



Australian Government

Australian Institute of Criminology

Community safety in Australian Indigenous communities

Matthew Willis



Overview

1. Community safety survey research project
2. Findings
 - a) Community strengths
 - b) Perceptions of safety
 - c) Needs, priorities, positive steps



This research

- **Funding**
- **Two aims:**
 - build knowledge of Indigenous community safety
 - develop questionnaire and methodology
 - specific to Indigenous communities
- **Service providers' perceptions**

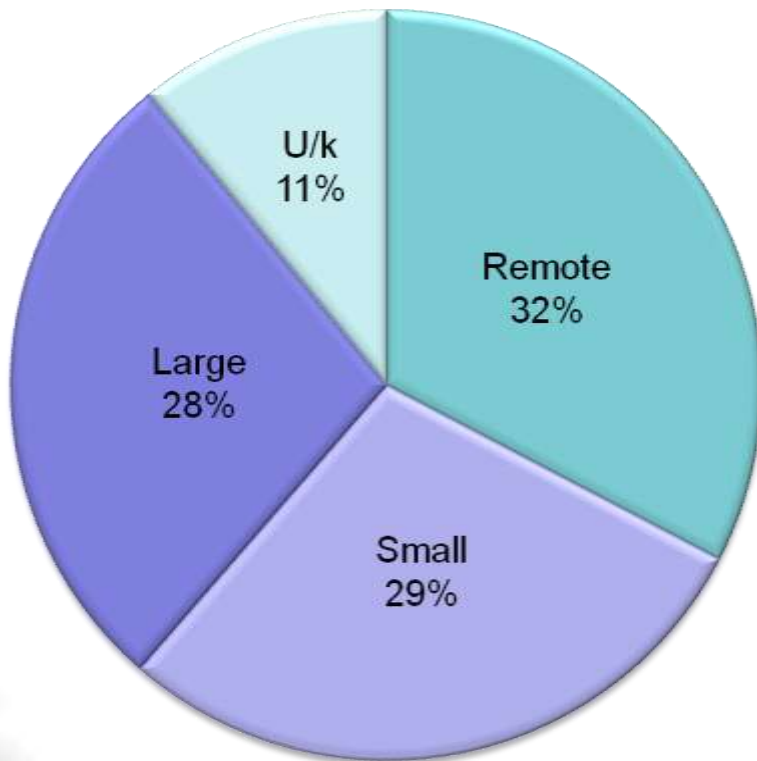


Questionnaire content

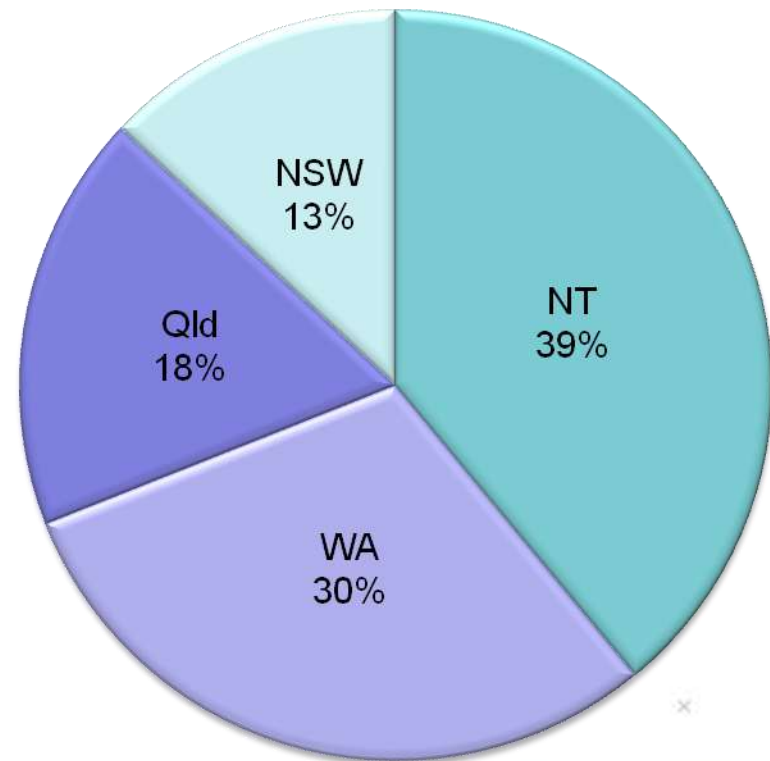
- **Community strengths**
- **Social problems**
- **Service availability and need**
- **Safety in the community**
- **Community initiatives and priorities**
- **Help-seeking behaviour**



Community type



State / Territory





Community strengths

- **Free text - 219 responses**
- **Interpersonal relationships & connections**
 - family, elders, shared cultural identity
- **Caring, honest, friendly, resilient**
- **Community commitment, working together**
- **Environment**
- **Services provided**



Help-seeking

- **Female victims (family violence, rape)**
 - Likely to turn to:
 - family/kin (75% likely/very likely)
 - female elders/strong women
 - friends
 - refuge/shelter
 - health service
 - police (63% unlikely/very unlikely)



Help-seeking

- **Females – why not disclose?**
 - Fear
 - payback, revenge (self, others)
 - further violence from offender
 - being blamed, shunned
 - having children taken away
 - Shame/embarrassment
 - Low self-esteem
 - Don't trust police



Perceptions of safety

- **Indigenous groups in community**
- **Some perceived to be very unsafe:**
 - female children and young people
 - especially larger towns/cities
 - frail or elderly
 - male children
 - female adults
- **Male adults and teenagers perceived to be safe**



Service availability & need

- **Availability mainly government**
 - education, health, police
- **Needs mainly community**
 - men's places; men's & women's groups
 - children's refuges; help for abused children; school attendance
 - sobering-up/detox
 - night patrols; community police
 - education for young mothers



Making a difference

- **Priorities**
 - safety of children & young people
 - alcohol and substance misuse
 - skills development
 - security
 - community justice
 - housing



Making a difference

- **Positive steps**
 - justice-related
 - alcohol and substance misuse
 - support services
 - children/youth services and support
 - education and awareness
 - community groups



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Thanks!

Want to know more?

Matthew Willis

ph: (02) 6260 9287

mob: 0430 596 276

matthew.willis@aic.gov.au

www.aic.gov.au