Territorians deserve safe communities and the Northern Territory Government is on track in delivering on its commitment of alcohol policy and legislation reform.

I am pleased to report that almost a quarter of the 219 recommendations have already been completed and Government is on track to have over half of the recommendations completed by the 12 month mark.

I want to thank the Independent Liquor Commission in being courageous in addressing hard issues like the Tennant Creek restrictions.

I want to congratulate the Police Commissioner in using his new powers to shut down licensees who don’t play by the rules for up to 48 hours.

These reforms give Territorians the trust in compliance and enforcement we need to curb alcohol related harm in the community.

My thanks go out to the many hard working public servants who have delivered and are delivering on these large and complex set of reforms.

I am looking forward to the exposure draft of the Liquor Act rewrite – a critical piece of alcohol policy in the Northern Territory.

I am hopeful that the trial of the Cardiff model in NT emergency departments will help lead to better intelligence and evidence when it comes to future alcohol policy.

I am optimistic that with the Minimum Unit Price Legislation (floor price), Banned Drinkers Register (BDR) and Police Auxiliary Liquor Inspectors (PALIs) all working together in concert that we will start to see real results over the next 12-24 months.

There is no one reform that will work in isolation, it takes a range of reforms all working together to achieve alcohol harm minimisation.

There has been an incredible amount of stakeholder engagement conducted by the Alcohol Review Implementation Team (ARIT) this year and while I know there are still some outstanding points of contention to navigate that overwhelmingly the approach to alcohol reform has been positive.

All stakeholders, either in the industry or NGO sector, have been positive, proactive and enthusiastic in their approach to help fix the Territory’s problem with alcohol and I thank them all for their support so far in this journey.

There is still a lot more to do and I look forward to continuing these reforms to help build a safer Territory.

Hon Natasha Fyles MLA
Attorney-General and Minister for Justice
Minister for Health
Since the release of the NT Government Response to the Alcohol Policies and Legislation Review Final Report and the Alcohol Harm Minimisation Action Plan 2018-2019 on 27 February 2018, Government has worked hard to implement sweeping alcohol reform to promote safer and more vibrant communities in the Territory. In the first reporting cycle of the Action Plan, the NT Government has completed 50 of the 219 recommendations supported by Government.

Key milestones in the Alcohol Harm Minimisation Action Plan 2018-2019 Progress Report – August 2018 includes:

- establishing the Northern Territory Liquor Commission in February 2018
- amending the Liquor Act to introduce the public interest and community impact test to apply to the determination of all liquor licence applications
- targeting the secondary supply of alcohol by establishing a 97 member-strong unit in NT Police, including 75 Police Auxiliary Liquor Inspectors (PALIs) to undertake Point of Sale Intervention (POSI) duties at takeaway bottle shops in Alice Springs, Katherine and Tennant Creek
- passing legislation in the Legislative Assembly in August 2018 that introduces a minimum floor price on 1 October 2018 for alcohol products in the Northern Territory (excluding wholesale). The Northern Territory floor price is set at $1.30 per standard drink

The following initiatives are currently in the process of being implemented, which will see Government working towards the completion of a further 92 recommendations in the next reporting cycle (September 2018 to February 2019):

- the release of a draft exposure Bill for the Liquor Act rewrite
- increasing collaboration between Licensing NT and Northern Territory Police through a service-level agreement

The Action Plan comprises of four key areas:

ONE
STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY RESPONSES – HEALTHY COMMUNITIES and EFFECTIVE and ACCESSIBLE TREATMENT

TWO
EFFECTIVE LIQUOR REGULATION

THREE
RESEARCH, DATA and EVALUATION

FOUR
COMPREHENSIVE, COLLABORATIVE and COORDINATED APPROACH BY GOVERNMENT

Work is underway on designing alcohol-related data products to inform Government, industry and the community in relation to the impact of alcohol in the Northern Territory.

The next progress report is due to be released in February 2019.
Strengthening Community Responses
Healthy Communities and Effective and Accessible Treatment

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.

