forum discussions across one half of the state. A schedule of Open Forum dates and locations is included (see Appendix II).

The research consultants investigated the kinds of issues, which might need to be explored through the Forums. This was done through close analysis of the VAJA and a review of current literature. The core issues emerging from this process included: knowledge about the Program, the perceived effect of the program on police/Aboriginal relations, access to volunteers, the training, resourcing and funding of the ACJP Program and also any regional initiatives which might provide

models for other ACJP's. From this, a list was compiled for each Team member to refer to during the Forum.

Where it was possible and permission was granted by the participants, the proceedings of all Focus Groups were tape-recorded for the purposes of accurate data collation. These tapes will be erased at the end of the Review process.

The design of the Forums was such that they would be open and informal. Any comments were welcome, but the list of issues proved to be useful in prompting people to speak their minds about particular issues. It was also helpful for the Team's note-taking purposes, and to compare impressions afterwards. These five major themes also enabled the responses to be coded and compared.

The aim was to conduct an interview with local police, ACJP volunteers as well as representatives from each community in each area visited by the Team. Dates and times were arranged by local ALO's and Koori Cooperatives. In some areas, the Review Team met with separate groups (at different locations) from within communities to enable all parties to have input into the Review process.

LIMITATIONS

The methodological ideal would have been to conduct these meetings with each group separately, however, this was not always possible. Because of the informal nature of most of the interviews, it meant that ALO's tended to sit in on ACJP meetings in most cases. Though when requested, some individuals were interviewed in private about issues which were of concern.

Generally, most participants were happy to speak their mind about local issues in the presence of local police. Though it is acknowledged that because of this structure, it is possible that not all concerns were able to be voiced during the Open Forums. It is even possible that the tape-recording may have intimidated some individuals. To combat these limitations to the best ability of the Team, contact details were available to participants so that they could contact Review Team members at a later time if desired. **The Team made every effort to make the process as inclusive as possible, and all parties that wanted input into the review process were welcome to either attend the Open Forum discussions or contact the team via the Aboriginal Advisory Unit.**

Information about the Open Forums was disseminated through local ALO's, who were asked by the Team to be responsible for organising suitable venues in their area as well as to organise a mutually agreeable time and date for their local Forum. Unsurprisingly, finding times and dates to suit everyone was extremely difficult, and communities were better represented in some areas than others. **Overall, the Team felt that it was able to consult with a substantial range of people, to be able to tap into the most prominent areas of concern for the ACJP Program in general.**

The open Forums were sometimes conducted by uniformed officers, which is also acknowledged as a potentially limiting factor of the process, as many Aboriginal people find the police uniform intimidating by its very presence. This issue was debated by the Team prior to the commencement of the Open Forum process. The participating police felt that as representatives of Victoria Police, it was important for the uniform to be worn, however, the matter was left to individual discretion.

A final limitation of the data gathered is that each Forum would ideally have been conducted in the presence of three Team members, one representative from the police, one of the researchers and one of the Indigenous representatives. However, the schedule for the discussions was ultimately

dependent on the arrangements of each local area, and was extremely difficult to coordinate as a result. Each of the Review Team members undertook their role in conjunction with other full-time employment. This meant that it was not always possible for a complete team to be present at each Forum, **although this did occur in the majority of cases**. Details of which team members attended which areas have been included in the Appendix. Where possible, those areas, which were attended by only one team member, were tape-recorded and the recordings reviewed by the consultants in the interests of data validity⁵. In other cases, handwritten notes were reviewed.

⁵ With the exception of Portland, which was not tape-recorded.

Area Summaries

The information provided to the Review Team in each area was invaluable. As part of the consultative process following the release of the interim report, it was established that there was a fair degree of controversy surrounding the 'summaries' of each area. In order to remove any incorrect interpretations or mistakes from the area summaries, it was decided that these should be removed from the body of the report, but still be available for any person or group who may wish to view the summaries independently from the Review Report and findings. **These summaries are NOT intended to give an in depth account of the complexities of each panel, rather it is basic information relative to each area.**

The valuable information provided by the participants is gratefully acknowledged. Local issues of management and control of Panels were considered beyond the scope of the Review, and more appropriately considered elsewhere. This Review, however, attempts to facilitate a framework in which such considerations might occur.

In addressing the Terms of Reference for this Review, the Team at no time intended to be critical of any one Panel or individual, but rather to draw out the broad issues which impact on the ability of ACJP's to effectively implement the goals of the VAJA.

The Aboriginal Community Justice Panel Review Team acknowledges that the 'over-consultation' of the Aboriginal community, although largely a product of the VAJA process, can have unintended consequences, particularly when the consultation process does not appear to achieve any particular outcome for the communities consulted. We trust that the recommendations, which we have arrived at after our consultations, will facilitate tangible and beneficial outcomes for all involved in the ACJP program, as well as the people it is designed to assist.

Issues for Consideration

Coordinating the Program

It was found in some areas investigated by this Review that the views of police and of local communities regarding the need for an ACJP conflicted. This left the community unable to make progress in terms of gaining support and funding for a Panel, despite their perception of a specific need. Procedures for the establishment of new ACJP's are currently inadequate, and this inadequacy is indicative of the lack of adequate coordination that currently characterises the Program.

Those involved in the approval of new Panels and resolution of internal conflicts affecting the ACJP must take into account the broad needs of a geographical group of Aboriginal people. Pinpointing a 'local' community is not always a simple matter in terms of indigenous people as bonds are familial rather than proximate.

While the Statewide Chairpersons Incorporated body exists to provide a forum for information sharing, it has no formal powers to administer or directly coordinate the Program, existing mainly as an advisory body to the now defunct Community Justice Panels Unit within Victoria Police. Coordination of the ACJP Program has devolved to the Aboriginal Advisory Unit, which, as noted

in the Report, is not sufficiently staffed to provide the necessary support required by this Statewide program.

The Review found that there is a role for the newly established Regional Aboriginal Justice Advisory Committees in coordinating the ACJP Program at a local level. As envisioned by the VAJA, RAJAC's could become involved in approving local initiatives and incorporate ACJP outcomes into Regional Aboriginal Justice Plans (see pg. 23 of VAJA).

Recommendation 1: Regional Aboriginal Justice Advisory Committee's (RAJAC's) should become involved in supporting local ACJP initiatives within their areas. The RAJAC's should assist in developing strategies to minimise Aboriginal people coming into the Justice system and develop a 'team' approach and partnership to enhance the relationships between police and Aboriginal communities through this committee.

Recommendation 2: A Formal Charter should be established between the AAU, RAJAC's and Statewide ACJP Chairpersons in consultation with the Victoria Police Aboriginal Policy Reference Group. This Charter should establish a base "Operating Procedures" for ACJP's, which will include standards for recruitment of volunteers to the Program.

The ACJPS Scope and Objectives

The original ACJP charter was extremely broad in its scope and objectives, and it is clear that the role of the ACJP requires some further refining and definition. VAJA initiatives will ease the burden on the Program, but there are other issues, which must be resolved. Of most concern is the tension between the proactive and reactive possibilities of the program, with evidence of Panels having to place an emphasis on one or the other in most locales. Resourcing makes achieving a balance difficult.

