

South Australia Police
Suicide Prevention Action Plan 2025-2028

Draft for Public Consultation
28 April 2025



SOUTH AUSTRALIA POLICE
SAFER COMMUNITIES



Government of
South Australia

CONTENT WARNING AND SUPPORT

This document contains information and content relating to suicide. We recognise that this topic can be distressing, confronting or emotionally-laden for some readers. If you or someone you know needs support, please consider reaching out to the support services listed below.
Your wellbeing is important and help is available.

Crisis Support Services

Mental Health Triage

13 14 65

24-hour assistance in a mental health emergency.

Lifeline

13 11 14 or text 0477 131 114

24-hour crisis response service.

Available via telephone, online and text chat.

Beyond Blue

1300 224 363

24-hour counselling service.

Available via telephone, online or email.

Suicide Call Back Service

1300 659 467

24-hour counselling service for suicide prevention and mental health. Available via telephone, online and by video call.

StandBy – Support After Suicide: AnglicareSA

1300 727 247

24-hour support for anyone bereaved or impacted by suicide.

13YARN

13 92 76

24-hour support from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Crisis Supporters.

First Responder Support Services

Military and Emergency Services Health Australia

(08) 7002 0880

Programs and one-to-one support for current and former military and emergency services personnel.

Black Dog Institute

(02) 8627 3314

National support service for emergency service personnel and volunteers, active and retired.

Fortem

1300 339 594

National support service for emergency service personnel and their families.

Frontline Mental Health

0493 720 538

Adelaide-based first responder service.

Additional Support Services

Grieflink

Online information for people who are dealing with the grief caused by the death of someone close to them and for those who are supporting them.

Thirrili National Indigenous Postvention Service

1800 805 801

24-hour support for families impacted by suicide or other fatal traumatic incidents.

QLife

1800 184 527

Online chat or phone counselling for LGBTIQ+ community. 3pm-midnight, 7 days a week.

Regional Access

1300 032 186

24-hour telephone and online counselling for people 15 years or older living or working in regional South Australia.

MensLine Australia

1300 789 978

24-hour online or phone advice and support for men with family and relationship concerns.

Kids Helpline

1800 551 800

24-hour online or phone counselling for youth (5-25 years).

FOREWORD

In accordance with our legislative obligations under the *Suicide Prevention Act 2021*, specifically sections 22 and 25, South Australia Police (SAPOL) has developed our first Suicide Prevention Action Plan. This plan is a mandatory requirement for every prescribed state authority within South Australia, including SAPOL.

SAPOL's Suicide Prevention Action Plan aligns with our agency's commitment to safeguarding the wellbeing of our staff and the community we serve and outlines the strategies and measures that SAPOL will implement to mitigate suicide risks among our personnel and the broader community. It addresses the unique challenges faced by our staff and recognises the importance of providing support and resources to those in need.

We acknowledge the significant efforts already being undertaken in the realm of suicide prevention within SAPOL. This plan builds upon these existing initiatives, casting a focused suicide prevention lens over our ongoing work. By doing so, we aim to enhance our current practices and ensure a comprehensive approach to suicide prevention.

At SAPOL, we are dedicated to creating safer communities and fostering an environment where our people are our greatest strength. This plan reflects our unwavering commitment to the mental health and wellbeing of our staff and the community, reinforcing our resolve to prevent suicide and support those affected by it.

STATEMENT FROM COMMISSIONER STEVENS

Suicide is a complex phenomenon with far-reaching impacts that affects individuals, families and entire communities. Its risk factors are diverse and multifaceted, spanning physical, psychological and social dimensions and often intersecting in ways unique to each person's circumstances.

At SAPOL, our officers frequently encounter individuals in crisis—those contemplating suicide, affected by attempts, or grieving a loss. This places us in a vital position to provide compassionate, informed support during some of life's most challenging moments.

We also recognise that the unique nature of the work undertaken by our own members can take a significant toll on their wellbeing and place them at an increased risk of mental ill-health and suicidality. The work undertaken by our members is often traumatic in nature, with research showing that law enforcement personnel are at a greater risk than the general population of experiencing suicidal ideation and death by suicide.

