SCHOOL BASED CONSTABLES - HIGHLIGHT OR HEADACHE

by

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SCHOOL BASED CONSTABLES - HIGHLIGHT OR HEADACHE

ABSTRACT

School Based Policing, a unique Northern Territory Program was established in 1985. It has had a profound and lasting impact upon youth in Territory Schools. Its focus has been toward proactive policing. A major outcome has been the development of a positive policing profile. The School Based Constable Program has been a real winner. Perceptions held of it within other arms of the Police Department are surprisingly negative.

Recommendations this paper offers may well strengthen SBC Program qualities and help overcome the challenges it confronts from within the Police Force.

The study takes account of issues embodied in this statement of intent.

To provide topical background and a 'frame of reference' within which the project is developed.

To reveal what the School Based Constable Program has achieved, and why it is under pressure.

To consider the history of the SBC Program in the NT, with especial reference to the Darwin Area.

To study the impact and contribution of the scheme's founders, both Police Department and Education Department personnel.
To trace the development of the program in both philosophical and outcome areas including analysis of its influence on both presenters (police) and clients (students).

To consider the key educational elements of the program, including its influence on the Darwin School Community.

To consider the influence of the Territory SBC Program on the development of interstate models.

To assess the value placed on the School Based Constable Program by police peers and superordinates.

To outline future challenges including relationships, career opportunities, perceptual enhancement, marketing and promotions - an evolution toward both enhanced recognition and fiscal self-sufficiency.

To offer recommendations aimed toward program enhancement.
Summary of Recommendations

Recommendation One:
That internal inservice be conducted, involving both peers and superordinate members of the force, to demonstrate the positives that evolve from proactive policing.

Recommendation Two:
That the School Based Constable division develop audio visual material to support inservice and information giving programs. This may include charts, posters and printed material similar to that supporting other aspects of the Community Policing Program (Neighbourhood Watch and so on).

Recommendation Three:
That promotion of the SBC program and its outcomes be featured on television by way of occasional Channel 8 'information spots'. (1)

Recommendation Four:
That the Police Department support the School Based Policing program as one offering positive outreach to the community, (hopefully) to alter perceptions held toward police in general terms because of SBC ambassadorship.
Recommendation Five:

That any concerns held by police about their possible redundancy as an outcome of the SBC Program success, be brought into the open, discussed and put to rest.

Recommendation Six:

That all members of the SBC Team, in the interests of effectiveness and efficiency, be encouraged to undertake teacher education studies leading to dual policing and teaching qualifications.

Recommendation Seven:

That the School Based Police section consider producing a text that traces the historical development of the SBC program in the Northern Territory. This text ought to apportion 'credit where credit is due' and to include the significant contribution the NT program has made to developments elsewhere within Australia and overseas. To tell the program's 'good news' stories would be a wise investment.

Recommendation Eight:

That consideration be given to salary enhancement that allows a special skills allowance to be added to base Constable and Senior Constable salary.

That this allowance be commensurate to length of years of School Based Policing service.

That the allowance be weighted to include recognition of additional qualifications including the passing of Sergeant's examinations, acquisition of teaching subjects leading to the Bachelor of Education award and so on.
That the allowance be incremental, taking account of both experience and qualifications.

That the incremental level of incentive payments stop when the salary level attaching to the position of Senior Constable (for Constables) and Sergeant (for Senior Constables) is reached.

Recommendation Nine:

That the School Based Constable program be allowed to continue in its present operational form. Changes in form or format ought to be negotiated between parties with stake and interest in outcomes.

Recommendation Ten:

That matters raised to the Police Department on the issue of School Based Constables and elements of Community Based Policing be accepted as issues focussed inquiries and not attack on personality.

That responses be direct rather than covert, encouraging rather than discouraging issue focussed inquiries.

That all parties with stake and interest in the outcomes of the School Based Constable program be encouraged to approach each other openly and honestly, frankly and trustfully.

That a management focus that is ‘toward consensus and collaboration’ be encouraged because of the artificiality imposed by traditional hierarchical management structure.
Recommendation Eleven:

That the School Based Constable Program be permitted to seek corporate or business sponsorship. This would result in parties with interest in programs working in partnership to achieve common aims.

Recommendation Twelve:

That both major and minor sponsors be sought to meet costs associated with production of pamphlets, stickers, periodic placement of advertisements, organisation of special events (i.e. competitions with prizes) and so on.

Recommendation Thirteen:

That radio air time and commercial television slots be arranged with the aid of sponsorship dollars. (Refer recommendation three)

Recommendation Fourteen:

That links be established with appropriate agencies for the production and marketing of memorabilia promoting awareness of the School Based Constable Program.

Items manufactured and sold could include:

- Care Bears
- Rulers and pencils
- Biros
- Stickers and refrigerator magnets
- T Shirts, caps and other items of clothing
- Mugs
- Pennants
- Lapel pins
- School bags
- Badges, logo patches and stickers
Signs that could be placed at schools or houses suggesting that students or children or families therein are ‘School Based Police’ conscious and supportive.

Manufacture could be local and under licence. It could involve schools, including Henbury Avenue Special School, Dripstone High School and others. It might involve sheltered workshops, provide enterprise for clients of the Don Dale Centre or guests of other correctional institutions.

Design concepts for products could be the subject of student competition.

Sale and distribution could include:
- Commercial outlets
- Sales at markets, on school fete days
- At shopping centre stalls
- At Education and Police Week exhibitions
- At the Darwin, Fred Pass and country show circuits
- Sales by Student Representative Councils at schools
- Products sold over Police Station counters, by Multiple Sclerosis, Red Cross and other community agencies.

**Recommendation Fifteen:**

That the Police Department not reduce the SBC budget if promotional and marketing initiatives are successful.

**Recommendation Sixteen:**

That any reduction in Police Department budgets, in the light of SBC program marketing successes occur only by negotiation and only if dollars earned from promotion and product marketing are sustained and demonstrate percentage growth.
That any budget pruning be restricted to areas of material and resource supply, not impinging on salary and staffing entitlements.

That personnel increase be maintained in both Darwin and Territory terms so the program grows for the sake of benefiting our youth on an increasingly Territory wide basis.
Chapter One

Setting and Scenario

The school based policing program is uniquely Northern Territorian. The program had its genesis in the early 1980's when then Chief Minister Paul Everingham approached the Police Department and asked that consideration be given to developing a 'school based' program or some alternative that would generate a proactive concept of policing in the minds of young people and the thinking of the community at large.

A proposition was developed by Constable Mitchell in consultation with his colleagues including Superintendent Kevin Mailey and Senior Constable Lance Goodger. Mitchell's presentation represented collective opinion on possible direction was presented to senior management for consideration. Consultation by Constable Mitchell with his peers ensured that propositions raised in his paper represented the thoughts, opinions and beliefs of others within the service on benefits and challenges a school based policing program would highlight. Mitchell accepted advice offered by school educators and administrators including Casuarina Principal Kerry Moir and Registrar Noreen Dodt.

1.1 Purpose of this study

This study will explore the Northern Territory School Based Policing program as it applies in Darwin schools. School based police work from High Schools and Secondary Colleges. Each has a number of feeder Primary Schools in his or her area of operation. The concept has grown to this model, circa 1994 from small beginnings in a singular context at (the then) Casuarina High School. Growth and development, with accompanying challenges and accomplishments over time will be examined: The past will be revisited, present 'modis operandi' considered a some future developments and directions anticipated.
Futuristic focus will involve a certain amount of imagination, conjecture and prognostication. The aim is for this study to be a policy influencing document.

My connection with the School Based Policing program began when I was appointed Principal of Karama School in 1987. Karama School was about to be included in the program with our school police constable based at the brand new O'Loughlin Catholic College. From that time I became convinced that this support program was one of the most important in schools, providing the opportunity for mutuality - two way respect - to establish. Goodwill and faith in outcomes were prerequisite elements. We went forward in confidence and program outcomes blossomed.

This project has a practical and functional purpose: It is developed in constructive terms, although some of the consequences of its application have not had positive outcomes. The School Based Policing Program is practical in outlook, being a service aiming to bring police people and policing in positive and constructive terms to the school domain and school student environment. It shows the program to be realistic and down to earth. The program has the interests and needs of students at heart: At the same time it is pragmatic in identifying and meeting perceived and stated student and school needs.

Critical to its success are police officers of calibre, practised in the art of people relations with humanitarian and developmental intent. Human relations is a skill rare in policing in general terms because policing philosophies are toward the para-militaristic of finding the culprit and punishing the offence, be it misdemeanour or crime. Identifying the strong points of school policing programs and building on them for the sake of students, schools, community and police is a study focus.

An underpinning strategy is to show the School Policing Program to be an issue of important significance. As an exercise in cooperation between educators and police, the program (to date) has been of great benefit to students.
It has enabled police in schools to chart a course toward better relations between them and their client group, from the roots up. The program has, as a medium and long term aim, the developing of processes and procedures whereby relations between police and the community are enhanced.

The short term paradox is one where sons and daughters are coming to hold police in higher regard than their mothers and fathers because of the school context in which they relate. In schools, police are advisers, educators in Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE), enunciators of 'Stranger Danger Protective Behaviour Strategies', Neighbourhood Watch' and 'School Watch' programs, friends, counsellors and confidants. This context is foreign to the adult community because of the relative newness of the school based policing role.

In the medium term, parents may be educated to accept the positives of policing conveyed to them through messages from their offspring. This will present a perceptual dilemma but the influence of children is strong and hopefully, will prevail. To children there is evidence aplenty to demonstrate the positives of school based policing.

The long term outlook is encouraging: Today's children are tomorrow's parents and hopefully will translate positive childhood perceptions into adulthood, conveying to their own children the positive policing principles they discovered. Should this come to pass and if School Based Policing transcends time, then policing influence for the next generation will be reinforced with adult suspicions about police substantially diminished.

This presupposes that present and future program difficulties will resolve, for the School Based Policing Program is under fairly immediate threat. A superior program is confronted with the possibility of being reduced to a level of mediocrity because of administrative and procedural change.
This will be dealt with in a later section of the paper.

1.2 Study Characteristics

Methodology applied to this study will be simple but appropriate and effective. In essence School Based Policing is a program that confronts what is being done, why it is being done, how it is being undertaken and what it is likely to achieve. Accomplishments both within the Territory and elsewhere (due to the influence of the program both interstate and overseas) will be considered.

The study will be reflective. It will embody the perceptions of police and some principals who have been involved with the program in Darwin. It will reflect both the highlights and frustrations of the program from the viewpoint of present and past police personnel. The pros and cons of the program will be considered on the basis of personal perceptions, impressions gained from some principal colleagues, and insights offered by members of the Police Department.

Analysis will be subjective. The study is deliberately limited to reflecting the perceptions of police personnel and some principals involved with the program in historical and contemporary terms. Extrapolations that can be deducted from information will be considered and recommendations for future development made on the basis of past and present experience. Face-to-face contact and anecdotal evidence (I am well known to many police and principals involved with the program) will be considered when recommendations are offered.

The NT has a small but highly refined and developed educational system. There are less than 50 schools in Darwin. School based constables operate from Darwin High School, Nightcliff High School, Casuarina Secondary College, Marrara Christian School, St Johns College, O'Loughlin Catholic College, Dripstone High School and Sanderson High School.
In the Palmerston Region, School Based Constables are located at Driver High School and Taminmin High School (Humpty Doo). The composite nature of the program coupled with limited geography (the program serves a population of only 78,000 in the area described) justifies an intimate approach to fact-finding because everyone knows everyone else so well.

Data and information will be largely anecdotal. There is a lack of literature on the subject of school based police and what does exist is largely recorded in popular media including magazines and newspaper reports. Little text material exists, but what has been documented will be canvassed in an early chapter of this report.

A positive aspect of this study is that of cooperation pledged by members of the Police Department attached to the school based arm of the service. I perceive two motives for cooperation, the major one being a genuine desire on the part of School Based Police to see the program succeed in fulfilling its aims and objectives. The other is a desire to see the status quo preserved and enhanced. There is a concern (discussed later) that a dismantling and reassembling process is in the offing. Should this happen the worst case scenario could be the dilution of the identity of School Based Police. Constables could be absorbed into the service and reduced to a 'service strand' offered to schools should the need arise and if personnel were available.

In optimal terms, School Based Police would welcome the creation of a specialist service arm complete with advancement and promotional opportunities that do not presently exist. These alternatives are discussed elsewhere in the paper.

1.3 Project Specifics and Limitations

The lack of research and literature on the subject of School Based Policing might be seen as a limitation: In scholastic and purist academic terms it is.
However, the embryonic nature of this supplementary school program provides scope for imaginative and creative thinking about future directions based upon practical experience. This knowledge is essentially first hand, which gives credence to the practical nature of this study. Its assumptive base will be positive in terms of moving from analysis to outcomes, recommendations and summary.

The Northern Territory program has been enthusiastically grasped and mirrored elsewhere. It is a genuine ‘first base’ attempt to alter policing profiles, making the work of police more positivistic in terms of client awareness and appreciation.

The lukewarm manner in which School Based Police perceive their efforts to be received by peers and superordinates - they believe they are most appreciated elsewhere and least appreciated at home - is a matter needing serious consideration: Is there situational misunderstanding based on ignorance, or are there more serious intra-force jealousies manifest in a desire to ‘mute’ this arm of the police service.

This study addresses issues not personalities. Strengths and positive consequences can and will be attributed to program authors and developers. Weaknesses and challenges are perceptual and will be tackled as issues, to be addressed in the remedial and developmental context of policy change, emphasis or re-direction. It is not intended that the project be in any way offensive: It grapples with those elements of School Based Policing needing attention, with a view to rectifying them for the good of both delivering agents and the client group.

School Based Policing Programs are for students, young and old. Any structural alteration that hones service delivery is fine, but any modification that would detract from the quality of service offered students is anathema.
In an educational context, schools are for children and it is a worry when children are overlooked in the plethora of developmental activity that goes on. That is when 'education for whom' becomes paramount. The concern is especially relevant in the age of devolution because localised empowerment and the concept of 'independent government self-managed schools' is to the fore. The need for effective educational and learning outcomes needs to be retained as a major thrust can become lost in the machinations of organisation attendant upon council 'management'. As a former Director for Northern Territory Education Jim Eedle once said, "... schools are for children!" (2)

In the same way School Based Policing programs are for children. Any structural alteration that hones service delivery is fine, but any modification that would detract from the quality of service offered students is anathema.

1.4 Study Development

This section introduces the topic and my specific purpose in examining a program with potential to both enrich and frustrate. From humble beginnings its portent has grown to become one of significance. Yet in other respects it is a program at a watershed in its history, placed at developmental crossroads.

The parameters of the study are limited to include only those police persons connected, either historically or in contemporary terms with the Darwin program. Similarly, information will be sort only from a selection of school principals involved with the program in Darwin from its inception to present date.

My intentions have been discussed with many school based police and a number of principals. All endorse the study as being timely and necessary.
Chapter two examines the program background fully and in detail. From humble beginnings a cooperative and dedicated educational development is seen to emerge. Both the philosophical and physical base of the program (why it was necessary and where it was conducted) will be detailed.

