

# GRAFFITI

## LOCAL ISSUES, LOCAL SOLUTIONS

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**Australian Government**

**Australian Institute of Criminology**



**Crime Prevention Division**

**Attorney General's**

department of nsw

This conference was organised by the Australian Institute of Criminology in conjunction with the Crime Prevention Division of the New South Wales Attorney General's Department.

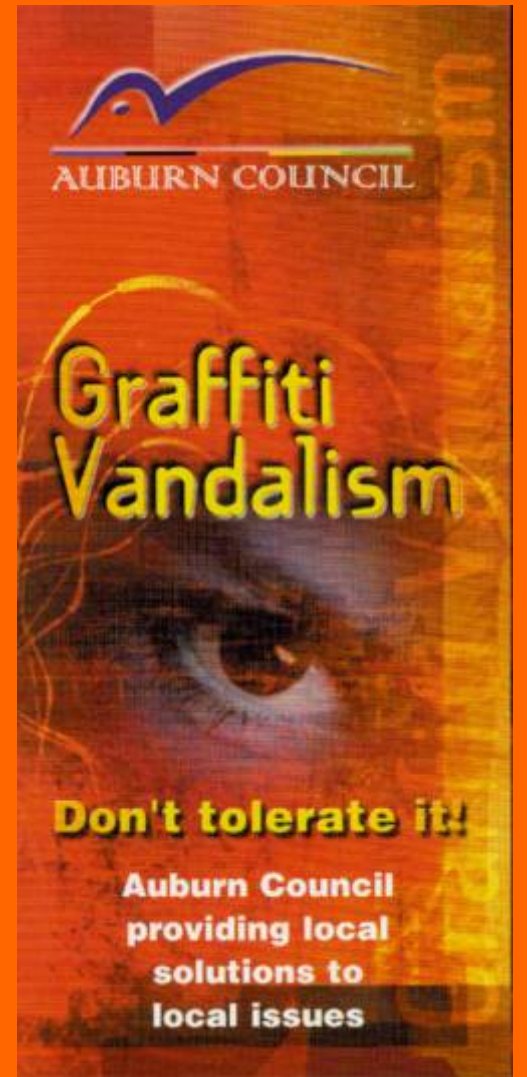
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# GRAFFITI

local issues  
local solutions

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Manager Strategic Projects



# Overview

- Background to involvement in graffiti removal & community education
- Community benefits
- Partnership benefits
- Big picture and how you can make it work
- Achievements
- Get started NOW
- Cautionary tales (coatings, murals and myths)
- Training
- Limiting your risk of exposure to claims
- Legislation changes & impacts in NSW

## Provide your community with:

- a cost effective graffiti removal program (< \$20K p.a)\*
- a FREE, rapid removal program from all areas including private property
- graffiti hotline and technical advice service
- confidence in you to provide innovative solutions
- increased perceptions of safety
- areas that look well cared for at a reasonable cost

*A total solution that is sustainable*

## Program partners:

- Dept of Corrective Services
- Work for the Dole
- RTA
- RailCorp
- Keep Australia Beautiful (NSW)
- NSW Police
- Australia Post
- Department of Housing
- Sydney Water

*Paint is sourced under NSW Government contract < \$6\* per litre*

# Partnership benefits

## Department of Corrective Services

- cost effective labour & transport
- reliable documented intelligence for use by Council and NSW Police
- additional surveillance
- accurate record keeping
- strategic partnerships in support of 'through care program for inmates

# Partnership benefits

## Work for the Dole Projects

- cost effective labour (average saving for each 26 week program = \$49,500) Auburn received approval for 10 programs @ \$49,500 = \$495,000
- reliable, documented intelligence for use by Council & Police
- surveillance
- accurate record keeping
- small groups easily maintain busy public areas
- teams can perform other duties as required
- positive outcomes for communities and participants

# Partnership benefits

## Government Departments

- supportive of Council to maintain their areas (Sydney Water, RTA)
- provide access to all areas readily
- leads to other partnerships that have Community benefit (e.g., Dept. Corrective Services)

# Partnership benefits

## Keep Australia Beautiful (NSW)

- Metropride program participation
- Action Stations! partner
- other activities (guest judging for environmental programs)