We are committed to safeguarding the health and wellbeing of our employees, recognising the important and challenging work they undertake every day. Our commitment is twofold: to enhance the wellbeing and resilience of our employees and to ensure they are equipped to make a meaningful difference in the lives of those we serve. This Suicide Prevention Action Plan reflects our dedication to fostering a culture of care, collaboration and action—within SAPOL and across the wider community.

Through training, partnerships and proactive support, we aim to reduce the risk of suicide, provide better outcomes for vulnerable individuals and prioritise the mental health of our workforce. By addressing these critical issues, we aim to create a safer and more supportive environment for everyone involved.



Grant Stevens APM LEM
Commissioner of Police
South Australia Police

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Acknowledgement of Lived Experience

SAPOL acknowledges the invaluable lived experience of those impacted by suicide, including individuals who have experienced suicidal ideation, their families, friends, carers and those who have lost loved ones to suicide. Each journey is deeply personal and we honour the courage, strength and resilience shown by those who share their stories to inspire hope and change.

We also acknowledge the contributions of those with lived experience in shaping suicide prevention strategies. Their insights are instrumental in fostering understanding and driving meaningful actions to improve outcomes for all.

We recognise the experiences of current and former members of South Australia Police who have faced suicidality or have been touched by the loss of colleagues or loved ones. We stand alongside their families, friends and communities, honouring their pain, resilience and love.

Through these acknowledgments, we commit to listening, learning and working together to create safer and more supportive communities for everyone.



Acknowledgement for First Nations Peoples

South Australia Police (SAPOL) acknowledges and respects Aboriginal peoples as the state's First People and recognises them as the Traditional Owners and occupiers of South Australian lands and waters. We acknowledge the deep feelings of attachment and relationship of Aboriginal people to Country. The term First Nations peoples is respectfully used in this document to include Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures.

We also acknowledge the devastating and disproportionate impact of suicide on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Nationally, between 2014 and 2023, suicide was the fifth leading cause of death for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and the second leading cause of death for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth, the impact is even more profound, with suicide being the leading cause of death for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children under the age of 17 years of age, accounting for almost a quarter of all deaths in this age group.

SAPOL respects and supports the autonomy of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in designing and implementing culturally informed strategies for life promotion and suicide prevention within their communities. Culture, identity, belonging, community and spirituality are recognised as vital protective factors that promote resilience, healing and wellbeing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We remain committed to listening, learning and working in partnership with First Nation communities to support their self-determined approaches to wellbeing and to ensure that life promotion efforts are grounded in respect, understanding and cultural safety.



Artwork by

Sergeant Danielle James, Nauo woman

ABOUT SAPOL

SAPOL is dedicated to keeping South Australians safe and supported—now and into the future.

Our work spans every part of South Australia, from metropolitan areas to regional and remote communities. We provide policing services across more than 100 locations, 24 hours a day, with a focus on reducing crime, maintaining public safety and responding to emergencies.

SAPOL's responsibilities are broad and complex. We uphold the law, preserve the peace, prevent crime, assist the public in emergencies, coordinate responses to critical incidents, regulate road use and prevent vehicle collisions. We also work closely with government agencies, emergency services and community organisations to deliver effective policing and public safety outcomes.

Our workforce of over 6,000 people reflects the diversity of the community we serve. Our people work in police stations, call centres, operational response teams, forensic services, emergency coordination, investigative units, support functions and community engagement roles. They operate in environments that are dynamic, high-pressure and, at times, deeply distressing.

The nature of policing means our people often:

- Respond to incidents involving suicide or mental health crises.
- Engage with individuals experiencing extreme distress.
- Provide support to families, witnesses and communities affected by suicide.
- Work in roles that expose them to traumatic events, distressing imagery, or emotionally demanding situations.
- Operate in high-risk environments where personal resilience is critical.

