Chapter Two - Crime Profile

2.1 Introduction

The following crime profile has been put together to paint a picture of the some of the issues relating to specific crimes occurring in the Redfern-Waterloo area. The profile examines data from the New South Wales Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOCSAR), steps taken at the local level which aim to address some of these issues, information collected during the community consultation process about specific crime and safety issues concerning the community and an examination of some of the research which relates to these issues which has previously been conducted in the area.

Each year BOCSAR releases recorded crime statistics for the previous year. In addition each year BOCSAR tabulates the most commonly occurring offences by the top twenty five Local Government Areas. Five year trends for these offences are also analysed for each Local Government Area.

Apart from homicide statistics, Australia has only had crime statistics since 1973.[1] This means it is difficult to make any long term historical comparisons. Often the term "crime wave" is used based on a short term increase in a certain category of crime statistics. Crime statistics however in N.S.W. show increases and decreases in relation to different sorts of crime on a regular basis. Short term increases in crime are more commonly discussed than short term decreases but both trends mean little in terms of the overall long term picture of crime rates in the state.

It is important to note that there are some categories of crime that do appear to be on the increase when viewed over a longer term period. Over the last three decades there does seem to have been an increase in property crime. Property crime includes offences like car theft and break and enters. The reasons for this are complicated but one of the contributing factors is the fact that people have more consumer goods now, and therefore more things stolen. Increased affluence, a market in stolen goods and illicit drug dependency are also important factors.

The point is that although there have been increases in certain types of crime, these increases are attributable to a range of specific and interwoven factors, not just a vague idea that "things are getting worse" or that people are becoming "more dangerous".

The interpretation of crime trends is a difficult task. The recorded criminal incident data presented in this report are based on information derived from the N.S.W. Police Service Computerised Operational Policing System meaning that only those incidents which are reported to or detected by police are included. The trends in recorded crime shown in this report will therefore reflect movements in the underlying factors which influence the detection, reporting and recording of crime.

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[1] N.S.W. Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (2003) Personal communication

An alternative measure of the level of crime in N.S.W. is available from crime victim surveys, for example the Crime and Safety Survey which is conducted annually by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (A.B.S.)[2] As well as providing an estimate of the victimisation rate in the community for a selected set of offences, this survey measures the proportion of crimes which are not reported to police and therefore not included in the official statistics.

In particular personal crimes such as assault and robbery are less likely to be reported than crimes which involve households. For example Crime and Safety New South Wales 2001 shows that in the twelve month period to April 2001, while 95% of motor vehicle thefts and 73% of break and enter offences were reported to police, only 30% of all alleged assault offences were reported during that period. Given that some offences have low reporting rates, it is possible that changes in recorded crime rates over time for these offences largely reflect changes in reporting rates.[3]

Public willingness to report crime however is just one of the extraneous factors which can affect trends in recorded crime. For this reason crime statistics are difficult to interpret as they measure a range of shifting factors including:

- Public feelings towards, and tolerance of certain behaviours
- Public definitions of certain events as "private matters" eg. domestic violence
- How willing people are to report crime to the police which may be influenced by factors such as insurance and confidence in the police to do something about the crime
- Police recording practices
- Shifts in policing policy which can have a marked effect on issues relating to the number of drug offences, drink driving offences, cases of offensive behaviour or of receiving stolen goods
- Political and administrative pressures on Police and
- Police numbers and work rates.

Crime statistics concentrate on traditional forms of property crime and crimes against the person. They tell us little or nothing about other forms of criminal, violent and anti-social behaviours. Behaviours that are not recorded include things such as:

- Tax avoidance
- White collar crime
- Environmental crime
- Consumer fraud
- Money laundering
- Corruption and
- Price fixing

These activities often involve greater social and economic costs than those crimes recorded in the statistics. Ultimately the statistics presented provide only a partial picture of the state of crime in N.S.W. and in Redfern and Waterloo.

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[2] Australian Bureau of Statistics (2001) Crime and Safety New South Wales
[3] ABS (2001) Op.Cit.

2.2 Crime and Safety in South Sydney

This crime profile presents the New South Wales Recorded Crime Statistics for 2002 for the South Sydney Local Government Area and examines some of the trends relating to specific offences over the five year period from 1998-2002. The profile will also refer specifically to the main types of offences occurring in Redfern and Waterloo. Some of the offences are also examined from a regional perspective for comparative purposes and to reflect the fact that local attempts to address larger issues or problems as part of the community safety planning process will need to expand beyond the suburbs of Redfern and Waterloo as well as the Local Government Area boundaries.

The crime profile should be understood in the context that recorded criminal incident data is based on information reported or detected by the NSW Police Service. The trends in recorded crime shown in the report will therefore reflect movements in the underlying factors which influence the detection, reporting and recording of crime. The Director of BOCSAR, Don Weatherburn has stated that in many instances it is simply impossible to state with any assurance why a particular trend has occurred. Attempts to explain trends in recorded crime in this report should be understood in that light.