The centrality of the territory role, and program genesis within the Northern Territory will be substantiated by reference to the literature, or lack thereof. This program commenced in the Territory in the mid 1980's. It is now 9 years old yet has been documented only in limited terms. It is time that a detail on this important educational initiative, a vital adjunct to programs in most urban schools was documented. The program has set a wonderful example in positive policing to other Australian states and territories and has made inroads into New Zealand. The work of founders including Senior Constable Scotty Mitchell has been recognised by American accolade - yet similar recognition within the Northern Territory has not been forthcoming. If there is appreciation it is certainly latent and rarely expressed.

The contributions of Sergeant Bob Bradford, Sergeant John Walters, Superintendent Smith and Assistant Commissioner Wilson will be considered in terms of their contribution and where their influence fits within the context of School Based Police program development.

In establishment and consolidatory terms there have been founders, developers, proactivists and reactivists. This equation will be considered in broad rather than specific terms. It will be shown that what the program founders desired was the development of a concept that police were friends, confidants, counsellors and proactive contributors to child and student development.

School based policing will be proposed as a rare world model, with background and foundation within the Territory being expanded. An elaboration of the literature will be offered in brief terms.
The roles of founders, now Sergeant Max Hill, Senior Constable Scotty Mitchell and key Darwin Principal Mrs Kerry Moir will be amplified.

The development of the school based constable concept from 'blue light' and 'after hours' context on 'one school only' to the point of it being an integral part of primary and secondary education will be elaborated. The chapter will follow the program from 1985 toward 1994.

Chapter three develops an educationally based case study on school based policing in urban schools in Darwin. In general and specific terms it outlines the extent of programs and support offered within the current context of the School Based Constable program. It delineates key programs from each other, discussing 'DARE', 'Stranger Danger Protective Behaviours Strategies', 'Safety House', 'Neighbourhood Watch' and 'School Watch' programs. Linkage including points of program commonality and difference are discussed. Program profiles and intended outcomes are included.

Problems relating to program boundaries and the seeming difficulty of showing how these programs correlate are raised. In essence there is a great deal of commonality between all elements: Differentiation, if too marked can be dysfunctional because students may not perceive the elements common between programs. There are many common characteristics between all the elements of school policing programs; awareness will help students to value the program in an overall rather than sectional and discrete context.

The chapter will focus on the positive curricular and extracurricular aspects of the school policing program. It will conclude on the high points that have permeated into the program circa 1994 from the beginnings of 1985. School based policing aimed to reverse the historical notion that police by nature of the occupation had to be reactive and responsive rather than proactive and oriented to prevent the outcomes of dysfunctional behaviour by demonstrating positive alternatives.
The puristic - possibly altruistic - notion of police and teacher developed programs conjuncting for benefit and enhancement of student awareness through learning opportunity is an aim of the program in its operational form. To a significant extent, this ambition has been practised by police working in schools and ambitions realised.

Chapter four canvasses the paradoxical elements of the study. There appears to be a juxtaposition: On the one hand school based police, principals, staff and students are delighted by program outreach and outcome; on the other police peers and superordinates disapprove. Those in the field - the practitioners - are caught between a rock and a hard place.

This chapter examines the thoughts, beliefs and feelings of field officers based in schools. Included is input from Senior Constable Peter Styles, Constables Jenny Rowe, Dave Skelton, Geoff Iddon and others. Sergeant Steve McGeorge who was involved in the program and has now left offers valuable insights into both highlights and frustrations as does (ex) Senior Constable Ian King who has resigned from NT policing in order to shift to Queensland.

King and McGeorge both qualified as Sergeants several years ago: McGeorge had to leave school based policing before his status could be realised because there are no promotional opportunities for police in this arm of service. King hoped in vain for promotion within the NT and went to Queensland hoping to remain in school based policing while attaining the status of sergeant. Both men and many other police working in schools have fully or partially qualified as teachers through educational study.

There appears to be a philosophical factor in the reason for program self-analysis from within the Police Department.
It may be that a superordinate held notion is that policing by nature has to be reactive and corrective rather than positivistic and 'shaping'. Policing by nature of its paramilitary heritage accepts that police have to respond and punish rather than leading in a developmental and shaping sense. This proposition has been put by experts in behavioural study whose viewpoints are outlined in this chapter.

There is a perception that the school based policing program as we know it should be dismantled. The 'why' factor is examined to reveal where there is justification in this proposition or whether shorter term expediencies are being considered. Certainly other arms of policing have lost staff in the past several years: Is there an express or implied proposal for make-up, catch-up or equalisation.

Whatever subtleties may exist, certainly the notion of 'denial' of the value and worth of the program by those within the Police Department is seen by those without. A heavy handed and unsympathetic response to school based policing programs by others within the Police Department is perceived to be a reality.

Chapter three demonstrates that the Northern Territory has a quality program lauded both interstate and overseas. Chapter four elaborates what is tantamount to a Police Department denial of this reality. Therein lies the juxtaposition.

Chapter five transcends the local scene by focussing upon the reaction to school based policing evidenced in other states and territories and in New Zealand. It discusses the way in which educational and policing systems elsewhere have accepted and acted on the Northern Territory model. The visits of school based police and administrators to other states is outlined. Responses to visits and outcomes are based in part on anecdotal evidence, in part on feedback from those who have visited and in part by way of brief feedback from South Australian, Western Australia, New South Wales, Queensland and New Zealand.
Recognition from elsewhere compared with credence given local practitioners in schools and from within the NT Police Department is re-visited to show that accolades offered have been from beyond the boundaries of the Northern Territory. There has been a paucity of recognition offered those at the heart of the program from within the Police Department and the Northern Territory. The question of 'why' this is the case is addressed.

The chapter highlights both program challenge and celebration. It wraps the previous chapters in a macro-influential sense while restating the negatives - those deleterious local perceptions.

Chapter six discusses future challenges the program confronts outlining ways whereby a quality program could be made better, without altering the basic thrust, precept and approach. Included are points discussed with the Police Minister in 1993, which could be addressed through program refinements, but definitely not dismantling followed by major restructuring.

The chapter suggests processes which, if applied, could enhance the satisfactions of School Based Police. Self sufficiency through sponsorship, funding and marketing is discussed. The benefits of increased publicity and public relations is raised. Career enhancement is an issue addressed - at the moment it is a source of major frustration.

The issues of personnel and resourcing, if addressed, would have an enhancing effect on the program as a whole.

Chapter seven is summative. Within its pages are detailed recommendations suggesting how a good program can be enhanced in terms of both recognition and outcome.
Recommendations are suggestive but based on study findings. Their application could well enhance a foundational and functional program, widespread in terms of influence but unique in having its genesis in the Northern Territory - our Territory.

Chapter Eight summarises the study.

Footnotes

(1) From an interview with Senior Constable Scotty Mitchell on June 24 1993 - drawn from interview transcript.

(2) Taken from an address delivered to school principals at the NT Principal's Conference held in Katherine in March 1978. In the same address Dr Eedle likened the new and foundational NT Educational System to a 'rising sun emblazoned in the sky'. His hope was that the new found vision, the local dimension would brighten as the system matured toward a zenith, and not decline toward any horizon. I have often wondered how the clarity of that early vision is standing up to the test of time.
"Out of little things, big things grow", sums the development of a significant program born from the concerns of police who believed in the proactive nature of policing. This departure from the 'norm', held that police work did not have to focus entirely on reaction to misdemeanour and crime, with the punishments that follow breach of the law. A focus could be education, instilling understandings of responsibility in youth so they chose not to breach social mores.

This had been touched on in a Juvenile Task Force Report prepared in 1983 and 1984. The task force report recognised that young people needed the provision of support services to help direct them into areas of legitimate and fulfilling recreation and direction. A concern about aimless and directionless behaviour was addressed, with an urge that this be countered by policy development.

Mitchell's response to the task force report was to consider the issues raised, including discussing them with the Principal of Casuarina High School, Mrs Kerry Moir. An after hours and weekend program was established, with Constable Mitchell and a handful of volunteers organising and conducting "Blue Light Disco's" for young people in the Casuarina High gymnasium. The assembly area was also used for after hours activities, with facilities offered at no cost to the program; in return Mitchell and his helpers provided organised and supervised activities with both purpose and direction.

Programs offered were constructive and carefully planned. To that extent Casuarina High School became an after hours community youth centre.
Programs were run on the same lines as those of Police and Citizens Youth Clubs (PCYC). The decision to include Constable Mitchell in the program was taken after consultation with an enlightened and forward thinking police senior, Inspector Kevin Maley. (4)

After school and after hours activities were only partially successful because many students elected not to attend. Some cited transportation difficulties: There was more appeal to attend the Red Cross Centre “The Fire Escape” in Casuarina Plaza, only 1.5 kilometres from Casuarina High School because Casuarina High had no pool tables. Another centre the “Tardus” at Malak was also available. (5)

While programs may not have been universally popular, the school nevertheless held appeal for a significant number of young people with more nefarious intent.

Casuarina High was broken into regularly, often as late (or early) as 2:00 am and 3:00 am in the morning. In 1982 alone, thirty-three (33) break-ins occurred. This was a concern to Mrs Moir, Constable Mitchell and Casuarina High Registrar Mrs Noreen Dodt. The damage bill attributed to break-ins, $45,000 in 1982 only marginally reduced to $40,000 in 1983. Big dollars were being spent on costly repairs: In today's terms, the annual damages bill was running close to $100,000.

The issue was one that a visionary principal and an enlightened policeman wanted to address through proactive rather than reactive strategies. Hence the approach and the approval for Constable Mitchell to develop the Casuarina After Hours Program. Although not universally appealing - given the “Fire Escape” and “Tardus” counter-attractions - it proved successful in curtailing vandalism and property loss. It also began the process of building more caring and positive attitudes within the psyche of young people about police. (6)
2.1 Beyond Discos and toward School Based Police

Constable Scott Mitchell had long pondered School Based Policing as a concept likely to succeed in reaching young people, helping to influence them in developmental terms. Correcting aberrant and delinquent actions might punish perpetrators but it was not likely to alter their perceptions. Building attitudes of positivism, self responsibility, care about others and hence self-respect, were processes he saw as both important and neglected.

The Hon Paul Everingham NT Chief Minister asked Commissioner Peter McAulay to place a priority on proactive and educationally focussed policing. This was done, with commissioner McAulay drawing on the interest and background of Superintendent Smith, Assistant Commissioner Wilson and others. (Refer Chapter One, Page 8 Para 3)

Everingham was impressed by the Commissioner’s response. After due negotiation, it was determined that Casuarina High School would be the best place at which to establish a ‘Police in Schools’ program. This effectively upgraded the after hours and weekend activities with which Constable Mitchell had been involved.

Police proactivity and involvement with young people quickly produced positive reaction among younger students. Kerry Moir said that “...little kids (Year 8 and 9 students) loved it ...!” (the program) (7) "The older students were suspicious at first but came to see Constable Mitchell filling a broader and more relevant role (than that of a traditional police person) with the passing of time." Positives began to snowball with perceptions and attitudes toward police and policing refocussing toward the benefits that police and student interaction could achieve. (8)

Constable Mitchell’s appointment produced an immediate decline in the number of break-ins to the school.
The figure fell from thirty plus forced entries in the early 1980's to only two in the year Constable Mitchell was appointed, to a negligible level in the years following. There was some mystique about his position including a belief that he was 'always there' (at the school).

Mitchell established the program in a way that set the highest possible standards for others to follow. He was, according to Moir, a quality resource person. His teaching style was personal and inimitable, enabling him to reach students. Preparation was meticulous and the outcomes of his influence more and more positive. He was the force behind the program, shaping it positively and directionally, ultimately selling its conceptual pluses to senior students and members of the Casuarina School Council.

Importantly, Mitchell was able to turn those concerns and latent suspicions held by senior students and some staff. Those who perceived school based policing to be irrelevant or threatening came to accept Constable Mitchell as a member of staff, someone who worked with students in a positive and purposeful manner. From 1986 when he became in effect a member of the Police Department with full time attachment to Casuarina High School, worry about a policeman on the school campus ceased to be an issue.

2.2 Widening and Deepening the Program Scope

School Based Policing broadened to include other high schools in Darwin. Mitchell stayed at Casuarina: Constable Lance Goodger introduced the concept to Nightcliff High with Constable Don Taylor establishing the program at Sanderson High School. Dripstone High School also came on line, sharing the resource with other high schools before a constable was appointed. A member of the Dripstone High School Council had been an overseas parent.
He enthusiastically supported the program but interpreted it as a scheme whereby police would 'keep guard' in school yards, protecting students from untoward happenings. He did not see school based police as being friends of students, but rather law enforcers on an extended beat.

From the outset, founders interpreted school policing as being preventative rather than punitive, because proactivity is a more positive approach than reaction to misdemeanour. *Education toward enhanced attitudes - toward people and property* rather than extension of the 'catch and lock up' mentality was the aim toward which program developers aspired. Ideally, police would be seen as friends, confidants and counsellors rather than as punishers, enforcers and 'in hindsight conscience prickers'.

One private school (Marrara) introduced the program after it was felt that divine direction was offered for this to be done. Others (St Johns) had an image problem with the program - as did some Government schools during the foundational stages of school based policing.

From late 1987 and early 1988, the program made an outreach into primary schools, this being done by feeder arrangement. Constables attached to high schools - government and private - 'adopted' a number of primary schools in their areas. This extension in essence had a 'snowballing' effect because it rapidly extended the scope and concept of the program. Instead of a 1:1 (police to high school) ratio, the equation extended so that each police officer assumed responsibility for three to four nearby primary schools. This necessitated significant program modification and refinement because of added workloads.

Extension was in large part the result of challenging and changing the perceptions held by primary principals toward the program.
Reluctance to accept that school policing could extend to include primary education suggested inadequate understanding of strategies and outcomes. Several, including Moil Principal Michael Myers, believed that school based police could fill an essential educational role in schools by leading students toward wise decision making in terms of attitudes to drugs, alcohol, peer pressure and so on.

Both Kerry Moir and Roy Harvey, Sadadeen Secondary College Principal in Alice Springs represented school policing to their Primary School principal colleagues in positive ambassadorial terms. Both helped the program make significant inroads into Primary Schools in Darwin and Alice Springs through promoting its values.

One major hurdle was to overcome the impression that School Based Constables would infer to the community at large that schools had behavioural and discipline problems necessitating police presence. Others believed that to have a police person in the school might impugn their management and leadership ability. Overcoming these negatives was both a major hurdle and a significant triumph. The imposition of a 'police state' in schools was a fallacy: The notion that police in schools might also 'dob' proved to be unfounded, the role filled being one developing trust and confidence with students. Some wanted school based police to dress in civilian clothing but this was resisted because of the need to demonstrate the dual nature of policing. Police wanted to project a positive image, demonstrating that those in uniform were caring and helpful people.

A positive outcome was the good press and media attention the program received. Acceptance grew to a desire, indeed an expressed wish from schools, to be included. That the program succeeded in public relations terms is evidence by the fact that every high and primary school in urban areas is serviced by School Based Police in the 'main school, feeder school' context.

The School Based Police scheme has extended to include rural communities in many areas of the Territory.
This paper is limited in its prime focus to the Darwin Program.

Within the Police Department there was a perception that School Based Policing was a 'soft' option: However, that attitude was to become more pronounced in later years. At the beginning, many police did not know about or understand the school based program.

