Territorians deserve safe and vibrant communities and the Northern Territory Government is developing a suite of measures to deliver that.

Too much of the crime and violence that we see in the Territory is fuelled by alcohol and we are tackling that with a clear and coordinated schedule of reforms based on the Alcohol Policies and Legislation Review Final Report (the Report).

The Report was handed to government in October last year, with 220 recommendations to develop an integrated alcohol harm reduction framework in the Territory.

As outlined in the supporting Table of Recommendations document government:

- supports without amendment or condition 187 of the 220 recommendations
- supports in-principle 32 recommendations and is considering how these can be achieved in a Territory context
- does not support the recommendation of a total ban of takeaway alcohol sales on Sundays, staying with current restrictions

Considerable steps have already been taken to implement recommendations including:

- Establishing the Alcohol Review Implementation Steering Committee & Industry Reference Group (on-licence establishments)
- Establishing the Alcohol Review Implementation Team in the Department of Chief Minister to drive and coordinate reforms
- Extending and expanding the moratorium on takeaway licences
- Passing Legislation to re-establish a Liquor Commission
- Establishing guidelines for the Liquor Commission to operate under while the Liquor Act is being rewritten
- Finalising members and chair for the Liquor Commission

I would like to acknowledge the support from the Territory Government Opposition and Independent Members, along with Industry and stakeholders, for the Report Review and the development of a safe, sustainable and robust alcohol industry in the Territory.

It is with the hard work of the Industry Reference Group (on-licences), Alcohol Review Implementation Steering Committee and Alcohol Review Implementation Team that we have been able to develop a detailed response to the Report.

There is considerable work to be done with the rewrite of the Liquor Act, legislation that will include approximately 70 of the Report’s recommendations.

I look forward to continuing consultations with a wide range of stakeholders to ensure we successfully deliver the Alcohol Harm Minimisation Action Plan 2018–2019 and build a safer Territory.

This is something the community wants us to do.

Hon Natasha Fyles MLA
Attorney-General and Minister for Justice
Minister for Health

* June 2018 revised edition
The independent Alcohol Policies and Legislation Review (the Review) found that although significant effort has been put into addressing harm caused by alcohol in the Northern Territory, these efforts were being hampered by a lack of a consistent whole-of-government policy approach, outdated and ineffective legislation, an absence of policy and program evaluation, poor data collection and sharing between agencies, and poor coordination and communication between agencies.

The Alcohol Harm Minimisation Action Plan 2018–2019 (the Action Plan) looks to address these barriers through a number of legislative, regulatory, policy and program initiatives.

Harm minimisation is a term which underpins effective action consistent with national and international drug policy. Harm minimisation includes:

- reducing the demand for alcohol through education, prevention or delay of first use and health promotion activities
- reducing the supply of alcohol through effective regulation, sale and promotion
- reducing the harm caused to individuals, families and the community through appropriate therapeutic support services

Each of these three areas is critical to positively influencing community attitudes and changing the drinking culture. Therefore applying a harm minimisation approach involves a balance between the three pillars of reducing demand, reducing supply and reducing harm.

The aim of the Action Plan is simple – to significantly reduce alcohol-related harms for Territorians.

To bring about real change and improvement, governments, business and the community need to work together. Everyone has a role in reducing the harms association with the misuse of alcohol in the Territory.

This Action Plan is supported by initiatives being undertaken through the following national strategies, including:

- National Drug Strategy 2017–2026
- National Alcohol Strategy 2018–2026 (draft out for consultation)
- National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People’s Drug Strategy 2014–2019
- National Alcohol and Other Drug Workforce Development Strategy 2015–2018
- National FASD Strategy

The Action Plan also identifies NT Government strategies, policies and programs that are supporting the effort to minimise alcohol-related harms in the Territory.

The Action Plan comprises of four key areas:

1. Strengthening community responses – healthy communities and effective and accessible treatment
2. Effective liquor regulation
3. Research, data and evaluation
4. Comprehensive, collaborative and coordinated approach by government

The Northern Territory’s new approach to alcohol

The Northern Territory’s new approach to alcohol
There are many reasons why Territorians misuse alcohol, including but not limited to trauma, homelessness, family dysfunction, social and peer pressure, stress, addiction and mental health issues.