Focus on working with Aboriginal communities to decide how to address alcohol-related harm
In 33 remote communities throughout the NT, Alcohol Action Initiatives are underway. These are community designed local projects that aim to reduce demand and the harms caused through excessive alcohol consumption. The Regional Network Group in the Department of the Chief Minister is leading the development of the Local Decision Making agenda and coordinating related activities to support and to respond to regional community concerns and social aspirations.

Develop guidelines for permit systems
NT Police has commenced an initial investigation to review existing police practices, issues and opportunities regarding permit systems at Groote Eylandt, Maningrida and Nhulunbuy.

Aligning the operating hours of sobering-up shelters and community patrols
Regional meetings have commenced with key stakeholders to address patient flow and service alignment. Short to medium-term actions have included changes to opening hours and providing additional support to Sobering-Up Shelter staff in Katherine, and extending the opening hours and establishing a primary health care nurse position in Darwin. See also the Review of Sobering-Up shelters.

Develop a targeted education campaign about secondary supply in remote communities
The departments of Health and Attorney-General and Justice have co–facilitated an education campaign raising awareness about the illegal and harmful practice of secondary supply in remote communities. BUSH TV developed the campaign in English and in different Aboriginal languages. The campaign will commence in September 2018 and will run until December 2018.

BRADAAG facility in Tennant Creek
On 4 July 2018, the Northern Territory Government announced that a purpose built resident rehabilitation and transitional outreach accommodation facility will be constructed in Tennant Creek for the Barkly Regional Alcohol and Drug Abuse Advisory Group (BRADAAG).
Develop a Northern Territory Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Strategy

Work is underway to develop the Northern Territory FASD Strategy, and it is anticipated that it will be finalised late-2018. In addition, Government has supported the Central Australian FASD Network to conduct a strategic planning workshop in October 2017, and Aboriginal Peak Organisations of the NT to deliver a Top End FASD forum in May 2018.

Review of sobering-up shelters

PWC Indigenous Consulting commenced the Review of Sobering Up Shelters project in May 2018. This review will identify additional improvements and options for Sobering-Up Shelter services throughout the Northern Territory, and it is expected the report will be finalised in October 2018.

Undertake a demand study for alcohol treatment services in the Northern Territory

The Demand Study has commenced and is being led by the Menzies School of Health Research and the University of New South Wales. Consultations with key Northern Territory stakeholders occurred in July 2018 to ensure the research design is adapted to meet the unique population distribution, geography and service delivery context of the Territory. In addition, the Aboriginal Peak Organisations of the Northern Territory (APONT) has been commissioned to undertake consultations with treatment service providers and Aboriginal community organisations on the assessment of need and feasibility of trialling managed alcohol programs in high-need areas of the NT. A discussion paper will be prepared to inform community consultations in early 2019.

Screening for alcohol use at pregnancy

Across NT Health, pregnant women are routinely screened for current alcohol consumption. Referral to support services, depending on geographical area, is offered to any woman who is identified as a high-risk alcohol user. These services use a caseload approach and work collaboratively with midwives and the woman during her pregnancy and postnatal period.

Establishment of the Alcohol and other Drugs Youth Grants Program

The Alcohol and Other Drugs Grants Program awarded grants of up to $20,000 to nineteen diverse projects such as arts and sporting activities, cultural connection and expression programs, and after hours youth support activities for Territory based incorporated organisations or community groups. Another round of funding will be made available in November 2018.

Review of ‘drinking spots’

The implementation of this initiative will be addressed in a future progress report.
Effective Liquor Regulation

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.

**Liquor Act Re-write**

The Department of the Attorney-General and Justice has commenced work on the re-write and is working towards an exposure draft Bill for consultation and public comment in 2019.

The below initiatives will be addressed through the *Liquor Act* re-write:

- ✔ Improving Responsible Service of Alcohol (RSA) requirements
- ✔ Review of infringement notices
- ✔ Enforcing mandatory signage in licensed premises in accordance with harm minimisation principles
- ✔ Strengthen powers to control, restrict or prohibit undesirable promotional activity in relation to both on-premises licences and takeaway licences
- ✔ Strengthen powers to restrict or prohibit undesirable liquor products
- ✔ Introduction of risk based licensing fees.

