

# SAFER COMMUNITIES

# SAFER CHILDREN



An environment where Aboriginal children are safe within their communities without fear of abuse.



**Department of Indigenous Affairs**  
Government of Western Australia



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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- Department of Racing, Gaming and Liquor
- Department of Premier and Cabinet
- Legal Aid
- Department for Communities
- Department of Industry and Resources

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	3
TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	4
1. INTRODUCTION.....	5
1.1. Purpose.....	5
1.2. Context.....	5
1.3. Background .....	6
1.4. Aboriginal Justice Agreements.....	9
2. INTENT OF THIS MODEL.....	9
2.1. The Phased Approach.....	10
2.2. Guiding Principles .....	12
Initial Response – Phase 1 .....	13
Recovery Response – Phase 2 .....	14
Ongoing Community Building – Phase 3 .....	15
3. SUMMARY .....	27

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1. Purpose**

This document provides a model for agreed and coordinated government action to address broad community issues arising from the disclosure of child abuse in Indigenous communities in Western Australia (WA).

Between February and July 2007 a dramatic rise in the number of disclosures occurred, and investigations in the East Kimberley commenced. The public knowledge of abuse and resulting arrests have been impacting broadly on the stability of these communities.

As sexual abuse charges fall within two categories - predatory and sexualised contact between children - alleged perpetrators may require child relevant support and management.

A collaborative approach is required to address the immediate needs resulting from disclosures and to continue to build the safety and stability of communities in the longer term. To be successful, this approach has to be grounded in a new way of working where governments and communities work together to find solutions.

This document includes the context, principles and processes for a collaborative model and articulates the mandate, roles and responsibilities of relevant agencies. It proposes engagement with community within the process.

### **1.2. Context**

In response to the Gordon Inquiry, the Western Australian Government invested more than \$71 million over four years to 2006/07 to implement its Action Plan for Addressing Family Violence and Child Abuse in Aboriginal Communities (the *Gordon Action Plan*).

As part of the implementation of the *Gordon Action Plan*, services have been established in remote communities to respond to child abuse and family violence. The establishment of the Multifunction Police Facilities is one of the more significant initiatives. These facilities, and many of the other services provided as part of the *Gordon Action Plan*, have been successful in improving the relationships and trust between service providers and communities, thus contributing to an environment where children and community members are willing to come forward to report their concerns.

Government has released a monitoring report on the implementation of the *Gordon Action Plan*, which highlights key strategic issues requiring policy consideration by the Government. An evaluation of the *Gordon Action Plan* is nearing completion.

The challenge now is for Government to address the issues raised in the *Gordon Action Plan's* monitoring reports to further strengthen implementation and ensure that improved outcomes for Aboriginal children, families and communities are achieved and sustained into the future.

The model outlined in this document is informed by, linked to and built on the long-term commitments of the *Gordon Action Plan* in order to address the issues arising from the disclosure of child abuse in communities.

### **1.3. Background**

There have been long held concerns regarding the incidence of sexual abuse of children within remote WA communities. However it should be noted that the incidence of child abuse is not confined to the Indigenous population, nor is it localised to remote communities.

Recently in the East Kimberley, significant numbers of Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) were reported by the Department of Health (DoH) to WA Police. These reports,

and the subsequent provision of a protective behaviours program, led to an environment where disclosures of abuse emerged. The disclosure of a 13-year-old girl in Kalumburu triggered a large-scale investigation. Since April 2007, WA Police assisted by the Department for Child Protection (DCP) and other agencies have been conducting investigations, which progressed rapidly, extending from Kalumburu to Halls Creek and Balgo.

Between April and July 2007 there were 38 arrests and 148 charges with 36 victims identified to date. More arrests are expected and investigations are likely to extend beyond the Kimberley. The investigation is the largest disclosure of child abuse in an Indigenous community since the Gordon Inquiry announced its findings in 2002.

On 10 July 2007 the Acting Commissioner of Police called a meeting of Directors General in response to the rapid escalation of child sex offence disclosures and subsequent investigations in the Kimberley.

On 23 July 2007, the Cabinet Standing Committee on Law and Order gave mandate to the Department of Indigenous Affairs (DIA) to lead coordination of a government response to the broader impacts on community as a result of the high number of disclosures.

