United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

The United Nations held its 11th Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in Bangkok, Thailand, from 18–25 April. The congress, which occurs every five years, focused this year on the following themes:

- effective measures to combat transnational organised crime;
- international cooperation against terrorism and the links between terrorism and other criminal activities;
- corruption;
- economic and financial crimes; and
- making standards work.

The congress also held six workshops:

1. enhancing international law enforcement cooperation, including extradition measures;
2. enhancing criminal justice reform, including restorative justice;
3. strategies and best practices for crime prevention, particularly in relation to urban crime and youth at risk;
4. measures to combat terrorism;
5. measures to combat economic crime, including money laundering; and
6. measures to combat computer-related crime.

Both the Attorney-General, the Hon. Philip Ruddock MP, and the Minister for Justice and Customs, Senator the Hon. Chris Ellison, delivered statements at the high-level segment of the congress. The Attorney-General spoke on terrorism, focusing upon counter-terrorism, international cooperation and human rights. Senator Ellison spoke on illicit drugs, money laundering, proceeds of crime, corruption, terrorism, people trafficking and international law enforcement cooperation. Senator Ellison also presented a keynote address to workshop 3.

Dr Toni Makkai, Director of the AIC, Rob McCusker, one of the AIC’s research analysts, and Dr Andreas Schloenhardt, an associate expert of the AIC, attended the congress. Dr Makkai was a member of the official Australian Government delegation as well as the scientific rapporteur for workshop 5 (measures to combat economic crime, including money laundering). Dr Makkai was also a panellist at workshop 2 (enhancing criminal justice reform, including restorative justice). Rob McCusker was a panellist on workshop 1 (enhancing international law enforcement cooperation, including extradition measures) and presented a paper on law enforcement cooperation in Australia and the Asia-Pacific region. Dr Schloenhardt was a panellist in the same workshop and presented a paper on extradition legislation and practice within Australia and the Asia-Pacific region. Rob McCusker was also able to visit the Anti-money laundering office in Bangkok for a detailed presentation on legislation, operational activities and prosecutions.

The UN congress was attended by approximately 3,700 delegates. The official documentation may be found at: http://www.un.org/events/11thcongress/photos.html

Research services

The objective of Research services is to conduct research on the extent, nature and prevention of crime in Australia in order to provide timely, policy-relevant advice to the Australian Government and other clients. The four research program areas are Crime monitoring, Crime reduction and review, Global, economic and electronic crime, and Justice and crime analysis. New research projects for 2005 include:

- stage two of the NSW crime prevention program management model;
- use of video to record the evidence of adult sexual assault victims;
- analysis of ACT family violence intervention program data;
- serious taxation fraud;
- a NSW local crime prevention planning evaluation; and
- a WA responsible parenting initiative evaluation framework.

In recent months, Research services staff have been focused on preparing major reports on key activities: Drug use monitoring in Australia (DUMA) and the Australian component of the International crime victimisation survey (ICVS).

Drug use monitoring in Australia

The 2004 annual report of DUMA was released in April 2005, number 65 in the AIC’s Research and public policy series. Operating since 1999, and currently at seven sites across Australia, DUMA presents both self-report and urinalysis data from participating detainees for the calendar year. It provides an overview of the characteristics of the detainees at each site, including self-reported drug use, prior criminal behaviour and treatment history. DUMA data play an important role by informing national and local policies and programs aimed at reducing drug supply, demand and harm.

Key findings from the 2004 DUMA report include:

- a stabilisation in the number of detainees testing positive to methamphetamine;
- a slight increase in the proportion of detainees testing positive to heroin in the Sydney sites but a decline or similar levels in other sites;
- almost one-third of detainees scored very high on a psychological distress scale; and
- of those detainees who used an illicit drug or alcohol in the past 12 months, over half said they were dependent on alcohol and other drugs.

International crime victimisation survey

The ICVS is an international project involving approximately 60 countries and is coordinated through the UN Office on drugs and crime. The AIC managed the Australian component of the 2004 ICVS, which included telephone interviews with approximately 7,000 people aged 16 or over. The ICVS is a general, but wide-ranging survey focusing on peoples’ experiences with personal and household crimes, the impact of these crimes and whether they were reported to the police. The survey also measures public perceptions about personal safety. Crime victimisation surveys are an important complement to administrative data available through police and other criminal justice agencies. The results are useful to policy-makers and practitioners in law enforcement and crime prevention, as well as the general community.

The key findings of the report include:
• since 2000, a decline in the proportion of people experiencing crime; and
• since 2000, a decline in fear of crime.


New positions

A warm welcome is extended to the institute’s new staff members including Jessica Anderson, Katie Gray and Michelle Murray in the research team, and Max Kwiatkowski in Information services.

Information services

Information services has recently added new sections to the AIC web site on Indigenous justice, rural crime, cybercrime and transnational crime. The existing sections on drugs, local government crime prevention, young people and crime, older people and crime, and sport and crime have been revised substantially. These gateways to information about crime and criminal justice can be found at http://www.aic.gov.au/topics.

