



GRAPPLING WITH GRAFFITI

Victorian Safe Communities Network
Annual Conference
17th November 2004
Melbourne



Grappling With Graffiti



- Graffiti – what is it?
- Causes & motivations
- Grappling With Graffiti – A Graffiti Management Strategy for Victoria
- Best practice – a holistic framework
- Practical examples of how you can prevent graffiti

Graffiti is:



- Any form of writing, drawing or scratching/etching on someone's property without their consent;
- It can be done with paint, pens, knives etc.;
- It can be difficult, if not impossible to remove;
- **IT IS A CRIME**

Types of graffiti

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Hip Hop – pieces



Types of graffiti (cont.)



Hip Hop - Tags



Types of graffiti (cont.)

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Political/social



Types of graffiti (cont.)

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Scrawls



Types of graffiti (cont.)

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Etching



Types of graffiti (cont.)

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Offensive



Types of graffiti (cont.)

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“Throw-ups”



Types of graffiti (cont.)

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Stencils



Who does graffiti?



- People of all ages do graffiti;
- Taggers are generally young people;
- ‘Pieces’ are generally done by older teens and people into their 20s;
- Graffitists are generally male but a number of females also do graffiti;
- May be done by individuals, groups or gangs;
- May come from wealthy, middle class or impoverished backgrounds.

Causes & motivations



- Peer pressure
- Claiming space
- Disconnectedness
- Displaying their ‘art’
- Vengeance and/or maliciousness

**BOREDOM IS AN EXCUSE
NOT A REASON**

Graffiti management – a holistic framework

Aims at the State Level

- Improved coordination between government, police, private industry and the community;
- Improved data collection, monitoring & reporting practices to facilitate development of appropriate responses;
- Enhanced community awareness about graffiti and participation in local graffiti management responses.



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Eight Point Plan

- Community education
- Supporting local responses
- A focus on transport corridors
- Improved data collection & research
- Legislative reform
- Attention to underlying causes of graffiti
- Public/private partnerships
- Prevention & diversion aimed at young people engaging in graffiti

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Community Education

- Partnerships developed with:
 - Victoria Police
 - Neighbourhood Watch
 - Crimestoppers
 - Dulux Australia
 - Mitre 10
- Goodbye Graffiti Community Education Campaign – launched 28.3.04

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GRAFFITI ATTRACTS GRAFFITI. PREVENT IT, REPORT IT, REMOVE IT.

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- Statewide low-key media campaign to raise awareness of graffiti
- Mitre 10 *Graffiti Mitre Plan* redeveloped in line with *Grappling With Graffiti Strategy* and made available to the community through all Mitre 10 Stores.
- Goodbye Graffiti Community Activity Initiative (GGCAI), in partnership with Dulux Australia to provide \$30,000 worth of free paint products to local governments and communities for graffiti management activities.

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Supporting Local Responses

In addition to the GGCAI,

- *Graffiti Toolkit* developed and provided to local governments outlining how to establish graffiti management activities;
- Statewide Graffiti Network established open to representatives from local government and Victoria Police

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Supporting Local Responses (Cont.)



The Graffiti Network

- Currently involves 33 Local Governments and 20 Police Officers working at the local level;
- Shares information on local policies and best practice;
- Provides support to local practitioners; and
- Exploring methods of improved data collection and information collation on a statewide basis.

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The Graffiti Network (Cont.)

- Meets bi-monthly
- Only discusses graffiti
- Coordinated & facilitated by CPV



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A Focus on Transport Corridors



Stakeholder working group established

- Government agencies
- Franchisees
- Local Governments

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A Focus on Transport Corridors (Cont.)

- Pilot Project corridor identified – Flinders Street to Camberwell Stations;
- Graffiti Audit completed on pilot corridor;
- Commuter survey completed on pilot corridor;
- Draft Strategy & Action Plan developed for consideration of stakeholders – high cost of removal requires setting of priorities.



