

**COOLANGATTA-TWEED
COMMUNITY SAFETY ACTION PLAN
REVIEW**

**PREPARED BY
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WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The Coolangatta-Tweed Community Safety Action Plan is a partnership between New South Wales and Queensland state governments and Gold Coast City and Tweed Shire Councils, to address crime and safety issues in the border communities.

In 2000, the New South Wales Crime Prevention Division of the Attorney General's Department (CPD) was approached by Crime Prevention Queensland (CPQ) to discuss the possibility of a cross border crime prevention project. CPD and CPQ then approached Gold Coast City and Tweed Shire Councils to participate in this initiative and facilitate the involvement of other key community stakeholders.

As a result of these discussions, Gold Coast City and Tweed Shire Councils agreed to take a lead role in this process. CPD and CPQ provided funding to Gold Coast City Council (as the project manager) to engage a consultant to develop a crime and community safety profile and community safety action plan for the Coolangatta-Tweed area.

The cross border area was defined as including the local areas of Bilinga, Currumbin, Tugun, Coolangatta, Tweed Heads, Tweed Heads West, Tweed Heads South, Banora Point and Bilambil Heights. A map showing the geographical boundary of the cross border area can be found at Attachment A.

A reference group comprising representatives of key community, business and government organisations was established to oversee the development of the plan.

The Coolangatta-Tweed Community Safety Action Plan 2003 – 2006 identified five key action areas:

- Police Intelligence and Information Exchange
- Child, Youth and Family Support
- Property Crime Prevention
- Visitor Safety
- Alcohol and Other Drug Harm Minimisation

In December 2003, the Coolangatta-Tweed Community Safety Action Committee was formalised to oversee the implementation of strategies within the identified key action areas.

As part of the New South Wales approval process, the Coolangatta-Tweed Community Safety Action Plan 2003 – 2006 was endorsed by the New South Wales Attorney General's Department as a Safer Community Compact. Compacts are valid for three years.

In order for the Coolangatta-Tweed Community Safety Action Committee to be appropriately positioned to respond to the ongoing and emerging community safety needs within the Coolangatta–Tweed cross border area, Gold Coast City and Tweed Shire Councils have partnered to coordinate and fund this review.

The purpose of this review is to:

- Update the crime and community safety profile for the Coolangatta-Tweed cross border area including the identification and prioritisation of crime, fear of crime, and safety issues.
- In consultation with key stakeholders, revise the current Coolangatta-Tweed Community Safety Action Plan including strategies to address the priority issues identified in the crime and community safety profile.
- Recommend strategies for the effective ongoing implementation of the Coolangatta-Tweed Community Safety Action Plan including composition of the Coolangatta-Tweed Community Safety Action Committee, project funding sources and the engagement of stakeholders.

1.2 Methodology

The methodology for this review was informed by the New South Wales Attorney General's Department – Guidelines for Developing a Crime Prevention Plan.

The following activities were undertaken:

1. Update of Community and Crime Profiles incorporating available quantitative data, qualitative information and consultation with the local area commands of the New South Wales Police Service and the Queensland Police Service. A detailed list of data sources and publications can be found in the Reference section.
2. A targeted consultation process was undertaken to:
 - gather qualitative information that may further inform the update of the Crime and Community Safety Profile
 - identify and prioritise current and emerging crime and community safety issues
 - gather information about the process and impact of current strategies under the Coolangatta-Tweed Community Safety Action Plan 2003 – 2006 including the representation, participation and ongoing commitment of various stakeholder lead and partner agencies
 - inform the development of the Coolangatta-Tweed Community Safety Action Plan 2007 – 2010

A detailed list of stakeholders consulted can be found at Attachment B.

3. Facilitation of a strategic feedback workshop with members of the Coolangatta-Tweed Community Safety Action Committee.
4. Development of the Coolangatta-Tweed Community Safety Action Plan 2007 – 2010.

The plan will include:

- a process and impact assessment of the current plan
- identification of key priority issues based on the updated crime and community safety profile and stakeholder input
- a strategic action plan to address each priority issue which will clearly detail Objectives, Strategy, Rationale, Key Performance Indicators or Outputs, Outcomes, Lead Agency, Partner Agencies, and Timeframes

The review will identify any implementation issues, including funding, that may impact on the operationalisation of the plan.

1.3 Limitations

Stakeholder Consultation

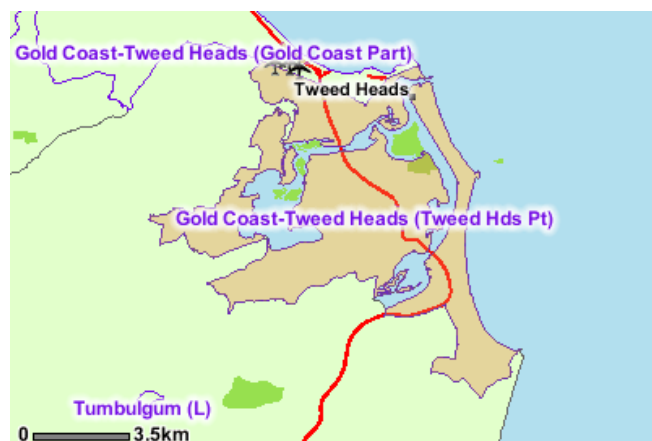
This was a review of the existing Coolangatta-Tweed Community Safety Action Plan 2003 – 2006. As such, targeted consultation with key community stakeholders was undertaken. Some stakeholders were not able to participate in consultations scheduled within the review timeframe however every effort was made to ensure that all stakeholders were aware of the review process and had the opportunity to provide input via telephone and/or email.

Access to Crime Statistics

Queensland Police Service crime statistics for the project area were not available due to departmental policy restrictions regarding the release of official crime statistics. This made it somewhat difficult to gain an accurate understanding of the types, incidents and trends in criminal activity within the cross border area. However information available on the public domain – District Crime Statistics and local information provided to Coolangatta Neighbourhood Watch – together with anecdotal information provided by local Police as part of this review provided valuable insights into crime and crime related activity within the cross border area.

2. COMMUNITY PROFILE UPDATE

The community profile update highlights the key issues which continue to have a significant relevance when addressing crime and community safety issues in the Coolangatta-Tweed cross border area. These are population and population growth rates, housing, relative disadvantage, tourism and homelessness.



For this purpose, statistical data has been sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics for the Statistical Local Areas of Bilinga, Coolangatta, Currumbin and Tugun, and the Urban Centre/Locality of Gold Coast-Tweed (Tweed Hds Pt) which best represents the Tweed Shire component of the Coolangatta-Tweed cross border area.

2.1 Population and Population Growth Rates

The estimated residential population of the Coolangatta-Tweed cross border area in 2001 was 60,947 persons, with approximately 73 per cent of residents located within the Tweed Shire. Of the total resident population, 15.8 per cent were under 15 years and 27.8 per cent were 65 years and over.

Age (Years)	Bilinga No.	Coolangatta No.	Currumbin No.	Tugun No.	Tweed No.	Percentage of total
0-4	62	202	117	258	2,359	4.9
5-14	135	326	300	514	5,345	10.9
15-24	177	608	351	544	3,971	9.3
25-54	599	2,131	1,221	1,977	15,288	34.8
55-64	228	953	318	545	5,478	12.3
65+	558	2,469	437	1,262	12,214	27.8
Total	1,759	6,689	2,744	5,100	44,655	

Population Growth

More recent statistics for the larger Gold Coast-Tweed Statistical District indicate that in the year to June 2004, the largest population increase (13,500 people) among Australia's Statistical Districts occurred in this district. Over the five years to June 2004, the highest average annual increase also occurred in the Gold Coast-Tweed (15,205 people).

The population of coastal New South Wales is also projected to increase at a faster rate than the rest of New South Wales. The locality of Banora Point, for example, is estimated to increase from 11,168 people in 2001 to approximately 13,899 people in 2024. Bilambil and Bilambil Heights are estimated to increase to approximately 10,935 people by 2024.

Tweed Shire, as a whole, has had an estimated annual growth rate of 2.9 per cent between 1991 and 2001.

It is anticipated that the population growth will primarily be accommodated through in-fill development. There is continued development of new residential estates throughout Tweed Heads, Tweed Heads South, Tweed Heads West, Banora Point and Bilambil Heights.

The City of Gold Coast has also continued to experience significant growth. Over the 5 years to 2003, the City grew by an average of 14,821 residents per year, an average annual growth rate of 3.5 per cent per year. Between 2005 and 2006, the City's population grew by 2.8 per cent compared with 1.9 per cent overall Queensland population growth.

Age Structure

Recent studies have indicated that the North Coast of New South Wales will continue to experience significant change. The number of children aged 0 to 14 years is likely to decrease by around 9 per cent between 2001 and 2031 whereas the number of older people (65 years and over) is projected to more than double.

The Gold Coast's population is also ageing, with a slightly higher median age than the rest of Queensland. The proportion of persons aged 65 and over is projected to increase from 13.7 per cent in 2001 to 14.8 per cent in 2011, and 18.7 per cent by 2021.

2.2 Housing

Household structure is rapidly changing in all parts of the Tweed Shire and Gold Coast City.

Between 1996 and 2001 Couples with Children declined from 29.9 per cent to 27.9 percent of all households in the Tweed Shire and Lone Person households increased from 22.9 per cent to 25.9 per cent of all households. In 2001, Couples With Children represented 28 per cent of all households in the Gold Coast City, and Lone Person households 24 per cent of all households.

Across the Coolangatta-Tweed cross border area, Couples without Children represented a much higher percentage of total families (44.3 per cent). The percentage of Lone Person households was consistent with city and shire trends (25.4 per cent).

A more recent housing needs assessment undertaken for the Gold Coast City Council by the Population Information and Forecasting Unit of the Department of Local Government and Planning, estimated that by 2026 Couples Without Children will be the largest household category comprising 31 per cent of all households and Lone Person households will be the second largest category making up 30 per cent of all households.