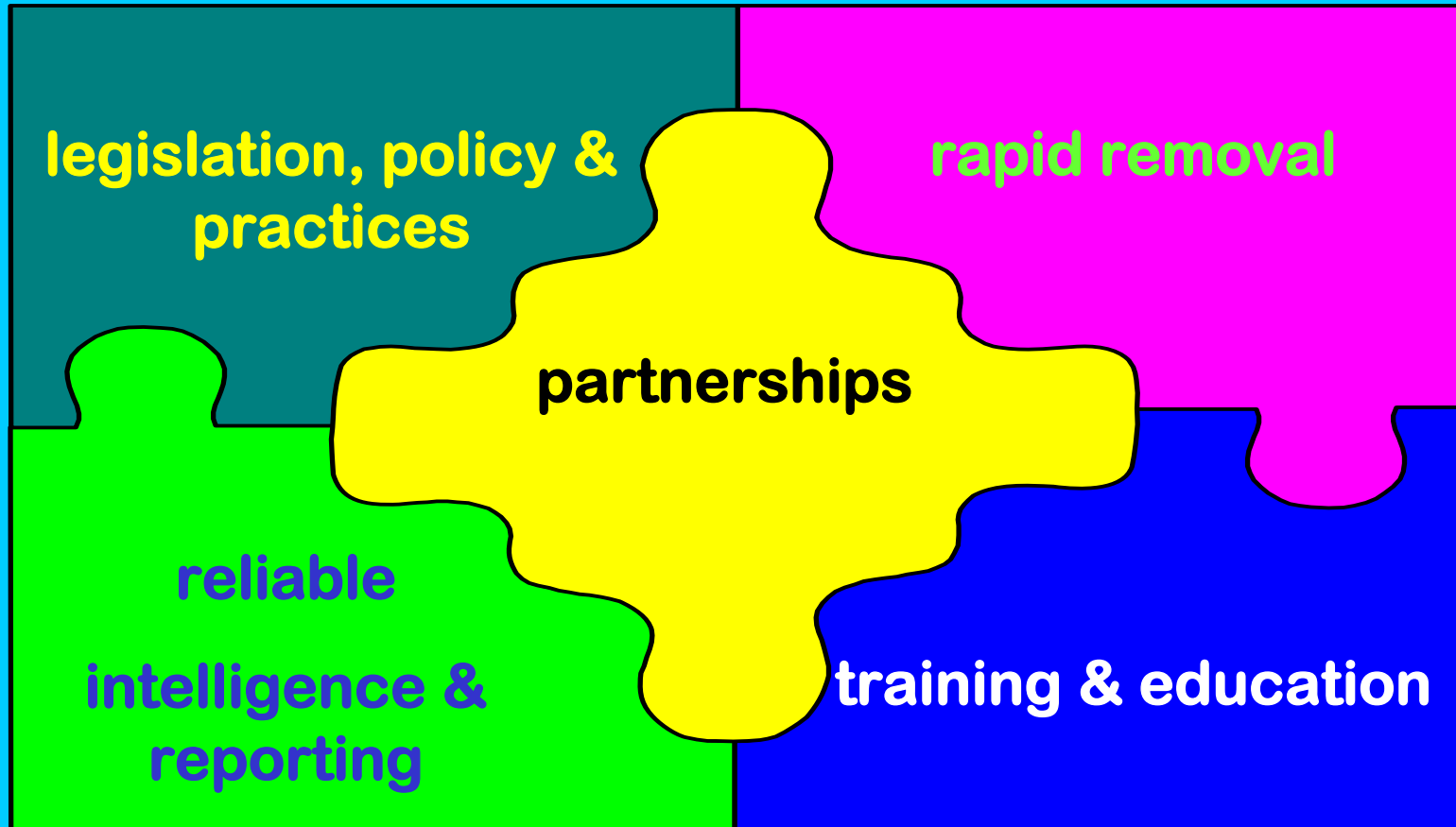
# Partnership benefits

## NSW Police Service

- can rely on reliable intelligence from Council
- Council support in relation to community events
- leads to other joint ventures eg., Joint Open Day, Joint Community Safety agreement etc