2.3 School Based Police and their Educational Role

Police and Citizens Youth Clubs (PCYC's) and Junior Ranger activities had been a part of the Police Department educative and social development program for young people before the School Based Policing was added to the agenda. In 1986 Senior Constable Max Hill was granted a Churchill Fellowship to study various community oriented policing programs offered in the United States. He spent time with the Los Angeles Police Department and gained insights into a Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) program conducted in schools by Los Angeles police. (9)

DARE was accepted as an educational area that could be included in school programs. It was seen as being complimentary to Junior Rangers. Junior Police Ranger (JPR) programs were designed to develop leadership in chosen students from within schools, the program being conducted externally and for students selected in Year 7 for inclusion in Year 8 and beyond. Limitations meant that the program was restricted to no more than six students per primary school. The desire of many children who wanted to become involved with the Junior Police Rangers resulted in disappointment because of exclusion.

DARE went beyond JPR by including all students from Transition onward in programs developed to their level of comprehension and understanding.
It comprised a series of sequential lessons that dovetailed with the Health and Physical Education curriculum in schools. It lead to both awareness and the development in students of skills needed to resist negative peer pressure by saying 'no' to drugs. It encouraged behavioural, social and developmental positives in students deportment and through their demeanour.

Hill, Mitchell and Sergeant Bob Bradford (10) were all involved in the initial development of this and parallelling school based programs. Indeed, Constable Mitchell chose to put his career on hold in order to work with this developmental aspect of policing and others since have done the same. (11) These men all wanted to work with people: It's encouraging that many others, both policemen and policewomen have followed the path blazed by the founding trio.

“Stranger Danger” (Protective Behaviour Strategies) is another program that was developed for presentation in schools. “Safety House”, “Neighbourhood Watch” and “School Watch” strands have all been promoted to students by school based police. These and other school related policing initiatives are discussed later. From the roots of the program has grown a vital, dynamic and interactive partnership between the Departments of Education and Police, between communities and police, between students and school based constables. This has been for the good of all with stake and interest in this cooperative venture - due to celebrate its first decade of operation in 1995.

2.4 School Based Police - A Rare World Model

Research reveals the School Based Policing Program was an Australian precedent set by the Northern Territory Police Department. Police interaction with schools happened elsewhere, but with less direct quality involvement.
The Northern Territory Police Department lead the way in employing constables who were deployed (located) in schools developing programs in conjunction with teaching staff and working in close liaison with principals: This was an Australian first. (12)

I could find no Australian texts developed on the subject, experts preferring to raise the importance of public relations as an element of police outreach. Most detail is anecdotal because there has been a dearth of documentation on the NT School Based Policing Program.

My data is based on interview and conversations held on a regular basis over the past several years. Personal awareness and understanding has come from formal interview and informal conversations held with a wide array of people from the NT Chief Minister and Minister of Police the Hon Marshall Perron, to school students.

In order to encourage spontaneous and unqualified responses, I deliberately decided to limit the scope of this study to the status of minor project. This is in part due to the fact that I have a stake and interest in this program and am anxious that it grows and flourishes in dynamic terms. I am not detached and dispassionate as a researcher (or spectator), but wholly and fully involved as a school principal who is very pro school policing and anxious that diminishment and qualification of a key program is avoided.

2.5 School Based Police - What the Literature Reveals

"... (T)he student seeking information about the police service would discover ... there is not a great deal available ..." (Varwell 1978:Foreword)
This has not changed, with paucity of literature relating to the subject even more scarce. Nevertheless there are some worthwhile points to be gleaned from the literature available.

Varwell (1978:38) states that security, belonging and self-esteem are qualities deriving from the home "...stemming from the love and care of parents." For some this background is not available; for them school environments can exacerbate resulting disaffection. Varwell (op cit: 98-100) cites Mark a retiring Metropolitan Police Commissioner in London who described society as being "perplexed".

While parents tend to pass on their own attitudes, standards and beliefs there are departures that confuse young people. Parents may not have a "... coherent and consistent body of standards in which to initiate their children and there is ... a chance that some ... will emerge into adolescence knowing no boundaries of ... acceptable behaviour." Added to that, some parents take the position they should not force their beliefs upon their children determining that children will set their own values as they grow up. Varwell suggests that parental behaviour influences children notwithstanding its 'informal' expression and that in the child's eyes parental neutrality "... is more likely to be seen as indifference." (Varwell, Op cit: 100)

If growing children are not made aware of boundaries defining acceptable behaviour they will unconsciously seek guidance from elsewhere. (Varwell, Op cit) Peer group and television can become dominant influencers. While the context of Varwell's comment was based on England nearly twenty years ago, his points are equally pertinent in the modern Australian environment. School based police can and do fill a void in the developmental processes, particularly for children who are confused by societal patterns, trends and direction.

Few texts were located during my literature search.
Those discovered were dated, largely focussed on overseas models, and
depictive of police and community relations as being about 'damage control' and
'patch up' rather than proactive and developmental policing (Coffey et. al., 1971;
Varwell, 1978). Similarly Australian writers recognising the importance of police
public relations, discussed the issue primarily in reactive terms (Chappell and

That judgment may be a little unfair in that opinions offered by writers were both
exhortive and visionary at the time. However, the benefit of hindsight demonstrates
that little of the vision has translated into policing practice.

2.5.1 Policing according to Chappell

Chappell and Wilson (1969:105,106) stated that "... police are the only agency
created to prevent ... crime. ... (C)hurch (and) school ... may attempt to cure it when
it occurs, but unlike police departments they do not have as their specific duty the
prevention of crime."

The concept of school based policing as practised in the Northern Territory turns
this proposition from one of prevention based on reaction (consequences follow
actions) to a position of education predicting the fallacies of inappropriate
behaviour (pre-awareness diminishing aberrant and dysfunctional behavioural
experimentation). It is easy to be wise in hindsight, but to educate in a way that
removes temptation by advising wisdom in behaviour and action is a superior
educational methodology.

Chappell and Wilson draw on observations offered by Orlando Wilson criminologist
and former Chicago Police leader in asserting that police are in a position to "... notice persons, situations and conditions that lead to crime."
If the police do not take action to stop people turning to crime and do not attempt to alter conditions conducive to crime, frequently no other agency will take on the job.” (Chappell and Wilson, Op cit) Police are held to be in a “... strategic position to obtain ... cooperation...” (Op cit): Police departments are “... in the best position to lead and coordinate the efforts of other agencies.” (Op cit)

"Police should attempt to establish good relations with children...because today's children will be tomorrow's citizens. The co-operation of citizens with the police and their degree of respect for members of the force will be primarily conditioned by the kind of relationship which police establish with them during childhood and adolescence. ... When ... police deal directly and well with ... children, the likelihood of the teenager's becoming an adult offender is considerably reduced.” (Chappell and Wilson 1969: 106 emphasis mine)

2.5.2 Revisiting Queensland Two Decades Later

In 1963 following an overseas visit to England by then Queensland Commissioner of Police Bischof, the Queensland Police Department established a Juvenile Aid Bureau based on models operating in England at that time. The bureau which dealt with children up to the age of 16, was 'therapeutic', attempting to provide alternatives to young people other than further misbehaviour. Liaison with schools and welfare agencies was a part of this early proactive policing. The program included home visits and regular liaison with both young people and those involved in their development - parents, teachers and so on. (Chappell and Wilson 1969: 107,108)

In the six years that followed, over 2,000 cases were handled with a 90% success rate: Only 1:10 committed further offences during the ensuing twelve months.
While Chappell and Wilson enthused about the program, they identified and summarised objections to police participation in youth programs:

Lack of professional qualification with reliance on "... staff experience and intuition rather than ... specialised educational qualifications." (Op cit : 109, 110)

Subjecting children and young people to the experience of having to enter and be in a policing environment. The 'dangers of contamination' were stressed, but it was conceded that careful planning could overcome the problem of exposure to police in a negative setting.

"...Police entering into a counselling relationship with children and teenagers (could) ... usurp ... the functions of other ... agencies ... and ... deal with cases which they are not qualified to handle." (Op cit : 110)

Chappell and Walters asserted however that the creation of similar bureaus elsewhere throughout Australia would be a positive initiative. They prognosticated that without correction antagonism between police and young people would "... increase rather than diminish in future years." (Op cit : 111, 112)

Milte and Weber (1977:1) caution that the primary task-set of police can be and often is misunderstood. Their role should be one that identifies them with community in a way that makes them facilitators in the area of community conflict management. They caution that a worst-case policing scenario could be tantamount to an "... occupation-army attitude." (Op cit : 47)
Milte and Webber summarised evidence available (based on the work of Chappell and Wilson which studied perceptual attitudes held of police in 1967) as showing respect for police to be lowest among young people (16-25 years) and the more highly educated. (Op cit: 46-48). Their work is 18 years old. If that suggestion was to hold true, it paints a bleak picture for 1994 because higher education is almost normative and the percentage of young people to general population is higher now than then.

The youth of the 1970's are today's middle aged adults who may well have passed on their negative youthful attitudes about police to their own children. While suppositional, this scenario suggests that positive and proactive policing aimed at the development of positive attitudes among youth, confronts a real challenge.

A further survey of attitudes on police and public relations conducted by Chappell and Wilson in 1970 - a mere three years later - showed that the "... proportion of those sampled who said they had "great respect" for the police had dropped dramatically, while those expressing "little respect" had risen sharply." (Op cit: 48)

While the study related to Victoria, an assumption that public responses were similar elsewhere could be made. At that stage police were the visible enforcers of government policy which transcended state boundaries, which included the Vietnam War. (For that matter they still are!)

Chappell, Walters, Milte and Weber attest to police "... becoming increasingly isolated from their communities. ... Increased urbanisation, rapidly changing social conditions, greater demands for police service ... serve to reduce the contacts police have with the law abiding elements of society." (Milte and Weber 1977: 53,54 emphasis mine)
The perception held of police is that they react: They respond to misdemeanour and crime, aiming to correct from a punitive position. They are punishers not preventers. Proactivity aligns with prevention, a position foreign to the historically based traditions of policing.

Proactivity is so recent that it does not have a base in literature. The works cited go some way toward enunciating the advantages of positive policing, but they argue public relations from a negative base. The assumption is that policing is reactionary, the advice being how to 'react better' in a nicer, more kindly way so police are seen as enforcers in a more positive light.

Mitchell and others who proposed school based police involvement were coming at policing from the opposite end of the continuum to that advocated by Robert Peel of England in 1829. Peel's force was established to respond to inappropriate behaviour, Mitchell's concept being to forestall it through education. "Prevention is better than cure" sits comfortably as an adage in some circumstances, but as Mitchell and other School Based Police have discovered, preventative policing is still a foreign concept misunderstood within and outside the NT Police Department.

2.6 The Northern Territory Model - Anticipating Need

Students have developmental needs, often not anticipated or understood either at home or school. They are confronted by the challenges of the 1990's 'life world' with its complexities and demands. Szuty poses the question: "Ultimately who is responsible for students whose ... behaviour causes problems ... teachers... principal ... parents ... society in general?" (1987:4) School based police, not considered by Szuty add an extra dimension to this equation in the Northern Territory situation.
Peacock stresses that those involved with education need to be extraordinarily aware of the challenges confronting young people who are recipients of formal education programs. Structures to support those involved with teaching can lead to enhanced outcomes. The task he says should not be left entirely to teachers. "It is everyone's responsibility to help bring ... 'good order' about in our schools." (Szuty, 1987:19)

Cornelius maintains that managing conflict 'the stuff of life' is enhanced by the knowledge and use of interactive skills, which can positively or negatively affect outcomes in relations between principals, teachers, parents and children. (Cornelius, 1987:1) "To introduce ... conflict resolving culture into ... school touches the lives of all members of the school community. A comprehensive program makes profound changes (to) the levels of student stress ..." (Op cit) Carroll deplores the tendency of youth to kick against the traces and offend social mores. He suggests that "...there is now an onus on schools to make ... curricula and programs more attractive and relevant to young people." (Carroll, 1987:15) This, hopefully will work toward demonstrating both the meaning and relevance of education.

At best teachers are challenged, at worst they feel powerless when confronted with the realities of modern education. Balson stated that teachers and teacher organisations are concerned at the "... growing number of defiant, uncooperative and apathetic students ..." in schools. (Balson, 1987:1) Balson suggests there is a bankruptcy in interpersonal skills among students in many schools with teacher's feeling powerless to influence the behaviour of young people without the influence of external controls. (Op cit)

This is a sobering commentary. However, in the Northern Territory situation, the involvement within schools of school based police adds an extra personnel resource dimension that goes some way toward meeting the challenges raised by Szuty, Peacock, Cornelius and Balson.
2.7 From Humble Beginnings

From a program beginning nine years ago, School Based Police are now involved in all Darwin Secondary Schools and their feeder primary schools, both government and private. Initially the focus was on secondary schools, but with DARE came an awareness of the need for school based police to become involved in primary schools with younger students. The program has grown to the extent that over 80% of primary children across the Territory and at all grade levels have access to DARE and related programs. (Mitchell, 1993:6)

The support offered by those within the upper echelons of the Police Department has been critical to establishing school based policing as a viable option. To a significant extent those involved with the program have been encouraged to determine trends and recommend directions. This lead to the development of a program that, in terms of policing elsewhere, was very up-front. A key factor was the definition of police as people serving and working within the community (13)

The 1985 task force established under the chairpersonship of Brian Richardson to study juvenile crime in cause, effect and prevention terms identified the need for police to be school based.

The committee espoused prevention as a better option than cure and suggested this was bound up in developmental responsibilities for youth that focussed on the family, education and youth recreation. (Richardson, 1985:33) Programs could be targeted to meet needs from several directions including meeting the needs of young people within the school system. (Op cit: 34) In terms of police officers in schools the report made the following comment:
"The involvement of police (with) young people in schools, could have a positive effect on the attitudes, interests and behaviour of young people. ... the Task Force endorses the possible extension of the Police Liaison Officer Scheme into ... schools." (Op cit : 39 **bolding mine** (14)

The committee found there were voids in the upbringing of children and identified the family as the source of many problems. "Parental attitudes ... lack of parental care control or supervision, lack of discipline in the home, inappropriate parental models ... were all identified." (Richardson, Op cit : 19) The support of police based in schools was suggested as one countering strategy that could work to enhance stability for young people.

That suggestion was already in place and working at Casuarina High School and elsewhere within Darwin schools. As elaborated it was a growth and outreach program, which was to prove developmentally positive and educationally sound.
(1) Material in this section is drawn from an interview held with Senior Constable Scotty Mitchell on June 24 1993. Mitchell offered a full, free and frank account of School Based Policing development in both historical and perceptual terms.

(2) The report titled "Task Force on Juvenile Crime" was prepared by a Committee of fourteen (14) people chaired by Dr Brian Richardson for the Department of Community Development. Its key findings included recommendations on young people in the school situation and how service could best be provided. Suggestions on police in schools were included. Established in December 1984, the Committee presented its report to the Minister for Community Development the Hon Barry Coulter on May 31, 1985.

(3) Casuarina High School at that time was a comprehensive high, offering programs to students from Year 8 to Year 12. Its transformation to a Senior Secondary College specialising in Year 11, 12 and adult education courses came later.

(4) Inspector Maley went on to head the Community and School Based Policing program 'from above'. Instrumental in the establishment of the Neighbourhood Watch program, he is now the Officer - In - Charge of Katherine, the third largest police base in the Northern Territory.

