Final Evaluation Report

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THE TASMANIAN INSTITUTE OF LAW ENFORCEMENT STUDIES

The Tasmanian Institute of Law Enforcement Studies (TILES) is committed to excellence in law enforcement research. Collaborative research that links academics with practitioners is a hallmark of that research. The institute focuses on four strategic priorities, namely research, teaching, communication, and professionalism. These support university and faculty initiatives for the University of Tasmania to be in the top echelon of research universities in Australia.

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Our mission

To conduct and promote evidence-based research to improve the quality of law enforcement and enhance community safety.
# Contents

FIGURES AND TABLES ............................................................................................................................................. I  
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ........................................................................................................................................ II  
THE RESEARCH TEAM ....................................................................................................................................... III  
LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS .................................................................................................. VI  
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ....................................................................................................................................... 1  
1 – BACKGROUND: THE TASMANIAN INTER-AGENCY SUPPORT TEAMS ..................................................... 4  
   THE IAST INITIATIVE .......................................................................................................................................... 4  
   THE IAST+ PILOT PROGRAM .............................................................................................................................. 5  
   EVALUATION ..................................................................................................................................................... 6  
2 – IAST+ ENGAGEMENT ...................................................................................................................................... 12  
   ATTENDANCE ................................................................................................................................................... 12  
   PROCESS ISSUES .............................................................................................................................................. 15  
3– STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK AND DISCUSSION ......................................................................................... 17  
   END OF PROJECT STAKEHOLDER SURVEY .................................................................................................. 17  
   STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS ........................................................................................................................... 21  
4- CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ............................................................................................... 28  
   Recommendations .......................................................................................................................................... 30  
APPENDIX A – RESEARCH TIMELINE .................................................................................................................. 32  
APPENDIX B – RESEARCH OUTCOMES AND DELIVERABLES ............................................................................. 33
Figures and Tables

Table 1 IAST model variants and sites ........................................................................................................... 6
Table 2 Average satisfaction ............................................................................................................................. 13
Table 3 Member Capacity ............................................................................................................................... 18

Figure 1 Meeting attendance .......................................................................................................................... 12
Figure 2 Satisfaction tracking Devonport ...................................................................................................... 13
Figure 3 Satisfaction tracking Launceston ..................................................................................................... 14
Figure 4 Satisfaction tracking Glenorchy ...................................................................................................... 14
Figure 5 - Accuracy of analysis – Devonport ................................................................................................. 15
Figure 6 - Accuracy of analysis – Launceston ................................................................................................. 15
Figure 7 - Accuracy of analysis – Glenorchy ................................................................................................. 16
Figure 8 SWOT analysis ............................................................................................................................... 29
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Our gratitude goes to all survey respondents who reflected on the aims and objectives of the scheme and their expectations of it, and especially to those who communicated their thoughts in the survey. This report would not be complete without their views and input.

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Associate Professor Roberta Julian

Dr Romy Winter

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The research team

**Dr Isabelle Bartkowiak-Théron** is the coordinator of Police Studies at the University of Tasmania, and a senior researcher at the Tasmanian Institute of Law Enforcement Studies. Having worked with youth at risk in France, Isabelle became known in Australia for having managed the Youth Pilot Project of the Australian National University-Victoria Police Nexus Policing ARC linkage from 2004 until 2006. She also ran the two-year evaluation of the School-Liaison Police and the first stage of the Mental Health Intervention Teams evaluation in New South Wales, for the New South Wales Police Force, from 2007 until 2009. Isabelle specialises in the qualitative and quantitative study of policing and policing services targeting vulnerable populations (e.g., young people, refugees, Aboriginal community members) and is in regular contact with representatives of these vulnerable populations. She contextualises data according to information gathered from the field and relevant literature. She is used to handling confidential information gathered by government and non-government organisations as well as sensitive information garnered from police data gathering systems. Her work in partnership with a number of government and non-government agencies has contributed to her being contracted in 2011 on a Proceeds of Crime Funding scheme to evaluate a restorative conferencing project in the area of Albury (NSW), an initiative run and monitored by Albury Family Youth that targeted young recidivist offenders. Isabelle also evaluated the Tasmania Early Intervention Pilot Program for the Department of Police and Emergency Services, and the Mental Health Diversion List for the Hobart Magistrates Court. She is the co-editor (with Nicole Asquith) of *Policing Vulnerability* (Federation Press, 2012). She is a member of several research governance and community engagement committees throughout Australia, and sits on the Australian Crime Prevention Council as an executive member for Tasmania. She is an Advisory Board member for the Centre for Law Enforcement and Public Health, and an editorial board member of the *Journal of Criminological Research, Policy and Practice*.

**Associate Professor Roberta Julian** was appointed to the position of Director, Tasmanian Institute of Law Enforcement Studies, in July 2003. Prior to this, she was a Senior Lecturer in Sociology at the University of Tasmania where she had been involved in teaching, research and administration for over 20 years. Roberta has an established record of scholarship within the discipline of sociology including a strong track record in applied social research. She has an international reputation based on her research exploring migrant and refugee populations. Roberta conducted research on the resettlement of Hmong refugees from Laos for over ten years and published book chapters and journal articles on Hmong identity and Hmong women in *Race, Gender and Class, Asian and Pacific Migration Journal and*
Women’s Studies International Forum. Her community-based research interests have now been extended to include issues surrounding other ‘at-risk’ populations such as young offenders. Roberta has been Chief Investigator for evaluations of projects managed by Tasmania Police, including: the U-Turn Program, a young recidivist car theft offender program; Project Currawong, a series of adventure programs aimed at challenging young people and providing pathways into community participation; and the Risk Assessment Screening Tool (RAST) used in family violence incidents. In 2004 she was awarded a three-year Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage Grant to examine issues surrounding community policing and refugee settlement in Tasmania. In 2006-7, she was one of three Chief Investigators (with Dr Clarissa Hughes and Inspector Matthew Richman) awarded almost $0.5 million to conduct the first Australian trial of an innovative alcohol misuse prevention approach known as ‘Social Norms’. More recently Roberta was the lead Chief Investigator in a five-year Australian Research Council Linkage Grant with Victoria Police, the Australian Federal Police (AFP) and the National Institute of Forensic Science (NIFS) that began in 2009 (awarded almost $1 million). This project examined the effectiveness of forensic science in the criminal justice system with a focus on police investigations and court outcomes. Roberta is a member of the Board of Studies of the Australian Institute of Police Management (AIPM), an Associate Investigator with the Centre of Excellence in Policing and Security (CEPS), a member of the Editorial Board for the Australian and New Zealand Journal of Criminology, a past President of The Australian Sociological Association (TASA) and a current member of the Committee of Management of the Australian and New Zealand Society of Criminology.

**Dr Romy Winter [BA, MAppSoc (Social Research), PhD]** is an experienced researcher with the Tasmanian Institute of Law Enforcement Studies and teaches Victimology in the Police Studies program at the University of Tasmania. Her research interests include criminal justice responses to intimate partner violence, "social problems" policy and the sociology of gender in relation to the workforce. Romy has a decade of experience in evaluating programs targeting vulnerable and hard-to-reach populations including parenting programs for at-risk families; young people on bail; Aboriginal men and boys in the criminal justice system, financial literacy and women with marginal attachment to the workforce.

**Dr Loene Howes [MA, MTeach, BSocSci(Psych)(Hons)]** is a lecturer in Criminology at the University of Tasmania. Prior to commencing at UTAS, Loene was a high school teacher for 14 years. During that time, she was a Year Advisor for a cohort of approximately 120 students for a period of five years. This role gave her some first-hand experience of participating in a multi-agency approach to support young people. Loene has participated in previous evaluation research within her capacity as a research assistant at TILES. Her research interests include career decision-making, communication in the
context of police intelligence and investigative interviews, and the communication of expert evidence in the criminal justice system.

