

Commitment and dedication by Aboriginal Custody and Victim Support person demonstrates that the community is striving to maintain positive relationships between police and Aboriginal people.

- ✦ To reduce the number of Aboriginal people entering the criminal justice system;
- ✦ Contribute to and participate in raising cultural awareness for police and the Aboriginal community;
- ✦ Improve the relationship between Police and Aboriginal people;
- ✦ Aboriginal members to gain a better understanding of police practices and procedures;
- ✦ Provide a service to meet the needs of Aboriginal victims of crime;
- ✦ Provide appropriate support to Aboriginal persons arrested or detained in custody;

Aboriginal Custody and Victim Support persons may be called on by Police on a twenty-four hour basis.

Police will generally contact an Aboriginal Custody and Victim Support person, in addition to the required contact of the Aboriginal Legal Service, regardless of the fact that the person arrested/detained is juvenile or adult if required. Support for victims will be on a needs basis.

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

NSW Police Force will continue to establish and maintain Aboriginal Custody and Victim Support across NSW.

For more information about Aboriginal Support Groups please contact the Aboriginal Issues Officer at your local Police Station or the ACLO or the Aboriginal Coordination Team on **02 9768 0745**.

Custody and Victim Support

Working Together To Build A Safer Community

The primary function is to provide support to Aboriginal people being held in custody and Aboriginal victims of crime.



NSW Police Force

All members of the Aboriginal community can volunteer to be part of Aboriginal Custody and Victim Support.

This program came from The Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths In Custody (1991) - Recommendation No. 145 and 220.

Priority 3 “Reduced Involvement and Improve Safety of Aboriginal People in the Criminal justice System” and Priority 3.5 Ensure the safety of Aboriginal People in Custody” of the NSW Police Force Aboriginal Strategic Direction 2012 – 2017 (ASD), identifies where Police can have significant input in decreasing the over-representation of Aboriginal people in the criminal justice system.

This priority can be achieved by increasing diversionary options, with particular focus on young people, reducing anti-social behaviour and increasing the safety of people in custody.

Aboriginal Custody and Victim Support consists of volunteers from the Aboriginal community, who would like to participate in providing support for Aboriginal people entering the criminal justice system or Aboriginal victims of crime.

Aboriginal Custody and Victim Support allows participants to gain knowledge and understanding of practices and procedures with regards to the law relating to arrests and detention.

Criminal record checks and working with children checks must be conducted for each applicant. Aboriginal Custody and Victim Support persons must complete the consent forms and receive a clearance prior to being accepted into the program.

Aboriginal Custody and Victim Support persons are issued with a photo identification card as proof of identity when called by Police requesting their attendance at the Police Station. The Local Area Commander has the authority to approve or terminate the identification card.

A Terms of Reference and policy has been developed outlining the aims and objectives of Aboriginal Custody and Victim Support and police in relation to the rights and responsibilities of the Aboriginal Custody and Victim Support persons.

In addition an Agreement to accept the conditions must be signed and approved by the Local Area Commander.

An information session has been developed to ensure Aboriginal Custody and Victim Support receive information relating to the practices and procedures relating to their role.

Aboriginal Custody and Victim Support assists in reducing the number of Aboriginal people entering the criminal justice system by assisting the development of awareness, communication skills and understanding of Aboriginal culture by police and Aboriginal community gaining a greater understanding of police and coming together to address Aboriginal community needs.

Training and on-going support is provided by the local police to assist Aboriginal Custody and Victim Support persons 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.