Investigations of this scale will result in a dramatic increase in the short and long-term workload of agencies; raise community expectations, and increases demand for additional services. A Directors General Group has been established to address immediate, medium and longer-term logistical, resource and service delivery issues within Indigenous communities using a coordinated approach.

Historically, there has been considerable reluctance within Indigenous communities to disclose specific sexual offences. Victims and their families may fear retribution and feel “shame” in disclosing incidents of child sex abuse to police, health or other

government and support agencies. They observe the often unintended and harmful effect of such disclosures on the family and wider community.

The experience so far indicates that the systemic factors contributing to, and result from, sexual abuse in these communities are somewhat different to those in the metropolitan area.

- The coexistence of widespread violence and alcohol abuse is well documented;
- Older people (including parents) feel they have no control over adolescents;
- There are reports<sup>1</sup> of sexual favours with children being traded for goods such as alcohol or tobacco. Sexualised behaviour among young children appears to have become normalised;
- It is reported that, despite the disclosures of child abuse in their community, many community members do not want to see the perpetrators sent away to prison. The removal of community members is a “solution” which has too many negative connotations. It also does not manage the issue of offenders returning to the community at a later time; and
- It is occurring in an environment where poverty, hopelessness and despair have contributed to a general breakdown of the usual social norms. It is clear that regardless of the outcome of criminal justice proceedings, assistance is needed to undertake community healing and rebuilding, aimed at re-establishing culture, including healthy social order and authority.

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<sup>1</sup> Reported by agencies involved in responding in current locations where there have been high levels of disclosure.

The challenge facing government and the communities is far broader than dealing with a set of offences and subsequent legal actions. A more collaborative approach is required via:

*“ The integration and continuity of separate programs that would heighten their overall effectiveness and enhance outcomes for families and communities requires connection of parallel projects across, government agencies and conjoint funding agreements (eg. Child and adult sexual abuse counseling, rehabilitative programs for violent men and sexual abuse treatment of perpetrators which currently range across the Department of the Attorney General, Custodial Health Services and Community Development without conjoint responsibility or collaboration).”<sup>2</sup>*

#### **1.4. Aboriginal Justice Agreements**

The WA Aboriginal Justice Agreement 2004 is the only fully funded process to develop a partnership framework jointly between the Western Australian justice-related portfolio agencies, working with Aboriginal people at the local, regional and State level.

Aboriginal Justice Agreements can offer a structure and process for community participation in the development and implementation of actions intended to address the incidence of family violence and child abuse. In addition, the plans allow for longer-term actions to facilitate community capacity development where the Local and Regional Justice Forums identify these as priority issues.

## **2. INTENT OF THIS MODEL**

It is the intent of this model to provide a phased approach to address issues arising from the disclosure of child abuse within Indigenous communities. This model is based on current experiences and practices. It will be further developed and informed

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<sup>2</sup> Ministerial Advisory Group on Child Protection – *A Plan for improving the protection of children and children’s Wellbeing in Western Australia: p10.*

by operational reports from currently identified locations. It is intended that this localised approach will support safety and security of children in Indigenous communities.

The model offers an opportunity for WA State Government services to be well coordinated. It will also provide an opportunity for Non Government Organisations (NGOs) and other key organisations such as the Catholic Education Office to be included at the local level.

The model is an extension of the *Gordon Action Plan*. It represents an ongoing commitment of Government to build sustainable partnerships with Aboriginal people, doing business differently and better. Monitoring of this approach will ensure that ongoing future delivery of services is informed by identifying funding priorities and strategic directions. It is intended that initiatives that are proven to be successful will be used to develop ideas and plans in other communities where appropriate.

## **2.1. The Phased Approach**

This coordinated approach will enable Governments and NGOs, including the Catholic Education Office, to work together. It is critical that this work is done with the full and active participation of the community.

Three main phases have been identified in recent operational responses and have been used in developing this model. Each of these phases commences at a similar time and the phases are not necessarily clearly defined in their end points. Rather, they are processes with a set of triggers that result in subsequent action.

