

Safe Communities Foundation New Zealand

Dr Carolyn Coggan, New Zealand

Mount Isa Queensland International Safe Community Application for Designation & Site Visit Report

September, 2008

Safe Communities Foundation New Zealand (SCFNZ)

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Certifying Centre of the WHO Safe Community Network;

Affiliate Safe Community Support Centre of the WHO Collaborating Centre on Community Safety Promotion; &
Accrediting Centre for Safe School Community International Accreditation Programme.

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Application & Site Visit Report

Name of Community: Mount Isa Queensland Australia

Date of Site visit: 14th -17th August, 2008

Reported: Dr Carolyn Coggan, Director,
Certifying Centre for International Safe Communities,
Auckland, New Zealand

Participating Experts for site visit and report:

- ⇒ Dr Carolyn Coggan - Director, Safe Communities Foundation NZ
- ⇒ Tania Peters - National Programme Manager, Safe Communities Foundation NZ
- ⇒ Dawn Spinks - Director, Queensland Safe Communities Support Centre

Working Programme:

Objectives of activity: Assessment of safe community in Mount Isa, based upon the criteria for designation as a member of the International Safe Community Network.

Friday 15th August 2008:

Seniors' Safety - Demonstration of 'Safe Shop'
Lead Alliance – Living with Lead Initiative
Family and Domestic Violence – Demonstration of 'Puppets to the Rescue'
Child Injury Prevention – Demonstration of 'Safe Home Inspection'
Substance Misuse – Meet and Greet
Road Safety – Meet and Greet, Baby Capsule Hire Scheme Demonstration
Mount Isa City Council – Overview of 'Family Recreation Park' concept plan

Sunday 17th August 2008:

Remote and Rural Health Conference

Lynette Drew:	Preventing injury in Mount Isa: the Mount Isa Safe Community initiative.
Bob Orchard:	Preventing childhood injury in Mount Isa
Gary Asmus:	WHO Cares about seniors' safety...and so does MISS
Wendy Cochrane & Gina Scott:	Puppets to the Rescue
Merelita Lido:	Mount Isa Substance Misuse Action Group
Teresa O'Connor:	The Rural and Remote Road Safety study: the final report

Overview:

Mount Isa is a city in North-West Queensland Australia. It came into existence because the area holds vast mineral deposits. Based on a combined production of lead, silver, copper and zinc, Mount Isa Mines is one of the most productive mines in world history. With a population climbing towards 25,000 in the city and 35,500 in the district, Mount Isa is the administrative, commercial and industrial centre for the state's vast north-western region. Traditionally the economy has centered 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%. Fifty-six percent of Mount Isa residents are couples with children and 84% of the population is under 50 years of age. Mount Isa also has a very transient population.

The Mount Isa Safe Community Application has provided evidence of the history of the Mount Isa Safe Community Initiative, the structures in place and the many initiatives occurring in Mount Isa. The aims of the Mount Isa Safe Community Initiative are commendable and provide a good framework. However, while the details of the initiatives were appropriate, the site visit team were surprised that there were areas not fully covered in the application, especially when they saw the extensive details provided in the support documents at the site visit. Firstly, little background information on Mount Isa was provided, a history of the effect of the large mine, changes in population, etc would have helped to place this application in context. Secondly, criteria three did not fully provide the reasoning for the initiatives selected as high risk areas, and thirdly the extensive data collection available to address criteria four were not comprehensively presented in the application. The site visit team considered that graphics would have greatly enhanced this section. However all these issues were adequately covered during the site visit and the site visit team was extremely impressed with the high level of data collection and evaluation that had occurred in Mount Isa to provide an evidence base for initiatives.

Members of the Mount Isa Safe Community initiative are very fortunate to have such comprehensive data and evaluation sources. The application reflects the involvement and support provided by the Mount Isa Centre for Rural and Remote Health as well as the North West Queensland Rural Division of General Practitioners, and the Queensland Injury Surveillance Unit by providing data and a dedicated bulletin. This type of support is often not available to communities working towards International Safe Communities status.