The following statistics are figures released by BOCSAR in relation to the six most commonly occurring offences in the South Sydney Local Government Area as well as the Council areas which border it. These offences are motor vehicle theft, steal from motor vehicle, steal from person, robbery, break and enter – dwelling and assault. Figures are also presented for the total number of offences in these categories for Redfern and Waterloo from 1999-2001.

It should be noted that BOCSAR excludes the City Council Area in its top twenty five Local Government Area rankings for each offence and that the figures relating to South Sydney were calculated prior to the boundary changes which took place in May 2003. The suburbs included in the South Sydney area aside from Redfern and Waterloo include Kings Cross, Woolloomooloo, Darlinghurst, Elizabeth Bay, Rushcutters Bay, East Sydney, Potts Point, Paddington, Surry Hills, Chippendale, Camperdown, Newtown, Erskineville, St Peters, Alexandria, Moore Park, Rosebery and Zetland.

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* NB - The new South Sydney Local Government boundaries declared on 9th May 2003 no longer include the suburbs of Kings Cross, Woolloomooloo, Darlinghurst, Elizabeth Bay, Rushcutters Bay, Elizabeth Bay, East Sydney, Potts Point, Chippendale and Camperdown. It is speculated that as a result the following figures do not represent the true nature of crime in the new South Sydney Local Government Area. It should also be noted that Redfern Police record separate confidential statistics for the six most commonly occurring offences within the Local Area Command boundaries which do not necessarily correspond with BOCSAR Local Government figures. The following figures should be understood in light of these factors.

2.3 Motor Vehicle Theft

Table One – Inner Sydney Local Government Areas Motor Vehicle Theft, Number of Offences and 5 Year Trends 1998-2002 (rates per 100,000)

LGA	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	5 Year Trend
South Sydney	**1,944**	**1,467**	**1,496**	**1,700**	**1,454**	**Down by 7%**
Botany Bay	531	358	384	430	339	Down by 10.6%
Leichhardt	1,275	1,036	1,056	1,131	808	Down by 10.8%
Marrickville	1,684	1,303	1,177	1,190	899	Down by 14.5%
Randwick	1,353	994	962	1,151	981	Down by 7.7%
Woollahra	672	447	523	615	578	Stable

Table One indicates that with the exception of Woollahra all the inner Sydney Local Government Areas have experienced a decrease in motor vehicle theft in the last five years. Again with the exception of Woollahra the decrease in the South Sydney area is less marked than in the areas of Botany Bay, Leichhardt, Marrickville and Randwick.[4]

Table Two – Inner Sydney Local Government Areas by Top Twenty Five Council Areas in N.S.W. for Motor Vehicle Theft 1999-2002[5]

LGA	Ranking 1999	Ranking 2000	Ranking 2001	Ranking 2002
South Sydney	**1**	**1**	**2**	**1**
Botany Bay	25	19	15	17
Leichhardt	2	2	3	3
Marrickville	3	4	8	6
Randwick	Not in Top 25	Not in Top 25	Not in Top 25	Not in Top 25
Woollahra	Not in Top 25	23	17	11

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[4] N.S.W. Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (2003)
[5] Ibid

Table Two indicates that South Sydney has ranked in the top two Local Government Areas for motor vehicle theft for the last four years.

Table Three – Motor vehicle theft – Total number of offences - Redfern and Waterloo 1999-2001

Suburb	1999	2000	2001
Redfern	154	155	166
Waterloo	78	115	99

Table Three indicates that that rates of motor vehicle theft have remained relatively stable in Redfern from 1999-2001 and have fluctuated much more in Waterloo during the same period.

According to the Insurance Council of Australia car theft in N.S.W. decreased by 23% in 2002 mirroring a national fall in a crime that costs insurance companies $600 million a year. N.S.W. remains Australia's car theft capital accounting for 40,000 or almost half of all vehicles stolen.[6]

The trend in the decrease in car theft has been attributed to consumers' increasing use of immobilisers which render a car inoperable without the ignition key. According to the National Motor Vehicle Theft Reduction Council
(N.M.V.T.R.C.) the installation of immobilisers has reduced opportunistic theft but has had less impact on professional thieves. N.M.V.T.R.C. state that around 60% of car thieves were teenagers while a third were criminals using a car to commit robbery or other crimes.

Cars older than ten years old with fewer security features make up the bulk of all thefts according to N.M.V.T.R.C.[7]

The figures in Tables One and Two demonstrate that South Sydney (including Redfern and Waterloo) along with Leichhardt and Marrickville Councils all rank highly for the offence of motor vehicle theft suggesting that there may be a regional connection for this offence.