**Dr Sally Kelty** [BComm, BA, PhD] Sally joined the University of Canberra in 2015 as part of the teaching and research faculty in Psychology. She has previously held a post-doctoral fellowship in Criminology/Social Sciences at the University of Tasmania and research and practice positions at the Department of Justice in Western Australia, the University of Western Australia and The Women’s and Infant’s Health Research Institute. Sally’s teaching and research interests include forensic and criminal psychology, psychological methods in forensic studies and positive psychology.
List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

ADS Alcohol and Drug Services
CP Child Protection Services
DHHS Department of Health and Human Services
DoE Department of Education
DPEM Department of Police and Emergency Management
DPFEM Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Management
IAST Inter-Agency Support Teams
IAST+ Inter-Agency Support Teams + (pilot project)
NGO Non-government organisation
OfC Office for Children
TILES Tasmanian Institute of Law Enforcement Studies
UTas University of Tasmania
YJ Youth Justice
Executive Summary

Inter-agency partnerships are a contemporary framework for implementing and monitoring government policy and associated programs. This document is the final report of the two-year evaluation of the ‘IAST+: Three Approaches to Case Coordination’ pilot project (IAST+). This evaluation was commissioned by the Office for Children, Tasmanian Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) in 2013. Evaluation activity concluded in July 2016, after all data and research material were collated from the various agencies and stakeholders involved in this project. The aims of the research were to examine inter-agency collaborative processes, with a long-term goal to better understand and build collaborative practice.

In Tasmania, the inter-agency collaboration that is IAST+ has been working to provide targeted services to at risk young people and their families. The precept of the scheme is to provide a format for multiple services to collaborate on issues relating to the care of children and young people. At its inception the model tested new means of collaboration and information sharing, better performance management tools or avenues for these young people and their families. The collaboration and cooperation of agencies and services in sharing information and delivering services to at-risk youth and families is the crux of IASTs. As indicated in the IAST Business rules (2007, 4 and 5):

IASTs provide a forum in which participating agencies responsible for delivering services in a particular community can devise the most appropriate support strategies for referred children and young people in a coordinated, timely and effective manner. (…) The IASTs provide a forum in which State Government agencies and local councils can identify children and young people in the target client group, jointly develop practical support strategies and then monitor the effectiveness of these strategies.

The IAST+ project focused on three different approaches to collaboration in the locations of Glenorchy, Launceston and Devonport.

The specific aims of the evaluation, as well as a background and description of the IAST+ are found in Section 1 of this report. Section 2 outlines data obtained through analysis of feedback from IAST+ meetings. The third section presents stakeholder feedback from a final online survey and the themes generated by face to face interviews with key stakeholders. The fourth and final Section 4 outlines conclusions.

The strengths of the IAST model lie in its endurance as a multi-agency collaboration exercise, with place-based variation, that has enabled trust to be built among agencies working with at-risk young people. IASTs pioneered the sharing of information amongst agencies in order to fill information gaps and provide good outcomes for at risk young people and their families. In terms of weaknesses, the framework is now outmoded and cases which are referred to the IAST groups have become
increasingly complex which contributes to the dwindling effectiveness of the IAST (and IAST+) model. This increase in the referral of high risk youth has meant that IASTs have moved away from their early intervention focus. The evaluation found weaknesses in terms of governance in that there are unclear boundaries between agencies, a lack of clarity around the program’s purpose and there is a lack of data to enable tracking of drivers and barriers to success. Further weakness has been found in the resourcing for IAST+ with workload exceeding the governance model and budget provided.

The evaluators have made twelve recommendations which will enable IAST+ models to capitalise on the learnings of this tranche of partnerships. These recommendations are:

**Recommendation 1.** IAST partnerships to clarify their purpose – a charter or MOU to be developed which outlines the parameters of operation and each members’ roles and responsibilities. Implicit in this recommendation is sign off from the senior management of the partners.

**Recommendation 2.** IAST+ membership to be expanded to include relevant NGOs in each area. This will enable young people to be tracked across a number of different intervention programs and services.

**Recommendation 3.** Clear work processes – all parties with decision making roles are visible and accountable for outcomes

**Recommendation 4.** Adoption of a clear risk assessment/protective factor framework which outlines what early intervention is and what a young person’s trajectory might look like e.g. no offending; pre-offending; low offending; high offending.

**Recommendation 5.** Impact factors – which relate to the various contextual components of the young person’s life e.g. education, health, nutrition, drug and alcohol issues, housing, family support etc. The impacts or risks involved in each young person’s case to be clearly tracked which involves the development of a generic tracking document for all sites.

**Recommendation 6.** Equal footing – all members to have the same level of authority to make decisions on behalf of their agency.

**Recommendation 7.** Sufficient resources to undertake the work involved in the team and carry out required action items. We recommend the appointment of a dedicated Coordinator for each IAST+ whose sole responsibility is for organising meetings, following up on action items and documenting positive and negative responses to agency/NGO interventions.

**Recommendation 8.** Commitment to dismantle silos – IAST+ members to consciously work together to recognise when member agency policies or resources may not be working in the best interest of the young person.
Recommendation 9. Change the frequency of meetings to weekly – this will eliminate the need for lengthy meetings or out of session meetings and enable the partners to respond in a timelier manner to their clients.

Recommendation 10. Implement clear protocols for exit for cases completed or too complex for the IAST+ model.

Recommendation 11. Protocol for follow-up – a standardised protocol for follow-up with clients which includes reporting and documentation will allow for greater transparency and accountability.

Recommendation 12. Longitudinal evaluation of selected cases – each site to document a number of case studies each year for long term follow up e.g. on exiting program, and follow up after one, two and five years.
1 – Background: The Tasmanian Inter-Agency Support Teams

The IAST initiative

Inter-Agency Support Teams (IASTs) arose out of the 2002 ‘Kids in Mind Tasmania’ project, which aimed at raising awareness of ‘the needs of children of parents with mental illness’ (DPEM, 2011, 7). At the core of this initiative was the objective of increasing inter-agency collaboration and networks by way of improved communication. In 2006, a total of 18 IASTs were created across Tasmania, under the lead of the Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Management (DPFEM). There were 23 IASTs in Tasmania at the end of 2011.

The core focus of IASTs is children and young people who experience, or are at risk of experiencing, a combination of circumstances (including mental illness, disengagement from school, homelessness, and family violence) or displaying marginal behaviour (alcohol or drug use and offending). IASTs invite a number of agencies (depending on the local availability of services) to jointly discuss each case and ‘work collaboratively towards developing and monitoring multi-agency responses to support these children, young people and their families’ (DPEM, 2001, 8). IAST membership includes a range of government and sometimes non-government organisations, mostly: the DPFEM, the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), the Department of Education (DoE), Youth Justice (YJ), Alcohol and Drug Services (ADS), and Housing Tasmania.

It is important to note that the scope and focus of the IASTs have changed over the life span of the project. There was a pronounced shift from considering young people whose parents were living with a mental illness (specifically ‘support children, young people and their families with multiple and complex problems’ – IAST Business Rules, 2007) to supporting the needs of young offenders or young people at risk of offending (DPEM, 2001, 8).

IAST aims and outcomes are as follows (DPEM, 2011, 9):

For children, young people and their families:

- a reduction in behaviours that place children and young people at risk of coming into contact with the youth justice system
- an enhancement in the protective factors that assist children and young people to make positive choices about changing their behaviour, and
- more coordinated support for children, young people and their families.