It is possible that, in some areas, the Programs potential to deal with the issue of reducing the number of Aboriginal people in custody, especially young people, is usurped by its capacity to reinforce policing strategies well known to be problematic for Indigenous people. Responding to Aboriginal people arrested for public order offences remains prominent in the conception of the ACJP Program, amongst volunteers and police. ACJP's have ceased to operate in the past as it was felt that their work was being done by Sobering-Up Centre workers.

It should be recognised that the problems identified by the RCIADIC are stratified, and the prevention of the need for criminal justice intervention requires emphasis, despite (or rather because of) the importance of the issue of deaths in custody. The extent to which ACJP volunteers should be involved in programs, which seek to address local problems, particularly for youth, requires some consideration. For Aboriginal people to become involved in the process of preventing and diverting their people from the Criminal Justice System is not in question, but the location of the action sometimes is. In certain locales, Cooperatives fulfil these roles, and in others they do so in conjunction with the ACJP. ACJP's who are 'out on their own' tend to be unsupported for such initiatives and limited in their ability to operate proactively.

Panels could usefully engage in cultural awareness programs for police and in running camps for Aboriginal youth and police members (already happening in some areas). With the population of young Aboriginal people on the rise, a sensible strategy for the future would be to resource the ACJP Program adequately. This would enable them to engage in important aspects of their work involving the reparation of the police/Aboriginal relationship. Aboriginal people should feel supported and serviced by government institutions, and ACJP's should be recognised as an important link in the process of building such a feeling.

The proactive capacity of the program has found emphasis in some areas, where panellists are called to domestic disputes, sometimes directly by the participants themselves. Communities run buses, picking young people up when they are out late at night. Facilities are required in almost every location visited to accommodate these young people, especially those who are dealing with family problems where it is not practical to take them home. The work of the ACJP does not stop upon leaving the police station or helping the teenager onto the bus and off the street.

There was evidence in some areas that the role of the ACJP volunteers was not well understood by the communities within which they worked. Communities place demands on ACJP workers, especially regarding transport. Such misunderstanding undermines the important potential of the ACJP program to address the issues discussed above.

As pointed out by volunteers themselves, it is not always possible to remove their client from custody, and this expectation of their service is often problematic, causing friction between volunteer and client at times. Further, it leaves young Indigenous people arrested for property and public order offences (such as offensive language or vandalism) unserved, as they will not come under the umbrella of cooperative drug and alcohol workers. It would be reasonable to suggest that

those most likely to engage in such offences would also be those least likely to have close contacts with local cooperative resources.

The VAJA points out that “a significant and emerging issue is (the) high and increasing use of illicit drugs among young Aboriginal people”(p.13). It is clear that substance abuse is an important factor impacting on levels of contact with the justice system generally. The Review team visited many communities where concern about young indigenous people’s drug use was a priority. A great desire exists to try to approach the problem, in unison with police, in ways not involving the use of punishment and deterrence strategies. The Review concluded the ACJP’s have the capacity to form an important nexus between young Indigenous people and police; finding common ground in their mutual trust of a Justice Panel volunteer and a dedicated Aboriginal Liaison Officer. The importance of proactive strategies is paramount and ways to broaden the objectives and scope of the ACJP Program’s charter in operation are included in the recommendations of this Review.

Recommendation 3: ACJP’s should receive induction and resourcing to become more proactively involved with community youth projects, crime-prevention programs and diversionary strategies. There should be appropriate professional development programs.

Recommendation 6: There should be greater formal recognition of the role and achievements of ACJP members. It is noted that processes giving formal identification to Panel members were implemented during the course of the review.

Geographical distribution

The Review considered the geographical distribution of the Panels in accordance with their ability to service the needs of Aboriginal communities and police. Three core issues of concern emerged:

Firstly, there are several unserved areas where the establishment of an ACJP could be entirely appropriate, including some in the Metropolitan region. However, given the current funding arrangements, establishing these would impact on the funding for the other seventeen, established ACJP’s. This re-assessment of funding should also consider issues relating to the equitable distribution of funding between Panels.

Secondly, areas can be identified where Justice Panels have ceased to operate because of a perception that the role was fulfilled by workers from drug and alcohol centres (or ‘sobering-up centres’) set up by local cooperatives. This highlights the current perception of the scope of the panels as purely reactive and concerned only with the removal of Aboriginal people from police custody to more appropriate venues for their care.

A third and related problem in terms of the distribution of the panels was found in areas where, although ACJP’s currently operate, they do so exclusively of some sectors of the community. There is consequently a perceived need for separate Justice Panels to be in operation in some local areas. Within a broader understanding of indigenous power structures, it is possible to see why such perceptions have some merit. Kinship is a key feature of indigenous culture and may be a consideration in the establishment of new

ACJP's, as previously mentioned. RAJACS should play a role in the arbitration and resolution of these issues at a regional level.

Recommendation 4: The AAU and the relevant RAJAC's should investigate the need for an ACJP in areas currently not serviced by a Panel. Priority areas for consideration are Dandenong, Healesville and Bairnsdale.

Funding and Resources

This issue featured prominently in discussions across the state. Since the funding allocated to the Community Justice Panels has not been increased since the Program commenced in the late 1980's, an increase in funding is necessary. The Program and its volunteers are clearly under-resourced to meet the demands placed upon them by the ethos of self-determination. There are 'needs' in every areas which are not being met, and good ideas with little or no chance of coming to fruition due to under-resourcing.

Most of the funding for ACJP's is directed towards facilitating the response of volunteers to police who have arrested an Aboriginal person. Thus, volunteers are provided with mobile phones and limited reimbursement for petrol. In most areas, volunteers are using personal vehicles in the course of their work. Individual panels have some limited capacity to manage the funds they receive. One panel has purchased a vehicle. The resourcing of the ACJP Program must give recognition that volunteers require resources capable of more than simply fulfilling the need to be mobile and contactable.

Please see overleaf for full details regarding ACJP funding and expenditure.

The Department of Justice must give consideration to the appropriate funding review as a matter of priority. This should occur in consultation with the AJWG, ACJP Chairpersons and RAJAC's. It is considered that the development of a funding criteria relevant to the operations of individual ACJP's is most appropriate

Recommendation 13: Department of Justice funding should be re-assessed for the ACJP Program to allow for expansion to areas currently not served by a Panel.

Recommendation 14: The Department of Justice, Aboriginal Justice Working Group, RAJAC representatives and ACJP Statewide Chairperson representatives should develop an equitable funding scale relative to individual ACJP operations. Assistance should also be given in seeking funding from other sources for proactive initiatives.