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[6] Insurance Council of Australia (2003) Personal communication
[7] National Motor Vehicle Reduction Council (2003) Personal Communication

2.4 Steal from Motor Vehicle

Table Four – Inner Sydney Local Government Areas Steal from Motor Vehicle – Number of Offences and 5 year trends 1998-2002

LGA	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	5 Year Trend
South Sydney	**4,353**	**4,359**	**5,851**	**5,919**	**5,034**	**Up by 3.7%**
Botany Bay	451	432	537	634	452	Stable
Leichhardt	2,209	2,238	2,410	2,537	1,646	Stable
Marrickville	2,270	1,906	1,919	1,903	1,416	Down by 11.1%
Randwick	1,615	1,652	1,740	1,960	1,512	Stable
Woollahra	1,171	1,211	1,237	1,378	1,065	Stable

Table Four indicates that South Sydney was the only inner Sydney
Local Government Area to experience an increase in the five year trend for the offence of steal from motor vehicle. [8]

Table Five – Inner Sydney Local Government Areas by Top Twenty Five Council Areas in N.S.W. for Steal from Motor Vehicle 1999-2002

LGA	Ranking 1999	Ranking 2000	Ranking 2001	Ranking 2002
South Sydney	**1**	**1**	**2**	**1**
Botany Bay	25	19	15	17
Leichhardt	2	2	3	3
Marrickville	3	4	8	6
Randwick	Not in Top 25	Not in Top 25	Not in Top 25	Not in Top 25
Woollahra	Not in Top 25	23	17	11

Table Five indicates that South Sydney has ranked in the top two Local Government Areas in N.S.W. for Steal from Motor Vehicle in the last four years. [9]

Table Five also indicates that as well as South Sydney, Leichhardt and Marrickville Councils all rank highly for the offence of Steal from Motor Vehicle. When we consider the similarities between these areas we know that they are densely populated and are characterised by large numbers of medium density development and small domestic housing blocks.

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[8] N.S.W. Bureau of Crime Statistics, Op. Cit. (2003)
[9] Ibid

Table Six – Steal from Motor vehicle Redfern and Waterloo – Total number of offences 1999-2001

Suburb	1999	2000	2001
Redfern	631	625	701
Waterloo	294	359	377

Table Six indicates a steady increase for Steal from motor vehicle offences for both suburbs from 1999-2001.

Unlike many suburban areas in the metropolitan region the South Sydney area including Redfern and Waterloo area has few garages, necessitating the bulk of cars being parked on the street. This would tend to put the local residential population and visitors to the area at risk of motor vehicle and steal from motor vehicle offences as opposed to areas where garages are more common where the risk and effort required to commit a motor vehicle-related offence is much greater. Railway stations and car parks are frequent targets for car theft according to N.M.V.T.R.C.

Redfern Police Station a facility earmarked for upgrading or relocation.

2.5 Steal from Person

Steal from person refers to the taking of another person's property with the intention of permanently depriving the owner of the property illegally but without force, threat of force, use of coercive measures, deceit or having gained unlawful entry to any structure even if the intent was to commit theft.

Table Seven – Inner Sydney Local Government Areas Steal from Person, Number of Offences and 5 Year Trends 1998-2002

LGA	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	5 Year Trend
South Sydney	**1,326**	**1,192**	**1,161**	**2,160**	**2,179**	**Not calcul-ted* N/C**
Botany Bay	131	155	149	177	173	N/C
Leichhardt	235	188	171	202	288	N/C
Marrickville	371	287	248	337	333	N/C
Randwick	245	284	309	416	441	N/C
Woollahra	146	114	137	180	249	N/C

* NB 5 Year trends for the offence of Steal from Person have not been calculated.[10]

Table Seven indicates that steal from person offences have remained stable in the previous two years in the South Sydney Area.

Table Eight – Inner Sydney Local Government Areas by Top Twenty Five Council Areas in N.S.W. for Steal from Person

LGA	Ranking 1999	Ranking 2000	Ranking 2001	Ranking 2002
South Sydney	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**
Botany Bay	3	5	4	8
Leichhardt	10	13	15	9
Marrickville	5	9	7	12
Randwick	16	17	13	16
Woollahra	20	16	12	10

Table Eight indicates that South Sydney has consistently ranked the number one Local Government Area for the offence of steal from person. [18]

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[10] N.S.W. Bureau of Crime Statistics (2003) Op. Cit.
[18] Ibid

Table Nine – Steal from Person – Total number of offences – Redfern, Waterloo 1999-2001

Suburb	1999	2000	2001
Redfern	326	241	618
Waterloo	86	69	130

Table Nine indicates that Steal from person offences have increased markedly in both Redfern and Waterloo over the three years 1999-2001.[19] According to Redfern Police this has been a long standing problem in the area. Some offenders have been targeting vehicles as they stop at various traffic lights especially in Waterloo. More recent anecdotal data over the last few months indicate a decline for this type of offence. [20]

2.6 Robbery

Robbery refers to the unlawful removal or taking of property, without consent, accompanied by force or threat. The number of offences is calculated by adding together three types of robbery namely robbery without a weapon, robbery with a firearm and robbery with a weapon not a firearm.