For communities:

- engendering a sense of community ownership of, and involvement in, issues that affect the well-being of children, young people and their families, and
• a reduction in the degree and extent of youth offending and antisocial behaviour in Tasmanian communities.

For participating agencies:
• better communication between participating Agencies, leading to more effective support and less duplication of effort, and
• an increased capacity for early intervention and prevention.

A review of the IAST was undertaken by the DPEM in 2010-2011. The review spanned several areas of importance for government and non-government agencies, and of notable significance for the articulation of collaborative governance mechanisms across participating agencies. These areas of significance were: leadership, resourcing, evaluation, inter-agency trust and accountability, and rationalisation. The review, spanning a two-year (24 month) period, also recommended consideration of several issues. These recommendations related to the nature and core business of the lead agency for the IAST, the commitment of partnering agencies, governance frameworks, the development of an early intervention collaborative framework, a review of business rules to take into account the new circumstances of the scheme, and a scientific process and impact review of the scheme. The latter recommendation triggered this current evaluation research project. Since then, the DPFEM further continued its internal work on the general IAST mechanisms and reporting processes, and started a process of rationalisation, looking into further detail at the individual cases that had been considered by all IASTs across the state. This resulted, in consultation with major stakeholders, in formulating strategies as to exiting or retiring some young people from the IAST program, after assessment as being unsuitable for an early-intervention program. These considerations are further analysed and included in this report.

THE IAST+ Pilot Program

The ‘IAST+: Three Approaches to Case Coordination’ (IAST+) works from the premise that inter-agency cooperation and collaboration is essential to effectively deliver services to at risk young people and their families. The IAST+ is an initiative hosted by DHHS, under the auspices of the Office for Children (OfC), using the existing Inter-Agency Support Team (IAST) framework as a starting point. It considers how ‘agencies can best be supported to work together to intervene earlier to achieve better outcomes for children and young people identified at risk’ (OfC, 2013, 7). Like the IAST, the precept of the IAST+ is to encourage multiple services to collaborate in responding to issues relating to the care of children and young people, while testing new means of collaboration and information sharing, and designing better performance management tools or avenues. The IAST+ project essentially focuses on three different approaches to collaboration, in three different sites throughout Tasmania: Glenorchy, Launceston and Devonport.
The ‘self-directed’ pilot is hosted by the Glenorchy IAST. IAST stakeholders are provided with ongoing external support (by way of professional development, invitees, workshops, etc.) to look at ways to work more effectively. The Launceston pilot, also known as the ‘co-located’ or the ‘directed model’, is provided with an additional resource of DHHS health practitioners, who assess families’ needs and recommend specific interventions based on these assessments. The ‘Existing Model’ is based in Devonport, and served as a control site in this evaluation(OFc, 2013).

Table 1 IAST model variants and sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model variant</th>
<th>Site</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Existing</td>
<td>Devonport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-directed</td>
<td>Glenorchy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-located or directed model</td>
<td>Launceston</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The IAST+ management team consists of three permanent positions at the Office for Children, who ensure the administration of the scheme, communication with hierarchy and act as a contact point for the research team. These three key personnel also act in coordination with the IAST management team from the DPFEM.

Evaluation

Research purpose and objectives

The purpose of this research was to ‘create, implement and finalise an evaluation methodology for a case planning and coordination trial project’.

The IAST+ trial project specifically targeted vulnerable children and their families in three local Tasmanian areas: Glenorchy, Launceston and Devonport. As per prior consultation with the Office for Children, this evaluation adopted an interactive evaluation research design. It was agreed that the TILES research team would consult on the design of evaluation tools, assist the IAST+ project team in administering these evaluation tools, and regularly report to the project team.

It was agreed that the IAST+ project team would be in charge of the logistics of administering these tools, and that on a three monthly basis, all completed evaluation documentation will be submitted to the research team for analysis over a two year period (end in July 2016).

This evaluation was based on primary data and document analysis, with the main evaluation tools consisting of interviews, surveys, and the regular (three-monthly) analysis of organisational information provided by the IAST+ project team (e.g., number of cases managed, committee meeting
minutes, exit surveys, self-assessment surveys; see Research Tools below for a full list of evaluation tools).

The aims of the evaluation were to:

1. identify and describe the mechanisms or processes which enhance and support inter-agency collaboration for the purposes of integrated case planning and service delivery
2. evaluate the effectiveness of mechanisms and processes which enhance and support inter-agency collaboration for the purposes of integrated case planning and service delivery
3. determine the value of integrated case planning to children, young people and families from both client and agency perspectives
4. collate, and determine the relative efficacy of the range of mechanisms and processes which enhance and support inter-agency collaboration.

Through the establishment of this methodological framework, the IAST+ project team at the Office for Children was hoping to identify better ways for agencies to collaborate in the identification of ‘at-risk families’ and the subsequent delivery of appropriate services to these families. A previous evaluation (DPEM, 2012) had indicated that further research was needed to (among other, more logistical issues)

1. gauge the level of support participating agencies can commit to for the continuation of the IAST, and
2. investigate the outcomes of the IAST Program and determine whether the IASTs are making a difference to the lives of children, young and their families with complex needs.

The involvement of UTas (TILES) in the evaluation of the IAST+ was intended to provide the project team with the tools to achieve some of these goals.

Research tools

Interviews

The research team interviewed all personnel in charge of the IAST+ pilot project (at three project sites), as well as those in charge of the IAST project as a whole throughout Tasmania. The interviews, conducted on an individual basis, intended to identify the various issues that needed exploring through the tools UTAS would develop later on.

The in-depth ‘background’ interviews of the management team (one individual interview for each team member) allowed for the clear identification and documentation of project aims and objectives, and for an initial ‘mapping’ of processes in the three designated trial sites (Devonport, Launceston and Glenorchy). They highlighted expectations for the scheme, set up all deliverables for the evaluation,
and guided the design of the various evaluation tools (particularly the surveys) described below. These interviews also informed the creation of qualitative and quantitative key performance indicators (KPIs) for the whole project.

**Surveys**

Surveys were used during several phases of this research. They were available in online format to all current members of IASTs across Tasmania (approximately 80 professionals from government agencies, in their professional capacity). The surveys were conducted:

1. once for all IASTs, at the beginning of the research, and
2. at the beginning and end of the research for members of the IAST+ pilot (in the three sites of Devonport, Glenorchy and Launceston).

All IAST members were known publicly through their participation in IAST teams. Targeted selection of survey respondents allowed the research team to ‘locate ‘excellent’ participants to obtain [rich] data (Charmaz, quoted in Flick 2009). Surveying all IAST members allowed for: the exploration and full documentation of related processes and tools used by agencies when assessing cases; and the documentation of problems (identified by stakeholders themselves), solutions to problems, and successes in collaborative processes.

The first background ‘attitudinal survey’ captured attitudinal data from all 20 IAST stakeholders across Tasmania that were not part of the trial project. This survey established a benchmark in relation to existing (or otherwise) collaborative processes, the efficacy of IASTs to date and expectations or ‘hopes’ for new collaborative models. This ‘one-off’ survey was administered online. ‘Stakeholders’ included representatives of agencies sitting on local IAST committees (e.g.: Tasmania Police, ADS, DHHS, Education, etc.).

The second (exit) survey only concerned stakeholders in the three trial sites (Devonport, Launceston and Glenorchy). It established a benchmark in relation to existing (or otherwise) collaborative processes, the efficacy of IAST+ to date and expectations or ‘hopes’ for new collaborative models, especially since the inception of the IAST+ scheme. This (approx. 10 min.) survey was administered at the end of the allocated two-year period.