Aboriginal Community Justice Panels Annual Budget

Ballarat	\$27,524.00
Echuca	\$16,000.00
Geelong	\$16,000.00
Jmara	\$16,000.00
Warrnambool	\$16,000.00
Heywood	\$16,000.00
Horsham	\$16,000.00
Kerang	\$16,000.00
Mildura	\$16,000.00
Robinvale	\$16,000.00
Swan Hill	\$16,000.00
Shepparton	\$21,020.00
Morwell	\$16,000.00
Lake Tyers	\$8,000.00
Bendigo	\$16,000.00
Bairnsdale (4 th Quarter Only)	\$4,000.00
West Gippsland	\$4,000.00
17 Panels sub-total	\$258,544.00
Extra Special Grant (\$1,000 per panel)	\$17,000.00
Special ACJP Grants Program	\$15,000.00
Grants sub-total	\$32,000.00
Panels & Grants sub-total	\$290,544.00
50677 - Meals and incidentals - National	\$900.00
50681 - Motel Accommodation - Vpol	\$2,500.00
50824 - Paging devices - maint	\$240.00
50835 - Mobile Phones - calls	\$16,000.00
50453 - catering expenses	\$3,900.00
50461 - medals/awards	\$6,000.00
51321 - Petrol – vehicle tanks (Colcott)	\$3,000.00
51435 - Hospitality Expenses (Training)	\$900.00
51445 - Misc. expenses	\$6,816.00
Stores – Office @ \$100 per month	\$1,200.00
51020 General Stationary supplies	
Sub-total	\$41,456.00
All ACJP Expenses Total	\$332,000.000
Budget Allocation	\$332,000.000

Table 1: Source Aboriginal Advisory Unit, Victoria Police

Training

Although there were initial plans to establish a TAFE course for ACJP volunteers, the team was unable to find evidence of such plans ever coming to fruition. One Chairperson did recall having undertaken training at one point and this may have been done through the Office of Corrections, which has an established protocol with the ACJP Program according to documentation received by the team⁶. This training was designed to facilitate support for ACJP's involved in the process of advising Magistrates as to appropriate bail conditions for Koori people as well as the supervision of Community Based Orders.

These two aspects of the ACJP function were initially prominent in their operations, as reported by the Victorian Aboriginal Issues Unit who undertook community consultations in 1991. The Unit investigated the issues underlying Aboriginal deaths in custody for the Royal Commission. Its report on the operations of the ACJP provided the current Review with a valuable insight into the early operations of various panels across the State, as well as issues of concern for local communities at that time and the degree to which ACJP's have been able to address them.

It is clear that a package similar to that being used currently for ALO's across the State be developed for delivery to ACJP volunteers. This responsibility should be shared between the AAU and the Statewide Chairpersons Advisory body.

Training should be delivered twice yearly or more frequently as required.

Recommendation 7: An induction package suitable for local adaptation and delivery should be developed for ACJP volunteers. As part of this package, consideration should be given to providing panel members with appropriate development and support to help them deal with the psychological stress associated with their role.

Co-operative Relationships/ the importance of kinship

An issue, which emerged, was that of the relationships between local Aboriginal Co-operatives, communities and ACJP's. In several cases, there have been 'splits' between the ACJP's and Co-operatives where the ACJP program has been separately Incorporated from community and cooperative affairs. Opinion varies as to the particular effect of this circumstance. This includes,

⁶ This protocol was not widely known about amongst the volunteers spoken to by the team. It would appear that many of the functions it proposes for ACJP's in relation to Corrections will be served by the establishment of the Aboriginal Official Visitors Program (see VAJA, p.35.)

signalling complete loss of community and cooperative control over (and participation in) ACJP's to incorporated Panels and Co-operatives working in conjunction towards shared goals without any apparent problems.

The Review Team became personally aware of the affect of factional influences within the Aboriginal Communities; this occurred with personal attacks on individuals within the Review Team and the Review Team and processes undertaken.

The Review Team believe that factional influences and 'point scoring' by some within the communities, is extremely counter productive to the overall benefits that are demonstrated by communities that work together for shared outcomes.

In some communities, it would appear that individual personalities and relationships have affected the operations of the ACJP, sometimes for the better and sometimes for the worse. But overall, both community, cooperative and incorporated ACJP's all share the common goal of bettering the situation for their communities. Individuals who can foster and support this goal by overlooking the 'political' environment within which the work of the ACJP is often done, are therefore often better suited for the role. The training and selection of ACJP's as well as ALO's is an important aspect of the success of the ACJP Program.

The Review Team considers that involvement of RAJAC's would act as an appropriate 'mechanism' to resolve situations between various community divisions.

The Role of the ALO

The ALO represents a vital link in the chain upon which the ACJP depends for its success. A culturally aware individual is much better suited to this important and challenging position than a person who takes on the role under instruction. It is strongly recommended that this position be voluntarily undertaken, and also that officers in this role in areas with a high concentration of Aboriginal people be granted appropriate time and resources to do justice to it.

In several cases, ALO's felt somewhat strained by the portfolio, as they found it difficult to reconcile the diverse demands of the role with other police requirements. In other cases, Aboriginal community members were unaware of who their local ALO was. It was clear that officers in those cases had not been able address the core function of their role, which is to liaise with local Aboriginal people.

Dedicated ALO's need support from their superiors to perform their role well, as recognised by the VAJA. This support is more evident in some places then others.

The few dedicated ALO's around the State have been able to forge very strong links with their local communities and this is bound to have a positive effect on relationships in the future. It should also be noted, however, that officers are inclined to forge the strongest links with the source of the ACJP. This has the potential to limit their ability to assist Aboriginal people as a whole due to the problems that sometimes exist within Aboriginal infrastructures. Because of these obstacles, ALO's need to be aware that their role goes well beyond simply forging a good relationship with their local

ACJP volunteers or Co-operative members. They should also incorporate Aboriginal people (and especially young people) who are unlikely to be in close contact with support networks of this kind. The Victoria Police needs to identify the most effective targets for 'liaison', and it is anticipated that this can be forged by the participation of police in local RAJACS.

Recommendation 8: A review of the Aboriginal Advisory Unit should be conducted to allow staff members to be more proactive in their involvement with Aboriginal communities, and assisting with the ACJP program's operation by visitations.

Recommendation 9: Continued Training of ALO's by the Aboriginal Advisory Unit should be a priority. In consultation with local communities, ALO's should also receive appropriate cross-cultural training to ensure a good understanding of local Aboriginal history, family relationships and customs. This training should be ongoing.

Recommendation 10: The position of ALO should be voluntary and not nominated. Victoria Police should give consideration to upgrading the ALO to a gazetted position. The ACJP Chairperson should have input into the appointment.

Recommendation 11: Commissioned Officers and Sub-Officers in giving priority to that portfolio should support members holding the ALO portfolio. Officers and Local Officers' in Charge should also have a satisfactory level of involvement with RAJAC's and with the ACJP.

Recommendation 12: ALO's should report to RAJAC's on a quarterly basis.

Volunteer Burnout

The voluntary structure of the ACJP Program places a huge burden on the shoulders of those who choose to participate, and only the very dedicated persist for more than a few years. Most areas reported attracting new volunteers as a difficult pursuit. This does not necessarily reflect an unwillingness on the part of Aboriginal people to become involved in programs like the ACJP, but points to the very small number of people in the Aboriginal population who are in an economic position which facilitates undertaking voluntary work.

A formal and informal debriefing structure should be incorporated through the AAU to ensure the psychological well being of volunteers for the ACJ Program and to provide a support mechanism.

Despite these problems, the Review finds that the ACJP Program continues to be facilitated within a voluntary structure. This is because it results in better service delivery to the community and it is felt that a movement towards a paid model would ultimately be deleterious to the Program as a whole. The issue of volunteers' motivations and the impact of this upon their commitment to an organisations ultimate goals has been extensively researched. While there is some dissent amongst the commentators, most empirical research in this area suggests that involvement in organisations for remunerative reasons leads to lower levels of commitment to organisational goals than does more normative, voluntary or personally motivated involvement (see Pearce, 1993; Etzioni, 1975).

