



Community Safety Plan 2015 - 2020



Mildura Rural City Council



Northern
Mallee
Community
Partnership

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INTRODUCTION

Perceptions of safety are a key indicator of the overall health and wellbeing of a community. A safe community is one where people are able to participate and live their lives in an environment without fear or risk of harm or injury. Community safety is about providing an environment where people are informed, engaged and welcome.

The Northern Mallee Community Partnership Safety Operational Group has developed this five year Community Safety Plan to address and improve perceptions of safety within the local community. The plan has been developed through a collaborative approach, is based on local data, informed by research

‘Everyone has the right to life,
liberty and security of person’

*(Article 3, Universal Declaration
of Human Rights)*

and evaluation and aligned to the 2013-2017 Mildura Rural City Council Plan and 2013-2017 Mildura Rural City Council Community Health and Wellbeing Plan. This plan focuses on perceptions of safety and considers a broad range of issues impacting on perceptions of safety within the community.

A number of priority areas for actions were identified based on the information and data collected through the development process. The key priority areas are:

- safe, active and well maintained public spaces
- partnerships and collaboration
- communication, media and safety messages
- supporting people, community strengthening and capacity building activities
- reducing harm associated with alcohol
- minimising the impact of illicit drugs in the community.

Local organisations and services are currently working in all of the key priority areas. There are increased opportunities for collaborative efforts, greater community engagement, access to resources and service improvements by combining all key priority areas into an overarching community safety plan.



BACKGROUND

Perceptions of safety are a significant measure of the broader health and wellbeing of a community. When people feel unsafe, they are less likely to be connected to, or actively involved in their community. When people feel unsafe they are more likely to be isolated and fearful which are important factors in a person's capacity to engage in social and recreational activities, education, employment and access services and facilities.

Community safety is consistently identified as a high priority for local residents. The 2013-2017 Mildura Rural City Council Plan and the 2013-2017 Mildura Rural City Council Community Health and Wellbeing Plan both commit to the development of a 'Community Safety Plan' as a way of addressing the concerns identified through the engagement and consultation process.

The Northern Mallee Community Partnership (NMCP) Safety Operational Group (SOG) was established in 2007 and its focus is to bring together representatives from different sectors to identify, collect and analyse data related to safety indicators and make recommendations to the NMCP. As part of annual planning in 2014, the SOG identified priority areas for action and a project group was formed to address perceptions of safety within the community.

The alignment of Council and the NMCP Safety Operational Group priorities created an opportunity for a collaborative approach to developing a plan to understand, address and improve perceptions of safety within the community.

'Neighbourhoods which are perceived as safe, foster community participation, encourage physical activity, community connectedness and add to the health and well-being of local residents and visitors. Neighbourhood safety can only be achieved through the development and support of partnerships, within local communities, with business, residents, community groups, police, agencies and councils, which identify local solutions to local issues. The built environment and the way neighbourhoods are designed and maintained, impact greatly on perceptions of safety and are critical factors in any strategy for improving safety in neighbourhoods.'

(Community Indicators Victoria)

THE SAFETY OPERATIONAL GROUP - PERCEPTIONS OF SAFETY PROJECT GROUP

The partners involved in the development of the plan represent key organisations with different roles and expertise who are involved in promoting safety in the community and crime prevention:

- Victoria Police
- Department of Justice & Regulation
- Mildura Rural City Council
- Youth Justice, Department of Human Services
- Mildura District Aboriginal Service
- Mildura Law Courts
- Northern Mallee Community Partnership
- Neighbourhood Watch
- Victims Assistance and Counselling Program, Sunraysia Community Health
- Mildura City
- Healthy Together Mildura
- Sunraysia Mallee Ethnic Communities Council.

The Community Safety Plan enables a holistic approach to community safety and will support:

- collaborative efforts for prevention and response to safety concerns
- improved coordination
- shared commitment to improving community safety
- better allocation of resources.

The implementation of the plan will be guided and supported by all SOG partner organisations. A project officer based at Council will work with the partnership to deliver the plan and coordinate and implement community safety initiatives as identified in the action plan.

