



Australian Government
National Indigenous
Australians Agency

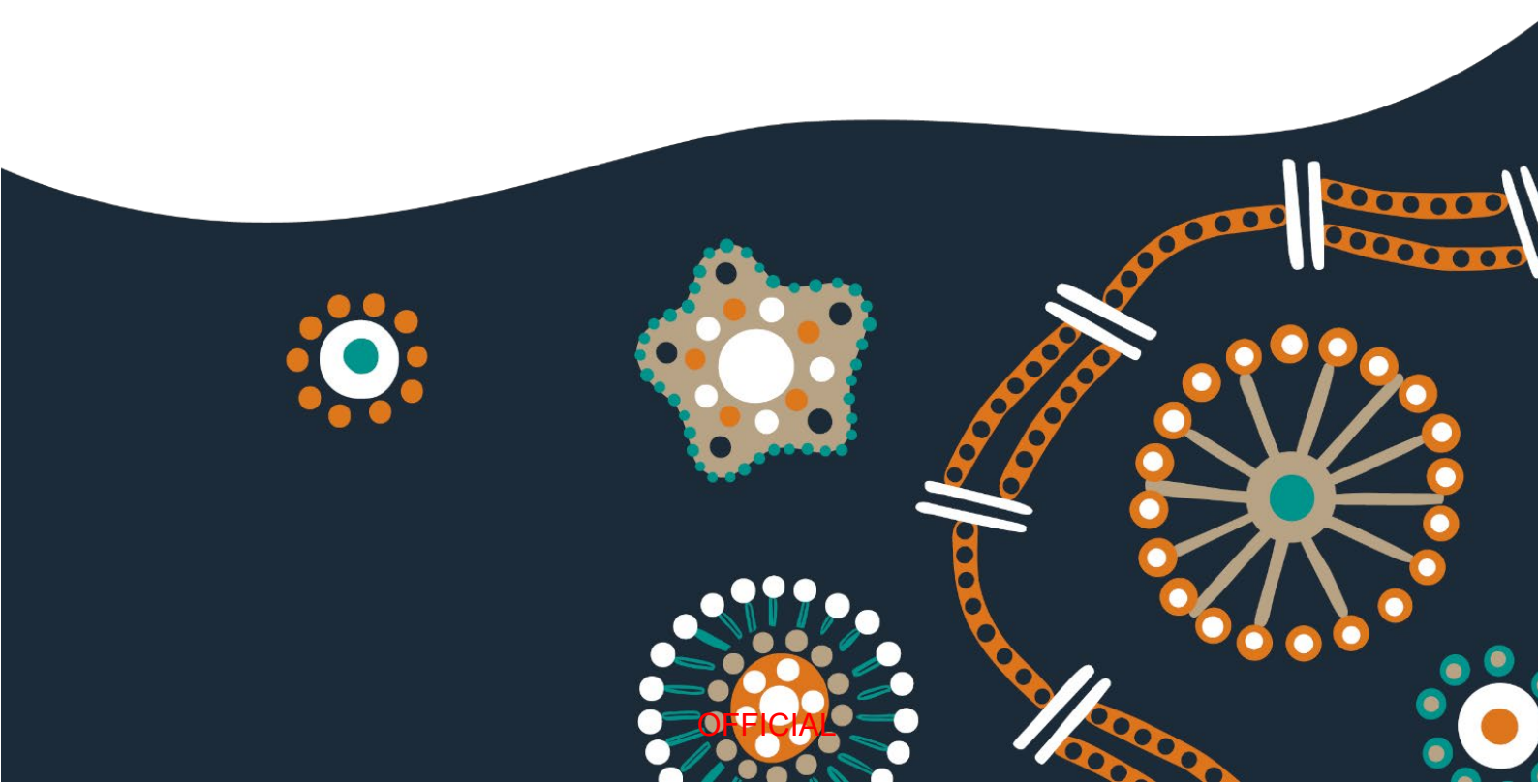


NIAA

Community Safety Patrols Project

Operational Framework

Reviewed 2026



Contents

- Acknowledgment of Country 4
- 1. Overview 5
 - 1.1 Aim of the Operational Framework 5
- 2. Community Safety Patrol Project 5
 - 2.1 Purpose 5
 - 2.2 Core Services 5
 - 2.3 Secondary Services 6
 - 2.4 Community Engagement and Support 6
 - 2.5 Tasks Beyond the Project 7
 - 2.6 Refusal of Service 7
- 3. Project Delivery 8
 - 3.1 Patrolling the Community 8
 - 3.2 A Safe and Culturally Sensitive Service 8
 - 3.3 Promoting the Community Safety Patrol Project 9
- 4. Roles within the Project 9
 - 4.1 Commonwealth Regional Staff 9
 - 4.2 Council Service Managers 9
 - 4.3 Community Safety Patrol Manager 9
 - 4.4 Zone Coordinator (where applicable) 10
 - 4.5 Team Leader 10
 - 4.6 Community Safety Patroller 10
- 5. Training 11
 - 5.1 Training 11
- 6. Community Safety Patrol Bases 12
 - 6.1 Base Locations 12
- 7. Vehicles 12
 - 7.1 Use and Maintenance 12
 - 7.2 Vehicles Purchased with Grant Funding 12
 - 7.3 Transporting Clients 13
- 8. Administration 13
 - 8.1 Work Health and Safety 13
 - 8.2 Privacy and Confidentiality 13
 - 8.3 Complaints 14
- 9. Record Keeping and Reporting 14
 - 9.1 Incident and Mandatory Reporting 14
 - 9.2 Key Performance Indicators and Data Collection 14



Attachment A: 16

Example of a Current Performance Report Template..... 16



Acknowledgment of Country

The National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of Country throughout Australia and acknowledges their continuing connection to land, waters and community.

We pay our respects to the people, the cultures and the Elders past and present.



1. Overview

1.1 Aim of the Operational Framework

1.1 This Operational Framework sets out the minimum requirements for running and managing Community Safety Patrol services. The Operational Framework must be read alongside:

- the Head Agreement;
- the Project Schedule and
- the Project Agreement.

2. Community Safety Patrol Project

2.1 Purpose

2.1 The Community Safety Patrol Project aims to improve community safety by delivering culturally appropriate assistance to all community members. This includes children out after dark, young people, individuals at risk of either causing harm or being harmed, those engaged in harmful substance abuse including alcohol and other drugs, individuals who have experienced violence as well as those experiencing homelessness (refer to Clause 2.6 for reasons to refuse service).

The Project is intended to recognise that:

- everyone has the right to be safe in the community,
- community safety requires a shared effort,
