

Table of Contents

Foreword	iii
Executive Summary	iv
Acknowledgements	xi
Introduction	1
Part 1 Project Description and Policy Context	2
1. Overview of Project	2
2. Objectives of the Project	2
2.1 Funding	2
2.2 Methodology	2
2.3 Project's Evaluation	4
2.4 Time-line	4
3. Policy Context and Background	6
3.1 Policy Context	6
3.2 Background to the funding and establishment of ambulance services in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Queensland	10
3.3 Toward integrated and comprehensive health transport strategies in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities	15
Part 2 Description of the Mornington Island and Doomadgee Communities	16
4. Description of the communities	16
4.1 Location of the communities	16
4.2 Climate	17
4.3 Population	17
4.4 Service profiles of the two communities	17
4.5 Current pre-hospital care services	21
Part 3 Research Findings	22
5. Phase I - Initial Research, Consultation and Project Development ..	22
5.1 Socio-economic and demographic profiles of the communities of Doomadgee and Mornington Island	23
5.2 Health profile comparisons	26
5.3 Initial Consultations	30
Consultation Guide	31
5.4 Summary of local views about the need and demand for pre-hospital services	33
5.5 Initial Project Development	38
5.6 Issues raised by the Project's Initial Round of Consultation	40
6. Phase 2 - Further research and review of the project's honorary pre-hospital care services	41
6.1 Caseload and activities undertaken by the pre-hospital services at Doomadgee and Mornington Island	41
6.2 The QAS Station caseload comparisons	46
6.3 Conduct of second round of community consultations	48
6.4 Summary of findings emerging during the second round of community consultations	48

6.5	Consultation Guide	50
6.6	Summary	53
7.	Review of Relevant Research	54
7.1	Pre-hospital care in indigenous community	55
7.2	Urban-rural differentials in traumatic injuries and mortality rates	55
7.3	Major issues confronting pre-hospital care in rural and remote areas	56
7.4	Use of volunteers	57
7.5	Integration and co-ordination with other services	57
7.6	Remote area training	58
7.7	Kirby's study in two rural and remote Queensland communities ..	59
7.8	Summary	60
8.	Relevant Developments Elsewhere in Australia	60
8.1	Northern Territory	60
8.2	Western Australia	60
8.3	New South Wales and Victoria	61
8.4	Summary	61
Part 4 Proposed Policy Framework, Service Model and Guidelines		62
9.	A Workable Model of Pre-Hospital Care for Doomadgee and Mornington Island	62
9.1	Social justice issues	62
9.2	Strengths and weaknesses of the models examined	63
9.3	Model preferred by the communities and supported by Project data ..	65
9.4	Key establishment issues	65
9.5	Recruitment, training and support	67
9.6	Toward a systematic approach to meeting the pre-hospital care needs of remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities ..	71
9.7	Conclusions and recommendation	71
10.	Progress Made With Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ambulance Recruit Training	74
10.1	Progress made	74
10.2	Lessons learned	74
10.3	Conclusions and recommendations	74
11.	Policy Framework and Guidelines for Developing Ambulance Services in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities	75
11.1	Service Objectives	75
11.2	A service delivery model with utility	76
11.3	Guidelines for the development and operation of pre-hospital care Services in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities ..	77
11.4	Training of QAS Students and Officers	82
11.5	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Recruitment, Employment and Support	83
11.6	Organisational infrastructure to support service development in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities	83
11.7	Recommendations	83

Part 5 Service Establishment Phase.....	85
12. The Establishment Phase	85
12.1 Training Needs Analysis of Ambulance Officers and Honoraries working in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities	85
12.2 Commencement of the service on Mornington Island	91
12.3 Issues Arising during the Service’s First Month	91
12.4 The situation at Doomadgee	92
Part 6 Findings of the External Project Evaluation	93
13. The External Evaluation of the Project	93
13.1 Details of the External Evaluation	93
13.2 Summary of Evaluation findings and recommendation	93
13.3 Evaluation of the Guidelines developed during the Project	96
Endnotes	97
Bibliography	101
Abbreviations	102
Appendices	103
Appendix A Map QLD Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services and remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities	103
Appendix B Map Mornington Island	104
Appendix C Legend of Doomadgee Township	105
Appendix D Costings for the establishment and operation of ambulance services at Mornington Island and Doomadgee.....	106

Foreword

This report is the first of its kind on the establishment of a prehospital ambulance care service model for isolated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. It establishes an unquestionable need for ambulance services in isolated indigenous communities like Doomadgee and Mornington Island. The report also demonstrates that prehospital services must be well integrated into primary health care systems and that a broader role exists for ambulance officers. In addition and most importantly the report recognises ambulance services must be tailored to a 'best-fit' model to meet individual community needs.