Household/ Family Type	Bilinga No.	Coolangatta No.	Currumbin No.	Tugun No.	Tweed No.	Percentage of total
Couple with children	341	704	827	1,545	3,860	35.8
Couple without children	371	1,047	575	1,059	5,939	44.3
One parent families	152	521	356	596	2,107	18.4
Total families	874	2,335	1,793	3,240	12,067	
Lone person household	251	1,044	387	590	5,146	25.4
Total households	1,239	3,794	2,335	4,170	17,706	

Note: Individual numbers do not always equal the totals shown and percentages do not always add up to 100 per cent as this table only shows major categories of household/family type.

Housing stress is already being experienced with the demand for rental accommodation on the Gold Coast exceeding supply. Many affordable rental properties have been lost to redevelopment and replaced by new, more expensive dwellings. The cost of rental properties on the Gold Coast is continuing to rise, increasing the number of renters experiencing housing stress. Vacancy rates for rental accommodation remain low (2.7 per cent in June 2006) and this is expected to continue to fuel rising rental costs. Although similar data is not available for the Tweed Shire anecdotal information suggests that the situation there is at least similar if not more critical.

2.3 Relative Disadvantage

Income

In 2001, 11.3 per cent of people aged 15 years living in Gold Coast City and 30.6 percent of people aged 15 years and over living in Tweed Shire received incomes of less than \$120 per week.

Weekly Individual Income	Bilinga No.	Coolangatta No.	Currumbin No.	Tugun No.	Tweed No.	Percentage of total
Negative-\$119	111	250	217	351	3,354	8.9
\$120-\$199	206	653	242	637	7,584	19.4
\$200-\$399	387	1,214	512	1,056	11,909	31.3
\$400-\$599	185	586	408	689	5,800	15.9
\$600-\$799	88	305	271	356	2,822	8.0
\$800-\$999	52	144	118	166	1,327	3.7
\$1,000+	55	160	164	188	1,563	4.4
Total	1,189	3,836	2,088	3,740	37,259	

Note: Individual numbers do not always equal the totals shown and percentages do not always add up to 100 per cent as this table only shows major categories of weekly individual income.

In 2001, 28.3 per cent of people aged 15 years and over living in the Coolangatta-Tweed cross border area received incomes of less than \$120 per week higher than the average across the two local government areas.

Employment

In 2001 there was an average unemployment rate of 12.5 per cent across the Coolangatta-Tweed cross border area. This is higher than both state averages of 8.8 per cent for New South Wales and 9.7 per cent for Queensland.

Anecdotal information suggests that the unemployment rate within the cross-border area among young people is even higher.

Labour Force Status	Bilinga	Coolangatta	Currumbin	Tugun	Tweed	Percentage of total
	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	
Total employed	536	1,953	1,254	1,929	13,886	87.5
- Full time	296	1,032	716	1,109	7,667	
- Part time	209	856	493	750	5,741	
Total unemployed	130 (19.5%)	336 (14.6%)	124 (8.9%)	237 (10.9%)	1,973 (12.4%)	12.5
Total	666	2,289	1,378	2,166	15,859	22,358

The unemployment rates in Bilinga (19.5 per cent) and Coolangatta (14.6 per cent) were higher than the average rate for the cross border area. The unemployment rate for Tweed (12.4 per cent) was similar to the average rate for the cross border area.

In a recent study of disadvantage across Australia, localities were assessed and ranked against indicators such as:

- social distress - low family income, rental stress, home purchase stress and lone person households
- health - low birth-weight, childhood injuries, immunisation, disability/sickness support, life expectancy, psychiatric patients, hospital/community and suicide
- community safety - child maltreatment, criminal convictions, imprisonment and domestic violence
- economic - unskilled workers, unemployment, long-term unemployment, dependency ratio, low mean taxable income and limited computer use/internet access
- education - non-attendance at preschool, incomplete education, early school leaving and post-schooling qualifications
- community engagement – a range of community indicators

Coolangatta, in particular, and Bilinga featured among the most disadvantaged communities in Queensland.

2.4 Visitors

It is estimated that Coolangatta receives approximately 3.8 million overnight visitors per annum.

Tweed Tourism estimates that there has been a 72 per cent increase in visitor numbers over the past year with Twin Towns Services Club receiving 2.5 million visitors per annum, 1.1 million from Queensland. This trend is expected to continue with tourism facilities being enhanced with the addition of approximately 4,000 new beds and a new conference centre over the next 12-24 months.

A recent economic development study conducted for the Tweed Heads Town Centre estimated that the combined town centres of Coolangatta and Tweed Heads received in excess of 11 million international, domestic and day visitors per year.

These figures do not reflect seasonal variations including peak local summer holiday periods which attract large numbers of local, domestic and international visitors, peak winter holiday periods which attract international visitors and domestic visitors from the southern states, 'Schoolies Week' which attracts young people from throughout Queensland, New South Wales and to a lesser degree other states, and other major sporting and community events which attract significant numbers of local, domestic and international visitors.

2.5 Homelessness

A 2001 study of homelessness in New South Wales found that the rate of homelessness in localities such as Tweed Heads was 60 per 10,000 persons.

The study also found that there were 6,880 residents of caravan parks in New South Wales. 40 per cent of caravan residents were located in coastal New South Wales. 452 persons were identified as homeless in Tweed Heads.

A study by the Gold Coast City Council estimated that in 2002 there were at least 2,671 homeless people within the City, the vast majority (95 per cent) in the coastal areas of the City.

Statistical area	2002 population	Rate per 10,000 (1996)	Number of homeless people in 2002
Gold Coast Pt 'A'	47,048	27	127
Gold Coast Pt 'B'	391,405	65	2,544
Total	438,473		2,671

Source: Our Invisible Community – People Homeless in Gold Coast City

If it is assumed that the homelessness rate in the Coolangatta-Tweed cross border area is 62.5 per 10,000 persons – the average estimated rate for Gold Coast City and Tweed Shire – based on a population of 60,947 persons, there could be at least 380 homeless people at any given time within the cross border area.

This estimate would not include people "sleeping rough" who may not have been able to be accessed during either study.

It is also important to consider the potential impact of development in the Tweed-Coolangatta cross border area which may be contributing to the lack of affordable housing. Caravans may be a more accessible and affordable housing option thereby also increasing the visibility of homeless people.

In 2005, the Gold Coast City Council conducted a 'Homelessness and Public Intoxication Survey' of selected public spaces throughout the city. Information gathered about Goodwin Park, Queen Elizabeth Park and the Kirra Beachfront, all located within the Coolangatta-Tweed cross border area, indicated the following:

- These locations have been known “homeless hotspots” for at least four years.
- At any one time, there may be between 2 and 8 homeless people frequenting each of these locations. The number of homeless people observed is relatively consistent but the identities can change.
- They are predominantly males aged 40-60 years, some with families but otherwise little evidence of children.
- These sites appear to be used mainly as gathering places although other public places, such as the Jack Evans Boat Harbour and other beachfront locations, are used for sleeping.
- The observed behaviour of these homeless people at the time of the survey was described as “aggressive – alcohol related” and there was evidence of empty bottles and casks at the sites. It was however acknowledged that underage drinking also occurs at these sites.
- Evidence of mental health issues was also identified.

2.6 Summary of key issues

The Coolangatta-Tweed cross border area is characterised by:

- Continued population growth rates of 2-3 per cent.
- An increasingly ageing population, particularly in the Bilinga, Coolangatta and (to a slightly lesser extent) Tweed localities, with at least one third of the overall current population aged over 65 years.
- An increasingly higher percentage of households comprising Lone Persons or Couples without Children.
- A high percentage of low income earners with almost one third of people aged over 15 years currently earning less than \$200 per week.
- Higher than average unemployment rates, particularly in the Bilinga, Coolangatta and Tweed areas.

- Localities – Coolangatta and Bilinga – ranked among the most disadvantaged communities’ in Australia.
- Continued growth in visitor numbers, particularly to the town centres of Coolangatta and Tweed Heads.
- An uncertain but potentially significant number of homeless people who may become increasingly visible as a result of the continuing redevelopment of the cross border area.

An older age profile, high unemployment rates and the tourism industry with its associated lower levels of pay and higher rates of part-time employment, seasonal peaks and vulnerability to economic troughs are all contributing factors to higher levels of disadvantage across the Coolangatta-Tweed cross border area. Many of these factors are also risk factors commonly associated with crime and crime related activity.

From a crime prevention and community safety perspective, this community profile raises a number of issues including:

- Continued population growth will drive both residential and tourism-related development within the Coolangatta-Tweed cross border area. While development provides opportunities to implement crime prevention through environmental design principles, it can also displace and/or cause housing stress for the disadvantaged within the community and is not always accompanied by the appropriate level of social infrastructure development which is required to support new and growing communities.
- Tourism is a significant factor associated with the continued prosperity of the Coolangatta-Tweed cross border area. The safety of visitors is, therefore, a significant consideration.
- The increasingly ageing population of the Coolangatta-Tweed cross border area suggests that significant attention may need to be given to the crime prevention and community safety needs of this population sector.
- Over the past few years the issue of homelessness has become an increasingly significant social issue throughout Australia. There is little information available upon which to base a sound estimate of the number of homeless people who may be located at any given time within the Coolangatta-Tweed cross border area. The development of any crime prevention or community safety strategies related to homelessness will require at least a clearer understanding of the ‘demographics’ of homelessness, including the level of representation of homeless people as victims and/or perpetrators of crime, within the cross border area.