In addition, research has shown that people's reasons or motivations for volunteering has an impact upon recruitment and retention rates. A direct, personal interest in the values and goals of an agency are the best precursors for both successful recruitment and retention of volunteers. Crucial also is the degree to which volunteers feel they make a difference in terms of the stated goals of the agency for which they have volunteered and that this will have a direct benefit for themselves or their household (Sills, 1975, Bell, 1995). Bell (1995) has argued that community organisations should not rely on altruism alone to motivate recruits, but should emphasis the participative rather than the voluntary aspect of work, and work to highlight the direct benefits of the program for the relevant community. His argument is that strong cultural support for local community activism will generate philanthropic behaviour.

The literature in this area cautions that overly-active recruitment 'drives' can result in unrealistically high expectations about participation in the program amongst volunteers, resulting in a lack of satisfaction and a high turnover. The best methods of recruitment have been shown to be through personal contact with other satisfied volunteers. This is evident in the family ties often found with the ACJP's. Organisational research shows that the best way to retain volunteers (or workers) once they have been recruited is to offer some particular form of satisfaction to its members, which they could not experience by volunteering or working elsewhere. The ACJP is well placed to offer such particular satisfaction to its volunteers, given the nature and importance of its role in the reparation of the Aboriginal/Police relationship in the State. A higher profile for the Program generally will help to ensure that an organisational environment which will foster such rewards develops around the ACJP.

A final reason considered by the Review Team in terms of voluntary structure of the panels was the fact that any extra funding channelled to the Program should be directed towards the development and support of the Panels' proactive capacities. This would be for the benefit of the larger community rather than being directed only towards remunerating volunteers. As one elder noted, Helping the Brothers and Sisters in custody, shouldn't be made into an Industry! Given each Panel's autonomous methods of operation, it would also be extremely difficult administratively to oversee such a model, which is not seen as the most effective use of resources. Also, voluntary structures are generally extremely politically appealing (from a conservative as well as a liberal perspective) and so by remaining voluntary, the program is much more likely to receive ongoing political support and government funding, giving it a more stable base for the future.

Recommendation 5: The ACJP Program should remain based upon a voluntary model.

other issues impacting on the acjp

The Review also examined some of the systemic issues and policy developments across government impacting on the operations of the ACJP Program. A broad range of issues was encountered.

In terms of Victoria Police Policy, there is a tendency for the ACJP Program to be subsumed by tasks which inadvertently reinforce public order policing strategies which are not necessarily in the interest of Indigenous people. The concentration upon the removal of people from police custody can reduce the focus on the need to reduce the number of people being arrested, especially for minor public order offences.

The VAJA has noted that data collection regarding Indigenous contact with the Criminal Justice System requires enhancement. In assessing the statistical data available, the Review found that little of the data was useful in terms of measuring the impact or effectiveness of individual panels⁷.

Recommendation 15: In general, data collection processes associated with the identification and processing of Aboriginal people should be enhanced. More specifically, ACJP Registers should be introduced in all police stations with an operating panel and ALO's should be required to forward reports to the AAU quarterly for the purpose of performance monitoring.

In addition there are a range of initiatives introduced under the VAJA impact of the ACJP charter. In particular, the Aboriginal Official Visitors Program being introduced by the Department of Justice, whose volunteers could potentially fulfil most of the tasks in relation to liaison with the Office of Corrections. This was originally proposed for ACJP volunteers. This development is well in line with the Recommendations of the Review which are designed to allow for more proactive, diversionary activities for ACJP volunteers, already overburdened in terms of the expectations of their role.

Some of the ACJP volunteers across the state have also participated in the Bail Justice Program, recently run by the Department of Justice in Victoria, which was also an initiative of the VAJA. The Bail Justice program is a new initiative and it is not yet clear whether there is an inherent conflict between this role and that of ACJP member. However, the Review Team notes that there is potential for these roles to place conflicting demands on these volunteers.

Recommendation 16: In the medium term there should be an evaluation of the roles of ACJP member and Bail Justice to determine whether these roles involve conflicting responsibilities.

Finally, this review was the first such since the ACJP's were established in 1988. It was evident to the review team that some of the issues brought to the team's attention during consultations have been present for many years.

Recommendation 17: The role and operations of ACJP's should have regular monitoring and be reviewed by December 2005.

REGIONAL ABORIGINAL JUSTICE ADVISORY COMMITTEES (RAJACS)

Under the Victorian Aboriginal Justice Agreement, one of the recommendations is the establishment of Regional Aboriginal Justice Advisory Committee's (RAJAC's). Under this recommendation at 6.2 of the VAJA their role is summarised as follows:

A network of 6 Regional Aboriginal Justice Advisory Committees across the State. Their primary role is responsibility for developing and monitoring of Regional Aboriginal Justice Plans. Plans developed within frameworks of the Agreement but based in the context of local Service Delivery.

⁷ This was because statistics are recorded by police in raw numbers and must be compared to population percentages in order for any conclusions regarding over-representation can be made.

Also role of monitoring and reporting on implementation of recommendations of Royal Commission on a Regional Basis.

Development of the RAJAC's will be in stages with maximum participation from local communities. A full time executive officer will be located in each Region to have responsibility for developing linkages between Justice Agencies and community organisations.

RAJAC's will:

- Develop cross-agency linkages and promote information sharing at a local level.
- Assess local community needs and map service provision and utilisation.
- Coordinate the development of Regional Aboriginal Justice Plans
- Monitor outcomes and service effectiveness.
- Monitor and report on the implementation of regional plans and justice outcome data.

The Regional AJACs should include representatives from:

- Local Tumbukka and Binjirru regional councillors.
- Local and regional Aboriginal organisations.
- Statewide AJAC.
- Victoria Police.
- Community Justice Panels.

And including but not limited to other key stakeholders such as Magistrates Court, VALS, Sobering up centre and others.

The Review Team was of the opinion that although at a Regional level, the RAJAC's would be in an ideal position to support local ACJP's in many avenues by advice, assistance, networking, resource advice and monitoring of ACJP activities relative to the needs of individual communities. The Regional RAJAC would be in an ideal position to support ACJP's by the very make-up of the committee from key 'Stake Holders'.

The Review Team perceives that a flow chart with this proposal, may appear as at "Appendix IV".

SUBMISSIONS TO INCOMPLETE DRAFT REPORT

To obtain the utmost consultation from 'stake holders', the incomplete draft report was circulated to ACJP's and it is noted without objection, that these reports were then further circulated to any interested parties. All interested parties were able to respond and make submissions to the Review Team. Submissions were taken up to the 21st March 2002. A meeting of key stake holders was held at ATSIC on 6th May and further submissions were then accepted up until 2nd July 2002.