- preventing harmful behaviour is a collective responsibility, not just the responsibility of Community Safety Patrols.

2.2 Core Services

2.2.1 The first priority of Community Safety Patrols is to:

- engage with First Nations children who are out at night without supervision, and to assist them to go home or to another safe location with a parent or carer during the evening, so they can attend and participate in school the next day.
- engage with First Nations children, young people and adults at risk of either causing harm or being harmed and provide culturally appropriate assistance to support them to return home or to another safe location.
- use non-coercive and culturally appropriate methods to help de-escalate minor conflicts and refer serious matters to law enforcement.



- Non-coercive methods may include but are not limited to actively listening, yarning with people to acknowledge issues, offer choices and options to negotiate a resolution and if necessary, provide additional support like transporting someone to a safe place or referring them to other community support services.
- Minor conflicts may include but are not limited to small disagreements, children or young people out a night without supervision, or interacting with people under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Serious matters may include but are not limited to violence or community unrest; domestic violence; or unlawful behaviour.

2.3 Secondary Services

2.3.1 If the Provider wishes to undertake task(s) in addition to the core services (as outlined in Clause 2.2), they must align with the purpose of the Project (as outlined in Clause 2.1) and identified community safety priorities (referenced in Clause 2.4).

They must also be agreed to in consultation with the community, the Provider and the Commonwealth (the National Indigenous Australians Agency). Providers must assess whether existing funding will cover any additional tasks before undertaking secondary services.

2.3.2 Additional services may include:

- transporting vulnerable individuals to safe locations such as a relative's home (where the relative agrees to receive the person), recognised safe house, women's or men's refuge, hospital, sobering-up shelter or other medical facility, where that person agrees to the relocation.
- de-escalating conflict where it is safe to do so.
- diverting intoxicated people from unnecessary contact with the criminal justice system.
- providing information or referrals, such as to counselling services.
- supporting community events which foster positive community engagement and support community safety.
- protecting and monitoring assets in community through observational checks.

