Strong Men, Strong Communities: report of evaluation support consultancy

Prepared for Department of Justice and Regulation

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Acronyms

ACCO       Aboriginal community controlled organisation
DOJR       Department of Justice and Regulation (Victoria)
FCVPP      Family and Community Violence Prevention Project
GEGAC      Gippsland and East Gippsland Aboriginal Cooperative
LAJAC      Local Aboriginal Justice Advisory Committee
LEAHA      Lakes Entrance Aboriginal Health Association
RAJAC      Regional Aboriginal Justice Advisory Committee
SMSC       Strong Men, Strong Communities
YWHS       Yoowinna Wurnalung Healing Service
Executive Summary

Background

*Strong Men, Strong Communities* was developed and delivered across East Gippsland by Yoowinna Wurnalung Healing Service (YWHS) and auspiced by Lakes Entrance Aboriginal Health Association (LEAHA). The project was funded as part of the Koori Community Safety Grants Program, an initiative of the Department of Justice and Regulation (DOJR) Crime Prevention Unit and managed by the Koori Justice Unit (KJU). The program recognised that strengthening Aboriginal culture was important in addressing some of the drivers of family and community violence.

Clear Horizon provided evaluation consultancy and support in the last year of the project (2015) to assist YWHS and government to identify project outcomes, identify ‘promising practice’ project elements that could be applied elsewhere, document lessons learned and provide recommendations for future project sustainability.

Key messages

Delivery and outcomes

*Strong Men Strong Communities (SMSC)* delivered the family violence prevention activity that was at the core of their plan. There is evidence that the project reached men who were at risk of being perpetrators or victims of family and community violence. The project used culturally competent ways that were an adequate fit with existing community resources and services, where these existed. When required, plans and key deliverables were reviewed and modified based on the project team’s learning about local needs and the men’s responses to the project.

The evidence of short and medium-term individual outcomes, although sparse, aligns with expectations. Individual participants were reported to have gained a better understanding of family violence. Feedback was more explicit about improvements in awareness of personal behaviour and of different ways of communicating. There was more willingness to confide in others and ask for help, more knowledge of personal health issues, greater awareness of Aboriginal culture and traditions and knowledge of available services. There were some indications that these shorter term outcomes were gradually leading to improved skills in recognising violent behaviour, resolving interpersonal conflict, managing personal health, connecting to culture, translating an understanding of traditional roles into being a role model, and using relevant support services.

At the wider community level, it was expected that the project would improve recognition of and responses to violent behaviour. The project had limited reach into the communities: the project team found that the participating men needed more time to build a trusting relationship and greater confidence in their abilities before engaging outside their groups with family and community members. Plans for community-wide activities were modified and project resources were shifted to additional work with the men.

For the project to work well, it was expected that relevant organisations would become more aware of community problems and the ways they could respond, as a step towards improving relationships and taking more coordinated action to address violence. These organisation-level
outcomes were varied. Men’s health and AOD workers at times developed valuable collaborations with the project team. Senior managers in relevant organisations were not consistently able work with YWHS towards more coordinated action. We heard, however, from a sceptical service manager becoming convinced of the value of the project.

Stories of change support the project’s claim to have achieved outcomes at the individual level with male participants and to some extent at the community and organisational levels. They describe:

- a group’s response to a death, and the valuable part that the group played in providing a space for healing
- changes a participant experienced as a result of being in the men’s group: becoming more aware of mental health issues, making new connections and developing as a role model.
- greater community-wide awareness of the need to heal, and a view that healing has begun
- how a local community Elder and a service provider from outside the community worked together to build a men’s group and in doing so improved inter-organisational relationships.
- the project team gaining the support of the manager of a local organisation, and the potential for a much stronger future partnership.

Good practice elements applicable elsewhere

1. The work with at-risk men

Working with actual or potential perpetrators of family and community violence in Aboriginal communities is not yet well understood. The SMSC project faced the steep challenge of building men’s groups in different geographical settings where participants felt safe enough to talk about difficult issues underlying violence. An approach was developed in consultation between the YWHS Project Manager and the Dardi Munwurro consultant, who was contracted as Project Coordinator. This targeted approach to men’s behaviour change, evolving throughout the project, was an adaptation of the Dardi Munwurro working model. The accounts collected for the evaluation, at the end of the project’s third year, indicate important changes at the individual, community and organisational level resulting from the work of SMSC. These are indications of promising practice in prevention, early intervention and recovery.

2. Use of specialist Aboriginal consultant

Alan Thorpe brought the respected Dardi Munwurro model to the project, based on culturally appropriate work with men in the justice system. Bringing this expertise into the local community and forming a partnership with YWHS, who employed an experienced Men’s Support Worker, was a significant contribution: the consultant’s specialist skills and knowledge could complement the local knowledge and skills of the Men’s Project Support Worker (Hugh Pepper).

Lessons learned

Allow time at the start:

Putting plans into action required a much more time and energy than anticipated:
the process of building trust and relationships with Aboriginal men across the five communities was a key task from the start

engaging and working in partnership with local men, organisations and service providers was a community-building challenge. The advice was to build on existing programs, and to ‘slow down and talk to each other more’.

**Work on long term sustainable support:**

There is consensus that a long term commitment is required, to continue working with participants after short term funding has ceased.

**Build project governance and partnerships**

The SMSC Steering Committees comprised about 25 representatives of Aboriginal and universal/mainstream organisations and included respected Elders. According to project documents, the committee met three times in the first year and only once more, in the second year, with declining attendance. Subsequently meetings were to be held directly after RAJAC meetings, as the majority of members of the Steering Committee were RAJAC attendees.

Several stakeholders expressed frustration that they were not well informed about the project and therefore could not help drive its development. Equally, the project team expressed frustration with a perceived lack of ‘buy-in’ by other organisations. While there were positive relationships between the project team and Men’s Health or Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) workers, the lack of high-level negotiation of key systemic issues was a barrier (such issues as the past history of organisational relationships, and competition for clients in the current climate of performance measurement by funders).

We note that SMSC’s experience reflects universal challenges around inter-organisational relationships. Stakeholders suggested small local action groups may have helped resolve issues. Membership would include ACCHO Chief Executive Officers (or a delegate with sufficient authority to ‘open doors’ for the project) and active local community members.

**Work with local leaders / Elders / respected community members**

Several informants noted that, while the Project Manager was local, the Project Coordinator and the Men’s Support Worker were new to the community and had to build trust and relationships over a substantial part of the funded period before being able to work on family violence prevention. The project plans relied on there being local leaders or champions and SMSC Steering Committee partners, who acted as intermediaries between the project team and local communities. It was clear that involving the right local leaders at the right time was a success factor. A few informants proposed that local engagement and local ownership would be more effective if the geographic areas of the projects were smaller, thus allowing the work to be better tailored to each unique community.