Table Ten – Inner Sydney Local Government Areas Robbery Rates – Number of Offences 1998-2002

LGA	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
South Sydney	1,320	1,060	1,141	1,698	1,112
Botany Bay	72	54	77	104	66
Leichhardt	215	202	167	207	165
Marrickville	562	412	410	473	282
Randwick	241	214	267	338	290
Woollahra	120	71	93	109	83

Table Ten indicates that the number of robbery offences occurring in the last five years in the South Sydney Area have remained relatively stable. Five year trend figures indicate that robbery without a weapon is up by 0.6% while robbery with a firearm and robbery with a weapon not a firearm have remained stable.[21]

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[19] N.S.W. Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research Op. Cit (2003)
[20] Redfern Police – Personal communication (2003)
[21] N.S.W. Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research Op. Cit (2003)

Table Eleven – Inner Sydney Local Government Areas by Top Twenty Five Council Areas in N.S.W. for Robbery 1999-2002

LGA	Ranking 1999	Ranking 2000	Ranking 2001	Ranking 2002
South Sydney	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**
Botany Bay	Not in Top 25	18	17	22
Leichhardt	11	13	12	10
Marrickville	2	3	4	4
Randwick	23	19	18	16
Woollahra	Not in Top 25	Not in Top 25	24	Not in Top 25

Table Eleven indicates that South Sydney has ranked as the number one Local Government Area for robbery from 1999-2002. [22]

Table Twelve – Total number of offences for Robbery – Redfern, Waterloo 1999-2001

Suburb	1999	2000	2001
Redfern	226	215	401
Waterloo	50	70	112

Table Twelve reveals that robbery offences have continued to increase from 1999 to 2001.[23] According to Redfern Police many of the incidents of steal from person and robbery in the area have occurred within a 1.5km radius of Redfern railway station. [24] Initiatives in place to address the issue are covered later in this part of the plan.[25]

Redfern Railway Station

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[22] N.S.W. Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research Op. Cit. (2003)
[23] Ibid (2003)
[24] Redfern Police – Personal communication (2003)
[25] Ibid (2003)

2.7 Break and Enter – Dwelling

Table Thirteen – Inner Sydney Local Government Areas, Break and Enter – Dwelling, Number of Offences and 5 Year Trends 1998-2002

LGA	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	5 Year Trend
South Sydney	**2,345**	**1,756**	**2,332**	**2,762**	**2,120**	**Stable**
Botany Bay	432	247	321	402	319	Stable
Leichhardt	1,503	1,223	1,651	1,380	1,417	Stable
Marrickville	2,430	1,719	1,470	1,393	1,011	Down by 19.7%
Randwick	2,037	1,421	2,047	2,229	1,940	Stable
Woollahra	2,345	1,756	2,332	2,762	2,120	Up by 4.9%

Table Thirteen indicates that rates for Break and Enter - Dwelling have remained stable over the last five years however there has been a decrease of 23.2% over the last year.[26]

Table Fourteen – Inner Sydney Local Government Areas by Top Twenty Five Council Areas in N.S.W. for Break and Enter – Dwelling 1999-2002

LGA	Ranking 1999	Ranking 2000	Ranking 2001	Ranking 2002
South Sydney	**7**	**2**	**1**	**3**
Botany Bay	Not in Top 25	Not in Top 25	Not in Top 25	Not in Top 25
Leichhardt	10	3	5	5
Marrickville	4	9	16	Not in Top 25
Randwick	Not in Top 25	19	17	13
Woollahra	Not in Top 25	13	9	7

Table Fourteen indicates that South Sydney has featured in the top three Local Government Areas for Break and Enter – Dwelling in the last three years. [27]

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[26] N.S.W. Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research Op. Cit. (2003)
[27] Ibid (2003)

Table Fifteen – Total number of offences for Break and Enter (Dwelling) – Redfern, Waterloo 1999-2001

Suburb	1999	2000	2001
Redfern	260	385	468
Waterloo	133	133	151

Table Fifteen demonstrates that Break and Enter offences have continued to rise over the three year period. Police have speculated that in some areas of South Sydney more professional people have moved to the region in more recent times. This has meant that there have been increasing numbers of residents who are rarely at home during business hours.

Police have also reported that the release from prison of a number of known recidivist offenders may be behind this trend as well as the large number of high density new housing plans in the area which allow ease of access to a large number of premises.[28]

The availability of drugs in the area may also be a factor in that it can encourage crime to take place close to the supply source.

2.8 Assault

Table Sixteen – Inner Sydney Local Government Areas – Assault, Number of Offences and 5 Year Trends 1998-2002

LGA	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	5 Year Trend
South Sydney	**2,358**	**2,160**	**2,483**	**2,860**	**2,745**	**Up by 3.9%**
Botany Bay	392	399	389	387	369	Stable
Leichhardt	576	596	583	634	712	Up by 5.4%
Marrickville	1,065	944	946	892	909	Down by 3.9%
Randwick	874	902	911	1,035	1,047	Up by 4.6%
Woollahra	231	257	274	328	352	Up by 11.1%

Table Sixteen indicates that the South Sydney Area has had a slight increase in the number of assaults in the area over the previous five years.[29]

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[28] N.S.W. Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research Op. Cit. (2003)
[29] Ibid (2003)

Table Seventeen – South Sydney by Top Twenty Five Council Areas in N.S.W. for Assault 1999-2002

LGA	Ranking 1999	Ranking 2000	Ranking 2001	Ranking 2002
South Sydney	7	5	4	5

Table Seventeen indicates that South Sydney has consistently ranked in the top seven Local Government Areas for assault in the last four years.[30] South Sydney is the only metropolitan Council to be represented in the top twenty five Council areas for assault for each of the years 1999-2002.