2.4 Community Engagement and Support

2.4.1 Community involvement is essential to the success of the Project. Patrols must focus on local safety priorities, which are set by each community via a workplan/ activity plan. Providers should regularly review progress against these priorities.

2.4.2 To strengthen community safety, Providers should build strong relationships with:

- schools,
- local police,



- youth support services,
- safe houses,
- community health centres,
- sobering up shelters,
- law and justice groups, and
- Elders.

2.4.3 Providers may also develop Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) with local police and community stakeholders to clarify Patrols roles and responsibilities, especially in areas without a regular police presence. These MoUs should be reviewed regularly.

2.4.4 Additionally, the Provider may provide community supports including but not limited to:

- raising awareness - about the importance of regular school attendance, and the presence of other support services available to the community.
- immediate short-term referrals – alerting to, transporting to or establishing contact with relevant local services such as safe places, community health centres or clinics, police or mobile child protection teams for immediate assistance.
- long term referrals – alerting to, transporting to, establishing contact with or following up with people about assistance services available.

2.5 Tasks Beyond the Project

2.5 The Provider **must not**:

- use assets or time working on the Project to participate in ceremonial business or hunting.
- perform police functions. Patrol staff do not have police powers and cannot stop, detain, search, or arrest individuals.
- prevent a person from leaving a Community Safety Patrol vehicle if the person wishes to leave the vehicle. The vehicle should be stopped at the nearest safe location, considering the persons condition (e.g. age, mental state, or vulnerability). If the person poses a risk to themselves or others, Patrol staff should prioritise their own safety, notify appropriate services (e.g. police) and consider relocating potential victims to a safer place. All incidents must be documented in writing as part of the Patrol's reporting obligations.

2.6 Refusal of Service

2.6.1 The Provider may refuse services to individuals who:

- pose a risk to the safety of the Provider or another person. This can include situations of actual physical violence, threats being made, highly aggressive behaviour, or clients with conditions that create a risk to



themselves or others. This can also include persons who have endangered the Provider or other persons on previous occasions.

- is clearly acting in bad faith. This includes intentional, purposeful behaviour, such as:
 - taking unfair advantage,
 - acting fraudulently or misusing the service, or
 - acting maliciously,
- cannot be assisted because the Project activities are inappropriate for the person. In such case, the Provider should offer a referral to other services. If the person declines, assistance may be withheld.

2.6.2 All refusal incidents must be documented confidentially by the Provider and reported to the Community Safety Patrol Manager to support accountability and assist in resolving any future complaints.

3. Project Delivery

3.1 Patrolling the Community

3.1.1 Providers must deliver regular Patrols focused on the core services of the Project (as outlined in Clause 2.2). Providers organisational Enterprise Agreements and potential closure periods must take into account contracted service delivery requirements and the broader effect on community safety. This should also be discussed and agreed to by the Commonwealth.

3.1.2 Patrols can be flexible – e.g. foot patrols may be more effective than vehicle use in some cases.

3.1.3 Patrol hours and nights must reflect each community's safety priorities (as referenced in Clause 2.4.1). These priorities should be set in consultation with the community and other services.

3.1.4 The numbers of Patrol staff required for the Project must be based on community needs and agreed to by the Commonwealth. A minimum of two Patrol staff are required per shift.

3.1.5 Providers must regularly review the Patrol's effectiveness in supporting community safety priorities. Activities must be safe, lawful and not compromise the Patrols Core Service.

3.2 A Safe and Culturally Sensitive Service

3.2.1 Providers must ensure the Project is delivered in a way that respects cultural values in each community. This includes employing local First Nations people who understand and respond to community needs.

3.2.2 A culturally appropriate approach includes:

- respects cultural authority
- empowering First Nations communities as a right and best practice,
- recognising the importance of culture and connection to the community,
- using a strengths-based and culturally safe approach,
- valuing First Nations knowledge and lived experience,



- supporting staff who may face additional pressures due to close community ties.