While attending the various consultation processes, it became evident to the Review Team that because of the different factional elements that were involved, there was never going to be a consensus of views. The Review Team undertook its obligations seriously and in the original time frame imposed, conducted inquiries and consultations to the Terms of Reference. Further consultations were sought by various parties and were granted. Then more consultations were requested. Even though the Review Team considered that they had obtained enough broad information to provide a balanced view of the operations of the ACJP, these consultations were conceded to - on the basis that further funding would be provided to the consultants on the Team. This did not eventuate. As such, the Review Team having fulfilled its obligations to the Terms of Reference completed this report.

However, The Review Team considered that issues of concern should be addressed and in fact could be addressed more appropriately than the Review Team, as an 'Agenda Item' to be progressed by the relevant committee.

Recommendation 18: Issues raised and consultations requested from the meeting at ATSIC on 6th May 2002, and from the further submissions received... that those matters be listed as Agenda Items for progression by the appropriate committee or forum.

The following made submissions to the Review Team:

Wimera Aboriginal Community Justice Panel.

Swan Hill Aboriginal Community Justice Panel.

Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative Ltd.

Warrnambool and District Aboriginal CJP Co-operative Ltd.

Superintendent Norman Victoria Police

Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service (VALS)

Various submissions received via the Department of Justice:-

These included RAJACS from Barwon South West, Gippsland, Grampians and

Hume. Also a submission from the Dandenong Area.

ACJP Statewide Chairpersons Committee.

CORE.

D.O.J.

These submissions are summarised as follows:

Wimmera Aboriginal Community Justice Panel.

The Wimmera ACJP have been working well with local police for many years and wish to continue as they have in the past. They deal with the needs of clients as their expertise and experience allows. The submission stated that some training should be available if needed in the Justice system. Submissions were taken up to 20/02/02.

Swan Hill Aboriginal Community Justice Panel.

The Swan Hill ACJP advised that there was agreement with the Executive summary and that the volunteers must be allowed to do their ACJP duties without interference from those who are destructive to the program.

There was agreement that Training was needed and skills up-graded on a regular basis. The 'turnover' of volunteers needs to be addressed and infrastructure put in place to head these issues off.

The RAJAC role needs explaining, as there has been no contact in this area from the committee.

The AAU and RAJAC's should be encouraged to strengthen networks with ACJP's. This should take place at a personal level.

Funding should be available for cross-cultural training of police in country areas.

It was noted that there are complaints against ACJP members by some in the community. However, it needs to be remembered that this is a voluntary organisation and there is a commitment by ACJP volunteers. The ACJP in this area is family based, but it would not exist otherwise. The submission called for review of funding and guidelines on expenditure. A call for clear guidelines on training and functions was made.

Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative Ltd.

Rumbalara's submission was very critical of the Review and the quantity and quality of the draft report. The submission was that the meetings that took place within their area were not transcribed accurately. There was a strong call for their area to be re-assessed and the consultancy be re-conducted by an independent body (other than the Review Team).

There were no further details provided to the Review Team. Inspector Boland had conferred per telephone with a member from this area and as a result of that conversation, the summary of the Shepparton area was modified as to the interpretation of the meetings.

The Review Team were of the view that the concerns raised by Rumbalara did not impact upon the overall Review and that undue emphasis had been placed on whether the ACJP did or did not undertake certain roles.

The Review Team noted that most ACJP's throughout the State had (at first) the misconception that the Review was a critical assessment of each individual within each ACJP. It was explained that the Review was to obtain an 'overall picture' of how the ACJP's operated throughout the State.

Warrnambool & District Aboriginal Co-operative Ltd.

Warrnambool & District Aboriginal Co-operative submitted detailed information relative to the numerous pro-active initiatives that they are involved in. The submission detailed the very good work this area is involved with, including cross-cultural training of police members.

The ACJP chairperson is also a Director at Worn Gundidj Aboriginal Co-operative Ltd. This organisation is involved in employment and training for many Aboriginal Youth.

As part of the submission, a plan for the ACJP for 2002 was also submitted.

The Review Team was very impressed with the pro-active activities that this area was involved in.

Superintendent Norman

Superintendent Norman, as Divisional Manager of the AAU raised a number of concerns with the incomplete draft report. These concerns are summarised as follows:

He believes that RAJAC's should be involved with ACJP's but has no coordination role. He believes that it was never intended by VAJA to have this type of role and that RAJAC's are Regional and not a local committee.

Superintendent Norman believes that ALO's and local police should have a commitment to their local ACJP's. He also pointed out that the Victoria Police Policy Reference Group is a Victoria Police Group and does not have responsibility for ACJP's.

He discussed a number of options instead of salaried positions, such as a flat rate for mileage or a flat rate for call-outs. Irrespective, a formal funding agreement should be arranged for each ACJP.

He believes that the Statewide Chairpersons Committee for ACJP's should act as a steering committee for ACJP's throughout the State. He believes that this Committee should be an open Forum. The Officer in Charge of the local police should arbitrate any disputes where the dispute arises.

The appointment of Bail Justices from among ACJP members was not considered a conflict of interest.

Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service

The submission from VALS was not actually received by the Review Team direct; rather the "Discussion Paper" was sent out to various clients. The paper was then forwarded to Victoria Police via the e-mail system.

However, the Review Team take this paper as a submission to the Review from VALS. The Discussion Paper is not re-produced in its entirety. It is available from the Review Team if required. The paper is summarised as follow:-

The paper is very critical of the involvement of Victoria Police in the Review Team. VALS believe that independent consultants should have been used. There is criticism of the actual Review Process where interviews should have been conducted separately. VALS believe that it was a flawed arrangement allowing ALO's to organise meetings as most ALO's have little to do with the Koori community.

There is criticism of Inspector Boland conducting the focus group in Shepparton in the absence of the independent researcher or community representative. VALS staff who attended these sessions had concerns regarding the objectivity of the exercise

[Inspector Boland had advised that because of other responsibilities of Review Team Members, it was unfortunate that they could not attend all meetings together. On this occasion, he attended alone. He was of the opinion that it was not an issue as VALS had three representatives present, which included the CEO of VALS, and that the integrity of the process was open to scrutiny by them.]

The Discussion Paper was critical of the Review Team not offering Strategic Directions to address limitations. There was also the opinion that the program remaining voluntary was without substance.

Doubts were raised as to the auspicing and administration of ACJP's under Victoria Police. There were also concerns as to the recommendation of RAJAC's being responsible for monitoring and coordination and accountabilities.

VALS has made the following recommendations including that they consider that a further review needs to occur to:

- address the current identified resource constraints facing the ACJP, and find meaningful, realistic and immediate solutions to overcome the over-burdening of the ACJP program and its volunteers;
- address the core issue of how community can continue to maintain & improve its running and control of the ACJP;

- include consideration of what organisation(s) would best auspice and support the ACJPs expanding role.
- VALS also recommends that the Department of Justice commit itself to identifying and setting up achievable strategies to reconcile the needs of the growing ACJP Programs with adequate and appropriate resources. This strategic plan should provide solutions to address the over-dependence on Aboriginal communities to provide invaluable service for free; assess the suitability of the Victoria Police in auspicings ACJP Programs as it expands on preventative and community building programs/initiatives; and develop strategies to overcome the over-burdening and under-resourcing of the ACJP program as a whole.

Submissions received via the Department of Justice. Including RAJAC's from Barwon South West, Gippsland, Grampians, Hume and Dandenong area.