**Need for ongoing learning about and evaluation of ways of working with at-risk men**

Collecting evidence of the detail of program processes and participant outcomes was limited by concerns about confidentiality (around Aboriginal men’s business and, equally, family violence issues). Dialogue with Clear Horizon about ethical issues and strategies helped to address these concerns. It would be valuable to explore a way of supporting YWHS and Dardi Munwurro to capture participant outcomes and the methods that have been effective in enabling these
outcomes, so that YWHS and Dardi Munwurro can share the learning and support other initiatives. This finding resonates with the recommendations of The Royal Commission into Family Violence in Victoria about the need to understand how to work with men and focus on their accountability, not only around crises but also in preventive ways.

We understand that YWHS and Dardi Munwurro have begun to document the model in more detail. This work, without breaching protocols around men’s business, could lead to better articulation of the model now developed. It will also support better dialogue and action concerning family violence prevention across organisations and communities.

Where evaluation support is required, build it in at the start

The evaluation support may have been more successful if the relationship had started near the beginning of the project and the evaluation consultants had been able to work alongside the project teams from start to finish. Through a mentoring relationship we would expect to build local knowledge and skills as well as deliver robust and well-informed evaluation findings during and at the end of the projects. This approach may also help grant recipients to focus on using the evaluation process to improve project delivery and be less anxious about accountability for meeting project targets.
1. Introduction

1.1. Project context, activities and rationale

Lakes Entrance Aboriginal Health Association as the , auspicing partner to Yoowinna Wurnalung Healing Service, received funding under the Koori Community Safety Grants Program (an initiative of the DOJR Crime Prevention Unit). The Program recognised the interrelationship of drivers for criminal behaviour and the importance of strengthening culture in addressing some of those issues. ACCHOs were invited to use their unique expertise and knowledge to tender for work that met local needs.

The planned project, working in the areas of Sale, Bairnsdale/Bruthen, Lakes Entrance, Lake Tyers, Orbost and Cann River, was funded, as its name suggests, for a primary focus on working with groups of men.

1.2. Evaluation consultancy scope

The evaluation consultancy sought to identify the extent to which intended and unintended project outcomes had been achieved, identify ‘promising practice’ project elements that could be applied elsewhere, document lessons learned and provide recommendations for future project sustainability. In commissioning the evaluators, DOJR representatives understood that there would be greater focus on process than on project outcome.

1.3. Purpose of report

The report is intended to assist the project team, community and government to build evidence of what works to prevent family and community violence in Victorian Aboriginal communities and to strengthen monitoring and evaluation.

1.4. Report structure

This introduction has described the project and its rationale and the scope and purpose of the evaluation. The next section (Section 2) is a summary of the evaluation method, including the Key Evaluation Questions and data sources, methods and tools. Section 4 outlines the findings against the Key Evaluation Questions. Section 3 describes the project and its delivery. Section 5 focuses on conclusions and recommendations.

Technical details, including data collection tools, are attached as Appendices.
2. Methodology

2.1. Overview

The evaluation adopted a collaborative, mixed-method approach to exploring the effectiveness, sustainability and value of the SMSC project and the success of the evaluation support. Key questions and sub-questions structured the inquiry, which built on previous work by the Koorie Justice Unit to develop, with the project team, a program logic and a monitoring and evaluation framework, and to complete an interim process evaluation.

Evaluation data was drawn from documents (project performance reports, facilitators’ reports of specific activities), a training workshop (seven participants) and interviews with nine stakeholders, including the SMSC project team and representatives of partner agencies.

2.2. Key evaluation questions

Key evaluation questions (KEQS) outlined in the project-specific monitoring and evaluation framework (developed in 2014 by KJU, YWHS and LEAHA) are as follows:

1. How effective was the project in delivering what was needed to the right people at the right time in the right ways?
   a. How well does the project fit with, complement, make use of and build upon existing community strengths, resources and services?
   b. How much did the project incorporate best practice elements relevant to similar projects and contexts?

2. What outcomes were achieved, for whom, and how worthwhile were they?
   a. How well did the project and its activities work to address the underlying causes of Koori violence?
   b. How well did the project build individual, community and organisational capability and capacity?
   c. How cost effective, efficient and worthwhile was the project overall?

3. How successful was the evaluation support?
   a. How did the evaluation support relationship develop?
   b. What worked well and less well in the evaluation training?

4. What were the lessons learnt (by the project and organisational staff and the evaluators)?

5. What lessons may be applicable to other organisations?
2.3. Data sources, methods and tools

The project methodology built on the program logic, monitoring and evaluation framework and data collection tools already completed by YWHS, LEAHA and the KJU. Clear Horizon reviewed program documentation in order to understand the project background and progress. Senior consultants met the project team on three occasions to plan Clear Horizon’s involvement, deliver training, support internal evaluation activities and conduct independent interviews with project staff, organisational staff and other key stakeholders. Data from project documents and staff and stakeholder interviews was triangulated to develop a comprehensive account of project performance. Project tools developed in addition to those already in use are included in Appendix 1.

2.4. Reporting

Clear Horizon drafted a report for the project to answer the key evaluation questions and capture stories of change and lessons learned. We sought feedback from YWHS and KJU before finalising this report.
3. Project Delivery

Strong Men, Strong Communities was delivered between February 2013 and February 2016 across East Gippsland by Yoowinna Wurnalung Healing Service, auspiced by Lakes Entrance Aboriginal Health Association. The project received $530,974 (excluding GST) for work primarily in Sale, Bairnsdale, Bruthen and Lakes Entrance and secondarily in Orbost, Lake Tyers and Cann River.

The SMSC project was led by a Steering Committee of 25 representatives of relevant State government departments and Aboriginal and mainstream non-government organisations.

The project support team comprised a Project Manager and a Men’s Support Worker (employed by YWHS) and, a Project Coordinator (subcontracted from Dardi Munwurro). All were Aboriginal.

A Project Working Group was formed to support the work. Membership of the group was the YWHS Executive Manager (Project Manager), Dardi Munwurro Consultant, (Project Coordinator) and SMSC Men’s Project Support Worker. The LEAHA Executive Officer or a LEAHA Board member were also invited to participate on occasion, representing the auspicing body.