**Subsequent survey administration and data limitations**

DHHS was subjected to a significant organisational overhaul during the research timeline. This resulted, among other things, in the Office for Children becoming defunct and all staff being reallocated to different sections within DHHS. As a result, the administration of the research suffered. Particularly, the somewhat direct access to IAST members that was
provided to the researchers through the Office for Children was cancelled. This responsibility fell onto the chairs of the IAST+. Despite some reminders from the DPFEM and researchers, only 4 exit surveys were completed. As a result, the most reliable data available at the end of the research became stakeholder interviews (IAST+ site chairs, DPFEM stakeholders and DHHS staff remaining somewhat attached to the project) and IAST+ case efficiency data held by the DPFEM (the outcome of the internal rationalisation exercise run by the DPFEM).

‘Day-to-day’ tracking tools

In light of data from surveys and of the in-depth interview with the project team, the research team designed, in consultation with the project team, a set of three ‘day-to-day’ tracking tools for the project. To ease the process and avoid ‘research participation fatigue’, these tools served not only as evaluation tools but also as administrative tools for the project:

1. IAST+ committee meeting minutes. The project team provided us with a set of de-identified minutes from a previous committee meeting. In consultation with the project team, the researchers were tasked to design a more efficient format for minute taking. The new form aimed to allow: better identification of cases and of their underpinning factors (mental health, abuse, drug addiction, alcohol issues, etc.), better identification of lead agencies in case management, better information sharing across agencies, clear identification of collaborative mechanisms and better monitoring of cases.

2. An ‘adverse or noticeable event’ documentation tool. It may happen that the project team or committee members receive notification of an adverse event or get some ‘good news’ relating to a case being managed. Examples include appreciation expressed by a client, or a mistake in case management which caused a client to decide for an immediate exit from the program. The proposed one-page tracking document will allow for documentation and analysis of these events.

3. Stakeholder self-assessment survey. At the request of the project team, the research team designed a short ‘self-assessment survey’ for all stakeholders to fill in at the end of each committee meeting. This anonymous five minute survey (identified by site only) allowed for some reflection as to whether the meeting was well run, and whether collaborative mechanisms were clearly outlined for all cases discussed. It also enabled the identification of possible obstacles to collaboration or good case management. It allows members to ‘vent’
possible frustration or praise proceedings. To encourage participation, a raffle of a $30 Coles, Woolworths or Plants Plus voucher was drawn every six months.

Further to initial discussions with the Office for Children project team, and in view of developing an impact evaluation, the research team had intended to design a ‘client satisfaction survey’, to be available online or as a hard copy for all clients exiting the IAST+ project. This survey was to be made available in all three trial sites in paper form, with prepaid return envelopes. However, the IASTs run an ‘entry’ and ‘exit’ survey already, available on the forms clients have to sign to enter and exit the IAST program. It was therefore decided not to run any additional survey, to avoid research ‘fatigue’ on the part of clients, and rather include these surveys (de-identified by the management team) as part of our overall desktop analysis of data (see Phase 2, below).

After consultation with the project team, it was agreed that other than the in-depth interviews of the project team, the researchers would not administer these research tools. The administration of all surveys was undertaken by project team members, as a member of the project team always attends committee meetings. This was agreed upon with cost reduction in mind, and to avoid redundancy in evaluation processes.

Subsequent survey administration and data limitations

After DHHS was subjected to a significant organisational overhaul during the research timeline (as per the previous vignette), the day-to-day tracking tools became unavailable.

Research timeline

**Phase One** (June 2013 – 30th September 2013)

The first phase of this evaluation focused on the in-depth interviews of the project team, followed by the design, development and administration of all evaluation tools, in consultation with the project team.

**Phase Two** (1st October 2013 – September 2015)

This stage of the research consisted of the research team reporting on a three-monthly basis to the project team, following the compilation and delivery of all data obtained by the project team over the said three months. The project team delivered sets of minutes (as an example of proceedings), all self-assessment surveys filled in by stakeholders, and any event documentation filled in during those three months. A member of the research team collected these documents from the Office for Children. The research team proceeded with a document analysis, and provided a verbal report to the project team at the Office for Children.
It was agreed that depending on circumstances and on the dynamics of the project and upon consultation with the project team, evaluation tools may be slightly modified to allow better data entry, to cater for unplanned logistics, or improve data gathering/sharing.

The research team visited all three sites during Phase Two, to familiarise committee members with the research team and ask any questions they may have. These visits occurred during committee meetings, and allowed for an ad-hoc, independent observation of proceedings.

During this stage, the research team compiled

1. a first interim report (2014), followed by
2. a full literature review and
3. a second interim report (January 2015)

**Phase Three** (September 2015 – May 2016)

The third phase addressed the impact of the IAST+ initiative, and the issue of collaborative processes holistically. Researchers examined statistical data (provided by the project team, in particular by the DPFEM) as well as data collected from the exit survey, and data contained in the exit interview of the project team.

This final analysis considered all data relating to:

1. All self-assessment surveys
2. An ‘exit survey’ administered to all IAST+ trial site stakeholders
3. All day-to-day tracking documents completed by committee members
4. The exit interview of the project team
5. All project statistics obtained.
2 -- IAST+ engagement

Attendance

Number of meetings held over the evaluation period varied between sites; Launceston (co-located) met 15 times, Glenorchy 12 times and Devonport 11 times. Meeting attendance at the three sites fluctuated over the study (Fig. 1). Devonport is the pilot site where attendance has been the most regular, with number of attendees between 6 and 11 (average of 9) per meeting. Glenorchy IAST meetings have been well attended throughout the evaluation period, with between 7 and 14 participants (average of 9) per meeting. Launceston is the site where attendance has been the most irregular, with numbers varying between 3 and 10, and an overall average of 6 attendees per meeting.

![Meeting Attendance](image)

Figure 1 Meeting attendance

Meeting attendance seems to be directly linked to satisfaction with the IAST process in general. Table 2 shows the average of stakeholders’ satisfaction over the year at the three trial sites. Overall, participants remained satisfied with the IAST process and meeting proceedings. The Launceston site (co-located model), while meeting more often than the comparison sites, reported higher levels of dissatisfaction on average and lower attendance at meetings.

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1 This report takes into account all self-assessment surveys returned to the research team by 31st October 2016.
The Glenorchy model reported the highest rate of satisfaction of the three sites, with 100 per cent of attendees reporting being very satisfied or satisfied. This compares with 98 per cent very satisfied/satisfied in Devonport and 92 per cent in Launceston. Devonport has the highest average reporting being very satisfied.

### Table 2 Average satisfaction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very satisfied</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Not satisfied</th>
<th>Not satisfied at all</th>
<th>Unsure</th>
<th>Average attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Devonport</td>
<td>41.2%</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Launceston</td>
<td>34.5%</td>
<td>57.5%</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glenorchy</td>
<td>35.0%</td>
<td>65.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Whilst meetings in Glenorchy seem to have gone smoothly with relatively consistent levels of satisfaction (Fig 4), meeting attendees in Devonport and Launceston expressed dissatisfaction on several occasions (Fig. 2 and 3).

![Satisfaction - Devonport](image)

**Figure 2 Satisfaction tracking Devonport**

While Devonport members report very high levels of satisfaction; there were two meetings where one attendee reported not being satisfied.
Figure 3 Satisfaction tracking Launceston
At the Launceston site; there were five meetings where attendees reported not being satisfied with the meeting.