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Improved Data Collection & Research

- Graffiti Network identified data collection & collation methods for consideration;
- Number of approaches available – need to identify best approach for statewide and local application.

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Legislative Reform

Discussion paper distributed in Dec. 03

Option 1:

- Restricting access of graffiti offenders to materials that could be used for graffiti purposes

Option 2:

- Establishing a mechanism to facilitate the immediate removal of graffiti from private property



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Legislative Reform (Cont.)

Responses –

Option 1: Not supported

Option 2. Limited support but only if a range of issues could be overcome.

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Attention to Underlying Causes of Graffiti

- Support provided to Deakin University research into why people do graffiti;
- Partnership with Australian Institute of Family Studies research – *Patterns and Precursors of Adolescent Antisocial Behaviour*

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Public/Private Partnerships

Partnerships developed with:

- Local Governments
- Neighbourhood Watch
- Crimestoppers
- Victoria Police
- Government Departments
- Mitre 10
- Dulux Australia



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Prevention & Diversion Aimed at Young People

- Discussions with Dept. of Human Services & Magistrates Court regarding sentencing and/or diversion options for juveniles;
- Awareness raising with local governments about Community Correctional Service's Community Work Program
- Development of a standard Memorandum of Understanding for graffiti related Work Programs.



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Best Practice – A holistic framework

Research shows that the most effective response strategies will include:

- Working with the community;
- Education about graffiti – its causes and its impacts and how to prevent it occurring & re-occurring;
- Removing graffiti as quickly as possible
- Policing.



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Generally known as the 4 'E's

- Engagement
- Education
- Eradication
- Enforcement

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LOCAL SOLUTIONS TO LOCAL PROBLEMS

Because the types of graffiti and the motivations of different graffitists vary enormously –

No graffiti strategy will work in every situation in every locality.

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Effective local level graffiti strategies need to:

- Be appropriate to the community;
- Be site specific;
- Explore possible motivations of local graffitiists;
- Be realistic about the communities capacity to implement the strategy;
- Be planned & integrated with broader community safety plans.

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Engagement

Must include

- Young people as well as the broader community
- Local governments
- Police
- Community groups
- Local traders

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Engagement (Cont.)

And:

- Consultation – identify community concerns and a potential strategy
- &
- Participation – encourage community involvement, participation & ownership of the strategy

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Eradication

- Remove graffiti within 24 hours as it is easier to remove and leaving it only attracts more graffiti
- Painting out graffiti is often efficient and cost-effective and may reduce repeated offences
- Discuss removal and prevention options for people living in heritage areas with council planning departments

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Eradication (Cont.)

- Using a variety of coatings that are available to make removal easier
- Contacting the local council or Neighbourhood Watch if you are unable to remove graffiti yourself

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Enforcement

Graffiti is vandalism - It is a crime and should be reported.

The Goodbye Graffiti campaign recommends reporting incidences of graffiti to:

- the local police station, after which
- Your local council and Neighbourhood Watch group

And/or

- Crime Stoppers (phone 1800 333 000) if you have information about graffitists

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Prevention

The Goodbye Graffiti campaign provides strategies to minimise the likelihood of attracting graffiti with:

- the use of appropriate garden planning such as fast growing vines or spiky plants like bougainvillea - one of the cheapest and most effective ways of avoiding graffiti
- the installation of sprinkler systems along garden beds, set to start during times that graffitists are likely to be active

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- the use of darker rather than lighter coloured materials
- the use of textured or rough surfaces to make it difficult to apply paint or felt tip pen
- the use of high density, low absorbency materials such as hard-burnt bricks
- the use of anti-graffiti coatings in high-risk areas to ensure easy removal

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- the use of a series of surface breaks to minimise flow and continuity for the graffitiists
- property maintenance – a poorly maintained property attracts graffiti
- the design of fences to make effective barriers to graffiti



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Further information is available from:

Crime Prevention Victoria

www.crimeprevention.vic.gov.au

Or

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