SAPOL recognises the impact policing has on the mental health of our people and is committed to supporting the psychological wellbeing of our workforce. SAPOL's Suicide Prevention Action Plan seeks to reinforce and enhance the organisation's commitment to foster a workplace culture that prioritises mental health awareness, early intervention and access to support services for our people.

This Suicide Prevention Action Plan reflects SAPOL's commitment to reducing suicide risk across South Australia—both in the community and within our organisation. It aligns with our Safer Communities vision and reinforces our dedication to protecting and supporting those who serve, as well as those we serve.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The SAPOL Suicide Prevention Action Plan is aligned with SAPOL's Strategy 2030: Safer Communities to ensure the safety, wellbeing and resilience of our community and workforce. The goal is to continue to build on the strong foundations that have seen us remain contemporary and highly regarded. Our commitment to this strategy is guided by five principles that provide the foundation for organisational growth and quality service delivery:

- Our People, Our Strength.
- Prevention First.
- Community Centred, Socially Minded.
- Collaborative Partnerships.
- Technology Enabled Policing.

Under SAPOL 2030, our vision is to contribute to the safety of South Australians by creating stronger community partnerships, leveraging technology and fostering a culture of care and adaptability. Suicide prevention is intrinsic to this vision, as it directly impacts public safety and community trust. By providing sensitive, informed support to individuals in crisis, we reinforce our role as a trusted and compassionate partner in the community.

This Suicide Prevention Action Plan underscores the importance of community engagement, operational excellence and workforce wellbeing. Suicide prevention efforts are woven into these priorities, ensuring that SAPOL not only responds effectively to individuals in crisis but also addresses the risks faced by our own members. Enhancing officer mental health and resilience is fundamental to fulfilling our commitments under this plan, enabling our people to serve with empathy and professionalism.

SAPOL's vision for suicide prevention and mental wellbeing includes the goal of reducing the risk of suicide for all members of society and all SAPOL employees. In meeting our obligations under the *Suicide Prevention Act 2021* and the South Australian Suicide Prevention Plan 2023-2026, our plan prioritises actions in line with the following five principles:



Priority Populations

Suicide is complex, devastating and has significant, long-lasting impacts, both on individuals and communities as a whole. Suicide is a leading cause of death in 15-44 years and it is estimated that over 7 million Australian adults are close to someone who has attempted or died by suicide. Despite suicide impacting every group in our community, there are a number of populations who are disproportionately at risk when it comes to suicide.

The following priority populations are identified as having an increased risk of suicide however, it is important to note that this is not an all-inclusive list of priority population groups. The SAPOL Suicide Prevention Action Plan considers how SAPOL can best support staff and the community who fall into these population groups.

First Responders

As part of their role in responding to emergency events, first responders are often brought into contact with stressful and traumatic situations. Regularly, they are first on scene to suicide involved taskings and as such have a greater exposure to suicide than the general population. With ongoing cumulative trauma exposure, higher rates of mental ill-health and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) than the general population, first responders can be at an increased risk themselves of suicide related distress.

In addition to this, first responders must navigate the emotional toll of supporting those bereaved by suicide as well as delivering notice of someone's death by suicide to their loved ones. Due to the nature of the first responder role, there are times where first responders may attend the suicide of someone they know, a colleague, or a loved one while on duty. This is particularly highlighted in regional and remote communities.

First Nations Peoples

First Nations peoples continue to be impacted by social marginalisation, loss of cultural identity, the cycle of intergenerational trauma, dispossession and the impact of colonisation. First Nations people experience poorer health outcomes across the lifespan and are twice as likely as non-First Nations peoples to die by suicide.

Men

Male suicides make up approximately 75% of all those who die by suicide in Australia. Stressors which can contribute to male suicide distress include relationship breakdown, bereavement and unemployment. Men who identify as members of other priority groups are at further risk. Males are less likely to access health services for a mental health disorder which highlights the many complex factors which can contribute to reducing suicide related distress.