METHODOLOGY

The SOG project group initiated and oversaw the development of the Community Safety Plan.

The development of the plan commenced with a review of data captured through past engagement processes including the community consultation undertaken as part of the development of the Mildura Rural City Council Plan 2013-2017. A review of national and international literature on perceptions of safety and community safety was undertaken as well as analysis of data from a range of sources.

The information gathered confirmed the broad and complex nature of community safety. Further consultation was undertaken to determine the main concerns of the community in relation to feeling safe via a broad based community survey which was undertaken in late 2014.

The survey drew a significant number of responses with over 400 members of the community participating. The success of the survey can be attributed to the collective efforts of the project group and the organisations represented. The engagement approach built on connections within community and the knowledge of how to engage effectively with a wide range of community members.

Priority areas and opportunities for action were identified by the SOG project group through analysis of survey data in conjunction with the existing data, literature and consideration of evidence based best practice in community safety. A detailed action plan has been developed to respond to the priority areas identified.

COMMUNITY SAFETY IN MILDURA RURAL CITY

Data from a number of sources focusing on perceptions of safety has been analysed to build an understanding of community safety, perceptions of safety and what influences perceptions.

Mildura Rural City Council Community Satisfaction Survey 2007-2013, Auspoll

Community perception of personal safety
Question: *How safe do you feel in your community?*

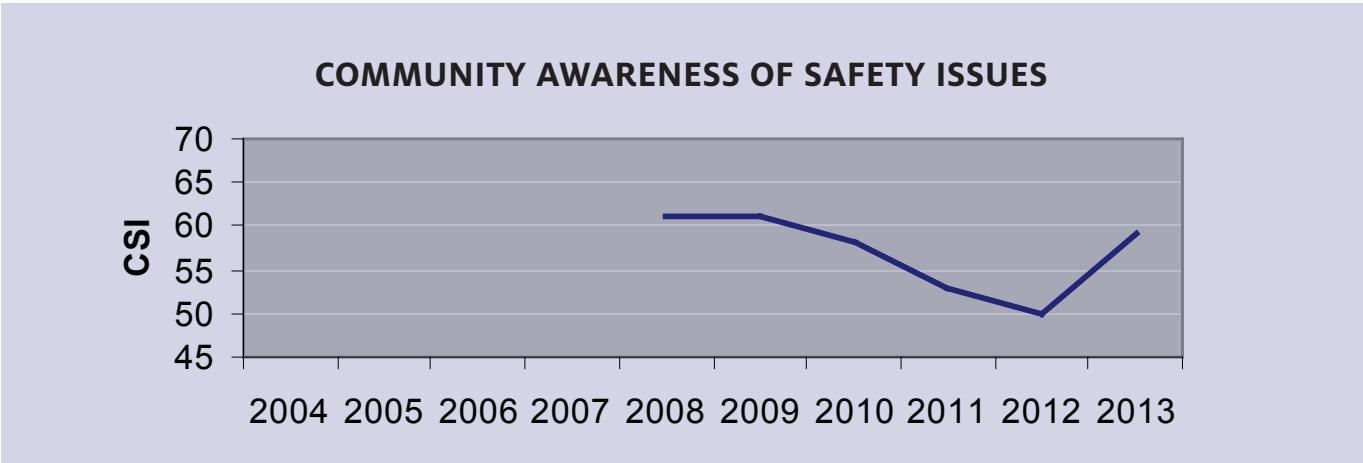
COMMUNITY SATISFACTION INDEX	75+	=	Very High
	65-75	=	High
	55-65	=	Moderate
	45-55	=	Low
	Below 45	=	Very Low



*CSI is a performance index weighted according to the importance applied by each respondent.