Harm minimisation and prevention initiatives under the Action Plan focus on minimising demand and harm associated with alcohol by:

- addressing social determinants of health
- educating Territorians about the detrimental effects of the misuse of alcohol and reducing demand
- supporting those adversely affected by the misuse of alcohol through the provision of effective and accessible treatment
SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

Government acknowledges that harm minimisation initiatives must be matched by efforts to address the underlying causal factors of why Territorians misuse alcohol. This means that we must address key social determinants of health such as employment, education, housing and social and emotional wellbeing. The Government is addressing this through initiatives such as:

**The Room to Breathe Program**
- Reducing overcrowding in public housing in remote communities by increasing living space in existing homes

**Government Employee Housing (GEH)**
- To expand GEH to include locally recruited NT Government employees in remote areas

**Repairs and Maintenance of Public Housing**
- For the repair and maintenance of public housing in remote communities

**Homebuild NT**
- For the construction of new public housing in remote communities

**The Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Reduction Framework**
- To ensure government policies which address factors such as alcohol, support the reduction of violence in the community

**LOCAL DECISION MAKING AGENDA**
- To ensure Aboriginal communities are empowered to make decisions about service delivery for their communities
### WHAT WE WILL DO

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Status</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focus on working with Aboriginal communities and other groups to decide how harms associated with alcohol can be addressed in their communities.</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop guidelines for permit systems to assist communities where a permit system exists, and for those that are considering such a system.</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<tr>
<td>The secondary supply of alcohol to be the subject of a targeted education campaign for remote communities to raise awareness of the damage that the illegal supply of alcohol can cause.</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<tr>
<td>Work with community patrols and sobering up shelters to align their operating hours and days of service to reflect community need (as has occurred with day patrols in Darwin).</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<td>Develop a Northern Territory Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Strategy that aligns with the soon to be released National FASD Strategy (insofar as practicable), which supports and builds on the current initiatives already being implemented or in the process of being implemented by NT Government agencies, in addition to the support available through the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<tr>
<td>Undertake a review of sobering up shelters.</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<tr>
<td>Re-instate the P.A.R.T.Y Program (Prevent Alcohol and Risk-Related Trauma in Youth) through Royal Darwin Hospital. The P.A.R.T.Y. program is a health promotion initiative that seeks to build resilience in young people to prevent alcohol and risk-related trauma.</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop targeted education campaigns focusing on identified groups that are most at risk from alcohol-related harms. Any campaign delivered by the NT Government will promote the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Australian Guidelines to minimise health risks from drinking alcohol with an aim to improve our drinking culture and minimise harm in the Northern Territory.</td>
<td>✔</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
WHAT WE WILL DO

- Undertake a demand study for alcohol treatment services in the Northern Territory by a suitably qualified organisation. The study will inform the NT Government decisions in relation to alcohol treatment services across the Territory, including the demand for residential managed alcohol program (wet houses).

- A ‘drinking spot’ review will be undertaken jointly by Police and the Alcohol and Other Drugs Directorate within the Department of Health, in consultation with affected communities.

- The Department of Health will continue to promote the use of protocols for screening alcohol use before and during pregnancy and collect data in accordance with the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare’s National Maternity Data Development Project.

- Establish the Alcohol and other Drugs Youth Grants Program (2017–2018) for community based prevention and demand reduction. Grants of up to $20,000 will be available for projects and activities aimed at preventing and reducing youth substance misuse.

Additional investment of $750,000 in YOUTH REHABILITATION PROGRAMS

- $250,000 for two full time trauma-informed care workers in Alice Springs for Bush Mob to enhance existing youth residential rehab services and for Holyoake to develop counselling programs.

- $350,000 towards four full time volatile substance abuse workers in the East Arnhem region to support Miwatj community-based work to reduce and prevent harmful volatile substance abuse.