(5) From an interview with Mrs Moir on July 14 1993. Mrs Moir, now an Aldersperson with the Darwin City Council is also the Director of Human Resource (Professional) Development with the NT Department of Education.
(6) This deduction was drawn from my interview with Senior Constable Mitchell. An edited transcript of interview with Senior Constable Mitchell is available if necessary.

(7) During our interview on July 14 1993. An edited transcript of interview with Mrs Moir is available if necessary.

(8) From interview with Mrs Moir on July 14 1993.

(9) Hill is now a Sergeant with the NT Police Department filling a major role in police prosecution. On his return from the United States he prepared a substantial report on his findings explaining how the program worked and the benefits it accorded both providers and recipients. I spoke with Sergeant Hill while Principal of Nhulunbuy Primary School (1986) soon after his return. He furnished me with a full copy of his report, including copies of materials that had been developed in the USA for classroom and student use.

A great deal of this material was used when the Northern Territory DARE program was being mapped for use in our schools.

I was convinced from initial and follow up conversations with Sergeant Hill, that he was disappointed in the treatment his report received. There was brief publicity about the study tour, and his report when it was presented. However, it was not accepted and used in a ‘full on’ sense, only gradually being synthesised and adapted into local programs.

(10) Sergeant Bradford continues as the officer in charge of the School Based Policing Program.
(11) The School Based Policing Program does not, by its nature and relationship with the Police Department, allow for a continuing career structure within its operational strand. Police cannot advance beyond the level of Senior Constable while remaining in the program. It is necessary for them to move out in order to move up.

As shown later, the Department and Police Minister are adamant that a career structure is not warranted. A report on the School Based Constable Scheme prepared by Michael Christie and John Walter (1991) suggests that a career structure within the school based policing program might not be wise.

(12) Based on a literature search undertaken at the NT University (Casuarina Campus) library, and conversation with members of the NT school based and community policing arms.

(13) From interview with Senior Constable Scott Mitchell on June 24 1993.

(14) The program was already in place and operational at Casuarina High School (now Casuarina Secondary College). The report suggested that "... although this program is yet to be evaluated there are positive reports of its operation." (Richardson et. al, 1085: p 36) It was also recognised that the program would have to be adapted to meet the needs of specific school communities - that 'carte blanche' would not be good enough because circumstances, priorities and needs might well vary from school to school.
CHAPTER THREE

A MULTI-FUNCTIONAL, COMMON PURPOSE PROGRAM

From humble beginnings, the School Based Policing program has developed to fill a variety of educating functions. From one policeman based in one school, the program has expanded to include coverage of all government and private secondary and primary schools in the Darwin area. Similar developments have occurred elsewhere around the Territory. Programs are located in the Alice Springs, Tennant Creek, Katherine, and Nhulunbuy regions. Jabiru and Groote Eylandt are covered sub-regionally. Aboriginal communities are progressively being included on a rotational visiting basis.

3.1 Timely and Necessary Programs

Program diversification has introduced DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) to students from Transition Primary to Secondary Level education (refer Section 2.3).

The structure of 'DARE' enables it to meet identified student questions and educational needs. It supplies information about consequences and predictable outcomes of behaviours extending from experimentation to possible addiction. In building on a year-by-year basis, it is not repetitious but 'knowledge accumulative'.

A feature of 'DARE' is program graduation, structured to meet the celebratory needs of students. Culmination for upper primary grades includes the awarding of certificates, musical and dramatic re-enactments of program focus, and a class or group party to which parents are invited.
Senior members of the Police Department together with School Principals and Regional Education Superintendents are often asked to attend and reinforce the importance of programs to graduating students.

‘Stranger Danger’ (awareness of strangers and misplacing trust in people who are not known) and ‘Safety House’ (developing confidence in students feeling threatened to approach householders who display safety house signs on their premises) programs are logical adjuncts to ‘DARE’. Both support the safety and general welfare needs of students. This is particularly important in an era of increasing environmental insecurity for children. These programs build confidence in young people, imparting both coping strategies and an ability to differentiate between ‘safe’ and ‘threatening’ situations.

While ‘Neighbourhood Watch’ is essentially an adult program, awareness of what is going on within the immediate residential vicinity can become part of the family ethic. Children as well as older family members can respond to suspicious circumstances (strangers loitering with apparent intent) by phoning the police and reporting the matter.

‘School Watch’ is a relatively new program currently being trialled in Darwin. It focuses on Sanderson High School and extends to Karama Primary, Manunda Terrace Primary, Wulagi Primary, Malak Primary and Leanyer Primary Schools. School Watch is coordinated by Student Representative Councils at each school. Regular meetings with students of Sanderson High School (the hub school) are held. Students are exhorted to keep a watchful eye on schools after hours, at weekends and during holiday periods. Parents and nearby residents are similarly encouraged. Anything untoward can be reported to the police in the same way as Neighbourhood Watch notifications. People are encouraged to report rather than intervening because this is the safer of the two options.

All programs have a common denominator: They are designed to involve members of the community in protecting person and property. A corollary is ‘self help’.
Rather than depending totally upon others (police and authorities) for protection, the community at large is encouraged to accept some responsibility for the protection of its members and the preservation of their property. Self help is a skill these programs collectively engender in communities - school, suburb and the city at large.

For some people, there is difficulty in demonstrating the benefits and limitations of programs in singular context. This is because there is some overlap. The presentation of programs as separate packages may be confusing: To show them as 'parts or segments of a whole' may help. This would require greater public awareness through communications and media promotion. The common elements of specific programs would then become more obvious to students, parents and the community at large. There is a danger that if programs are shown as discrete units without shared connections being highlighted then overall effectiveness will be reduced. If that is the case, separate agenda items may become like loose cannons with limited effectiveness because people believe there is 'too much' with which to cope. (1)

### 3.2 Program Positives

School Based Police are leaders in changing the focus and perception of students toward police in general terms. Chapter two demonstrated from the literature that the preponderance of attitudes that have developed in perceptual terms, over time, are essentially negative. School based police have been and continue to be catalysts for change in youth attitudes toward police. Chapter four will spell this out in more specific terms. (2)

"School based programs ... fall into two broad categories. ... (l)n school programs ... are the sole efforts of the school, seeking to address the problem of juvenile delinquency through adjustment to the internal structures and processes, ... in the areas of organisation, curriculum and pedagogy. The programs in the second category require and are conducted in partnership with outside agencies ... family, community and the police. (Omaji, 1993 :403 emphasis mine)"
Association with off campus organisations including the Police Department has enhanced the capacity of schools to deal with the widening range of socially related issues that have been imposed on the school curriculum. Police have expertise, the school the environment where these skills can be offered in a positive, familiar and non threatening atmosphere.

"(P)reventive programs ... carry significant implications for the juvenile justice system in Australia ... factors which make the position of schools so strategic suggest that success in curbing students ... problems would drastically minimise the workload of the police .. to the extent that this ... relates to juvenile offending." (Omaji, Op cit : 408)

3.3 First Impressions of Police Held by Youth Are Changing

Police are often the student's first encounter with conceptual understanding of the law. Based on parental experience, in all likelihood sensitive, first impressions are critical. (Moretz, 1980 : 220) Moretz studied reactions toward police of 126 males and 111 females from 14 American High Schools situated in "... a growing, affluent suburb in one of our country's major cities." (Moretz, Op cit : 221 - 222) The research findings were enlightening:

"... both sexes agreed that the prominent attribute of policemen is that they were ... difficult to understand. ...From this particular sample , it would seem that young persons hold some very surprising views regarding the police. Contrary to the "pig" image bestowed upon police by ... young people of the sixties, the students ... saw them as a valuable agency in society. Contrary to those images of the police as powerless, young people in this study viewed potency as one of their prominent characteristics. ... relatively positive views of the police were held, except that they were poorly understood." (Moretz, Op cit : 223 emphasis mine)

Tendencies toward more positive first impression held of police offer a foot in the doorway that once was non existent. Perceptual change offers the police a chance to build on this enlightened view.
School-police liaisons (and) programs have evolved, along with a variety of other initiatives (including) Blue Light Discos, camps (and so on). (They have arisen) from the need to target youth and provide them with information about ... positive experiences involving police. ... These school based initiatives are being ... reported in ... force journals indicating that Australian forces are looking to ... programs to improve youth-police interactions. ... Students negative attitudes are challenged by providing information about the police ... and by providing positive, reinforcing contacts with police in a non-threatening situation.” (‘Police in Schools’, Draft Paper marked ‘For Information Only’, with no author or date of production offered.)

Griffiths (1983 : 331) reports that in Canada police officers visit schools “...on a regular basis to make class presentations ... At the K-7 level, programs involve talks ... on such topics as bike safety, strangers, vandalism and the emergency use of telephones.” In the case of older students “... officers often discuss the rights and responsibilities of youth as well as high interest issues such as drug laws and drinking. In addition, youth may participate in sports activities with officers or accompany officers on patrol.” (Griffiths, Op cit)

According to Griffiths, the focus (aims and objectives) of reciprocal programs are five-fold. Importantly, they have a two-way focus (students and community of police, police of students and community.)

1. Shaping perceived juvenile attitudes toward police;
2. Developing positive feelings toward police in order to minimise offence against the law because of a growing respect for officers and tasks they undertake;
3. Shaping of school based interactive programs that develop enhanced perceptions based on understanding and generating respect for police people.
4. Developing police appreciation for young people so that generalised ‘hard line and historically held beliefs’ are dissipated and replaced by genuine care, empathy and understanding;
5. Enhancing police understanding of school based relationship initiatives thus engendering contact between the two institutions (Education and Police Departments) which will build long term positive cooperative ties between the two. (Griffiths Op cit : 335 - 337 emphasis mine)
Changes in values placed upon police are timely and can be built upon. Derlega et al (1979: 221) reported that “Despite the overall positive reaction about ... police, striking differences in attitudes exist ... according to age.” In National Crime Survey data compiled in the United States “… police performance was rated good by only 1 in 5 among the 16 - 19 year old group. ... Eighteen per cent of the 16 to 19 year old group rated police performance as poor ...” (Derlega, et al Op cit)

While Griffiths and Derlega respectively reported upon Canadian and American situations, parallels can be drawn to Australia. Chapter two demonstrated that concerns were held in historical terms about the wisdom or otherwise of placing trust and confidence in police.

3.4 The N.T.’s Positive Approach to School Based Policing

Torney (1971: 137) advised that in socialising terms “... children must come to recognise laws, perceive their functions (and) develop relevant attitudes toward those who enforce them (guiding) their own behaviour to bring it into line with morality and legality.”

This challenge has been greatly assisted in the Northern Territory as an outcome (and ongoing process) of the School Policing equation. School Based Police for some time after the program inception, were peripheral to school programs and adjunct to school staff. Programs have developed to become both central and integrative as an element of Health Education and Social Awareness courses: School based police are accepted and valued as part of the staff corporate of schools to which they are attached. They are trusted colleagues of staff and valued friends to students, both young and old.

Findings emanating from a study of school based police (there referred to as School Liaison Officers [3] ) in Richmond, Canada highlight personal attributes that have helped make that program a success.
“Friendliness, approachability and ... willingness ... help SLO's earn the confidence and respect of an increasing number of students. Because the SLO's are fully-fledged police officers, not merely pseudo-teachers, kids see that they are able to deal with their problems personally.” (Grant, 1992: 10)

Student response to the Richmond program, offered in both elementary and senior schools was positive. "About 85% of students surveyed indicated that they liked their School Liaison Officer personally. ... Their only complaint was that they wanted the SLO to spend even more time at their school. Students stated that they felt safer and more cared for by the community." (Grant, Op cit)

My observations of School Based Policing programs in the Northern Territory and specifically in Darwin suggest these outcomes as paralleling the responses students in our schools offer about the program. This has not always been the case. When police were first appointed to schools, many had a lot to learn about teaching and relating to children. Interpersonal skills have developed over time, with many School Based Police taking an active interest in their personal development in these terms. Some ask for feedback, others have undertaken additional training and all have been supported, assisted and offered development by the Community Relations Unit attached as a specialist cell to the NT Police Department.

Students value School Based Police in general and specific terms. The program is one that is enriching the lives of pupils of all ages.
Footnotes

(1) A review of DARE is presently being conducted with the manual being re-written and re-vamped. This is being done by Senior Constable Scott Mitchell and others within the Community Policing Unit (CPU). They are working in conjunction with a number of practising teachers who have been given part release to work on the program. One of the revisionary benefits will be the upgrading of DARE to recognise the interconnections that exist with other community based policing initiatives.

The review is expected to be completed by the end of 1994. Police going into training programs for future roles in schools are being made aware of changes in DARE emphasis and thrust.

(2) It is common to witness children in primary schools going to 'their' police person, of their own volition to talk about issues. Interaction ranges from ordinary conversation to the seeking of advice. Children quite willingly discuss their worries and problems with police, often more spontaneously than they do with teachers. Communications skills and the capacity to relate to students are interpersonal positives that have developed in police attached to both school and wider community programs.

(3) In addition to School Based Police, School Liaison Officers are employed by the Department of Education (NT). They often work in conjunction with School Based Constables in following up issues and concerns on the home front. They visit homes of students when that is necessary. In some schools Aboriginal Liaison Officers (ALO's) are employed to specifically follow up matters affecting Aboriginal students.
Recently, the Department of Education was able to employ Aboriginal Resource Officers (ARO's). Commonwealth funding made available through the Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) is used. ARO's work with students at school and offer support in programming and assistance to teachers. They better help the school to understand, appreciate and incorporate aspects of Aboriginal culture into programs. They support Aboriginal children, especially those in transition into the school.

Homework Centre facilities are available to Aboriginal students through another DEET funded program.

In total, a significant amount of support is offered to students attending Northern Territory primary and secondary schools.
CHAPTER FOUR

CAUGHT BETWEEN A ROCK
AND A HARD PLACE

Chappell and Wilson (1969: 100, 101 emphasis mine) reported that in Australia

"... the relationship between teenagers and the police ... was one of tension and conflict. ... conflicts between certain sections of the community and the constabulary are likely to get worse ... in future years. ...

Teenagers and criminals were the two sections of the community which police thought were most hostile toward them. Well over 50 per cent of informants in all forces except the Queensland police ... thought that teenagers showed antagonism toward them." (emphasis mine)

From an historical point of view, with the community against them, police became a collective who were 'en garde' against possible inroads into their domain. Their role was to prevail against misdemeanour and crime: In turn their inner sanctum was both supportive and sacred. Excursions into the wider community were generally of punitive intent: Incursions into their precinct attracted suspicion and encouraged hostility. For the most part visitors were either apprehended citizens or community members with a grievance to enunciate or complaint to lay.

4.1 A Need to Turn The Worm

Suspicion of police, thoroughly documented as a social problem in the 1950's and 1960's had the propensity to deepen. At best antagonistic youth would grow into non-cooperative and suspicious adults who would beget children of their own.
At worst the teenage generation could grow up with hostile intent and criminal tendencies. Their offspring would have an added negativism passed on through parental influence.

Chappell and Wilson cite Voelcker who studied British teenage groups in an attempt to understand what motivated negative societal attitudes and dysfunctional actions.