The LGBTQIA+ Community

It is estimated that in 2020 more than two in five members of the LGBTQIA+ community had considered suicide in the preceding 12 months and almost four in five had considered suicide at some point in their life. Ongoing experiences of discrimination and exclusion have been strongly linked to increased psychological distress and trauma in LGBTQIA+ communities. Furthermore, studies have indicated that in line with the discrimination that many experience, LGBTQIA+ community members are less likely to reach out to crisis support services when experiencing mental distress.

Children and Young People (5-25 years)

Suicide is the leading cause of death for children and young people aged between 5-25 years, with one in two young people being impacted by suicide by the time they reach 25. There are also significantly higher rates amongst First Nations peoples, LGBTQIA+ and regional/rural youth. As young people are learning to cope and deal with challenges during their developmental years, they can present as an increased risk when exposed to educational disadvantage, adverse life events, or social and cultural disadvantage.

Regional and Remote Communities

Regional, rural and remote Australians are a population which has been identified as one which is overly impacted by suicide. Factors which may contribute to this, include limited access to healthcare or appropriate resources, isolation, increased stigma for accessing support with concerns around confidentiality within a community and potentially greater access to lethal means.

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Communities

Australia has one of the largest multicultural populations in the world. Despite this, settling in a new country can be a difficult and stressful experience. Resettlement and acculturation, separation from family, racism and discrimination, or having escaped war or trauma are just some of the challenges CALD communities may face. Adding to this, some people from CALD communities may be less likely to access supports when in mental distress due to language barriers, lack of knowledge of services, religious or cultural beliefs and stigma which can leave CALD communities at an increased risk.

Veterans

The Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide has highlighted the increased risk of suicide in the military population. Factors which can influence this include trauma exposure and increased rates of PTSD, the struggle to reintegrate with civilian life after service, feelings of isolation and maladaptive coping through drugs and alcohol.



DEVELOPMENT OF THE SUICIDE PREVENTION ACTION PLAN

SAPOL's consultation process for the development of this Action Plan was designed to satisfy the requirements of the *Suicide Prevention Act 2021* and was comprehensive and inclusive, engaging people with lived and living experience as well as priority populations. An expression of interest was sent to all SAPOL staff, inviting participation in focus groups. A survey was then distributed to those who responded to the expression of interest. Focus groups were conducted both face-to-face and online and individual meetings were offered to those unable to attend the focus groups. Additional written submissions were received, including contributions from individuals with lived experience. Meetings were also held with community constables and First Nations stakeholders.

Additional feedback on the draft plan was sought from families of those impacted by the suicide of a SAPOL employee, members with lived experience and members from key areas that investigate and respond to suicides in the community.

A Steering Committee was established with members appointed from each Service and Terms of Reference were developed for the Committee. The draft Suicide Prevention Action Plan was disseminated for review and consultation across each Service. Steering Committee meetings were held to discuss and refine the plan. The Action Plan was cross-referenced with relevant frameworks, including SAPOL's Reconciliation Action Plan, to ensure alignment and comprehensiveness.

The plan was then escalated to the executive team for endorsement. An environmental scan of other kindred agencies was performed, along with an investigation into grey literature. Engagement with external partners, including the Military and Emergency Service Health Australia (MESHA), was also undertaken to ensure a thorough and well-rounded approach.

Public feedback is now being sought on the draft plan and any feedback will be considered as part of the final drafting process before the plan is ratified and published. Once this action plan is finalised, we will collaborate closely with the other prescribed state authorities. This collaboration will ensure that all efforts are cohesive and aligned, maximising the effectiveness of our collective actions in preventing suicide. By working together, we can create a unified approach that addresses the needs of our communities comprehensively and efficiently.

OUR PEOPLE, OUR STRENGTH

Reducing the incidence and impact of suicide for 'Our People'

SAPOL recognises that the welfare and wellbeing of our people is fundamental to our success as an organisation and to the safety of the communities we serve. Policing is a challenging profession and we acknowledge the profound impact that operational and organisational stressors can have on the mental health of our staff.

As part of our unwavering commitment to staff welfare, SAPOL is implementing this comprehensive Suicide Prevention Plan aimed at reducing the incidence and impact of suicide among our people. This plan is built on a foundation of proactive support, early intervention and a workplace culture that prioritises mental health and psychological safety.