# commitment to making it work



# Achievements so far:

- over 3000 sites cleaned
- retag rate < 1%
- Community confidence in Council to deliver has increased
- Community perceptions of safety increased
- Community appreciates rapid response to calls for graffiti removal
- assisting over 30 NSW and interstate Councils

## Get started now:

- plot 'worst areas on a map
- establish relationships with interested stakeholders: NSW Police, schools, TAFEs, Chamber of Commerce, suppliers, hire companies
- 'sign up' businesses in the worst areas first
- advise Community of what you plan to do & that this is a long term program
- start with a pilot program in a defined area, results are noticeable and measurable (this helps to assess retags to enable good future planning)
- formulate additional strategies for program sustainability

# Cautionary tales: coatings, murals & myths

## Coatings : Pros and cons

### *Sacrificial coatings cons*

- not 100 % reversible! (regardless of manufacturer's claims)
- expensive to apply *but* roughly 4 times the purchase price to remove
- heritage surface concerns
- if Councils remove graffiti from a wall are we bound to replace coatings? If so, at whose cost? Is Warranty void? Who applied it originally ? & other nightmares

# Cautionary tales: coatings, murals & myths

## *Sacrificial coatings*



uneven  
application

deteriorated  
coating – diesel  
etc absorbed



deteriorated  
coating – failed  
removals

not 100%  
reversible



# Cautionary tales: coatings, murals & myths continued

## *Cons continued*

- architectural concerns - building does not look as designed (coating part walls)
- some coatings actually aid paint penetration to substrate
- false sense of security to property owners and community generally
- retaliation from taggers for protecting the wall (other malicious damage)
- effects building 'breathability'

# Cautionary tales: coatings, murals & myths

## *Sacrificial coatings Pros*

- maybe afford some disincentive to taggers

## *Non Sacrificial coatings*

### Cons

- permanent
- expensive
- seals surface ( zero breathability)
- warranty claims

# Cautionary tales: coatings, murals & myths

## *Non Sacrificial coatings*

### Pros

- surface finish almost impervious to damage by taggers
- provides protection from other contaminants like diesel, dirt etc in transport tunnels
- easy to clean (OH & S issues supported)
- disincentive for taggers to be in dangerous, confined spaces like railway tunnels

**COATINGS - ARE THEY WORTH IT ? YOU DECIDE**

# Murals



- Are they really a disincentive to tag?
- Auburn Council's experience with murals
- What does the Community (as a whole) really think
- What message are we sending?
- Young people and inhalants
- Peer pressure and 'at risk' contacts



# Training & systems

- Why have graffiti management training ?  
Isn't it just a cleaning job?
- Why call the electrician to do the plumber's job?
- What is involved and where do you get it?
- Limiting risk of exposure in relation to claims
- Importance of record keeping
- Are contractors trained graffiti managers ?

# Contractors

- Contractors are in the business of staying in business
- Is Local Government trying to divest its responsibilities to contractors ? Why ?
- Intelligence gathering: who cares ?
- If your organisation is spending \$1million how do you explain a program that costs less than \$30,000?

# Legislation: changes & impacts

- Local Government Amendment (Graffiti) Bill 2002

Enacted July 2002

How this is working in NSW and considerations

- Summary Offences Act Amendment 2003

How does this impact on Council activities?

# Myths

- coatings will protect walls from graffiti attack and surface damage
- sacrificial coatings are reversible
- graffiti murals will curb illegal graffiti activity
- graffiti removal is just a cleaning job
- cleaning graffiti will remove the problem
- illegal graffiti is a fact of modern day life and we must accept it
- taggers are expressing their ‘exhuberance of youth’
- if in the name of artistic expression – it’s all ok

## Auburn Council is rewarded:

- 2000 Premier of NSW encourages all Councils in NSW to do what Auburn is doing
- 2001 Keep Australia Beautiful Metropride Award (3<sup>rd</sup>)
- 2001 NSW Local Government Minister congratulates Auburn Council in Parliament
- 2002 Keep Australia Beautiful Metropride Award (1<sup>st</sup>)
- 2003 Local Government Management Excellence Award for Innovation
- 2004 Institute of Public Works Engineering Aust. Award for Innovation (1<sup>st</sup>)

Great results can be achieved !

**YOU CAN DO IT**



AIC National Conference 2005