

Certificate 1 in Automotive for 12 months with the possibility of ongoing support.

- 'Youth Arc' is providing Learner's Licence training (to Course 21 and beyond). Most Course 21 participants attained their Learner's Licence.

Some achievements include:

- Certificate 1 Automotive is being achieved regularly by course participants.
- Archers Towing provided employment for a participant of Course 18.
- A Hazell Bros Group Employment Scholarship was awarded to a participant of Course 19.

UPDATE

Course 13 trialled a 14-week program, four weeks longer than the normal timeframe, to try and incorporate the delivery of the full Certificate 1 in Automotive. Following this Course it was decided the program could return to the original length of 10 weeks without compromising the program.

JOINT WORKSHOP FOR U-TURN PROGRAMS - BRISBANE 2008

The National Motor Vehicle Theft Reduction Council sponsored a workshop for U-Turn staff from Tasmania and Queensland in Brisbane between 17-18 April 2008. The workshop provided a valuable opportunity to exchange ideas and assess the Tasmanian U-Turn program. Constable Tony Gough, Andrew Verdouw, and Post-Course Support Worker Catherine Poole were invited to take part.

All the Tasmanian delegates were highly impressed with the 'Car-B-Q' (pictured) which was designed and built by U-Turn Queensland.

They commented:

"Participating in the workshop to review the Best Practice Model was a terrific opportunity to analyse our practices of the past five years", said Andrew Verdouw.



The Logan Queensland U-Turn 'Car-B-Q'



Pictured front row left to right are Sponsors Mr Ray Carroll, Executive Director, and Mr Geoff Hughes, Director, of the National Motor Vehicle Theft Reduction Council (NMVTRC) and delegates at the Joint Workshop, Brisbane April 2008.

"Good to meet with workers facing the same sort of problems confronted by the Tasmanian Youth Workers", Cate Poole said.

"Attending the workshop gave me an insight into the current issues faced by U-Turn Queensland and an appreciation of how well-developed and successful the ever-evolving Tasmanian program is," added Tony Gough

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U-Turn is delivered by Mission Australia under contract to Tasmania Police, and is funded by the State Government.



INTRODUCTION

Project U-Turn has now been in operation for 5 years, after commencing as a pilot project in February 2003. In this time, 21 courses have been delivered by Mission Australia and 144 young people have graduated from the program. The State Government has provided further support, including comprehensive funding, for the program for a further 3 years. U-Turn Tasmania is the only 'stand alone' program of its kind in the country, using a dedicated workshop site to service a focused, youth-based, reform program.

2007 proved to be both challenging and exciting. Mission Australia U-Turn staff have recently been contracted as the service providers for a further 3 years until June 2010. Mission Australia has committed to a target of 40 participants per year for the next contractual period.

The best-practice model upon which the program is based clearly reflects that U-Turn is most likely to be effective for young recidivist car thieves who have an interest in cars and mechanical skills.

The program's focus of 'hands-on' mechanical training is the major attraction for participants. Commencing the mechanical training aspect of the program provides participants with an opportunity to tackle their offending behaviour and further develop life skills.



U-Turn participants hard at work on small engine training

STEERING COMMITTEE BUSINESS

The U-Turn Steering Committee, chaired by the Commissioner of Police, continues to maintain a focus

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on enhancement of the program. Recent committee business has sought to address the issues of retention rates, referrals, post-course support, positive outcomes, promotion and marketing. There has been an increasing number of younger participants. This would suggest a clear need to explore ways of attracting referrals from the older age range. A wide mix of ages is recommended best practice.

REFERRALS FROM MAGISTRATES

A number of strategies have been developed to address the issue of capturing the older age range of referrals in the target group. One positive step was a U-Turn presentation to Magistrates at their State Forum in Launceston in July 2007. The presentation, by Program Manager Andrew Verdouw and Dr Vanessa Goodwin, was very well received, and followed up with a letter to Chief Magistrate Arnold Shott requesting further support from the judiciary.

STAFFING CHANGES

There have been a number of significant staff changes at U-Turn in recent times. In November 2007, Mission Australia employed Aimee Rossler in the role as the northern-based Post Course Support Worker. Cate Poole moved from this position to carry out that role in the south. Dr Vanessa Goodwin recently left the role of Project Manager to focus on other projects including 'Inter-generational Crime'. Vanessa had been involved with U-Turn since the inception of the Project and has been instrumental in its continued success.

Several years ago, Vanessa asked Constable Tony Gough to visit U-Turn courses as part of his Community Policing role in Eastern District. Tony began visiting the workshop and engaging with participants through informal sessions in the Challenging Behaviours component. His former role in Community Relations involved regular, positive interaction with young people. These sessions proved to be beneficial in breaking down some of the barriers between police and young people. A participant said to Tony following one of these visits, "I used to only like one copper, now I like two; thanks for coming out to see us".



