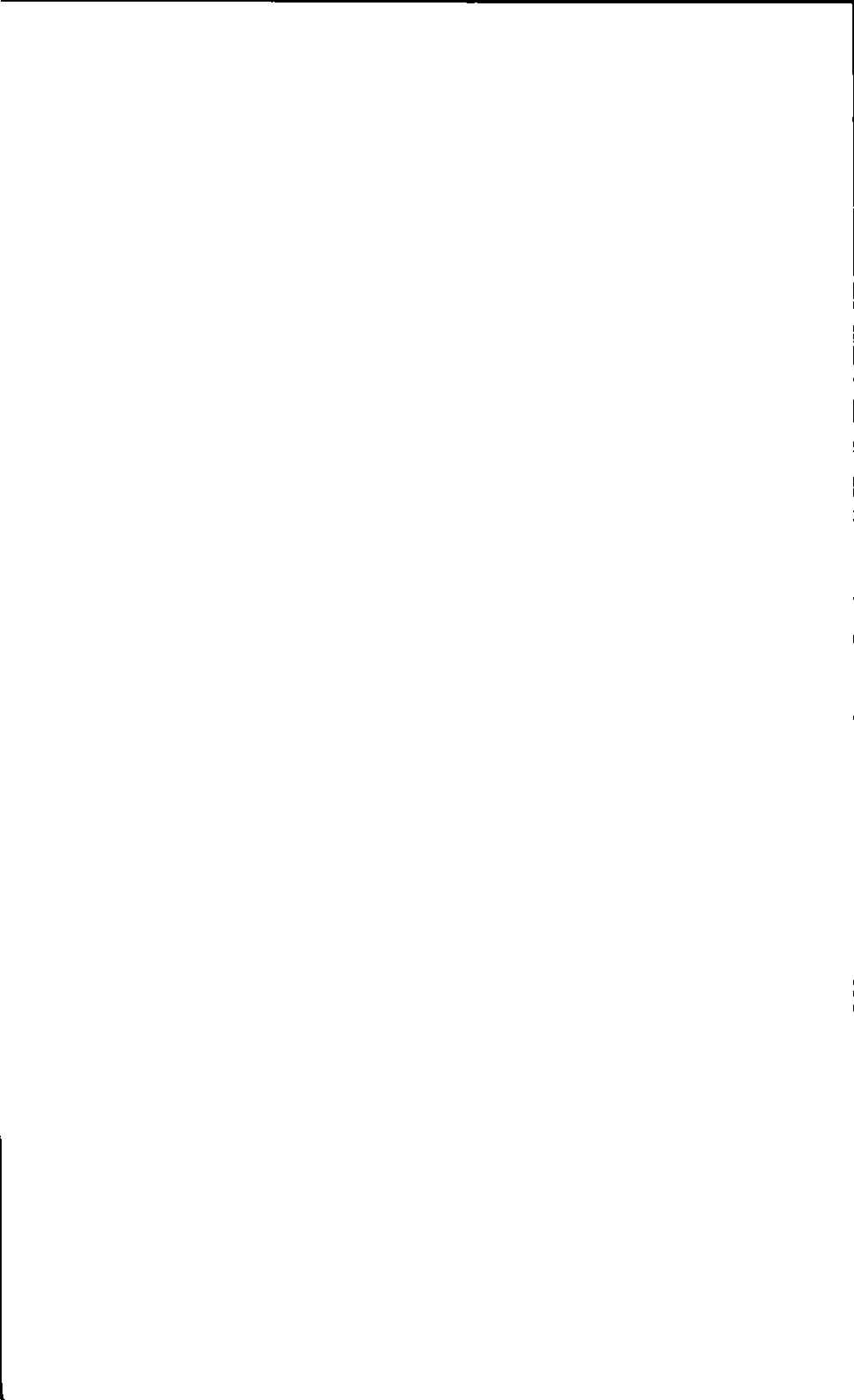# CRIME PREVENTION FOR OLDER AUSTRALIANS

Crime Prevention
for Older Australians

Crime prevention series
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Crime Prevention for Older Australians

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Introduction

Surveys in Australia and throughout the world have shown consistently that older people are far less likely than younger people to be victims of crimes such as robbery, theft, fraud, rape and homicide (*see* Appendix 1). However, many elderly people are unduly fearful of such crimes and this fear can have an adverse effect on their quality of life. With any crime prevention strategy, therefore, the objective must be to reduce fear to such an extent that older people are able to attain maximum enjoyment from their day-to-day lives, while maintaining their independence to remain in their own homes and communities as long as possible.

The extent, as well as the fear, of the more covert phenomena of abuse and neglect is more difficult to gauge. In this instance, abuse and neglect includes any physical, psychological or economic ill-treatment inflicted on an older person in either the home or an aged-persons institution and is often referred to as elder abuse. It is equally important that strategies be developed to protect older people and to prevent any form of elder abuse.

The vulnerability of the aged varies considerably. Health, gender, race, ethnicity and socioeconomic circumstances all affect the capacity of older people to cope with the material, financial, physical and psychological consequences of crime. On the other hand, the geographical dispersion of crime is determined by population make-up, population densities and population mobility. As a result, these variables all interact in a complex way to determine how both crime, and the fear of crime, are experienced by different people in different places for different reasons.

However, low victimisation rates, together with the abstract notion of what actually constitutes a fear of crime, have tended

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to generate disagreement regarding the extent of resources and support which should be allocated for crime prevention and fear reduction strategies for older Australians. Any form of social intervention does, after all, involve the deployment of finite economic and human resources. To begin to unravel this dilemma the following questions must be addressed. Should revenue be allocated specifically for programs which prevent crime against the elderly, or should more general crime prevention efforts which benefit all members of the population including the elderly be undertaken? Should funds be set aside to promote programs which alleviate fear of crime by the elderly? Should separate legal or social service remedies be implemented to deal with elder abuse, or are initiatives directed against the more general problem of family violence adequate? In other words, is it necessary to take into account the unique characteristics of elderly populations and their particular types of victimisation and social experiences? Are the elderly a special group in need of special protection?

This book will examine these basic questions by exploring both the theoretical and the empirical principles of crime prevention strategies. By focusing on the need to look at specific problems in specific areas, it will investigate the potential for increasing the perception of confidence felt by older people, both in themselves and in the wider community. An analysis will be made of the dual individual and interactive roles which could be realised by older peoples' organisations, the community, the police and government at all levels, as well as the participation of older people themselves. Most significantly, this book will emphasise that any crime prevention programs developed should reduce, and not enhance, any fear experienced by older Australians.

The ageing of the Australian population

In general

Australia is experiencing rapid population ageing. This is a result of a decline in both birth levels and mortality levels as well as an increase in post-war migration. As a percentage of the total population, the number of persons aged 65 and over is projected to increase from 10.7 per cent in 1991 to about 12 per cent in 2001. By next century the change will be more marked when increases will rise to between 16 and 18 per cent in 2021, and then to between 19 and 21 per cent in 2031 (ABS 1988). Figure 1 illustrates the projected population at selected ages from 1991 to 2031.

Figure 1 *Projected population at selected ages, 1991–2031 (000s)*
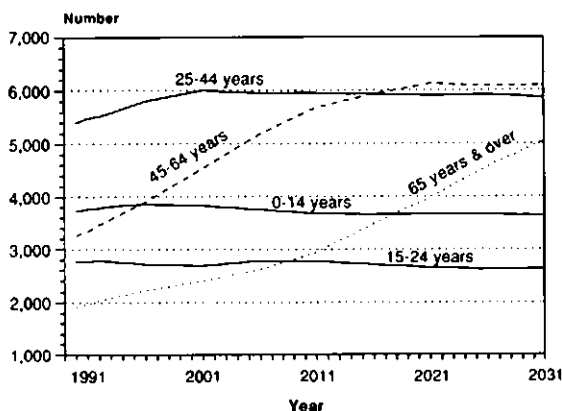
Data source Figs 1 & 2: *Projections of the Populations of Australia, States and Territories 1989 to 2031*, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Cat. No. 3222.0.

The ageing of the aged population

A significant aspect of population ageing is within the aged population itself. The population aged 80 and above is the fastest growing age group. In 1991 2.1 per cent of the population was aged 80 and over, compared with 1.4 per cent in 1968 and 1.8 per cent in 1984. The number of people over 80 has increased by more than 100 per cent over the last twenty years and will double again by the year 2011 (ABS 1988a).

Between 1991 and 2031, the total population is expected to increase by 50 per cent. During the same period the 80-plus population is expected to increase by nearly four times. However, while the oldest age group will grow the most rapidly for the rest of this century, the 'young old' (those in their mid-60s to mid-70s) will become the fastest growing group in the first decade of next century as the baby boom generation starts to reach retirement age (ABS 1988a).

In contrast the proportion of the population aged between 0 and 14 years is expected to decrease in each projection year. On the other hand, the proportion of the population aged between 15 and 64 years, will increase initially and then decline from about 2010 onwards (ABS 1988a). Figure 2 illustrates the proportions of people at selected age groups from 1991 to 2031.

Figure 2 *Proportions of people at selected age groups 1991-2031 (per cent)*
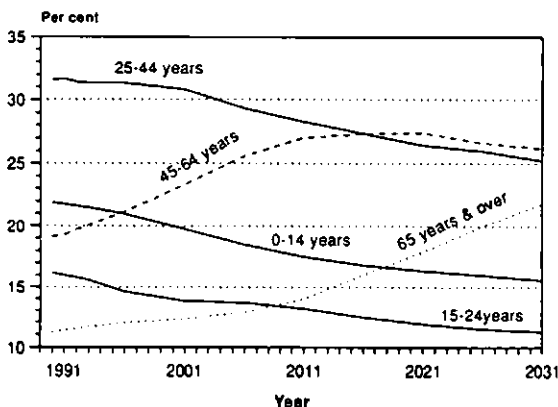
Who are the ageing?

The numbers and proportions of older people are only part of the story of population ageing. There is an increasing diversity within the older population of which age itself plays a crucial role. Chronological age is not a reliable guide by which to gauge what people can or cannot do. Biological age should be considered as an alternative measure. Indeed, as the health of older people improves biological age will become increasingly significant. There has been an attempt to combine the two measures with the result that the following three categories are often used. These are:

- **'Young Old'**—People who can maintain a normal, active pattern or life. Usual age range: 65–74 years.
- **'Middle Old'**—People with certain functional impairments who require limited assistance with certain activities but are still capable of living on their own so long as they get help. Usual age range: 75–85 years.
- **'Old old'**—These are frail and generally so disabled as to require institutional or constant nursing care. Usual age range: over 85 years. (House of Representatives Standing Committee for Long Term Strategies 1992, p.10).

However, there are still enormous variations even within these arbitrary age groups. Once again, a certain age cannot really be taken as a criterion for determining the category to which an individual belongs. That depends on the particular person. He or she may be sprightly at 90 or incapable at 65, and must be assessed on his or her own merits. Defining what is 'normal' for any age group also creates the danger that those who are most capable will be taken as the general standard. This could create unrealistic expectations for others in that age group and disappointment if they fail to meet standards expected. It could also be problematic for others who are capable of much more. People must be judged on their personal capacities, not in accordance with what prejudices about certain ages can imply (House of Representatives Standing Committee on Long Term Strategies 1992, p.10).

Diversity of age is, in turn, reflected in the diversity of the aged population itself. This heterogeneity should have a major influence on crime prevention policies for elderly Australians and is outlined as follows.

Older women

A notable feature of Australia's ageing population is that older women will continue to outnumber older men in the future, especially in very old age. While the sex differences in life expectancy may lessen slightly in the future, it is expected that in 2001, women will make up just over 50 per cent of those aged 65 to 69 years, 56 per cent of those aged 70 to 79 years, and 68 per cent of those aged 80 or over (Kendig & McCallum 1986, p.11). This means that over the age of 80, women will outnumber men by more than two to one. Policies and attitudes, therefore, will have to be especially sensitive to the circumstances of very old women living alone.

The rural elderly

Many older people leave the city and their extended families to move to country areas when they retire. This can sometimes lead to loneliness and isolation, particularly if a spouse suddenly dies. In these circumstances older people can be more vulnerable to crimes such as fraud and confidence tricksters. When devising crime prevention programs for the rural elderly, therefore, it is important not to assume that the sense of community, which is often more developed in the country, is of equal benefit to everyone.