"The causes of increasing juvenile crime, of the development of teenage gangs and of juvenile irresponsibility ... are complex ... These developments are related in part to the growing urbanisation of our society, to less rigid parental control, to the breakdown of traditional religious and social values, to young people's greater freedom to participate in adult activities without at the same time having to assume responsibilities for their actions and to numerous other factors." (Chappell and Wilson 1969: 105 *emphasis and underlining mine*)

Voelcker urged that "one of the most important ways police can help to reduce crime and delinquency is by active participation in ... prevention programs through the medium of special youth divisions in each police force." (Chappell and Wilson Op cit)

Orlando Wilson a former chief of Chicago police was an early advocate of police participation in preventative programs. He believed there were five supportive arguments for this position.

"1. Police are the only agency created to prevent crime.

2. Police are usually the first group ... to notice persons, situations or conditions that lead to crime. If police do not take action to stop ... people turning to crime, and do not attempt to alter conditions conducive to crime, frequently no other agency will take on the job.

3. Police are in the strategic position to obtain ... cooperation from welfare agencies and other groups interested in preventing juvenile delinquency and crime ... they are in the best position to lead and coordinate the efforts of other agencies." (1)
4. Police should attempt to keep teenagers put of penal institutions* (Chappell and Wilson Op cit : 106 emphasis mine)

Chappell and Wilson continue that "...in Australia ... there is a growing realisation among policemen that there is a need for police participation in delinquency prevention programs. However, few forces have attempted to create well-staffed, well-trained and efficient youth divisions." (Chappell and Wilson Op cit emphasis and underlining mine)(2)

Establishing rapport and demonstrating empathy is critical to the development of harmony and the creation of quality relationships. A common plea from youth is that adults don't know, can't understand the problems besetting the 1990's youthful generation and don't really care anyway. School Based Police can help dissipate this perception and overcome with young people, the directionless and hopeless future with which many feel confronted.

This exhortation based on the realisation that punitive policing encourages negative attitudes, was made twenty-five years ago. From that time until now, proactive policing has made substantial inroads into the psyche and thinking of Australian youth. In many respects the Northern Territory has lead the way: The Territory model has been studied by forces in other states and overseas, thus becoming a frontrunning program. (3)

Christie and Walter (1991 : 2,3) acknowledge that general community attitudes toward police have changed and are contemporarily more positive than was the case. However:

"Parents often unwittingly propagate a fear of police by using the image of the 'punitive policeman' as a means of controlling their own children's behaviour. "If you don't do as you're told the policeman will come and lock you up!" Such dire warnings can just slip out and the fact that they do emphasises how ingrained this negative image of police is." (Christie and Walter, 1991 : 3) (4)
4.2 Changing Perceptions

The Northern Territory Police Force, through its Community Policing Unit has become a proactive agency. Officers involved with school based policing are motivated by "... a desire to work with youth and show the positive side of police work." (Christie and Walter 1991 : 7) (5)

Christie and Walter discovered that

"... officers who have taken jobs as School Based Constables have found that as well as "serving and protecting the community" (6) they themselves have benefited personally. Many had become inured to the less pleasant side of General Duties and had felt that they were developing an “us versus them” attitude." (Christie and Walter, 1991 : 7,8 emphasis mine)

While School Based Constables found some initial apprehension about their appointments by students and teachers, they came to be accepted quickly and were treated as individuals by their school associates. (Christie and Walter, Op cit)

"Despite the uniform, people were able to recognise and appreciate individual qualities and talents in the constable concerned, and in a number of cases this appreciation deepened into friendship. As a result the officer’s circle of friends grew to include people he or she would never normally associate with while on General Duties. This in turn had the effect of giving the constable insights into the problems and concerns of ordinary people and a better understanding of the background to social problems in their area." (Christie and Walter, Op cit emphasis mine)

The authors of this comprehensive study found the transition from fear and apprehension, to appreciation and respect was a powerful intrinsic motivator for police in schools, to stay there. The desire to serve in school communities transcended extrinsic ambition for promotion, where this would have required school based police to move back to general duties. (7)
Christie and Walters reveal, that with the exception of one strongly union oriented school "... all schools involved in the scheme have praised and appreciated the presence of the constable stationed there." (8) School Based Policing influences and changes attitudes. This outcome is intangible but highly effective in terms of shaping future youth behaviour. Students and their parents "... see the police engaged in proactive, positive policing, (thus) School based Constables do immeasurable good." (Christie and Walters, Op cit : 15)

4.3 SBC's- Caught Between a Rock and a Hard Place

Previous sections have demonstrated both a universal (overseas and Australian) and local (Northern Territory) recognition of the need for School and Community Based Policing Programs. School Based Programs have done inestimable good for both recipients (students) and service providers (school based police). For the latter, the rewards have been intrinsic rather than material. Denial of promotional opportunities has been and remains a key negative factor.

While police generally go into school based work because of humanist motivation (9), lack of internal recognition and challenge offered by police peers is daunting at best, at worst disappointing.

The traditional view of policing - that it is and should remain reactive and corrective - is held by many, possibly the majority of police, as the only correct interpretation of police work. While this view is not supported by many police leaders who know and appreciate the value of school based programs, peers of school police are often less than encouraging in their expressed and implied attitudes. (10)

From the inception of modern day societal control, often attributed to London's Bow Street Runners, policing has been perceived as an 'enforcing' profession.
To many, it is para-militaristic in nature with enforcement proponents believing that police have to respond and punish rather than leading in a developmental and shaping sense.

Traditionalism identifies policing success as being measured in terms of convictions rather than misdemeanours or criminal acts that are prevented. The former is measurable, the latter intangible, adding credibility in their eyes to the police operational charter. Positive policing, to traditionally biased police, is incredulous.

I was advised by experts who study behavioural development that the influence of training is very powerful. Traditionally, police training had a 'control' and 'apprehension' focus. The purpose of policing was to catch people doing wrong so they could be punished for their actions. This meant that training contained elements of military preparation, where commands were given, orders 'obeyed', and the focus was on task and function rather than upon people.

'Desensitisation' from some top and middle managers can be an outcome of such preparation. 'Become like the traditional top or move out' could be an inferred message implied toward police wanting to change key elements of policing focus. In the words of Roy Harvey, former Principal of Sadadeen Secondary College "... Being a police officer in a school can be compared to being in a state of limbo. One is not a teacher, in the traditional sense, nor is one a police officer, again in the traditional sense." (Harvey, 1987 : 144) (11)

Harvey suggested that School Based Policing helps police cope with "an image problem ... (and) crime prevention." (Harvey, Op cit p 139).

Problems in accepting this policing innovation are not restricted to the Territory. " 'Plastic policing' and 'soft option' were typical of the comments that the Police Schools involvement program attracted when it first stepped foot into Victorian classrooms. But three years down the track this innovative program (appeals) ... to modern policing. You'd be hard pressed to find any police knocking its usefulness." (Caulfield, 1992 : 9) (12).
Caulfield may be overstating the degree of program acceptance. However, if his assessment is even half way accurate it would seem that Victorian Police place a greater value on the School Resource Officers (School Based Constables) than their Northern Territory counterparts. The Victorian Program only commenced in 1989: Its level of acceptance and degree of effectiveness is quite significant. Study of Victorian methodologies may benefit our SBC Program.

For some SBC's the actuality of appointment must have been somewhat of a letdown because of peer perception. Referring to appointments Smith (1987: 20, 21) wrote:

"... the positions were advertised in a way that left no doubt as to the requirements which included an ability to relate well with youth, sound background and maturity. The Constables are ... selected by a board comprising senior officers directly connected with the scheme. ... Prior to placement some training is provided. The training includes a methods of instruction course ... a comprehensive examination of relevant legislation affecting children such as the Juvenile Justice Act and the Criminal Code. ... Community Policing policy and activities are also covered." (emphasis mine)

Smith upholds SBC's as

"... greatly admired and respected by the school community, particularly the students. Even the most wayward child has come to appreciate their value. ... Many parents are now seeking advice from the Constables as how to deal more effectively with their children. The anti-authority attitude prevalent in most children has largely diminished. ... The ease with which the students relate to the Constable is constantly demonstrated." (Smith 1987: 22)

In concluding Smith states

"... the programme in the Northern Territory shows ... promise as a proactive Police initiative. ... It has attracted considerate support from ... school communities including teachers, parents and students. ... It has been an excellent image building exercise which should result in a better understanding in the wider community of the Police role." (Smith 1987: 23 emphasis mine) (14)
4.4 Wariness and Latent Suspicion

There are those who suggest that School Based Policing as it has developed in the Territory should be dismantled. While Smith and others are program proponents, opposition toward such a successful policing strand is hard to understand.

It could be there are jealousies held of SBC's because they are held in high community esteem. I sometimes sense this might be the case but it would be hard to prove.

There may be misunderstandings based on ignorance. I recently attended a police training program and learned that the attendance of an Assistant Commissioner who opened the day long program was the first visit of someone having this level of rank, to a developmental course. That inservice was held in mid 1993, nearly a decade after the program had established.

Christie and Walter gleaned worrying negatives from their 1991 study:

"From ... the questionnaires and interviews it is clear that respondents felt that the role of the School Based Constables is not really appreciated by colleagues, particularly those in General Duties. They say they are spoken of disparagingly as "Kiddy Cops", among other expressions, that other police think they sit around drinking coffee all day and that the scheme is taking away personnel from hard pressed areas whilst other officers are out there doing "real" police work. Oddly enough the Commissioner of Police and senior officers in general make much of the success of the scheme and, at conferences and in the press, cite the School Based Police Programme as an example of positive and proactive policing.

The reasons for the disregard on the part of the lower ranks is complex. The School Based Constables feel that it stems from an inherited, traditional view of police work in which the emphasis is on law and order and the arrest and imprisonment of offenders.
This view is compounded by ignorance, for although School Based Constables have made attempts to inform colleagues of what they do, any mention of extra curricula activity ... only exacerbates an already jaundiced concept of the “Schoolie Cop” or “Hobby Cop”.

Inner sectional rivalry is another reason for ... poor communication as is the resentment general officers feel when they have to work regular shift work. ...They do not appreciate that the School Based Constable spends many unpaid hours attending committee meetings, running discos, or dealing with the problems of parents that he or she happens to meet in the supermarket.” (Christie and Walter 1991 : 9 emphasis mine)

During school holiday times SBC’s return to General Duties so they are not completely divorced from station life.

The authors add that “... some of the School Based Constables ... (feel) that they have found their niche in youth and community work and (regret) the fact that the only way they (see) of pursuing a career in the field and advancing themselves (is) by applying for jobs outside the service.” (Christie and Walters, Op cit : 10 tense change mine)

4.5 Push - Pull Paradigm Shift

The SBC program has been instrumental in altering the perceptions held for police by schools and their communities. Traditional wariness has been replaced by positive perception and genuine appreciation. While SBC’s in particular are lauded, there has been a spin-off from their generative effort which extends to other sections of the force.

The sad paradox is that this effort is not recognised or appreciated by the Police Department at large. While top level management is said to be supportive of SBC effort I believe this appreciation is sectional, not universal.
The lower ranks (peer level) lack appreciation for the efforts of SBC's in minimising their dealings with problem youth.

Historically and traditionally, members of police forces drew together to counter negative community perceptions. Attitudinal change and community warmth for SBC’s has forced a split in Northern Territory ranks with affiliations becoming bipartisan in a ‘them and us’ sense.

A natural consequence of School Based Police feeling ‘general force’ rejection and isolation, is to ‘grow together’ in a sub-group sense. While this may be good for SBC’s in could further alienate and distance them from police peers in the longer term.
Footnotes

(1) The involvement of multiple agencies, each with a specific agenda and individual terms of reference can confuse situations. Often one party does not know what the other is doing because of time delays and inadequate feedback. Secrecy shrouds the actions of some groups. If it were possible for one interest group to coordinate overall efforts in preventing misdemeanour and minimising aberrant behaviour in the Northern Territory, this would be a good thing.

(2) Queensland was the only proactive force in Australia in terms of having established a youth support division when Chappell and Wilson developed their text (1969). There was in Queensland minimal staff support for the program. The authors also urged attention to youth needs for the New Zealand police force.


(3) Senior Constable Scott Mitchell has visited New South Wales, Queensland and Western Australia on an ambassadorial basis. Members of the Community Police Unit have gone overseas (New Zealand) to demonstrate the Territory model and its operational schemes. Senior Constable Mitchell was honoured with a presentation by the wife of the United States Ambassador in 1992 for his contribution to policing models studied by the United States. The influence of the NT Program has had a ripple effect in terms of the outward extension of its influence.
(4) Sergeant John Walter recently transferred to Darwin from the Katherine Region. He was a former School Based Constable and is now the Officer-In-Charge of the developing School Watch Program. He is also connected with Safety House and Neighbourhood Watch.

(5) The authors base their finding on a questionnaire sent to School Based Constables. Eighteen (18) questionnaires were sent out, and ten (10) returned. The eight police who did not return their questionnaires were verbally interviewed. Constables in Darwin, Alice Springs, Katherine and Jabiru were canvassed.

Of the eighteen officers involved, fourteen (14) were male and four (4) female. Average respondent age was twenty nine (29) and the average length of service in the force eight (8) years. Members of the group involved were therefore chronologically mature and had a great deal of individual and collective policing experience.

(6) This is a plank of the NT Police Department “Mission Statement”.

(7) Police within the School Based Program cannot pass the rank of Senior Constable without moving back to general service. Many including Senior Constables Steve McGeorge and Ian King who worked in my schools (Karama Primary and Leanyer Primary respectively) were theoretically qualified to accept the rank of Sergeant, being held back only because they preferred to remain in the schools program. Senior Constable Scott Mitchell, a program founder has not been able to advance beyond this rank, although he fills a senior administrative, coordinating and training role in the Community Police Unit. Sergeant Bob Bradford and Senior Constable Scott Mitchell between them cover the total Community Policing function, including schools in the Darwin - Palmerston communities.
McGeorge subsequently relinquished his school based position to accept appointment as a Sergeant in Katherine. King left the Northern Territory to take up youth work in Queensland. Both had added education qualifications to their policing skills, King completing a Batchelor of Education degree at the Northern Territory University in 1993.

(8) Staff of the exceptional school were concerned because DARE was to be conducted by an untrained teacher. "This is a legitimate complaint and major stumbling block for the extension of the scheme to southern states where some unions resolutely defend past achievements in raising the qualifications and standards of teaching staff." (Christie and Walter 1991 : 14)

(9) Two policemen, both well known to me, took decisions to enter the school based program because of a desire to associate with, contribute to and extend the power of positive, proactive policing. Senior Constable Geoff Iddon could have successfully carved a career path through adherence to the general duties strand. He has held positions of responsibility in both rural and town stations.

Detective Constable Dave Skelton transferred to school based policing after many years in both general duties and criminal investigation work. He had a strong desire to become a proactive and preventative policeman, rather than continuing to focus on the reactive and punitive operational mode.

The experiences of both men, and my knowledge of them in this field, convince me that there is a peace of mind and an internal satisfaction that providers of positive policing value above traditional police work. It could be argued that less stress and greater personal satisfaction derived from proactive policing extend to encompass family and friends. This may add a dimension to the quality of personal and domestic life experienced by school based police.
(10) This perception is based in part on what school based police officers have told me. Information given in most instances has been qualified by a request that the providers remain anonymous.

