



STRATEGIC PLAN 2008 – 2010



Index

Introduction	3
Vision	3
Mission	3
Guiding principles	3
Background	4
Principal achievements	4
Challenges	4
VSCN priorities	5
Definition and scope	6
Executive committee	6
Contact	6

Vision

The VSCN is recognised as the leading community safety organisation in Victoria.

Mission

The VSCN will provide leadership for community safety efforts in Victoria.

Introduction

The Victorian Safe Communities Network (VSCN) is an association, incorporated in Victoria, whose principal role is to support practitioners, researchers and policymakers working in community safety in Victoria.

Our strength is the passion, energy and commitment of the diverse range of professionals, volunteers and communities striving for the common goal of a safer Victoria. The diversity of our membership combined with our safety partners ensures that our focus remains broad and inclusive of differing approaches to enhancing safety in Victoria.

This, the second VSCN strategic plan, expresses the objectives of the network for 2008 – 2010 and builds upon the foundation of the achievements of the past.

Development of the plan involved the collaborative effort of over 30 VSCN members at a facilitated planning workshop in early 2007, and was written and edited by Jan Shield and James Sherry in consultation with the elected VSCN Executive Committee.

Sincere thanks are due to the VSCN members who so willingly contributed their time and expertise at the planning workshop, facilitated by Kris Honey of KNH Consulting.

January 2008

Guiding principles

The VSCN subscribes to the following principles of excellence in community safety practice, research and policy:

Intersectoral and interdisciplinary –

our network recognises and respects the contribution of the diverse disciplines and sectors that are involved in community safety.

Collaborative –

we understand that by working together collaboratively, our diverse safety stakeholders will achieve much better outcomes for Victorians than by working in isolation.

Interactive –

the network provides members and our safety partners with opportunities to interact and critically analyse current issues in the community safety field.

Promotional –

we focus on positively promoting the concept of safety and supporting best practice in safety promotion.

Evidence-based –

we encourage and support efforts to build and work from a strong evidence base while recognising that for some members the call to action is strong.

Background

The Victorian Safe Communities Network (VSCN) was established in 1996, during the Fifth International Conference on Safe Communities held in Victoria. Hume City Council (formerly Shire of Bulla) and the Latrobe Shire were designated as World Health Organization Safe Communities at this time and were the first municipalities in Australia to become WHO – designated Safe Communities.

The purpose of the VSCN is to encourage government and community to work collaboratively on public safety, crime and violence, and injury prevention. The social and financial benefits are accrued by addressing both intentional and unintentional injury within the guiding principles of healthy public policy, community participation and intersectoral collaboration. The VSCN provides a forum for practitioners, researchers, and policymakers within community safety to support one another.

The achievements of the first decade are summarised in the words of one member – the Network has become a “mature, confident, competent, passionate, strong and unique organisation”.

Principal achievements 1996 – 2006

- Sustaining the Network for over 10 years
- Securing a sound financial base for its operations
- Sharing information and ideas between members
- Providing communication channels between government and community
- Supporting Community Safety Month for 10 years
- Modelling a collaborative culture in its interactions with members
- Providing professional development, education and support to members and new community safety professionals
- Harnessing the diverse skills of its members
- Retaining its independent voice
- Upgrading its communications via email and the website
- Establishing linkages with national and international colleagues and networks.

Challenges

The Network commits its members to respond to the challenges that will present themselves over the coming years. We predict these to include:

- Maintaining financial and human resourcing
- Sustaining and developing Community Safety Month
- Retaining the independence of the Network
- Continuing to meet our members’ changing needs and priorities
- Developing a strong advocacy role, particularly with governments
- Continuing to consult on key government policies and plans
- Building the profile of the network
- Achieving an integrated and coordinated approach within different sectors.

VSCN priorities

The vision and mission of the VSCN will be achieved through implementing its strategic priorities:

- Developing the profession
- Advocating for community safety
- Supporting organisations
- Sustaining the Network

1. Developing and sustaining the profession

The VSCN will develop the profession and strengthen the professional practice of members through facilitating opportunities for members to come together by:

- conducting conferences and seminars
- providing lectures on community safety topics for post-secondary education programs
- establishing and supporting emerging networks and interest groups
- establishing working parties for specific purposes according to the needs and interests of members
- recognising the development needs of different sectors
- providing members with examples of best practice, case studies, resources and opportunities for exchange via web based communication.

2. Advocating for community safety in all forums

The VSCN will advocate for community safety in all forums including key state and local government organisations and the media:

- establishing a working party for the recognition of lead agencies in community safety in Victoria
- developing and promoting formal policies on a range of community safety issues.

3. Supporting organisations to meet community safety responsibilities

The VSCN will support the community safety responsibilities of Government and other agencies through providing leadership, and influencing policies and planning, by:

- encouraging the development and implementation of integrated approaches to community safety
- assisting communities to achieve accreditation as WHO Safe Communities
- supporting national and international collaboration.

4. Sustaining the Network

The VSCN will sustain the Network's capacity to support its members by:

- maintaining a strong financial base
- broadening and expanding membership
- developing sponsorships
- developing formal partnerships with like organisations, eg ASCF and NZSCF.

Definition and scope

Community safety is defined differently in different arenas and is frequently confused with public safety. Within the World Health Organization's Safe Communities model it is taken to mean community-wide efforts to improve the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities by establishing "a state in which hazards and conditions leading to physical, psychological or material harm are controlled" (Laflamme et al).

This inclusive concept encompasses a very broad range of issues, eg "concepts of personal safety and security, the prevention of accidents [sic], the debate on intentional vs unintentional injury, and crime prevention. Outcomes may or may not include injuries. Responsibility for community safety is a shared responsibility and dividing it into segments may be convenient for policy makers and professionals in the field, but may not be in the interests of the community and may reduce impact" (Cassell et al, 1999). The concepts embodied by community safety help shift the focus from a negative framework (crime and prevention) to a positive framework (safety and promotion).

The VSCN will continue to encompass the full spectrum of specialised responsibilities of community safety, including:

- Safety in specific locations – farms, homes, roads, workplaces, schools, public places
- Safety in specific endeavours – sports and recreation, policing, emergency services
- Safety for specific populations – children, adolescents, seniors, CALD communities, emerging communities, women, people with a disability
- Safety in specific contexts – emergency situations
- Safety from specific behaviours – crime and antisocial behaviours, violent assault, family violence, drug and alcohol use

Executive Committee, 2007 – 2008

Jan Shield	Co-Chair
James Sherry	Co-Chair
Nello Marino	Secretary
Ian Danahay	Treasurer
Michael Bourne	
Erin Cassell	
Tim Hardiman	
Alan Kennedy	
Ellyn Martin	(part of year)
Lisa Purchase	(part of year)
Sharon Wishart	
Barbara Minuzzo	Secretariat

Contact

The VSCN Secretariat
Safety Centre
Royal Children's Hospital
Flemington Road
Parkville Vic 3052

T 9345 5193

F 9345 5086

E vscn.vscn@rch.org.au

W www.vscn.org.au



We would like to acknowledge the generous support of a number of our safety partners

Supported by