Figure 4 Satisfaction tracking Glenorchy
Glenorchy meetings appear to have had good outcomes for attendees on every occasion.
# Process issues

Overall, stakeholders perceived that group meetings allowed for an accurate analysis of all cases presented in meetings, as indicated in Figures 5, 6 and 7. An average of 22% of attendees at the Devonport site (across all meetings) reported very accurate analysis as well as 63% reporting analysis as accurate.

![Accuracy of analysis - Devonport](image1.png)

**Figure 5 - Accuracy of analysis – Devonport**

An average of 21% of attendees at the Launceston site (across all meetings) reported very accurate analysis as well as 58% reporting analysis as accurate.

![Accuracy of analysis - Launceston](image2.png)

**Figure 6 - Accuracy of analysis – Launceston**
An average of 17% of attendees at the Glenorchy site (across all meetings) reported very accurate analysis as well as 77% reporting analysis as accurate.

**Accuracy of analysis - Glenorchy**

![Bar chart showing accuracy of analysis at Glenorchy](image)

**Figure 7 - Accuracy of analysis – Glenorchy**

As shown in Figures 5-7 above there were instances at each site where meeting participants did not think cases had been discussed well – with either inaccuracies or ambiguities: six meetings in Devonport where some participants were dissatisfied with the analysis of cases, as well as seven meetings in Launceston and five in Glenorchy.

Details about issues with process and governance are discussed in the following section.
3– Stakeholder feedback and discussion

Information in this section has been sourced from the anonymous online end of project survey of stakeholders as well as face to face interviews with selected members of the three committees, including Chairs.

End of project stakeholder survey

The following results represent responses to a second (and exit) survey with stakeholders in the three trial sites (Devonport, Launceston and Glenorchy). This (approx. 10 min.) survey was administered at the end of the two-year evaluation period. Responses were received from DPFEM (2), DoE (3) and DHHS (4). The Office for Children agency had been closed during the life of the evaluation. No stakeholders from local government responded to the survey. Of the nine respondents completing the exit survey, four each were located in Devonport and Launceston and one respondent was located in Glenorchy. Seven survey respondents reported always attended meetings, while two attended sometimes.

While the number of respondents to the survey is small (nine) out of a possible 35 participants at meetings or 26%, the responses reflect the trends reported in the first and second Interim reports.

Value of IAST+ to individual stakeholder

For more than three quarters of these survey respondents a major value of the IAST+ was collaboration; whereas two-thirds reported that it was most valuable for finding the right intervention for the young person or family

- Regular update on at-risk families, confidence that they are receiving this level of support (Launceston stakeholder)

Almost half found the IAST+ was a valuable platform for exchanging information.

- Invaluable opportunity to foster and extend my network to collaboratively address multi-faceted issues for at risk youths and their families (Devonport stakeholder)

Value of IAST+ to stakeholder agency/organisation

Respondents reported that the value to their agencies was communication, shared focus and collaboration as well as confidence that the intervention was the relevant support for the family. For one stakeholder the value was also in accountability -

- Cooperative and positive working relationships that ensures agencies remain engaged and accountable for at risk youths and their families (Devonport)
Respondents were asked in what capacity they attended the IAST+ meeting. Table 4 shows their responses. In most cases it appears that the committee member was selected by their organisation/agency to attend the meetings.

**Table 3 Member Capacity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In what capacity are you in your IAST+ role:</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I attend meetings on a needs basis</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is part of my job description</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Someone from my agency needs to attend, I was chosen</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I volunteered</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was nominated</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>answered question</td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Understanding of purpose of IAST**

All stakeholders responding to the survey had a good understanding of the purpose of the program with most respondents mentioning improved support for families, improved case management and a shared agenda for agencies involved:

*To provide high level, targeted support to young people who are involved with two or more government agencies and, if possible to keep them out of the youth justice system and engage them in an appropriate educational program. To enable the various agencies to share information with each other which is used to inform our support/approach/intervention (Launceston stakeholder)*

**Understanding of collaboration in the context of IAST**

Collaboration was understood as the sharing of information, ideas and resources in order to provide the best outcomes for clients, working with other professionals in a relationship characterised by trust and respect.

*working together in a manner that enables participants to cooperatively operate in an environment of trust and respect that recognises the capacity of the individual agency and expertise of the individual participant (Devonport stakeholder)*

*Honest sharing of current information to enable us to support young people - whatever that may look like. IAST members trust each other and have the best interests of these young people as the prime focus of all discussions (Launceston stakeholder)*

**Successful collaborations outside case management roles**

Survey respondents nominated a number of drivers for successful collaboration outside their normal role such as creation of linkages, networking, sharing knowledge and experience in working together provided through membership of IAST+. 
**Internal obstacles to collaboration**

When asked about any obstacles to collaboration a third of survey respondents skipped this question; another third reported that there were no obstacles. The remaining respondents cited lack of senior management support of IAST process, problems with finding time to attend and families’ not giving consent for referrals as obstacles they had encountered.

**External obstacles to collaboration**

In terms of external obstacles, irregular attendance by agencies (specifically Child Protection) was raised by a third of survey respondents. Further obstacles were agencies not undertaking actions assigned to them. One respondent reported that not all meetings used a strengths based approach.

**Benefits of early intervention framework for IASTs**

All respondents saw the main benefit in being able to intervene with young people before issues escalate in severity and complexity and/or become entrenched. As one Launceston stakeholder says:

*The obvious benefit is that it prevents some very dire situations eventuating in families with high and complex needs. Identifying problems earlier can result in a much better outcome for the youth and/or their family. Youth realistically can have a limited time period where offering assistance will have a positive impact and change the direction of their life. If left too late they have the risk of becoming entrenched in a lifestyle and/or health deteriorates (Launceston Stakeholder)*

**What two things could improve the IAST process?**

Although the survey sample was small, there was widespread concurrence that more involvement from NGOs was desirable. Other suggestions around governance were mandatory attendance by the main agencies, more contemporary business rules and improved recording of referrals, subsequent action and progress to avoid repetition. Suggestions around practice involved using a strengths based approach, inclusive practice and working with children at an earlier age.

**Agency support for attendance**

All respondents reported that their agency gave them time to attend IAST meetings. Three respondents noted that attendance was in their job descriptions and one received assistance with transport. Other comments included the agency recognising that attendance at IAST was worthwhile and having the support of the agency to make decisions about service provision.

**How well is information shared?**

All respondents reported that information was shared very well or well both within meetings and outside meeting times. Comments included that membership of the committee was stable which fosters good working relationships, respect and trust and enables communication.
How well is your meeting chaired?

Respondents reported that their meetings were very well (71%) or well (29%) chaired. Comments included the meetings being well organised and leadership being strong and committed which further engenders trust in the process.

Are at risk families identified?

100% of respondents to the survey said yes.

Assessment of impact of agency on IAST+ cases

Stakeholders answered this question with statements describing the impact of their agency in a positive way:

1. [school] Principals are aware of the process and what the IAST is there for. Information is fed back to principals and they provide up to date info for meetings. Education is recognised as fundamentally important if positive change is to occur.
2. A huge impact by providing stable/secure accommodation - where able - to allow other agencies to have better success with their interventions.
3. A lot, we have nearly all the families with our different services that are on the list and it enables everyone to work more effectively with the families, sharing info and resources
4. Care planning. Specialist knowledge of acute psychiatric issues and developmental needs.
5. Education has the potential to make a huge difference as long as it is tailored to suit the individual needs
6. Significant impact
7. We can provide support if needed, with consent.