(11) Roy Harvey, together with Kerry Moir, were initial Principal advocates supporting the establishment of School Based Policing in the Northern Territory. As Principal of Sadadeen Secondary College (now Sadadeen Open College with a Secondary - TAFE interface) Harvey was strongly supportive and very encouraging in the development of this program.

(12) In Victoria School Based Police are known as School Resource Officers (SRO’s). Initially 50 SRO’s were drawn from general police duties and their appointments were received with skepticism and derision. Attitudes have been turned around. Presently SRO’s support one in five Victorian Schools, Government and Private. There are plans to expand the program further (1992 information).

SRO’s focus on Year five and six students whose attitudes are still being developed.

(13) Michael Smith was the Superintendent of the Community Policing Unit (NT) at the time. He had 25 years of force experience, including General Duties, Prosecutions, Technical Services (OIC) and Community Relations Branch. He was appointed in 1983 to implement the Department’s Community Policing Policy.
(14) There is some doubt as to when the Smith article was written. In the text he refers to 'police being placed in schools to date' as at June 1987. However the 'NPRU Review', in which the article was published is shown as 'Vol. 2, No. 2, 1986. The only explanation would be that Smith was being futuristic, knowing that by June 1987 there would be a certain number of police in schools.
CHAPTER FIVE

SPREADING THE SCHOOL BASED POLICING GOSPEL

Communities everywhere are confronted by behavioural challenges offered by children and young people who are growing up. Each to a greater or lesser extent has placed an imperative on agencies that they attempt to come to terms with these behaviours, countering them as best they can. Most have become increasingly disenchanted with traditional punishment and punitive focus, preferring a more positive and 'developmental' approach to behaviour modification and attitudinal shaping.

The NT School Based Policing Scheme developed (Chapter One) from the efforts of a few Principals and a handful of Police to come to terms with the issue. Harvey suggests that while formal evaluation may be inappropriate, being best left until the present youthful generation reached adulthood, "... it is possible to look at how the scheme is developing now." (Harvey, 1987 : 145)

5.1 Spreading the Word for 'The Word Will Out'

It's hard to stifle impactful news, negative or positive. The news about the growth of School Based Constable (SBC) effectiveness in Northern Territory schools gained public focus in the years following its inception. Local media including 'The Northern Territory News', 'The Star', and more recently 'The Suburban' (1) have regularly featured news stories about School Based Policing. The 'NT News' normally carries feature articles on the subject with a regular Saturday column 'Community Policing News'.
Public Relations highlighting of both challenges and outcomes has been positively focusing. Sergeant Bruce Penney was a regular columnist ensuring that press coverage over time was wide ranging and all incorporative concentrating on both issues and personnel. (2) The latter put 'faces and names' and effectively humanising and identifying School Based and community focussed police leaders to the public at large.

Another emphasis was the development of articles by Superintendent Smith (refer Chapter Four) and others for publication in Police Department publications. Circulation of these magazines between forces ensured that information about the Northern Territory SBC program reached other States and Territories, together with overseas destinations.

5.2 "Seeds" and "Transplants" from a Field of Good Ideas

School Based Police have been invited interstate and overseas to tell others about NT School Based Policing. Senior Constable Mitchell has visited all states, and has been across the Tasman to share information with the New Zealand Police Force. Knowledge of our program and his major contribution to it, has reached the United States and Canada.

Representatives from School and Community Based Programs have spread the message around Australia. This includes attendance at National Conferences on Juvenile Justice. The Territory focus has been on the advantages, educationally based prevention has over treatment and control of aberrant behavioural outcomes.

Omaji makes the following points:

"... not much progress seems to have been made on the path to functional prevention. (However) ... prevention for prevention (sake) now seems axiomatic."
In contrast to focus on treatment, a prevention focus for juvenile crime intervention is perceived to minimise negative labelling, have a lower per capita and overall cost, to be perceived more positively by parents and to provide a more fertile context for behavioural change. Over the past five years criminologists in Australia have been promoting the concept of crime prevention. (Omaji, 1993: 399, 400 emphasis mine)

Omaji observed that

"... schools are seen as the principal agency not only for socialisation but also for social correction ... Schools are in the unique position to identify maladjustment early in the lives of children and to differentiate between growing pains and the beginnings of deep seated emotional disturbance. ... Our schools are potentially one of our best weapons in the fight against delinquency." (Omaji, Op cit: 400)

The focus on prevention is precisely what the Territory program has been about since its inception.

**Territory School Based Programs supported by SBC's have been inspirational and transformational.**

There are spin-offs. The concept of prevention has percolated into the wider Australian Community as revealed by Omaji and others.

A pilot analysis of suspensions and manifestation of socially challenging behaviour has been undertaken in the ACT with follow up anticipated.

**South Australia** has developed the ‘Stop, Think, Do’ program with a focus on counselling and prevention. School counsellors work with individuals, small groups and whole classes on an ‘awareness and consequences’ approach. (3)
My information is that the Police are supportive with two-way cooperation growing from a program that looks at non-violent conflict resolution and developing in students the skills of responsible behaviour management.

"It is only recently that the police community has become aware that diverting young people from the criminal justice system is a legitimate part of police work and a crime prevention strategy within itself. (There is legitimacy for) "...police participation in the development of alternative strategies for 'at risk' young people." (Lough, 1990 : 9)

A Supportive Environments School Program commenced in Tasmania in 1988. It has a counselling focus and is still predominantly teacher and school oriented. This program had the potential to 'seed' a wider operation involving police in school based programs. (Omaji, 1993 : 404, 405)

A "Kids and Cops" program, designed and implemented by the Patrol Commander at Launceston was introduced in 1989. An "Arrows" recreation centre for young people was established, together with a facility in Burnie for youth sentenced to community service orders. (4) Activities included manufacture of wooden furniture and toys for children. (Carter, 1989 : 1)

"There had been some attempts to try and reach the youth of the area by way of public meetings but (there was) lack of participation. (Carter, Op cit : 3)

Police clubs were operating in Hobart and throughout Tasmania. (Carter, Op cit : 4)
Points identified as important program outcomes included:

- Benefits of quality role models;
- The advantage of caring and empathetically motivated supervision;
- The provision of recreational activities that replaced idle unemployment;
- Alternatives to under-age drinking and vandalism;
- Sharing youth development with parents;
- Supporting the community in its efforts to assist young people.

(Carter, 1989: 6 - 9 emphasis mine)

'Beat policing' has taken on new meaning and definition in New South Wales.

"... Restructuring ... significantly increases the role of ... beat (officers) in their overall policing of the community. ... Officers are assigned a specific .... area to patrol on foot with the intention of creating a co-operative approach with the local community to law enforcement." (Lough, 1990: 3)

Crime prevention workshops are aimed at Year 10 - 12 Secondary age students (15 - 18 year olds). They are conducted in the beat area. Seminars are also held for police involved in the program.

"The workshops held within the beat patrol have the objective of developing an understanding of community-based policing initiatives that enhance crime prevention within the beat area. This information is then passed on to young people via the school based Crime Prevention Workshops."

(Lough, Op cit : 4 emphasis mine)

Police and Citizens Youth Clubs also provide service for young people within given areas.

Outward Bound youth courses are

"... designed in conjunction with the local Family and Community Services Office ... local Childrens Court and ... community based services.
"The program promotes team work, trust, communications skills, peer support, leadership skills and a range of skills to equip the participant to reach a stage of development where he or she can participate in pro-social behaviour." (Lough, Op cit : 6 emphasis mine)

New South Wales activities are designed to attract young people diverting them from action paths that will put them into conflict with the law.

Queensland has a Juvenile Aid Bureau working in the areas of crime detection and protection of children from various forms of misuse and abuse. Lough (Op cit: 7) found the bureau's role was confined to counselling and cautioning against misdemeanour. This is a reactive rather than a proactive approach, coming after the act rather than before the fact. Other more proactive initiatives include leadership training, youth patrols and lifestyle camps.

Lough found that Queensland programs were local or regional without state-wide implementation. That extension will come in time.

Victoria (refer Chapter 4.3) is well on the way to establishing a proactive preventative and educational model through the input into Schools by School Liaison officers (SLO’s). Police are building "... positive and constructive relationships with children."

(Wallace, 1988 : 251)

Wallace believes the characteristics of proactive policing with special appeal to Victorians include the following:

- Making the police a community based institution
- Prioritising police resources on serious crimes
Ensuring that the social responsibilities to prevent criminal behaviour are shared by all members of the community and not by police alone.*
(Wallace, Op cit : 252

Western Australia has the ‘Constable Care’ program, involving an imaginary policeman in close contact with schools to raise safety consciousness among primary school children. The program was introduced in 1989. Supposedly modelled on a NSW concept

“The fictitious constable (was) introduced to overcome the problem of holding children’s attention during safety lectures. "Very simply, we found that if there was a carrot at the end of our message kids would get involved," Sergeant (Ross) Pengilly said. Primary schoolchildren who enter competitions run under the Constable Care program will be eligible to share prizes worth $30,000. ... "This should help them retain the safety messages we will be trying to get across." (Sergeant Pengilly stated).* ("Police ‘recruit’ aims to raise safety standards"; "The West Australian", 27.2.92)

Rob White, a teacher of Youth Studies at the (then) Western Australian College of Advanced Education put things quite bluntly.

* The intervention of the police in the lives of school students, both within and outside of educational institutions, is clearly intended to mould their behaviour in particular ways. The main intention seems to be to shape student attitudes toward crime and law enforcement ... in a manner that reflects a ‘punitive’ or ‘revenge’ mentality toward offenders, accompanied by unquestioning respect for authority and ‘the law.’ *(White, 1989 : 69)

If this assertion is correct, then WA has a long way to go in order to establish proactive policing with the state's student population. Undoubtedly things will change for proactive policing is dynamic, with each Australian force influencing the other. Exchange and study tours have facilitated the exchange of ideas.
5.3 Territory School Based Police are Strong Ambassadors

Northern Territory School Based Police have been metaphorical beacons in demonstrating to other services the value of proactive, preventative, school focussed policing. Senior Constable Scott Mitchell has visited Western Australia, South Australia and New South Wales (refer 5.2). Feedback indicates his educating efforts have been deeply appreciated. (5)

A series of ongoing field trips have been undertaken by Senior Constables and Superintendents attached to School (and Community) Based Policing. This has had enormous outreach, the only dysfunction being greater and greater demands placed upon the School Based Police leaders to educate peers rather than students.

5.4 A Program of Consequence

School Based Policing and comparable models have the power to positively influence life direction and perceptions of youth. Through young people, the rigid historically reinforced attitudes of parents and others can be changed. Its a case of 'Generations X and Y' moving to redefine the attitudes of the 'Babyboomers' and that of '60's Parents'.

"The preventive programs of schools ... carry significant implications for the juvenile justice system in Australia (and) ... in other ... nations. The factors which make the position of schools so strategic suggest that success in curbing students "behaviour" problems (could) drastically minimise the workload of police, the courts and the corrective services, at least to the extent that this workload applied to juvenile offending. ... Schools are central to the lives of young people."
... With necessary support from the community, schools should be able to play this role reasonably well." (Omaji, 1993: 408, 409 emphasis and underlining mine)

Territory Police have developed a program of consequence and real worth. Its benefits are felt on a Territory and Australiawide basis. The study of our SBC program overseas, has had positive and powerful impact upon the approach of overseas police toward proactive policing.

Importantly and above all, the program enhances 'life world' opportunities for children and students.
Footnotes

(1) The 'Northern Territory News' is the Territory's only daily paper. From 1975 until the end of the 1980's it came out each afternoon, going back to a morning daily in 1990. It has been described as a 'refreshingly local' paper and balances negative press with good news stories. It has a circulation of over 35,000 copies daily and a Territory wide readership (poll found) of 78% of the population.

The 'Darwin Star' was a paper having wide local circulation in the late 1970's and early 1980's. It became defunct because of profitability decline and closed about 1984. While the SBC program was only embryonic at that stage, the 'Star' carried a feature article focussing on several schools in Darwin and throughout the Territory in each issue. This double page feature covered initiatives including items about how schools were working to positively develop and reinforce student development.

The 'Suburban' is a free weekly local paper with a circulation in the Darwin and Palmerston areas. It runs an 'Education News' page and regularly highlights School and Community Based Policing Programs in other stories. This paper, a subsidiary of the 'NT News' was created in 1992. It has a distribution of 30,000 copies per week.

Other regional papers ( 'Arnhem Courier', 'Groote Eylandt News', Alice Springs Centralian', 'Tennant Creek Times', 'Katherine Times' and 'Litchfield Times' carry stories on School and Community based policing either drawn from Darwin or developed with local regional flavour. School Based Policing Programs get excellent print press coverage.

(2) Sergeant Penney subsequently resigned from the NT Police Department and went into business practice. His place was taken by Sergeant John Walter. Penney was responsible for establishing excellent media contacts.
(3) This in part is modelled on Dr Maurice Balson's approach to behaviour management. Balson is an eminent authority in the area of youth psychology and preventative behaviours. Rather that stressing 'reward and punishment' Balson's focus is on 'actions and consequence' or 'action and logical or predictable outcomes'. This model demonstrates that behaviour, be it positive or negative has its own consequent set of outcomes which can be logically predicted. Changing or modifying behaviour to ensure satisfying outcomes is his emphasis.

(4) The Education Department is connected with the "Arrows" program. The prognostication of "Arrows" included that the centre "... is to date functioning well with the cooperation of the local police. Arrows can only continue its successful operation as long as there is ... constant quality input by the Police themselves, otherwise the bonding that has been established will soon be lost." (Carter, 1989: 4 emphasis mine)

(5) Information received on this subject has been largely verbal. Mitchell and others have spent increasing amounts of time on interstate field trips, requested by other forces to demonstrate aspects of SB Policing both unique to and highly effective within the Territory. Present focus and concentration is on extending the program to carry positive attitudes about police and policing into Aboriginal communities.

Collectively held attitudes are that policing has been heavily punitive and extremely unkind to and for Aboriginal people. Youthfully held perceptions are of parents and older siblings being regularly arraigned before the courts with retribution the prime focus and punishment the major outcome.
CHAPTER SIX

TOWARD QUALITY RECOGNITION
AND PROGRAM SELF-SUFFICIENCY

To some extent, General Duties police officers hold a belief that the School Based Constable Program is the Achilles Heel of policing. It is seen as resource draining, a program providing a soft option for police and not contributive to their understanding of real policing - apprehension, arrest and punishment.

It could be that there is the perception of a threat: That if proactive policing is successful, acting to reduce the number of offenders and offences, reactive policing may become undervalued at best, at worst threatened with redundancy. Career prospects could be threatened.

It is common practice to give reasons for disaffection that are 'stated' rather than 'real' concerns. The intention of the SBC program founders and developers, that policing should be proactive and developmental rather than reactive, corrective, band-aid and patch-up in orientation, certainly sits uncomfortably with many, possibly the majority of police.

6.1 Information Has Been Offered

The SBC program has been identified to the general force both through publications (internal and external) and by personal and sectional inservice offered through the Community Policing Unit. Antagonisms expressed by others toward this specialist section are not occasioned by operational ignorance.
Chapter 4.4 outlined intra-force attitudes that lead to distrust when one section of a force is wary about what another is doing.