Project plans and logic

The project plan included:

- contracting a Lead Facilitator from Dardi Munwurro to Co-facilitate with Men’s Support Worker, nine programs in three regional locations consisting of information and intake sessions, three-day retreats and 72 follow up sessions
- fortnightly Men’s Groups (establishing three new, and supporting three existing groups)
- two Regional Men’s Camps (bringing participants of the six Men’s Groups together)
- two Regional Forums with local service providers
- six Family Strengthening Days for the wider community.
  - local reference groups (in Sale and Bairnsdale) meeting five times a year
  - a project Steering Committee meeting quarterly in the first year and three times in the second and third years

To clarify how these activities were intended to increase community safety, a draft Program Logic (Section 5.2, Figure 1) was developed by the Koori Justice Unit based on a workshop with key project stakeholders, and validated during the evaluation consultancy.

The project was seen to work through three pathways: changes at the individual level at the community level, and in relevant organisations. In the long term, the expectation was that the project activities would contribute to

- Aboriginal people
  - Being more likely to refrain from violence
  - Having better interpersonal skills and stronger relationships
  - Having a stronger sense of their cultural identity and greater resilience
Having mutual respect for each other’s roles and responsibilities
Using services and supports (including men’s groups)

- the community
  - improving community connections and social relations
- organisations
  - practising a more coordinated response to family violence.

In the short and medium term,

- **Individually focused activities** (working through small groups of men) were intended to improve understanding of family violence and its impacts, build awareness of the impact of personal behaviour, understand different ways of communicating, learning about health issues, culture, traditions, men’s and women’s roles, and about the available services. Such awareness was expected to lead in the medium term to better recognition of violent behaviour, resolution of interpersonal conflict, and better communication skills. Individuals would be take more responsibility for managing their health, have a stronger connection to culture, and access needed services. They would be able to translate understanding of traditional roles into being role models in their community.

- **Community-focused activities** such as Family Strengthening Days, Regional Men’s Camps and Regional Forums would complement the activities for individuals and lead to confidence throughout the community to recognise and respond to violent behaviour, as well as new connections between community members and formal and informal sources of support.

- **Organisation-focused activities** include governance activities (such as Local Reference Group and Steering Committee meetings) and staff recruitment. It was hoped that these activities, while providing oversight of the project, would also lead to coordinated action to address violence and better service partnerships.

**Modified plans**

In practice the project team found that it was a slow process to introduce a structured Dardi Munwurro men’s behavioural change program. Their work instead focused on less intensive men’s groups, reaching a broad spectrum of men, including some with multiple health, social and legal issues. The project initially connected with men in two main ways: through existing groups or through a respected Elder encouraging men to attend a new group convened by SMSC. They worked with a group coordinated by the AOD worker at Ramahyuck (Sale) and others by the AOD/men’s health workers in Bairnsdale and at Lake Tyers. Once participants were ready to do so the focus moved gradually over several months towards more intensive work based on Dardi Munwurro behaviour change programs. Between group meetings the Project Coordinator and Men’s Project Support Worker visited individuals or small groups of men to maintain connection and provide support:

_I organised the venues, Al [Dardi Munwurro] came two days a fortnight. I’d follow up the group meetings with visits to each community, trying to be as consistent as possible - I might touch base with two or ten men, looking at issues for the next group - it was always about presence._ (SMSC Men’s Project Support Worker)

Particularly in the later part of the SMSC project the group work included culturally inspired physical activities
We connected men to culture, e.g. through the Lake Tyers canoe project and spear making, to complement the emotional, hard stuff. Men are missing their cultural identity, so bringing in an activity that is culturally relevant is important. (SMSC Men’s Project Support Worker)

Also in the later stages, groups of men from different communities met together, a move that was identified as a significant change:

Lakes Entrance and Lake Tyers [groups] are totally different. But we got ten men from Lake Tyers at the Lakes Entrance group. They are sharing responsibility for helping it to keep going. We also took Lake Tyers men to Orbost - they are building a relationship there. (SMSC Men’s Project Support Worker)

Part of the original SMSC Project plan was to support men to become community leaders. This aspect survived in an unstructured way through groupwork, where there was an emphasis on mutual support and the community’s need for men’s leadership. It was hoped that some of the men would take on additional community responsibilities as a result of the program, supported by later formal tertiary training in community services.

Two Regional Elders’ forums were held for reflection on community issues and needs (replacing forums originally planned for service providers).

Plans to run six family strengthening days were not pursued, owing to the need to build the relationships with male participants and support their journey and the funding was diverted to provide for three additional overnight camps and workshops for the men’s groups. Families were on occasion involved in celebrations of milestones in the men’s groups. The project team reported that the families were impressed by the way the men were able to talk about their experiences in the project.
4. Findings

Key evaluation question: How effective were the projects in delivering what was needed to the right people at the right time in the right ways?

... including:

a. How well did the projects fit with, complement, make use of and build upon existing strengths, resources and services?
b. How much did the projects incorporate best practice elements relevant to similar projects and contexts?

Effectiveness

The project team reports working throughout the project on connecting with existing organisations, services and groups. Connections were made and groups were worked with in several communities.

Challenges included:

- Making and sustaining connections in five distinct communities across the region. The project team recorded in their reports and in interviews the challenges of adjust to small communities and their politics. There was some questioning of the viability of the project’s regional remit.
- Maintaining connections when there was turnover in intermediaries such as local men’s health workers and AOD workers
- Limited relationships between organisations. One stakeholder had a strong opinion that the community needed to see their organisations working together well, for example by seeing staff at community barbecues, whatever the pressures on their time
- Loss of Steering Committee support: two stakeholders commented that members did not have enough ‘buy-in’ and did not ‘open doors’ for the project team. Others suggested more community people rather than government representatives needed to be on the Committee. (SMSC5) and a small action group might have been more practical than a large Steering Committee (SMSC8)

Good practice elements relevant to similar projects and contexts

1. The work with at-risk men

Working with actual or potential perpetrators of family and community violence in Aboriginal communities is not yet well understood. The SMSC project faced the steep challenge of building men’s groups in different geographical settings where participants felt safe enough to talk about difficult issues underlying violence. An approach was developed in consultation between the YWHS Project Manager and the Dardi Munwurro consultant, who was contracted as Project Coordinator. This targeted approach to men’s behaviour change, evolving throughout the project, was an adaptation of the Dardi Munwurro working model. The accounts collected for the evaluation, at the end of the project’s third year, indicate important changes at the individual, community and organisational level resulting from the work of SMSC. These are indications of promising practice in prevention, early intervention and recovery.
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Alan Thorpe brought the respected Dardi Munwurro model to the project, based on culturally appropriate work with men in the justice system. Bringing this expertise into the local community and forming a partnership with YWHS, who employed an experienced Men’s Support Worker, was a significant contribution: the consultant’s specialist skills and knowledge could complement the local knowledge and skills of the Men’s Project Support Worker (Hugh Pepper).