## **INTENT OF THE PHASED APPROACH**

- An immediate response to disclosure that deploys appropriate expertise and skills to the local level;
- Partner and support Indigenous communities in restoring safety and security for all members, particularly the young and vulnerable;
- Working with communities, to provide a phased whole of government response to address the broad impacts of the disclosure of child abuse;
- Refine and manage the approach through regular reporting to government and NGOs;
- Establish and deliver short, medium and longer term strategies to address child abuse within Indigenous communities;
- Assess and prioritise resource implications of strategies identified; and
- Ensure local level structures and processes are established and resourced to deliver the intended approach.

**Phase 1 – Initial Response:** The immediate and short-term response, where evidence is obtained, perpetrators are charged and case managed within the court system and victims provided with safety, support and intervention strategies. Community education is undertaken to raise awareness of relevant legal processes and their implications.

**Phase 2 – Recovery:** Will deliver support for the broader community to manage issues arising as a result of the allegations and arrests.

**Phase 3 – Ongoing Community Building:** The longer-term community building process. It is intended that agencies will work with communities to accomplish any cultural shift required to ensure the safety and security of children.

## **2.2. GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

It is the intent of this approach to be guided by the following principles:

- Flexibility and responsiveness to local needs is essential, within the associated legislative requirements;
- Aboriginal people are entitled to receive the same benefits, services and protections as the wider community;
- Trust and mutual respect are integral to working effectively with Aboriginal communities;
- Community capacity and governance should be strengthened by the approach; and
- Recognition and inclusion of the local knowledge base is the best way to refine the approach.

# INITIAL RESPONSE – PHASE 1

Local Coordinator (convened by WAPOL): (contact details)

Local Coordination Group meeting: Weekly at xx am/pm at (location)

Membership: WAPOL (convener), DCP (co-convener), DoH, AMS, DIA, DET, DotAG, DCS, DAO, DFC, CLC, Legal Aid, Place Manager and others as required and/or agreed.

## **INVESTIGATION (WAPOL Coordinator) AND CASE MANAGEMENT (DCP, Police, DoH)**

Meeting time: Daily at ..... am/pm at ..... (location)

Detective Superintendent Perth:

Inspector Sex Crimes

Senior Sergeant Child Protection Squad

DCP and WAPOL Spec Child Interview Unit:

DCP Coordinator /Team Leader:

Alleged Offender Court Process/Management (DotAG and DCS)

Offender Support (DCS, Legal Aid and ALS)

Other Significant Staff

## **COMMUNITY SUPPORT (Coordinated by DoH, with AMS)**

Mental Health Group (Immediate trauma/ victim support)

Child Victim and Witness support and preparation (DotAG, DCP, DoH)

Adult Victim Support (DotAG)

Other students' support-School psychologists (DET)

Community mental health (DoH and AMS): Indigenous Mental Health clinicians

Restraining orders (WAPOL, DotAG), Family Court Proceeding assistance (Legal Aid) Public education regarding legal implications of sexual behavior (LA, ALS and CLCs)

Protective Behaviors Programs (DET)

Community education regarding related legal procedures (DoTAG, LA, ALS and relevant local partners)

## **OTHER FUNCTIONS OF THE LOCAL COORDINATION GROUP**

- Initial notification to other agencies – WAPOL and DCP
- Media Communication
- Develop a strategy for liaison with local community - Coordinated by WAPOL (ANCOR)
- Interagency information sharing - Coordinated reporting (situation updates) to government via agency DG to the DGG on Indigenous Affairs – DIA to convene and provide Exec Support
- Interagency coordination of logistics (staff travel and accommodation in emergency response phase)
- Short-term emergency accommodation for staff and community- DHW
- Engagement of Non Government Agencies either already in the community or to be brought in
- Where there is not an existing Place Manager identify and expedite the appointment of one at the location through the DCP, with DIA
- Liaison with a Community Reference Group that is made up of existing community structures or specifically established where there are none existing.

# RECOVERY RESPONSE – PHASE 2

Local Coordinator (Place Manager): (contact details)

Local Coordination Group meeting: Suggested fortnightly at xx am/pm at (location)

Membership: Place Manager (convener) DCP (Co-convener), WAPOL, DoH, AMS, DRGL, DIA, DET, DAO, DotAG, DCS, DFC, Legal Aid, CLC and others as required.

