

# JUST NORTH

Volatile Substance Misuse (VSM)  
in Far North Queensland  
January to June 2019

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## OVERVIEW



# Volatile Substance Misuse (VSM) in FNQ



Far North Queensland

## VSM incident locations

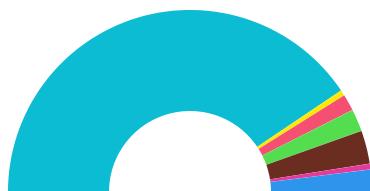
89% of the total reported VSM incidents occurred in the Cairns Region. Incidents were also reported in Weipa, Kowanyama, Lockhart River, Mareeba, Bamaga and Thursday Island. One incident was reported in Normanton however, this location is not within the Just North target area.

## VSM Use in Cairns Suburbs

Twelve suburbs in the Cairns local Government area (LGA) had reported VSM incidents. These were Bentley Park, Bungalow, Cairns City, Cairns North, Earlville, Edmonton, Manoora, Mount Sheridan, Redlynch, Westcourt, White Rock and Woree.

## Location of reported VSM incidents

Incidents Reported by FNQ region



- Cairns Region
- Cook Shire
- Kowanyama Shire
- Lockhart River Shire
- Mareeba Shire
- Northern Peninsula Area
- Torres Strait Region

Incidents Reported by Cairns suburb



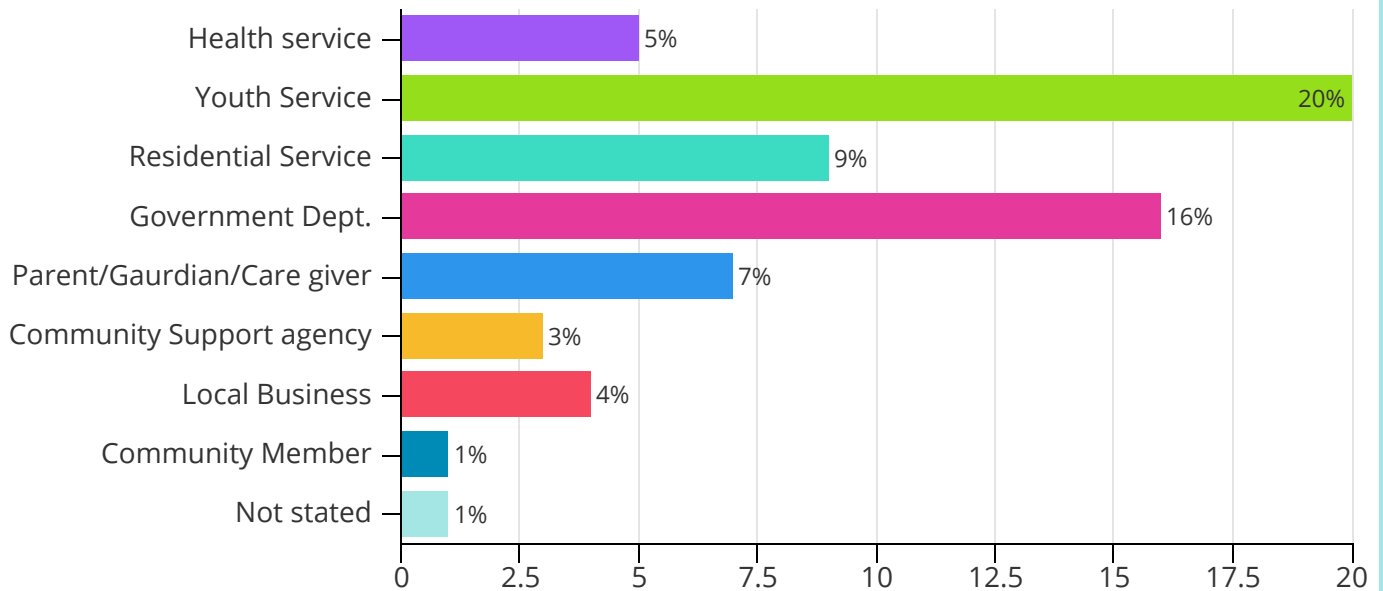
Town	LGA	Reported Incidents
Cairns	Cairns Region	84
Weipa	Cook Shire	1
Kowanyama	Kowanyama Shire	3
Lockhart River	Lockhart River Shire	4
Mareeba	Mareeba Shire	6
Bamaga	Northern Peninsula Area	1
Thursday Island	Torres Strait Region	4
Normanton*	Shire of Carpentaria	1