Education about and through School Based Policing offered to the community has had the following benefits:

1. Attitudes held of police have been redefined 'from the roots up' with students thinking more positively of police than do their parents. With the passing of time, this positivism may move 'osmotically' to enhance the concept of police as held by the adult community. (Refer Chapters 2.5; 3.3; 3.4)

2. Changing the focus on policing in the minds of students and parents from the historical concept of reaction and punishment to the modernistic preventative and educative focus.

3. Re-educating parents and the adult community through the re-shaping of youth attitudes.

4. Demonstrating that police are facilitators, helpers and "Samaritans", rather than obstacles in the path of community development and social justice.

Devolution of management and operational responsibility is as common to the Police as all other government departments. Administrators are being asked to work increasingly efficiently within a shrinking budget frame. (1) This has the effect of questioning where dollars are spent and the value of such expenditure.

6.2 The 1994 Dilemma - A Restructuring Attempt

An outcome of budgetary concern manifested itself in March 1994. A 'rumour' broke that School Based Constables in the Darwin - Palmerston area were to be attached to stations rather than continuing to headquarter on High School, Secondary School and Secondary College premises. (2) News of this proposed restructuring was 'leaked'. The Northern Territory Principals Association (NTPA) and the Council of Government Schools Organisation (COGSO) took up the issue. (3)
A series of meetings involving police and representatives of the two organisations followed. The result was an allaying of community concerns and a statement that no change would ever occur without full review. This would involve guaranteed consultation with the NTPA, COGSO and other stake and interest groups. (3)

In reflecting upon that frantic period, I wonder whether the Northern Territory Police Department had genuinely underestimated the value placed upon School Based Constables by students, staff, parents, groups with stake and interest in the program and the community at large. If this was the case, senior police management had the good grace to accept community reaction, modifying the proposed agenda. Preservation of the status quo has been reassuring to the SBC's, and their clients. Refinements may be in order but program dismantling cannot happen.

6.3 Meeting with the Chief Minister

Early in 1993 (4) I met with the Chief Minister and Minister for Police the Hon Marshall Perron, to discuss School Based Policing in Northern Territory schools.

This followed an inquiry directed to the Minister through the Sanderson Branch of the Country Liberal Party.

My correspondence had addressed a number of issues including:

1. The unique and positive qualities of the School Policing Program in the NT.
2. Questions about the program status and future including a concern that "officers involved with the ... program are not able to advance beyond the rank of Senior Constable." (Gray, 'School Policing Program Northern Territory Model', August 21 1992 :1)
3. A perception that police working within the unit were "... undervalued in terms of recognition placed on the worth of their service ... by many of their peers and seniors. ... Their work is seen as a 'soft option' or 'easy strand.' " (Gray, Op cit: p 2)
4. Non recognition of special area service by way of promotional opportunity or career path denied legitimate opportunities. “If police are forced to transfer, the community will be the big loser. The Police Minister may not be aware of this situation. Could this be raised with him as a matter needing urgent redress? Would he look at the possibility of police involved in this section being offered career path opportunities without having to transfer to other sections of the (police) department?” (Gray, Op cit : 2,3)

5. Reiteration of the excellence of the program and the fact that it should take “... much of the credit for improved community perceptions held for police particularly by primary school children.” (Gray, Op cit, p 3)

6. A plea that a positive and working program ... " deserves to be strengthened through fuller and more appropriate recognition of ... officers who are making it work.” (Gray, Op cit, p9)

The branch passed the correspondence to the Chief Minister, with an element of follow up being a visit to a subsequent meeting by Police Superintendent Gary Smith to explain the program and answer questions. Following the meeting and discussion I arranged an appointment with the Minister. (5)

Discussions focussed on issues that had been raised. In response to career opportunities Mr Perron suggested that School Based Policing should be a strand option for police, to be occupied for a finite period of time. He told me that one or two years should be sufficient time for police within the school based arm to come to terms with special attributes and skills needed. My response was that skilled teachers develop over time, that a short period would not move SBC’s from the developmental stage.

I also discussed with the Minister the fact that many School Based Police had or were gaining teaching qualifications so they could communicate more sensitively and caringly with students, school staff and parents. These qualifications were additional to those required of Constables to reach Senior Constable and Sergeant rank. A growing number of SBC’s were gaining qualifications in both the disciplines of policing and teaching, but were not able to have them recognised in dollar terms. Both intrinsic and extrinsic satisfactions are important.
The Chief Minister told me that the force was not big enough for promotional opportunities to extend beyond their present level. He suggested that promotion conscious police should move back to general duties where their proactive skills could be used with members of the general public. This could help counter public belief that police in the general area were brusque in manner interested only if following up breaches of the law.

He suggested that monetary resources would not stretch to allow a special consideration of this or any arm of policing. In response I suggested marketing and promotion strategies that might be adopted. 'Neighbourhood Watch' is sponsored by the Territory Insurance Office. Interstate school policing programs have the backing of companies and organisations directly or indirectly benefiting from program operation. (6)

The Minister stated that the NT may not be big enough or the program attractive enough to attract support dollars.

Chapter Seven offers recommendations based in part on outcomes of this conversation.

6.4 Toward Self Sufficiency and Program Marketing

School Based Police have a multitude of aids to support programs in schools. Included are 'care bears', stickers, and other paraphernalia. However, these artifacts are limited, compared with other Community Policing initiatives.

The Safety House Program provides identifying signs, both large and small, for schools. Streets with safety houses are identified by street signs, either standing alone or attached to naming poles. Houses which are designated as offering refuge are marked with distinguishing 'mini signs' on fences or post boxes.
Major school signs and street symbols are supplied by Darwin Lions Clubs and erected by clients of the Department of Correctional Services under supervision. Some literature is available for distribution, and suburbs are supported by a local coordinator. Coordinators are supported by the Lions Club and the Police Department in checking, and vetting potential Safety House families. Regular checking allows lists to be reviewed with additions and deletions being part of the process. Safety Houses for each area are noted on maps at local schools.

Neighbourhood Watch is sponsored by the Territory Insurance Office. The program is supported in each suburb by an Area Coordinator, Regional (sub-area) Coordinators and Street Coordinators. Between them the coordinators provide ongoing awareness to residents of the program and support it offers. Periodic newsletters pertinent to each area are distributed by street coordinators. Stickers, pamphlets and other informational material is available on request to residents or through schools.

Additional services include the loan of engraving machines for inscription of valuable goods, street templates to allow the house number to be inscribed with luminous paint at kerbside for ease of identification should emergency services be called and so on. Some groups offer to inscribe bikes of children in the area to facilitate their tracing and return in the case of misplacement or theft.

School Watch recently established on a pilot basis in the Northern Territory is sponsored by MMI, an insurance group. The company supplies signs for schools, stickers and a wealth of information explaining the program in overall terms, and specifically for students, parents, staff and nearby residents. The program should succeed and be extended to cover other metropolitan regions. It's development is sponsor enhanced.

The School Based Policing program is not supported in this way. It relies for total funding from the Police Department. Recommendations included in Chapter Seven focus in part upon 'self-help' through revenue generation. (7)
The community has a deep appreciation for school based police and the outcomes of their efforts. To publicise these in a way that demonstrates the value of the program to the commercial and business world may well enhance sponsorship opportunities. In order to be able to support any program, potential backers need to know of its existence and what it does.

Self-sufficiency facilitates independence and can free groups from organisational shackles. The School Based Policing Program could well benefit from the ability to be more self-sufficient than it is at the present time.

Publicity on aspects of Community Policing including the School Based Constable Program have been far-reaching, but appealing to the domestic and residential population rather than to business, commerce and industry. This is addressed in Chapter Seven.

### 6.5 Upping the Status of School Based Police

Foregoing chapters have demonstrated the pivotal role played in Darwin schools by School Based Constables. This extends to encompass other Territory centres. The influence of the NT program has influenced developments elsewhere within Australia. Elements of our program have been communicated to overseas destinations.

Our School Based Police are recognised and appreciated for their efforts, but rewards are largely intrinsic and appreciation for their efforts denied by other sections of the Force.

The program has many quality features but it could be further enhanced. Chapter Seven embodies information contained in these chapters and offers considered recommendations for further enhancement of the School Based Constable Program.
Footnotes

(1) The Police Department, with all other Departments, was affected by Estimates Review Committee (ERC) cuts of April 1991. In real terms budgets were pruned and departments asked to effect efficiencies and to streamline operations. All Departments were encumbered with an annual 2 percent efficiency dividend. This means that the total budget allocated after cabinet deliberations, is reduced by 2% per year, as a 'recognition ('cost') or 'measure' of increasingly efficient operations. It is an application of the 'leaner, meaner, more operationally efficient' principle. The levy is a compulsory negative dividend.

In light of the ERC review (committee membership of three included the Chief Minister Marshall Perron, the Deputy Chief Minister and Treasurer Barry Coulter and the Head of the Chief Minister's Department) the Police Department has been increasingly cautious about budget expenditure. Some of the concern about the SBC program can be attributed to that sub-section's expenditure needs.

(2) School Based Constables are based at Darwin High School, Casuarina Secondary College, Nighcliff High School, Dripstone High School, Sanderson High School, O'Loughlin Catholic College (Karama), Marrara Christian School, St John's College, and Kormilda College in Darwin. From there they cover all feeder primary schools, both government and private, in the region, including schools on Bathurst and Melville Islands to the north of the city.
They are based at Driver High School in Palmerston and Taminmin High School in Humpty Doo (Darwin's near rural area) similarly covering all nearby primary schools.

The proposition to move them to a station base would have meant that School Based Constables would have responded to Police Headquarters at Berrimah or to stations in Darwin, at Nighcliff, Casuarina and Palmerston.
(3) The exchanges that occurred ought to be noted. During March, a move to reposition School Based Constables became known. As a person who was the recipient of disclosed information about the possibility I can categorically refute that there was a leak from within any branch of the police service. The question of loyalty is not at stake: However the issue was of considerable concern. Both the NT Police, COGSO, individual School Councils, Principals, staff members and students are convinced that School Based Police offer a valuable and meaningful program.

The situation was aggravated by a perception that SBC relocation was intended to bolster station numbers in General Duties terms. It was anticipated that station OIC's would roster School Based Constables onto General Duties if necessary, so limiting their capacities to service schools. A counter viewpoint was quickly put, that the relationship would be 'purely administrative' for the requisition of stationary and other items.

The situation was aggravated through the release of a statement officially explaining the justification for change. In part the statement, issued by the Police Community Relations Unit on March 11, 1994 stated:

"The importance of the School Based Constable Scheme should be upgraded through the transfer of administrative control to Local Police Offices ... Programs could not be run without the support and involvement of operational police ... changes would give the local Police Officers greater ownership of local programs.

"The changes are being made to lift the profile of School Based Constables. Experience shows that these sorts of programs work best when there is a commitment to them at local level" (Assistant Commissioner Bill Wilson said." (NT Police Community Relations Memo, March 11, 1994 emphasis mine)
The contention was that SBC profile had been excellently established and the 'local control' aspect at station level was worrying. At best it would place School Based Constables in the unenviable position of being professionally responsible for their operations to Program Coordinator Sergeant Bob Bradford, and administratively behoven to Local Station Sergeants. While programs elsewhere within the Territory are organised according to the proposed model, 'small town' and community understanding can make impossible projects viable because of basic understanding and goodwill.

Be it right or wrong, 'a rat was smelt': Intense lobbying, negotiation and a Darwin Regional COGSO meeting organised for Thursday March 17 followed in that order. The meeting was to "... address parents on the proposed changes to the school-based policing system. All parents concerned about the effects these may have on students and the school are welcome to attend." (NT Council of Government School Organisations memo, (Steve Carter President COGSO, Darwin Region, March 15 1994).

This action was taken following a COGSO letter addressed to Mr Fred Finch Minister for Education. It stated in part:

"The program (if changed) may ... lose direction and effectiveness. This move also poses the possibility of school based constables being assigned to "general duties" in the event of a police station being under-resourced or during periods of excessive workloads on other station personnel.

... Within schools and among those in the wider education community who deal with them on a regular basis, ... school based constables are regarded as a highly valuable resource ... having done much to raise the profile of police in a way that is ... positive and vitally important.

They are committed to working in a pro-active model and have become essential members of the school community, interacting freely with staff, students and, where appropriate, students' families." (Richard Creswick. President Northern Territory Council of Government Schools Organisations, correspondence, 10 March 1994, p 1 emphasis mine)
A second memo, released as a media statement through the Northern Territory Police, Fire and Emergency Services at 11:55 am on March 17, diffused the situation.

"A plan to transfer the administration of the School Based Constables program to Local Police Offices in Darwin will not proceed now, until further consultation takes place with schools.

Assistant Commissioner of Personnel and Development Command, Bill Wilson, said it had been proposed to upgrade the role of the scheme by increasing the involvement of operational police in its administration.

Senior police had given a commitment that School Based Constable's duties would not change. However, it appeared there were some concerns within Darwin's schools about the transfer ...

"As a result, it has been decided not to proceed with the transfer of School Based Constables to Local Police Offices at this stage (Mr Wilson said).

"It was agreed that further extensive consultation would take place and, if the proposal does proceed in the future, we have agreed that a joint monitoring team will be established, comprising police, principals, COGSO ... and students." (Jane Munday (Director of Media Relations and Corporate Communication), Northern Territory Police, Fire and Emergency Services Memorandum, March 17, 1994, p1 emphasis mine)

(4) Unfortunately I did not record the date - but it was a Friday afternoon.

(5) It is important to note the (unofficial but I believe true) course of action that followed my approach to the Sanderson CLP Branch. My correspondence was passed on to the Chief Minister and Minister for Police who referred it to Senior Management of the Police Department. It was passed downline for response, a concern being that "someone must have talked to Henry Gray - find out the circumstances."
In fact no-one had talked to me on those aspects of the subject in telling or complaining terms. My document was created because of concerns I had perceived and believed needed to be addressed. As a person who believes in open discussion on problematic issues, I had raised the matter with this a firm focus. The question was - and remains - an issues focussed and not a personality directed matter.

When in conversation with the minister, I mentioned this circumstance and suggested that 'searching for scapegoats' was a negative and non-corporative Police Department way of approaching issues.

(6) These benefits include a reduction in vandalism and damage to public and private property. South Australian and Western Australian programs have company sponsorship. Recently 'School Watch' was established in the NT with MMI and Telecom Sponsorship.

(7) There is a concern within the School Based Area that funding sufficiency would result in budget reductions. This would strain the unit in the direction of needing to 'compulsorily resource'.
CHAPTER SEVEN

MAKING A GOOD PROGRAM BETTER

RECOMMENDATIONS

The School Based Policing Program sometimes reminds me of the Grimm Brother’s “One Eye, Two Eyes and Three Eyes”. In that story, Two Eyes was berated for being abnormal, by her sisters and mother. It wasn’t until rescued from her predicament that she was found to be perfectly natural, with her siblings and parent being 'downsized' by a rescuing prince.

School Based Constables have been misinterpreted by many of their peers and seniors. Programs have to be judiciously managed to keep within budget, and personnel remain largely unrecognised, indeed unappreciated from within.

That's just like Two Eyes' situation when she lived at home.

