

# MACKAY / WHITSUNDAY SAFE COMMUNITIES PROJECT



## Progress Update 1 June 2000

This is the first of regular progress updates that will be released on a six monthly basis.

### Background:

As a response to above average injury rates identified in the Mackay / Whitsunday area, the Mackay / Whitsunday Safe Communities Project was established to address the issue and help the area become Queensland's first internationally recognised safe community.

The Mackay / Whitsunday Safe Communities Project is a World Health Organisation supported approach to community injury control that has been proven to be an effective means of reducing injury throughout the world, including Australia.

### Project Management Team:

In September 1999, an intersectoral project management team was established with representatives from Mackay City Council, Whitsunday Shire Council, Queensland Transport, Queensland Police Service and Queensland Health.



Members of Project Management Team (Left to right): Peter Day (Manager, Environmental Health, Whitsunday Shire Council); Paul Vardon (Health Promotion Officer, Tropical Public Health Unit, Queensland Health – Mackay); Nicole O'Bryan (Road Safety Consultant, Queensland Transport); Kevin Harrigan (Officer in Charge, Proserpine Police); Jan Kilbourne (Chief Community Development Officer, Mackay City Council) & Dr Dale Hanson (Emergency Physician, Mackay Base Hospital, Queensland Health). Absent: Peter Driemel (Environmental Health Officer, Whitsunday Shire Council).

### Launches:

On 3 February 2000, Mackay Mayor Julie Boyd officially launched the project at the Mackay Council Chambers, supported by Mackay Health Service District Manager Mr David Yule, Mackay Hospital Emergency Department Physician Dr Dale Hanson and the Manager of the Queensland Injury Surveillance Unit Mr Adrian Horth.



(Left to right) Dr Dale Hanson, Adrian Horth, David Yule and Julie Boyd.  
Photo courtesy of: Mackay Daily Mercury)

On 7 February 2000, Whitsunday Mayor Mario Demartini officially launched the project at the Proserpine Cultural Centre, supported by Mackay Hospital Emergency Department Physician Dr Dale Hanson.



(Left to right) Dr Dale Hanson and Mario Demartini

These launches represented the first step in establishing Queensland's first internationally recognised 'World Health Organisation Safe Community'.

Professor Lief Svanstrom (Head of the World Health Organisation Collaborating Centre on Community Safety Promotion at the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm, Sweden which co-ordinates the Safe Communities program at an international level) commended Mackay and Whitsunday for undertaking and supporting this important initiative.



## Project Working groups:

There are several project working groups currently involved in the project. Given this is a long term initiative, further project working groups are planned.

- Collaborative injury research working group:

Membership includes representatives from Queensland Injury Surveillance Unit, Queensland Health and James Cook University. This working group currently collects injury data from Mackay and Proserpine Hospitals. The data is then analysed to guide the direction of injury control activities, as well as to assist in the evaluation of the project. *For further information regarding this working group please contact: Dr Dale Hanson, Emergency Physician, Mackay Base Hospital ph: 4968 6000*

- Senior safety working group in Mackay:

Membership includes: representatives from Mackay City Council, Mackay Community Health Services, Queensland Health's Tropical Public Health Unit and local community members. This working group plans to address the issue of falls prevention. Activities of this working group to date include: the release by the Mackay City Council of a seniors information directory, the launch of the Healthy Homes Party Program and the launch of the Just Walk It Program. *For further information regarding this working group please contact: Ms Jan Kilbourne, Chief Community Development Officer, Mackay City Council, ph: 4968 4433.*

- Violence Prevention:

Mackay Crime Prevention Partnership and the Mackay / Whitsunday Safe Communities Project are sharing resources, to conduct an audit of violence in the Mackay / Whitsunday region. The aim of the audit is to document what is recorded of unacceptable violence in our community and identify causes of violent behaviour. The audit will provide a starting-point for the communities of Mackay / Whitsunday to develop strategies to prevent violence, and a baseline against which to evaluate the effectiveness of initiatives in reducing violence. *For further information regarding this, please contact: Mr John Mallett, Regional Coordinator, Mackay Crime Prevention Partnership, ph: 4968 4548*

- Child safety working group in Whitsunday:

Membership includes: representatives from Whitsunday Shire Council, Whitsunday Community Health Centre, Education Queensland, Queensland Police Service, Queensland Transport, Whitsunday Neighborhood Centre and Queensland Health's Tropical Public Health Unit. This working group plans to address the issue of bike injury using a multi-strategic approach. The first step being taken in Whitsunday to reduce child injury associated with bicycles, is the BP Bike Ed Program.

A BP Bike Ed train the trainer program was conducted by Queensland Transport in Proserpine in April. Eleven people attended this course including teachers, police and parents. *For further information regarding this working group please contact Mrs Laura Brown, Coordinator of Whitsunday Community Health Centre ph: 4946 5633.*



(Left to right) Nicole O'Bryan; Road Safety Consultant, Qld Transport, Jodie McSweeney; Proserpine Police, Richard Floyd; PE Teacher, Cannonvale State School.  
(Photo courtesy of: Whitsunday Times)

## Conference Attendance:

Dr Dale Hanson and Paul Vardon recently attended a World Health Organisation Safe Communities International Symposium in Melbourne that included: the formal accreditation ceremony of Melbourne, a 2 day seminar on community safety and three one day site visits to study community safety initiatives implemented in a range of settings.

## Planned future Safe Communities activities include:

- Compilation of a baseline injury report for 1999
- Conducting a telephone survey
- Child safety workshops
- Development of a web-site
- Injury prevention activities at local primary schools in Whitsunday

*To find out more, to be involved, or to let the project management team know of existing local injury prevention and safety promotion activities please contact the project facilitator: Mr Paul Vardon, Health Promotion Officer, Tropical Public Health Unit – Mackay, Queensland Health, ph: 4968 3858*