During the site visit the site visit team members were very impressed with the level of support in the community for the Mount Isa Safe Community Initiative and the standard of the programmes showcased. The site visit team liked the use of the signature "Safety is Everybody's Business". The remainder of this report provides details related to both the application and site visit on how the Mount Isa Community Initiative met each of the six criteria for designation as an International Safe Community.

Criteria 1: An infrastructure based on partnership and collaborations, governed by a cross-sectional group that is responsible for safety promotion in the region

The application clearly outlines on pages 3-7 the organisation, structure and roles of the Mount Isa Safe Community Advisory Team and the eight targeted Action Partners. The site visit team was pleased to see that these eight Targeted Action Partners were based on relevant data or community action. The site visit team was impressed to see the additional comprehensive details and letters of support provided as support materials at the site visit. The "Terms of Reference" and "Introduction to the Mount Isa Safe Community Project" provided a clear picture of the structure, aims, goals, and key principles of the project.

The first meeting of the Mount Isa Safe Community Advisory Team was held in October 2002. This was the result of community interest in a variety of injury related issues. The Mount Isa City Council agreed to support the International Safe Communities initiative and have a representative on the project advisory committee.

Members of the site visit team were pleased to see that the staff turnover issues prevalent in many rural and remote communities had been addressed by the Mount Isa Community Advisory Team by seeking the involvement of position description in external organisations such as 'director', 'nominated councilor', 'senior health promotion officer' etc. Staff changes can impact heavily on the stability of teams of this nature.

It was pleasing to see that more details of the Xstrata Community Partnership Program were included in the support material as this partnership to provide funding for the community project coordinator position is an important aspect of the project. The Business Plan presented to Xstrata and included in the support material clearly outlines 1) how all the criteria for accreditation will be met and 2) the progress to 27th March 2008. While the site visit team appreciates the difficulties associated with gaining appropriate staff it will be important to ensure that this position, which is currently vacant, is filled as soon as possible. It is to be hoped that the next project coordinator will continue to produce regular Mount Isa Safe Community News as the newsletters supplied in the support material are excellent. This information could also be put on the website.

The site visit team was very impressed with the 'Environmental Scan of Mount Isa Safe Community Action Team (MISCAT) Safe Community Action Partners' conducted by the then coordinator and supplied in the support material. The way that this was designed to document the support needs of the MISCAT to achieve and maintain sustainability and effective evaluation techniques provides important information for other communities seeking accreditation. The recommendations could be very helpful in this regard.

The site visit team was pleased to see the way that the International Safe Communities' framework was used to shape the aims of the Mount Isa Safe Community Advisory Team. It was pleasing to see the way that the Mount Isa Safe Community Advisory Team set out to achieve these aims. This was especially apparent at the time of the site visit.

The application and consequent site visit demonstrated the strategic and operational support provided by a wide range of government and non-government agencies.

The site visit team was impressed that the Mount Isa Safe Community Advisory Team meetings are held every two months and that strategies are in place regarding the agenda, minutes, media and decision making requirements.

Both in the application and at the site visit there was clear evidence of the efforts being made to ensure the ongoing sustainability of the Mount Isa Safe Community Advisory Initiative.



MOUNT ISA SAFE COMMUNITY

SAFETY IS EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS



Puppets to the Rescue, Family & Domestic Violence Initiative, with Mount Isa Community Members

Criteria 2: Long-term sustainable programmes covering both genders and all ages, environments and situations

The site visit team was impressed with the way that the Mount Isa Safe Community Initiative has developed a working group (Action Partner) approach to the injury prevention activities underway within the community. Members of the site visit team were especially impressed with the evidence-based approach for the setting of priorities.

Detailed information regarding both past and current activities has been provided in the application. The site visit team appreciated the way that colour coding has been used to indicate which programmes are ongoing or under consideration for re-implementation.

Programmes are presented under six Action Partners: Childhood Injury Prevention, Substance Misuse Action Group, Mount Isa Family Violence Combined Action Group, Physical Activity Regional Taskforce, Mount Isa Seniors Safety, North West Road Safety Working Group and miscellaneous initiatives not specifically linked to a particular Safe Community Initiative Action Partner. Each section begins with a comprehensive outline of the history of the group and the associated data collection and evaluation activities. Extensive tables are presented under the headings: programme name and developer; what it addresses; results; and partners. The team was very impressed with the details included in these tables and with the extensive supporting information provided at the site visit.