## CASE MANAGEMENT

(Usual service provision responsibilities apply)

Child protection (DCP):

Placements for children in care (DCP):

Ongoing investigation and prosecutions (WAPOL):

Offender Court Process/Management (DotAG, DPP, DCS, ALS and Legal Aid)

Child Victim and Witness Support (DoTAG):

## COMMUNITY HEALING (DoH and DCP)

Child victim support: (DCP visiting psychologists)

Community mental health (DoH visiting services) and (AMS)

Alcohol and drug programs (DAO) and liquor control (DRGL)

Cultural and healing activities in partnership with existing community structures

Protective Behaviors Programs (DET)

Alternative Dispute Resolution (DoTAG and other partners)

Establish arrangements for effective engagement, through trust and communication as a foundation for future community building (DFC and DOIR)

## OTHER FUNCTIONS OF THE LOCAL COORDINATION GROUP

- Interagency information sharing - Coordinated reporting (situation updates) to government via agency DG to the DGG on Indigenous Affairs – DIA to convene and provide Exec Support
- Interagency coordination of logistics (staff travel and accommodation in emergency response phase) (LCG)
- Short-term accommodation for staff and community- DHW
- Relevant media communication
- Engagement of Non Government Agencies either already in the community or to be brought in
- Training/support of local community response staff in cultural awareness and sensitivity (Agency responsibility)
- Facilitate community building activities with the Place Manager – DFC and DOIR
- Liaison with community via a Community Reference Group that is made up of existing community structures or specifically established where there are none existing
- Where there is not an existing Place Manager identify and expedite the appointment of one at the location through the DCP, with DIA

## ONGOING COMMUNITY BUILDING – PHASE 3

Local Coordinator (Place Manager): (contact details)

Local Coordination Group meeting: Suggested monthly at xx am/pm at (location)

Membership: Place Manager (convener) DoH (Co-convener), AMS, WAPOL, DAO, DCP, DOIR, DHW, DRGL, DIA, DET, DotAG, DCS, CLC, Legal Aid and others as required.

### COMMUNITY HEALING (DoH and AMS)

Child victim support: DCP visiting psychiatrists and/or psychologists  
 Community mental health (DoH visiting services)  
 Alcohol and drug programs (DAO)  
 Cultural Healing activities (in partnership with existing community networks)  
 Protective Behaviours Programs (DET)  
 Alcohol and drug programs (DAO) and liquor control (DRGL)  
 Judicially Based Case Management (DotAG)

### ONGOING PARTERSHIPS TO STRENGTHEN GOVERNANCE AND SERVICE FUNCTIONS (DLGRD and DFC)

Family support, protective behaviours training (DCP)  
 Governance training (DOCEP, ORATSIC, DLGRD and TAFE)  
 Community Development (DFC)  
 Effective arrangements for engagement are identified, in consultation with Indigenous people to ensure a partnership approach in ongoing development (DFC and DOIR)  
 Housing and accommodation plan (DHW)  
 Public health plan (DoH and AMS)  
 Prevention Programs maintaining law and order (WAPOL, DCS, DotAG through AJAs, DIA Patrols)  
 Developing local work transition programs and economic development plan (DIOR, RDCs, DLGRD, DET Participation Officers with local partners)

### OTHER FUNCTIONS OF THE LOCAL COORDINATION GROUP

- Media and communication
- Liaison with a Community Reference Group that is made up of existing community networks or specifically established where there are none existing
- Interagency information sharing - Coordinated reporting (situation updates) to government via agency DG to the DGG on Indigenous Affairs – DIA to convene and provide Exec Support
- To ensure that the AJA process is used as a vehicle to identify and prioritise issues impacting on the community
- Training/support of local community response staff in cultural awareness and sensitivity (Agency responsibility)