Table Eighteen – Total number of offences for Assault – Redfern, Waterloo 1999-2001

Suburb	1999	2000	2001
Redfern	312	373	406
Waterloo	190	201	260

Table Eighteen indicates that assaults over the three years have continued to increase in Redfern and Waterloo.

2.9 Offender and Victim Profile

According to Redfern Police offenders committing break and enter and stealing offences in Redfern and Waterloo are mainly young males aged ten to eighteen years of age. More serious offences such as armed robberies and violent break and enters in Redfern and Waterloo are most commonly committed by males aged from eighteen years to their early thirties. Offenders have reported to Police that the main motivating factor behind the commission of these crimes is drug addiction. Many of the offenders in this regard could also be classified as victims since Police state that in addition to substance abuse issues most offenders are of low socio-economic background, are from dysfunctional families and have had limited education.

Police report that many offences are taking place in and around the railway station in Redfern and at major intersections in and around Elizabeth, Phillip, Wellington, McEvoy and Morehead Streets as well as along parts of Botany Road. Many victims have been young Asian women walking between Redfern station and Sydney University. Police report approximately 80% of all crime is committed by 20% of recidivist offenders some of whom are locals, others who reside outside the area.

The Crime Profile has demonstrated that the South Sydney Local Government area which includes Redfern and Waterloo ranks among the highest in New South Wales for six of the most commonly occurring offences.
The profile also indicates that there may well be a regional connection to some of the offences taking place in the area. It should be stressed that anecdotal evidence suggests that as much as 50% of crime is never reported to Police. The above figures do not reveal the motivations for offending behaviour nor the community safety issues of concern to the community.

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[30] N.S.W. Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research Op. Cit. (2003)

2.10 Addressing Crime and Safety Issues in Redfern-Waterloo

Redfern Police Local Area Command

Redfern Police have employed a number of strategies to address crime and safety issues in Redfern and Waterloo. One strategy has targeted high risk offenders, that is offenders where there may be a likelihood that the person may re-offend. Police have also been frequently deployed to Redfern railway station so as they may observe all entering and exiting pedestrian movements to and from the area. This operation has lead to a significant reduction in crime and improved perceptions of feeling safe in the area with many members of the community making positive comments about this initiative during the consultation process.

Two Duty Officer Inspectors have been given portfolios to target the Redfern-Waterloo area through covert operations and the mobilisation of up to twenty Police officers at a time in saturating an identified "hot spot". These operations are being implemented on a regular basis. An additional eight police have been deployed to work in conjunction with the Intelligence Response Team (I.R.T.) to target hot spot areas in Redfern and Waterloo. Strike forces targeting robbery offences have resulted in fifteen arrests with 54 charges laid specifically relating to taxi and street robbery offences.

Police have also established a Police Accountability Community Team (PACT). The purpose of the PACT is to:

- Ensure that Local Area Commanders are accountable to their local communities
- Encourage community partnerships to reduce crime and fear of crime
- Develop local solutions to local crime in partnership with local stakeholders
- Improve public safety and reduce fear of crime at a local level
- Raise understanding of the relationship between policing and crime reduction and
- Ensure Commanders take into account local community views on Police visibility, Police deployment and crime hot spots when deciding Police tasking and deployment.

In addition Police provide advice to people on upgrading domestic security following a break and enter. The Mounted Police also provide additional support to Redfern Local Area Command. Redfern Police are also involved in a number of community development initiatives which are referred to in relevant sections of the document.

The Redfern-Waterloo Anti-Drug Strategy

In November 2002 the Premier announced the Redfern / Waterloo Anti-Drug Strategy in response to concerns raised by members of the community with regard to illicit drug use as a contributing factor to crime and safety issues in the two suburbs. The issue of illicit drug use as being the primary motivating factor behind much of the crime and safety issues in the area was also raised on a number of occasions by members of the community during the consultation process and is referred to in the first part of this plan. The strategy acknowledges that illegal drug use is not limited to the two suburbs however it does aim to address the issue in specific sites such as The Block and in public housing.

In the context of this crime profile the Anti-Drug Strategy includes a range of initiatives in relation to law enforcement and the work of Redfern Police including:

- Pro-active policing targeting drug dealers and drug houses in Redfern and Waterloo and preventing alleged known drug users who live outside the area from travelling to the area
- Two Police Duty Officer Inspectors have been given portfolios to implement ongoing high visibility operations such as Operation Vikings in and around The Block and other sites which has lead to charges being laid against 80 alleged offenders with 47 arrests and a resultant significant decline in criminal activity in the area
- Police and the State Rail Authority undertaking Transit and sniffer dog operations aimed at improving surveillance and safety at entrances and on platforms on Redfern station since December 2002.

In addition the Redfern-Waterloo Anti-Drug Strategy looks at treatment and rehabilitation, prevention, education, family and social support and has identified the need for:

- improving health outcomes through better responses to drug overdose management
- reducing drug use and abuse through improved responses to drug treatment programs including referral to the Magistrates Early Referral Into Treatment Program (M.E.R.I.T.).
- improving the disposal of needles in areas around identified problem areas
- reducing the number of hours of operation and the location of the needle and syringe van to reduce exposure of children and young people to the facility and
- developing education strategies for drug users to increase knowledge about changes to procedures for the needle and syringe exchange van.