Information services now produces seven subject alerts for limited distribution covering crime prevention, cybercrime, drugs, evaluation, Indigenous justice, juvenile justice and people trafficking/smuggling. The alerts list new books, reports, journal articles, conference papers and web sites. There are between one and three alerts per month issued for each topic. If you would like to receive a copy of the alerts, or would like to receive them, please contact jvbarry@aic.gov.au.

Interns

Over the summer of 2004–05, the AIC appointed six work experience interns. They undertook a range of tasks relating to armed robbery recidivism, water theft, future trends in local crime, Indigenous–police relations and bushfire arson, as well as work updating the drugs section of the AIC web site. The interns were:
• Sean Conaghty, an undergraduate in his final year of a Bachelor of Social Science (Justice) at the University of South Australia and a member of the WA police force;
• Kristi Cooper, a postgraduate student completing a Bachelor of Laws at the University of Sydney;
• David Hurdle, an undergraduate in his final year of a Bachelor of Arts in Criminology and Criminal Justice at Griffith University, and a member of the WA police service;
• Kathryn Neal, an undergraduate in her final year of a Bachelor of Social Science (Criminology) at the University of New South Wales;
• Jo Nikopoulos, an undergraduate in her final year of a Bachelor of Laws at Latrobe University, with a Masters of Applied Social Research at Monash University; and
• Lisa Rosevear, a postgraduate student completing a Doctor of Philosophy (Sociology) at the University of Tasmania.

Conferences

Safety, crime and justice: from data to policy

ABS House, Canberra, 6–7 June 2005

This conference, which is being held in conjunction with the Australian Bureau of Statistics, follows on from the Evaluation in crime and justice: trends and methods conference held in March 2003.

The keynote speaker is Mr Laurie Glanfield AM, Director-General of the NSW Attorney-General’s Department, who is speaking on research, evaluation and policy in criminology. Other plenary speakers include Dr Dianne Heriot, Assistant Secretary in the Community Safety and Justice Branch of the Australian Government Attorney-General’s Department, Mr Steve Larkin, a principal with the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, and Dr Holly Johnson, a visiting fellow at the AIC.

Concurrent sessions include the following themes: improving the evidence base, program evaluation, implications for policy of new technologies research design and data quality, data limitations and jurisdictional data comparisons. Panel discussions will include: tracking offending through the criminal justice system, complexities, policies and issues, assessing data for research and

Departure of Public affairs manager

It is with regret that we announce the departure of Leanne Huddy, manager of Public affairs. Leanne has been with the AIC for almost 12 years. Initially, Leanne worked as the acquisitions officer in the JV Barry library, and then became the reference and acquisitions librarian, a key position for the client service function of the institute.

Six years ago, Leanne took over the role of executive officer, Research. This position entailed providing executive support for the Director as well as the AIC’s research program. Leanne also undertook the demanding role of supervising the publications output of the Institute. Four years ago, Leanne’s position was expanded to manager of the Research and dissemination team, more recently known as manager of Public affairs.

Leanne has been responsible for Ministerial office liaison and responding to media inquiries. Both of these roles can be particularly demanding, but Leanne’s calm manner has always prevailed and ensured that any crises which may have developed were dealt with admirably.

Thanks are extended to Leanne for the enormous contribution she has made to the AIC. She will be greatly missed. We wish Leanne well in her new position at the Australian Sports Commission.

Leanne Huddy, former manager, Public affairs
Canberra, 15–16 August 2005

National Museum of Australia,
improving practical crime prevention policy
and effectiveness in informing and
programs in Australia today. The different
delivery of crime prevention policies and
approaches in the development and
role of evidence-based policy (EBP)
conference is on critically examining the
this conference. The focus of the
Attorney-General's Department, is hosting
The AIC, in conjunction with the NSW
21–22 November 2005

Delivering crime prevention: making
the evidence work
Carlton Crest Hotel, Sydney,
21–22 November 2005

The AIC, in conjunction with the NSW
Attorney-General's Department, is hosting
this conference. The focus of the
conference is on critically examining the
role of evidence-based policy (EBP)
approaches in the development and
delivery of crime prevention policies and
programs in Australia today. The different
models for EBP programs will be
assessed in terms of their appropriateness
and effectiveness in informing and
improving practical crime prevention policy
and on-ground working. Barriers to the
successful implementation of evidence-
based initiatives will be reviewed, and
possible solutions explored. Conference
themes will include:
• how to turn research into practice;
• deciding how and when to use the
different approaches to EBP in crime
prevention practice;
• improving linkages between research,
policy and practice;
• evaluation as a tool for organisational
individual learning and change; and
• methods for disseminating and
promoting the adoption of innovative
practice.

The closing date for abstracts to present
in concurrent session at the conference is
31 July 2005. More information can be
found at http://www.aic.gov.au/
conferences/2005-cp/.

Occasional seminars

The AIC invites experts to present public
seminars on a range of topics. Recent
seminars have included:
• The health of young people in custody
in NSW, presented by Mark Allerton,
2 March 2005;
• A theory of offending, presented by
John MacLeod, 22 March 2005; and
• Using data mining techniques to
detect criminal networks, presented by
John Zeleznikow, 6 April 2005.