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	<b>Phase 1: Initial Response</b>	<b>Phase 2: Recovery</b>	<b>Phase 3: Ongoing Community Building</b>
<b>WA Police</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Lead the investigative response including the deployment of qualified child interview teams and child abuse investigators</i></li> <li>• <i>Provide coordinated, sustained and rapid deployment of personnel</i></li> <li>• <i>Ensure communication with other members of the Local Coordination Group to enable a timely and efficient response to broader impacts on the community</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Assist in and promote restorative justice processes in local communities</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Provide sustainable policing services by increasing resources to existing police stations and MFPF</i></li> <li>• <i>Establish new MFPF supporting high-risk Indigenous Communities</i></li> <li>• <i>Assist in the coordination of Government services</i></li> <li>• <i>Participate in multi-agency initiatives</i></li> <li>• <i>Support the uptake of Police diversion services</i></li> </ul>
	<p><i>Gordon Initiatives To Consider</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Video Evidentiary Unit <b>G4</b></i></li> <li>▪ <i>Place Family Protection Coordinators in country districts <b>G3</b></i></li> <li>▪ <i>Aboriginal Police Liaison Officers <b>G46</b></i></li> <li>▪ <i>Establish new remote policing services and co-locate with DCP <b>G2</b></i></li> <li>▪ <i>Increase resources for Child Abuse Investigation Unit <b>G44</b></i></li> </ul>	

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	<b>Phase 1: Initial Response</b>	<b>Phase 2: Recovery</b>	<b>Phase 3: Ongoing Community Building</b>
<b>Department for Child Protection</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess, investigate and provide case management and support of children and families where there are protective issues</li> <li>Make placements in foster care or residential care</li> <li>As part of the investigation process and with the support of WA Police conduct family and community group meetings to provide feedback and advocacy and seek advice regarding child protection</li> <li>Support DIA in the appointment of an appropriate Place Manager where one does not exist</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide support and therapeutic services to abused children and their families</li> <li>DCP will contribute to the work involved in the recovery phases especially around strengthening the child protection focus within the community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Train Indigenous and other child interviewers to conduct joint interviews with police</li> <li>Promote responsible and protective parenting.</li> </ul>
	<p><i>Gordon Initiatives To Consider</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased Child Protection Workers <b>G1</b></li> <li>Strengthen relationships between Strong Families and Indigenous Families Program <b>G6</b></li> <li>Expand Stronger Families program <b>G5</b></li> <li>Child Death Review Committee <b>G64</b></li> <li>Expansion of Aboriginal Sexual Abuse Service <b>G10</b></li> <li>Expand Crisis Care after hours services <b>G7</b></li> <li>Actively enhance programs to support “at risk” families <b>G52</b></li> <li>Safe Places-Safe People <b>G15</b></li> <li>Recruit and support Aboriginal Support Workers <b>G8</b></li> <li>Build capacity and strengths of communities <b>G53</b></li> <li>Developmental community process <b>G54</b> and Skill community members <b>G65</b></li> <li>Increase capacity to provide culturally appropriate counseling and support services <b>G14</b></li> </ul>	

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	Phase 1: Initial Response	Phase 2: Recovery	Phase 3: Ongoing Community Building
Department of Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide emergency response staff to assist in the assessment and treatment of alleged victims of child sexual assault</li> <li>• Provide mental health services for community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In partnership with DCP and Non Government Organisations, provide post abuse support services for children and families</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funds, in partnership with the Commonwealth Government, to provide suitably resourced health services and facilities within Indigenous communities</li> <li>• Notify WA Police concerning all incidents of STIs or other indicators of child sex abuse</li> <li>• Contribute to educational programs such as Protective Behaviours and Sexual Health programs</li> </ul>
	Gordon Initiatives To Consider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand Sexual Assault Referral Services <b>G11</b></li> <li>• Aboriginal psychiatric services <b>G67</b></li> <li>• Child Protection Unit <b>G9</b></li> <li>• Professional development for Aboriginal staff <b>G77</b></li> <li>• Aboriginal Liaison Workers in the Sexual Assault Referral Centre <b>G78</b></li> <li>• Reporting of Abuse in Children <b>G80</b></li> </ul>	

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Department of Indigenous Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide lead agency coordination of the Operational Response through the Directors General Group on Indigenous Affairs</li> <li>• Provide a liaison role between Indigenous communities and the Operational Response DG Group through the Place Manager</li> <li>• Ensure the Place manager is informed of all decisions, meetings and minutes of meetings of the DGG overseeing the response →</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and deliver the regional level recovery response with relevant government and non-government agencies</li> <li>• Ensure that all service delivery in remote communities meets the Guiding Principles requirements and operate in the best interests of the whole community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribute towards the development and expansion of Community Patrols in Indigenous communities</li> </ul>
	Gordon Initiatives To Consider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote universal prevention and Early Intervention re family violence and child abuse <b>G33</b></li> <li>• Develop Place Management approach in East Kimberley <b>G27</b></li> <li>• Data on prevalence of sexual assault <b>G121</b></li> <li>• Governance and Leadership <b>G28 – 29</b> (superseded by Bilateral Agreement – role for DLGRD)</li> </ul>	