These initiatives are referred to in more detail in chapter six of the plan, titled Health, Drug and Alcohol issues. The Redfern-Waterloo Partnership Project has also been active in responding to the problem of illicit drug use through a number of programs and initiatives which are covered in the other sections of this document including early intervention, supporting young people and planning and environmental issues.

The Aboriginal Housing Company

Aboriginal people gravitated to Redfern originally to seek work to help build parts of the Sydney railway system. In 1973 Aborigines established a community of their own in Redfern in direct response to overcrowding and a severe housing crisis due partly to discrimination in the private rental market. The aspirations of the 70's and 80's were adversely affected by the introduction of heroin on The Block around 1989. This lead to the onset of deteriorating housing conditions and in 1999 and 2000 a project manager and social planner were appointed to the Aboriginal Housing Company (A.H.C.) to facilitate the redevelopment of The Block.

The A.H.C. has systematically relocated and evicted drug dealing on The Block and have demolished derelict properties as they have become vacant. Four years of planning and research has culminated in the production of the Redfern Community Social Plan and a detailed Masterplan consisting of sixty-two three and four bedroom family homes with a focus on crime prevention through environmental design, good health, family, culture and spirituality. The A.H.C. expects to submit its detailed Masterplan to Council by the end of 2003 with construction tenders to be advertised shortly. It is anticipated that construction will commence in mid-late 2004 with a completion date in 2006.

2.11 Community Consultation

Community consultation is a vital process in the development of any strategic plan. It aims to better understand the aspirations of communities and provides people with a stake in the community with ways to identify issues of concern and provide suggestions on how issues can be resolved and how government processes, plans and policies can be improved. This is in line with Council's Community Consultation Policy as outlined in the Draft Social Plan 2001-2003 that:

"South Sydney Council will have well co-ordinated, integrated and adaptable community consultation processes that provide opportunities for all groups in the community to have input into the development and review of Council policies, plans, services and processes and to have their say on issues of importance." [31]

It is acknowledged that consultation is essentially an ongoing process and this plan should be viewed as a dynamic document as community safety practice in the area continues to evolve.

Consultation Profile

Approximately 250 residents, businesses, service providers and representatives of government departments were consulted during the development of the Redfern-Waterloo Community Safety Plan. Most people were consulted either through an informal one on one interview in a variety of settings or at group sessions at Department of Housing precinct committees. (A precinct may be anything from a single building block to a series of walk up medium density units within defined street boundaries). A copy of the interview questions appears at Appendix A.

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[31] South Sydney Council Draft Social Plan (2003)

The consultations covered a wide cross section of members of the community including older people, people with disabilities, Aboriginal people and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. The Redfern and Waterloo communities support a variety of people born overseas from over thirty countries. It is acknowledged that due to time constraints few children and young people were consulted in the development of this plan. However, the input of these two groups is considered in the following section on existing research which covers consultations which have already been conducted.

A summary of the groups and services consulted in the development of this plan appears at Appendix B.

Consultations – Key findings

The people who were consulted were asked five questions in relation to either living, working and / or visiting the area. These were open-ended questions designed to better understand what people liked and disliked about the area, suggestions for making the area a better place, an understanding of the term "Community Safety" and about whether they felt a sense of belonging in the area.

Question One - The first question asked respondents about what they liked about living in the area. The intention of the question was to better understand the strengths of the community. The most common responses were:

Strong sense of community – friendly, unpretentious, diverse and genuine people

Central location – close to the City, services, shops, facilities and good transport

Accommodation – people were of the view that their standard of housing was reasonably high.

Question Two - People were next asked what they did not like about the area. The most common responses were:

Social isolation – many people interviewed felt that a number of people in the area were alienated and needed more information on what activities existed for socialising in the community

The Family – including parents with drug, alcohol and violence issues as well as unsupervised children

Intimidating Young People – mainly in groups walking and hanging out on the street at all hours of the night

Fear of crime – largely being a victim of a break and enter, assault or bag snatch

Drugs in the area – including use, abuse, supply, loitering and the unsafe disposal of needles and syringes

Poor state of the environment – including poor maintenance, poor urban design, vandalism and graffiti which contributed to a negative image of the area.

Question Three - The third question asked what would make the area a better place. Most common responses were:

Address drug issues – a perception existed that while it was acknowledged that the problem was very complex there was need for the Police and the government in general to do more to address this issue.

Instill a sense of pride into the area – many people commented that the sense of community in the area was not as strong as it used to be.

More community activities – chiefly more smaller based activities with and between neighbours

More support for children and families – including those identified as being vulnerable and at risk

Increased support for Young People – including more recreational activities outside of school hours

Shared community spaces and facilities – including better quality facilities and more opportunities to gather informally in public spaces.

Question Four - Fourthly respondents were asked what is their understanding of the term "Community Safety".

Some of the responses appear as quotes at the beginning of each section of the plan. Responses included:

"An awareness in people of the ways in which they can work together to contribute to their own and each other's safety and security".

