

Social Justice Interagency Services



"Umi One, Mepla Way Against Domestic and Family Violence"

In 2010, a number of Agencies formed a Domestic & Family Violence (D&FV) Action Committee for the Torres Strait. The group is known as the **Social Justice Interagency Services (SJIS)**. The group is made up of government and non-government agencies who are directly involved in domestic & family violence incidents/issues.

The Group's objective is to respond appropriately to D&FV within the community.

Our vision is to eradicate domestic & family violence within the Torres Strait Community and for all families to be safe from harm.

Aim

The Group meets regularly with an aim of reducing D&FV in the Torres Strait through:

- Strengthening partnership between communities and local services
- To educate victims and perpetrators of the support services available to them
- Working towards early intervention with a view of preventing repeat offences
- Reduce the incarceration rate of domestic & family violence (Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander) offenders
 - Increase networking within government and non-government agencies
 - Promote awareness and educate the community about domestic and family violence.

Role

The role of the SJIS is to respond and provide direction and leadership in regards to domestic and family violence issues that affect the Torres Strait Community.

The SJIS will create an open forum for discussion and communication between Agencies to prevent duplication of services and will enhance and provide support to any such Agencies that also respond to domestic and family violence issues in the Torres Strait Community.

The SJIS enables members to work collaboratively so that D&FV related services and initiatives are implemented in the Torres Strait in a coordinated, collaborative and sustainable manner.

The Social Justice Interagency Services is a collaboration of government and non-government agencies working together who are directly involved in domestic and family violence intervention and prevention within the Torres Strait region.

The Group also analysis's/identify the need (offending type, behaviour, repeat) and priorities where to target (in terms of people, community and location).

Social Justice Group Members

- Government and Non-Government members



Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander
Legal Service (Qld) Ltd



Relationships Australia.
QUEENSLAND



Probation & Parole Services,
Queensland Corrective Services

Queensland Health – Social & Emotional
Well-Being Team

Department of Child Safety, Youth and
Women

Department of Justice and Attorney-
General

ACTIVITIES (PAST AND ONGOING):

- Domestic & Family Violence Prevention Month (month of May) – planned activities which includes:
 - Information & Education Awareness Sessions/Stalls either on Thursday Island, Horn and Hammond Islands and also Outer Islands where we can; focus is on:
 - Elder Abuse
 - Healthy Relationships – targeting children and young people
 - Reporting
 - Domestic & Family Violence – explanation, cycle
 - Referral pathways
 - National Domestic & Family Violence Candle Lighting Vigil – on the first Wednesday of the month of May, lighting of the candle at 6pm (around the State)
- Fundraising
- Funding applications

KEY EVENTS:

Past events:

- Community Leaders Roundtable (23 May 2016, Thursday Island)
 - Outcomes & Key Discussions:
 - Response time (to incidents, victims and perpetrators)
 - Development of Safety Plans for each island
 - Domestic Violence (Respondents) Pilot Project – Torres Strait
 - Service Mapping was needed to identify available services, gaps and duplications
 - Community connectiveness is lacking *“it takes a community to raise a child”* and if the community connected more better then all would be able to assist in keep families safe in their home and community.
- Inaugural DV Conference (16 & 17 May 2017, Thursday Island)
 - Day 1 – participants received information and learnings
 - Day 2 - commencement of safety plans noting that each island of the Torres Strait are unique and different, and commencement of a domestic and family violence strategy for the Torres Strait where our voices will be heard at a national level.
 - Recruitment of Community Champions (following the conference the community champions stayed a further 3 days and attended accredited training in Recognise, Respond & Refer – Domestic Violence)
 - SJIS Ambassador launched
- Presented at the Queensland Indigenous Family Violence Prevention Forum 2017 “Our Keys to Healing”.

On-going

- Represent the Torres Strait holistically in regards to Domestic & Family Violence)
- Host the Local Level Alliance (LLA)
- Provide updates to the Torres Strait Regional Child, Youth and Family Committee
- Domestic Violence (Respondents) Pilot Project – Torres Strait
- Develop the Torres Strait Domestic & Family Violence Plan
- Develop Safety Plans for each islands of the Torres Strait
- Finalised the recruitment of Community Champions (including their roles & responsibilities and Code of Conduct)
- Lobbying and collaborating with relevant Agencies to support our work

CHALLENGES:

- Finalising the D&FV Plan and Safety Planning for the Torres Strait
 - Funding
 - Volunteers – statistics and activities identified the need for a position that focus solely on Domestic & Family violence work

Champion of Change Initiative

- **WHY**

SJIS identified a gap with the ongoing response and support for those affected by D&FV (victims, perpetrator, children, community etc) throughout the Torres Strait.

There was also a need for community engagement and an integrated approach to respond appropriately to D&FV.

- **AIM**

a) To recruit 2 community champions for each island of the Torres Strait that will recognise, respond (safely) and refer (appropriately); these champions are grass root and are voluntary.

b) To identified a contact in the community to provide support, linking and referral to both victims and perpetrator.

OUTCOME

Is to upskill community champions by providing the appropriate tools and awareness to enable communities to better collaborate and improve the way they work together and develop local solutions to address D&FV in the Torres Strait. It is anticipated that the D&FV violence will eventually be eradicated from the Torres Strait.

The community champions will play a vital role in the following:

- The development of unique Safety Plans that will cater for each individual community. The Safety Plans will be implemented and utilised by community champions and relevant stakeholders when required.
- The development of the D&FV Plan for the Torres Strait is driven and owned by the community and will be provided to relevant government to endorse and acknowledged.
- The Safety Plan and D&FV Plan will be adapted to community specific needs.
- Community Champions where elected via an expression of interest process.

A key focus of the Community Champions is to start and keep the conversation of D&FV going in the Torres Strait.

Papua New Guinea

Boigu 1

Dauan

Saibai (Kaumag) 1

Ugar (Stephen)

Erub (Darnley)

Torres Strait

Masig (Yorke) 2

2 Mabuiag

Badu (Mulgrave)

Moa 2

Iama (Yam) 2

Poruma (Coconut) 2

Mer (Murray) 2

Warraber (Sue) 2

1 Keriri (Hammond)

Waiben (Thursday)

Ngurupai (Horn) 1

Muralug (Prince of Wales)

Seisia

Bamaga

Cape York



Thursday Island, main administrative centre of the Torres Strait



WHERE TO FROM HERE:

- To be the lead Group that targets and focuses on D&FV prevention and in intervention in the Torres Strait, that is recognised locally, state and nationally
- Incorporate the Red Rose Rally
- Training – related to domestic & family violence that will be provided to the community champions as well as roll out to the community in general such as Bystander/MATE training
- Finalise the D&FV Plan and Safety Planning for the Torres Strait
- Create a position (to do the administrative tasks which would include mapping all the statistics to identify patterns/trends, source and complete funding applications, research, coordinating community champions)
- Finalise the recruitment and empower our community champions
- Hosting bi-annually D&FV Conference – this will depend on funding