4.1. Outcomes

2. What outcomes were achieved, for whom, and how worthwhile were they?
   a. How well did the project and its activities work to address the underlying causes of Koori violence?
   b. How well did the project build individual, community and organisational capability and capacity?
   c. How cost effective, efficient and worthwhile was the project overall?

We present stories of change developed from interview data. They are relevant to outcomes for individuals, community and organisations and also help to demonstrate how outcomes were achieved.

Stories of individual outcome

The Elder’s story tells of how, when a men’s group began to gel, numbers increased and ‘we got the men to see culture through different eyes, and for the first time’. As another stakeholder put it:

_The strongest relationships are happening where respected community people come and bring others._ (SMSC5)

**Story 1: An Elder’s story - connecting**

_It was difficult because we had a person in the Project Coordinator position who had to start from scratch to build relationships with the men. I guess my part was to encourage him to go and knock on doors and I introduced him to a few people and encouraged men to come along to the days when we gathered. It was about getting to know the men, giving personal invitations rather than sending flyers out – flyers aren’t really for men to read. Men connect better with conversation and humour and those kinds of things. When the flyers were coming out it was more the verbal promotion from my point of view that got them to come along and support themselves and their family. Being local, people had more connection with me. If I endorse this, which is what I was trying to do, by coming along and inviting men I knew, it was a lot easier._

_To start off with there were regulars there every week – a small number happy to be part of the conversation on the day. It was good. It started out small like that. We had other people come along who were a little bit stronger in their journey in life and a bit stronger in their cultural background. It was nice to hear the kind of things they were talking about and good for the men to hear that. Because they were on a search for culture themselves. Not all Aboriginal men are_
I got a bit more involved in the last 18 months. The way I saw things was from a spiritual point of view. The program could build on that and SMSC could kick in at times about the family violence. Numbers increased and we got the men to see culture through different eyes, and for the first time.

We had a dreaming story shown on the screen. I got the men to watch it to see if they could pick up what was happening. Then when I showed them what was actually happening and how they could apply it in today’s setting, they were going ‘Ah…yes’. They were seeing something that was real to them today, was relevant to them. Then SMSC kicked in having that conversation around the table about self-strengthening, finding out who you are, looking at family in a different way, the importance of Mother Earth. Then we had outings to significant places. I asked the men to look and talk about what they saw. It led to men looking at things differently. I told them what I saw and they were identifying with those things and it was really strong. Numbers started to increase when that was happening.

Attendance was built with the men’s group at Lake Tyers coming in and joining the Lakes group – a little bit different conversations. My role was because I spoke to Dooka and Alan and tried to encourage the local point of view. I knew they had their program that they wanted to achieve within that but we were talking about the local men and their willingness to speak about the things that were holding them back. Dooka and Alan thought about what I said and came back and asked me to take on a few sessions with them running their program in between times. It was the same men’s group but instead of running the conversation as men’s business from a counselling point of view, culture was involved. One thing was around spear-making and the social part of that – gathering, looking for the wood, putting someone in charge of lighting and taking care of the fire, the processes of skinning the bark, the conversations around that. It was a good time for Alan and Dooka to have a conversation when that activity was taking place.

Story 2: Safe space to grieve

This story from the project team describes a group’s response to a death, and the valuable part that the group played in providing a space for healing.

A man passed away recently - it was after our group, which he attended with a brother and a cousin. He was 50 and had been through a similar group program in prison with Dardi Munwurro. Reflecting on that program brought back memories of how far he had come. He talked about where he was in life - had confidence that he didn’t have even six months before. He said his daughter had had a child.

When we heard about his death we talked to the Elders and others about whether to hold the next group or cancel out of respect. The group was built up at that stage, with a lot of investment by men who wanted to reflect about the impact of the death. Pretty much every man stood up and reflected that day two weeks later and spoke about their families and themselves. It started a healing process. The group gave them a safe space to talk and allow themselves to become emotional. That’s stuff that will stay with you 20 years down the line. To agree to actually have a group after the death was huge, and to acknowledge the impact of grief and loss. That group still meets.

We created an opportunity for men to feel safe at that time, discuss feelings, reflect on grief and loss - without turning to alcohol, which some said they used to do. (Project worker)
Story 3: Becoming a brother

The next story, told by a group participant, touches on several changes the man experienced as a result of being in the men’s group: he talks of being more aware of his health issues, of making new connections between people and of ways to connect people to informal and formal support. In seeing that he can ‘be a brother’ he is developing as a role model. While he does not directly refer to family violence, he is discovering ways of building the conditions (the trust and the willingness to communicate feelings and ask for help) for addressing issues as a men’s group.

I lost my mum. Then I lost my brother in a car accident. I was apart from my dad for a long time. Before the camps – I was selfish in a sense, I think. I didn’t really think about others. I was in a bit of a bad way emotionally.

I heard about the group through the local health organisation. They put out flyers and came and saw me.

Going to the camps helped me deal with my depression. Just by being together with the men and my dad in a spiritual and emotional way, and being away together, away from the norm. It was the day to day stuff, like sharing accommodation - You have to speak to each other! [The camps] helped by looking at other people’s lives and realising my grievance was like theirs. I realised how strong depression is, and why fellers are drinking all the time. It was an education. I think it was an education for the facilitators too.

I was encouraging other guys to come. I’d got their trust before the camps. I told them ‘whatever you tell me I won’t tell anyone’ – unless it was medical, when I would tell them I could refer them to someone.

I didn’t know I was diverting them away from alcohol and drugs. But to hear them laughing without the alcohol and drugs was something different. The caring side of them came out.

I realised I was a mentor, a big brother. That made me stronger, realising I could help another brother who hasn’t got family around and he’s a couch surfer himself. I was helping their families too, by being an ear for them and letting them know.

The men need somewhere to go – they don’t even realise till they go on the camps and talk with other men. It can be easy to think you’re alone. But then when you sit in that circle and start yarning, that message stick can be a pretty strong thing in your hand - it’s passed around to the men and it’s about not talking over one another, having respect.

Spiritually I look at life a lot differently. I take the time now. Before it was ‘9 to 5, 9 to 5’. My mental state is the biggest change – I’m more confident. I’m getting help with depression. While I was doing the men’s camps I was seeing the psych. Seeing a psych is hard but it has helped. It was hard but I had to deal with the grief.

From the program I got a strong connection for sure with the other men, and their trust - them knowing I’ll always be a brother to them – not to walk past when we see each other.