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<b>Department of Education and Training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Ensure all suspicions of child abuse are reported to Police &amp; DCP in line with established DET Child Protection procedures</i></li> <li>• <i>Make arrangements that ensure that alleged perpetrators do not have access to their alleged victims on school property (issues around info sharing to implement this)</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Explore and develop strategies to maximise school attendance within Indigenous communities</i></li> <li>• <i>Maintain a Drug and Alcohol Education Officer</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Contribute educational programs within Indigenous communities such as Protective Behaviours, Responsible Parenting</i></li> <li>• <i>Ensure all teachers and education support staff within Indigenous communities undertake Child Protection Training</i></li> <li>• <i>Provide community governance education and training</i></li> <li>• <i>Liaise with universities for the provision of degree courses – eg NDU in Broome</i></li> </ul>
	<i>Gordon Initiatives To Consider</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Teach Protective Behaviours <b>G114</b></i></li> <li>▪ <i>Implement a state-wide management plan for school attendance including developing case management, student tracking system and school attendance officers <b>G115</b></i></li> <li>▪ <i>Prevention Education <b>G116</b></i></li> <li>▪ <i>Reporting and disclosure of child abuse <b>G118</b></i></li> </ul>	

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Department of Housing and Works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Build emergency accommodation identified as necessary for children at risk in Indigenous communities</i></li> <li>• <i>Deliver critical housing and buildings for communities and government agencies within Indigenous communities</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>To construct required buildings and accommodation that support government agencies deployed within or visiting Indigenous communities</i></li> <li>• <i>Liaise with local government and other agencies (i.e. Horizon Power, Water Corp) to ensure the provision of essential services in the community</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>To reduce overcrowding within Indigenous Communities through residential accommodation and infrastructure</i></li> </ul>
	<p><i>Gordon Initiatives To Consider</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Develop strategies to increase private rental accommodation for disadvantaged tenants <b>G105</b></i></li> <li>▪ <i>Management Support Program DHW <b>G107</b></i></li> <li>▪ <i>Provide emergency accommodation for Aboriginal people <b>G109</b></i></li> </ul>	

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<b>Department of the Attorney General</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bring together the judiciary and the relevant agencies involved in the delivery of justice services, to ensure sufficient court, legal and support services in order to expeditiously dispose of the increased number of child sex abuse cases</li> <li>Provide culturally appropriate court preparation and support to child complainants and witnesses of child sex abuse within Indigenous communities</li> <li>Provide counseling, information and support to adult victims and vulnerable witnesses. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide assistance with applications for Violence Restraining Orders.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Provision of Interpreters</li> <li>Provide Audio Visual facilities throughout courts within the Kimberley</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide victim and witness support to children within Indigenous communities</li> <li>Support the uptake of police and court diversion services for Aboriginal people</li> <li>Provide Alternative Dispute Resolution</li> <li>Evaluate possibility of developing specialist Aboriginal courts and family and domestic violence courts within the region.</li> <li>Through Aboriginal Justice Agreements, assist in providing forums to engage with Aboriginal communities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that the regional Aboriginal Justice Agreements are available to all relevant agencies for their appropriate action</li> <li>Evaluate possibility of developing specialist Aboriginal courts and family and domestic violence courts within the region.</li> </ul>
	<b>Gordon Initiatives To Consider</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Victim support and Child Witness Services<b>G20</b>      Expand Family Violence Courts<b>G22</b></li> <li>Unified Victim Support Services<b>G83</b>      Aboriginal Support Workers<b>G8</b></li> <li>Promote greater awareness of court systems including translating into language<b>G82</b></li> <li>Increase Aboriginal volunteers in Victim Support Services<b>G85</b></li> <li>Alternative dispute resolution services<b>G86</b>      Proactive release of information<b>G89</b></li> <li>Regional based cross cultural training<b>G87</b>      Integrated Court Management System<b>G90</b></li> </ul>	