- $150,000 to provide flexible rapid responses to youth alcohol and drug issues as they arise. In 2018, it will go towards programs in the East Arnhem Region.
The NT Government acknowledges the importance of a robust regulatory framework for alcohol in the Northern Territory to minimise the harm associated with the consumption of alcohol and to provide certainty for business, the public and industry.

**LEGISLATIVE REFORM**

The Liquor Act (the Act) regulates the sale, provision, promotion and consumption of liquor in the Northern Territory. The Report made it clear that a complete re-write of the Act was required, in order to provide a coherent framework for the operation of the liquor industry and to remove confusing and inconsistent provisions in the Act.

**TRUSTED AND TRANSPARENT DECISION-MAKING**

In addition to effective legislation, it is imperative that decision making for liquor regulation is improved to restore confidence and transparency in such decisions. The Report recommended the reinstatement of the Liquor Commission, and Government delivered on this recommendation by passing legislation to reinstate the Liquor Commission in February 2018.
ENFORCEMENT AND COMPLIANCE

Compliance and enforcement activities make up the final part of a sound regulatory framework for alcohol. A strict and rigorous compliance and enforcement regime that is clearly understood by those administering it and those to which it applies (which includes the broader community) is critical to a robust system of licensing.

This also includes initiatives which reduce alcohol supply.

In addition to work already undertaken in the establishment and enforcement of the Banned Drinker Register (BDR), the NT Government are committed to bringing about the following legislative reform.

- **12-18 MONTHS** to draft a new Liquor Act to remove confusing and inconsistent provisions
- **ONE 400** There is 1 licensed establishment for approximately every 400 people living in the Northern Territory
- **50 AMENDMENTS** to the Liquor Act since 1979
- **14 YEARS SINCE** a formal report on alcohol recommended the Northern Territory Liquor Act be rewritten
- **5 YEAR** moratorium on takeaway licences

The Northern Territory has the highest per capita consumption of alcohol in Australia.
Re-write the Liquor Act to provide a robust framework for industry and community. As recommended by the Report, this includes consideration of changes to; licence categories, conditions and licensing fees and licence application processes and procedures. It is anticipated the process will commence in 2018 and take approximately 12-18 months to complete.

Retain Point of Sale Inspections (POSIs)/Temporary Beat Locations (TBLs) and transition to a more sustainable operational model, where trained and authorised personnel replace Police, allowing them to focus on secondary supply and other serious matters.

Develop of an Advertising Code of Practice under the Liquor Act which accords with harm minimisation principles (and where appropriate, any national strategy) and to be reviewed on a regular basis.

Extend and expand the moratorium on all new takeaway alcohol licences (to be reviewed after five years).

Develop annual Audit and Compliance Plans to be prepared by Licensing NT, with reporting against the plans to be reported on annually.

Review infringement notices under the Liquor Act, in particular who can issue them and for what offences.

Increase collaboration between Police and Licensing NT to improve our enforcement and compliance regime under the Liquor Act across the Territory. To be underpinned by a service level agreement, or Memorandum of Understanding.

Improve Responsible Service of Alcohol (RSA) requirements as recommended by the Report, including making RSA requirements a statutory condition of a liquor licence, requiring a person to hold an RSA upon commencement of employment (removing the one month grace period), requiring more frequent refresher courses with content approved by Licensing NT and a focus on ensuring compliance with the new RSA requirements.
Effective Liquor Regulation

WHAT WE WILL DO

1. Enforce mandatory signage in licensed premises to assist in the development of an effective RSA culture in a venue, raise awareness of CCTV and the role of security (patron safety), dealing with minors including underage drinking and false ID, reduce drinking by pregnant women and their partners, and to encourage responsible consumption of alcohol.

2. Introduce an appropriate Northern Territory minimum floor price for alcohol, in conjunction with a focus on stopping the secondary supply of alcohol ensures that our most disadvantaged Territorians are prevented from accessing cheap alcohol in large volumes, while arming our Police with the ability to target those trying to benefit through the unlawful provision of alcohol (secondary supply).