These submissions are summarised in the following, with points not already covered by the aforementioned submissions.

The submissions from these areas were again critical of police involved in the Review process. The role of CJP's should be broader than assisting police. There should be broader government funding to assist CJP's. That the review be extended to cover a review of the police commitment to Police/Aboriginal Liaison. Aboriginal people should be employed in police stations in clerical roles and advisory capacity. Lack of Statistical data impacted on the review. No real analysis of how the ACJP's spend their money. The presentation of the report is poor (**incomplete draft report**) Consultation with CORE was absent. The review failed to evaluate whether the program should remain with Victoria Police or not. Support for the Community Controlled philosophy of the program. Reassessment should be made following further consultations with ACJP Chairpersons. Review should be set aside and a further review conducted by independent body.

ACJP Chairpersons Committee

Provided a submission to the final report relevant to the recommendations where some recommendations were agreed to and others rejected. This submission is available for perusal if required.

CORE

Core submitted views on the recommendations and re-affirmed its support for the ACJ Program and its continued expansion.

DOJ

The Department of Justice has provided a submission to the Review Team which suggests that broader and more in-depth accumulation of information and statistics are required. The submission by the DOJ is beyond the scope of the Review Team. This Submission is also available for perusal if required.

Conclusions and Recommendations

In seeking appropriate recommendations, the Review Team was mindful of the Government's statement at page 11 of The Victorian Aboriginal Justice Agreement, which states "The Government recognises that the Aboriginal community has the right to develop its own structures to service its needs, while maintaining the right to use mainstream services."

In making these recommendations, the Review Team concedes that each ACJP is unique and that if any change is required within an ACJP, it will ultimately be the individual area that will make that decision.

These recommendations relate in the main to Terms of Reference 1,3,4 and 6, where the data facilitated a comprehensive response to the issues raised. Terms of reference 2 and 5 have been responded to in a more qualified manner, on the basis of the data gathered, as explained elsewhere.

The Terms of Reference (TOR) are re-produced here in abridged form for ease of reference. The complete TOR are located at Appendix 1.

- 1. To review the Aboriginal Community Justice Panels Program objectives and scope with a view of continued development of the program in accordance with the Victorian Aboriginal Justice Agreement recommendations 4.5 and 4.6.*
- 2. Review the geographical distribution of Aboriginal Community Justice Panels in accordance with the needs of the Aboriginal communities and Victoria Police.*
- 3. Analyse the recruitment practices, training and support for Aboriginal Community Justice Panels Program volunteers in the service delivery of the program.*
- 4. Review current funding arrangements to ensure the program meets its objectives and provides for future growth and development.*
- 5. Review the effectiveness of individual Aboriginal Community Justice Panels as to their structure, interaction and impact on their communities and Police/Aboriginal relations.*
- 6. Examine systemic issues and policy developments across Government, which impact on Aboriginal Community Justice Panels, and make recommendations where appropriate.*

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: Regional Aboriginal Justice Advisory Committee's (RAJAC's) should seek involvement in supporting local ACJP initiatives within their areas. The RAJAC's should assist in developing strategies to minimise Aboriginal people coming into the Justice system and develop a 'team' approach and partnership to enhance the relationships between police and Aboriginal communities through this committee.

Recommendation 2: A Formal Charter should be established between the AAU, RAJAC's and Statewide ACJP Chairpersons in consultation with the Victoria Police Aboriginal Policy Reference Group. This Charter should establish a base "Operating Procedures" for ACJP's, which will include standards for recruitment of volunteers to the Program.

Recommendation 3: ACJP's should receive induction and resourcing to become more proactively involved with community youth projects, crime-prevention programs and diversionary strategies. There should be appropriate professional development programs.

Recommendation 4: The AAU and the relevant RAJAC's should investigate the need for an ACJP in areas currently not serviced by a Panel. Areas for consideration are Dandenong, Healesville and Bairnsdale.

Recommendation 5: The ACJP Program should remain based upon a voluntary model.

Recommendation 6: There should be greater formal recognition of the role and achievements of ACJP members. It is noted that processes giving formal identification to Panel members were implemented during the course of the review.

Recommendation 7: An induction package suitable for local adaptation and delivery should be developed for ACJP volunteers. As part of this package, consideration should be given to providing panel members with appropriate development and support to help them deal with the psychological stress associated with their role.

Recommendation 8: A review of the Aboriginal Advisory Unit should be conducted to allow staff members to be more proactive in their involvement with Aboriginal communities, and assisting with the ACJP program's operation by visitations.

Recommendation 9: Continued Training of ALO's by the Aboriginal Advisory Unit should be a priority. In consultation with local communities, ALO's should also receive appropriate cross-cultural training to ensure a good understanding of local Aboriginal history, family relationships and customs. This training should be ongoing.

Recommendation 10: The position of ALO should be voluntary and not nominated. Victoria Police should give consideration to upgrading the ALO to a gazetted position. The ACJP Chairperson should have input into the appointment.

Recommendation 11: Commissioned Officers and Sub-Officers in giving priority to that portfolio should support members holding the ALO portfolio. Officers and Local Officers' in Charge should also have a satisfactory level of involvement with RAJAC's and with the ACJP.

Recommendation 12: ALO's should report to RAJAC's on a quarterly basis.

Recommendation 13: Department of Justice should re-assess appropriate funding for the ACJP Program to allow for expansion to areas currently not served by a Panel.

Recommendation 14: The Department of Justice, Aboriginal Justice Working Group, RAJAC representatives and ACJP Statewide Chairperson representatives should develop an equitable funding scale relative to individual ACJP operations. Assistance should also be given in seeking funding from other sources for proactive initiatives.

Recommendation 15: In general, data collection processes associated with the identification and processing of Aboriginal people should be enhanced. More specifically, ACJP Registers should be introduced in all police stations with an operating panel and ALO's should be required to forward reports to the AAU quarterly for the purpose of performance monitoring.

Recommendation 16: In the medium term there should be an evaluation of the roles of ACJP member and Bail Justice to determine whether these roles involve conflicting responsibilities.

Recommendation 17: The role and operations of ACJP's should have regular monitoring and be reviewed by December 2005.

Recommendation 18: Issues raised and consultations requested from the meeting at ATSIC on 6th May 2002, and from the further submissions received... that those matters be listed as Agenda Items for progression by the appropriate committee or forum.

Appendix 1

Terms of Reference

The Review of the Aboriginal Community Justice Panels Program is a requirement under the Victorian Aboriginal Justice Agreement (VAJA). VAJA at recommendation 4.6, page 42 states:-

“Aboriginal communities and the Government recognise that the Aboriginal Community Justice Panels (ACJP) Program, administered by the Victoria Police, is an essential, front line service that assists Aboriginal people who come in contact with the criminal justice system.

The factors impacting on the program’s operation include:

The reduction of Commonwealth funding to Aboriginal organisations and a consequent increase in demand for ACJP's to deliver a broad range of emergency and welfare services.

Increased involvement in confronting and stressful Aboriginal-police encounters, and a lack of counselling, training and support for dealing with these incidents.

Poor linkages between ACJP's and other key Aboriginal and mainstream justice-related services.”