In fact, that same sense of community can often have a detrimental effect on rural men and women who are victims of elder abuse. The potential tyranny of a small town where everyone is known to one another can be further exacerbated by distance and lack of appropriate referral services. A sense of shame and fear of public exposure limits the opportunities for the rural elderly to obtain information about their rights and options. It is important to provide isolated older people with contacts that may best meet their particular needs and assist

to balance the inequities that are sometimes faced in rural and
remote Australia.

The ethnic elderly

Australia's aged population is rapidly becoming more ethnically
diverse, and the overseas-born are expected to be the source of
the greatest increase in the older age group in the coming
decades. This is illustrated in Figure 3.

Figure 3 *Proportions of population aged 60 or over by birthplace
1981 and 2001*

1981

Australian-born
75%

English-speaking
countries
14%

Non-English-
speaking
countries
11%

2001

Australian-born
64%

English-
speaking countries
14%

Non-English-
speaking
countries
22%
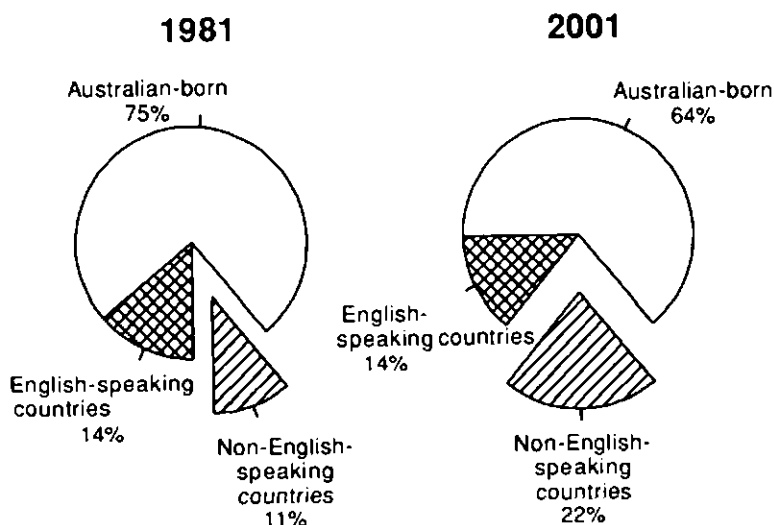
Data source: Kendig & McCallum 1986, *Greying Australia*,AGPS, p. 16.
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Ethnic people vary according to which community they
belong. This is evident in their political, religious and social
divisions. Modern day pressures apply just as equally to ethnic

families as other Australian families, sometimes resulting in a breakdown of traditional practices and values which leave many older people feeling insecure and alienated. English language proficiency often decreases with age, particularly in times of stress. Although, in fact, of the 90 per cent of older people from non-English speaking countries who have lived in Australia for ten years or more, 31 per cent of the men and 44 per cent of the women speak English 'not well' or 'not at all' (Kendig 1989, p.16). Social isolation can mean that older ethnic people do not take advantage, or are perhaps not even aware, of services and programs which may be able to help them. The same isolation and language barriers can cause problems in nursing homes and in less populated areas.

The Aboriginal aged

For Aboriginal men the average life-span is 48 years. For Aboriginal women it is 55 years. Frail age begins at 35. If old age is defined as 65 years and over, then only 3 per cent of the Aboriginal population fit into this category. This compares with nearly 11 per cent of the white Australian population. Old old age, when it occurs, is therefore an extremely valuable experience for Aboriginal people. However, there are very complex social circumstances combined with severe economic deprivation interacting with all issues connected with the Aboriginal aged, and obviously different criteria need to be addressed. Nevertheless, it is of paramount importance to include older Aboriginal people in any strategies which may be devised to improve the quality of life for Australia's elderly.

The disabled aged

As people get older, it can be more likely that they may suffer from some type of disability, ranging from a hearing problem to being confined to a wheelchair. These people, particularly those who are seriously disabled or suffering from dementia, can be more vulnerable to crime. They have restricted ability to use general facilities and often require specialised services. In fact, the health of an older person is a critical determinant of the way in which they will experience old age.

The frail aged

Just over half of people aged 90-plus are living in institutions such as nursing homes or hostels. This figure reduces to around 40 per cent for people aged 85 and over. About 17 per cent of people aged 75 and over are living outside their own homes (House of Representatives Standing Committee on Community Affairs 1990, p.84). Many of these people feel isolated from family and friends and are unable to participate fully in decisions affecting their lives.

Socioeconomic status

Status, both social and economic, are crucial factors when considering strategies relating to crime prevention for Australia's elderly. The *Henderson Report* (1975, p.234) revealed the largest group of people in poverty in Australia to be those over 65 years of age (60 years of age for non-married women). More specifically, 24 per cent of aged people living outside institutions are very poor; they live below the poverty line. A further 22 per cent are rather poor; they live just above the poverty line (Western 1986, p.304).

The degree of diversity within the aged population can be accommodated by adopting a multi-faceted approach to crime prevention measures. However, it is first necessary to examine the theoretical approach. This is outlined in the next chapter.

Crime prevention in theory

When assessing ways in which crime prevention measures for older people can be implemented, it is necessary to examine crime prevention strategies in general. These can take several forms or follow several models, and are outlined as follows.

Situational crime prevention

Situational crime prevention has been defined as the 'use of measures directed at highly specific forms of crime, which involve the management, design or manipulation of the immediate environment in as systematic and permanent a way as possible' (Hough et al. 1980). It is sometimes referred to as 'primary prevention' or 'opportunity reduction' (Geason & Wilson 1988, p.5). It takes as its starting point, the recognition that crimes such as robbery and theft do not stem from any deep seated predisposition on the part of the offender towards crime, but rather the offender is heavily influenced by the available opportunities to commit such offences (Clarke 1983). The offender responds to both the immediate circumstances and the immediate situation in which an offence is contemplated. In other words, the decision to offend is socially or psychologically determined. However, the final decision, whether or not to offend against a particular target, is situationally determined. The motivation to offend, therefore, is not constant or beyond control (Geason & Wilson 1988, p.5).

The practical emphasis in situational crime prevention means that, instead of dealing exclusively with an offender's background or environment (for example poverty, poor education, inadequate socialisation) measures are designed which directly relate to preventing criminal acts. As a result, it

is made more difficult to successfully commit certain types of crime. Situational crime prevention methods can operate at different levels, affecting the individual, the community or the physical environment (Bennett 1986).

At the **individual** level, 'target hardening' strategies are emphasised the most. This encourages people to make their homes more secure through such measures as the installation of deadlocks and security doors, peep-holes in front doors, iron bars on windows and house alarms.

At the **community** level, the most common situational crime prevention strategy is the Neighbourhood Watch campaign. This is the best known form of organised surveillance aimed at reducing crime, including property crime, which takes place in or near the victim's home. It operates on the basis of community awareness and close cooperation with the police. The program focuses on: encouraging people to note suspicious activity and immediately report serious crime; minimising preventable crime through improved personal and household security; and deterring burglars by marking property and displaying stickers around the house as a warning.

At the level of the **physical environment** crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) aims to prevent opportunities for crime, including theft, vandalism, and threats to personal safety. It involves input into the design of individual houses, and their relationship to one another, and to the surrounding neighbourhood. It also focuses on improving street lighting, controlling access to buildings, and restricting pedestrian and traffic flow. CPTED ensures that public spaces such as parks, playgrounds and schools are clearly visible from the street and are able to be observed from adjacent streets or from surrounding development, in order to reduce the discretion with which an offender or vandal can act (Geason & Wilson 1989, p.3).

Although situational preventative measures have a great deal to offer by virtue of their practical and immediate relevance to local crime problems, there have been criticisms. One of these is that some strategies centred on situational measures simply shift responsibility back onto the individual without providing

adequate resources for actually strengthening the community. The methods used are also often inequitable. Middle-class and well off communities and households are able to purchase a degree of private protection which is not affordable amongst poorer groups. By the same token, Neighbourhood Watch is more likely to be successful in middle-class areas where there is more social cohesion. Lower socioeconomic groups who perhaps need protection from crime the most, benefit the least. Existing inequalities are, therefore, intensified. In addition, Neighbourhood Watch is run by the police in relative isolation from other existing community organisations and local agencies without much regard for the peculiar features of particular communities. Furthermore, crimes which are not so opportunistic in nature, such as violence in the home, cannot be prevented through situational crime prevention measures.

While situational crime prevention tends to focus on reducing opportunities to commit various types of crime, social crime prevention emphasises the importance of increasing the opportunities to engage in legitimate behaviour.

Social crime prevention

Social crime prevention or 'social intervention' as it is sometimes referred to, essentially involves addressing the absence of incentives to be a law abiding citizen, and tries to create a situation where an individual has a personal stake in conforming. It focuses on changing the public health, education, housing, occupational and leisure circumstances of potential offenders. Recent research has involved proposals based on the results of longitudinal studies of the development of offenders. It suggests that targeted social interventions might not only have a greater impact on crime levels, but that the results would be more easily identified. These proposals focus on early childhood education, school failure and unemployment problems and have a long-term orientation (Waller 1989, p.43).

Social crime prevention also aims to increase social cohesion by encouraging people to participate in the life and decision-making of their communities. This would, it suggests, reduce

both racial disharmony and intergenerational conflict (Geason & Wilson 1988, p.16).

The social crime prevention perspective, therefore, shifts the emphasis from defending communities to strengthening them. Within this process, both situational measures and the role of the police and other criminal justice agencies remain crucial. There are, however, inadequacies associated with this method.

While social crime prevention tends to move the responsibility for crime prevention away from the individual into a broader strategy involving the community and social relations, it fails to provide the support needed to strengthen local communities to prevent crime and minimise its effects. The breakdown of the family, high unemployment and increased mobility are embedded in the social fabric of modern society and are outside the control of local communities. The community, therefore, needs to become more than just a location where particular measures are promoted and implemented. It needs to be mobilised as a resource for more effectively dealing with the crime problem. That same community, in turn, needs to be given adequate support in managing and implementing specific programs. Both situational crime prevention and social crime prevention need to be located within an alliance of organisations and agencies directed at strengthening the local capacity to prevent crime and alleviate its consequences. This highlights the importance of government involvement and the idea of multi-agency (or inter-agency) cooperation.

Multi-agency cooperation

The idea of multi-agency cooperation stems from the basic premise that preventing crime is not just simply about law enforcement. It recognises that local crime problems are associated with a range of conditions and, by implication, policy arenas. Multi-agency intervention, therefore, is the planned, coordinated response of the major social agencies to problems of crime. Traditionally, however, the interests of such agencies have been somewhat diverse. As a result there has been little overall rationale for the allocation of resources. For agencies to

cooperate at the local level, it requires a genuine commitment to organise a variety of means by which local interests and views may be represented. Differing objectives and responsibilities of the separate agencies have to be taken into account with a corresponding respect for both individual and combined roles (Sampson et al.1988).

It is appropriate, therefore, that the agencies which have responsibility for the delivery of local services should recognise their potential influence on local crime problems so that they can more effectively coordinate their efforts to make that influence a positive one. These agencies typically include the police, courts, social work, housing, recreational and educational institutions, voluntary organisations as well as government (Lea et al. 1989, p.11). In fact, liaison between all levels of government, together with a clear understanding of their defined roles, is crucial for the successful implementation of multi-agency cooperation.

The main priority of multi-agency cooperation is the well-being of each individual community. It is recognised that detailed information of the specific crime problems to be prevented, the circumstances in which the crimes occur and the people who are affected by the crimes are all important resources in responding to such issues (Sampson et al. 1988). The encouragement of active local participation is particularly relevant when dealing with crime prevention and fear reduction for Australia's elderly. Multi-agency cooperation is also a crucial element within victim support networks.

Overseas models

Initiatives towards multi-agency community-based crime prevention strategies and programs are widely accepted in many other western industrialised societies. It is not possible to adopt any of the models which have been developed overseas per se. However, some of the techniques have relevance to the Australian situation and could be adapted accordingly.

In the **United States** there have been numerous crime prevention projects implemented at the local level and

sponsored by the National Institute of Justice, the Police Executive Research Forum, the Eisenhower Foundation and the National Crime Prevention Council. Research has been decisive in showing that crime cannot be reduced simply by pouring more police resources into particular locations.

In the late-1970s, the United States Government funded a massive crime prevention campaign. The intention was to 'assist community organisations and neighbourhood groups to become actively involved in activities designed to prevent crime, reduce fear of crime, and contribute to neighbourhood revitalisation' (US Department of Justice 1978 in Rosenbaum 1986). This approach emerged as a result of the recognition that crime cannot be reduced simply by pouring more police resources into particular locations. In fact, the police themselves have recognised that both police and neighbourhood residents share responsibility in fostering neighbourhood-level social control (Geason & Wilson 1988, p.17).