"Respect for each other to build community" and

"Looking at issues as a community and addressing them as a community".

Question Five - The final question asked people about whether they felt a sense of belonging in the area and to expand on their response.

Almost 90% of respondents felt as though they belonged in the area. Many people felt that a sense of belonging related to the length of time a person had resided in the area. Others felt as though they had belonged from the moment they moved in.

When asked about the number of connections people had with one another there was a wide range of responses from those people who knew a great many people in the community to those who knew relatively few.

Those consulted said that most people said hello to one another in the area. Many people said that there was not a culture of visiting one another's homes and emphasised the need for more spaces for informal community activities particularly with their immediate neighbours. Some people said that there was very much an "old guard" and "new guard" in the area and that the newer people to the area were inclined to be more indifferent to participation in community life.

The Redfern-Waterloo Partnership Project and Community Consultation

The Redfern-Waterloo Partnership Project's Community Engagement Strategy aimed to develop meaningful relationships to ensure that all sectors of the community participated in the development of solutions to address their concerns.

In late 2002 a consultant was engaged to develop a benchmark for community engagement which involved a number of interviews with key stakeholders including residents, the culturally and linguistically diverse community, older people, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, Government agencies, non-government organisations, local businesses and sporting clubs.

The main issues identified through the Community Engagement Strategy related to:

- The Built Environment - including street lighting, maintenance, urban design, the negative impression created by roller shutter doors on shopfronts and the need to reclaim public spaces

- Drugs and Alcohol - including use and abuse, violence, family violence and chronic health problems

- Sense of Community – including the need for a stronger sense of community, more opportunities for interaction with neighbours, more community-based activities particularly for older people, need for sustainable improvements to public housing and a general need to provide more opportunities to bring all sectors of the community together

- The Family – including a need for role models and mentoring programs for children and young people, a lack of employment opportunities especially for Aboriginal people, insufficient family support services, family violence and low self-esteem

- Young People – including young people and crime and anti-social behaviour, improved recreational opportunities, need for role models, recognition of the "rites of passage" of young people and a need for a review of youth services.

2.12 Existing Research

A great deal of research has already been carried out with respect to community safety issues in the South Sydney Local Government Area which includes the suburbs of Redfern and Waterloo. The research has involved a number of consultations with the local community and is important information in terms of informing the development of this plan. The research includes:

<u>1994 South Sydney Council Social Plan</u>

As far back as 1994 1,500 residents and community workers were consulted to identify the main social issues for the South Sydney community. Many people suggested that crime and anti-social behaviour in public places in the South Sydney area was increasing. Fear of street crime, fear of assault or break and enter, a poorly maintained environment, domestic violence, pedestrian safety and vandalism were all mentioned as problems in the area at this time.

<u>1996 Consultations for Council's Safer Design Draft Development Control Plan</u>

In 1996 Council conducted a series of workshops with various advisory committees and residents in relation to crime and safety in the public domain. The issues of concern raised in relation to crime and safety were poor lighting, unsafe parks at night time, unsafe public toilets, car parks, laneways and railway stations and fear associated with alcohol consumption and violence in and around hotels and entertainment venues.

<u>1999 Interviews with the Aboriginal Community</u>

In 1999 Council conducted consultations with some members of the local Aboriginal community involving 80 in-depth interviews which revealed that they were concerned about issues in relation to racism, safety at home, safety on public transport, youth boredom, lack of employment opportunities and drug and alcohol abuse.

<u>1999 Interviews with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities (CALD)</u>

In 1999 in-depth interviews were conducted by Council with 90 households from eight different non-English speaking communities in South Sydney. These included people from the following communities / backgrounds: Arabic, Bangla, Cantonese, Greek, Italian, Korean, Mandarin and Russian. The majority of respondents, 59%, felt unsafe in the area aside from the Greek and Cantonese communities. Community safety issues identified included perceived threat of theft, bag snatching, assault, alcohol and drugs and crime associated with young people.

<u>1999 Unequal in Life – The Distribution of Social Disadvantage in Victoria and New South Wales</u>

In 1999 Professor Tony Vinson undertook a study on behalf of Jesuit Social Services. The study compared 622 postcode areas in Victoria and 578 postcode areas in New South Wales against ten indicators of social disadvantage. The study found that Waterloo ranked number 22 of the New South Wales postcode areas in terms of disadvantage, one of only two urban postcodes in the top twenty. Redfern which has significant pockets of gentrification ranked 189.[32]

<u>1999 Department of Health Community Consultation on Drug and Alcohol Services</u>

A study conducted by the Department of Health revealed that there is widespread concern in the community about drug dealing and injecting in and around The Block, that children were exposed to this and that stressful and dangerous conditions on The Block inhibited the delivery of health and social services.

<u>2000 Community Satisfaction Survey</u>

In early 2000 Council conducted a comprehensive survey of 600 local residents to determine their satisfaction with the various services it provides, main concerns and views on Council's role in social issues. Two of the three most commonly identified issues related to crime and alcohol and drug problems.