3.3 Promoting the Community Safety Patrol Project

3.3.1 Providers should regularly engage with the community and the Commonwealth.

3.3.2 Additionally, to build awareness and promote coordinated safety efforts, Providers may promote the Patrol Project through local radio, pamphlets, community events, school visits and presentations at schools, community meetings or meetings of local organisations; encourage collaboration between patrol staff and other services and involve Elders, respected persons and Traditional Owners and respected community members to strengthen trust and visibility.

4. Roles within the Project

4.1 Commonwealth Regional Staff

4.1 While Providers are responsible for delivering the Project, they must maintain regular communication with National Indigenous Australians Agency Regional Staff to ensure alignment on local safety priorities and ensure Community Safety Patrols are meeting their objectives and milestones on time and within budget.

4.2 Council Service Managers

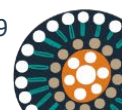
4.2 Council Service Managers (CSMs) employed by the relevant Northern Territory Regional Councils are not funded by the Project. However, CSM's may contribute in an operational capacity under the direction or in lieu of the Community Safety Patrol Manager.

4.3 Community Safety Patrol Manager

4.3.1 Each Provider must appoint a Community Safety Patrol Manager(s) to oversee the Project. Key Responsibilities may include:

- monitor patrol operations and performance,
- facilitate community engagement on an ongoing basis to align patrols with local safety priorities (as referenced in Clause 2.4),
- manage relationships with police and other stakeholders (e.g. through MoU's),
- support staff and link with schools and School Attendance Officers (where necessary),
- manage the Project's budgets, rosters, recruitment, training and asset management,
- promote the Project (as outlined in Clause 3.3) and provide required reporting to the Commonwealth.

4.3.2 Community Safety Patrol Managers and Zone Coordinators must not instruct staff to force individuals to comply with Patrol requests.



4.4 Zone Coordinator (where applicable)

4.4 Under the Patrol Managers direction, a Zone Coordinator(s) may be expected to:

- support Patrol staff and Team Leaders to ensure consistent and effective service delivery and reporting,
- assist with the operations of the Patrol service and community engagement,
- build links with schools and other stakeholders,
- coordinate training and supervise administrative tasks,
- consolidate incident reports and support required for reporting to the Commonwealth,
- promote the Project (as outlined in Clause 3.3) within the community.
- Perform the same duties as the Team Leaders (as outlined in Clause 4.5).

4.5 Team Leader

4.5 Under the guidance of the Community Safety Patrol Manager and Zone Coordinator (where applicable), a Team Leader may be expected to:

- supervise Patrol staff to ensure an effective and consistent service,
- deliver core services (as outlined in Clause 2.2),
- collate and complete information or data requests as directed by the Community Safety Patrol Manager,
- manage time sheets and submit incident reports,
- communicate with schools, police and other services,
- support Project promotion and awareness (as outlined in Clause 3.3),
- monitor and respond to community identified needs and priorities and provide direction for patrollers to respond to these needs,
- perform the same duties as the Community Safety Patrollers, outlined below in Clause 4.6.

4.6 Community Safety Patroller

4.6 Under the direction of the Team Leader, a Community Safety Patroller is expected to:

- conduct regular community day and/or night patrols,
- deliver core services of the Project (as outlined in Clause 2.2),
- defuse violent situations and protect vulnerable people (where safe to do so),



- collaborate with schools, health clinics, sobering-up shelters, safe houses, women's refuges and other services in the community (where necessary),
- divert intoxicated people away from the criminal justice system,
- record and report incidents and assistance provided,
- communicate with schools, police and other services,
- provide advice, information and/or assistance that may reduce risk to individuals,
- promote the Project (as outlined in Clause 3.3).

5. Training

5.1 Training

5.1 Providers must ensure Patrol staff receive both formal and informal training to build their capabilities and prepare them for the complex situations they may face. Providers may consider a combination of critical trainings, including but not limited to:

- First Aid,
- Mental Health First Aid,
- Therapeutic crisis intervention,
- Rights and responsibilities of Patrollers,
- Legal /compliance training including mandatory reporting obligations,
- Respectful engagement with young people,
- Identifying and reporting abuse,
- Alcohol and other drugs,
- Training on referral processes to assist people in accessing other services in the community,
- Operation of a four-wheel drive vehicle,
- Literacy and numeracy,
- IT training.