The major American community crime prevention and fear reduction programs incorporate several initiatives. These include: changes to the physical environment, changes in police service, efforts to organise neighbourhood residents and a focus on individual efforts to protect both the people themselves and their neighbours from victimisation. It has also been acknowledged that Neighbourhood Watch, which originated in the United States, can only be sustained over the longer term if watch groups are re-oriented to ongoing community interests and needs (Rosenbaum 1986).

In Florida, several programs aimed at eliminating intergenerational hostility have been established. For example, high school students attend classes on gerontology. As part of this project, they determine the needs and concerns of local older residents, and they partake in seminars with organisations that are advocates of the elderly. There is also an Adopt-A-Grandparent Project, in which students are able to adopt a resident of a nursing home or care centre and participate in a variety of activities together. Other programs include ones in which retirees offer their skills and experience

to schools to enrich students' educational experiences; creative students are matched with older mentors who challenge their potential, or seniors are able to volunteer as reading and math tutors, storytellers and classroom assistants at elementary schools (Butterworth 1989, pp.23, 36-8).

In **France,** the national Bonnemaison Scheme, primarily administered through local government, has emphasised broad ranging social policy strategies concerning the recreation, education and employment needs of young people in its approach to crime prevention. The French program combines national and local funding and has the commitment of politicians and bureaucrats at all levels. However, even though it is appreciated that if crime prevention is to succeed it must have the full backing of the local community, there has been no attempt to impose crime prevention committees on unwilling local councils. The initiative to participate is left entirely to the individual areas (King 1989).

The importance of improving the physical and social environments of major cities, particularly in depressed neighbourhoods is stressed in the French approach to crime prevention. The necessity to encourage social harmony in the cities, encourage communal life, and offer support for victims is acknowledged, as is the need to reduce tensions between races and generations by promoting cultural pluralism and encouraging people to participate in the life and decision-making of their community (King 1989).

In Lille, for instance, it was found that the construction of the new Metro a few years ago attracted groups of young people who would often spend the whole day, and sometimes the night, hanging around the Metro entrance. The concern evoked among the Metro administrators and security officials was not related to any serious crime problem. They did not steal or attack travellers. It was more the discomfort they caused by their often outlandish punk or hippy appearances, together with the threat they presented to middle-class values. People were frightened by them, particularly the elderly. A theatre project was devised to entice the young people away from the Metro with the idea of directing their energies into constructive

channels. This proved to be a most successful way of integrating the young people into youth training schemes and ultimately back into the community (King 1989, p.10).

In **The Netherlands,** the strategy, like Bonnemaison's, stems from recognition that traditional criminal justice responses are no longer effective in preventing all crime and a greater share of the responsibility needs to be shifted to the local level. To assist this, The Netherlands is also trying to generate new forms of cooperation between tiers of government, agencies and also between public and private sectors. In fact, a large emphasis is placed on bureaucratic forms of coordination, with centralised government control (van Andel 1988).

However, the Dutch, unlike the French, are less convinced that community-based initiatives are sufficient to reduce crime levels. Their programs still contain significant components aimed at reducing opportunities for crime, although not simply through target hardening. Strategies, therefore, involve the situational model, including environmental design approaches and community development, as well as a broader social crime prevention model (van Andel 1988). The underlying principles are:

- Crime must be dealt with not just by prosecution of offenders, but by the society as a whole. This includes a need to care for and assist victims.
- A distinction must be made between serious offences and common crime.
- There must be close coordination between police, prosecutors and local government.

In the **United Kingdom,** the Home Office Crime Prevention Unit (CPU) was set up in 1983. This occurred as a result of a reappraisal of the boundaries of responsibility for crime prevention. Rather than being the exclusive preserve of the police, it was now recognised that individuals and organisations in the community could effectively and acceptably contribute to the reduction of criminal opportunity and criminal motivation (Engstad & Evans 1980). The CPU approach combines both situational and social crime preventive

measures and encompasses such services as education, social services and the police, as well as including government departments and private industry (Ekblom 1988, pp.12,13).

A non-government organisation, the National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (NACRO) was established in the mid-1970s. NACRO has adopted a community approach and has promoted crime prevention by arranging conferences on such issues as people at risk, housing and urban design. Several programs have been launched to help residents revitalise run-down areas with overlapping problems of high unemployment, family breakdown, crime, poverty and ill-health. NACRO's technique is to establish a steering committee comprising resident groups, voluntary agencies and representatives of the local authorities, providing key services such as housing, social services, education and law enforcement. This group develops an action plan based on extensive interviews with residents (Rock 1988).

As a result of both CPU and NACRO innovations, a number of British schemes both public and private, involving protecting people and property as well as developing social and community activities, have been introduced. Examples include: lock fitting schemes for old and disadvantaged people; improved management in tower block housing; providing support for women victims of domestic violence; youth activities in disadvantaged areas, and crime prevention advice and publicity material (Geason & Wilson 1988, p.20). A system has also been introduced whereby schools are encouraged to participate in a program in which students interact with older people. This can range from helping with the gardening to playing chess or cards with nursing home residents.

In **Canada,** the Royal Canadian Mounted Police contract the services of their specially trained Crime Prevention Officers to municipal government. They then assist in the planning and development process of crime prevention strategies. The programs fall into three categories: community surveillance, most often through neighbourhood or block watch; property marking and target hardening (Waller 1989). The methods used are, therefore, mainly situational with the inclusion of

environmental design principles. However, the Canadians are currently considering making a national commitment to crime prevention in a manner which encourages making multi-agency crime prevention happen locally, with educational, research, and documentary support and with the police playing the role of catalyst, analyst and trainer (Waller 1989, p.75).

Overseas approaches range from introducing specific changes to the physical environment in order to reduce opportunities and increase surveillance, to comprehensive national schemes intended to streamline the infrastructure of community-based programs. All of the initiatives have shifted away from exclusive reliance on law enforcement and sentencing towards local responsibility and community-based institutions.

What is common to the overseas models is the requirement for detailed information about specific crime problems. There is not one, but rather multiple empirical realities from which policy initiatives may proceed. To meet individual needs in particular areas, a high level of dedication and commitment is required by a great many people. This is particularly critical when devising strategies which would benefit older Australians. The practical application, therefore, of a combination of the theoretical perspectives and aspects of the overseas models is of extreme importance.
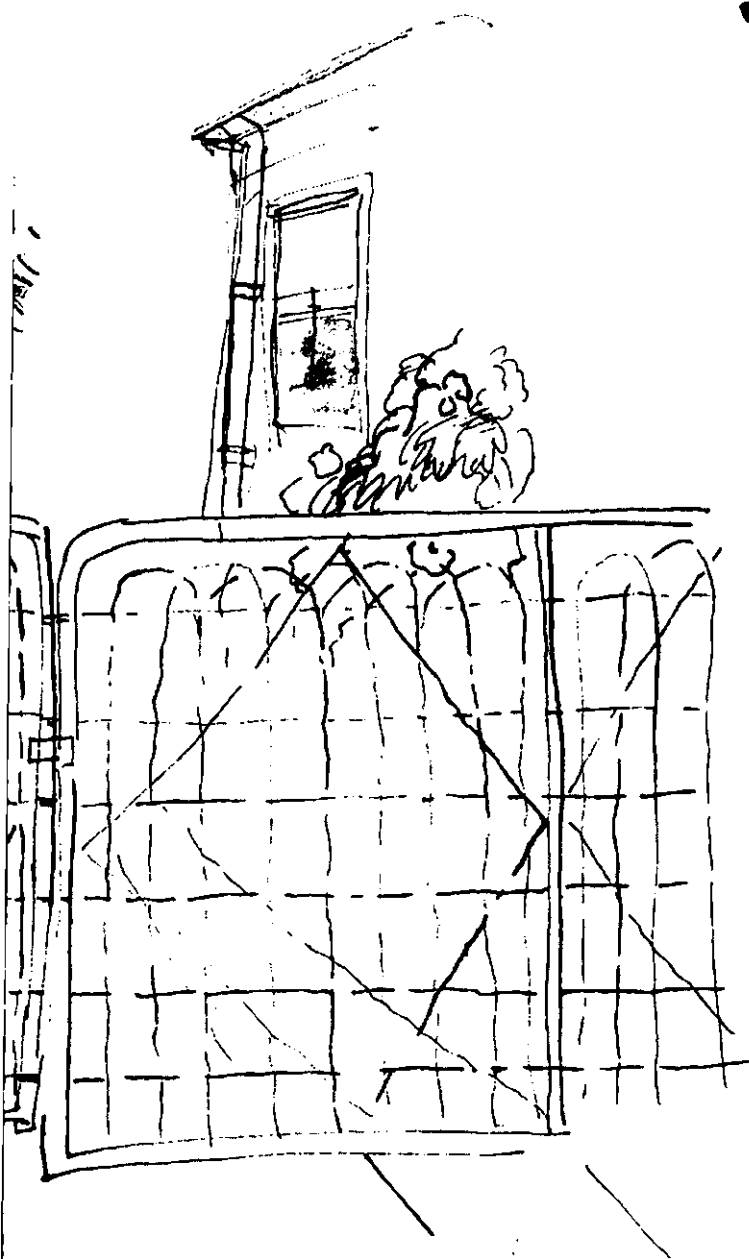
Crime prevention in practice

Preventing crime for Australia's elderly is a concern for the whole community. Therefore the skills and resources of a wide range of organisations and people need to be involved. These should include government at all levels, the police, private sector bodies, the media, older peoples' organisations as well as older people themselves. It is, however, important to take into account that not all crime problems can be separated from other social problems which confront older people.

Role of government

In the first instance, emphasis should be placed on putting crime prevention strategies into place at government level. For a multi-agency approach to succeed there needs to be, both a strong commitment to, and a general flexibility in, the provision of services provided. These should reflect the diversity of requirements and situations among older people. Cooperation between Commonwealth, state and local governments is an essential part of the process so that the programs available are integrated and appropriate, notwithstanding divided responsibilities between levels of government and departments within them.

At **federal** level, a commitment to crime prevention for Australia's older people, should be made through adequate funding and general legislation in the form of a national strategy. Even though the Commonwealth provides state and local governments with a large share of their revenue, it has few responsibilities for direct service provisions in relation to the elderly. Its role, therefore, mainly through the Department of Community Services and Health, is one of coordination between

health, welfare and housing programs for older people (Kendig 1990, p.41).

However, the Commonwealth Government through the Commonwealth Office for the Aged has the capacity to initiate overall multi-agency cooperation through the following functions, some of which are already being undertaken by the Office:

- the development of effective networks of communication with peak organisations representing older people of all backgrounds as well as service providers;
- consultation with older people through the peak organisations on a regular basis to ensure their involvement in the decision making process;
- direct advice to government, through the relevant Minister, of issues raised by older people, or of concern to older people;
- coordination of all government programs which impact directly or indirectly on older people both within the Department of Community Services and Health and other government instrumentalities;
- regular and ongoing liaison with the Office's state counterparts as a focal point for government activity in the area; and
- the facilitation of a greater community awareness of the ageing process (House of Representatives Standing Committee on Community Affairs 1990, p.xii).

An extremely important aspect of the role of the Commonwealth Government, and one which is of immediate relevance to older people, is the need to initiate legislation which would promote a positive picture of older people. Old age should be seen as a natural and fulfilling phase of a complete life. As part of this vision, the following principles should be adopted. These would guarantee the rights of older people to:

- independence, choice and dignity;
- equality of opportunity in employment and all other activities;
- freedom from discrimination and exploitation;

- participation in the development, implementation and evaluation of policies, programs and services which affect them; and,
- comprehensive and accessible information and advice on their rights and options (Kendig 1990, p.xii).

These measures have the potential to increase opportunities for older people to remain independent and continue with important contributions to society. Old age is beset with negative stereotypes which set older people apart and, in a very real sense, create their 'difference'. The result of this can be reduced opportunities for social involvement and independence, especially if older people themselves become to believe the stereotypes.

By promoting and maintaining independence, self-esteem and social integration, Australia's elderly are less likely to become the victims of crime.

Strategies specifically designed to address crime prevention issues, and which would complement the national strategy, need to be developed at state government level.