And blokes from other communities – we need more networking with other groups. It opens their eyes to know it’s not just happening in their own yards. We needed more men to make the group bigger and stronger. The more the merrier. A lot have commitments 9 to 5 or deal with issues in their own ways, but you’ve still got to have a mate at the end of the day, you can talk to and confide in. It would be good to have more fathers and sons, and uncles who are like fathers.(SMSC11)
Community outcomes

Story 4: Mending

This story is about community outcomes: greater community-wide awareness of the need to heal, and a view that healing has begun.

I’ve learned that our men are willing to change. I’ve learned (and I’m looking for the right words) that our community is a lot more broken than I thought it was. The Strong Men Strong Communities Project has addressed family violence, drug and alcohol problems, challenging behaviours. It hasn’t just helped heal individuals in the program but has gone towards healing our community somewhat. I speak to a lot of fellas - not just the men in the groups but family and friends. I’ve picked up that there’s a change and people are starting to address these problems. I’ve heard great comments from community about the changes they’ve seen and I just wish I had been able to write them down. I love it. It’s fantastic. It’s an opportunity not only for us but right across the state. (Leading community member)

Organisational outcomes

Story 5: Elder /’outsider’ engagement

The following story is another perspective on the first and is included to illustrate how a local community Elder and a service provider from outside the community worked together to build a men’s group and in doing so improved inter-organisational relationships.

Here the first two years were struggle, struggle. The men said ‘Who’s this guy from Melbourne who’s going to tell us to change our behaviour?’- It felt to the men like Alan was pushing his program on our men – though that’s not what he was thinking he was doing. It was hard to engage the men because they weren’t ready. Some of the men who we know are perpetrators were happy to go to the Health Promotion group at LEAHA, open to any men over 18. We tried to transfer some of the men but they weren’t ready. SMSC was too confronting for them.

It was when our Chair got involved that the men felt safe. Darryl, the Chair of our board (LEAHA) is a respected Aboriginal male. ... They changed and made it more general talking and they started getting a larger turn-up. Then when relationships were built it was possible to say to someone ‘Do you think you are ready...? They were getting no men or only two or three, and then up to 20. Darryl turned up every fortnight. He was amazing. He tells it like it is with no fluffing and that’s how it needed to be. In the first two years I thought ‘this is a waste, what are we doing?’ But since they’ve been meeting with Darryl there’s been more cohesiveness.

This shows that when you’re an outsider you have to listen to what the men want and need, then change your program to suit their needs.
Finally a story about gaining the support of the manager of a local organisation, and the potential for a much stronger future partnership.

**Story 6: Manager sees results**

*This man was a manager in one of the communities. He was resistant initially, confronting me and interrogating me: ‘Who are you? What do you want?’ This came from being let down previously, and the need to see some sustainable results.*

*I said ‘I’m here to contribute and have a relationship.’ We needed him and his worker to make anything happen.*

*This went on for the first two years - We could have just not gone back but we visited every two weeks.*

*Things gradually got better and one day he hugged me! He must have seen some results and had good feedback from the worker. After that he was calling out for me. He sees me as part of the family. He says ‘We can’t let this go. It has helped our community.’*

*This is an example of congruency - we’re being what we’re trying to teach. We are demonstrating trust, the ability to manage frustration, and to lead. We showed our integrity and earned credibility. (Project team)*

The perspectives provided by stakeholders strongly suggests that work with men, combining practical activity (road trips, camps) cultural learning (canoe and spear making, connection with Elders) and group work based on men’s behaviour change techniques, has created a space for addressing the underlying causes of violence. Elders forums have been welcomed for the opportunity to yarn and problem-solve about trauma, grief and loss, addictions, how community members talk to each other (gossip versus creating safe spaces).

As illustrated in the stories above, the project has helped to build individual, community and organisational capacity and capability for change and for developing community leadership. The following table offers an at-a-glance analysis of the outcomes the story-tellers mention. It is notable that individual participants do not state explicitly that family and community violence is at issue. This is consistent with the project team’s report that violence is only talked about when a high degree of trust has been built.
Table 1: Outcomes analysis of stories

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes (short and medium term)</th>
<th>Story number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individual participants</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Better understanding of family violence and its impact - then improve skills in recognising violent behaviour</td>
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<tr>
<td>Better awareness of personal behaviour and its impacts, better understanding of different ways of communicating and expressing feelings, more willingness to confide in others and ask for help - then communicating well and resolving interpersonal conflict,</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
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<tr>
<td>More knowledge of personal health issues - then managing personal health better</td>
<td>✔ ✔</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greater awareness of Aboriginal culture and traditions and. This awareness would in the medium term, connecting to culture and translating an understanding of traditional roles into being a role model, and.</td>
<td>✔ ✔</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge of available services - then using relevant support services</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Community</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Better understanding of family violence and its impacts and more awareness of available services, leading in the medium term to more confidence to recognise and respond to violent behaviour and new connections between people and sources of informal and formal support.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Organisations</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Relevant organisations would become more aware of community problems and organisational responses and then improve relationships and partnerships and take more coordinated action to address violence.</td>
<td>✔ ✔</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Overall value**

Overall the project was welcomed as a worthwhile injection of funding for Aboriginal-specific services..

Reports of the benefits experienced by the men, and of positive feedback from family members, indicate significant changes for those men. Further inquiry is needed to understand to what extent other participants have benefited, and in what ways.

The project’s value for the wider community are yet to be assessed. It is to be hoped that the work with men's groups will be able to continue so that the communities can realise the remainder of the project plan, including women’s support, family strengthening days and the development of male community leaders.

Some further steps have been taken to build the relationships and partnerships required for the region to see more coordinated services and action to address family violence.
Effectiveness and efficiency were remarkable given the barriers of distance and limited resources, the challenges of sustaining partnership over a three-year period and the sensitivity of the topic of family violence.

Shortcomings in efficiency reflect a systemic issue around resources, workforce planning, workforce development, health and safety in Aboriginal community controlled organisations. Stronger and sustained project governance (through regular well attended Steering Committee or working group meetings leading to shared actions) may have enabled more efficient project coordination.

4.2. How successful was the evaluation support?

3. How successful was the evaluation support?
   a. How did the evaluation support relationship develop?
   b. What worked well and less well in the evaluation training?

Clear Horizon engagement with the project was less than intended. The planned tasks included updating the existing draft monitoring, evaluation and reporting framework and tools, supporting the collection of new information, providing one on one assistance (as required) to support the monitoring of project activities, and assisting the development or use of monitoring tools such as pre and post workshop surveys and attendance records. In practice Clear Horizon

- developed an evaluation plan with project and organisational staff
- obtained ethical approval for Clear Horizon’s role
- designed and delivered a one-day training course on Most Significant Change Technique (MSC).
- conducted independent interviews with stakeholders face to face and by telephone.