This report documents the importance of an integrated approach and the special considerations required to deliver ambulance services or prehospital care to isolated and remote indigenous communities. The relative isolation is a major factor. Funding, human resource implications, and the relatively poorer health status of indigenous peoples within these communities combine to produce unique challenges to ambulance service provision.

Whether as a health professional requiring community-based back-up, or as a community member needing prehospital care, it is important that everyone's needs are met effectively and efficiently. Ambulance services are an important component of the health and social infrastructure of the community that should be readily accessible.

It is indeed gratifying that the majority of the recommendations relating to Mornington Island have been adopted and the establishment of the service on Mornington has now occurred. Furthermore, a full time ambulance service is to be established in Doomadgee in the 2000/01 FY. This success is directly attributed to the overwhelming support of the communities and the tremendous work and persistence of the project team.

A special thanks to Ambulance Officer Steve Lucas, and Dr Leanne Craze for their diligence and commitment to the project as well as to Frankie Patterson and the project reference group for on-going advice. But, most of all, to the Mornington Island community which should be highly commended for holding on to their belief that one day they would have an ambulance service.

This report represents a landmark in the evolution of ambulance services in Australia. It hopefully lights the way for the continued development and establishment of equitable services to these isolated and often forgotten communities.

I commend this report on the establishment of a pre-hospital care model for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to you.

David Eeles
Regional Executive Director
Far Northern Region
Queensland Ambulance Service

Acknowledgments

Leanne Craze & Steve Lucas
March 1998

Project Team Members

David Eeles (Project Manager)	Regional Executive Director The QAS Far Northern Region (formerly, Assistant Commissioner Northern Region)
Frankie Patterson (Project Contact Officer)	Clinical Research Co-ordinator The QAS Pre-Hospital Care Research Unit
Ina Wilkinson (Community Representative)	Aboriginal and Islander Health Program Mornington Island
Peter Dunn (External Evaluator)	Australian Rural Health Research Institute Charles Sturt University
Sol Bellear	Aboriginal Health Policy Unit, Qld Health
Kath Tolley	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission, National Aboriginal Health Strategy
Steve Clark	Rural Health Training Unit, James Cook University Townsville
Rosemary Bentley	Aboriginal and Islander Health Program, Aitkenvale
Peter Opio-Otim	Aboriginal Coordinating Council, Deed of Grant-In Trust Communities Representative
Peter Leck	Mt Isa District Health Service Representative
Geoff Reynolds	Formerly, Assistant Commissioner, QAS Far Northern Region
Professor John Field (External Evaluator)	School of Paramedical Studies NSW Ambulance Service
Steve Lucas (Project Officer)	The QAS Northern Region
Leanne Craze	Research Consultant

Assisting the Project - Mornington Island

Gary Hooper	Mornington Shire Council
Ken Davies	Mornington Shire Council
Bob Thompson	Mornington Shire Council
Andrew Cameron	Director of Nursing, Mornington Hospital

Steve Stafford	Queensland Police Service
Robyrtta Felton	Women's Shelter
Ina Wilkinson	Aboriginal and Islander Health Service
Annie Chong	Aged Persons Hostel
Heather Watters	Aged Persons Hostel
Trevor Horan	Trade Training Centre

All Mornington Island community members who generously gave their time and who served as Honorary Ambulance Officers

Assisting the Project - Doomadgee

Ram Karpil	Doomadgee Council
Marika Hernandez	Director of Nursing, Doomadgee Hospital
Steve Jenkins	Queensland Police Service
Kevin Greensill	Community Development Employment Program
Val Douglas	Aboriginal Health Worker
Lila Cairns	Aged Persons Hostel
Fiona McKenna	State School Principal
Paul Jones	General Store Manager
Curtis Mitchell	Doomadgee Trainee Ambulance Officer

All Doomadgee community members who generously gave their time and who served as Honorary Ambulance Officers and as assistants

Devine, S (1997), *Training Needs Analysis of Ambulance Officers and Honoraries Working In Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities*, North Queensland Rural Health Training Unit, Townsville, p. 5.

Draft Whole of Government Indigenous Community Infrastructure Coordination Strategy March 1997, prepared by McDonnell & Phillips Pty Ltd

List of Abbreviations

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACC	Aboriginal Coordinating Council
CDEP	Community Development Employment Program
CPR	Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation
DEETYA	Department of Employment Education Training and Youth Affairs
DES	Department of Emergency Services
DOGIT	Deed of Grant-In Trust
HACC	Home And Community Care
HF	High Frequency
HREOC	Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission
JCU	James Cook University
LAC	Local Ambulance Committee
QAS	Queensland Ambulance Service
QATB	Queensland Ambulance Transport Brigade
QLD	Queensland
RACGP	Royal Australian College of General Practitioners
RFDS	Royal Flying Doctor Service
RHSET	Rural Health Support, Education and Training
RHTU	Rural Health Training Unit
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
VETEC	Vocational Education and Training Employment Commission
VHF	Very High Frequency