* indicates initiatives that are ongoing **indicates pilot projects or activities still in planning

Childhood Injury Prevention

Falls

- Train the Trader and Buy Wise seminars
- Unsafe baby furniture pick-up
- Survey of playground service providers

Burns and Scalds

- Hot water *BURNS* like fire
- Safe Home*
- Stop Drop and Roll*
- Fight Fire Fascination

Drowning and Immersions

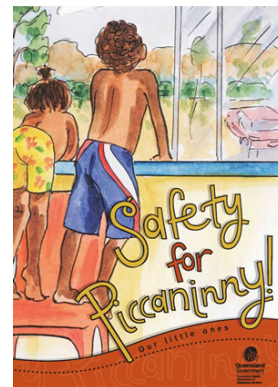
- Local pool fencing inspections and adoption of State pool fencing standards
- Drowning awareness raising

Poisoning

- Lolly or Tablet?
- Lock them up, store them high

Locally Identified Issues

- 'Primesafe' education program *
- Don't give half a gift-Helmets save lives *



Baby capsule hire scheme *
Child restraint Check events *

Substance Misuse Action Group

Voluntary code of practice and responsible retail practices for local retailers*
Staff development and training*
Boycott of bronzed soft drink bottles
Protocols for media reporting of volatile substance misuse*
Beer goggles for use at education events*
'Girlfriend Safe in the City' campaign
'Sober Bob' campaign

Mount Isa Family Violence Combined Action Group

Domestic violence resource guide to be used by all Queensland Police operators *
'No Grog Here' alcohol free homes
Seek funding for a project officer to provide early intervention support services for 0=5 year olds affected by family violence
Counselling and support for perpetrators of domestic/interpersonal violence *
'Puppets to the Rescue' early intervention education programme to break the silence on domestic violence and teach people alternative behaviours*
Stingers 'Domestic Violence it's not our Game' campaign *
'Don't forget me when you're talkin' DV' **
Fax Back *

Physical Activity Regional Taskforce

'10,000 Steps John Campbell Miles Circuit' *
Development of the Mount Isa Family Recreational Park
Workshops regarding safety equipment requirements for people participating in sport

Mount Isa Seniors Safety

Installation and use of a manual hydraulic hoist at Mount Isa City Council swimming pool to allow people with mobility issues to access this facility *
Stakeholder consultation and priority setting workshop
Stay on your feet forum

North West Road Safety Working Group

The role of this group is primarily strategic rather than action focused. They meet on a six monthly basis. From this group an operational group, namely the Traffic Advisory Committee has recently been re-established. Each attendee of the North West Road Safety Working Group reports back to the Working Group on the main activities that their business or organisation has been working on with regards to road safety including:

Don't Give Half a Gift Campaign



Northwest Road Safety Group and their fantastic demonstration of materials

Road safety adverts on radio

Beer Goggles

Targeting speed and seat belts; acquisition of a new wagon to reach more isolated communities; working with Technical and Further Education College programme for young drivers

Improving road conditions, widening roads and installing or upgrading rest stops

Continuing to monitor traffic movement, local black spots, providing maintenance of local roads, signage maintenance and upgrades

Outcomes of study into the causes of road crashes in rural and remote Queensland

Targeting Driver Reviver sites with brochures and pamphlets on issues of fatigue, sharing the road program for caravans and heavy vehicles.

The site visit team were very impressed with the comprehensive display provided by the NWRSWG. The appropriate use of data combined with an evidence-based approach was impressive. Displays, resources, presentations and the passion and drive of the action partners related to child safety, senior safety, substance abuse, family violence and the development of the family Recreation Park were also very impressive. As Lynette Drew, project spokesperson for Mount Isa Safe Community remarked "*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*".

Miscellaneous Initiatives

In addition to activities listed there are several other projects underway within the Mount Isa community that are not linked to a particular Safe Community Action Partner. These are listed below. Of those included in this table the stakeholder group established to oversee the original screening program 'Get Bled for Lead Campaign' has evolved into the 'Living with Lead Alliance' and has verbally expressed a desire to be linked with the Mount Isa Safe Community Initiative, however formal ties between the two programmes are still being established (refer also to comments under Criteria 3). Another new Action Partner 'Safety in Custody' also has arisen from a community need.