Support from the Project Steering Committee appeared ineffective or absent. After a valuable start-up meeting where the project team travelled to meet Clear Horizon in Melbourne, the Project Manager was rarely available to work on the evaluation and there were long communication gaps. Communication was somewhat better after the evaluator spent three days in Lakes Entrance and worked with the Project Coordinator, the Project Support Worker and the Yoowinna Wurnalung administrator. Otherwise the degree of collaboration possible on the key evaluation tasks was limited.

Although the evaluation training was advertised throughout the region Steering Committee member organisations, with encouragement for members of the Aboriginal workforce to be released to attend, recruitment to was low and only one participant from outside Yoowinna Wurnalung attended. Necessary changes of date may have been a factor. This severely limited the extent to which workers could build confidence in interviewing participants of the men’s groups about their experience of the project. Further, the geographical distance between Clear Horizon and LEAHA/Yoowinna Wurnalung limited the extent to which the evaluators could seize opportunities for face-to-face meetings and interviews as they arose.

4.3. Lessons learned

4. What were the lessons learnt (by the project and organisational staff and the evaluators)?
5. What lessons may be applicable to other organisations?

The lessons learned through the project and its evaluation may all be applicable to other organisations. The following summary is based on project team reports to DOJR and conversations with Clear Horizon, and on stakeholders’ perspectives. In summary:

**Allow time at the start:**

Putting plans into action required a much more time and energy than anticipated:

- the process of building trust and relationships with Aboriginal men across the five communities was a key task from the start
- engaging and working in partnership with local men, organisations and service providers was a community-building challenge

*Allow time to build rapport - with community leaders, organisations and contracted consultants. Work together better as organisations. Build on programs you already have. Slow down and talk to each other more. (SMSC1)*

**Provide consistent opportunities**

*When you get momentum, stay on the front foot. [Keep a regular group going] Ignore the public holiday that everybody’s having and keep it going. Even if you didn’t have the attendance on the day, you are there and the men are aware of it and they will come (SMSC2)*

**Work on long term sustainable support:**

The team feel a long term commitment is required - continued work with local men, developing and supporting opportunities for them to come together

**Build project governance and partnerships**

The SMSC Steering Committees comprised about 25 representatives of Aboriginal and universal/mainstream organisations and included respected Elders. According to project documents, the committee met three times in the first year and only once more, in the second year, with declining attendance. Subsequently meetings were to be held directly after RAJAC meetings, as the majority of members of the Steering Committee were RAJAC attendees.

Several stakeholders expressed frustration that they were not well informed about the project and therefore could not help drive its development. Equally, the project team expressed frustration with a perceived lack of ‘buy-in’ by other organisations. While there were positive relationships between the project team and Men’s Health or Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) workers, the lack of high-level negotiation of key systemic issues was a barrier (such issues as the past history of organisational relationships, and competition for clients in the current climate of performance measurement by funders).

We note that SMSC’s experience reflects universal challenges around inter-organisational relationships. Stakeholders suggested small local action groups may have helped resolve issues. Membership would include ACCHO Chief Executive Officers (or a delegate with sufficient authority to ‘open doors’ for the project) and active local community members.
Work with local leaders / Elders / respected community members

Several informants noted that, while the Project Manager was local, the Project Coordinator and the Men’s Support Worker were new to the community and had to build trust and relationships over a substantial part of the funded period before being able to work on family violence prevention. The project plans relied on there being local leaders or champions and SMSC Steering Committee partners, who acted as intermediaries between the project team and local communities. It was clear that involving the right local leaders at the right time was a success factor. A few informants proposed that local engagement and local ownership would be more effective if the geographic areas of the projects were smaller, thus allowing the work to be better tailored to each unique community.

Need for ongoing learning about and evaluation of ways of working with at-risk men

Collecting evidence of the detail of program processes and participant outcomes was limited by concerns about confidentiality (around Aboriginal men’s business and, equally, family violence issues). Dialogue with Clear Horizon about ethical issues and strategies helped to address these concerns. It would be valuable to explore a way of supporting YWHS and Dardi Munwurro to capture participant outcomes and the methods that have been effective in enabling these outcomes, so that YWHS and Dardi Munwurro can share the learning and support other initiatives. This finding resonates with the recommendations of The Royal Commission into Family Violence in Victoria about the need to understand how to work with men and focus on their accountability, not only around crises but also in preventive ways.

We understand that YWHS and Dardi Munwurro have begun to document the model in more detail. This work, without breaching protocols around men’s business, could lead to better articulation of the model now developed. It will also support better dialogue and action concerning family violence prevention across organisations and communities.

Where evaluation support is required, build it in at the start

The evaluation support may have been more successful if the relationship had started near the beginning of the project and the evaluation consultants had been able to work alongside the project teams from start to finish. Through a mentoring relationship we would expect to build local knowledge and skills as well as deliver robust and well-informed evaluation findings during and at the end of the projects. This approach may also help grant recipients to focus on using the evaluation process to improve project delivery and be less anxious about accountability for meeting project targets.

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5. Appendices
## 5.1. Activity timeline

### Table 2: Strong Men Strong Communities - summary of reported activities

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<tr>
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<th>Feb-Jun 13</th>
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<th>Jan-Jun 14</th>
<th>Jul-Dec 14</th>
<th>Jan-Jun 15</th>
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<td><strong>Marketing and Promotions</strong></td>
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<td>Lakes Entrance</td>
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<td>16 Sep Info day (8 men and their families)</td>
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<td>14 - 16 March cultural camp in NSW. One of the men interested turned up, and attended with the workers</td>
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<td>6 Nov Info day (8 men from existing AOD group plus ACCO staff) -</td>
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<td>Presentation dinner (Aug)</td>
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<td>Men's Activities</td>
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<td>Lakes</td>
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<td>Intake Sept; Camp 9-11 Oct cancelled; relationship building and fortnightly gatherings begun</td>
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<td>18/12 Golf Day with Lake Tyers (10)</td>
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<td>Meetings (number attending):</td>
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<td>19/2 (2); 5/3 (14); 19/3 (7); 7/4 (6); 16/3 (0); 30/3 (0); 12/5 (3); 26/5 (7); 9/6 (0)</td>
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<td>Camp 19-21</td>
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<td>Feb (6); 18/3 (8); 1/4 (5); 15/4 (6); 29/4 (7); 13/5 (6); 27/5 (0);</td>
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<td>The group is active fortnightly</td>
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<td>(approx. 20 members)</td>
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<td>4/3 (17)</td>
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<td>LT (0)</td>
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<td>29/4 (0)</td>
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<td>2 day wkshp Nicholson July</td>
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<td>LT reps to help Orbost start</td>
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<td>5-day cultural exchange</td>
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<td>Mildura camp, and reciprocated</td>
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<td>Women's Activities</td>
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<td>Partners and family members to</td>
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<td>be invited to an information</td>
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<td>session about the SMSC project</td>
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<td>and ways for them to be</td>
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<td>engaged as part of men's</td>
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<td>group meetings</td>
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<td>Participant s reported</td>
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<td>156</td>
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5.2. Program logic, March 2014