Growing community awareness and appreciation of SBC’s parallells the situation of Two Eyes being recognised and rescued. For the School Based Constable Program, this rescue possibly occurred when the community emphatically said "No" to 1994’s proposed restructuring. Hopefully the future augurs well for a program that has been juxtaposed through its receipt of bouquets and brickbats.
7.1 Recommendations

The School Based Constable program is deficient in the key areas of internal (within the Police Department) recognition and budget independence. It is behoven upon the Police Department for its budget. Members of the department, in overall terms, offer little credit and scant recognition to the SBC's for a job well and conscientiously done.

7.1.1 Recognition Of Proactivity

Chapter Four (Sections 4.3 and 4.4.) showed that School Based Constables are positively regarded by the public, but held in low esteem by many peers. Clearly, there has to be a change in attitude from within the Police Department for things to change.

**Recommendation One:**

That internal inservice be conducted, involving both peers and superordinate members of the force, to demonstrate the positives that evolve from proactive policing.

**Recommendation Two:**

That the School Based Constable division develop audio visual material to support inservice and information giving programs. This may include charts, posters and printed material similar to that supporting other aspects of the Community Policing Program (Neighbourhood Watch and so on).
**Recommendation Three:**

That promotion of the SBC program and its outcomes be featured on television by way of occasional Channel 8 'information spots'. (1)

**Recommendation Four:**

That the Police Department support the School Based Policing program as one offering positive outreach to the community, (hopefully) to alter perceptions held toward police in general terms because of SBC ambassadorship.

**Recommendation Five:**

That any concerns held by police about their possible redundancy as an outcome of the SBC Program success, be brought into the open, discussed and put to rest. (2)

**Recommendation Six:**

That all members of the SBC Team, in the interests of effectiveness and efficiency, be encouraged to undertake teacher education studies leading to dual policing and teaching qualifications. (3)

**Recommendation Seven:**

That the School Based Police section consider producing a text that traces the historical development of the SBC program in the Northern Territory. This text ought to apportion 'credit where credit is due' and to include the significant contribution the NT program has made to developments elsewhere within Australia and overseas. To tell the program's 'good news' stories would be a wise investment. (Refer to Chapter 5:1, 5.2)
Chapter Four (refer 4.4) confirms that recognition of quality programs (Chapters Two and Three) provided by School Based Constables is generally restricted to intrinsic credit.

In my interview with Chief Minister and Minister for Police the Hon. Marshall Perron, (Chapter 6.3) a concern that SBC's could not gain promotion was confirmed. To get on they would have to leave the School Based arm of police enterprise. There is only one promotional position in the School Based Police Program: The highest status that can be gained by others is Senior Constable.

**Recommendation Eight:**

- That consideration be given to salary enhancement that allows a special skills allowance to be added to base Constable and Senior Constable salary.

- That this allowance be commensurate to length of years of School Based Policing service.

- That the allowance be weighted to include recognition of additional qualifications including the passing of Sergeant's examinations, acquisition of teaching subjects leading to the Bachelor of Education award and so on.

- That the allowance be incremental, taking account of both experience and qualifications.

- That the incremental level of incentive payments stop when the salary level attaching to the position of Senior Constable (for Constables) and Sergeant (for Senior Constables) is reached.
This recommendation may be contentious, indeed unpopular with some service sections. However, the loss of quality officers from the program could be serious in the extreme.

While School Based Constables enjoy their work, they should not be forced to remain in the program purely from a sense of loyalty or “Samaritanship”. Extrinsic reward is important and would convey to SBC’s an enhanced appreciation for their worth and work.

In other fields of endeavour, incremental allowances are paid. The NT Department of Education pays classroom teachers with especial skills a ‘Master Teacher’ allowance to recognise their qualities, at the same time encouraging and enabling them to stay in classrooms.

7.1.3 Restructuring the SBC Program

Recent suggestions that the School Based Constable program be restructured (Chapter 6.3) generated unnecessary heartache. In my opinion the proposition to alter an excellently operated proactive agency had to be met head on: Reaction expressed a concern that the quality of the program would be diminished if proposed changes were enacted. If there was concern about the profile of the School Based Constable program held by members of the force, it was certainly dissipated by the groundswell of reaction that followed.

Recommendation Nine:

That the School Based Constable program be allowed to continue in its present operational form. Changes in form or format ought to be negotiated between parties with stake and interest in outcomes.(4)
7.1.4 A Matter of Trust

My raising of School Based Policing issues was met with a concern that I had been given 'inside' information. Nefarious motivation for my interest was suspected. The belief seemed to be that I was acting because of information received or reacting to inside knowledge that had been imparted.

I have had great respect for the School Based Policing Program and much admiration for police who provide for the needs of students in schools through its outreach. Any concerns held for this program are issues driven and not personality focussed. (5)

Recommendation Ten:

- That matters raised to the Police Department on the issue of School Based Constables and elements of Community Based Policing be accepted as issues focussed inquiries and not attack on personality.
- That responses be direct rather than covert, encouraging rather than discouraging issue focussed inquiries.
- That all parties with stake and interest in the outcomes of the School Based Constable program be encouraged to approach each other openly and honestly, frankly and trustfully.
- That a management focus that is 'toward consensus and collaboration' be encouraged because of the artificiality imposed by traditional hierarchical management structure.

In a humanistically oriented organisation (where people are primarily interacting with other people) organisational warmth, health and internal well being is enhanced if the management pyramid can be flattened.
This recognises the importance and contribution of everyone within the organisation.

7.1.5 Sponsorship and Self-Sufficiency

Conversation with the Minister of Police (Chapter 6.3) and the concept of program self-sufficiency (Chapter 6.4) go hand-in-glove. Budgetary dollars are finite: In a situation of scarce resources, sponsorship and product marketing stand out as ways in which the School Based Policing Program could earn an increase in both dollars and public recognition. Both would enhance awareness adding to program support and possible expansion.

Self-help is an ingredient in any organisational building recipe.

**Recommendation Eleven:**

That the School Based Constable Program be permitted to seek corporate or business sponsorship. This would result in parties with interest in programs working in partnership to achieve common aims.

**Recommendation Twelve:**

That both major and minor sponsors be sought to meet costs associated with production of pamphlets, stickers, periodic placement of advertisements, organisation of special events (i.e., competitions with prizes) and so on.

**Recommendation Thirteen:**

That radio air time and commercial television slots be arranged with the aid of sponsorship dollars. (Refer recommendation three)
Recommendation Fourteen:

That links be established with appropriate agencies for the production and marketing of memorabilia promoting awareness of the School Based Constable Program.

Items manufactured and sold could include:

- Care Bears
- Rulers and pencils
- Biros
- Stickers and refrigerator magnets
- T Shirts, caps and other items of clothing
- Mugs
- Pennants
- Lapel pins
- School bags
- Badges, logo patches and stickers
- Signs that could be placed at schools or houses suggesting that students or children or families therein are ‘School Based Police’ conscious and supportive.

Manufacture could be local and under licence. It could involve schools, including Henbury Avenue Special School, Dripstone High School and others. It might involve sheltered workshops, provide enterprise for clients of the Don Dale Centre or guests of other correctional institutions.

Design concepts for products could be the subject of student competition.

Sale and distribution could include:

- Commercial outlets
- Sales at markets, on school fete days
- At shopping centre stalls
- At Education and Police Week exhibitions
- At the Darwin, Freds Pass and country show circuits
- Sales by Student Representative Councils at schools
- Products sold over Police Station counters, by Multiple Sclerosis, Red Cross and other community agencies.
Contribution by others in design and manufacture of memorabilia would of itself project the SBC program further into the public arena. Sales could be encouraged by commission arrangement, with sellers gaining a percentage benefit for their own enterprise or organisation.

There may be concern that products would not sell. (6) As the audience appeal would be toward young people most keen and supportive of the SBC Program, sales could almost be guaranteed. The fact that some of the goods are consumable, would assure continuing sales through ongoing replacement (i.e., pencils, biros, stickers and so on.)

7.1.6 Budget Guarantees

It can happen within organisations that budgets are pruned to take account of savings or efficiencies. If the School Based Constable Program was to enter the promotions and marketing arena, there could be a possibility that allocated monies would be trimmed back to take this initiative into ‘negative’ account. The thought of this outcome would cause the SBC program to approach an initiative of this nature in a cautionary fashion.

Recommendation Fifteen:

That the Police Department not reduce the SBC budget if promotional and marketing initiatives are successful.

This would presuppose that profits made would be put back into program development and expansion. Costs of publicity and advertising (see earlier recommendations) could absorb some of these enterprise dollars. If money is available, the ability to expand programs into hitherto unconsidered realms might become possible.
Recommendation Sixteen:

That any reduction in Police Department budgets, in the light of SBC program marketing successes occur only by negotiation and only if dollars earned from promotion and product marketing are sustained and demonstrate percentage growth.

That any budget pruning be restricted to areas of material and resource supply, not impinging on salary and staffing entitlements.

That personnel increase be maintained in both Darwin and Territory terms so the program grows for the sake of benefiting our youth on an increasingly Territory wide basis.

7.2 Application

These recommendations are offered after careful consideration of a challenging but enlightened and rewarding policing concept. Some would not be without controversy. All would involve parties with stake and interest in the program declaring their hands and laying their cards on the table.

Openness and forthrightness, coupled with an ability to sensitively appreciate counterviewpoints would be prerequisite to any negotiation.

The Northern Territory has an excellent School Based Constable Program. It is second to none. At the end of the day all involved groups want what is best for our students and community.

My wish is toward fulfilling the needs of children, students and families through further development of quality and supportive schools input by police educators.
Footnotes

(1) Channel Eight earns the highest general audience ratings in Darwin and appeals to a market including youth and younger parents. To negotiate a segment on the ABC's '7:30 Report' or similar would allow SBC information to go Territory wide on a 'once off' basis. It may be possible to negotiate with 'Imparja Television': This would give rural cover on the program throughout the Territory and into country South Australia, New South Wales, Queensland and Western Australia.

(2) While it might be nice to anticipate the traditional approach to policing as a phenomena ultimately to be set aside, this will never happen.

(3) It has been my experience that police people who undertake teacher training, gain interpersonal and teaching skills of great assistance in their work. While these skills might, to some extent, 'evolve' over time, specific training facilitates the development of officers as competent police educators. The downside is frustration because these additional skills are not recognised in any monetary way by the Police Department.

(4) This was promised during the March 1994 negotiations. Had a mechanism for negotiation previously been in place, this issue would never have arisen.

(5) Both as a Principal and President of the Northern Territory Principals Association all issues I have taken up have been focussed on issues and never on personalities.
I have written extensively for media, been involved with radio and television and have written for interstate professional publications on issues pertaining to education over the past four years. In that time I have not been quizzed about motivation or intent. In fact, encouragement toward my involvement in media outreach has come from some senior officers within the Education Department.

(6) When I discussed this with the Police Minister he suggested that memorabilia would not sell. He pointed to the slow movement of plaques created to commemorate the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Bombing of Darwin. I suggested that ‘appeal’ would have been minimised because few Darwinians were around at the time of the bombing. Additionally the plaques would not have appealed to young people who are keen purchasers of memorabilia that takes their fancy.

Time and again, appeal to the sensibilities of young people has opened up product markets.

School Based Constable products would focus both purchasers and their friends on the worth and benefit of the program, reinforcing the SBC concept in a positive and wholesome manner.
CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSION

This study has examined the Northern Territory School Based Constable Program, an arm of the Territory Community Policing Unit.

Chapter One introduced the paper by posing the unique nature of the program. It proposed a study of the School Based Constable (SBC) Program with the prime focus being on the Darwin (including Palmerston) area. By its very nature of expansion, reference to the program in a wider Territory has been made from time to time, but the purpose of the study has been to consider the implications of the SBC program within a limited setting.

The terms of reference were outlined, together with the parameters to be covered within following chapters.

Chapter Two commented on the program in terms of its genesis and subsequent development. An excursion into the field of literature demonstrated the model as drawing upon precepts and principles of public relations, most information being dated. It showed that historically, police were both a feared and somewhat despised species. Territory police were not excepted from this general perception.

Against this background a program of proactive intervention developed and took root. Consolidation was built upon humble beginnings.

Chapter Three has demonstrated that SBC's offer a varied and wide ranging program, but one designed to enhance the well being of young people.
It has helped to refocus child and youth attitudes on police in a very positivistic manner. The success of the Territory SBC Program has been demonstrated through reference to various readings, reinforced by personal experience including the testament of those associated with the program.

In Chapter Four attention is drawn to the juxtaposed nature of the School Based Policing Program. School Based Policing sits adjacent to schools and their communities on the one hand, to the Police Department as a whole on the other. To some extent it abuts onto and between both.

There has been a paradigm shift in that contemptuous community attitudes have turned to a focus of honour and respect being held for School Based Constables. The worm has turned away from previously held community attitudes.

But the shift has been toward the negative from within the Force. The fortress like mentality which once held police together, protecting them from the public, has been dented. School Based Police show the human side of the policing enterprise, revealing a concern and care that is the very essence and soul of School Based Policing. That has not been popular with many members of the general force, who perceive this focus as alien to the traditions upon which policing was established.

To be caught between a rock and a hard place, in a push-pull situation is situationally discomfitting. In base terms, the enemies have become friends, with former colleagues in many cases choosing to distance themselves from School Based Constables. From a community viewpoint the change is complimentary, from a peer perspective invidious and distasteful.

In Chapter Five, spread of the School Based Policing message is considered, including the influence of the Territory model interstate and to some extent overseas.
Many good ideas in the area of School Based Policing have germinated within the Northern Territory. Programs offered enhance the 'life world' opportunities for children.

Chapter Six elaborated the need for self-help and proposes ways and means by which the School Based Constable Program could be consolidated and extended. It demonstrated that the program, in the light of recent restructuring attempts, has possibly succeeded beyond the anticipation of Police Department hierarchy. When modifications to program structure were suggested in March 1994, they were stoutly resisted by interest groups and the Darwin Community at large.

Promotion and marketing are upheld as strategies to enhance the SBC program. It has been shown that self-sufficiency facilitates independence and can bestow the freedom groups need in order to pursue a specific agenda. Marketing and sponsorship have enhanced other arms of Community Policing.

The need to increase the status and recognition afforded School Based Constables, especially from within the Police Department is restated.

Chapter Seven contains recommendations for change to the SBC Program which, if implemented may have the following benefits:

Recognition of the proactive benefits derived from the School Based Constable Program.

Bestowal of added extrinsic recognition, with extra dollars complimenting community respect, feelings of well-being and other intrinsic satisfactions that may be felt by SBC’s.

Restructuring that is enhancing and not destructive.
Engendering trust among and between parties with stake and interest in the School Based Constable Program.

Building empowerment through sponsorship and product marketing, leading to self-sufficiency and organisational health.

 Guaranteeing that the budget for personnel and staff expansion, with the assurance that initiatives developed will not be used against the program.

“The Northern Territory’s ‘School Based Constable’ ... program offers educators and police the opportunity to work in partnership for the benefit of young people in our schools. ... Proactive policing (encourages a redefinition of) attitudes from the roots up with students thinking of police more positively. ... Traditional perceptions of police ... are deeply entrenched. Re-educating parents and the adult community by reshaping the attitudes of the young is a challenge, but not an impossibility. The NT school-based policing program ... moves in this direction.” (Gray, 1994: 38)

More to the point, the program is working.
CHAPTER NINE

READINGS AND REFERENCES


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