3. Strengthen powers to control, restrict or prohibit undesirable promotional activity in relation to both on-premises licences and takeaway licences.

4. Strengthen powers to restrict or prohibit the sale of undesirable liquor products.

5. Empower Public Housing Safety Officers, Public Housing Officers and Police to make an application for a public housing residence to be declared a restricted premises.

The Liquor Act will be re-written to provide a coherent framework for the operation of the liquor industry within harm minimisation principle.

The Liquor Commission will be reinstated to ensure trusted and transparent decision-making.

A minimum floor price will be introduced as a supply reduction measure.

There will be increased collaboration between Police and Licensing NT to enforce compliance under the Liquor Act.
In order for our efforts to be successful in minimising alcohol-related harm over the long term, the Territory needs to significantly improve our research, data and evaluation initiatives.

This means ensuring the data is accurate, can be linked to other datasets and is easily accessible.

Research on alcohol consumption, misuse, harm and addiction needs to be comprehensive, contemporary and reliable in order for government and service providers to make informed and effective decisions.

Significant investment is made by governments into treatment and service provision in relation to alcohol-related harms. Good practice and governance requires each of these programs to be subject to rigorous evaluation and monitoring. This is especially so for new initiatives, such as a minimum floor price and the Banned Drinker Register (BDR).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>47.8%</td>
<td>Of adults in the Northern Territory exceed the National Health and Medical Council’s guidelines for alcohol consumption.</td>
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<tr>
<td>67%</td>
<td>Of domestic violence incidents in 2014 involved alcohol.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>173%</td>
<td>Alcohol consumption rate in the Northern Territory is 173% of the national average.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40%</td>
<td>Of road fatalities in the NT are alcohol-related.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.6%</td>
<td>The proportion of infectious diseases and deaths attributable to alcohol in the Northern Territory.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$640 million</td>
<td>Estimated economic cost to the NT of alcohol-related harm is $640 million per year.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WHAT WE WILL DO

Undertake a demand study for alcohol treatment services in the Northern Territory will be undertaken by a suitably qualified organisation. The study will inform NT Government decisions in relation to alcohol treatment services across the Territory, including the demand for residential managed alcohol program (wet houses).

Establish a ‘last drinks survey’ to enable Police and Emergency Departments to identify where people purchased and consumed their last drinks.

Trial the ‘Cardiff model’ in the Emergency Department at the Royal Darwin Hospital to link emergency department data with assault statistics, to inform policy development and minimise alcohol-related trauma in the Territory.

Commence regular collection and publication of alcohol-related data including wholesale supply, consumption, criminal justice statistics, hospital and health data. This data should align wherever practicable with the indicators used under the National Alcohol Strategy 2018–2026 (draft) and include useful Territory specific indicators.

Endeavour to collect data on online alcohol sales in the Northern Territory to ensure we have comprehensive and accurate consumption data for the Territory.

Continue to publish statistics in relation to the BDR – currently, the BDR publishes monitoring reports online every three months.

Commit to providing feedback from all data collected to stakeholders including the Licensing NT, hospitals and health services, police, ambulance, industry and our remote communities so they can see the impact of strategies and give power back to communities to decide how harms associated with alcohol should be addressed through such policies such as the Local Decision Making agenda.
WHAT WE WILL DO

Further build on the work of the Criminal Justice Research and Statistics Unit within the Department of the Attorney-General and Justice to inform government policy and investment.

Undertake independent evaluations and monitoring of all initiatives implemented under this Action Plan, including the BDR, minimum floor price and POSIs/TBLs.

Establish data standards for all data collectors including NGOs funded by government.

Establish secure data sharing arrangements to enable analytics between government and service providers that is compliant with the information privacy principle (IPPs).

UNDEARTAKE a demand study for alcohol treatment services

Establish a ‘last drinks survey’ to enable Police and Emergency Departments to identify where people purchased and consumed their last drinks.

CONTINUE to publish statistics in relation to the BDR.