Figure 1: Strong Men, Strong Communities Program Logic (draft March 2014, annotated April 2016)

**GOALS:**
- To reduce family conflict and violence in the Koori community
- A stronger Koori community where equal and respectful gender relations are the norm, violence is not tolerated, and individuals feel safe seeking assistance to address conflict and violence when it occurs.
5.3. Clear Horizon data collection tools

Evaluation of LEAHA’s Strong Men, Strong Communities

Organisational Participant Information Sheet: Interview

Principal Evaluator: Ms Zazie Tolmer. Senior Evaluator: Dr Bridget Roberts

1. Introduction

We are inviting you to take part in this evaluation because of your involvement with evaluation of the Strong Men, Strong Communities project. This Information Sheet tells you about the evaluation so you can decide if you want to be involved.

*Please read this information carefully.* Ask questions about anything that you don’t understand or want to know more about.

*Participation in this evaluation is voluntary.* If you don’t want to take part, you don’t have to. You can stop your participation at any time you want to, with no consequences. Your comments will not affect your relationship with any organisation involved with the project.

2. Why are we doing the evaluation?

Clear Horizon Consulting is evaluating the Strong Men, Strong Communities project. The purpose is to find out how effective the project has been over its three years of activity. We are interested in what works well and what has been learned that can be applied to future projects. Our findings will be available across Victoria to help prevent family violence.

3. What are we asking you to do?

We want to talk to you about the project because of your knowledge of how it has worked. The interview will be conducted by Clear Horizon Consulting and will take about 30-60 minutes. The interview will be arranged with you at a mutually convenient time and place. It may be conducted face-to-face or by telephone.

We will ask you for your views, based on your knowledge of the project, on the project’s important achievements, such as who was reached by the project, when and how; how well the project used community strengths, resources and services; how you think it addressed the underlying causes of violence; and what you learned.
4. **What will happen to the information I give?**

We will take notes of the interview. What you say will contribute to the findings in the report but will not be attributed to you by name or role, unless you specifically agree to this.

You can choose, if you wish, to have your name in the report, in a list of acknowledgements.

You can withdraw the information you give at any time prior to data analysis, by contacting the evaluator before 31 December 2015.

5. **What are the possible benefits and risks?**

Your feedback is very important for us to know how well the projects are working and why. Your comments will help us learn for the future.

You will be asked to give up some of your time to attend the interview. If you do not feel comfortable answering our questions you do not have to continue if you do not want to, and you can choose not to answer a question at any time.

**Supplement for Police personnel only:**

Participants should be aware of confidentiality of police information provisions under the *Victoria Police Act 2013*, and in particular the following Sections 227 and 228.

**Section 227 Victoria Police Act 2013 states:**

'Unauthorised access to, use of or disclosure of police information by members or former members of Victoria Police personnel – summary offence':

(1) A member or former member of Victoria Police personnel must not, without reasonable excuse, access, use or disclose any police information if it is the duty of the member or former member not to access, make use of or disclose the information.

Penalty: 240 penalty units or imprisonment for 2 years or both.

(2) Without limiting what may be a reasonable excuse, it is a reasonable excuse if the member or former member took reasonable steps not to access, use or disclose the police information.

**Section 228 Victoria Police 2013 states:**

Unauthorised access to, use of or disclosure of police information by members or former members of Victoria Police personnel—indictable offence

(1) A member or former member of Victoria Police personnel must not access, use or disclose any police information if—

(a) It is the duty of the member or former member not to access, use or disclose the information; and

(b) the member or former member knows or is reckless as to whether the information may be used (whether by the member or former member or any other person) to—

(i) endanger the life or safety of any person; or

(ii) commit, or assist in the commission of, an indictable offence; or

(iii) impede or interfere with the administration of justice.

Penalty: 600 penalty units or imprisonment for 5 years or both.

(2) An offence against subsection (1) is an indictable offence.

Participants should also note that Section 95 of the Constitution Act 1975 provides that a person employed in any capacity (whether permanently or temporarily) in the service of the State of Victoria should not:

(a) publicly comment upon the administration of any department of the State of
7. Do I have to take part in this evaluation?
You do not have to participate. Your decision whether to take part or not will not affect your relationship with any organisations involved in the project.

8. What will happen to information about me?
Only the evaluators from Clear Horizon Consulting will have access to, and be able to identify, the information you give us. We are committed to protecting your privacy in line with legislation (Information Privacy Act (2000)). We will manage the information you give us in a secure and confidential way. This means:

- we will not leave your name on any data we collect from you
- we will not discuss you in the other interviews we do
- we will not pass on your details to anyone else
- data will be stored on a password protected company server which only the evaluators will have access to
- all the information will be kept for five years. The information will be archived by Clear Horizon in a secure way.

Clear Horizon will have no role in determining how the final report of the evaluation will be published and distributed. The final report will be provided to the Koori Justice Unit, Department of Justice and Regulation, who will publish and distribute as they feel is appropriate. A summary of the findings will be available from the Koori Justice Unit.

10. What if I have concerns?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If you have concerns about the conduct of the evaluation, contact:</th>
<th>If you are not satisfied with the response of the evaluators to your questions or issues, contact:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Bridget Roberts  
Senior Consultant and Project Manager, Clear Horizon  
Phone: (03) 9425 7777  
Email: bridget@clearhorizon.com.au  
In writing: 129 Chestnut St, Cremorne VIC 3121 | Department of Justice Research Ethics Committee (Ref no: CF-15-1365)  
Phone: 03 8684 1514  
Email: ethics@justice.vic.gov.au  
In writing: Level 24, 121 Exhibition St, Melbourne VIC 3000 |

If you have a complaint concerning your involvement as a Victoria Police member, please contact  
Secretariat, Research Coordinating Committee, Corporate Strategy and Governance Department  
Level 5, Tower 1, Victoria Police Centre, 637 Flinders Street, Docklands VIC 3008  
Tel: +61 3 9247 3385; Fax: +61 3 9247 6712; Email: research.committee@police.vic.gov.au
‘Organisational’ Participant Consent - interview

I [print name] ___________________________ agree to participate in the evaluation of LEAHA’s Strong Men, Strong Communities conducted by Clear Horizon Consulting. The evaluator or an appropriate support person has discussed this evaluation with me. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the evaluation and I have received answers that are satisfactory to me. I have read and kept a copy of the Information Sheet and understand the general purposes, risks and methods of this evaluation.