3. CRIME PROFILE UPDATE

3.1 Crime Profile Update – New South Wales

Recorded incidents occurring between January 2004 and December 2006 in Tweed Heads indicate the following trends:

- Domestic violence related assaults increased by 21.3 per cent between 2004 and 2006. Non-domestic violence related assaults increased by 18.8 per cent during the same period. Tweed Police report that over 40 per cent of non-domestic violence related assaults are alcohol related.
- Malicious Damage increased by 19.2 per cent between 2004 and 2006. Tweed Police report that approximately 11 per cent of malicious damage offences are alcohol related.
- Motor vehicle theft increased by 26.9 per cent between 2004 and 2006.
- Stealing from motor vehicles also increased by 15.6 per cent between 2004 and 2006.

Crime trends in Tweed Heads are quite different from the remainder of the Shire which has relatively stable crime rates in all categories except for malicious damage which increased by 7.3 per in the period from January 2002 to December 2006. Full details of recorded offences for the Tweed Local Government Area can be found at Attachment C.

Recorded incidents of selected offences in Tweed Heads

Offence Type	2004	2005	2006
Assault – domestic violence related	229	235	278
Assault – non-domestic violence related	330	348	392
Break and Enter - dwelling	358	365	367
Break and Enter – non-dwelling	372	332	334
Malicious Damage	759	925	905
Steal from motor vehicle	499	503	577
Steal from retail store	300	229	230
Steal from dwelling	370	379	338
Motor Vehicle Theft	208	239	264

Source: New South Wales Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research

The major crime issues identified by Police were:

- malicious damage
- stealing, particularly from motor vehicles and retail stores, and the high representation of visitors among victims of this type of offence

- the increasing involvement of alcohol in criminal activity and other forms of anti-social activity particularly among young people

(Anti-social behaviour is any form of behaviour that causes harassment, alarm or distress to another person. It can include screaming/shouting, use of foul/abusive language that can be heard in a public place, noise, and other forms of public disturbance. Anti-social behaviour affects the quality of life of many individuals and communities and research shows that if left unchecked, anti-social behaviour creates an environment in which crime can occur.)

- the more recent emergence of organised gangs, with both mature and under-age members, with potential links to outlaw motor cycle gangs and drug related activity

3.2 Crime Profile Update – Queensland

There were no official crime statistics pertaining to the Coolangatta-Tweed cross border area available from the Queensland Police Service.

Available public data indicates that for the Gold Coast Police District, of which the cross border area is a very small part, reported Offences Against the Person remained stable across the three year period between 2003-2006. Offences Against Property, particularly in the categories of Unlawful Entry, Other Theft (which includes Stealing) and Other Property Damage increased in 2005/06.

Reported Offences – Gold Coast Police District

Offence Type	20003/04	2004/05	2005/06
Assaults	1,661	1,684	1,659
Sexual Offences	379	340	367
Total Offences Against the Person	2,775	2,722	2,715
Unlawful Entry	6,983	6,975	7,004
Other Theft	15,771	13,463	14,264
Other Property Damage	4,126	4,272	4,501
Unlawful Use of Motor Vehicle	2,597	2,438	2,160
Total Offences Against Property	34,469	31,194	31,747

Source: Queensland Police Service: Annual Statistical Review 2003/04, 2004/05 and 2005/06

Despite the fact that the Gold Coast Police District covers a very large geographical area – including Burleigh, Broadbeach, Surfers Paradise, Southport, Runaway Bay, Nerang and Pacific Pines – reported district crime trends appear to be consistent with the anecdotal information available about the Coolangatta Police Division,

Consultations with Police indicated that crime within the Coolangatta Police Division was relatively stable. Assaults, in particular, have decreased as a result of targeted Police activity (Operation Southern Alliance) from 7.00pm to 3.00am on Friday and Saturday nights.

Property related crime reported by Police to Coolangatta Neighbourhood Watch indicates that stealing may be a significant concern in Coolangatta. Publicly available information provided to Coolangatta Neighbourhood Watch and presented below indicates quite clearly that stealing increases during the Christmas/New Year holiday period, particularly in Coolangatta.

The following additional issues were highlighted by local police:

- the management of intoxicated persons and related anti-social behaviour remains a challenge particularly with the spill over of patrons attending major events and licensed premises in Tweed Heads
- the management of alcohol related issues and anti-social behaviour, particularly among young people, along the Esplanade and in parks
- the increasing demands placed on Police to respond to incidents, often alcohol related and involving under-age drinking, which occur at private parties throughout the area

Selected Crime Statistics for Bilinga, Coolangatta, Currumbin and Tugun

Month	Location	Burglary	Stealing	Stolen Vehicle
December 2006	Bilinga		2	
	Coolangatta	2	6	1
	Currumbin/Currumbin Waters	2	6	
	Kirra	2	2	
	Tugun	5	1	
January 2007	Bilinga	1	2	
	Coolangatta	15	12	
	Currumbin/Currumbin Waters	5	8	
	Kirra		5	
	Tugun	3	6	
February/March 2007	Bilinga	3	2	7
	Coolangatta	8	23	17
	Currumbin/Currumbin Waters	10	4	5
	Kirra	1	5	4
	Tugun	11	4	2
Total		68	88	36

Source: Neighbourhood Watch Coolangatta, Local Police News

3.3 Summary

Available data and anecdotal information from Queensland and New South Wales Police indicated that overall crime was stable across the Coolangatta-Tweed cross border area.

The following common concerns were highlighted:

- the significant rate of stealing offences particularly targeting visitors to the area
- malicious damage and the increasing involvement of alcohol in this type of offending
- the continuing challenges in maintaining public order and management of anti-social behaviour particularly in the main thoroughfares of Coolangatta and Tweed Heads
- movement and management of intoxicated patrons traveling between licensed premises on either side of the border
- the growing number of private parties at which the control of under-age drinking, intoxication and related consequences is becoming increasingly difficult
- the emergence of organised gangs, with potential links to outlaw motor cycle gangs and drug related activity, traveling between the Gold Coast and Tweed Heads

The following high risk areas were also identified:



1. Chris Cunningham Park
2. Goodwin Park
3. Griffith Street (particularly from 3.00am to 6.00am on Friday and Saturday)
4. Jack Evans Boat Harbour
5. Point Danger
6. Rainbow Beach
7. The Esplanade

Police reported a good level of informal collaboration particularly with regards to the exchange of intelligence and the management of major events.

4. COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK

Targeted community consultations were held with a diverse range of stakeholders including:

- Council officers involved in aboriginal liaison, community development, community safety, community services, local law management, recreational services, research, social planning and youth development
- representatives of government departments providing services to families, children and young people
- representatives of New South Wales and Queensland Police Services, and liquor licensing authorities
- representatives of the business sector (including late night traders) and tourism industry
- representatives of community based organisations within the Coolangatta-Tweed cross border area

The feedback received during consultations was largely anecdotal and may have been based on a mixture of professional observations and experience, personal observations and experience, and perceptions influenced by the media and others. The community stakeholder feedback is intended to complement available data and secondary information and should not be read in isolation.

The overall feedback is presented below and falls under the following key areas:

- Issues relating to young people as victims and perpetrators of crime - anti-social behaviour, alcohol related activity and community perceptions about young people
- Safety in public spaces – including the identification of “high risk” areas
- Homelessness - community perceptions and lack of informed responses
- Alcohol management issues - issues relating to licensed premises, the impact of increasing numbers of licensed premises and public intoxication
- Local area development and image – the impact of future residential and tourism development, tourism and safety and the role of the media
- Progress of the Coolangatta-Tweed Community Safety Action Plan - community awareness and legitimacy of the Coolangatta-Tweed Community Safety Action Committee

4.1 Feedback about Issues Relating to Young People

ISSUE	STAKEHOLDER COMMENTS
Anti-social behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groups of young people numbering between 3–10 people, some as young as 12-13 years, a mixture of males and females, regularly congregating in public places (e.g. beachfront, shopping centres, parks) in the Coolangatta-Tweed cross border area. • The presence of large groups of young people, particularly when they are intoxicated and/or displaying anti-social behaviours, can be intimidating to other potential users of public spaces in particular the elderly, women with young children and other young people. • The young people are almost always known to each other and what starts off as a social gathering can often deteriorate into shouting matches, trading insults and even throwing punches. The escalation of anti-social behaviour is often influenced by alcohol. Anti-social behaviours can include yelling, swearing, pushing, spitting and urinating in public. • The anti-social behaviour of young people often impacts on the alfresco dining areas within the Coolangatta-Tweed area. These areas are often frequented by “caravaners” who make up a significant proportion of tourists to the area and who are part of a nation-wide network of “caravaners” through which “bad news” travels very quickly.
Alcohol related activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The escalation of private parties within the Coolangatta-Tweed cross border area attracting young people from within and outside of the area. Event details are predominantly communicated via mobile text messaging and the internet. These parties pose a significant crowd control and alcohol management problem because they are held on private property. They are synonymous with intoxication and under-age drinking. • The ease of access to alcohol by young people – usually facilitated by older friends and family. • Young people within the area are regularly involved in binge drinking and underage drinking, and increasingly moving into substance abuse. • Significant concern was expressed about the increasingly younger age at which people start drinking alcohol and then move onto substance abuse. There are no counseling or other support services for alcohol and drug dependent people under 18 years within the cross border area.

ISSUE	STAKEHOLDER COMMENTS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people are modeling adult behaviours and attitudes towards alcohol – they are the “victims” of an entrenched binge drinking culture in which most social activity involves drinking alcohol and drinking alcohol is synonymous with “having a good time”.
Community perceptions about young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a perception that young people from Tweed Heads are disadvantaged socio-economically and come into Queensland because there are no recreational opportunities available to them in their local community. There is also a perception that they are “the trouble makers”. • There is a significant amount of movement among young people across the Queensland-New South Wales border both for schooling, recreation and social activity. Young people from the Tweed attend school in Palm Beach and Currumbin and their friends and social interests tend to be centred in Queensland. Young people from the Burleigh area attend parties at Pottsville and Chinderah. Young people from Queensland also attend the PCYC which is located in Tweed Heads. • Issues relating to young people are often highlighted in the media which serves to reinforce some of the misconceptions in the community about young people and their activities. These issues need to be kept in perspective as they are predominantly anti-social not criminal.