COMMIT to providing feedback from all data collected to stakeholders including the Licensing NT, hospitals, health services, police, ambulance industry and our remote communities.
Comprehensive, Collaborative & Coordinated Approach

The NT Government is committed to preventing and minimising harms associated with alcohol misuse. In order to achieve this goal, relevant government agencies must work together and share necessary information as required. Successful implementation will require a whole-of-government approach with a high level of cross-agency coordination, cooperation and information sharing.

Government must also work in partnership with industry, non-government organisations and the community, in order to implement the Action Plan, as everyone has a role to play when it comes to minimising alcohol-related harms.
CABINET

Comprehensive, Collaborative & Coordinated Approach

CHIEF EXECUTIVE LEVEL REPRESENTATION FROM
- Dept of Chief Minister
- Dept of Attorney-General and Justice
- Dept of Health
- NT Police
- Dept of Treasury and Finance

ALCOHOL REVIEW IMPLEMENTATION STEERING COMMITTEE (ARISC)

DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE LEVEL REPRESENTATION FROM
- Dept of Chief Minister
- Dept of Attorney-General and Justice
- Dept of Health
- NT Police
- Dept of Treasury and Finance
- Territory Families
- Dept of Housing and Community Development
- Dept of Trade, Business and Innovation
- Director-General of Licensing NT

ALCOHOL REVIEW IMPLEMENTATION TEAM (ARIT)

ALCOHOL HARM MINIMISATION WORKING GROUP (AHMWG)

NT PUBLIC
- HEALTH STAKEHOLDERS
- LEGAL STAKEHOLDERS
- ALCOHOL INDUSTRY STAKEHOLDERS
- REGIONAL STAKEHOLDERS
- OTHER STAKEHOLDERS AS NECESSARY

ALCOHOL REVIEW IMPLEMENTATION TEAM (ARIT)

ALCOHOL HARM MINIMISATION WORKING GROUP (AHMWG)

REGIONAL STAKEHOLDERS
- NT PUBLIC
- HEALTH STAKEHOLDERS
- LEGAL STAKEHOLDERS
- ALCOHOL INDUSTRY STAKEHOLDERS
- OTHER STAKEHOLDERS AS NECESSARY
WHAT WE WILL DO

**Four Comprehensive, Collaborative & Coordinated Approach**

- Release the Northern Territory Alcohol Harm Minimisation Action Plan 2018–2019 and publish six monthly progress reports. The first report is expected to be finalised in August 2018.

- Establish the Alcohol Review Implementation Team within the Department of the Chief Minister to drive reforms and to ensure effective and coordinated engagement with relevant stakeholders, including industry, community and NGOs.

- Continue to develop capacity and capability of the NT Police Territory Intelligence and Co-ordination Centre (TICC) to enable agencies to share intelligence in an efficient and collaborative manner, which will assist to identify issues early on and provide targeted support and interventions to those that need it most.

- Establish an Industry Reference Group for on-licence establishments to provide industry-focused advice to Government on specific issues, particularly in relation to licence conditions, review of the advertising code of practice and the impacts of changes on industry.

- Continue the roll-out of the Local Decision Making agenda to ensure Aboriginal communities are empowered to make decisions about service delivery for their communities.
WHAT WE WILL DO

Collaborate with relevant Commonwealth agencies to ensure consultation with Aboriginal communities about alcohol are properly executed and culturally appropriate.

Further build on the work of the Criminal Justice Research and Statistics Unit within the Department of the Attorney-General and Justice to inform Government policy and investment.

RELEASE the Northern Territory ALCOHOL HARM MINIMISATION ACTION PLAN 2018–2019 and publish six monthly progress reports. The first report is expected to be finalised in August 2018.

Continue the ROLL-OUT of the LOCAL DECISION MAKING AGENDA to ensure ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES are EMPOWERED to make decisions about service delivery for their communities.

Collaborate with relevant Commonwealth agencies to ensure consultation with Aboriginal communities about alcohol are properly executed and culturally appropriate.

Comprehensive, Collaborative & Coordinated Approach