In addition the VAJA acknowledges that the Victoria Police together with the Aboriginal Justice Working Group, chaired by Andrew Jackomos, Manager, Indigenous Issues, Department of Justice, will Review the ACJP Program and its future role in implementing the Aboriginal Justice Agreement to strengthen the operation of ACJP's.

At recommendation 4.5, VAJA further acknowledges that the Victoria Police will place particular emphasis on the continued development of the ACJP's network.

In accordance with recommendations 4.6 and 4.5 the terms of reference have been compiled.

1. To review the Aboriginal Community Justice Panels Program objectives and scope with a view of continued development of the program in accordance with the Victorian Aboriginal Justice Agreement recommendations 4.5 and 4.6.
2. Review the geographical distribution of Aboriginal Community Justice Panels in accordance with the needs of the Aboriginal communities and Victoria Police.
3. Analyse the recruitment practices, training and support for Aboriginal Community Justice Panels Program volunteers in the service delivery of the program.
4. Review current funding arrangements to ensure the program meets its objectives and provides for future growth and development.
5. Review the effectiveness of individual Aboriginal Community Justice Panels as to their structure, interaction and impact on their communities and Police/Aboriginal relations.
6. Examine systemic issues and policy developments across Government, which impact on Aboriginal Community Justice Panels, and make recommendations where appropriate

Appendix II

Focus Group Plan

Date	Location	Police Rep.	AT SIC Rep.	Aboriginal Community Rep.
Wed. 25 th July	Geelong/Corio	Insp. Boland and Cmdr. Henry	Emma Ryan	Bob Hamann and Greg Black
Mon. 30 th July	Dandenong	Insp. Boland	Emma Ryan	Bob Hamann
	Warnambool	Cmdr. Henry		Greg Black
Tues. 31 st July	Heywood	Cmdr. Henry		Greg Black
Wed. 1 st Aug.	Chairs Meeting	Insp. Boland	Emma Ryan	
Wed. 1 st Aug.	Portland	Cmdr. Henry		Greg Black
Thur. 2 nd Aug.	Bendigo	Insp. Boland	Emma Ryan	Bob Hamann
Thur. 2 nd	Hamilton	Cmdr. Hen		Greg Black

Au g.		ry		
Fri. 3 rd Au g.	Ech uca	Ins p. Bol and	Em ma Rya n	Bob Ham ann
Fri. 3 rd Au g.	Hors ham	Cm dr. Hen ry		Greg Blac k
Mo n. 6 th Au g.	Shep part on	Ins p. Bol and		
Tue s. 7 th Au g.	Ker ang	Cm dr. Hen ry		Greg Blac k
We d. 8 th Au g.	Swa n Hill	Cm dr. Hen ry	Em ma Rya n	Greg Blac k
Thu r. 9 th Au g.	Mor well/ War ragu l	Ins p. Bol and		
Thu r. 9 th Au g.	Robi nval e	Cm dr. Hen ry	Em ma Rya n	Greg Blac k
Fri. 10 th Au g.	Mild ura	Cm dr. Hen ry	Em ma Rya n	Greg Blac k
We d. 15 th Au g.	Bair nsda le/ Lak e Tyer s	Ins p. Bol and	Em ma Rya n	Bob Ham ann
Tue s. 21 st Au	Ball arat	Ins p. Bol and	Em ma Rya n	Bob Ham ann

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Appendix iii

Qualifications and experience of Review Team Members

Dennis Henry:

Has been a member of Victoria Police for 35 years. Has experience in wide areas of policing, including Traffic, Criminal Investigation Branch, Licensing Gaming and Vice Squad, Child Exploitation Unit. Was the Superintendent in charge of the Mildura area prior to moving to Warrnambool. Currently Commander of Region Two General Policing Department. Dennis has been involved in a number of task forces, complex projects and reviews. He was awarded two Commendations from the Chief Commissioner, two Highly Commended Certificates, holds the National Medal and clasp and Victoria Police Service Medal with 30 year clasp. In 1999 he was awarded the Australian Police Medal.

Greg Boland:

Has been a member of Victoria Police for 32 years. Also has experience in wide areas of policing including metropolitan and country, Criminal Investigation Branch's, D.24 and Community Policing Squad. Current rank of Inspector in charge of Sexual Offences and Child Abuse Coordination Office. Holds a Bachelor of Arts (Police Studies) from Monash University and Associate Diploma (Police Studies). He was the Aboriginal Liaison Officer for the Dandenong and surrounding areas for eleven years. Implemented Operation Boordup Mahnong (Comforting Hand) which related directly to ACJP's, author of the Victoria Police publication of Towards Reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. Awarded a Churchill Fellowship in 1998 to study the relationship between police in New Zealand, Canada and U.S.A. and their Aboriginal people. Awarded a Commendation for his efforts to improve police/Aboriginal relations. Holds the National Medal with clasp, Victoria Police Service Medal with 30 year clasp.

Greg Black:

Greg has been Chairperson of the Corio ACJP for over ten years. He is a respected elder who has lived in the area since 1959. Originally from the Swan Hill area he moved to Balranald and then to Corio.

Robert Hamann:

Bob has been working with Koori people involved in drug use and homelessness in his role as SAAP (Supported Accommodation and Assistance Program) working with Ngwala Willumbong Cooperative, over a period of seven years. Bob has created a large number of resources throughout the St.Kilda and metropolitan area for SAAP and related programs within the agency. With qualifications in Alcohol and Other Drugs work and Workplace Assessment and Training, Bob is also involved in training within the Koori community. In 2001 this has included a training program for drug and alcohol workers employed by Aboriginal Cooperatives across Victoria, in association with