Mildura Rural City Council Community Satisfaction Survey 2007-2013, Auspoll

Community awareness of safety issues
Question: *Being made aware of safety issues in your community*



KEY DATA SOURCES

The following list outlines the key data sources used to build knowledge of community safety concerns:

- Annual Mildura Rural City Council Community Satisfaction Survey, perceptions of safety and awareness of safety issues data 2007-2013
- Victoria Police crime data for Mildura Rural City Local Government Area 2012-2013
- Mildura Rural City Council Plan community consultation data 2013
- Community Indicators Victoria Perceptions of Safety data 2007, 2011
- Mildura Social Indicators Report 2008
- Township Community Plans (Mildura West, East Mildura, Red Cliffs, Murrayville, Irymple, Nichols Point)
- Evaluation of the Mildura CBD Safety Strategy 2010.

The community survey undertaken by the Project Group identified the key factors that influence the community's perceptions of safety:

- public lighting
- well maintained public spaces
- police presence
- media reports
- community engagement and neighbourhood participation
- drug and alcohol issues
- crime
- Closed Circuit Television.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT AND ALIGNMENT

Local Context:

Mildura Rural City Council Plan 2013-2017 (pg 6)

1.1 Community Safety

Goals to be achieved:

- People feel safe; and
- People are safe.

Mildura Rural City Council Community Health and Wellbeing Plan 2013-2017 (pg 14)

Our goal is to create an environment where people are safe.

Strategy: Improve community safety

Actions: Develop and implement Community Safety Strategy

Additional local strategies and policies considered as part of the development of the plan:

- Mildura Rural City Council (MRCC) Road Safety Strategic Plan 2010-2017
- MRCC Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) Policy CP036
- MRCC Public Lighting Management Plan 2013-2018
- Community Plans.

Victorian Context:

- Victorian Charter of Human Rights
- Victoria Police Blue Print 2012-2015
- Victorian Government Community Crime Prevention Framework.

National and International Context:

- National Crime Prevention Framework
- Australian Safe Communities Foundation.

BEST PRACTICE IN COMMUNITY SAFETY

- Local partnerships, strong partnerships, shared responsibilities and common goals
- Community engagement and involvement in addressing community safety issues
- Strategies that consider both the physical environment and the social environment and the interrelation between the environments.

PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

The purpose of the Community Safety Plan is to provide a clear outline of how the Northern Mallee Community Partnership and the Mildura Rural City Council can work together to address and improve the perception of safety in the community.

GOAL

'Our goal is to create an environment where people feel safe'

- (Mildura Rural City Council Community Health and Wellbeing Plan, 2013-2017)

PRINCIPLES

The principles that underpin and guide the plan:

- Shared responsibility, decision making and a collaborative approach between local organisations, services and community is required to address and improve community safety.
- Best practice and evidence based solutions will deliver sustainable community safety results.
- Promoting an active and engaged community is crucial for improving perception of safety in communities.
- Local communities are best placed to develop and deliver solutions to improve safety in their own community.



PRIORITY AREAS

Six key priority areas were identified through the analysis of data collected through the research and consultation process. Specific goals were set in relation to each priority area and an action planning process was undertaken by the project group and stakeholders.

1 Safe and well maintained public spaces

Goal:

To create built and natural environments that are safe, promote health and wellbeing, are well maintained and utilised by the community.

- implementation of strategies that activate key public spaces
- application of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles on all new developments and review of key public spaces and facilities
- improving quality of public lighting
- continuation and extension of Closed Circuit Television program
- improving or addressing issues associated with hot spot areas such as laneways and public toilets.

2 Partnerships and Collaboration

Goal:

To strengthen existing partnerships which enable collaborative and effective approaches for addressing community safety.

Achieved by:

- continuation and extension of existing community safety partnership
- engagement of broader community in collective action for improved community safety
- exploring opportunity to undertake Pacific Australia Safe Communities Designation Accreditation process

3 Supporting people, community strengthening and capacity building activities

Goal:

To increase social capital in the community and improve the perception of safety for people who are less likely to feel safe.

Achieved by:

- supporting community development projects which have a safety and crime prevention focus through Council's Community grants program
- supporting community based programs aimed at improving perception of safety for vulnerable communities and community members (older people, women, newly arrived communities and children)
- continued implementation of the Neighbourhood Watch Program and activities.

PRIORITY AREAS

4

Communication, Media and Safety Messages

Goal:

Increase awareness and understanding of safety issues throughout the community.