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	<b>Phase 1: Initial Response</b>	<b>Phase 2: Recovery</b>	<b>Phase 3: Ongoing Community Building</b>
<b>Department of Corrective Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Provide appropriate custodial care of prisoners from Indigenous communities within the justice system</i></li> <li>• <i>Provide appropriate custodial transport of prisoners from Indigenous communities within the justice system</i></li> <li>• <i>Manage the integration of Indigenous prisoners into the justice system considering age, cultural and family issues</i></li> <li>• <i>Suicide Prevention Programs</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Supervise persons on bail or oversee supervision orders in the community with other relevant support staff</i></li> <li>• <i>Supervise parolees in the community with other relevant support staff</i></li> <li>• <i>Train and clinically supervise Aboriginal Community Corrections Officers</i></li> <li>• <i>Support the uptake of police and court diversion services for Aboriginal people</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Contribute to streamlining core police and justice activities through extension of custodial services</i></li> <li>• <i>Provide or purchase culturally secure sex offender treatment programs for adults and juveniles in and out of prison</i></li> <li>• <i>Provide or purchase culturally appropriate cognitive Behaviours, Violent Offenders and alcohol and drug programs in and out of prison</i></li> <li>• <i>NGO support</i></li> </ul>
	<i>Gordon Initiatives To Consider</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Community Supervision Agreements G12</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Sex Offender Programs G91</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Management of released offenders G13</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Reasoning and Rehabilitation Programs G92</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Provide psychological and psychiatric services to all juveniles in detention and remand centres G98</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Aboriginal Men Perpetrators Group G102</i></li> </ul>	

AGENCIES	AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE CHILDREN ARE SAFE AND SECURE WITHIN THEIR COMMUNITIES, WITHOUT FEAR OF ABUSE		
	Phase 1: Initial Response	Phase 2: Recovery	Phase 3: Ongoing Community Building
Drug and Alcohol Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinate government, NGO and community based services response relating to alcohol and drug misuse.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure culturally secure treatment, referral and harm reduction services concerning alcohol and drug misuse are available within Indigenous communities.</li> <li>Facilitate and or provide culturally secure training for Alcohol and Drug workers within government, non-government and community controlled organizations in relevant communities.</li> <li>Establish effective culturally secure clinical supervision mechanisms for alcohol and drug workers.</li> <li>Support the uptake of police and court diversion services for Aboriginal people.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that Aboriginal communities have ready access to culturally secure drug and alcohol prevention and early intervention information, programs and resources.</li> <li>Support the development of coordinated initiatives to prevent and reduce harm in relation to alcohol abuse, including expansion of the Enough is Enough alcohol program.</li> <li>Work with the Commonwealth, other State Government agencies and local groups in the development of a petrol sniffing strategy as appropriate.</li> <li>Support the establishment of Local Drug Action Groups.</li> <li>Work with other agencies to develop family focused strategies to assist Aboriginal parents with alcohol and drug problems to address their alcohol and drug use and strengthen parenting skills.</li> <li>Over time, increase the number of Aboriginal employees in AOD services</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Gordon Initiatives To Consider:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Volatile substance abuse services <b>G71</b></li> <li>▪ Drug and Alcohol Initiatives <b>G73</b></li> </ul>	

**AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE CHILDREN ARE SAFE AND SECURE WITHIN  
THEIR COMMUNITIES, WITHOUT FEAR OF ABUSE**