<u>2000 Consultations with Gay, Lesbian and Transgender People</u>

In early 2000 Council conducted a variety of research projects to determine the priority social issues being experienced by the gay, lesbian and transgender communities in South Sydney. The research consisted of consultations with Council's Gay and Lesbian Liaison Officer, major community organisations and a literature review of existing reports and publications. Community safety issues identified included fear of discrimination and harassment, homophobic related violence and domestic violence in same sex relationships.

<u>2000 Consultations with Older Persons</u>

Council conducted a series of consultations to determine the priority social issues for older people in the local government area. The research involved consultations with Council staff in the Aged and Disability Services Section and an investigation of existing research and publications. The research revealed that older people are fearful of going out at night, are afraid of being victims of assault and are fearful of using public transport.

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[32] Vinson T. (1999) Unequal in Life – the Distribution of Social Disadvantage in Victoria and New South Wales, The Ignatius Centre for Social Policy and Research, Jesuit Social Services

2000 Kidspeak – Needs analysis

In October 2000 a small needs analysis was conducted involving focus groups with local children and children's services providers. The research revealed that children were in need of more accessible recreational opportunities particularly for those aged between 8-10 years and there was a need for an outreach service to better link local agencies with family and children.

2002 Youth Consultation Report

In July 2002 South Sydney Youth Services conducted a consultation with 129 young people. The research revealed that local young people have significant concerns in relation to community safety. This consultation is referred to in more detail in the chapter Community Safety and Young People.

2001-2002 Community Social Plan – Pemulwuy Redevelopment Project, Redfern, Aboriginal Housing Company

Research conducted by the Aboriginal Housing Company in and around The Block revealed that housing in the area is inappropriate and inadequate, buildings are substandard, there are high rates of crime and vandalism, there are chronic health problems, unemployment, drug use and abuse and a high level of social disadvantage.

2002 Marking Time Project

Marking Time is a heritage markers / public art project that aims to celebrate the cultural heritage of the Waterloo community by marking several sites with interpretive art works. Consultations were held with over one hundred local residents and revealed that the community identified several locations which they felt were unsafe and which could be made more attractive with the
addition of more public art. The consultations also revealed that people were concerned about the lack of facilities in Waterloo while the issues of crime, safety, vandalism and graffiti were often mentioned.

2002 Pathways to Prevention Project

In July and August 2002 consultants employed by the Crime Prevention Division of the N.S.W. Attorney General's Department through funding provided by the Commonwealth Attorney General's Department commenced a project aimed at providing a greater range and more effective support to children aged 0 to 14 who may be at risk and their families. Consultations took place with 93 parents and children as well as two group discussions involving 25 people. The recommendations of this consultation are referred to in more detail in the chapter titled Early Intervention Approaches to Community Safety.

Conclusion

The crime profile indicates that in 2002 South Sydney ranks number one of all Local Government Areas in N.S.W for the offences of motor vehicle theft, steal from motor vehicle, steal from person and robbery. South Sydney has dropped from number one to three from 2001 to 2002 for break and enter (dwelling) with a 23% decrease in number of offences committed. The 2002 figures further indicate that South Sydney remains the only metropolitan Council to feature in the top twenty five Councils for assault.

It is not the role of the Redfern-Waterloo Community Safety Taskforce to duplicate the work of the Police by addressing the specific crimes described in the two suburbs in the Crime Profile. It is however acknowledged that a number of new and innovative strategies are currently underway between Redfern Police, the Redfern-Waterloo Partnership Project, South Sydney Council, State Rail, Energy Australia and the State Transit Authority in response to concerns raised by members of the community. These strategies are referred to in more detail in relevant chapters of the plan.

This plan has a focus on directing efforts toward empowering the institutions closer to the source of the identified problems, to play a more active part in influencing the conditions which might reduce criminal opportunities and behaviour.

The process of defining the problem, that is through the development of the Crime Profile, community consultation and a review of existing research has revealed that there are five major areas which form the key issues to be addressed in this plan namely:

- **Community Strengthening Activities** – including ways of improving community consultation and the connections or interactions people share with one another at the neighbourhood level

- **Early Intervention approaches to Community Safety** - such as issues concerning children and families

- **Community Safety and Young People** - specifically with regard to the 12-18 age group

- **Health Issues** – including drug and alcohol use and abuse and the prevention of community harm and

- **Planning and Environmental Issues** – looking at ways of planning for safer urban design including private dwellings and maximising the use of public spaces.

All of the chapters which follow in the plan are interconnected and the document should be read and applied as a whole. The planning process also acknowledges that existing activities are already being undertaken by a range of people and organisations which relate directly to community safety or more indirectly to the strength and diversity of the communities in Redfern and Waterloo. Where possible these important initiatives are acknowledged in the plan.

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* Review of Human Services

Action is underway to commence a review of all human services, both Government and non-Government which operate within or deliver programs to the Redfern and Waterloo area. The review recognises that the capacity to deliver additional resources to meet community needs are limited and that in order to meet the highest needs of the community it may be necessary to redirect existing resources. The findings of the review will be used to inform the reshaping of the existing service network. The strategies which follow within this document should be understood in the context of this review.