Working Smoke Alarms Save Lives' campaign

Get Bled for Lead Program

Ladies Auxiliary garden **

Overall, site visit team members considered that the application demonstrated a range of initiatives covering both genders, all ages, environments and situations. They also considered that in most cases a community based development approach had been undertaken. The site visit team was impressed with the level of evaluation associated with the initiatives and considered that the community was fortunate to have an extensive data collection operating in their area. However concern was expressed that no mention was made of suicide prevention initiatives and wondered if this had been overlooked. This was discussed further at the site visit.

Criteria 3: Programmes that target high-risk groups and environments

Three programmes have been listed in the application under this criteria.

Mount Isa Shop Safe Safety for Piccaninny – Our little ones Family Healing Project

The site visit team was disappointed that, unlike criteria two where extensive information was provided, there is little discussion of the reasons for the inclusion of these programmes or what the Mount Isa Safe Communities Advisory Team considered were their high risk groups. Considerable data and evaluations are presented throughout the application and these could have been used here.

The site visit review team however noted that information included in criteria four does throw light on the inclusion of the three programmes. Data from a 'Be Kind to Your Mind' survey identified Seniors Safety in Public Places, Safety in the Community at Night, and Prevention of Alcohol Related Harm as areas requiring attention. This information could have been referenced in this section.

Because little data were presented on hospitalisations and fatalities due to injuries the site visit team was not sure if all high risk areas had been addressed. This issue was adequately addressed during the site visit.

During the site visit, members of the review team had an opportunity to meet with Betty Kieran (Member for Mount Isa) and two representatives from the Lead Alliance. Given that Mount Isa has an 11% increase in lead levels over the national Australian standards, this is obviously a significant issue for Mount Isa. While this issue was outside those usually considered within the injury/crime parameters for International Safe Community designation the site visit team were pleased that the Lead Alliance had: adopted an evidence-based approach by conducting research into the issue; established an alliance with support from relevant key stakeholders; implemented sustainable programmes; and were committed to evaluating their efforts.



Lead Alliance outside MP Betty Kiernan Office

The details and examples provided in the supplementary information for this criteria were very helpful. Site visit members were especially impressed with the 'Safety for Piccaninny – Our little ones' booklet which was produced in close partnership with the aboriginal community of Mount Isa. It demonstrates a collaborative effort involving government and non-government agencies as well as active participation from a range of local Aboriginal tribal groups.

Criteria 4: Documentation of the frequency and causes of injuries

The Mount Isa Safe Community Initiative is very fortunate to be part of an extensive Emergency Department Injury Surveillance system operated by the Queensland Injury Surveillance Unit (QISU). In addition to the QISU data collection system, a detailed survey of injury presentations between 1990 and 2001 was undertaken by a Masters of Applied Epidemiology student in 2001 and the results made available to the community. This has provided valuable evidence for the development of various injury prevention initiatives. In addition to these two broad data collection systems, several projects within the Mount Isa community have provided valuable data, especially the Child Injury Prevention Project. These have been clearly outlined within criteria two.

The Mount Isa Safe Community Initiative Active Partners have also sourced data from a wide range of other data sources. This application is to be commended for its extensive use of data to develop its initiatives. Surprisingly though, the application does not include injury data, graphs and trends to demonstrate the evidence bases they have used.

Site visit team members were disappointed that minimal injury and surveillance data were included in the application. However it was evident at the site visit that documentation of the frequency and cause of injuries is occurring and that data are effectively used to inform project development and ongoing monitoring. At the site visit, team members were supportive of a proposed repeat ED survey to be conducted in 2009. MISCAT is also encouraged to conduct injury surveillance updates as, from 2009, this will be a requirement of the World Health Organization Collaborating Centre on Community Safety.



Child Safety Banner



Mount Isa Base Hospital

Criteria 5: Evaluation measures to assess the programmes, processes and the effects of change

Throughout criteria two, examples have been given of evaluation measures used to inform the development of initiatives. The site visit team was impressed with the level of evaluation associated with the initiatives and considered that the community was fortunate to have an extensive data collection operating in their area. The evaluation of the Child Injury Prevention Project (ChIPP) available at the site visit was especially impressive and a very valuable resource. For example, evaluation findings reported significant reductions in child injury presentations as a result of this intervention.