What resources are needed for good case management and problem-solving to occur?

Stakeholders were asked for suggestions for improvements. Responses included suggestions for dedicated workers for IAST+, information and knowledge of the sector, leadership, respect for agency and individual worker expertise, legislative and governance frameworks, collaboration, and time.

These responses reflect previous feedback around lack of shared understanding of the role of IAST+ and its constituent members and a lack of resourcing to manage the caseload.

How would you describe the impact of the IAST+ on at-risk youths and their family?

Responses ranged from nil to highly successful; those that regarded it as positive commented that this was because senior personnel were involved; action for high risk families is often immediate; other respondents credited success to the combination of services which makes it able to address all of the young person’s needs.

What should be two key performance indicators for the IASTs?

Suggestions for key performance indicators (KPI) for IASTs fell into two main classifications of short and long term KPIs.
In the short term, KPIs might be:

a. Improved engagement with appropriate educational program
b. Short term engagement of families with support services
c. Communication and inclusive practices with families
d. Safe and supportive living arrangements

Whereas longer term, KPIs might be:

e. Offending is lower
f. Reduction in agency resources associated with the family
g. Families exit because goals are met
h. Positive feedback from families

*Name two things the IAST has achieved over last two years*

The main themes arising from this question were that networks and good working relationships between agencies and NGOs have been established and there is deeper knowledge of the young people and the issues that impact on their risk & safety. A third theme that emerged was achieving engagement with families.

*Details of meetings*

In terms of timing – respondents rated this as good, suitable and flexible. Feedback is that meetings are well chaired, all have opportunities to speak and be listened to respectfully. Discussion is regarded as professional, relevant, respectful. Venues were regarded as convenient and good. Caseloads are assessed as workable in most cases. Follow-up is seen as generally good; one respondent was critical about non-attendance and not reading minutes which meant actions were delayed. In other comments, one stakeholder reported they would prefer a better method of recording the reason for referral, and improved systems for monitoring progress and final outcomes.

*Stakeholder interviews*

The analysis of interview data demonstrates that there remains a lack of clear consensus of what IASTs are for, and what they should be doing and why. The exact purpose of the collaborative process also seems confusing, as aims diverge according to respondents’ (siloed) professional core businesses and personal views of the scheme. The research team has chosen to unpack respondents’ questions in the following two-fold manner: views about purpose and views about collaboration.
Views about IAST purpose

Through the interviews with a variety of stakeholders the evaluators concluded that there was a lack of consistency in member views of the purpose of the IAST+. Some were quite clear:

*in the name, it’s Inter Agency Support Team. It’s about all agencies coming together to support our clients. That’s the fundamental thing. I suppose it’s about engaging or trying to engage with the clients I’ve got and about making positive steps in their lives (Launceston).*

Some stakeholders saw the sole purpose of IAST+ being to bring the resources and collaboration around the table. Other stakeholders saw the IAST+ as a general safety net:

*if a child has become subject to the attentions of an IST there’s clearly a lot of things that have fallen over, whether it be at home or at school, socially, drug and alcohol, family breakdown, any number of those nasty social ills. But clearly this is a child that, to get to IST, has fallen through the cracks. The IST’s within our State is probably their safety net..., it’s a safety net for children who have fallen through the cracks (Glenorchy).*

For some stakeholders the purpose IS the collaboration; to look at the young person, their family and the resources in place or available in the local area and suitable for their needs. All the agencies at the table are usually actively involved with the families being discussed; so it is the joining of dots and sharing of intelligence that is the key goal.

Views about collaboration

Inherent in the name is that there will be partnerships and collaboration involved in the model. At most sites around the table are Education, Health, Housing, child and adolescent mental health (CAMHS), Child Protection, Police and in some cases youth justice. A clear benefit has been the opportunity for members to network, and share information about their services and joint clients in a pro-active manner which enables positive working relationships to be developed and nurtured.

*it creates a networking environment where people actually know each other and it’s not just a group email going out in relation to the agenda, there’s out of session contacts that go on all the time (Glenorchy).*

The synergy created by the model enables agency representatives to come up with creative solutions to client issues.

*We will often come up with innovative local solutions to problems and that’s where it’s having not only the key stakeholders but those key people from the key stakeholder groups who have the networks and know where we need to go (Devonport).*

Similarly, essential to collaboration and a good working partnership is the commitment of the participants to find positive outcomes for the young people involved in their service.

*The reason it does work well is because of the members of my committee, it’s their passion and they’re a driving force to actually making a change in these people’s lives (Launceston).*
However, as foreshadowed in the Interim Reports provided in this evaluation, there are also negative opinions about collaboration under the IAST frameworks. The main issue raised by stakeholders is the irregularity of attendance by agencies (Child Protection has been named up several times as having poor attendance record) and this creates a gap in information on the young person and their family. Another issue with attendance is that the representative of an agency changes often which impacts on continuity and flow of information as well as relationship building. As well as inconsistent attendance, meetings have been described as “gossip fests” rather than strategically collaborating towards outcomes. Some stakeholders attribute this to the age of the IAST+ model:

My concerns about this process because it’s been around for so long... about it becoming just a talkfest. We sit once a month, we talk about these clients but nothing really happens and I’m really worried about that (Launceston).

Others commented about the difference in levels of commitment by the agency in terms of senior management not providing enough resources for the agency to commit time and staff resources to the action items recommended at meetings. Commitment is also an issue for those being seconded to the meeting without sufficient briefing. Meeting chairs report a strong level of commitment to outcomes from regular meeting attendees. It is recommended that ad hoc allocation to IAST type tasks is avoided by partner agencies as this weakens capacity considerably.

Resourcing is an issue in the current climate of cuts to public sector jobs and community sector funding. Although at times changes implemented due to rationalisation have actually enabled the IAST+ model. One such examples is that changes in allocation of school social workers so that they are working across schools districts (rather than allocated to single schools) has proven useful for IASTs as a single person will now have contact with multiple young people at multiple school sites.

Commitment is also an issue in relation to the information provided by each agency to the meetings. While often information is shared generously, at other times the silos between agencies are very rigid. Sometimes the reluctance to share information might relate to confidential information which then needs to be disclosed in general terms e.g. police.

Vignette

Young person disengaged from education, drinking heavily, into dope and running amuck with probably five or six other young people. IAST organised community conferencing and got him to Court and worked intensively to sever the ties with peer group. Members mobilised a lot of support around that young person, changed his education plan and that young person is now doing extremely well 18 months or two years down the track.

I say "Client One is going to court on the 4th of next month at (x)am. There are 20 complaints before the court and on those complaints there are a total of 35 charges." That's all I say.
Interviewees also raised the issue of juggling different levels of information from agencies and NGO workers with a short amount of time allocated to each case. Devonport has had NGOs at the table for several years; being a feature of a small regional areas with reduced government agency presence. Devonport stakeholders make the point that NGOs are key members because not all information about families resides in government file holding.

There is a consensus among all sites that NGOs need to be at the table as they have a different kit of resources. But this is counteracted by the need to keep the membership at a workable number. It may be that their attendance is case dependent e.g. NGOs working with family being discussed are invited. At the same time including a range of different organisations with different capacities can add to the complexity of collaboration. There is also the case of different languages and discourses used by the various agency and NGO representatives as well as vast differences in the capacity to respond quickly. Chairing of meetings by Police is both a strength and a weakness of the model; police might have capacity to undertake certain actions because of DPFEM systems and resources but police also bring a particular criminal justice focus to the meetings which might not always be appropriate.

Governance is also raised as a parallel issue with collaboration. Glenorchy and Launceston have regular meeting times and venues; meeting on a set date each month.