State government is potentially better equipped than any other level of government for integrating and coordinating crime prevention programs for older people. Consequently, this is where the correct implementation of a multi-agency approach is not only most viable, but crucial for its success. State government should provide clearly enunciated guidelines for the various agencies involved. South Australia, for instance, has endorsed the following five basic crime prevention objectives:

- to increase funding and support for police and other agencies involved in the detection, investigation and punishment of offenders;
- to increase State budget allocations for crime prevention and encourage justice agencies to dedicate higher proportions of their resources to it;
- to extend the range of government and non-government bodies participating in crime prevention and implementing programs with crime prevention potential; and

- to establish and maintain consultative structures and procedures which will enable the state to pursue consistent and far-reaching prevention philosophies, encourage cooperation between agencies both within and outside the public sector, and ensure that key initiatives are evaluated adequately (South Australian Attorney-General's Department, Crime Prevention Policy Unit 1989, p. 9).

Based on the above pointers, crime prevention projects in such areas as 'Safety and the fear of crime among elderly people' could be implemented. Research methods should incorporate broad social, economic and situational analyses. This would extend the concept of crime prevention and provide an alternative perspective on traditional criminal justice responses to crime. As case studies, these projects would develop crime prevention models relevant to both state and local community planning (Crime Prevention Unit, South Australian Attorney-General's Department).

An integral part of any crime prevention project is the formation of local crime prevention committees along the lines of those which have been developed in France. Such committees would undertake a planning process with assistance from the relevant state government department, to develop a crime prevention plan for individual areas. Membership of the committees concerned with crime prevention and fear reduction for the elderly could vary, but would basically comprise the following:

- Police
- Family and Community Services
- Local Council/s
- Local service providers
- Neighbourhood Watch
- Voluntary organisations
- Older people's organisations
- Older people.

The development of a committee and its crime prevention plan could then fall into three stages.

The first of these would enable the specific department covering the area of crime prevention to work in the area to identify potential committee participants and inform them of the approach involved in the development of a crime prevention plan. When the Committee has formed and undertaken decisions relating to its operation, it then presents a submission to the relevant Minister to obtain funding for a Project Officer.

The second stage would begin with the employment of a Project Officer. The Committee would then be able to undertake a research/development phase. The Project Officer would gather data on crime and perceived crime problems in the area. In liaison with relevant government departments, the Project Officer would examine various strategies to address the problems identified, and then engage in a community consultation process on the proposed strategies.

The third and last stage would involve the endorsement of the Crime Prevention Plan by the relevant Minister and the Committee would be funded to undertake the implementation process over a certain period (adapted from guidelines recommended by the Crime Prevention Unit of the South Australian Attorney-General's Department).

A practical application of the above strategies could involve, for instance, a fear among elderly people of the actions of young people using a walkway outside their flats on a public housing estate. To exacerbate the problem a bus stop which is on the route from the local hotel is just at the top of the walkway. So when the young people use the walkway there is often drunkenness and loutish behaviour involved which results in verbal abuse and physical intimidation of the older people. This problem is quite simply resolved by building a bus stop a little further on down the road which would cater for people travelling from the hotel. However, the original bus stop has to be retained because the older people use it when going shopping and any change would mean they would have too far to walk. So the whole process involves not only building a new bus stop, but re-directing a bus route. To resolve the problem in a way which suits everyone, therefore, involves the

cooperation of various state government departments, local government, the police, community organisations and, of course, consultation with the older people themselves.

The above scenario highlights, not only the importance of a multi-agency approach, but the need for coordination. It also demonstrates the necessity for local interests and views to be represented. Local government, in fact, plays a crucial role in the whole process.

Local government is, in many ways, the logical agency to take the leading role in community crime prevention measures for older people. It is, however, impossible to expect local government to play a significant role in crime prevention without financial and political support at state and Commonwealth government levels. Policies for older people should, therefore, be refined at local government level based upon the principles of the national and relevant state strategy.

Even though it is recognised that local government in Australia is limited in its range of responsibilities, particularly compared with many overseas countries, it is still in the position of being the agency with the most knowledge of individual needs in particular areas. Local government concerns can be closely and relevantly attuned to the needs of people at the grassroots levels of society.

Much crime is localised in nature. Some communities experience higher levels of crime than others. Local Councils have day-to-day contact with most, if not all, of the major players/participants in a local community. These include residents, business people, sporting and community service organisations (including groups for older people), developers, government departments and authorities, the local media, local politicians and the police. Local government is, therefore, the only authority which is able to bring together these diverse groups of people and organisations.

Local government can choose to use its networks, together with its existing areas of responsibility such as development control, design and control of open spaces and public parks as well as social planning and involvement, to have an impact on crime prevention. A synthesis between a number of issues and

approaches to crime prevention for the whole community, including older people, could be as follows:

- planning and designing safer physical sites where crimes are less likely to occur. It is important to design public housing in such a way that older people are not made to feel vulnerable to other sections of the community;
- encouraging developers **not** to create hostile physical environments;
- gaining community involvement in ownership of physical assets;
- involving the community in specifying its needs and concerns;
- involving the community in contributing to solutions, including service as well as physical solutions;
- understanding people's fears and perceptions;
- ensuring cooperation at the local level between all agencies and the community;
- integrating physical planning and community involvement to get people back into public places (Office of Local Government 1991, p.9).

Crime prevention should be viewed by local government as part of an overall approach to creating safer communities. An integral part of their approach should be to ensure that older people are actively involved in all sections of the community and that they have a positive attitude of mind brought about by feeling that they are in control of their lives and their environment. It is most important that older people be given any information, or made aware of opportunities, which would improve their quality of life and make them feel more secure. This could be done in conjunction with older people's organisations and cover the following topics.

- Practical advice on **fitness** and **diet.** Regular and appropriate exercise keeps people mentally and physically alert, and promotes self-esteem.
- Seminars on **personal** and **household security**.
- Information about **available services** and where to go for help.

- Special **information sessions** for people who may need particular attention, such as the **ethnic community, the disabled, older women** living alone and **older men** living alone.
- Community awareness of **elder abuse**.
- Promote contact between **young people** and **older people.** Try to break down the tendency to stereotype on both sides.
- Access to **community transport** for shopping and excursions.
- Raise awareness of socio-political and quality of life issues in relation to **third age** learning and **education.**
- Educate older people to be wary of **con men** and **fraud**.
- Make sure older people are aware of specific **crime problems** in the **local area**. These may change at various times in different locations.
- **Victim support** groups.
- Assist in the formation of **safety groups** for local older residents. Group members could check on each other's well-being by telephone or at regular coffee mornings.
- Make sure the **older people** themselves are involved in **crime prevention strategies**.

By following Commonwealth and state government directives and implementing these at local government level, any strategies implemented will be professional in theory and practical in application.

An example of a successful partnership between the Commonwealth Government, the state government and local government authorities is the HOMEASSIST scheme in South Australia. This particular project is funded through the Home and Community Care Program, the South Australian Department of Employment and Technical and Further Education, the State Together Against Crime Scheme, participating Local Councils and community service organisations.

The HOMEASSIST Scheme provides assistance to low income and financially disadvantaged people as well as the frail aged and younger people with moderate to severe disabilities and

their carers who are living within the community, and may be at risk of premature or inappropriate admission to residential care (HOMEASSIST guidelines). Although the scheme is not specifically intended for older people, they are the group who use the service the most.

The aim of the HOMEASSIST program is:

- to coordinate and facilitate access to a broad range of home based services appropriate to a person's needs through assessment and referral to appropriate agencies;
- to provide a range of short-term or ongoing services to low income, disabled and otherwise disadvantaged clients aimed at reducing the safety and security risks of these people;
- to advise on and install security hardware;
- to provide information and advice on the home environment (e.g. maintenance issues, safety/security issues, personal support issues) and the service environment;
- to provide consumer links with other support services, such as:
  - Domiciliary Care Services;
  - Meals on Wheels;
  - Royal District Nursing Society;
  - Telecross (the telephone reassurance service operated by the Red Cross Society which provides a daily telephone check on people with disabilities who live alone and may be at risk of an accident or fall);
  - South Australian Police Department, Security Advice Unit;
  - Neighbourhood Watch;
  - Victims of Crime Service;
  - Together Against Crime Action Groups (community based crime prevention programs being developed on a regional basis);
  - Rotary International;
  - Lions International;
  - Apex Clubs of Australia (HOMEASSIST guidelines).

While it is intended that the HOMEASSIST Scheme receives wide publicity through Commonwealth, state and local government sources, it is the participating Councils' responsibility to ensure that HOMEASSIST is promoted adequately to eligible clients within their area and that other agencies and referral sources are given information on the type and range of services offered.

Even though it is important that the local communities recognise their own roles in crime prevention programs for older people, the role of the police is a crucial aspect of the multi-agency approach.

Role of Police

In order to involve the police in local crime prevention measures, it is necessary to obtain stronger police-community relationships. This is done through the concept of community policing. Community policing can basically be described as a necessary partnership between the community and the police forged to ensure that the justice system continues to operate effectively in maintaining community standards of behaviour (Waring 1991, p.18).

Community based crime prevention involves encouraging and facilitating efforts by the public to take protective measures on their own behalf. It grows out of the realisation that the first line of defence against crime is not the police, but potential victims (Bayley 1989). The basic philosophy of community crime prevention is that social interaction and citizen familiarity play an important role in preventing, detecting and reporting criminal behaviour (Mukherjee 1987). Knowledge of available services and initiatives in the community is a necessary component and community policing endeavours to avoid needless overlap and duplication (Waring 1991, p.18).

Perhaps the most well known community policing strategy, and the one most relevant to older people, is the Neighbourhood Watch scheme. This is a comprehensive package comprising four elements:

- **Cooperation between residents and the police** as described above;

- **Property marking schemes** which involve participants in the programs marking property visibly or invisibly with some sort of personal code;

- **Home security surveys** whereby the police provide a free home security survey to advise participants on minimum levels of protection and low cost solutions;

- **Community crime prevention and environmental awareness** which is the promotion of crime prevention and community campaigns to address particular local environmental issues (Bennet 1987, p.3).

When Neighbourhood Watch was first introduced in Britain it was described as being:

> primarily a network of public spirited members of the community, who observe what is going on in their own neighbourhood and report suspicious activity to the police. In simple terms, the citizen becomes the 'eyes and ears' of the police, looking out for the usual and unusual to protect their own home and that of their neighbour, thereby reducing opportunities for criminal activity (Turner & Barker 1983, p.1).

Neighbourhood Watch is, therefore, a community-based activity that is primarily directed at crime prevention in residential areas. It depends on individual residents accepting greater responsibility for crime prevention in their community and cooperating with police to take effective action. The underlying rationale is that Neighbourhood Watch schemes will deter prospective criminals because it will be known that residents in such areas will be vigilant, property will be protected and offences will be quickly reported. As a result, the opportunities for crime will be lower, and the risk of detection higher, than elsewhere. However, the benefits to be anticipated from Neighbourhood Watch extend far beyond crime prevention alone. Because Neighbourhood Watch requires residents to work together to protect each other's property,

successful schemes will increase contact and interaction within neighbourhoods, thereby improving community spirit. In turn, this socialisation—combined with the anticipated reduction in crime—will provide reassurance to residents and reduce their fear of victimisation. Finally, since the police play a key role in Neighbourhood Watch, it provides them with an opportunity to establish constructive links with residents and improve relationships with the local community (Husain 1990, p.4).

Another integral part of community policing is the recognition of the particular safety and security needs of the elderly. Police departments throughout Australia have introduced a range of specialised services. These include crime prevention education programs and in some cases the establishment of an Aged Services Unit. The Aged Services Units are active in liaising between police and senior citizens.

