

Police will generally contact an Aboriginal Support Group person within one (1) hour of a persons arrest or detention. This is in addition to the required contact of the Aboriginal Legal Service, regardless of the fact that the person arrested/detained is juvenile or adult.

Commitment and dedication by Aboriginal Support Groups demonstrates the community is striving to maintain positive relationships between police and Aboriginal people.

NSW Police Force will continue to establish and maintain Aboriginal Support Groups across NSW. Guidelines for the establishment of Aboriginal Supports Groups and a model of best practice have been prepared by the Aboriginal Coordination Team. For more information about Aboriginal Support Groups please contact the Aboriginal Coordination Team (below) or your local Police Station.

## Contact Details

### ABORIGINAL COORDINATION TEAM

Manager \_\_\_\_\_ (02) 8835 9129  
ACLO State Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_ (02) 8835 9545  
Aboriginal Family Violence Officer \_\_\_\_\_ (02) 8835 8003  
Program Officer \_\_\_\_\_ (02) 8835 9130  
Program Support Officer \_\_\_\_\_ (02) 8835 8918

### COMMISSIONER'S INSPECTORATE

Level 8A  
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LET'S WORK IN PARTNERSHIP TO  
*keep our mob out of custody*

*ATSIS Support*

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*With your help, a safer community.*

The Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (RCIADIC - 1991) Recommendation No. 145 identified the need for the *operation of cell visitor schemes*. Aboriginal Support Groups (or cell visitor schemes) are being established in Police Local Area Commands across NSW.

## *Role of the Aboriginal Support Group*

To improve relationships and interaction between police and the Aboriginal community within Local Area Commands by:

- Providing quality support for Aboriginal victims of crime;
- Supporting Aboriginal persons arrested or detained by police;
- Establishing and maintaining an effective working relationship between Aboriginal persons and police;
- Developing awareness and understanding of Aboriginal culture and community needs; and
- Providing advice, support and feedback to the Aboriginal community on police practices and procedures.

Outcomes from Aboriginal Support Groups and police working together include:

- Providing an on call service for Aboriginal victims or offenders;
- Providing an effective and appropriate service to meet the needs of Aboriginal victims of crime;
- Providing appropriate support to Aboriginal persons arrested or detained;
- Seeking to reduce the number of Aboriginal people entering the criminal justice system;

- Participating in Aboriginal cultural awareness programs for police;
- Improving police and Aboriginal relationships;
- Police gaining a better understanding of Aboriginal culture and heritage;
- Police providing appropriate training to Aboriginal community members of the Group in police practices and procedures, particularly in custody issues;
- Supporting Aboriginal Community Liaison Officers and police.

Aboriginal Support Group members are volunteers from the Aboriginal community who can be called on by police on a twenty-four hour basis. Members are nominated and selected by local Aboriginal people or the Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer.

The Aboriginal Support Group assists with reducing the number of Aboriginal people entering the criminal justice system through developing awareness and understanding of Aboriginal culture to police and work together with police to address community needs.

Training is provided by the local police to assist Support Group members to understand policies and legislation relating to custody issues providing a better understanding of police practices and procedures as it relates to arrest and detention.

Support Group members may also contribute to the development of local Aboriginal cultural awareness programs providing understanding of Aboriginal culture to police. This equips members with the necessary tools to provide an effective service to Aboriginal persons who have been arrested or detained and the Aboriginal community in general.

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