   We really meet once a month but if something happens in one of the clients lives that's time critical and can't wait till the next meeting then we do emails to each other. There might be a significant thing like one has been reported missing or not been seen for two or three days. We can't wait 28 days so we might have an email or phone call if something is time critical or just can't wait (Launceston).

However, essential to meeting the workload generated by the meetings is for the committee to convene outside regular times.

   ... to discuss the clients properly and to make sure we get the best for the clients... probably 15 on the list... once the list grows to mid 20s ... then the meeting is an hour and a half to two hours and I find, no disrespect to my committee, that people just start to switch off a little bit and we don't seem to have the same outcomes as we would for a smaller list where we can take more time to discuss some outcome (Launceston)

For Glenorchy, the team meets regularly outside the set meeting dates:

   Look, to be quite honest, most of our work occurs out of session. We might get some outcomes during a session and who needs to follow up but a lot of it will be meeting as different agencies, different people from within those agencies meeting outside to further discuss and progress some of it. Most of the work goes on outside of it (Glenorchy member).

Devonport negotiate date and time of each meeting and the chair also mentions doing informal things outside of meeting times. This is a clear demonstration that the volume and complexity of the
caseload requires increased resourcing to enable the local teams to work with at risk young people and their families. For some the model is too passive –

an IAST meeting that meets once a month, but doesn’t meet in school holidays, it’s a fairly passive approach to actually dealing with something that’s this huge [demonstrating], and all you want to do is look at this bit once a month. So and even though it may have worked as an adjunct to other things, it’s a drop in the ocean, and it relies upon people going away from the meeting and doing other stuff, and connecting up other services, and trying to make more inroads with families. And if there are limited resources, or there are different priorities or whatever, it’s very difficult for the decisions of an IAST to actually necessarily always be translated into some action on the ground, or enough action.

The complexity of the cases being managed is acknowledged by all stakeholders. Most of the young people being referred to IAST+ are known to Gateway^2 or else are common clients with complex needs.

In this sense there is strong evidence that IAST has moved away from dealing with early intervention cases and are case working youth known to the criminal justice system. There is a theme amongst the interviews that suggests IAST+ may be spending too much time with those already entrenched in the system (Youth Justice Services and Ashley Youth Detention Centre^3) and not enough on 0-12 year olds who might be able to be diverted.

Because it’s gone for so long - and no disrespect to anybody - it’s been allowed to creep to the stage where a lot of the other agencies are probably guilty of referring people to IST because they’ve run out of ideas themselves and think they’ll put it there and maybe move the accountability for the wrong reasons... maybe (Launceston)

Unfortunately a lot of our kids are at that pointy end of the triangle. Some of them, we’re not going to stop the behaviours that we’re dealing with. Sometimes it’s about trying to curb it just a little bit (Glenorchy)

There is always difficulty in measuring success in early intervention programs but IAST members note their frustration with the difficulty in measuring success. This is in part a reflection of unclear roles but also a lack of transparency and consistency with tracking the young people and their families through

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^2 Funded by the Department of Health & Human Services, Gateway services link individuals and families with appropriate information and advice, brief intervention and referrals to relevant services. Staff work collaboratively with individuals and families to ensure their needs are recognised and the appropriate service response is given.

^3 Youth Justice Services is responsible for the delivery of restorative justice services to the victims and perpetrators of youth crime aged 10-17 years. Community based services such as community conferencing, community service orders and supervision support are provided by Community Youth Justice Teams based in the North West, North and South. Custodial Services are provided at Ashley Youth Detention Centre in the North, near Deloraine. AYDC is responsible for the safe and secure care of young people on remand and detention. Community Youth Justice is responsible for diversion and rehabilitation programs for young people under supervision in the community.
the various interventions. Protocols and workflow documents have developed incrementally and differently in each area which makes it difficult to evaluate strengths and weaknesses; particularly with large caseloads of complex clients. Interviewees were critical about data collection (there is almost none done, which prevents things from moving forward). Data gathering is currently ad hoc, and is not consistently maintained within one site, even less across IAST sites. Lack of consistency in documentation of process and outcomes undermines the validity of any initiative. In the case of IAST+ the lack of comparable data collection tools makes it difficult to evaluate individual and universal impact factors, being the enablers or barriers to success and obscures what works for which client in what circumstances. The evaluators were also unable to determine any cost/benefit analysis of the models as this data was unavailable. It is important that processes for collecting these types of data are set up at the beginning of any social program or initiative as it becomes impossible to retro-fit tools to inconsistent data.

To further complicate lack of clarity around the trajectory towards outcomes for the young people involved, IAST+ is often not the only body working with these kids

*I get frustrated because some of our kids are very hard case kids and it worries me that they sit on too many committees. Some of them sit on IST but because some are on care and protection orders with Child Protection they have Care Team meetings at Child Protection to discuss them and I go to those as well. Some are on Youth Justice so they have meetings and I go to them, too. I’m very mindful that some of these clients could be discussed at two or three different meetings and that’s when I said to Hobart that if some of these are on Youth Justice and they have their CCC meetings - Collaborative Case Conference meetings - we shouldn’t go against each other. So if they are on CCC with Youth Justice I should release them off ours so that all the energy goes with Youth Justice because when Youth Justice have meetings they have psychologists and... they have more people to their table than I get to mine. So if they’re on Youth Justice matters and they’ve been referred to their CCC program I delist them straight away ...*(Glenorchy)

The IAST+ were created with a specific early intervention focus. Early intervention is designed to prevent the onset of delinquent behaviour and supports the development of a youth’s assets and resilience. However, clients very often are kept on IAST+ listings even after going to Ashley, or after long periods of aggravation/escalation in deviant behaviour. From a model designed for early intervention, IAST+ has grown organically to try to be a ‘one size fits all’ model and this is causing it to
fracture. The resourcing is insufficient for a large caseload of complex clients. As one interviewee said “If it were truly early intervention, neither police nor youth justice would be at the table’.

Although it is difficult to make direct comparisons for reasons discussed above (lack of documentation, lack of process and outcome data, lack of detail of decision making and actions), the evaluators consider the model operating in Devonport as most meeting the needs of local clients. As far as the IAST+ model is concerned, the key to success is stability in attendance, consistent outcomes and tangible actions that have impacted on the young people involved. Our analysis is that while all sites are heavily reliant on investment of members; action items arising from the meetings are often simplistic with sketchy follow-up, which often does not take into account the whole context of the child and the multiple risk factors involved. This might be conceptualised as the social determinants of (for example) re-engagement with school; the young person also needs clothes, hygiene, nutrition, transport etc. for re-engagement with school to be possible on an ongoing basis. Devonport, with the NGOs at the table, seems to be able to be more flexible in responding to the needs of the young person and perhaps this is a feature of a smaller community where services already have a culture of cooperation.

Many of the weaknesses associated with the IAST that have been discussed above, will be ameliorated through movement towards Joined Up groups which feature smaller caseloads, structured risk assessment processes which might triage young at risk people into categories such as high offenders, low offenders, pre-offenders and no offending. These groups are aimed more at early intervention with young people and the structure of the groups does not require Child Protection and Youth Justice Agencies to be regularly at the table.
4- Conclusions and recommendations

In summary, the evaluators consider that the strengths of the IAST+ model is that it was an early example of best practice for an inter-agency collaboration exercise. The model endured, although with place-based variation, for many years and enabled trust to be built among agencies working with at-risk young people. IAST+ was able to share information amongst agencies which filled information gaps and provided good outcomes for families. In terms of weaknesses, the models being used are now outmoded and cases which are referred to the IAST+ groups are increasingly complex which contributes to their dwindling effectiveness. This increase in the referral of high risk youth has meant that the IAST+ has moved away from its early intervention focus. Weaknesses in terms of governance are that there are unclear boundaries between agencies, a lack of clarity around the program’s purpose and there is a lack of data to enable tracking of drivers and barriers to success. One of the main impacts contributing to towards lack of focus is perhaps that the agency that set up the IAST+ model was disbanded and subsequently the program has been police-led. Further weakness has been found in the resourcing for IAST+ with workload exceeding the governance model and budget provided.