4.2 Feedback about Safety in Public Spaces

ISSUE	STAKEHOLDER COMMENTS
<p>The following locations were consistently identified as “high risk” areas for public safety:</p> <p>Chris Cunningham Park Coolangatta foreshore Duranbah Goodwin Park Jack Evans Boat Harbour Point Danger Rainbow Beach</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General feedback related to concerns regarding the congregation of groups of intoxicated young people, suspected drug activity, vandalism (which makes it difficult to invest in recreational infrastructure such as playgrounds, barbeque areas, etc) and personal safety issues (e.g. poor lighting, syringes, general fear of crime). • Goodwin Park was identified as a high risk area due to the regular congregation of intoxicated young people and related anti-social behaviour which often precludes use of the park by other legitimate users. Similar observations were made about the Coolangatta foreshore and Chris Cunningham Park. • Duranbah Beach was acknowledged as an area which was frequented by young people involved in the youth surf culture. This limited its attraction for other age groups, including families. • Point Danger was perceived as isolated. • Jack Evans Boat Harbour, together with the Chris Cunningham Park, was frequently identified as an area which is poorly lit and almost hidden from view. It provides an environment conducive to undertaking activities away from the “public eye” such as under-age drinking, intoxication and other substance abuse.

4.3 Feedback about Homelessness

ISSUE	DETAILS
Community perceptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a perception that the congregation of homeless people in areas such as the Coolangatta foreshore and Chris Cunningham Park is creating a safety and security concern, reducing the cleanliness of the parks and contributing to vandalism of park assets. • There is also a contrary view which suggests that homeless people in fact maintain park assets because they are frequent users, however, their presence in the parks make other users reluctant to use the facilities. • Complaints to local authorities were predominantly about the impact on amenity. • The presence of homeless people made visitors feel “uncomfortable”. • There is general acknowledgement that community (and visitor) perceptions are fuelled by the lack of understanding about homelessness, the extent of it within the local area, the needs of homeless people and how to respond.
Lack of informed responses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service providers, in particular, expressed concern about safety issues for homeless people particularly in relation to their vulnerability to substance abuse, sexual abuse, child abuse and “opportunistic prostitution”. • There was also concern expressed about the extent to which there were mental health issues among the homeless and the representation of young children and older persons among the homeless. • It appeared that the typical response to “complaints” about homeless people was to “move them on”. This often meant that they were moved from one side of the border to the other, and frequently back again. Attempting to reconnect homeless people with family or any form of support service was extremely difficult due to their mobility and the lack of services within the cross border area.

4.4 Feedback about Alcohol Management Issues

ISSUE	DETAILS
Issues relating to licensed premises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Differences in trading hours and licensing requirements (e.g. voluntary versus mandatory Liquor Accord) on either side of the border were perceived to be linked to the problems experienced in managing the movement of patrons, in particular intoxicated patrons, across the border and between licensed premises. • Problems occur predominantly between midnight and 6.00am. • Late night trading premises attract excessive numbers of patrons who spill out onto the streets. • There is a perception that patrons from Tweed premises move onto Coolangatta late night trading premises and if they are refused entry continue drinking along the foreshore. They wander the streets and shopping areas often causing disturbances, property damage and exhibit ant-social behaviours (e.g. urinating in public places).
Impact of increasing numbers of licensed premises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an increasing nervousness about the growing number of applications for liquor licenses in the Coolangatta area, especially for the establishment of cafes/bars and footpath dining outlets, where it is perceived that alcohol management problems may have a greater impact on the surrounding community due to the less controlled drinking environment.
Public intoxication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a growing concern about groups of young people loitering, drinking in parks and intimidating other park users and passers-by. There is a perception that these groups are either under-age or cannot afford to frequent licensed premises but want to be part of the night-time activity. • The on-street mix of patrons and non-patrons of license premises, often in the vicinity of licensed premises, makes it difficult to identify who is responsible for the disturbances, anti-social behaviour and related property damage in the local area.

4.5 Feedback about Local Area Development and Image

ISSUE	DETAILS
Impact of future residential and tourism development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is concern that the escalating residential development occurring in the Tweed will increase the current level of housing stress particularly for low-income earners and the disadvantaged. This may increase the number of homeless persons in the area. It may also increase the likelihood of crime and crime related activity. • There was a similar concern expressed about the escalation of tourist style development (including the potential proliferation of licensed premises) in Coolangatta and the impact that this may have on an area that appears to be torn between wanting to be a family holiday destination and the increasing demands for night-time entertainment options including late trading licensed premises. There is a perception that “Tweed is for lifestyle and Coolangatta is for nightlife”. • It was recognised that the escalation of development on both sides of the border is often taking place in areas that are currently utilised by young people and the homeless. There was a concern regarding the potential displacement of these groups and the related crime and community safety issues that may result.
Tourism and safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was continued concern about the targeting of tourists by thieves. Tourists were perceived to be an “easy target” because they are easily identified within the local community, they often don’t take the necessary precautions to safeguard their property and often there is nowhere safe for them to store their property in public places such as the beach. • There was positive feedback received regarding the Beach Lockers trial. • There was broad stakeholder acknowledgement that tourists were becoming increasingly security conscious and that while this may not change their own practices, it does impact on their choice of holiday location. The importance of maintaining a reputation as a safe tourist destination was considered to be very important to the Coolangatta-Tweed area which was still largely considered a family destination.
The role of the media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was recognised that the cross border area doesn’t experience the regular negative publicity that appears to be characteristic of other coastal areas such as Surfers Paradise and Broadbeach. However, when an incident does occur in what is considered a relative “sleepy hollow”, the impact on the community is quite significant and this is largely determined by the attention the incident receives from the media. An example of this was the recent media surrounding the alleged “youth gang activity” occurring in the area.

4.6 Feedback about the Progress of the Coolangatta-Tweed Community Safety Action Plan

ISSUE	DETAILS
Community awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There appeared to be little awareness, outside of stakeholders directly involved in strategies related to the Coolangatta-Tweed Community Safety Action Plan, about the existence of the plan, its activities and outcomes. • There was positive recall of the Beach Lockers trial but no recognition that it was an initiative of the Coolangatta-Tweed Community Safety Action Committee. It was perceived to be a Gold Coast City Council project.
Legitimacy of the Coolangatta-Tweed Community Safety Action Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was a significant lack of clarity about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the purpose of the Committee and its geographic focus - who are the lead agencies - when it meets, where and how frequently - who is able to attend and how to access meeting information - the benefits of attending meetings • There was also a degree of confusion between the role of the Coolangatta-Tweed Community Safety Action Committee and the recently re-established Coolangatta Police Community Consultative Committee
Access to information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were concerns expressed about the inability to access official crime statistics for the Coolangatta-Tweed cross border area with each Police Service having a distinctly different policy with regards to release of crime statistics. New South Wales Police provided access to up-to-date detailed crime statistics on request whereas Queensland Police have a policy of not releasing local area crime statistics. • There were also concerns expressed about the different levels of participation by representatives of the Police Services in the Coolangatta-Tweed cross border project. It was acknowledged that this may be due to staff changes and operational priorities however the active participation of representatives of both Police Services is viewed by all stakeholders as critical to informing the strategic direction of the project and ensuring that it continues to provide appropriate and timely responses to key crime and crime related issues that are impacting on the cross border communities.

5. DISCUSSION

5.1 Review of the Coolangatta-Tweed Community Action Safety Plan 2003 - 2006

A review of the plan was undertaken in 2004. The review documented the significant progress achieved across all 20 strategies and recommended that funding be sourced to facilitate the implementation of strategies yet to be progressed.

The following table provides a summary of the outcomes of that review and also incorporates relevant feedback from the current review (indicated in *italics*).

Action Area	Strategy	Summary of progress
Intelligence and Information Exchange	1. Formation of 5 Working Parties to manage strategy implementation	Completed. A recommendation was made that strategies be developed to address the fluctuating membership of Action Teams and the impact that this may have on progressing Action Plans.
	2. Establishment of Cross Border Community Safety Action Committee	Completed. A number of recommendations were made to improve the functioning of the committee. <i>The current review identified concerns regarding the poor level of community awareness of the activities of the Committee and the related issue of the legitimacy of the Committee.</i>
	3. Cross Border Crime Prevention Information Exchange	<i>Police reported a good level of informal collaboration particularly with regards to the exchange of intelligence and the management of major events. Access to and sharing of information about the actual levels of crime and crime related activity in the Coolangatta-Tweed cross border area with other project stakeholders continues to be problematic.</i>
Child, Youth and Family Support	4. Cross Border Domestic Violence collaboration project	Healthy Relationships Project – current. <i>Good feedback was received about this project and, in particular, its ability to raise a number of related issues with young people (e.g. bullying, alcohol, anti-social behaviour)</i>
	5. Twin Towns PCYC Cross Border Youth Activity Space and Integrated Youth Service Delivery project	Requires funding. <i>Completed and officially opened on 19 August 2006.</i>
	6. Safe Party Pack project	Ongoing.