\* Location outside of program target area

# VSM Incident Reports

Local Business  
Parent/Guardian/Care giver  
Government Department  
YETI Staff  
Youth Service  
Residential Care Service  
Health Service  
Community Support Agency

VSM Incident Reporting Agents



# VSM Users

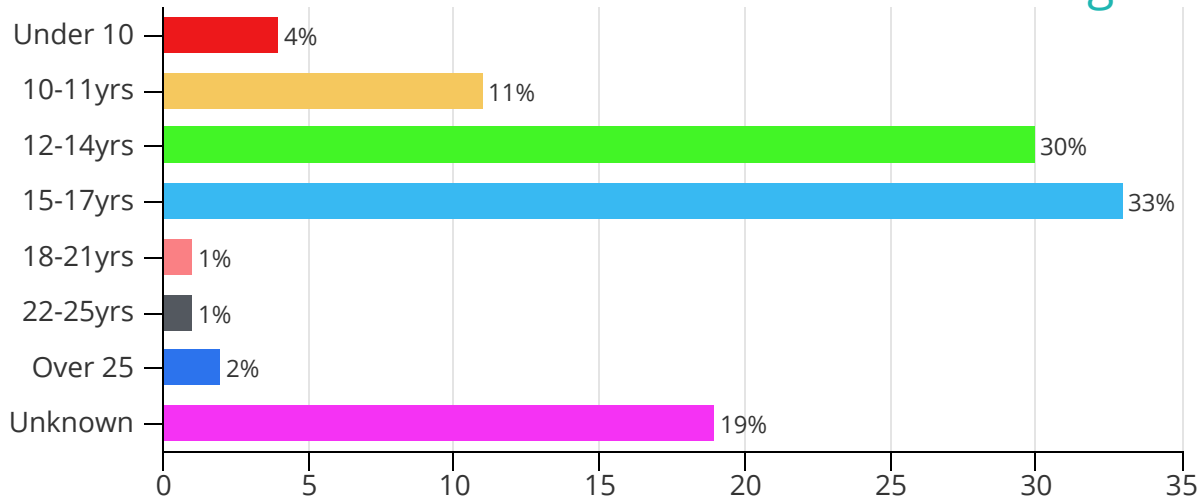
## Gender



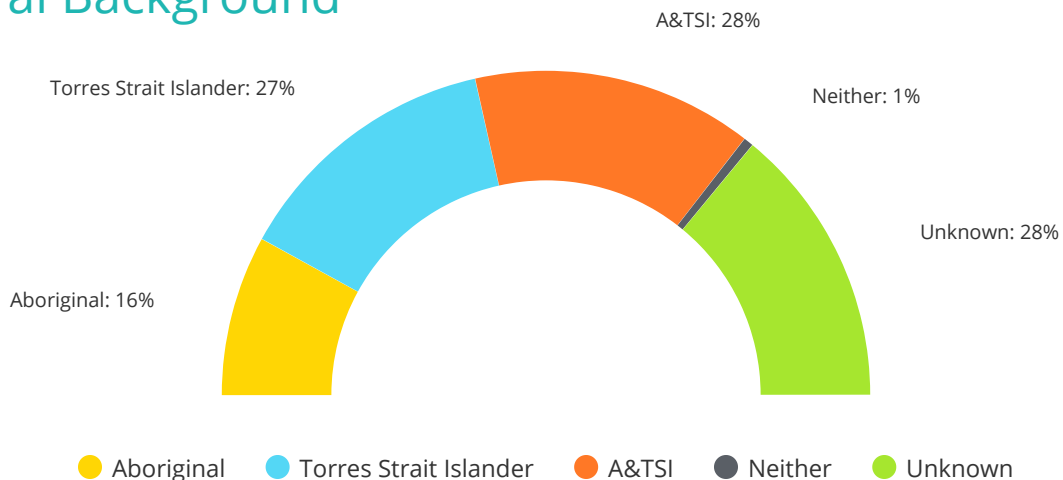
Female Male Unidentified

**58%** of reported VSM users were female

## Age Group



## Cultural Background



# PRODUCTS REPORTED VSM INCIDENTS

In 95.1% of reported incidents  
**Deodorant**  
was the preferred product



**237**

is the total number of deodorant cans consumed in VSM incidents

**3**

is the average number of deodorant cans consumed by VSM users per VSM incident

**31**

is the highest number of deodorant cans consumed by a single VSM user in one sitting

## Other products inhaled included

Product	Percentage
Paint	1.2%
Glue	0.4%
Petrol	1.6%
Other aerosol	0.4%
Unknown	1.2%