Through these actions, we seek to foster a compassionate and supportive environment where every member of SAPOL feels valued, connected and empowered to seek help when needed. Our people are our strength and together, we will work to ensure that no one faces their struggles alone.

To achieve this, SAPOL will implement a range of targeted actions designed to promote mental wellbeing, enhance access to support services and strengthen our organisational response to suicide prevention.



OUR PEOPLE, OUR STRENGTH

PRIORITY 1 - PARTNER - Enable multisectoral and whole of community approaches to suicide prevention

ACTION	MEASURE	RESPONSIBILITY
Partner with external agencies to develop lived experience expertise for service delivery to SAPOL employees	Membership of Research Advisory Board with MESHA and attendance at other key forums	People, Culture and Wellbeing Service
Review governance documents through a lens of suicide prevention	- Employee Assistance Section policies and procedures are reflective of suicide prevention - Implement policy and processes to address the psychological impact of internal investigations - Implement revised policy and procedure for information sharing regarding suicide and traumatic deaths - Establish an enhanced service-level policy regarding the wellbeing of staff in remote locations	All Services
Enhance partnerships with external agencies and other emergency services and participate in intra- and inter-agency working groups	Report on forum and committee participation	All Services
Continuation of communication campaigns to raise awareness for staff and community on key days such as World Suicide Prevention Day and RUOK Day	Publication of a calendar of events with accompanying resources	People, Culture and Wellbeing Service Communication and Engagement Branch

OUR PEOPLE, OUR STRENGTH

PRIORITY 2 – RESPECT – Promote social and emotional wellbeing and prevent and respond to suicide risk for First Nations

ACTION	MEASURE	RESPONSIBILITY
Undertake activities to increase cultural awareness, sensitivity and respect among SAPOL employees	- Completion of cultural needs review as per SAPOL Reconciliation Action Plan - Cultural training developed and implemented	People, Culture and Wellbeing Service
Improve culturally sensitive support for First Nations employees	- Number of published First Nations Community-Controlled Organisation providers offering culturally sensitive counselling, therapy and support training and programs for First Nations staff - Completion of a review of available culturally appropriate Employee Assistance Program options - Established pathways for ongoing communications from First Nations workers and members of the public to guide suicide prevention initiatives - Communication pathways established to promote internal initiatives and access to wellbeing support and services	People, Culture and Wellbeing Service State Operations Service
Provide opportunities for SAPOL staff to participate in formal and structural cultural learning	Provide appropriately sourced and cultural learning program/s for all staff and report on compliance	People, Culture and Wellbeing Service
Ensure that SAPOL's corporate strategies inform social awareness, sensitivity and respect among employees across the organisation to enhance the social and emotional wellbeing outcomes for First Nations employees	- Implement and communicate these strategies across SAPOL, for example: - SAPOL People Strategy 2021–2025 - Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2021-2025 - Reconciliation Action Plan	All Services

Develop cultural wellbeing training for all members across the organisation	• Develop and deliver mental health and wellbeing training, with a First Nations perspective, to all employees ensuring this is: ○ co-designed with First Nations people and ○ is reflective of the historic and lived experiences of First Nations peoples and ○ enables members to identify mental health indicators in a First Nations person to ensure the provision of a culturally appropriate response to those in need of assistance	People, Culture and Wellbeing Service
Develop, maintain and enhance partnerships with internal and external providers to deliver culturally appropriate support to First Nations employees	• Develop formal partnerships with external organisations including South Australian Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisation Network that support the social and emotional wellbeing of First Nations people and communities • Explore and engage culturally appropriate Employee Assistance Program options and promote these to all First Nations employees • Develop and implement processes for accessing culturally sensitive support following a death of a colleague, family or community member, or during significant or distressing events • Review existing grief, loss and wellbeing supports and ensure any new support services are provided by approved/qualified practitioners	People, Culture and Wellbeing Service