Action Area	Strategy	Summary of progress
	7. Caravan Park Project	This was an established project which requires further discussion with regards to its potential implementation across the Coolangatta-Tweed cross border area and related funding issues. <i>Completed. Banora Point Caravan Park is in final stages of closing.</i>
	8. Crime Prevention in Schools project	Ongoing with a particular focus in the lead up to 'Schoolies Week'.
	9. Big HArt Youth Arts Project	Requires funding. <i>Completed.</i>
Property Crime Prevention	10. Target Hardening for repeat victims of Break Enter and Steal offences	Ongoing – review of existing lock standards/ development of new standards. <i>Police VIPs continue to offer home security audits for victims of unlawful entry. Gold Coast City Council and the Queensland Police Service are currently implementing the 'Screening Out High-Rise Crime' initiative which is funded by the NRMA and targets unlawful entry of high-rise accommodation particularly via balcony doors.</i>
	11. Safety Expo for seniors	Not undertaken to date. <i>Seniors safety seminars were delivered by Gold Coast City Council in October-November 2006 and are scheduled again for late 2007. Tweed Shire Council provides a similar service for its communities. The current review identified the need to examine the implications of the ageing population of the cross border area to inform the development of appropriate ongoing strategies.</i>
	12. Home Security Strategy	Requires funding. <i>Completed.</i>
	13. Crime Prevention Seminars for businesses	Seminar held in May 2004. <i>The current review identified the ongoing concerns with regards to safety and security issues in the business centres of the cross border area, particularly in relation to the management of alcohol and the impact of anti-social behaviour in and around those centres on the real and perceived fears of locals and tourists.</i>
	14. Lockers trial project	Completed (February – April 2007). <i>Positive feedback about the trial was received during the current review.</i>
	15. Hotspot lighting and environmental improvements	Safety audits to be conducted. <i>A safety audit of Goodwin Park has been undertaken. Improvements have been made to lighting in/around the public toilets. The current review was unable to establish the extent to which the other recommendations have been implemented.</i>

Action Area	Strategy	Summary of progress
Visitor Safety	16. Safety Tips for Visitors project	Stickers have been developed and safety information is displayed at the Gold Coast Airport. <i>The current review identified ongoing concerns about the impact of real and perceived crime and community safety issues on tourists. Concerns related to the ongoing targeting of tourists by thieves, anti-social behaviours of groups of young people and intoxicated people, and the increasing presence of homeless people within public spaces.</i>
	17. Car Rental Project (removal of identifying markers on vehicles and promotion of vehicle security)	Some discussions have occurred with local car rental operators with no other progress to date. <i>Completed. A review of this strategy identified that it was not required as rental companies already remove identifiers.</i>
Alcohol and Other Drug Harm Minimisation	18. Responsible Service Agreement between Police and licensees in southern Coolangatta and northern Tweed	No progress to date. <i>The issue of alcohol management in and around licensed premises and in public places was raised during the current review. The Gold Coast Liquor Industry Consultative Committee has been incorporated and is supported by Liquor Licensing, Police and Council. All members are part of the voluntary Gold Coast Licensees Accord.</i>
	19. Responsible Service of Alcohol course and promotion	No progress to date.
	20. Establishment of Community Drug Action Team	There is no equivalent to the New South Wales Community Drug Action Team operating in Queensland. <i>The issue of drug misuse was raised during the current review predominantly in the context of emerging 'organised gang' activity in the Tweed. Local area drug use and distribution was also raised by some stakeholders in the Tweed community.</i>

Three of the most successful cross border projects which have been undertaken under the banner of the Coolangatta-Tweed Community Safety Action Plan are the Healthy Relationships Project, S.A.I.L.S. (Sailing Adventures in Life Skills) Project and Portable Beach Locker Trial.

The Healthy Relationships Project is a domestic violence awareness project undertaken in New South Wales and Queensland schools targeting bullying and other unacceptable behaviours within the school environment. To date 10 schools in each state have been consulted regarding the project. The level of response has been very positive. The project commenced in March 2007 and is scheduled to be operational in schools by June 2007.

The S.A.I.L.S. project was a five week program utilising sailing and related activities to raise the self-esteem of local youth in the Tweed area and enhance their leadership, team building and conflict resolution skills.

This project was an expansion of the existing program in Gold Coast City and demonstrated the application and benefits of shared learning within a cross border context. Nine of the eleven young people who commenced this project have successfully completed it and seven of these have signed up for the Duke of Edinburgh bronze medallion. Participant feedback has been extremely positive. Formal evaluation of the project is currently underway.

The Portable Beach Locker Trial facilitated the installation of beach lockers at Rainbow Bay to encourage beach users to secure their valuables. The purpose of the trial was to assess the level of usage, the impact of the strategy on property theft rates from the beach and nearby vehicles, and the impact on perceptions of safety. The 10 week trial concluded on 22 April 2007. Feedback throughout the trial was extremely positive from both resident and visitor users with requests for a similar service to be provided at other beach locations. A formal review of the project is currently underway.

The other issue which was addressed by both the 2004 Progress Report and this current review was the functioning of the Coolangatta-Tweed Community Safety Action Committee.

The 2004 Progress Report made the following recommendations:

- that the practice of alternate chairing of Committee meetings continues but that both Council chairpersons attend all committee meetings irrespective of who is chairing the actual meeting
- that meeting reminders and distribution of minutes is undertaken in a more timely manner
- that strategies be developed to address the fluctuating membership of Action Teams and the impact that this may have on progressing Action Plans
- that basic media protocols be developed

The current review sought feedback with respect to the level of representation, participation and ongoing commitment of various stakeholder lead and partner agencies.

Feedback indicated two inter-related issues:

- The poor level of awareness of the activities of the Committee

Outside of stakeholders directly involved in strategies related to the Coolangatta-Tweed Community Safety Action Plan there was very little awareness by other stakeholder groups of any crime prevention or community safety initiatives undertaken under the umbrella of the plan.

Most stakeholders recalled the Portable Beach Locker Trial and identified it as a Gold Coast City Council project.

This seems to indicate that in addition to a media protocol, the Coolangatta-Tweed Community Safety Action Committee needs to develop a community crime prevention awareness and education strategy.

- The legitimacy of the Coolangatta-Tweed Community Safety Action Committee

There appears to be a significant lack of clarity, among stakeholder groups, about the purpose of the Committee, its geographic focus, when it meets, where and how frequently, who is able to attend, how to access meeting information and the benefits of participation. Some stakeholders perceived the Committee to be an initiative of the Gold Coast City Council, rather than a partnership approach involving both Councils. Others were confused between the role of this Committee and the recently re-established Coolangatta Police Community Consultative Committee.

5.2 Key Issues for the future

Overview

Over the past three years, the population of the Coolangatta-Tweed cross border area has continued to grow at a rate of 2-3 per cent per annum. A thriving tourism industry and continued residential and commercial development throughout the area underlie an increasingly ageing population and a significant level of disadvantage which is characterised by a high percentage of low income earners, higher than average unemployment rates, the increasing cost of housing and rental accommodation, and an uncertain but potentially significant rate of homelessness. From a crime prevention and community safety perspective, the Coolangatta-Tweed cross border area has many of the high risk factors associated with crime and crime related activity.

Actual crime figures indicate that overall crime trends are stable across the Coolangatta-Tweed cross border area. There continues to be a significant rate of stealing offences, particularly targeting visitors to the area. Incidents of malicious damage are also concerning particularly due to the increasing involvement of alcohol in this type of offending. The maintenance of public order and management of anti-social behaviour, often linked with intoxication, also continue to be a challenge for law enforcement agencies.

The Coolangatta-Tweed cross border area has a number of specific high risk areas for crime and crime related activity. These include Chris Cunningham Park, Goodwin Park, Griffith Street (particularly from 3.00am to 6.00am on Friday and Saturday), Jack Evans Boat Harbour, Point Danger, Rainbow Beach and The Esplanade in Coolangatta.

Community concerns about crime and community safety issues mirrored the findings of the community and crime profiles.

The impact of future residential and tourism development on crime and community safety trends, property security, issues relating to young people – including intoxication and anti-social behaviour, safety in public spaces, management of intoxication in public spaces and the link between crime and social disadvantage were key issues identified during stakeholder consultations.

Based on the data and information gathered to update the Coolangatta-Tweed community and crime profiles, and the input of key stakeholders, the priority crime and community safety issues for the next three years are:

- Developing a stronger evidence base for responding to current and emerging crime and community safety issues
- Property crime prevention
- Supporting Young People
- Safety in Public Spaces
- Alcohol Management
- Seniors Safety

Developing a stronger evidence base for responding to current and emerging crime and community safety issues

(a) Access to local crime data

The aim of the Coolangatta-Tweed Community Safety Action Plan is to reduce crime and fear of crime and promote community safety within the Coolangatta-Tweed cross border area. Reducing crime and the fear of crime is intrinsically linked to having an understanding of the extent of crime and crime related activity within an area, both in terms of current and emerging trends.

The ongoing engagement of Queensland and New South Wales Police Services in this project will be critical to the provision of crime data and intelligence regarding current and changing crime trends. While it is acknowledged that reported crime does not portray the entire picture of crime and crime related activity, it is the most reliable indicator of crime trends within the community.

(b) Monitoring potential risk factors through research, consultation and community engagement

Given the significant level of residential and commercial development occurring within the area, continued population growth and the indicators of increasing disadvantage, it will be critical for social infrastructure and support services to keep pace with development to mitigate some of the potential risk factors that could lead to an escalation in crime and crime related activity.

Potential areas of research, consultation and community engagement may include:

- Identifying the future (5-10 years) social service and support infrastructure needs of the cross border area:
 - What levels and types of social service and support infrastructure will be required to meet the needs of the current and future population of the cross border area?
 - Where will these services be located and how will cross border access be facilitated?
- Monitoring the levels of disadvantage throughout the cross border area with a particular focus on housing stress, unemployment and homelessness, and the relationship between these factors and crime rates. For example, there is no information currently available to indicate the relationship between homelessness and crime, either in terms of the representation of homeless people in the crime statistics or homeless people as victims of crime.

Property Crime Prevention

Tourism is a significant employer in the Coolangatta-Tweed cross border area and many local businesses are involved either directly or indirectly in servicing the tourism industry. Strategies which improve the tourism image, and subsequently the strength of the industry, in the cross border area have significant positive flow on effects to the local area and the region generally.