Achieved by:

- developing a communications strategy and best practice guide for conveying community safety messages.
- engaging the local media in community safety partnerships and initiatives.

5

Reducing harm associated with alcohol

Goal:

To create a long term alcohol strategy for Mildura Rural City that identifies actions to reduce harm associated with alcohol consumption.

Achieved by:

- development of an alcohol strategy.

6

Minimising the impact of illicit drugs in the community

Goal:

Inform and empower the community with information about illicit drugs, particularly Ice, its affects, treatment and support options.

Achieved by:

- continuation of Project Ice initiatives
- actively pursuing further funding opportunities for collaborative approaches to drug concerns in the community
- delivery of mental health and drug education training.



IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION

The Community Safety Plan will be reviewed annually. Measures have been attached to each specific action outlined in the plan to ensure the outcomes can be measured and evaluated. Monitoring of the plan will be supported through Council's quarterly reporting system and reported to the Safety Operational Group.

REFERENCES

- Community Indicators Victoria 2011, http://www.communityindicators.net.au/wellbeing_reports/mildura
- Mildura Rural City Council Community Health and Wellbeing Plan 2013 to 2017
- Mildura Rural City Council Plan 2013 to 2017
- Community Crime Prevention Framework, Department of Justice & Regulation
- National Crime Prevention Framework, Australian Institute of Criminology
- Community Satisfaction Survey 2007-2013, Auspoll
- Mildura CBD Safety Strategy Evaluation, 2010, Bronny Walsh
- Universal Declaration of Human Rights



ACTION PLAN

Priority Area	Goal	Action	Measure	Lead	Timeline
1) Safe, active and well maintained public spaces	To create built and natural environments that are safe, promote health and wellbeing, are well maintained and utilised by the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ "Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design" (CPTED) principles are applied to new development, redevelopment, maintenance and management of public spaces and facilities within the municipality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ % of community spaces audited as non-compliant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Council – corporate nistration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ongoing- achievements reported annually
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Develop activation and place making plans for community precincts (riverfront and Mildura CBD) and laneways to create a vibrant community space with programs, vendors, activities and events that encourage community use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ % plan developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Council – Community Futures ■ Mildura City 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 2015-2016
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Implement activation and place making plans for community precincts (riverfront and Mildura CBD) and laneways. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ % plan implemented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Council – Community Futures ■ Mildura City 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 2016-2020
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Implementation the Mildura and Red Cliffs CBD Closed Circuit Television program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ % program implemented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Council – Community Futures ■ VicPol 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ongoing- achievements reported annually
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Extend the current Closed Circuit Television program to key localities such as 8th Street, 7th Street and the riverfront (Mildura). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ % extension complete 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Council – Community Futures ■ VicPol 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 2015-2016
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Raise profile and increase public awareness of existing Closed Circuit Television system through development and implementation of a media campaign. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ % campaign implemented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Council – Community Futures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 2015-2020
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Investigate the development of a smart phone based reporting application for Council's Customer Response Management system. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Brief developed, quotes obtained ■ Budget allocation request prepared pending cost versus benefit analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Council – Information Systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 2015-2016
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Develop Public Toilet Strategy taking into account usage, suitability and CPTED. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ % plan developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Council – Building and Environmental Service ■ VicPol and SOG 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 2015-2016
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Develop an action plan for the implementation of the Public Lighting Strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Action plan developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Council –Asset Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 2015-2016
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Implement the 'Lighting the Regions' project, upgrading of street lights. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ % project implemented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Council – Asset Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 2015-2016

ACTION PLAN

Priority Area	Goal	Action	Measure	Lead	Timeline
2] Partnerships and Collaboration	To strengthen existing partnerships which enable collaborative and effective approaches for addressing community safety	NMCP SOG Safety Project Group meets regularly to support implementation of plan.	■ Number of meetings conducted	■ Safety Operational Group	■ Quarterly meetings
		NMCP SOG Safety Project Group meets regularly to support implementation of plan.	■ Review and evaluation conducted	■ Safety Operational Group	■ Annually
		Develop and implement a communications plan based on the Community Safety Plan.	■ % communications plan implemented	■ Council – Community Futures	■ Annually
		Conduct a Safe Communities Forum allowing involvement of partners and community members.	■ Forum conducted	■ Safety Operational Group	■ Annually
		Undertake Pacific Australia Safe Communities Designation Accreditation process.	■ % process completed	■ Safety Operational Group	■ 2015-2017