OUR PEOPLE, OUR STRENGTH

PRIORITY 3 - PREVENT - Create compassionate, safe and resilient communities

ACTION	MEASURE	RESPONSIBILITY
Partner with external agencies with expertise in suicide prevention and postvention, to develop external facing responses and services	Implement partnerships with support services to deliver improved postvention responses	People, Culture and Wellbeing Service
Review and improve procedures to identify and provide support to vulnerable SAPOL employees and their families	- Implement relevant Standard Operating Procedures - Ensure SAPOL's absence management procedure is reflective of support measures - Improved information sharing between Coroner's Office and SAPOL during inquest management - Implement systems to identify and manage cumulative trauma exposure	People, Culture and Wellbeing Service Coronial Investigation Section Investigational Assurance Section
Invest in the capability of leaders and supervisors to support SAPOL staff	- Publish and provide access to resources in various formats to support leaders in managing employee wellbeing - Develop a supportive leadership training program for supervisors - Engage an external provider for Manager Assist services - Implement changes to the field tutor course to enhance field tutor capability to recognise mental health challenges for probationary constables	Employee Assistance Section Academy and Learning Organisational Development Diversity and Inclusion Branch
Enhance inclusion and awareness of the LGBTQIA+ community	- Employee(s) accredited as an LGBTQIA+ trainer through Pride in Diversity to deliver specific LGBTQIA+ training within SAPOL - Completion rates of LGBTQIA+ awareness training	People, Culture and Wellbeing Service

Build the capability of SAPOL's employee support services to support employees impacted by work and prevent further harm	Implement professional development program/s to enhance the skillset of SAPOL staff to deliver initiatives with a prevention of mental ill-health focus and to respond to employee distress and potential suicide risk	People, Culture and Wellbeing Service
Investigate and expand peer support mechanisms within SAPOL to enhance mental health support and reduce the risk of suicide among staff	Number of SAPOL staff members engaged to provide peer support to SAPOL employees	People, Culture and Wellbeing Service
Continue to respect and enhance the self-esteem of employees by recognising the contribution of individuals to their workplaces and communities	- Number of Certificates of Appreciation issued at Branch/District/LSA level - Number of Certificates of Commendation issued at Service level - Number of Level 1 Awards made by Commissioner	All Services Awards and Recognition Unit
Continue to deliver staff-focused wellbeing and resilience strategies/services	- Number of staff utilising the Reconditioning Program - Initiatives and activities implemented and progressed through the Health and Wellbeing Officers Network	People, Culture and Wellbeing Service



OUR PEOPLE, OUR STRENGTH

PRIORITY 4 - RESPOND - Meeting the needs of people and communities when, and in the ways, they are needed

ACTION	MEASURE	RESPONSIBILITY
Increasing accessibility and awareness of SAPOL employee support services	• Ensure SAPOL's intranet is reflective of current support resources and services • Maintain and enhance the 24-hour on call function for psychosocial support for critical incident response • Review effectiveness of the Employee Assistance Program and ensure appropriate risk-management protocols are in place	People, Culture and Wellbeing Service
Uplift, educate and support supervisors, managers and staff to enable them to respond effectively and compassionately in the event that an employee dies by suicide, or is impacted by a suicide-related event	• Implement a referral process that delivers specialised postvention services to members attending or impacted by suicide in the community • Develop resources to guide supervisors and employees to facilitate effective discussions with employees involved or impacted by suicide-related events	People, Culture and Wellbeing Service

OUR PEOPLE, OUR STRENGTH

PRIORITY 5 - REVIEW - Monitor and evaluate suicide prevention strategies and support evidence informed practice

ACTION	MEASURE	RESPONSIBILITY
Participate in inter-agency communities of practice to ensure cross-sectoral collaboration on policies, practices and sharing of learnings, emerging evidence and resources developed	• Membership of, attendance and participation in key Australia New Zealand Policing Advisory Agency events • Report on SAPOL's attendance at key forums and conferences	Employee Assistance Section Mental Health Operations Support Unit
Review and evaluate Employee Assistance Section services related to suicide prevention and postvention to identify if any additions, modifications or enhancements are required to support staff	• Review of Employee Assistance Section services (as needed)	People, Culture and Wellbeing Service
Review Suicide Prevention Action Plan	• Suicide Prevention Action Plan to be reviewed every two years (or as required)	People, Culture and Wellbeing Service