Abstracts of these seminars are available
oncusalional/.

Roundtables

As part of its exploration of contemporary
crimes that are of significance to public
policy debate, the AIC holds roundtable
discussions with experts and
stakeholders. The aim is to develop the
knowledge base relating to these issues.
Recent roundtables have focused on the
following topics.

Online child exploitation: a forum
for Australian Government agencies
(no. 89) 9 December 2004

This roundtable sought to capture
information and views from 14 Australian
Government departments and agencies
about their current understanding of the
problem of online child exploitation,
initiatives that are currently in place, and
suggestions for finding a way forward.
Those attending the roundtable were
asked to consider:
• the best long-term and effective
strategies to deal with online child
abuse;
• the scope to improve coordination in
Australian Government agencies’
responses;
• pathways/obstacles to the regulation
of online child pornography; and
• potential areas for legislative and
policy reform.

A report was prepared for the participating
agencies and contains a number of
recommendations for further action.

Bushfire arson (no. 94) 31 March to
1 April 2005

Two roundtable meetings hosted by the
AIC brought together bushfire researchers
and practitioners from around Australia,
highlighting the AIC’s important role in
bushfire arson research. This research,
being conducted in partnership with the
ACT Department of Justice and
Community Safety (JaCS) and through
the Bushfire Cooperative Research
Centre (Bushfire CRC), aims to reduce
the impact of deliberately lit bushfires in
Australia. The bushfire arson project will
greatly increase our understanding of the
motives and activities of those who
deliberately light bushfires and what can
be done to reduce the impact of their
potentially devastating offences.

During December 2004, Dr Toni Makkai
and research analyst Matthew Willis,
together with bushfire arson project
partner Derek Jory of JaCS, facilitated a
roundtable discussion for local
stakeholders (no. 91). Representatives
from the ACT Emergency Services
Commission, the Rural Fire Service,
Department of Urban Services and the
Office for Youth, Children and Family
Support participated and generated
valuable discussion which will help shape
directions and priorities in future bushfire
arson research.

AIC interns for 2004–05 (l–r): Sean Conaghty, Lisa Rosevear, Kristi Cooper, Kathryn Neal, David Hurtle and Jo Nikopoulos
Other recent roundtables

Other roundtables that have been held by the AIC recently have focused on:

- the International crime victim survey (no. 90) 13 December 2004;
- the impact on crime and violence of Indigenous service delivery: a forum for Australian Government agencies (no. 92) 22 February 2005; and

International visitors to the AIC

The AIC, as the national focus for the study of crime and criminal justice in Australia, continues to welcome visitors from around the world with whom we can share our knowledge and strengthen our links. Recent visitors have included:

- members of the Youth Justice Project Team, Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, Ireland, 2 March 2005;
- members of the Parliamentary Select Committee, House of Representatives, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 4 March 2005; and
- a delegation from the Japanese Ministry of Justice, 19 March 2005.

2005 Board of management

The AIC’s Board of Management met in Canberra on 7 April 2005. At the meeting, the composition of the Board for 2005 was confirmed. Current Board members are:

- Professor Richard Fox, Deputy Dean, Faculty of Law, Monash University (Chair);
- Dr Toni Makkai, Director, AIC;
- Ms Joanne Blackburn, First Assistant Secretary, Criminal Justice Division, Attorney-General’s Department;
- Mr Nigel Hadgkiss APM, Director, Building Industry Taskforce, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations;
- Mr Tim Keady, Chief Executive Officer, Department of Justice and Community Safety, ACT;
- Mr Norman Reaburn, Director, Legal Aid Commission of Tasmania;
- Ms Penny Armatage, Secretary, Department of Justice, Victoria; and
- Mr Terry Evans, Deputy Chief Executive, Attorney-General’s Department and Department of Justice, South Australia.

Criminology Research Council

In April the Criminology Research Council held its first meeting for 2005 at the AIC’s offices in Canberra. Mr Laurie Glanfield AM, Director-General of the Attorney-General’s Department, was re-elected as Chair of the Council.

At the first meeting of each year, the Council considers new areas of policy-relevant research that it can support through consultancies. Three recently approved consultancies include a review of the use of multiple social services among chronically offending youth; an attempt to optimise juror satisfaction by identifying the most effective procedures for managing juries in criminal trials; and an examination of the ways Australian criminal justice system personnel identify and respond to mental disorders among persons suspected of and convicted of crimes.

Two other consultancies are nearing completion: one on the use of specialty courts throughout Australia, and another that assesses the impact of research funded by the Council. Further details on the CRC are available at the CRC web site: http://www.aic.gov.au/crc/.

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Publications

Publications can be purchased from the AIC with credit card authorisation or by cheque (use enclosed order form). To order any book titles in North America, contact:

Criminal Justice Press, PO Box 249, Monsey NY 10952, USA Tel: +1 914 354 9139 Fax: +1 914 354 9139
Email: cjpress109@aol.com Web site: http://www.criminaljusticepress.com/

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