These programs recommend a number of simple crime prevention measures which can be taken to enhance personal safety. Many of these precautions apply equally to all members of the community, but others are designed to address the particular needs of older people. A lot of the information is practical and affordable. The police, in conjunction with other agencies, assist older people on lower incomes to take full advantage of their suggestions by helping with items which may be unaffordable. An excellent example of the type of advice offered has been published in Victoria by the Ministry for Police and Emergency Services, assisted by the Older Persons Planning Office in cooperation with a number of other Victorian Government and community agencies. Some of this advice incorporated in a booklet entitled 'Confident Living for Older Victorians' is listed below:

How to improve the security in your home

- Ensure all **windows** are locked;
- Do not place **spare keys** under door mats, flower pots or in meter boxes. Spare keys should not be left outside the home; leave spare keys with a friend or neighbour;
- Lock the **meter box**;

- Burglars are attracted by overflowing **mail boxes**. If on holidays or absent for long periods ask a trusted neighbour to clear the mail box or arrange with the post office to hold mail;
- Cancel **milk** and **newspaper** deliveries when going away;
- Cut **bushes** and **trees** which obscure windows. Do not have bushes or trees in your garden where they can be used as hiding places by intruders, or used as access to a first floor window;
- Make sure the **street number** is easy to see from the street;
- **Wedding** and **funeral notices** which include an address can tell a thief when to strike. It is a wise precaution to have someone at home to keep an eye on the house if you are out at such a published event;
- Leave **lights** on inside and out if required—they are not expensive;
- Have an extra **telephone** installed in the bedroom.
- **Identify property**. Marked property is less attractive to burglars, and police can return it to its owners if it is recovered. Marking pens or engravers should be used. The nearest Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator can lend marking pens and engravers;
- Two thirds of all burglars get in through windows. So it makes sense to fit **window locks**. There are locks for every kind of window, and they can cost very little;
- A good quality **security door** should be fitted to front and rear entrances as they provide an additional lock plus a barrier for the caller;
- A **security deadlock** is advisable for main exit doors;
- a **peephole** fitted in the door allows identification of callers before letting them in;
- A chain helps in order to be able to speak to strangers at the front door before letting them in.

Personal safety

- Always be careful who you let into your home; if you have installed a peep hole or door chain you will be able to see who is at the door without opening it. If your door is not

fitted with a peep hole or chain, look through a window to see who is at the door;

- Always check the credentials of service repair people and do not allow charity collectors to enter your home. Talk to strangers through a security door. If you are unsure of a person's motives, ask for the name of their company and telephone number and check their position with the company;
- Always be careful who is present when you are sharing private information about yourself. Be discreet about discussing your financial or living arrangements loudly in public;
- Don't advertise the fact that you live alone through telephone listings or letter box names;
- If you are feeling threatened by someone at the door or someone on the telephone, a call to a 'make-believe' partner/companion that 'it's okay, I've got it' may seem silly to you, but it could be the action which ensures that you don't become a victim of crime;
- Do not give your telephone number or reveal any information about yourself to unknown people;
- Do not let strangers know you are home alone or when you will be away from the house;
- If you receive an obscene or abusive call, do not try to talk to the caller **hang up!** If the calls persist, keep a record of the times and then contact Telecom and the police.
- Know public transport timetables and routes—avoid waiting for extended periods at stations and bus-stops.
- Rather than carry a handbag, use a money belt or a hidden purse.

Personal alarms

Personal alarms can range from pendants containing radio transmitter buttons worn around the neck, to hand held devices that emit load alarms that can frighten attackers or summon help. On deciding on the type of alarm system needed (if needed) it is important to consider issues such as:

- Cost; rental or purchase;
- Weight of device;
- Type of switch and ease of operation: press button, air switch or micro switch.
- Location of the switch: on a pendant; wristband or carried in the pocket;
- Its function in obtaining assistance in a health emergency as well as a situation of threat.

Older peoples' seminars should be attended by specially trained community police. These police, in turn should be aware of the circumstances of older people and be sympathetic to their needs. It is advisable for police to be aware of how to cope with people suffering from dementia and Alzheimer's disease. They should learn to recognise if older people are living in abusive situations.

If crime prevention strategies for older people are going to be implemented at community level, there is a requirement within, and between, local government and the police for better communication, education, information and dissemination. As a result fear of crime could be reduced. In fact, controlling fear of crime is important for community policing because fear of crime can weaken the ability of a community to deal with local crime problems (Collins & Babb 1992, p.1). It may be concluded, therefore, that consistent strategic efforts by the police authorities to improve quality and accountability of policing services through community policing and positive police contact with the public can lead to a reduction in community fear of crime (Collins & Babb 1992, p.33)

It is crucial, therefore, that the police and the community work together, and that the community be encouraged to recognise its own role in crime prevention. However, to enable the police to successfully implement the concept of community policing, there has to exist, first of all, a community. This can be particularly problematic in lower socioeconomic areas. A multi-agency approach is important in helping to establish that feeling of community. Older people and their organisations also have a large role to play in the establishment of community as well as crime prevention and fear reduction within that community.

Role of older people's organisations

One way to disseminate crime prevention information is for local government and the police, in cooperation with other agencies, to work through local older people's organisations. The seminars should include many diverse topics, from target hardening to how to recognise a con man, how to cope with personal assault, healthy living seminars and self-defence seminars. Shopping trips, bus trips and outings generally could also be arranged through senior citizen's clubs.

However, older people's organisations also have an important political role to play in deciding on the type of crime prevention and fear reduction strategies which would be acceptable for older people, and how these strategies should be implemented. One such organisation is the Australian Pensioners' and Superannuants' Federation. The AP&SF is the national consumer voice of pensioners and older people and has a national capacity to research issues for its 300,000 members from a consumer perspective. The Federation acts to promote the interest of pensioners and superannuants through many channels. These are detailed as follows:

- initiates campaigns with affiliates and other member organisations on national issues;
- conducts consumer based research;
- lobbies politicians and the providers of services to older people;
- liaises with other consumer and welfare organisations;
- works through the media to promote issues;
- has membership on many government and non-government advisory bodies;
- publishes a bimonthly newspaper and regular discussion papers on topical issues; and
- uses forums, meetings and conferences to pursue a better deal for pensioners and superannuants (AP&SF guidelines).

The benefits of such a political power for older people would include:

- a better balance of views in many areas which have been historically dominated by professionals, government and industry, for example health and residential care;
- better informed decision-making by government, industry and consumers;
- more relevant programs, services and products for older people;
- a better informed and increasingly articulate constituency of older people, who will, over time, play a greater role in determining priorities to meet their needs (AP&SF guidelines).

Through such a political voice, older people, themselves, could determine what crime prevention measures would best suit them and also enhance their standing in the wider community, as well as their perception of themselves.

Role of older people

Older people have a positive role to play in the implementation of crime prevention and fear reduction strategies relating to themselves. The majority of Australia's elderly are fit and healthy. Many have high levels of skills and expertise which could be used as an important resource in the wider community. Older people often have the time, the energy and the ability for voluntary work in and for the local community. They are the ones who could instigate social cohesion within those communities (Midwinter 1990, p. 50).

Neighbourhood Watch could, for instance, profit if more attention was paid to the potential contribution of older people. In fact, Neighbourhood Watch could perhaps be more successful if it did not limit itself to purely defensive actions— encouraging the fitting of locks and bolts, property marking and watching for strangers. If it engaged in more positive activity such as escort schemes for shopping trips for elderly frail people, or for evening entertainment outings. Such schemes could be staffed and organised by the active older citizen (Midwinter 1990, p.51).

Older people could also have a positive role to play assisting the police in some of their community activities, as well as victim support schemes and local crime prevention panels.

However, it is not possible for either their image to be enhanced or the potential resource of older people to be realised without the support of the media.

Role of the media

The media has an important role to play in the public perception of older people. Negative, sensationalist reporting not only produces stereotypes, but also has a detrimental effect on the way older people view the incidence of crime; it leads to greater fear and isolation. It could even possibly lead to a higher incidence of crime amongst the elderly. However, by adopting a focussed, positive approach, media reporting, particularly in relation to crime prevention issues affecting older people, could be part of the solution, not part of the problem. In local areas, the media could assist by publishing crime prevention tips in the local newspaper. On a national level, the media could help disseminate information to the ethnic elderly who do not understand English through SBS television. By the same token, illiterate older people would benefit from television advertising.

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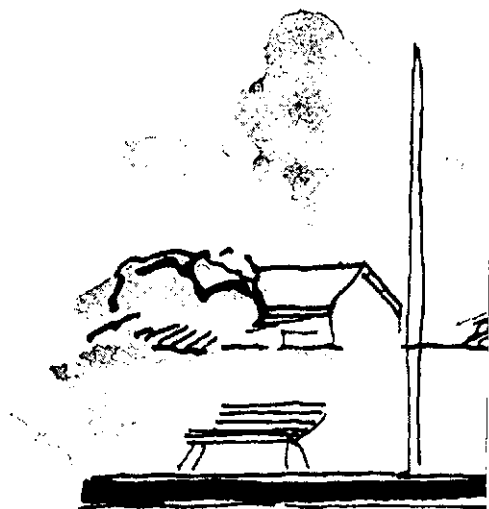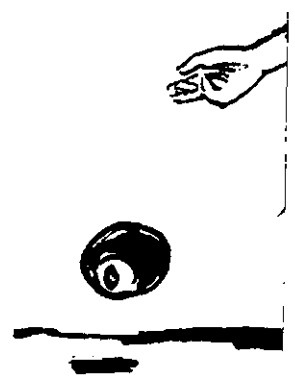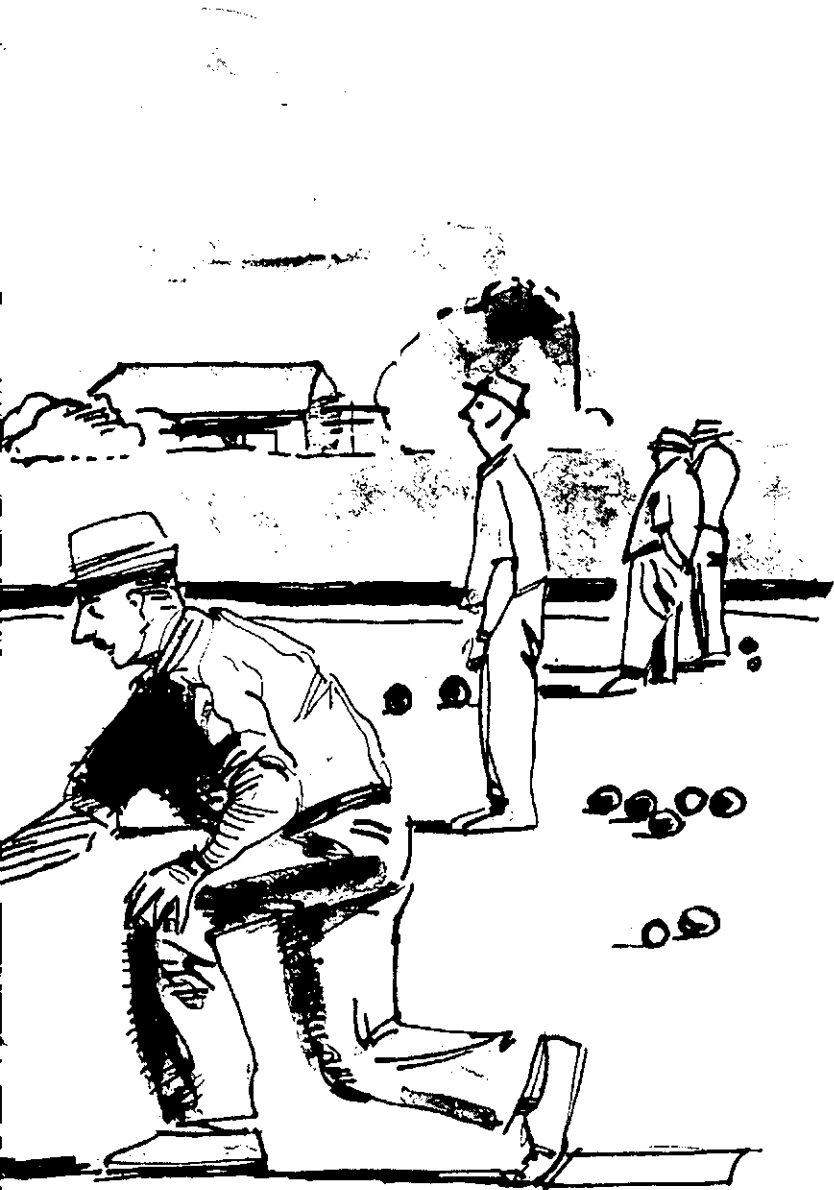
Fear reduction

While there is no clear evidence that concern about levels of crime in society generally is higher among the elderly than other groups, fear of victimisation is a different story. The fear among the elderly of being a victim of crime is real and pervasive. It matters little whether this fear is out of proportion with the overall probability of being victimised. What is important is that it be recognised as a concrete phenomenon and strategies developed accordingly. The objective must be, therefore, to reduce fear and enhance the quality of life for Australia's elderly. However, to achieve this, it is first of all necessary to understand just exactly what constitutes a fear of crime.

What is fear of crime?