The significantly high incidence of stealing, particularly targeting tourists and businesses on both sides of the border, requires a collaborative response involving law enforcement agencies, Councils, tourism bodies and the business sector. Strategies developed to address property crime need to focus on education, prevention and the development of collaborative cross border partnerships for sustainability.

Strategies could include:

- Development of a Coolangatta-Tweed Business Safety Kit

The information provided in this kit would be of assistance to business owners/operators, their staff and customers. The Queensland Police Service provides quite detailed, but generalised, information available both in hard copy and on the internet, addressing robbery awareness, cash handling tips, protective behaviours etc. However, there is little information about the impacts of public drunkenness and other anti-social behaviours and what people can do about them.

In particular the public are not properly aware of their rights under Public Nuisance Laws, Move On Powers and Local Laws relating to public order.

Providing information to assist in the appropriate reporting of incidents to Police also assists Police to correctly identify hotspots and to most effectively allocate often scarce resources.

The kit may also include useful information about Internal/External Security Tips, Cash Handling and Transport, Preventing Employee Theft, Preventing Shoplifting, Responding to potential threats, What to do after the event, Responsible Service of Alcohol, Graffiti and Vandalism.

The kit could also include a promotional Coolangatta-Tweed Business Safety key ring (with emergency telephone numbers for Police and Council), a suspect person tear-off reporting pad to enhance the ability of staff to give descriptions of offenders, a handy wallet-size "How to report crime " card, and an "Important Telephone Numbers" magnetic list for placement in business premises.

- Incorporating business safety information and resources on www.seamlessborders.com.au
- Extension of the Portable Beach Locker Trial to other high risk areas
- Development of a sustainable business model to address the security and safety issues of the cross border business precinct. This could include investigating existing models such as Broadbeach Marketing and Brisbane Marketing.

Supporting young people

A number of studies and projects have been undertaken to investigate and meet the needs of young people within Gold Coast City and the Tweed Shire. They include:

- A study into the leisure needs of young people undertaken by the Gold Coast City Council recommended that more research was required into the leisure needs of young people, strategies to increase leisure opportunities and choices among young people and provide a more desirable mix of leisure activities that are congruent with the diverse needs of young people, and strategies used by young people to negotiate leisure constraints on the Gold Coast.
- A youth activity scan undertaken by Gold Coast City Council in collaboration with Elanora State High School and Youth At Risk Alliance in 2004 provided some insights into the entertainment and leisure preferences of young people which focused predominantly on entertainment and activities linked with the beach. Transport was identified as a significant barrier that prevented young people from attending organised events.
- The Southern Gold Coast Youth Project – a collaboration between the Department of Communities and the Gold Coast City Council – is currently delivering activities in collaboration with young people.
- The Palm Beach Police Community Consultative Committee, in collaboration with Education Queensland, is also investigating the potential to develop a Coordinated Response for Young People At Risk (CRYPAR). This project would facilitate Police (and potentially schools) to identify young people at risk and link them to appropriate support resources within 48 hours.

A similar project is currently operating successfully in the Metropolitan South Police Region. Local support agencies on the southern Gold Coast have indicated their willingness to participate in this project, which would be focused on the Palm Beach area, and funds are currently being sourced for project coordination.

- In 2006 Tweed Shire Council undertook a youth needs assessment to underpin Council's strategy for youth development.
- New South Wales Police and Tweed Shire Council facilitated a Youth Crime Prevention Forum in February 2007. The service providers' forum identified a diverse range of concerns and ideas in key areas relevant to young people including drugs and alcohol, safe and affordable housing, use of technology, groups of young people and organised gangs.

The next stage of this project is to engage young people in this process.

- The Coolangatta-Tweed Community Safety Action Committee has also supported the 'Healthy Relationships' domestic violence awareness project and the S.A.I.L.S. project.

In terms of ongoing support for young people, the Coolangatta-Tweed Community Safety Action Committee may:

- continue to support the 'Healthy Relationships' domestic violence awareness project throughout the cross border area
- assist in securing funding to be able to offer the S.A.I.L.S. program – which was managed by the Youth Development Officer, Tweed Shire Council - to other young people within the cross border area
- examine the feasibility of establishing a Cross Border Coordinated Response for Youth At Risk
- promote the establishment of opportunities for young people to experiment with adult roles and develop leadership, problem-solving and negotiation skills particularly in matters relevant to their age cohort. The Coolangatta-Tweed Community Safety Action Committee could lead the way by providing an opportunity for young people to become involved in crime prevention through membership of the Committee and related working parties.

Safety in Public Spaces

A safety audit of Goodwin Park was conducted in late 2005 by officers of the Queensland Police Service, Gold Coast City Council and a local youth service. The audit team found that the park was maintained to a high standard, with adequate lighting throughout the majority of the park, good sightlines and facilities.

Some recommendations were made for potential improvements in the lighting and maintenance of the public toilets, lighting at the rotunda and barbeque areas, landscaping and cleanliness in the vicinity of the skate bowl.

Despite some improvements to lighting in the park, complaints continue to be received regarding antisocial behaviour particularly involving young people gathering and drinking in the park at night-time.

Complaints regarding Goodwin Park, Chris Cunningham Park and Jack Evans Boat Harbour are similar in nature and present an opportunity to engage with young people in a very practical way to address their safety concerns and those of other park users.

Young people could be engaged, with the wider community and park users, in an assessment of the design and activity management features of the sites - including consideration of sightlines and surveillance opportunities, land use mix and activity generators, lighting, signage and other directional indicators – and the development of response strategies based on crime prevention through environmental design principles. Research could also be undertaken to identify best practice in other locations where similar issues have been successfully addressed (e.g. Townsville Esplanade redevelopment, Cairns Pier Street development).

This would provide a valuable opportunity for:

- engaging young people in local problem solving
- raising the awareness of young people about the impact of crime and crime related activities (including anti-social behaviour) on other users of public places and the broader community
- gaining an understanding of the crime prevention and community safety concerns of young people

Alcohol Management

(a) Public Intoxication

Continued concerns about groups of young people loitering, drinking in parks and other public places, and intimidating legitimate users and passers-by are common throughout the Coolangatta-Tweed cross border area. There is a perception that these groups are either under-age or cannot afford to frequent licensed premises but want to be part of the night-time activity.

Strategies such as 'moving on' young people appear to merely displace the problem.

The development and implementation of a Cross Border Public Intoxication Action Plan aimed at reducing alcohol related incidents in public places, such as parks and beachfront areas, may assist in providing a consistent message to young people across the area about what is acceptable behaviour in public places.

This strategy may also have the potential to be supported by the provision of a Chill Out zone in high-risk areas such as the Esplanade, and the incorporation of an outreach-foot patrol model of engaging with young people, such as 'Cool Heads' which is currently being established by the Tweed Shire Council and St Josephs.

(b) Alcohol Management in and around Licensed Premises

Differences in trading hours and licensing requirements (e.g. voluntary versus mandatory Liquor Accord) on either side of border are perceived to be linked to the problems experienced in managing the movement of patrons, in particular intoxicated patrons, across the border and between licensed premises.

Coupled with the increasing nervousness about the growing number of applications for liquor licenses in the Coolangatta area and the potential for increased alcohol related crime and anti-social behaviour, it is timely to facilitate informed discussion with all stakeholders in order to:

- identify the current and emerging issues
- discuss the potential of, and any obstacles to cross-border cooperation on liquor licensing issues
- establish a representative working group to progress the development of a coordinated approach to alcohol management in and around licensed premises within the cross border area

Seniors Safety

The continued ageing of the population of the Coolangatta-Tweed cross border area together with changes to family/household structures and housing options, and increasing indicators of disadvantage within the general community may increase the risk to seniors of becoming victims of crime.

The issue of elder abuse is being recognised as an increasingly serious issue as our population in general ages. The Northern Rivers Social Development Council – which includes Tweed Heads – has recently been funded to develop a framework for identifying, responding and/or intervening in situations where older people are considered at risk of abuse. The first stage of developing the framework is a survey to develop an accurate picture of the extent and nature of elder abuse.

Although this survey does not include the cross border areas which fall within Gold Coast City, it may be possible for the Coolangatta-Tweed Community Safety Action Committee to approach the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department to provide additional funding to facilitate the extension of the project to the whole of the cross border area.

Assistance may also be available through the Queensland Seniors Council. The Council provides advice to the Minister for Communities, Disability Services, Seniors and Youth on issues relating to seniors and ageing. A key priority area for the council is elder abuse prevention.