Training should be tailored to each individual community's safety priorities.

Providers closure periods for training must take into account contracted service delivery requirements and the broader effect on community safety. This should also be discussed and agreed to by the Commonwealth.

5.1.2 Providers must also offer appropriate debriefing and support especially for staff dealing with difficult situations, such as family violence, assault, sexual assault or self-harm. This will help to manage stress and maintain wellbeing.

5.1.3 Providers must deliver privacy and confidentiality training to all staff when they commence roles under the Community Safety Patrol Project.



6. Community Safety Patrol Bases

6.1 Base Locations

6.1.1 In addition to the assets provision in the Head Agreement, the Provider must record the condition of Community Safety Patrol Bases in its Register of Assets (if owned by the Provider).

6.1.2 Community Safety Patrol Bases are an important part of the Community Safety Patrol service which provide a base for Community Safety Patrol operations in the community and can foster team identity and a sense of ownership within the community. The base locations may be used for administration for the patrol team to complete paperwork, communications, report writing, training and equipment storage. Patrol offices are not staffed as 'drop in' centres.

7. Vehicles

7.1 Use and Maintenance

- 7.1 The Provider must set and enforce clear rules for vehicle use and maintenance. Key requirements include:
- a) vehicles must be roadworthy and regularly serviced in accordance with the scheduled servicing for the model, by authorised mechanics. Vehicle inspections must be carried out as required by the relevant State or Territory Motor Vehicle Registry. Tyres must always be in a roadworthy condition and regularly checked for wear and tear.
 - b) all vehicles must be registered with the relevant State or Territory Motor Vehicle Registry and have comprehensive insurance cover.
 - c) staff must adhere to the rules and regulations placed on licensed drivers in the relevant State or Territory.
 - d) organisations must keep a consistent record of vehicle use, noting the driver, time and distance travelled. Vehicles are not to be used for private use.
 - e) vehicles must carry appropriate safety equipment for Community Safety Patrol services, such as torch and batteries, first aid kit, any protective equipment (e.g. gloves), water, spare tyre and jack.
 - f) patrol vehicles should be driven slowly to allow observation and interaction with the community as necessary.
 - g) smoking and alcohol are strictly prohibited in patrol vehicles.
 - h) when not in use, vehicles must be stored in a secure location in the community, preferably the Community Safety Patrol Base.

7.2 Vehicles Purchased with Grant Funding

7.2.1 Providers should consider leasing vehicles first. If purchasing is necessary, written approval from the Commonwealth must be obtained.



7.2.2 Before purchasing a vehicle, Providers must consult with patrol staff, the community and the Commonwealth to ensure the vehicle suits local needs. Vehicles such as all-terrain vehicles, motorcycles or four-wheel bikes are generally not suitable for Community Safety Patrol Projects.

7.2.3 Generally two types of vehicles are used for Community Safety Patrol Projects. Either type of vehicle can be fitted with a different sort of barrier design to facilitate carriage of clients and protection of the driver of the Vehicle from interference.

All modifications to vehicles as outlined below must be certified for compliance, including design standards, by the relevant State or Territory Government; must be road worthy and safe for clients to travel within.

- Station Wagon/Dual Cab Utility/ 4WD: e.g. a Toyota Land Cruiser Troop Carrier or similar. Should a model only have two front doors and a rear door, Service Providers must ensure that any barrier used to protect the driver is approved by the relevant State or Territory Government for carriage of people in the back.
- Small Commuter Bus: e.g. a Toyota Hiace Commuter (14 seats) or similar. Such a Vehicle may have a barrier which extends the width of the cabin directly behind the driver, as there are two doors available to passengers in the vehicle. Providers must ensure staff driving the vehicle have the appropriate license for any vehicle exceeding the capacity of a basic car licence.

7.3 Transporting Clients

7.3 When transporting someone in a Patrol vehicle, the maximum speed must not exceed 80km/h (or the speed limit where it is lower than 80km/h).