# Retailers



47

Retailer Store  
Manager  
visits/contacts



32

Retailer kits  
distributed

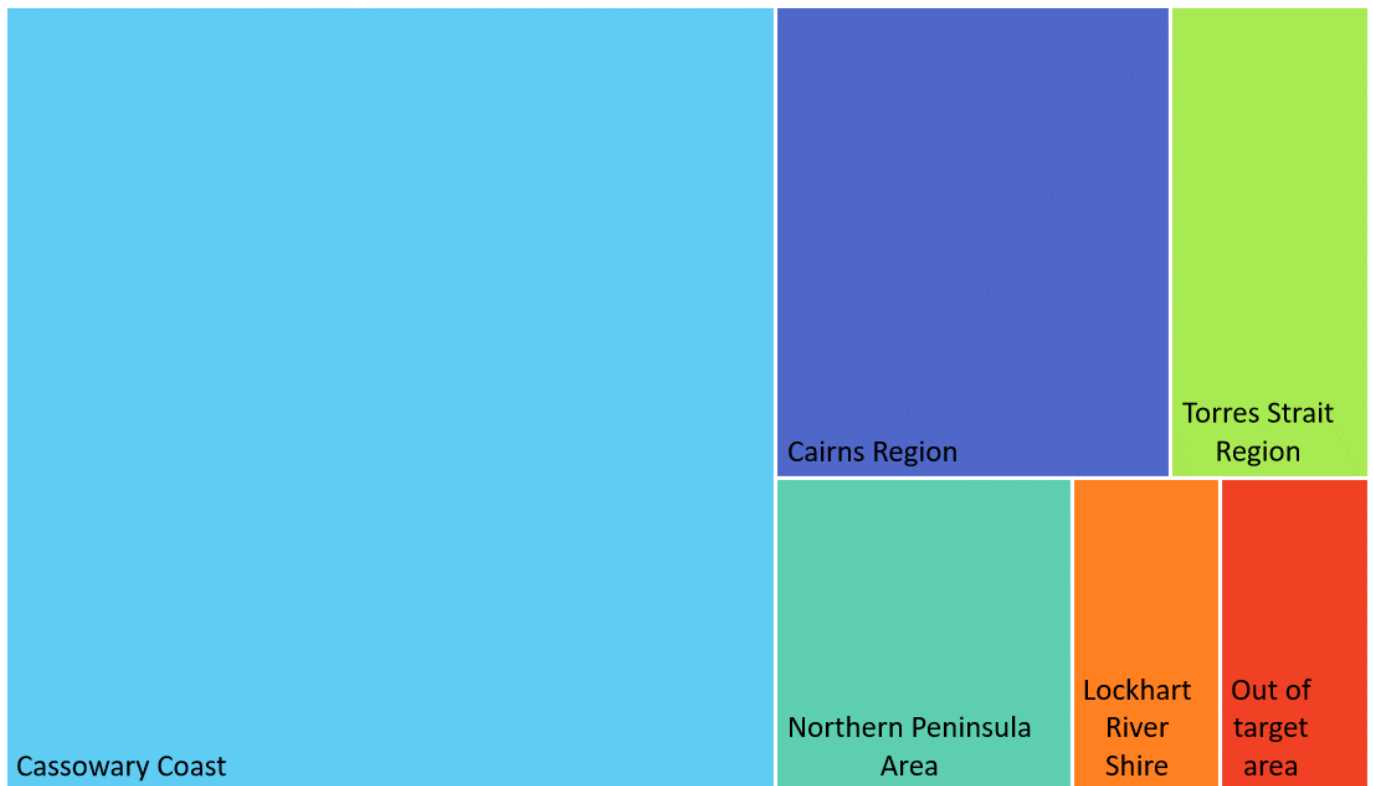


140

Retailer Newsletter  
recipients

## Resource Distribution

- Cairns Region
- Cassowary Coast
- Torres Strait Region
- Northern Peninsula Area
- Lockhart River Shire
- Out of target area



### Resources distributed included:

- The distributed resources included:
- Just North Capacity Building Toolkit
  - Yarning Tools (set of 7)
  - Sniffing and the Brain (Set of 3)

- NHMRC Health worker quick reference guide
- Inhalant use: Aguide for parents and families
- Strong Spirit, Strong Mind: Parents and care givers sniffing guide

# Training

## Dovetail - Young People and Drugs (YPAD) Training

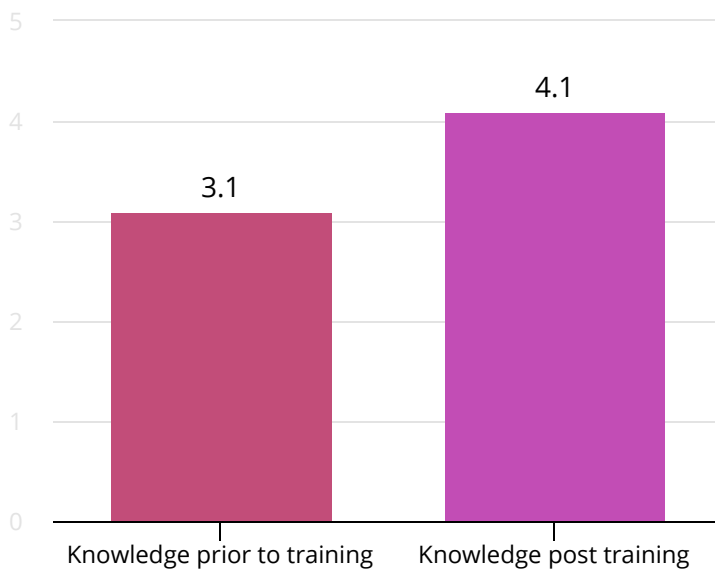
YPAD training was delivered in 2 locations during the reporting period. The first training was hosted by Gungarde Community Centre Aboriginal Corporation, with 16 participants.

19 participants attended the Cairns training hosted by YETI who flew and accommodated workers from Kowanyama, Cooktown and Bamaga to attend.

## Volatile Substance Misuse (VSM) Training

Just North delivered VSM Training sessions to 56 participants from Jan - Jun. Locations included Cairns, Innisfail, Lockhart River, Pormpuraaw, Weipa and Cooktown.

## VSM Training Evaluation Results



**Great**  
**Informative**  
better **Thanks** understanding

# VSM user support systems



**54%**

known to Just North or YETI



**76%**

of VSM users currently connected to a support service



**54%**

of VSM users are connected to a care team



**63%**

of VSM users are connected to child safety



**10%**

of VSM users were seen by a medical professional immediately after a VSM incident



**35%**

of VSM users currently connected to the Cairns Coordinated Care for Vulnerable Young People (CCYP) mechanism



**13%** of VSM incidents involved Queensland Police Service (QPS)



# Responses following VSM incidents



**36**

times Just North offered or provided VSM training to agencies who reported a VSM incident



**16**

sessions of Just North VSM training delivered to support agencies working with VSM users



**20**

resource requests following VSM incidents



**27**

Number of times Just North connected a VSM user to place based supports



**21**

Retailer visits conducted in areas where VSM use occurred



**34**

Number of times YETI staff provided support to a young person during or immediately after a VSM incident

## Just North provided harm minimisation information following a VSM incident to



**27**

VSM users



**17**

Support services



**34**

VSM user parents, care givers or guardians