COMMUNITY CENTRED, SOCIALLY MINDED

Contribute to the reduction of suicide and the impact in our community

SAPOL is committed to working alongside our partners to reduce the incidence and impact of suicide in our community. Suicide prevention requires a whole-of-community approach and SAPOL plays a vital role in supporting individuals in crisis, responding to incidents and contributing to broader prevention efforts.

SAPOL has established strategies to guide our response to mental health and suicide-related distress and we will continue to collaborate with health services, community organisations and other government agencies. Our focus is on providing a compassionate and effective police response, reducing stigma and ensuring that those in need are connected with the right support at the right time.

To strengthen our contribution, SAPOL will implement a series of actions designed to enhance our capability, improve coordination with partner agencies and support community-led suicide prevention initiatives.



COMMUNITY CENTRED, SOCIALLY MINDED

PRIORITY 1 - PARTNER - Enable multisectoral and whole of community approaches to suicide prevention

ACTION	MEASURE	RESPONSIBILITY
Register as a member of Suicide Prevention SA	Membership registered with Suicide Prevention SA	People, Culture and Wellbeing Service
Appoint a SAPOL champion to sponsor the implementation of the plan	Identify sponsor	ELT representative
Enhance partnerships with external agencies and other emergency services and participate in intra- and inter-agency working groups	- Report on participation in forums and/or committees which align with this objective. For example: - Local Liaison Group meetings - Prevention of Aboriginal Death in Custody forum - Mental Health Response Project - Contribute to the Mental Health Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between SAPOL, SA Health, SA Ambulance, Royal Flying Doctor Service - Implement and enhance MOUs and/or SAPOL protocols for collaborative suicide prevention initiatives	All Services

COMMUNITY CENTRED, SOCIALLY MINDED

PRIORITY 2 – RESPECT – Promote social and emotional wellbeing and prevent and respond to suicide risk for First Nations South Australians

ACTION	MEASURE	RESPONSIBILITY
Engage with First Nations employees, community members and Community-Controlled Organisations to determine culturally appropriate and respectful suicide prevention initiatives for both employees and communities	Number of initiatives, activities or projects undertaken with First Nations people, groups or communities with a dedicated focus on health and wellbeing	Governance and Capability Service People, Culture and Wellbeing Service State Operations Service
Continue efforts to identify and mitigate the risks associated with First Nations peoples being in police custody	- Review of General Order, Mental incapacity and General Order, Custody management - Identify measures to be implemented specifically relating to police prisoners in cells or whilst in custody - In accordance with the Closing the Gap Strengthening Partnerships Agreement, develop and formalise partnerships with members of the South Australian Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisation Network, who assist the social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal persons in custody	Metropolitan Operations Service Governance and Capability Service
Promote anti-discrimination and anti-racism strategies across the organisation, in line with SAPOL's Reconciliation Action Plan 2024-2026	Reconciliation Action Plan implementation and progress reporting	People, Culture and Wellbeing Service