**Retaining Point of Sale Interventions**

On 3 May 2018, the Liquor Amendment (Point of Sale Intervention) Bill 2018 passed the Legislative Assembly, empowering Police Auxiliary Liquor Inspectors (PALIs) to conduct Point of Sale Intervention (POSI) duties outside takeaway alcohol shops in Alice Springs, Tennant Creek and Katherine. The legislation commenced on 6 June 2018. Government announced the introduction of 75 PALIs to form part of a 97 member unit in NT Police, including 12 police officers specifically targeting secondary supply, seven operational staff and three prosecutors. The first squad of 20 PALIs commenced training in Alice Springs and 18 graduated on 20 August 2018.
Annual Audit and Compliance Plans
A new Compliance and Enforcement Policy for Licensed Premises is currently being developed by Licensing NT.

Introduction of a floor price for alcohol products in the Northern Territory
The Liquor Amendment (Minimum Pricing) Bill 2018 passed in the August 2018 Sittings of the Legislative Assembly. It provides that liquor must be sold at a minimum price of $1.30 per standard drink, which was a figure determined after review of the Northern Territory context. The floor price applies to all sales and supply of alcohol in the Northern Territory. The Bill requires licensees to provide data that will be able to be used to support a rigorous evaluation of the impact of the floor price. The floor price is proposed to commence on 1 October 2018, and the data requirement under the legislation is proposed to commence early 2019.

Empower Public Housing Safety Officers, Public Housing Officers and Police to make an application for a public housing residence to be declared a restricted premise
Enquiries are underway as to the implementation of this initiative in accordance with the Residential Tenancies Act.

Establishment of the Liquor Commission
12 members of the Liquor Commission were appointed on 1 March 2018. A minimum of three members are needed for any sitting of the Liquor Commission, including a Chair or Deputy Chair and two other members, one of which must be a health expert. The Commission is chaired by Mr Richard Coates and has made more than 80 decisions since its establishment.

New powers for the Police Commissioner
Legislation passed in May 2018 that provided new powers to the NT Police Commissioner to suspend a liquor licence for up to 48 hours if:
- it is considered appropriate in the event of an emergency or natural disaster, riotous conduct, or a breach of the peace or threat to public safety occurs; or
- the licensee, or an employee or agent of the licensee, is being investigated for an offence against the Liquor Act, and investigating officers reasonably believe the offending is likely to continue.

Five-year moratorium on takeaway alcohol licenses
Amendments to the Liquor Act in February 2018 imposed a five-year moratorium for takeaway licences in the Northern Territory.

Developing an Advertising Code of Practice under the Liquor Act in accordance with harm minimisation principles
The Director-General of Licensing has reviewed the existing Code and will seek the endorsement of the Liquor Commission in due course.

Collaboration with NT Police and Licensing NT to be underpinned by a Service Level Agreement
A Service Level Agreement (SLA) between NT Police and Licensing NT will be finalised in late 2018.
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.

**Undertake a demand study**

The Demand Study has commenced and is being led by the Menzies School of Health Research and the University of New South Wales. Consultations with key Northern Territory stakeholders will occur in July 2018 to ensure the research design is adapted to meet the unique population distribution, geography and service delivery context of the Territory. In addition, the Aboriginal Peak Organisations of the Northern Territory (APONT) has been commissioned to undertake consultations with treatment service providers and Aboriginal community organisations on the assessment of need and feasibility of trialling managed alcohol programs in high-need areas of the NT. A discussion paper will be prepared to inform community consultations in early 2019.

**Establishment of a Last Drinks Survey**

The Northern Territory Police Last Drinks Survey (LDS) was put in place on the 1 March 2018. The LDS captures when and where a person had their last alcoholic drink, and takes into account a 12 hour period of drinking. As of the 21 May 2018, over 400 Last Drinks Surveys have been completed.