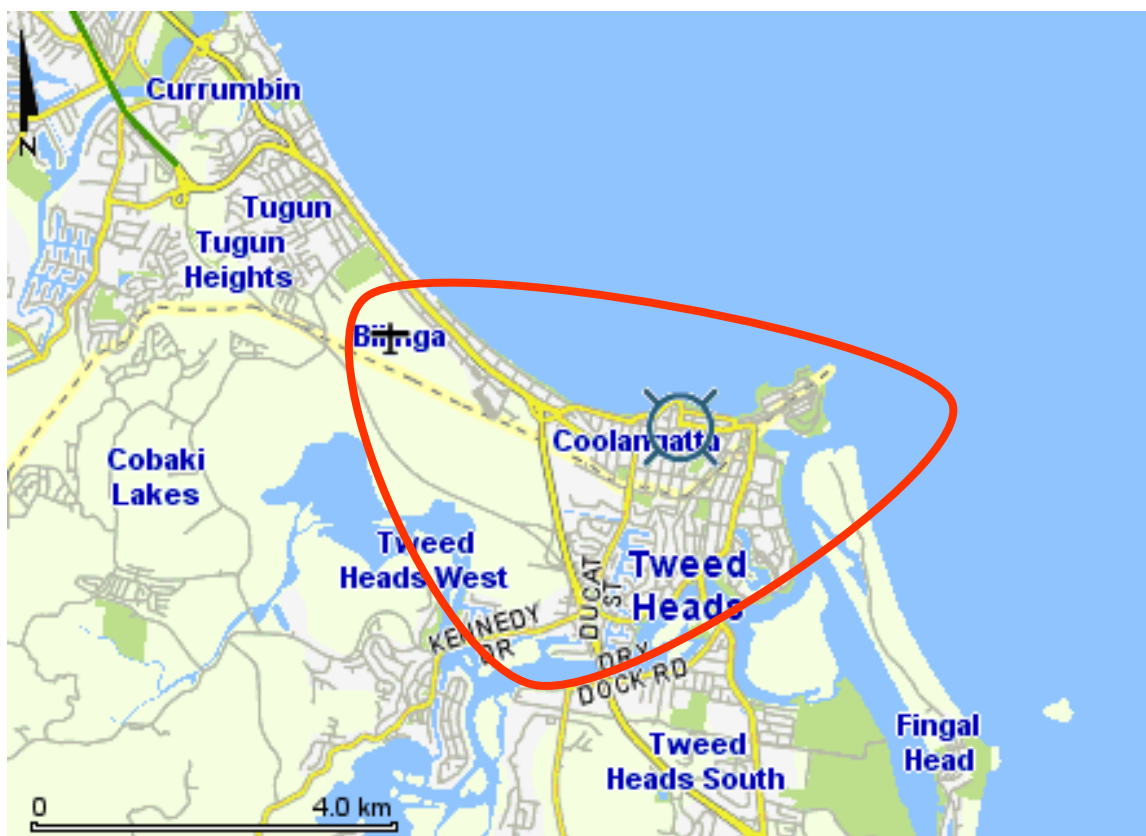
5.3 The role of the Coolangatta-Tweed Community Safety Action Committee

Both Gold Coast City Council, through its *Corporate Plan 2005 – 2009*, and Tweed Shire Council through its *Tweed Futures 04/24*, have a significant stated commitment to community safety.

In these documents there are clear priorities given to safeguarding quality of life, creating safe communities, promoting community wellbeing, working in collaboration and partnership and creating resilient and sustainable communities.

In order to address the concerns expressed by stakeholders about the functioning of the Coolangatta-Tweed Community Safety Action Committee - poor level of awareness of the activities of the Committee and legitimacy of the Committee – the following recommendations are made:

1. That the Coolangatta-Tweed Community Safety Action Committee focus its activities specifically on the Coolangatta-Tweed cross border area as shown in the map below. This represents the area where the majority of current, and likely future, strategies are focused.



2. That a formal partnership agreement be entered into by the two lead agencies – Gold Coast City Council and Tweed Shire Council.
3. That an Executive Support Team comprising Gold Coast City Council, Tweed Shire Council, Queensland Police Service, New South Wales Police Service,

New South Wales Attorney-General's Department, Queensland Department of Communities and Action Team Leaders be formally established for the management of the project.

4. That a local cross border crime prevention 'champion' be identified to support and promote the work of the Committee.
5. That a Charter be developed which clearly sets out the purpose, roles and responsibilities of the Committee.
6. That a communication strategy be developed and implemented. This may include a media protocol, Committee newsletter, website, etc.
7. That Committee meetings be held regularly and include a guest speaker on a topic relevant to the work of the Committee.
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8. That the Committee undertake discussions with the Regional Manager, Department of Communities (Qld) regarding the potential to access capacity building resources, and related funding opportunities, which may assist in facilitating the sustainability of the Committee.

6. COOLANGATTA-TWEED COMMUNITY SAFETY ACTION PLAN 2007 - 2010

6.1 Developing a stronger evidence base for responding to current and emerging crime and community safety issues

Strategy	Outputs	Resources	Recommended lead agency	Partner Agencies	Timeframe*	Outcomes
Access to local crime data	Establishment of formal protocols for the regular exchange of local crime data	Project management	Gold Coast City Council Tweed Shire Council	Queensland Police Service New South Wales Police Service	Short-Term	Informed development of appropriate responses to current and emerging crime and community safety issues through a better understanding of the extent of crime and crime related activity within the cross border area
Monitoring potential risk factors through research, consultation and community engagement	Research project examining the future social service and support infrastructure needs of the cross border area Research project examining the levels of disadvantage throughout the cross border area	Funding (National Crime Prevention Program)	Gold Coast City Council Tweed Shire Council	Blair Athol – Homeless Outreach Support Team	Long-Term	Identifying the future (5-10 years) social service and support infrastructure needs of the cross border area Monitoring the levels of disadvantage throughout the cross border area with a particular focus on housing stress, unemployment and homelessness, and the relationship between these factors and crime rates.

* Timeframes are indicated as Short-Term (1-6 months), Medium-Term (7-18 months) and Long-Term (19-36 months)

6.2 Property Crime Prevention

Strategy	Outputs	Resources	Recommended lead agency	Partner Agencies	Timeframe*	Outcomes
Developing effective crime prevention resources for the business sector	Coolangatta-Tweed Business Safety Kit	Funding (Safer Community Compact Grant)	Gold Coast City Council Tweed Shire Council	Queensland Police Service New South Wales Police Service Southern Gold Coast Chamber of Commerce Tweed Chamber of Commerce and Industry	Short-Term	Reducing property crime including break and enter, malicious damage and shop stealing Raising the awareness of business owners about the steps they can take to prevent property crime
Providing easy access to crime prevention information and resources for the business sector	Incorporating business safety information and resources on www.seamlessborders.com.au	Funding (Safer Community Compact Grant)	Gold Coast City Council Tweed Shire Council	Queensland Police Service New South Wales Police Service Southern Gold Coast Chamber of Commerce Tweed Chamber of Commerce and Industry	Short-Term	Reducing property crime including break and enter, malicious damage and shop stealing Raising the awareness of business owners about the steps they can take to prevent property crime

* Timeframes are indicated as Short-Term (1-6 months), Medium-Term (7-18 months) and Long-Term (19-36 months)

Property Crime Prevention (continued)

Strategy	Outputs	Resources	Recommended lead agency	Partner Agencies	Timeframe*	Outcomes
Undertaking a Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design audit of hot spots for theft from motor vehicle	Identification of specific environmental design issues which may be creating opportunities for theft from motor vehicles	Existing Police resources	Queensland Police Service New South Wales Police Service	Gold Coast City Council Tweed Shire Council Southern Gold Coast Chamber of Commerce Tweed Chamber of Commerce	Short-Term	Reduce the incidents of theft from motor vehicles through target hardening
Providing resources to encourage property security by visitors	Extension of Beach Locker Trial	Funding	Gold Coast City Council Tweed Shire Council	Queensland Police Service New South Wales Police Service Southern Gold Coast Chamber of Commerce Tweed Chamber of Commerce and Industry	Medium-Term	Reducing the opportunity for property crime, including theft of motor vehicles and theft from motor vehicles, targeting visitors
Development of a sustainable business model to address the security and safety issues of the cross border business precinct.	Investigation of existing models (e.g. Broadbeach Marketing and Brisbane Marketing) Development of a business model which meets the specific needs of the Coolangatta-Tweed business community	Funding	Gold Coast City Council Tweed Shire Council	Queensland Police Service New South Wales Police Service Southern Gold Coast Chamber of Commerce Tweed Chamber of Commerce and Industry	Medium-Term	Development of a sustainable business model for crime prevention Effective engagement of key stakeholders in crime prevention

* Timeframes are indicated as Short-Term (1-6 months), Medium-Term (7-18 months) and Long-Term (19-36 months)

6.3 Supporting young people

Strategy	Outputs	Resources	Recommended lead agency	Partner Agencies	Timeframe*	Outcomes
Continue to support the 'Healthy Relationships' domestic violence awareness project	Written resources DVD/Video	Funding	Queensland Police Service New South Wales Police Service	Gold Coast City Council Tweed Shire Council	Short-Term	Raising awareness among young people of the impact and consequences of bullying and other unacceptable behaviours
Continue to support the S.A.I.L.S (Sailing Adventures in Life Skills) program	Program of sailing activities	Funding	Tweed Shire Council	Gold Coast City Council	Short-Term	Enhancement of leadership, team building, conflict resolution skills of young people
Examine the feasibility of establishing a Cross Border Coordinated Response for Youth At Risk	Feasibility assessment	Funding (Education Queensland, New South Wales Department of Education)	Gold Coast City Council Tweed Shire Council	Queensland Police Service New South Wales Police Service	Long-Term	Identification of young people 'at risk' and linking them to appropriate support services within 48 hours
Promote the establishment of opportunities for young people to experiment with adult roles and develop leadership, problem-solving and negotiation skills particularly in matters relevant to their age cohort.	Resources and training to support the involvement of young people in the Coolangatta-Tweed Community Safety Action Committee	Funding (Department of Communities)	Gold Coast City Council Tweed Shire Council	Department of Communities	Medium-Term	Raising the awareness of young people about the impact of crime and crime related activities, engaging young people in local problem solving, and developing leadership skills among young people from the local community

* Timeframes are indicated as Short-Term (1-6 months), Medium-Term (7-18 months) and Long-Term (19-36 months)

6.4 Safety in Public Spaces

Strategy	Outputs	Resources	Recommended lead agency	Partner Agencies	Timeframe*	Outcomes
Engaging young people, with the wider community, in an assessment of the design and activity management features of high risk areas such as Goodwin Park, Chris Cunningham Park and Jack Evans Boat Harbour	Up-to-date safety audits of Goodwin Park, Chris Cunningham Park and Jack Evans Boat Harbour	Project management	Gold Coast City Council Tweed Shire Council	Gold Coast Youth Service Tweed Youth Service Twin Towns PCYC	Medium-Term	Engaging young people in local problem solving Raising the awareness of young people about the impact of crime and crime related activities (including anti-social behaviour) on other users of public places and the broader community Gaining an understanding of the crime prevention and community safety concerns of young people