The site visit team appreciate that it is difficult for community groups to undertake outcome evaluations and were therefore impressed with the level of evaluation data made available at the site visit. It is important for benchmark and outcome evaluations to occur to ensure that a continuous improvement process is in place.

Over the past six years, in response to the needs of the local community, groups in the areas of road safety, family violence, substance misuse and child injuries have demonstrated a dedication to evidence-based practice, and the development of sustainable programmes to promote safety.

Members of the team were pleased to read of the efforts to build and maintain this capacity through the Research Capacity Building Initiative (RCBI). The engagement of the current Director of Research and Development at the Mount Isa Centre for Rural and Remote Health as RCBI coordinator as well as additional evaluation capacity building support through various Government departments and the Building Safer Communities team is to be commended.



Mount Isa City Council



Substance Misuse Meeting

Criteria 6: Ongoing participation in national and International safe communities networks

The site visit team appreciates the difficulties associated with the staff turnover in a remote Australian community. This was discussed at the site visit. However they were pleased to see and hear of the planned actions to ensure ongoing participation in national and international networks.

On a national level, representatives have attended site visits in Townsville and Thuringowa as well as the designation ceremony at Mackay. They also participate in Queensland Safe Communities Committee teleconferences and have presented at QSCSC conferences.

The team was pleased to hear that encouragement and support had been provided to other communities that have contacted the Mount Isa Safe Community Initiative for advice.

Before the site visit, site visit team members visited the Mount Isa Safe Community dedicated Safe Community website and were pleased to see that it was up and running. This is an excellent start and it is to be hoped that resources are available to keep it up to date. Representatives from the Mount Isa Safe Community Initiative need to consider writing brief reports and case studies of their activities to get these out to a wider audience.

Because the international profile of Mount Isa is currently low, Mount Isa Safe Community could also consider submitting regular news items to the International Safe Communities monthly newsletter. www.phs.ki.se/csp/who_newsletters_en.htm The email address to submit news is koustuv.dalal@ki.se (SCMN in subject box). Once knowledge of the Mount Isa Safe Community website is widespread this may not be so important.

After hearing the excellent presentations related to Mount Isa community safety initiatives, Dr Coggan encouraged representatives from Mount Isa to submit an abstract and attend the 17th International Safe Communities Conference to be held in Christchurch this year. A new requirement from the International Safe Community Network is that representatives from designated communities are expected to participate in at least one International Safe Community initiative outside their country within five years of achieving the criteria for designation.



Points for consideration

The review team considered that the following points could further assist Mount Isa in its continuous-improvement approach to community safety.

- That to ensure sustainability, all efforts are made to appoint a Safe Community project coordinator in the near future.
- That the need for suicide prevention and mental health activities is investigated.
- That during 2009, serious consideration is given to providing further analysis of injury surveillance data and that this analysis is included in annual reports.
- That Mount Isa Community Advisory Team give consideration to incorporating relevant workplace safety initiatives under the Mount Isa Safe Community umbrella.
- That overtime, the Mount Isa Safe Community Initiative considers the benefits and challenges of establishing formal ties with the 'Living With Lead Alliance'. Currently this initiative is not part of the Mount Isa Safe Community Initiative.
- That the Mount Isa Community Advisory Team ensures that their web site is kept up to date and includes case studies of activities occurring in Mount Isa particularly those related to criteria two and three.
- That action is taken to ensure that Mount Isa City Council has a link on its web site to its International Safe Community status.

Conclusion

Following the review of the Mount Isa Safe Community application and the results of the official site visit, the Safe Communities Foundation New Zealand, in its capacity as a Certifying Centre of the WHO Collaborating Centre on Community Safety Promotion, found that the Mount Isa Safe Community achieved the criteria to be designated as an International Safe Community by the WHO Collaborating Centre in Karolinska Institute, Stockholm, Sweden. The designation ceremony is likely to take place in early 2009 in Mount Isa and will be officiated by a representative from the Safe Communities Foundation New Zealand.