ACTION PLAN

Priority Area	Goal	Action	Measure	Lead	Timeline
3 Supporting people, community strengthening and capacity building activities	To increase social capital and improve the perception of safety for people in the community who are less likely to feel safe.	■ Support community development projects which have a safety and crime prevention focus through Council's Community grants program.	■ Number of projects supported	■ Council – Community Futures	■ Ongoing- achievements reported annually
		■ Community safety events/ activities in rural communities.	■ Number of events / activities supported	■ Council – Community Futures	■ Ongoing- achievements reported annually
		■ Support safety related actions contained within Community Plans.	■ Number of plan actions supported	■ Council- Community Futures	■ Ongoing- achievements reported annually
		■ Implement Neighbourhood Watch program.	■ % program implemented	■ VicPol/ Neighbourhood Watch	■ Ongoing- achievements reported annually
		■ Install signage in neighbourhood parks to encourage reporting of crime.	■ Number of signs installed	■ Council – Building and Environmental Services	■ 2015-2016
		■ Undertake "safety hot spot analysis" and reporting within neighbourhoods and undertake community awareness activities as required.	■ Number of hot spot activities	■ VicPol/ Neighbourhood Watch	■ Ongoing- achievements reported annually
		■ Consult with young people and children to identify their safety concerns in relation to key public spaces.	■ Consultation Undertaken	■ Council – Community Care Services, Leisure and Cultural Services	■ Annual
		■ Consult with young people and children when designing and redeveloping public spaces.	■ Number of Consultation undertaken	■ Council – Community Care Services, Leisure and Cultural Services	■ Ongoing- achievements reported annually
		■ Support community based programs aimed at improving perception of safety for vulnerable communities and community members (children, youth, older people, women, newly arrived communities).	■ Number of projects supported	■ Council – Community Futures	■ Ongoing- achievements reported annually
		■ Support the development of a Regional Action Plan for the Primary Prevention of Violence against Women.	■ Regional action plan developed	■ Safety Operational Group	■ 2015-2016

ACTION PLAN

Priority Area	Goal	Action	Measure	Lead	Timeline
4 Communication, Media and Safety Messages	Increase awareness and understanding of safety issues throughout the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a communications strategy and best practice guide for conveying community safety messages. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communications Strategy developed Communications Plan implemented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safety Operational Group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2015-2016
5 Reducing harm associated with alcohol	To create a long term alcohol strategy for Mildura Rural City that identifies actions to reduce harm associated with alcohol consumption.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to operate the Taxi Waiting Zone. Develop an Alcohol Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hours of operation Strategy developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council – Community Futures Council – Community Care Services (Healthy Together Mildura) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing 2015-2016
6 Minimising the impact of illicit drugs in the community	To inform and empower the community with information about illicit drugs, particularly Ice, its affects, treatment and support options.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to implement Project Ice initiatives in the local community, information sessions on demand, relevant drug and alcohol information distributed via website and Facebook, community forums. Actively pursue future funding opportunities to continue the collaborative work across community through Project Ice and other funding opportunities, concerning drugs, as they arise. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of information sessions held Number of community forums Funding obtained 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safety Operational Group Northern Mallee Community Partnership SCHS VicPol Safety Operational Group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing 2015-2017
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to deliver key training programs to build community capacity - Mental Health First Aid, Youth Mental Health First Aid and Aboriginal Mental Health First Aid. Support the delivery of drug education in local schools. Advocate on behalf of community regarding the recommissioning of drug and alcohol services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of attendees at training and total training sessions delivered in the region Number of sessions completed Project group updates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northern Mallee Community Partnership Staff trained from member agencies NMCP & member agencies Safety Operational Group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing 2015-2017 2015