In terms of opportunities for the future, the momentum generated by IAST+ will enable a newer generation model to be undertaken and flourish due to the networks and information sharing capacity that has been built up. Agencies have learned how to operate across their organisational boundaries and this has potential to lead to innovation in terms of working together to support young people at risk. The threats that the IAST+ model faces include a general lack of appetite for funding early intervention programs under current government economic frameworks. Attempts to provide ‘one size fits all’ service models are unable to meet the heterogenetic and complex needs of at-risk young people and so one-stop shops are set up to fail.

Moving forward, the evaluators see the legacy of IAST+ in the emerging youth welfare space of ‘joined up services’. The IAST+ program has the potential to evolve into the collective impact framework which is seen as current best practice and our recommendations will facilitate the migration from the older model into a collective impact model. The five key conditions for collective impact are:

1. A **common agenda** for change including a shared understanding of the problem and a joint approach to solving it through agreed upon actions.

2. Collecting data and **measuring results** consistently across all the participants ensures shared measurement for alignment and accountability.

3. A **plan of action** that outlines and coordinates mutually reinforcing activities for each participant.
4. Open and **continuous communication** is needed across the many players to build trust, assure mutual objectives, and create common motivation.
5. A **backbone organisation** (s) with staff and specific set of skills to serve the entire initiative and coordinate participating organisations and agencies.³

Finally, IAST+ has also demonstrated the synergism between law enforcement and public health which has potential for further exploration.

**Recommendations**

After analysis of information collected as part of the evaluation; the evaluators recommend the following:

- IAST partnerships to clarify their purpose – a charter or MOU to be developed which outlines the parameters of operation and each members’ roles and responsibilities. Implicit in this recommendation is sign off from the senior management of the partners.
- IAST+ membership to be expanded to include relevant NGOs in each area. This will enable young people to be tracked across a number of different intervention programs and services.
- Clear work processes – all parties with decision making role are visible and accountable for outcomes
- Adoption of clear risk assessment/protective factor framework which outlines what early intervention is and what a young person’s trajectory might look like e.g. no offending; pre-offending; low offending; high offending.
- Impact factors – which relate to the various contextual components of the young person’s life e.g. education, health, nutrition, drug and alcohol issues, housing, family support etc. The impacts or risks involved in each young person’s case to be clearly tracked; which involves the development of a generic tracking document for all sites.
- Equal footing – all members to have the same level of authority to make decisions on behalf of their agency
- Sufficient resources to undertake the work involved in the team and carry out required action items. We recommend the appointment of a dedicated Coordinator for each IAST+ whose sole responsibility for organising meetings, following up on action items and documenting positive and negative responses to agency/NGO interventions.
- Commitment to dismantle silos – IAST+ members to consciously work together to recognise when member agency policies or resources may not be working in the best interest of the young person.

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• Change the frequency of meetings to weekly – this will eliminate the need for lengthy meetings or out of session meetings and enable the partners to respond in a timelier manner to their clients.

• Implement clear protocols for exit for cases completed or too complex for the IAST+ model.

• Protocol for follow-up – a standardised protocol for follow-up with clients which includes reporting and documentation will allow for greater transparency and accountability.

• Longitudinal evaluation of selected cases – each site to document a number of case studies each year for long term follow up e.g. on exiting program, and follow up after one, two and five years.
## APPENDIX A – Research Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Items</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Project Phases</th>
<th>By</th>
<th>Completed</th>
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<tr>
<td>Planning and scoping of evaluation</td>
<td>July/August 2013</td>
<td>Phase 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consideration of methodology and evaluation tools</td>
<td>August 2013</td>
<td>Phase 1</td>
<td>TILES</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project team Interviews</td>
<td>August 2013</td>
<td>Phase 1</td>
<td>TILES</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preparation of surveys</td>
<td>August 2013</td>
<td>Phase 1</td>
<td>TILES / OfC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Formatting of all surveys</td>
<td>September 2013</td>
<td>Phase 1</td>
<td>TILES</td>
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<tr>
<td>Administration of background survey of 20 IAST sites</td>
<td>Early September 2013</td>
<td>Phase 1</td>
<td>TILES / OfC</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td>Administration of background survey of 3 IAST+ trial sites</td>
<td>Early September 2013</td>
<td>Phase 1</td>
<td>TILES / OfC</td>
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<td>Design of day-to-day tracking tools</td>
<td>Mid-September 2013</td>
<td>Phase 1</td>
<td>TILES / OfC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Release and administration of day-to-day tracking tools</td>
<td>From October 1st 2013</td>
<td>Phase 2</td>
<td>OfC</td>
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<td>Release and administration of Client exit survey</td>
<td>From October 1st 2013</td>
<td>Phase 2</td>
<td>TILES / OfC</td>
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<td>Ad-hoc visit of IAST+ trial sites</td>
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<td>TILES</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td>Design of meeting observation tool</td>
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<td>Phase 2</td>
<td>TILES (SK)</td>
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<td>Ongoing collection of data</td>
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<td>OfC</td>
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<td>Release of data to TILES for Analysis</td>
<td>From October 2013, every 3 months</td>
<td>Phase 2</td>
<td>OfC</td>
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<td>Desktop Analysis of data, three-monthly reports</td>
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<td>TILES</td>
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<td>Desktop Analysis of all data; preparation and delivery of final report</td>
<td>From late September 2015</td>
<td>Phase 3</td>
<td>TILES / OfC</td>
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<td>Quality control and information checks of surveys</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Phases 1, 2 &amp; 3</td>
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## Appendix B – Research outcomes and deliverables

<table>
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<tr>
<th>OUTCOMES</th>
<th>SUB-AIMS</th>
<th>DELIVERABLES</th>
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</table>
| 1. Mapping of how agencies work together and how they can work together better | Mapping of chair facilitation skills (what makes a good Chair?) | Series of recommendations on:  
- Meeting facilitation  
- Meeting chairing  
- Information sharing  
- Follow up on information  
- Process ‘invisibility’  
- Needs identification and assessment  
- Outcome identification  
- Exit / retirement process for children and their families  
- Impact identification AND documentation  
- Stakeholder expectation  
- Project purpose(s) |
| | IAST+ meeting dynamics (how are meetings run, and could they be better run?) |  |
| | Overall collaboration and responsibility allocation |  |
| | Identification of information sharing pathways (+ what is done with this information) |  |
| 2. Impact study: how have IAST+ changed kids’ lives? | Acquiring an indication / establishing qualitative indicators of behavioural changes (for example) | Series of recommendations on:  
- Current impact measures  
- Possible impact measures (identification of possible qualitative and/or quantitative KPIs)  
- ‘Hard’ and ‘soft’ measure of impact |
| 3. Overall IAST+ SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis |  | Trends analysis, with extractions of:  
- Collaboration gaps  
- Collaboration strengths  
- Possible process warning  
- Economic argument (how many hours are saved, through agencies meeting via the IAST model) |
| 4. The effect 1, 2 and 3 (above) have on service delivery |  |  |