Traditionally the concept 'fear of crime' has been treated in an abstract way. Unlike a mugging or a theft, fear of crime has not been considered as a tangible phenomenon. It does not refer to a particular incident that may be circumscribed in time and space. Instead, it refers to ways of thinking, feeling and acting that are more universal and somewhat more difficult to qualify.

However, if a large proportion of older people feel that they are at criminal risk, even though they have not been personally victimised, then in a sense, they may be said to experience costs resulting from their knowledge of, and emotional response to, the criminal victimisation of their contemporaries. Such a conceptualisation engenders feelings of insecurity about person or property which may cause mental anguish or constrain people to behave in such ways that have a negative impact on their quality of life. Therefore, those who are vicariously victimised, like those who are directly victimised,

may be said to experience the costs of crime (Fattah & Sacco 1989, p.206).

By regarding 'fear of crime' as vicarious victimisation, the concept shifts from an abstract notion to empirical reality. In so doing it becomes a more practical concern. However, fear emanating from such a source manifests itself, not in the objective reality of the risk involved, but in the confidence of older people in dealing with crime should it happen. How this fear is measured is another important issue.

The traditional measure of fear of crime in the criminological literature is 'How safe do you (or would you) feel walking alone in this area after dark?'. For instance, Figure 4 illustrates a response to the following: 'please try to remember the last time you went out after dark in your area and for what reason. Did you stay away from certain streets or places for reasons of safety or certain people?'

Figure 4 *Fear and perceptions of safety, rate per 1,000 persons, Australia 1991*
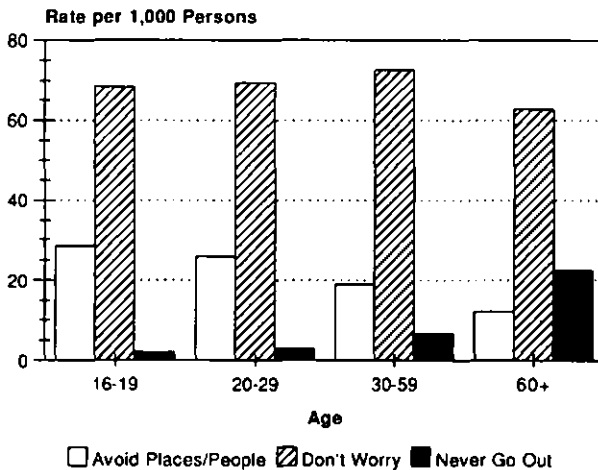
Source: Walker J. (forthcoming), *Crime in Australia*, Australian Institute of Criminology, Canberra.

This is a very narrow indicator of why people register fear and how fear is experienced by different people in different areas. More specific questions have to be addressed, such as: Do older women express more fear than older men? Do people in lower socioeconomic groups experience more fear of crime than people in higher income brackets? Do people living alone experience more fear than those who live with one or more persons?   In fact, a recent English study did pose similar questions.

Who fears crime?

This particular study found that, although fear of crime is experienced more by elderly women than elderly men, that fear cuts across socioeconomic barriers and bears no relationship to the actual level of crime in particular neighbourhoods. In fact, one of the most fearful groups was found to be single, elderly people living alone in comparatively trouble-free areas. Their fears, apparently, stemmed not from direct experience, but from a general vague perception of crime statistics (Midwinter 1990, p.35).

In New South Wales, crime prevention surveys recently completed by two local councils (Waverley and Fairfield) have also dealt quite extensively with the degree of fear of crime among the elderly.

The Waverley Municipality has quite a high percentage of their population aged over 60 years. The survey conducted attempted to explore:

- the perception of crime as a local problem alongside other local problems;
- the extent to which older residents are victims of crime and the consequences of such victimisation;
- the indirect effects of crime on older residents, and
- the influence of other factors on the attitudes and experiences of older people in relation to their sense of personal security.

The respondents were chosen indirectly through community organisations in an attempt to instigate less impersonal contact

than would otherwise be the case, and to include housebound older people. They were predominantly female, aged 70 and over and living alone; many of the respondents were born outside Australia and had been living at their current addresses for many years. The findings of the survey revealed that fear of crime among the majority of the elderly was not as important as had been expected. The report concluded that a significant factor in the results was the level of social isolation, which in the sample group was fairly low. This may be because the sample was chosen through community organisations. It may also be because the level of social cohesion in the Waverley area is high. Most older people have been living in the same house or flat for many years, and there is a definite community spirit.

On the other hand, the Fairfield Project indicated that fear of crime is a very substantial problem for the entire population in that municipality. However, older people are more fearful than the younger ones. This fear impacts negatively upon the ability of a large number of residents to move freely within their neighbourhood, to utilise local parks, public transport and even shopping centres. People do not feel particularly safe in their own homes, nor do they feel that it is safe to leave their houses and property unattended. It also appears that it is women generally who feel least safe and whose lifestyles are most constrained by fear of crime.

The Fairfield area has a high concentration of people from non-English speaking backgrounds, a very high population turnover rate and many of the people live on a public housing estate. There is little or no community spirit.

It appears that a lack of social cohesion with its corresponding level of individual social isolation is the major factor in who, among the elderly, are most fearful of crime. Socioeconomic factors are important in so much as poorer areas often have more difficulty in developing a feeling of community among its residents. It is very important, therefore, that the social isolation of the elderly be addressed. This is where community involvement and a multi-agency approach is crucial to any crime prevention and fear reduction programs for elderly people. This way specific problems in specific areas could be addressed.

Why is it, though, that the part of the population least likely to suffer crime is the most frightened?

Why are the elderly fearful of crime?

One of the reasons the elderly are more fearful of crime is because of their increased vulnerability. A high prevalence of reduced or low income means that any loss of economic resources is more serious. Even the problems of replacing pension books, library tickets, cheque books and other documentation after a purse snatch may become more demanding and tiresome when we are older (Midwinter 1990, p.3). Also, ageing is a period of decreasing physical strength and agility, which means resistance is both less effective and more dangerous than for younger persons. Even relatively minor injuries may result in serious and perhaps permanent damage to the older victim, to say nothing of the enormous psychological impact (Grabosky 1989, p.18).

It is not surprising then that older people are particularly fearful of being the victim of street crimes (Midwinter 1990, p.37). The increased risks involved, which are often magnified by social isolation, are an integral part of this fear.

Another significant aspect of elderly fear of crime is the overdramatisation of certain crimes in the media. Many older people, as well as the general public, form their perception of crime through the media. Once again, social isolation affects older people's feelings of vulnerability; the media is often their only form of contact.

Confidence-building strategies

If fear of crime by Australia's elderly is caused by individual anxieties or distorted information which exaggerates the actual risk, it may be possible to reduce this fear through community confidence-building strategies. These may lead to more social cohesion and a suggested format follows:

- Hold regular meetings to keep older people informed of crime levels in their local areas. Place particular emphasis on the fact that the elderly are not special targets of crime.

- Monitor crime reporting in the mass media to promote a more moderate and less sensationalist picture of crime in the community.
- Use the local media to promote community-awareness programs for older people, to let them know what services are available in their local community.
- Promote a more positive picture of ageing in the general community by portraying older people as a resource, not a burden.
- Engender a feeling of order in the community by addressing such problems as litter, graffiti, etc. A perception of incivilities increases older people's fear of crime
- An increased police presence may lead to more positive judgements about the police, and greater satisfaction with the performance of the police role. Such attitudes may lower levels of fear.

All of the above points would be ideally achieved at the community level under the auspices of local government. Local councils could, in fact, act as the umbrella organisation in integrating the expertise of relevant service providers, educational institutions, the police, and older peoples' organisations. This would accommodate the individual needs of different groups such as women, ethnic and Aboriginal communities, and the frail and disabled aged.

Community building strategies

If social interaction builds interpersonal commitments which generate feelings of security, less cohesive communities may benefit from increased levels of interaction among residents. To the extent that neighbourhoods are able to organise, they can more effectively take action against such things as abandoned buildings or noisy neighbours which realistically lie outside the confines of criminal justice agencies. It is also important to encourage interaction between all members of the community, but particularly intergenerational communication.

Cohesive communities are better able to deal with local crime problems and to provide the mutual support and assistance which will alleviate concerns about personal safety.

Physical rebuilding strategies

Crime prevention through environmental design is explicitly directed toward the alleviation of feelings of insecurity which older people may feel. Some suggestions following this method are as follows.

- Examination of traffic areas to ensure optimum safety for older pedestrians and perhaps increase pedestrian areas.
- Reassess underpasses, subways, access to communal properties, multi-storey car parks, poorly lit areas and all other environmental trouble spots which provide sport for criminals and vandals.
- A sensitivity to public housing tenants. Special needs and anxieties of older people should be taken into account.
- Carefully consider possible sites for facilities for older people. These would include day care or residential care homes.
- A clean tidy, orderly area is important for reducing levels of fear in individual communities.

While implementing programs to reduce fear among Australia's elderly, it is important to keep in mind that they can very easily have the opposite effect. If for instance, it is decided to fight fear by putting more police on the streets as a show of force, this may only increase the salience of the crime problem in many people's minds. By the same token, elaborate safety measures or suggestions of hardware which is supposed to make people feel safer may only serve as constant reminders of their personal vulnerability. A similar consequence may ensue if an attempt is made through the mass media to inform the public about their real chances of criminal risk.

However, it must be understood that fear is not only a predictable human response, but it is also a necessary reaction to a dangerous situation. In fact, to inhibit people's fear could simultaneously decrease their caution and produce longer term

costs by increasing exposure to victimisation risk. It is, therefore, not the fear of crime as such which is problematic, but the negative effects of this fear. Fear only becomes a problem when it inhibits people's well-being and restricts their social life (Yin 1985, p.71). For a great many elderly people this is obviously the case.

Two elements in the implementation of fear reduction strategies are of crucial importance if they are to have a positive effect. The first is to understand the empirical relationship between crime and fear, thereby understanding fear of crime as a concrete phenomenon. The second is to encourage social cohesion and reduce the social isolation which characterises the lives of many older people. This emphasises the importance of a multi-agency approach.

Elder abuse

There have been many different types of abuse described under the general term 'abuse of older people' or 'elder abuse'. McCallum (1990), however, specifically defines it as a 'pattern of behaviour by a person that results in physical or psychological harm to an older person' (McCallum, Matiasz & Graycar 1990, p.11). When referring to elder abuse, researchers generally distinguish two broad types: abuse and neglect. Abuse is commonly used to label an act of commission. In other words, there is an active involvement or interaction on the part of the abuser. Neglect, by comparison, is used as an act of omission, namely those with only a passive involvement of the abuser (McCallum, Matiasz & Graycar 1990, p.8).

In order to ensure a consistent approach to the identification of data on abuse and maximum cooperation in detection of, and intervention in, abuse situations, it is important that a universal definition be adopted by government departments, the police and relevant agencies. This definition should be used as a guideline for identifying unacceptable behaviour by any person in a caring, kinship or friendship relationship with another person, and would fall into the four categories listed below.

Psychological abuse is the infliction of mental anguish. It includes actions which cause fear of violence, isolation or deprivation, feelings of shame, indignity and powerlessness. These actions include sexual harassment, name-calling and other forms of verbal assault, such as repeated threats and insults. It also includes actions that demean or degrade the older person, such as restriction of access to appropriate clothing, toileting or bathing. It also includes actions that cause emotional distress by depriving older persons of the normal

comforts of human existence, such as access to friendships and personal relationships, access to people who speak their own language, access to privacy and the right to be treated with respect. Psychological abuse often occurs in conjunction with other types of abuse.

Economic Abuse is the illegal or improper use of an older person's money, property or other assets by someone other than the owner. Examples of economic abuse include misappropriation of money, valuables or property, forced changes to a will or other legal documents and denial of the right of access to, or control over, personal finances.

Physical Abuse is the non-accidental use of physical force or coercion to inflict bodily harm. It includes assault, restricting freedom of movement, and sexual abuse.

Neglect consists of the deprivation by a carer of basic necessities, such as food, liquids, or medication, or services, especially services that are necessary for maintaining physical or mental health. Neglect may be active or passive. This distinction is needed to avoid some of the potential confusion, between abuse and neglect.

Universal guidelines would develop from a universal definition. By adopting a common approach, all agencies and individuals would be aware of the potential contribution of the others, not only in detection and intervention, but also in the prevention of elder abuse.

Detection

The effectiveness of any intervention strategy is ultimately dependent upon the ability to recognise cases of elder mistreatment. However, the detection of such cases is not easily accomplished. Victims of elder abuse and neglect are often incapable, either physically or psychologically, of stopping the abuse. Fear of further punishment or abandonment keeps others quiet, as does the shame and guilt associated with the fact that the abuser is often a close family member. Moreover, the person playing the caregiver role, who normally would be most likely to identify and seek assistance for physical or

emotional problems, has a strong vested interest in keeping such problems hidden.

