

Mount Isa Queensland Australia International Safe Communities Site Visit



Mount Isa is the administrative, commercial and industrial centre for the state of Queensland's vast north-west region with vast mineral deposits of lead, silver, copper and zinc. It has a population of 25,000 in the city and 35,000 in the district. Traditionally the economy has centred on the copper-silver-lead-zinc mine but, although the mine is still the largest single employer in the city, the percentage of the city's workforce employed in the mines has dropped from 60% in the 1970s to 22%.

Over the period 14th - 17th August 2008 Dr Carolyn Coggan and Tania Peters from Safe Communities Foundation New Zealand (in their capacity as Certifying Centre and Affiliate Safe Community Support Centre of the WHO Collaborating Centre on Community Safety on Community Safety Promotion) and Dawn Spinks, Director, Queensland Safe Communities Support Centre conducted a site visit in Mount Isa to assess whether the safe community programme in Mount Isa met the six criteria to become an International Safe Community. Mount Isa Safe Community (MISC) commenced in 2002 after the Mount Isa Centre for Rural and Remote Health produced an analysis of injury data collected at the Mount Isa Base Hospital. Since then MISC has linked with several organisations that have collectively worked towards gaining recognition as an International Safe Community.

As MISC project spokesperson Lynette Drew said *"It will be a proud moment for the city if we achieve this internationally renowned status. A Safe Community is one in which all sectors of the community work together to increase the overall safety of its members. We have been working to get Mount Isa recognised in this way since 2002 and it is a great credit to the ever expanding team of people who have set themselves the task of making Mount Isa safer. While much remains to be done, it is evident that something quite substantial has grown from small beginnings"*.

After a comprehensive site visit, and examination of the extensive support material provided by MISC, Dr Coggan and the site visit team found that Mount Isa had addressed each of the criteria required for designation as an International Safe Community in a comprehensive manner. Dr Coggan commented that *"Over the past six years, in response to the needs of the local community, groups in Mount Isa have demonstrated a dedication to evidence-based practice and the development of sustainable programmes to promote safety. Their continued presence will ultimately ensure that Mount Isa is a safer place to live, work, study, travel and play"*.

The designation ceremony at Mount Isa will be held in early 2009. Further information can be found by visiting the Safe Communities Foundation NZ web site <http://www.safecommunities.org.nz/sc/mtisa>



Puppets to the Rescue, Family & Domestic Violence Initiative.



Safe Home inspection, Queensland Fire Rescue Service



Mount Isa City Council



Child Safety Banner



Northwest Road Safety Group and their fantastic demonstration of materials



Lead Alliance outside MP Betty Kiernan Office



Substance Misuse Meeting