Former Project Manager, Dr Vanessa Goodwin, handing over the reins to First Class Constable Tony Gough at the Course 18 Graduation.

At the Graduation of Course 18, Vanessa was thanked for her valued contribution and dedication to the U-Turn Program, and Constable Tony Gough was welcomed as the new Project Manager.

Tony officially took over the role in June 2007 and is currently responsible for the general administration of the program for the Department of Police and Emergency Management (DPEM), acting as Secretariat of the Steering Committee. His duties also include:

- regular contact with course participants; and
- participation in the weekly Go-Karting Days.

The Karting activities provide some terrific opportunities for Tony to interact informally with the participants. The Go-Karting also creates a healthy competitive atmosphere, is a popular activity with participants, and affords good balance to other course activities.



Constable Alison Kay of Eastern District Community Policing after a 'not so hot lap' in one of the U-Turn Go-Karts

SUPPORTED HOUSE

In April 2007, Mission Australia appointed David Stapleton to the role of Supported House Carer.

David has been a Carer in similar situations in Victoria and has been an educator for many years. Former Carers Elyse and Mike Tamplin provided valuable insight into some of the issues facing the supported house. The main issue was the suitability of the Warrane property. It was found to be too small and crowded for four young people and a Carer. Mission Australia approached Housing Tasmania to negotiate an alternative property more suitable for our needs and now have a replacement property in Lindisfarne. David moved into the new, more appropriate supported house in May 2007. One of the participants commented to Tony that 'the house is great and Dave is a good bloke, it's not too bad being away from my mates'.

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE (The PCYC Bus Project)

At U-Turn, participants are encouraged to take responsibility for their behaviour and given the opportunity to turn their lives around. Restorative justice is one of the three main strategies used by U-Turn, and to this end participants work on a community-oriented project, such as repairing a car for presentation to a victim of motor vehicle theft, or other worthy causes. This enables them to learn about the impact of vehicle theft on victims, and to give something back to the community.

During their time at U-Turn, the participants of Course 19 worked on a 1990 Toyota Coaster Bus. This bus had been used for years by the Bridgewater Police & Community Youth Club to transport people to and from various community-based programs. The bus was in need of some crucial restoration so it could continue this important function for the PCYC and the community. The opportunity to repair a vehicle for presentation to such a worthy cause or victim is one of the most important components of the program. No doubt this larger-than-usual project presented a challenge to the training staff and participants, but the finished product was worth the extra effort.

The keys to the bus were handed over to a very grateful Rodney Graham, Vice-President of the PCYC,



Restorative Car recipient, Kirsten and Project Manager Tony Gough with former Minister, David Llewellyn MP

at a graduation ceremony on 27 September 2007. Rodney was full of praise for the efforts of the U-Turn staff and participants.



The restored PCYC Bus on display at the graduation of Course 19

Other recent graduation ceremonies have seen participants present victim of crime Geoff with a 1989 Toyota Camry, as a replacement for his vehicle that was destroyed by acts of vandalism. A Mitsubishi Lancer and Nissan Pulsar were presented by subsequent courses to other worthy victims of crime, who both desperately needed replacement vehicles. These vehicles were again generously donated by RACT Insurance.

U-Turn is very fortunate to have the support of RACT Insurance, particularly that of the Manager, Mr Ralph Doedens, who has been a member of the Steering Committee since the program commenced in 2003. RACT Insurance has donated many vehicles to U-Turn and has committed to providing more for future courses. In May 2007 RACT formalised their support to the program.



Minister Cox congratulates a participant of Course 21

RACT has agreed to:

- provide Third Party, Fire and Theft insurance for the cars given to victims at graduation



Commissioner of Police, Jack Johnston and Minister for DPEM Jim Cox, with participants of graduating Course 21

- provide an RACT staff member to assist up to one day on each course and
- provide up to four cars of an agreed value per year.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Mission Australia and the Steering Committee would like to acknowledge the significant contribution made by Richard McCreadie, former Commissioner of Police, and the former Minister of Police and Emergency Management, David Llewellyn MP. They provided unwavering and crucial support to U-Turn in ensuring ongoing funding and sustainability of the program.



Former Minister for Police and Emergency Management, David Llewellyn MP

PROGRAM ENHANCEMENTS

- Traffic Education Program (TEP) is a one-day pilot program facilitated by Constable Jill Gray and Bridgewater Police and Community Youth Club. TEP focuses on the consequences of high-risk behaviour in cars.
- Leon, a Drug and Alcohol worker from Anglicare, has been engaging with recent courses in order to eventually provide more regular, formal educative sessions.
- Additional external funding has been sought and provided for a dedicated trainer to deliver



Former Commissioner of Police, Richard McCreadie



Mr John Schwaiger, Hazel Bros, with the inaugural winner of the Hazel Bros Employment Scholarship from graduating Course 19