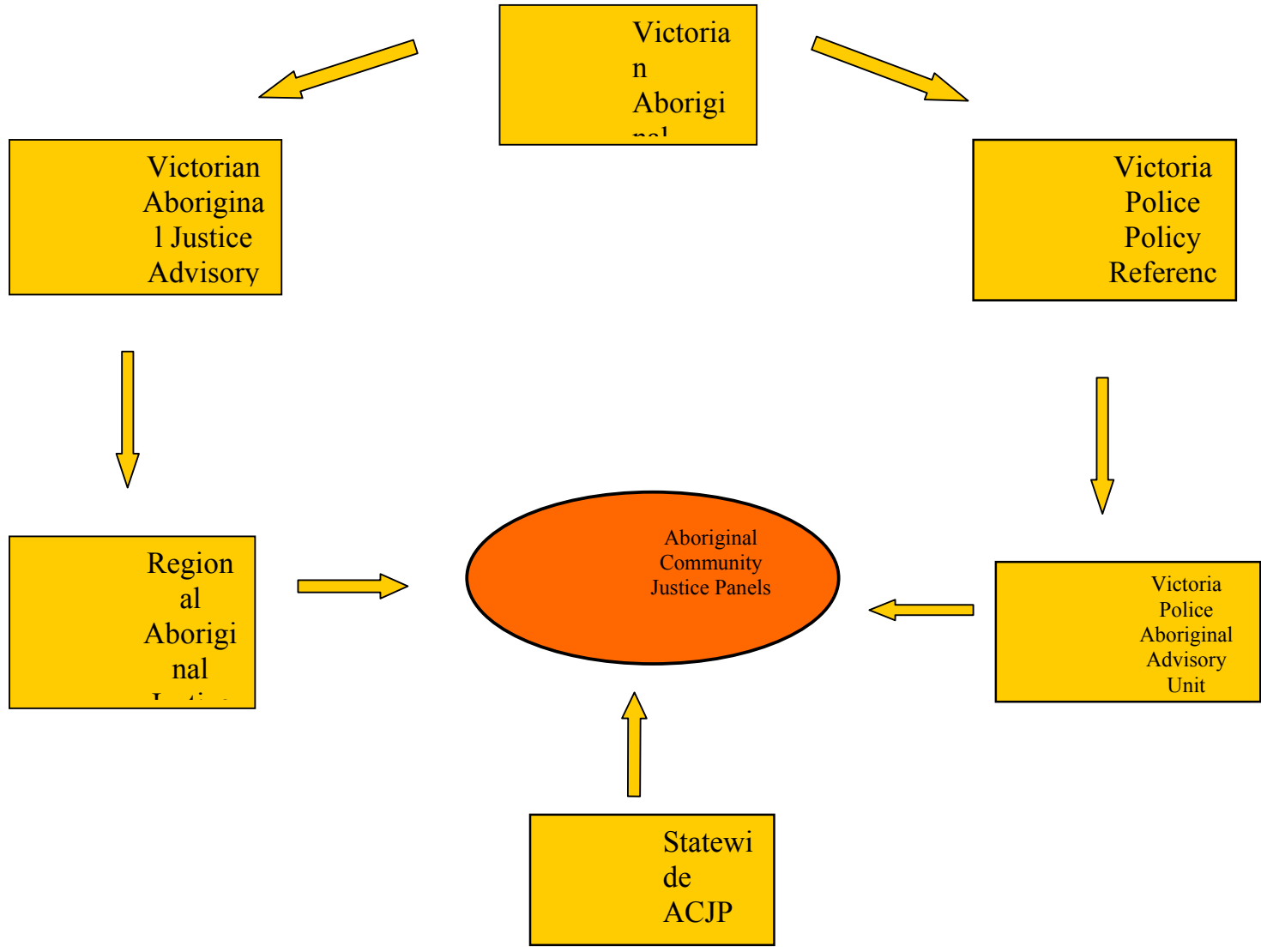
Swinburne University. Bob has also been involved in a national consultation to produce the Indigenous SAAP Case Management Kit.

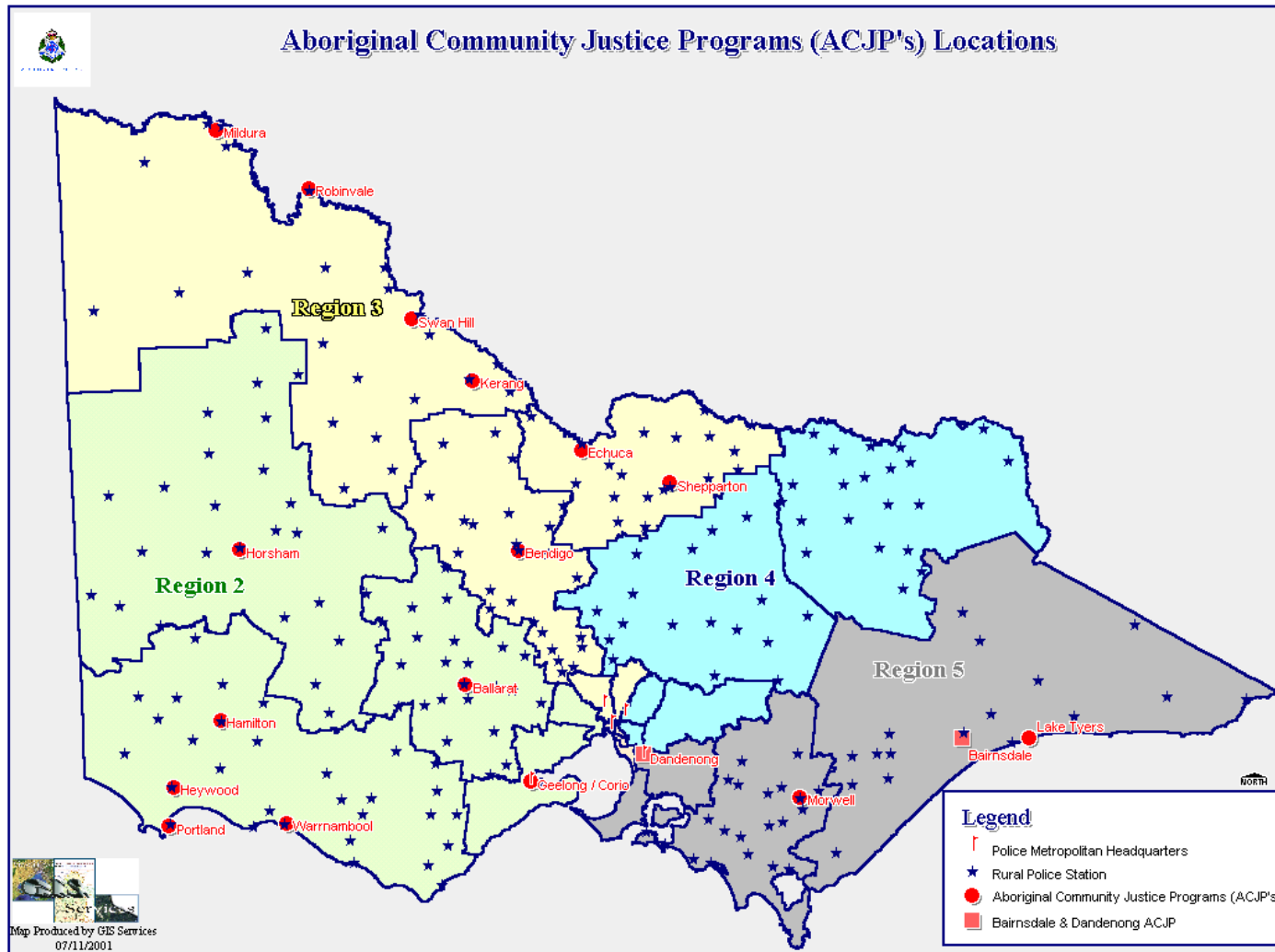
Stuart Ross:

Stuart is the Manager of Projects at Melbourne Criminological Research and Evaluation Unit at the University of Melbourne. Until the end of 2000 he was the Director of the National Centre for Crime and Justice Statistics in the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Stuart was responsible for the ABS national statistics on crime, criminal courts and corrective services as well as ABS survey activity in the crime and justice field. Stuart has a detailed knowledge of the criminal justice systems of the Australian States and Territories and brought high-level project management and data management and data analysis skills to this project.

Emma Ryan:

Emma holds an MA in the area of police accountability. She has been a sessional tutor in the Department of Criminology since 1997. She has lectured in the areas of policing, feminist criminological theory and penology. This teaching makes Emma familiar with issues surrounding the impact of the criminal justice system on indigenous people and the relationship between Kooris and police. She has undertaken sessional tutoring in the area of Criminal justice at the Centre for Indigenous Education at the University of Melbourne and has also been involved, as Project Officer, in research with Charles Sturt University investigating the ethics of heroin use.





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