8. Administration

8.1 Work Health and Safety

8.1 Providers must:

- ensure appropriate Work Health and Safety policies and procedures are in place at all locations used to deliver the Project, including all Patrol Bases.
- give staff clear guidance to manage safety risks during Patrol operations. This includes developing and maintaining protective practices to ensure the safety of all persons.
- identify and regularly review physical risks.
- report serious Work Health and Safety incidents to the Commonwealth as soon as practicable.
- provide any information about the Project requested by the Commonwealth in relation to Work Health and Safety.

8.2 Privacy and Confidentiality

8.2.1 Providers must:



- develop clear policies and procedures for handling Personal and Confidential Information.
- ensure that its staff and clients understand when and how Personal or Confidential Information can be disclosed.
- include Privacy training in staff inductions.

8.2.2 Keep all personal information confidential unless the individual gives written consent for disclosure of the information.

8.3 Complaints

8.3.1 Providers must work with communities to establish and maintain a clear Complaints handling process (as required by the Head Agreement) that can handle feedback from community members, service users, partner organisations and Project staff.

8.3.2 A sign detailing the Complaints handling process should be available in each office that delivers a Project. Where appropriate, the sign should be displayed in all relevant languages.

The Provider must ensure that a Complaint can be made either verbally or in writing through the Complaints handling process. If the Provider receives a Complaint verbally, the Provider must make a written record of the Complaint.

The Provider must ensure that the Complainant is kept informed of progress in dealing with the Complaint.

9. Record Keeping and Reporting

9.1 Incident and Mandatory Reporting

9.1.1 The Provider must document incidents and support provided in order report to the necessary authorities. This includes events where an individual is at risk of being harmed and those where an individual is causing harm. The Provider must protect an individuals' privacy.

9.1.2 Ensure all staff understand and comply with mandatory reporting laws for children and domestic and family violence under relevant State or Territory legislation. This includes ensuring that staff understand the role of mandatory reporting in maintaining the safety of children and families and working towards holistic community safety.

Debriefing and other supports must also be provided for staff involved in mandatory reports. Providers should consider using external resources to help manage associated stress.

9.1.3 Organisations must ensure that Patrol staff are given clear guidance and training around mandatory reporting. This may include decision-making tools and scenario-based training.

9.2 Key Performance Indicators and Data Collection

9.2.1 As required by the Project Agreement, Providers must report on Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to track the effectiveness of the Project.



Attachment A provides an example of current mandatory KPIs that Providers must report against.

9.2.2 In addition to the mandatory KPIs set out by the NIAA, Providers may record additional KPIs if the measure will display a key outcome of the Project.

For instance, Providers may consider reporting on:

- other areas of assistance / instances of support provided. For example:
 - children out late at night (unsupervised),
 - family violence,
 - arguments/fighting,
 - breaking in/stealing,
 - property damage,
 - accidents.
- the number of referrals made to appropriate support service providers.
- description of obstacles that have affected the functionality of the Project and suggestions or plans to improve the service.
- a gender or age breakdown of individuals assisted.
- highlights and challenges for a reporting period.

The Commonwealth welcomes any case studies from Providers.



Attachment A:

Example of a Current Performance Report Template

Community Safety Patrols Project

Data Items	Target Data	Reported Data
Employment Numbers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Total number of females employed - Total number of males employed - Total number of non-binary/different term preferred/unspecified - Total number of Indigenous females - Total number of Indigenous males - Total number of Indigenous non-binary/different term preferred/unspecified 		
Number of Hours Worked – Indigenous Staff		
Number of Hours Worked – All Staff		
Indigenous Employment – Proportion of hours worked		
Core Service Provision		
Formal Training – Proportion of staff that commenced formal training		
Stakeholder Satisfaction – Proportion of stakeholders in the community that are satisfied that night patrol is well-delivered and appropriate		
Safety and Security – Proportion of stakeholders in the community that agree that night patrol is helping to increase feelings of safety and security in the community		
Average number of active patrol hours each week		
Client Numbers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of female clients assisted - Number of male clients assisted - Number of non-binary/different term preferred/unspecified clients assisted 		
Stakeholder Meeting Numbers:		



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Police - Schools - Safe house owners - Health centres - Other stakeholders - Total number of meetings held 		
<p>Safety Issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - De-escalation - Injury/medical - Suicide/mental health - Gambling - Sobering up/AOD/VOC - Other - Total number 		