AGENCIES	AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE CHILDREN ARE SAFE AND SECURE WITHIN THEIR COMMUNITIES, WITHOUT FEAR OF ABUSE		
	Phase 1: Initial Response	Phase 2: Recovery	Phase 3: Ongoing Community Building
Department of Racing, Gaming and Liquor		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Oversight liquor licensing throughout the region and regulate the sale, supply and consumption of liquor.</li> <li>Facilitate liquor accords and community alcohol agreements in collaboration with key stakeholders.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure compliance with the requirements of the Liquor Control Act.</li> <li>Develop and implement policy consistent with Government objectives.</li> <li>Minimize harm and ill health caused to any group of people due to the use of liquor.</li> </ul>
	<i>Gordon Initiatives To Consider</i>		
Department of Premier and Cabinet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinate media and communication strategies from a Whole-of-Government perspective.</li> <li>Monitor and respond to unhelpful, discriminatory and incorrect information being disseminated.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinate the WA Government negotiating position with the Joint Commonwealth/State Strategic intervention plan to address child abuse in Indigenous communities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide policy support and coordination of Government services between various committees, groups and Department of Premier and Cabinet.</li> </ul>
	<i>Gordon Initiatives To Consider</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regional Training Program <b>G37</b></li> <li>Across Government collaboration and Co-ordination <b>G34</b></li> <li>Information sharing legislation and protocols <b>G42</b></li> </ul>	
Legal Aid			
	<i>Gordon Initiatives To Consider</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Representation of parents in Children's Court <b>G123</b></li> </ul>	
Office of Crime Prevention			
	<i>Gordon Initiatives To Consider</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Safety and Crime Prevention Indigenous Partnership fund. <b>G19</b></li> </ul>	

AGENCIES	AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE CHILDREN ARE SAFE AND SECURE WITHIN THEIR COMMUNITIES, WITHOUT FEAR OF ABUSE		
	Phase 1: Initial Response	Phase 2: Recovery	Phase 3: Ongoing Community Building
Department for Communities			
	<i>Gordon Initiatives To Consider</i>		
Department of Industry and resources		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Develop local engagement with arts groups/centre for social, cultural and economic growth.</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Review, recommend and implement arts initiatives, which provide sustainable involvement in cultural, social and commercial activities.</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Developing local work transition programs and economic development plan where appropriate.</i></li> </ul>
	<i>Gordon Initiatives To Consider</i>		
Non-Government Agency Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Incorporate where possible into interagency coordination meetings (taking account of confidential discussions).</i></li> <li>• <i>Contract to provide specific immediate services unable to be provided by Government to victims, families and offenders.</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Develop and contract to provide specific longer-term services to victims, offenders and families.</i></li> <li>• <i>Contract to provide restorative justice and reconciliation meetings to assist in community building.</i></li> <li>• <i>Manage hostels and safe houses.</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Contract to provide longer-term family support, therapeutic services, and treatment programs.</i></li> <li>• <i>Contract to provide training to and supervision of helping professionals in communities.</i></li> </ul>

### 3. SUMMARY

A model is proposed for agreed whole of government action to address broad community issues arising from the disclosure of child abuse in Indigenous communities in the East Kimberley.

Given the dramatic rise in disclosures and investigations of child abuse in recent months, it has become critically important to have a response model that addresses the immediate needs of victims as well as the broader issues impacting families and communities.

The proposed approach has been informed by current experiences and practices and will be further developed based on evidence of what is working well. This approach can be used to respond in other communities where appropriate.

This response model is underpinned by the *Western Australian Government's Response to the Gordon Inquiry into Family Violence and Child Abuse in Indigenous Communities* (the *Gordon Action Plan*). The *Gordon Action Plan* provides the ongoing, longer-term measures needed to reduce family violence and eliminate child abuse.

It involves working collaboratively across Governments and with non-Government organisations. It is essential that the community is fully and actively participating in the implementation of this approach.

The model will provide a phased approach consisting of:

#### **Phase 1 – Initial Response:**

Immediate and short-term response coordinated by WA Police. Involves investigation and case management; community support; and communication with communities and across agencies.

#### **Phase 2 – Recovery:**

Support for the broader community to manage issues arising as a result of the allegations and arrests. This phase involves case management,

community-healing strategies such as child victim support, counseling, mental health services and drug and alcohol interventions.

**Phase 3- Ongoing Community Building:**

Longer-term community building processes that brings about safety and security of children. This phase emphasises a focused approach to providing victim support and counseling, cultural healing and alcohol and drug programs. It seeks to build partnerships between communities, government and non-government agencies to strengthen governance and service functions. Family and community needs such as housing, governance training, community development, health and economic development are responded to in this phase.

The roles and responsibilities of agencies in each phase of operation have been mapped out. Relevant *Gordon Action Plan* responsibilities that each agency will need to consider in their response is also identified. This provides a clear picture of the role of each agency in undertaking this coordinated response. It will also assist in the process of assessing the status of implementation action taken by agencies in communities.

As at 21 September 2007