I agree to take part because:

1. I know what I am expected to do and what this involves.
2. The risks, inconvenience and discomfort of participating in the study have been explained to me.
3. All my questions have been answered to my satisfaction.
4. I understand that the project may not be of direct benefit to me.
5. I understand that my participation will not affect the relationship I have with any service provider.
6. I can withdraw from the study at any time prior to final data analysis (31 December 2015) and decide not to answer any question asked.
7. I can obtain a summary of the results of the study when it is completed.
8. I understand that my personal information will be kept private.
9. I agree to the publication of results from this study provided details that might identify my contribution are removed
10. I am satisfied with the explanation given in relation to the project as it affects me and my consent is freely given.

☐ Yes ☐ No

I agree to being named in a list of contributors to the final evaluation report.

I agree to the interview being audio recorded ☐ Yes ☐ No

I want to see a copy of the interview transcript or notes: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Name of the participant: ___________________________ Date: ______________

Signature: ___________________________

Name of the evaluator: ___________________________ Date: ______________

Clear Horizon CH14_160
Signature: _____________________________
Story Collection Guide

Background

We are hoping to capture some stories about changes that may have resulted from activities you have participated in, such as ...[insert specific activities that formed part of the project]...

If you are happy with this, I will ask you 3 or 4 questions and record your answers. I will go over what I have written at the end to make sure you are happy with it.

We hope to use the stories and information collected from your interviews for a number of purposes including:

- to help us understand what participants think is good and not so good
- to make improvements to our work
- to tell our funders what has been achieved.

[Hand the person the MSC participant information sheet, read it through and check they understand it. Explain terms as necessary]

Contact Details

Name of storyteller * ____________________________________________________

Name of person recording story ___________________________________________

Location ______________________________________________________________

Date of recording ________________

* (If they wish to remain anonymous, don’t record their name or contact details – just write “community member or some similar description.)

Questions

1. Tell me a little about yourself
2. What activities/groups have you taken part in?
3. What changed for you (or for others) as a result of taking part?

1. ________________________________________________________________

2. ________________________________________________________________

3. ________________________________________________________________

4. ________________________________________________________________
4. We have been talking about a number of changes (refer to list above), from your point of view, which do you think is the MOST significant change. Please try to describe this change in the form of a story.

Beginning (situation before the change)...

Middle (what happened?)...

End (situation after)...

5. Why did you choose this change in particular? Why was it significant for you?

6. Confidentiality

We may like to use your stories for reporting to our donors, or sharing with other participants and trainers.

Do you, (the storyteller):

- want to have your name on the story (tick one)  
  Yes ☐ No ☐
- consent to us using your story for publication (tick one)  
  Yes ☐ No ☐
Contact Details

Name or nickname of storyteller/s, or a number if they wish to be anonymous
____________________________________________________

Name of person recording story _____________________________________________

Location __________________ Date of recording ____________

The conversation

7. Go round the group and ask for a memorable moment from the
groups/meetings/outings they have attended

8. When did something change for you because of being part of the group?

1. _____________________________________________________________

2. _____________________________________________________________

3. _____________________________________________________________

4. _____________________________________________________________

9. We have been talking about a number of changes (refer to list above), from your point of view, which do you think is the MOST significant change. Please try to describe this change in the form of a story.

Beginning (situation before the change)

____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

Middle (what happened?)

____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
10. Why did you choose this change in particular? Why was it significant or important for you?

11. Confidentiality

We may like to use your stories in our evaluation report. We will make sure you can’t be identified - no names and nothing that will indicate who you are or which community you come from.

Do you, (the storyteller) consent to us using your story in our report about Strong Men Strong Communities? (tick one)  Yes □  No □
**Evaluation of Strong Men, Strong Communities**

We would like to hear feedback from the men’s groups that have been part of Strong Men, Strong Communities.

If you are happy with this, I will ask you about four questions and record your answers.

**Why?**

Feedback /yarning will help us

- Support this group
- Start future groups
- Tell our funders what has been achieved

**How?**

- If you don’t want to take part, you don’t have to.
- We will record the interview.
- Bridget Roberts, from Clear Horizon, will hear the recording and use the main parts of what you say in a report to the Koori Justice Unit (Department of Justice and Regulation).
- Your name won’t be used, and nothing that will say who you are or which community you come from, unless you tell us that you would like to have your name on the story you tell.

| Do you agree to your story being used in a report about Strong Men Strong Communities? | Yes ☐ No ☐ |
| Do you want your name to be used in the report? | Yes ☐ No ☐ |

Signed .................................................................Name .................................................................

Date .................................................................

You should have two copies of this sheet. Please keep one copy for yourself and hand back the other
Capturing ‘data’ from conversations

We would like to capture some stories and other feedback from the men’s groups that have been part of Strong Men, Strong Communities.

Note:

- Helping the men to reflect on how the group has been for them is a valuable part of normal group process
- They can choose whether or not to reflect.
- They can choose whether they talk in the group or one-to-one (I’m assuming this might be possible)
- They should be told that their stories could also add to the evaluation and help us
  o Improve activities for this group
  o Start future groups
  o Tell our funders what has been achieved
- They need to give you permission before you can use the stories and feedback. Please see the note at the end of the MSC guide (page 3 below) and also consider how to use the recommended formal consent form.
- Anything that you use will be confidential - no names, no way of identifying the men.

Documenting

How you organise this depends on the group and what you and they are comfortable with. Some options are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Way of documenting</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You make notes at the time</td>
<td>Normal process but could look too official and secret. This can be helped by reading your notes back to the men so that they can check they are right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make an audio or video recording</td>
<td>Reliable. Clear Horizon could write it up if you save and send it on a USB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You write up the yarn after the session</td>
<td>This is also normal process for sensitive situations and topics. You would have to make time to do it the same day or next morning, to be sure of remembering it well enough.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You or one of the men write points on butcher’s paper so everyone can see</td>
<td>This is clear but may be too formal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men write their own story/feedback and help each other write theirs</td>
<td>Depends on their literacy skills and confidence.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>