Although many professionals may be well-positioned to detect any mistreatment of older people, they lack the specific training which would allow them to follow through with such cases (Anderson 1981; Kosberg 1988). What is needed are standardised procedures for the identification and referral of individual circumstances. This would entail cooperation and coordination between the following agencies.

Community care workers provide paramedical, nursing, housekeeping, food and personal care services to older people in their own homes. Because of the personal nature of the services provided, workers frequently have close contact with older people. They are therefore in a position to observe and to take action in situations of abuse (New South Wales Task Force on Abuse of Older People 1992, p.18).

Geriatric and rehabilitation services consist of teams of multi-disciplinary health professionals, including doctors, nurses, social workers and others. They provide a range of services to older people including assessment and treatment of illness and disability. They are usually hospital based and provide a service within the community (New South Wales Task Force on Abuse of Older People 1992, p.18).

Hospitals, in particular Accident and Emergency Sections, are well-placed to detect physical abuse. They employ a variety of health professionals and, in many cases, social workers (New South Wales Task Force on Abuse of Older People 1992, p.18).

Medical practitioners may become aware of abuse or be called upon to treat a patient who has been subject to abuse, as part of their general practice or following a referral (New South Wales Task Force on Abuse of Older People 1992, p.18).

Solicitors and chamber magistrates may be approached by older people or their friends or relatives for advice about legal issues related to forms of abuse and exploitation. Alternatively, when consulted about an unrelated matter it may become apparent that abuse has occurred (New South Wales Task Force on Abuse of Older People 1992, p.18).

Through such a variety of agencies, it becomes possible to detect the more subtle forms of abuse (emotional, psychological and economic) as well as the more obvious cases of physical abuse.

A particularly contentious aspect of the detection issue concerns the appropriateness of mandatory reporting. No state in Australia has laws which enforce mandatory reporting of elder abuse. Mandatory reporting of elder abuse could be counter-productive in that it could further disempower older people and perhaps result in their being placed in an aged-care institution.

Intervention

Once cases of elder abuse have been identified, the next step is intervention. Intervention strategies can involve a wide range of services including legislative and law enforcement agencies, education and counselling, health and financial services, emotional and physical support, family and institutional care, advocacy and guardianship (The Office of the Public Advocate, Victoria 1990, p.66). Two of these services, the police and counselling, are particularly relevant.

The police are often called on when abuse is detected in a domestic situation. In the role of law enforcement, they have powers to protect the victim in a dangerous situation and where appropriate, to refer them to other agencies. Where fraud occurs, the police also have an apprehension role. They may also raise awareness about abuse of older people and its unacceptability (New South Wales Task Force on Abuse of Older People 1992, p.18).

Counselling and its associated **support services** can take several different forms. For instance, it could be family counselling which would involve all family members and not just the victim or the perpetrator of the mistreatment. This approach proceeds from the assumption that all family members may be affected by, and contribute to, the environment within which mistreatment occurs (Edinberg 1986). Treatment strategies may also focus more specifically upon the abuser and the abused. In the former case, alcohol or

drug treatment programs may be accessed in order to help the abuser cope with problems of substance dependency. Intervention strategies on behalf of the victim may focus on the attempt to provide reassurance and to help the elderly cope with the consequences of mistreatment. He or she may need assistance in dealing with the self-blame that frequently accompanies mistreatment and in resolving any emotional difficulties which mistreatment by an intimate may create (Fattah & Sacco 1989, p.269). A particularly valuable strategy in this respect may be the use of self-help groups.

However, it is also important to take into account the intergenerational conflict that leads to some mistreatment, as well as the fact that the behaviour could be attributed to spouse abuse and may have been a symptom of the relationship for many years.

Also, if mistreatment occurs because caregivers are unaware of, or misinformed of the psychological, social and behavioural correlates of ageing, intensive counselling may correct these misperceptions and teach skills that facilitate coping responses (Steinmetz & Amsden 1983; Hooyman et al. 1982).

With respect to **financial abuse**, protective intervention can be achieved by transferring control of financial resources to a guardianship or trusteeship arrangement (New South Wales Task Force on Abuse of Older People 1992, p.19).

Any form of intervention, however, must allow older people to remain in charge of their lives, with the power to decide whether they want services, and without the threat of involuntary placement in an aged-care institution.

Prevention

Prevention rather than treatment is obviously the preferable option where elder abuse is concerned. As such, the emphasis changes from examining specific cases in which mistreatment is known or suspected to have occurred, to concern with older people and their caregivers.

It cannot be assumed that all family members are equally suited to provide care for an elderly person. By the same token, many people do not want to look after their elderly relatives.

Indeed, there is strong, empirical evidence to suggest that abuse and neglect may result because the caregiver is not economically, physically or psychologically prepared to assume to discharge the responsibilities that such a commitment implies (Fattah & Sacco 1989, p.272).

This would indicate that those individuals and families who are considering involvement in the caregiving role need to be assessed with respect to relevant capabilities before the responsibility for the care of an older person is assumed (Kosberg 1985). In addition, consideration could also be given to educating people in the techniques required for a caregiving role and also awareness training of the expected stresses and where to go if help is required.

Perhaps, there should also be a recognition that our society is not really equipped to cope with full time care-giving. There is a need to develop non-institutional community alternatives. According to Kosberg (1985, p.388), such alternatives might include:

> social settings which meet the needs of the elderly such as public housing for the elderly, foster homes, group homes, etc., as well as services that can assist the independence of an older person living in his or her own dwelling. Such community resources can include meals-on-wheels programs, home care and chore services, transportation programs, telephone reassurance and friendly visitor programs.

If such programs were more widely available, potential abusers would not feel so obligated to assume the role of carer when they really do not have the resources to do so.

Respite programs could also alleviate some of the emotional and physical burden associated with the long-term provision of care (Anetzberger 1987). For those who are willing to be carers, tax incentives, direct subsidies or cash payments similar to family allowance schemes (Fattah & Sacco 1989, p.274) may be of help.

However, it is recognised that, at the present time, caregivers are an extremely important resource in looking after older people. By the same token, abusive situations can develop and escalate in part because the caregiver and the elderly victim become increasingly isolated from the community. While this isolation may not directly cause mistreatment, it may be structurally conducive to its development.

If it is acknowledged that caring for elderly people can drain the physical, financial and psychological resources of the family, causing stress, isolation, confinement, fatigue and financial sacrifice, then community agencies should cooperate better so they can refer people to the appropriate source for assistance in caring for a relative. Caregivers should have some type of follow-up or ongoing information servicing and counselling. Planners of community services need to consider caregivers' special needs when developing programs. If they receive appropriate assistance and support some relatives may be less likely to become abusers and less likely to place the old in institutions.

Effective prevention of elder abuse, therefore, might be achieved through informal and formal community supports which reduce isolation. Again, volunteers, home visit, recreation programs or congregate meal programs might serve this end. Involvement in such activities would integrate family members into the wider community while allowing them to derive more direct and tangible benefits.

A higher degree of social integration serves to empower the older person and to increase awareness of options regarding his or her circumstances. More active involvement in the community may increase self-confidence and reduce feelings of dependency. The whole situation of the older person and the caregiver becomes more visible. However, to ensure optimum benefit from a community approach, multi-agency cooperation is critical to ensure maximum success.

Older people as the focus of policy attention

Strategies

To ensure maximum cooperation and optimum delivery of services in regard to crime prevention and fear reduction for Australia's older people, strategies need to be developed initially at Commonwealth Government level. State and territory governments then need to adopt proposals to complement the national strategy. Local government can further refine its policies for older residents, based upon the principles of the national and relevant state strategy. This technique would help to ensure that older people across Australia are accorded a uniform level of service opportunity, while at the same time allowing local governments to have a national and state focus which they can adapt to meet local community requirements. Strategies devised need to incorporate:

- A public campaign to promote a more realistic and positive picture of older people.
- Recognition of the specific needs of certain sections of the older community. For example, women, the rural elderly, the ethnic elderly, the Aboriginal aged, the disabled aged and the frail aged.
- The development of effective networks of communication with the main organisations representing older people of all backgrounds as well as service providers.
- Consultation with older people through their organisations on a regular basis to ensure their involvement in the decision-making process.
- The establishment and maintenance of consultative structures and procedures which would enable governments to pursue consistent and far-reaching

prevention philosophies, encourage cooperation between agencies both within and outside the public sector, and ensure that key initiatives are evaluated adequately.

- The formation of local crime prevention committees which would include the police, family and community services, local councils, local service providers, Neighbourhood Watch, voluntary organisations, older people's organisations and older people themselves.
- The need to liaise with the media to reduce sensationalist crime reporting and promote a more positive image of older people.
- The development of guidelines concerning the recognition of, and intervention in, elder abuse, including the indicators and risk factors associated with abuse.
- A respect for the autonomy, freedom of choice, and right of the informed adult to refuse intervention in the case of elder abuse.
- The increase in support for carers.
- The development of low-cost, independent housing adapted to meet the needs of older people.
- An awareness of the policies and procedures and appropriate training in their operation must be a priority for all service providers and volunteers working with older people.
- A clear definition of the role of the police.
- Community participation and consultation. This should play a key role in the development of crime prevention and fear reduction strategies for older people.
- A reduction in the social isolation of older people with a corresponding emphasis on social cohesion.
- The empowerment of older people, and their right to control their own situations.

Conclusion

As the ageing trend becomes more obvious in Australia, increasingly more attention will need to be paid to the special crime and safety issues arising from the ageing process. As a result, it will be necessary to take into account the unique

characteristics of elderly populations and their particular types of victimisation and social experiences. In other words, the special needs of the elderly will have to be acknowledged and addressed. To achieve this, however, it must also be recognised that lack of social cohesion with its corresponding level of social isolation is the major factor in the fear of crime among older people.

Preventing crime and reducing fear for Australia's elderly, therefore, is not just about law enforcement—it is a concern for the whole community. The community needs to be more effectively mobilised as a resource; it needs to be given adequate support in managing and implementing specific programs. As a result the skills and resources of a wide range of organisations and people need to be involved. These would include all levels of government, the police, private sector bodies, the media and older people's organisations, as well as older people themselves.

From this approach, emerges a recognition that not all crime problems can be separated from other social problems which confront older people. It also recognises the heterogeneity of the ageing population. Different groups, such as older women, the rural elderly, the ethnic elderly, the Aboriginal aged, the disabled aged and the frail aged should have a major influence on crime prevention policies. Both situational crime prevention strategies and social crime prevention strategies need to be located within an alliance of organisations and agencies directed at strengthening the local capacity to prevent crime and alleviate its consequences. This emphasises the importance of local government involvement and the idea of multi-agency cooperation.

To obtain maximum efficiency from multi-agency cooperation, it is necessary to examine similar programs discussed in this book such as those operating in France, the United Kingdom, The Netherlands, the United States and Canada. Obviously, none of these programs could be adopted per se, but different aspects could be modified at regional levels to suit specific local conditions in Australia.

It is also likely that elder abuse will begin to emerge more clearly as a significant issue requiring additional allocation of resources and expertise. Once again a high degree of social integration would serve to empower the older people concerned, and to increase awareness of options regarding his or her circumstances. More active involvement in the community would increase self-confidence and reduce feelings of dependency. This would enable the situation of older people and their caregivers to become more visible. However, caregivers need support too. Effective prevention of elder abuse might, therefore, be achieved through informal and formal community support networks. Such networks would reduce isolation.

However, the most important aspect of crime prevention and fear reduction for Australia's elderly are the older people themselves. Older people need to be encouraged to increase their own opportunities to remain independent and continue contributing to society. Old age is beset with negative stereotypes which tend to set older people apart and, in a very real sense, create their 'difference'. The result of this can be reduced opportunities for social involvement and independence, especially if the older people themselves come to believe the stereotypes.

Through multi-agency cooperation at the local level, particularly in respect to community participation, the elderly are more likely to experience independence, self-esteem and social integration. This way they are less likely to become victims of, or be unduly fearful about, crime in Australian society.

Appendix 1

Statistics relating to crime victimisation

Analyses of patterns of the more conventional crimes committed in Australia and overseas show low levels of victimisation of the elderly. The data in Figures A1 to A4 are consistent with this. There are, however, some interesting variations.

