

**Submission
No 22**

COMMUNITY SAFETY IN REGIONAL AND RURAL COMMUNITIES

Name: Name suppressed
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Partially
Confidential

The current state of crime in Gunnedah has reached intolerable levels whereby people are scared for their safety in their own homes, and aware that it will repeat night after night. I personally live out of town but during crime sprees we sleep with one eye open, and getting up at every dog bark or noise we can hear. Friends and colleagues have been victims of break ins and theft and their distress is palpable and impacts on the wider community. Furthermore it is creating a racial divide within the community with rising tensions and there is an undertone of violence and the risk of vigilante behaviour as many feel the police do not have the powers to prevent this from continuing to happen. Many of the offenders are well known in the community and frustration continues to rise each time they return to the community.

This is making the town a melting point of crime, racism and fear, and a town that people are considering leaving - myself included. This is not an area I want to raise my family in under the current circumstances from safety, lack of solutions, undertones of violence and racism etc.