* Timeframes are indicated as Short-Term (1-6 months), Medium-Term (7-18 months) and Long-Term (19-36 months)

6.5 Alcohol Management

Strategy	Outputs	Resources	Recommended lead agency	Partner Agencies	Timeframe*	Outcomes
Development and implementation of the Cross Border Public Intoxication Action Plan	Cross Border Public Intoxication Action Plan	Project management	Gold Coast City Council Tweed Shire Council	Queensland Police Service New South Wales Police Service	Medium-Term	Reducing alcohol related incidents in public places
Provision of a safe environment for intoxicated people seeking support	Chill Out van	Funding	Department of Communities	Queensland Police Service New South Wales Police Service	Medium-Term	Raising the awareness about the effects of alcohol Providing appropriate support for people in public places who are affected by alcohol
Alcohol Management in and around Licensed Premises	Breakfast forum to discuss alcohol management issues in and around licensed premises within the Coolangatta-Tweed cross border area	Speakers Venue User-pays	Gold Coast City Council Tweed Shire Council	Liquor Licensing Division (Qld) Queensland Police Service New South Wales Police Service Gold Coast Liquor Industry Consultative Association	Short-Term	Identification of current and emerging issues Agreement on the potential for cross-border cooperation on liquor licensing issues and identification of any obstacles Establishment of a representative working group to progress the development of a coordinated approach to alcohol management in and around licensed premises within the cross border area

* Timeframes are indicated as Short-Term (1-6 months), Medium-Term (7-18 months) and Long-Term (19-36 months)

6.6 Seniors Safety

Strategy	Outputs	Resources	Recommended lead agency	Partner Agencies	Timeframe*	Outcomes
Assessment of the extent and nature of elder abuse within the Coolangatta-Tweed cross border area	Survey Results	Funding (Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department, Queensland Seniors Council - Department of Communities)	Gold Coast City Council Tweed Shire Council	Northern Rivers Social Development Council Department of Communities Gold Coast Taskforce on Elder Abuse	Medium-Term	Evidence base for the development of strategies aimed at the prevention of elder abuse

* Timeframes are indicated as Short-Term (1-6 months), Medium-Term (7-18 months) and Long-Term (19-36 months)

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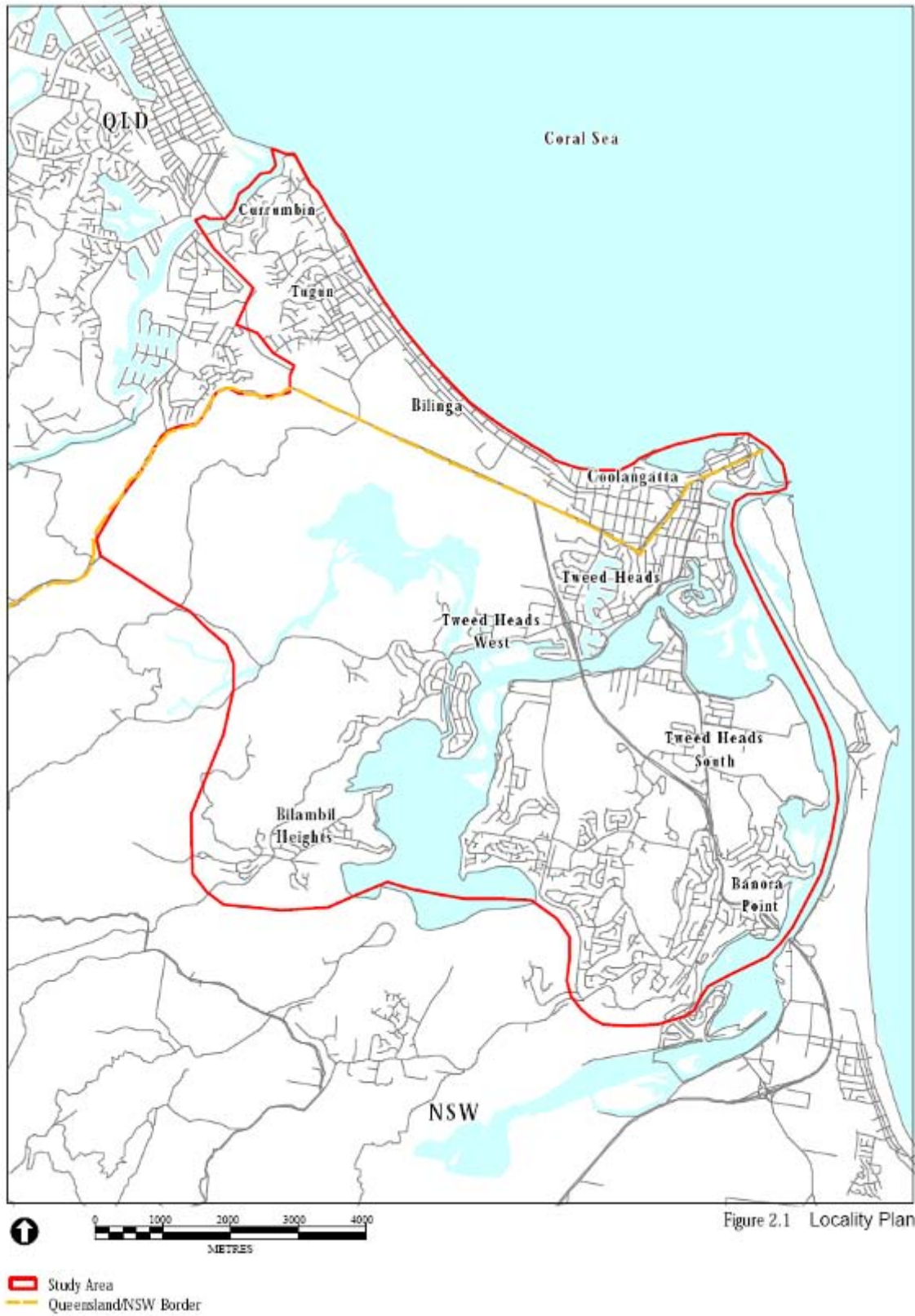
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ATTACHMENTS

Coolangatta-Tweed Cross Border Project Area



Stakeholder Consultation List

Name	Organisation
Dianne Abdo	Supervisor Local Law Gold Coast City Council
Ian Amos	Treasurer Gold Coast Liquor Industry Consultative Association
Gabby Arthur	Administrative Assistant Tweed Shire Council
Stewart Brawley	Manager Recreation Services Tweed Shire Council
Inspector Greg Carey	Crime Manager Tweed/Byron Local Area Command New South Wales Police Service
Turi Cipriano	Compliance Officer Liquor Licensing Division
Gary Corbett	Manager Community & Cultural Services Tweed Shire Council
Brooke Denholder	Coordinator, Social Planning and Research Gold Coast City Council
Ross Devine	Community Development/Research Gold Coast City Council
Inspector Des Lacey	District Inspector (Southern Divisions) Queensland Police Service
Dale Jackson	SCSO (Community Safety) Department of Communities
Senior Constable Susan Jackson	Partnership-Police Programmer Tweed Heads PCYC
Peter Le Gros	Secretary Gold Coast Liquor Industry Consultative Association
Andy Ley	Community Research Officer Gold Coast City Council
Maggie Anne Leybourne	Secretary Tweed Chamber of Commerce
Senior Constable Lisa Lynch	Coordinator Gold Coast District Crime Prevention Unit Queensland Police Service

Name	Organisation
Mark Madden	Manager Tweed Heads PCYC
Gary Matthews	Chairman Tweed Tourism
Donna Matulis	Social Planner (Youth) Gold Coast City Council
Lesley Mye	Aboriginal Liaison Officer Tweed Shire Council
Neil Pengilley	It's About Our Kids
Cr Chris Robbins	Divisional Councillor Gold Coast City Council
Guy Russell	Coordinator Local Law Gold Coast City Council
Robin Spragg	Social Planner Tweed Shire Council
Margaret Strong	Youth Development Officer Tweed Shire Council
Wayne Thompson	Chairman Gold Coast Liquor Industry Consultative Association
Kellie Trigger	Regional Manager Department of Communities
Julie Wilson	Program Administrator Community Conferencing New South Wales Attorney-General's Department
Georgina Wright	Project Officer Tweed Shire Council

**Recorded incidents of selected offences in the Tweed Local Government Area
Annual totals and 60 month trend from January 2002 to December 2006**

Offence	Jan 2002 to Dec 2002	Jan 2003 to Dec 2003	Jan 2004 to Dec 2004	Jan 2005 to Dec 2005	Jan 2006 to Dec 2006	60 month trend	Average annual percentage change
Murder	1	0	1	0	1	Not Calculated *	**
Assault - Not domestic violence related	343	377	330	348	392	Stable	**
Assault - Domestic violence related	217	216	229	235	278	Stable	**
Sexual assault	41	40	64	71	45	Stable	**
Indecent assault, act of indecency and other sexual offences	64	81	50	68	62	Stable	**
Robbery without a weapon	23	17	14	19	12	Not Calculated *	**
Robbery with a firearm	1	0	2	0	3	Not Calculated *	**
Robbery with a weapon not a firearm	3	5	6	7	7	Not Calculated *	**
Break and enter - dwelling	512	511	358	365	367	Down	-8.0%
Break and enter - non-dwelling	397	376	372	332	334	Down	-4.2%
Motor vehicle theft	258	244	208	239	264	Stable	**
Steal from motor vehicle	787	590	499	503	577	Down	-7.5%
Steal from retail store	249	364	300	229	230	Stable	**
Steal from dwelling	358	377	370	379	338	Stable	**
Steal from person	54	64	39	50	58	Stable	**
Malicious damage to property	682	794	759	925	905	Up	7.3%

* A trend is not calculated if at least one 12 month period in the selected timeframe had less than 20 incidents.

** No annual percentage change is given if the trend is stable or if a trend has not been calculated.

Source: New South Wales Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research