Figure A1, for instance, illustrates that in Australia in 1991, the incidence of crimes generally committed against the person was considerably lower for the 60 years plus age group. In addition, females aged 60 years and over were not as likely as males to be victims of robbery, but they were many times more likely than their male counterparts to be threatened with violence. Figure A2, which depicts Western Australian findings of reported offences against the person, also indicates that older people are much less likely to be the victims of crime. Figure A3 suggests that women over 65 years of age in South Australia may be more likely to be victims of robbery and assault than women in the 55 years to 64 years age group, but still less likely than the rest of the population. On the other hand, men over 65 years of age in South Australia are much less likely than other age groups to be victims of robbery and assault. Figure A3 is consistent with Figure A4 in its results for women, but indicates that men over the age of 65 years in New South Wales are just as likely as women in the same age group to be victims of robbery and assault, but again, this is lower than for younger age groups.

Figure A1 *Crimes against the person in 1991: estimated incidents per 1,000 persons, Australia*
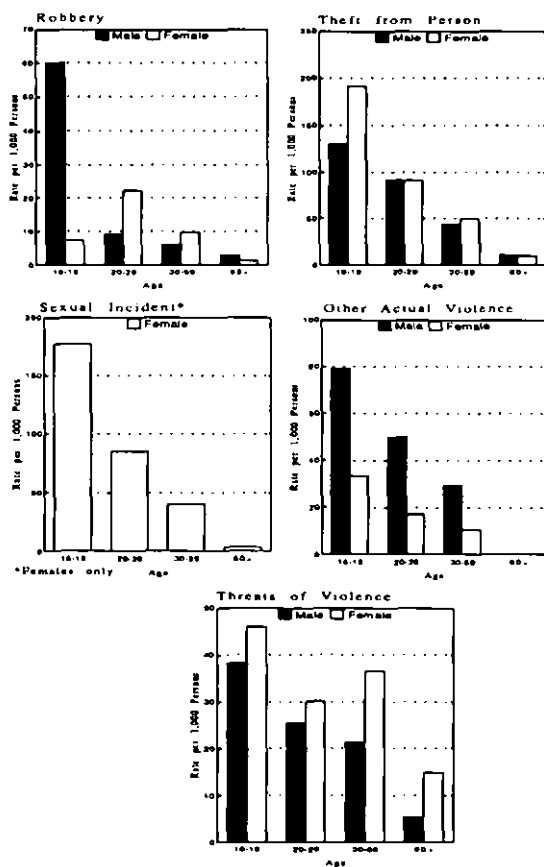
Source: Walker, J. (forthcoming) *Crime in Australia, 1992*, Australian Institute of Criminology, Canberra.

Figure A2 *Reported offences against the person by gender and age of victim, Western Australia 1990*
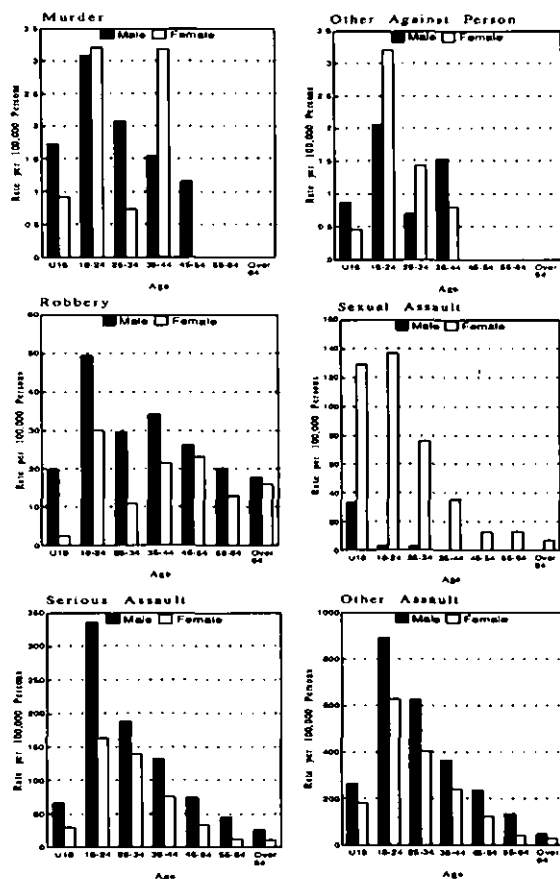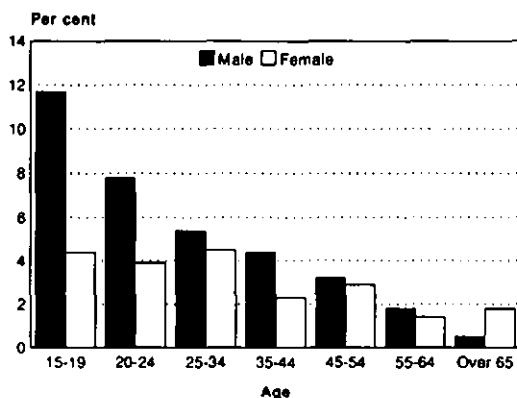

Rate: Victims of reported offences only - per 100,000 persons by gender and age

Data source: Broadhurst, R.G., Ferrante, A.M., Susilo, N.P. 1990, *Crime and Justice Statistics for Western Australia*, The University of Western Australia.

Figure A3 *Victims of Crime * in the last twelve months by gender and age, South Australia, April 1991*

Per cent

■Male □Female

*Percentage of population in South Australia aged 15 and over who were victims of robbery and assault by gender and age

Data source: *Crime and Safety, South Australia,* ABS Cat. No. 4509.4

Figure A4 *Victims of Crime * in the last twelve months by gender and age, New South Wales, April 1991*

Per cent

■Male □Female
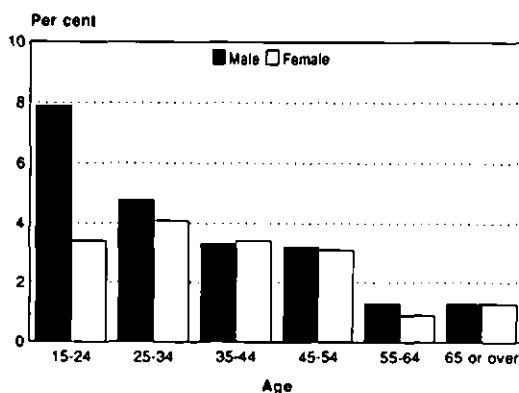
*Percentage of population in New South Wales aged 15 and over who were victims of robbery and assault by gender and age

Data source: *Crime and Safety, New South Wales,* ABS Cat. No. 4509.1

Appendix 2

Some useful addresses

ACT

Commonwealth Office for the
  Aged
Dept of Health, Housing and
  Community Services
GPO Box 9848
CANBERRA ACT 2601
Telephone: (06) 289 5246

ACT Consumer Forum for the
  Aged
GPO Box 9889
CANBERRA ACT 2601
Telephone: (06) 295 8391

ADACUS
6/14 Lonsdale Street
BRADDON ACT 2601
Telephone: (06) 249 8022

Canberra Pensioners' Social and
  Recreational Club Inc
67c Currong Flats
BRADDON ACT 2601
Telephone: (06) 247 3797

Council on the Ageing (ACT)
Hughes Community Centre
Wisdom Street
HUGHES ACT 2605
Telephone: (06) 281 2985

NEW SOUTH WALES

The Office on Ageing
The Ministry of Health and
  Community Services
Level 5, 73 Miller Street
NORTH SYDNEY NSW 2060
Telephone: (02) 391 9741

Central Coast Council on the
  Ageing
217 Albany Street North
GOSFORD NSW 2250
Telephone: (043) 244 749

Coffs Harbour Council on the
  Ageing
PO Box 285
COFFS HARBOUR NSW 2450
Telephone: (066) 536052

Council on the Ageing (NSW)
34 Argyle Place
Millers Point
SYDNEY NSW 2000
Telephone: (02) 247 3388

Combined Pensioners &
  Superannuants Association of
  NSW Inc.
Suite 6, Level 5, 405 Sussex
  Street
HAYMARKET NSW 2000
Telephone: (02) 281 1811

Broken Hill Old Age & Invalid
   Pensioners' Association
38 Wright Street
BROKEN HILL NSW 2880
Telephone: (080) 87 2599

Older Women's Network
87 Lower Fort Street
Millers Point NSW 2000
Telephone: (02) 247 7046

NSW Ret'd Mineworkers
   Association
18 Northcote Street
COLEDALE NSW 2515
Telephone: (042) 67 2047

PSA Retired Associate Members'
   Branch
"Omaru", Moores Way
Glenmore, CAMDEN NSW 2570
Telephone: (046) 545 309

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Office of the Commissioner for
   the Ageing
PO Box 70
Rundle Mall
ADELAIDE SA 5000
Telephone: (08) 226 7050

South Australia Council on the
   Ageing
45 Flinders Street
ADELAIDE SA 5000
Telephone: (08) 232 0422

Retired Union Members
   Association SA Inc.
The Secretary
Trades Hall
11 South Terrace
ADELAIDE SA 5000
Telephone: (08) 331 8422

VICTORIA

Older Persons Planning Office
6th Floor
500 Bourke Street
MELBOURNE VIC 3000
Telephone: (03) 602 9578

Co-ordinator, Confident Living
   Program
Ministry for Police and
   Emergency Services
222 Exhibition Street
MELBOURNE VIC 3000
Telephone: (03) 651 6367

Australian Council on the Ageing
   (National Office)
3rd Floor, VACC House
464 St Kilda Road
MELBOURNE VIC 3004
Telephone: (03) 820 2655

Victorian Council on the Ageing
126 Wellington Parade
EAST MELBOURNE VIC 3002
Telephone: (03) 416 0822

Combined Pensioners' &
   Superannuants' Association
   of Victoria
Box 21, Trades Hall
CARLTON SOUTH VIC 3053
Telephone: (03) 662 3971

Older Persons' Action Centre
2nd Floor, Ross House
247-251 Flinders Lane
MELBOURNE VIC 3000
Telephone: (03) 650 4709

QUEENSLAND

Office of Ageing
Dept of Family Services &
    Aboriginal and Islander
    Affairs
1st Floor
Cnr George & Elizabeth Streets
BRISBANE QLD 4001
Telephone: (07) 224 8933

Australian Pensioners' &
    Superannuants League
    Queensland Inc.
PO Box 141
WEST END QLD 4101
Telephone: (07) 844 5878

Queensland Office on the Ageing
Sir Lesie Wilson Youth Centre
Tenth Avenue
WINDSOR QLD 4030
Telephone: (07) 857 6877

Qld Council of Carers
PO Box 291
COORPAROO QLD 4151
Telephone: (07) 843 1401

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Office of Seniors' Interest
32 St Georges Terrace
PERTH WA 6000
Telephone: (09) 222 0111

Council on the Ageing (Western
    Australia)
11 Freedman Road
MT LAWLEY WA 6050
Telephone: (09) 272 2133

Pensioners' Action Group – WA
    Inc.
79 Stirling Street
PERTH WA 6000
Telephone: (09) 220 0617

TASMANIA

Council on the Ageing
    (Tasmania)
The GateWay
2, St Johns Avenue
NEWTOWN TAS 7008
Telephone: (002) 281897)

Tasmanian Pensioners' Union
GPO Box 1297N
HOBART TAS 7016
Telephone: (002) 43 8741

Tasmanian Association of State
    Superannuants
"Chandos"
WOODBRIDGE TAS 7101
Telephone: (002) 67 4658

NORTHERN TERRITORY

Council on the Ageing (Northern
    Territory)
18 Bauhinia Street
KNIGHTCLIFF NT 0810
Telephone: (089) 48 1511

Darwin Pensioners & Senior
    Citizens Association Inc
GPO Box 852
DARWIN NT 0801
Telephone: (089) 81 9691

Tennant Creek Senior Citizens &
    Pensioners Association Inc
PO Box 408
TENNANT CREEK NT 0861
Telephone: (089) 622471

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Crime prevention series

Marianne Pinkerton James

Whilst emphasising the low victimisation rates for the elderly age group, *Crime Prevention for Older Australians* provides many useful strategies which aim to reduce fear of crime by older people, so that they can continue to lead useful and fulfilling lives. This booklet focuses on the need to look at specific problems individually, and canvasses the potential for increasing the perception of confidence felt by older people, both in themselves and in the wider community. Emphasis is placed on the importance of the interactive roles of older peoples' organisations, the community, the police and government at all levels, as well as the participation of older people themselves in any crime prevention programs.