COMMUNITY CENTRED, SOCIALLY MINDED

PRIORITY 3 - PREVENT - Create compassionate, safe and resilient communities

ACTION	MEASURE	RESPONSIBILITY
Partner with external agencies with expertise in suicide prevention and postvention, to develop external facing responses and services	Deliver improved postvention responses through established partnerships with support services	People, Culture and Wellbeing Service Metropolitan Operations Service
Collaborate with agencies across the mental health landscape to create safer communities	Participation in Local Liaison Group meetings to identify vulnerable or at-risk individuals who engage with involved services to better provide a holistic response when engaging with these individuals	Local Service Areas/District Operations Management Mental Health Operations Support Unit
Stay abreast of emerging issues and community expectations regarding SAPOL's role in suicide prevention	- Participation in relevant forums, conferences and training enabling SAPOL staff to stay abreast of best practice in co-responding to mental health crises within the community - General Order, Mental incapacity reflects an enhanced positive impact by SAPOL when community members are impacted by suicide	Mental Health Operations Support Unit
Build working relationships to improve collaboration with health services	- Representation on external governance committees allowing for better responses for community members suffering a mental health crisis - Implementation of a forum for information sharing with services impacted by suicide and attempted suicide	Metropolitan Operations Service
Build the capability of SAPOL employees to respond effectively to police incidents involving suicide and/or acute mental health episodes	- Police cadet training reviewed through a suicide prevention lens - Implement training with a mental health first aid component encompassing causes of suicide and preventative strategies relative to first responders and the broader community	Academy and Learning

COMMUNITY CENTRED, SOCIALLY MINDED

PRIORITY 4 - RESPOND - Meeting the needs of people and communities when and in the ways they are needed

ACTION	MEASURE	RESPONSIBILITY
Work in partnership with health and other relevant agencies to support a coordinated response to incidents relating to the risk or incidence of suicide	• Evaluate the Mental Health Co-Responder program with SA Health which attends mental health taskings to conduct mental health assessments within the community • Develop multi-sectoral approaches to support people and communities impacted by suicide • Establish partnerships, policies and MOUs with support agencies to support vulnerable members of the community	Mental Health Operations Support Unit

COMMUNITY CENTRED, SOCIALLY MINDED

PRIORITY 5 - REVIEW - Monitor and evaluate suicide prevention strategies and support evidence informed practice

ACTION	MEASURE	RESPONSIBILITY
Participate in inter-agency communities of practice to ensure cross-sectoral collaboration on policies, practices and sharing of learnings, emerging evidence and resources developed	• Membership of, attendance and participation in key Australia New Zealand Policing Advisory Agency events • Report on SAPOL's attendance at key forums and conferences	Employee Assistance Section Mental Health Operations Support Unit
Engage with the Suicide Prevention Council around relevant data on emerging priority populations to improve response to any emerging vulnerable groups	• Ongoing engagement with the Suicide Prevention Council	Health, Safety and Wellbeing Branch
Reporting on SAPOL Suicide Prevention Action Plan progress to the Suicide Prevention Council	• Provide an annual report to the Suicide Prevention Council by October 31 each year	Health, Safety and Wellbeing Branch
SAPOL to investigate suicides on behalf of the coroner and utilise data obtained	• Number of investigations and key recommendations identified • Process developed by Coronial Investigation Section to ensure flow of relevant information to relevant stakeholders to inform and evaluate suicide prevention measures	Crime Service

Relationship to other policies, strategies, frameworks

This Suicide Prevention Action Plan is designed to complement and align with existing policies, strategies and frameworks within SAPOL, ensuring a cohesive and integrated approach to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our staff and the community. The following policies, strategies and frameworks align with this action plan:

Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy

This strategy outlines our commitment to promoting, protecting and restoring the mental health and wellbeing of our employees, so they reach their full potential and enjoy life.

People Strategy

This strategy reflects our commitment to the safety, value and respect of all SAPOL staff and sets the direction for continuing to build a resilient, safe and vibrant police service in South Australia.

Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)

Our RAP confirms our commitment to reconciliation and to our continued development as a culturally responsive organisation. This is the third RAP to be developed by SAPOL since our inaugural RAP in 2014. We continue to strive to be an organisation where First Nations cultures are not only respected but truly valued.

Diversity and Inclusion Vision

SAPOL's Diversity and Inclusion Vision is to be a diverse and inclusive organisation where all people are safe, respected and supported to reach their potential. We know that we still have work to do and that we cannot fulfil this vision without the commitment of our people at every level of the organisation.

Contact Details

South Australia Police, Employee Assistance Section:

sapol.suicidepreventionfeedback@police.sa.gov.au

Please note that this mailbox is not monitored for reporting crimes or medical emergencies. If you need to report a crime, please contact your local police station or dial 000 in an emergency.

DRAFT