The Last Drinks Survey will be implemented in emergency departments as part of the Cardiff Model.
Trial of the Cardiff model

Work is underway to establish a version of the Cardiff model in the emergency departments in Alice Springs and Darwin to link emergency department data with assault statistics to inform policy development and prevent alcohol-related violence in the Territory.

ON TRACK

ON TRACK

Comence regular collection and publication of alcohol-related data, including online alcohol sales to accurately inform consumption data in the Northern Territory

Establishing data standards for all data collectors and establishing secure data sharing arrangements to enable analytics between government and service providers compliant with information privacy principles

Commit to providing feedback from all data collected to stakeholders to evaluate the impact of strategies on minimising alcohol-related harm

An internal Data and Evaluation Working Group has been established to guide the Alcohol Review Implementation Team in the delivery of Action Plan initiatives concerning data, research and evaluation. In particular, the Working Group is focussed on designing alcohol data products to inform Government, industry and the community in relation to the impact of alcohol in the Northern Territory.

ON TRACK

ON TRACK

COMPLETE AND ONGOING

Publication of BDR statistics

An Evaluation Report was released in June 2018, assessing the BDR’s effectiveness after six months operation. Progress against the recommendations arising from the BDR Evaluation Report will be incorporated into future Alcohol Harm Minimisation Action Plan 2018–2019 progress reports. The Department of Health continues to publish a monthly report of key statistics relevant to the implementation of the BDR including treatment access data.

ON TRACK

Further build on the work of the Criminal Justice Research and Statistics Unit to inform Government policy and investment

The Criminal Justice Research and Statistics Unit has recruited 2 new staff to build the level of analysis and reporting of justice-related information. Currently that resource is being fully utilised on the reporting, analysis and evaluation of the BDR. The Criminal Justice Research and Statistics Unit is represented on the Data and Evaluation Working Group to provide expert advice as to the implementation of research, data and evaluation initiatives under the Action Plan.

The Criminal Justice Research and Statistics Unit is underpinned by a Memorandum of Understanding by NT Police, the Department of Health and the Department of the Attorney-General and Justice.
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.

Continue the roll-out of the Local Decision Making agenda

The Regional Network Group in the Department of the Chief Minister is leading the development of the Local Decision Making agenda and coordinating related activities across the Commonwealth, Northern Territory and local governments, regional organisation and Aboriginal communities to support and to respond to regional community concerns and social aspirations.

Work underway currently includes:

• Wadeye formalising the Kardu Alliance model, representing six local Aboriginal organisations
• NT Government agencies continuing to work with Guringji Aboriginal Corporation on community initiatives, including new housing, economic development, various contracts and tourism enterprises
• the Yugul Mangi Aboriginal Development Corporation signing a Guiding Principles Agreement and Implementation Plan with Government in May 2018
• the Department of Education, as part of a three year plan, establishing 34 Local Engagement and Decision-Making committees in remote community schools.

Collaboration with the Commonwealth Government to ensure consultation with Aboriginal communities about alcohol are properly executed and culturally appropriate

Early discussions continue between departmental officers from the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, the Department of the Chief Minister and the Department of the Attorney-General and Justice regarding the *Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory Act 2012 (Cth)* as it relates to the *Liquor Act* rewrite.
Stakeholder Engagement by the Alcohol Review Implementation Team

The Alcohol Review Implementation Team has conducted extensive engagement with key stakeholders, including:

• holding over 200 meetings to discuss alcohol reforms
• travelling to regions including Alice Springs, Katherine, Tennant Creek, Nhulunbuy and Tiwi to discuss regional alcohol-related matters
• releasing a monthly eNewsletter to provide updates on the progress of alcohol reforms
• presented to many stakeholder groups, including Local Governments Association of the Northern Territory (LGANT), the Royal College of Surgeons, the Youth Roundtable, the Association of Alcohol and other Drug Agencies NT (AADANT) and other non-government organisations.

Developing the capacity of the NT Police Territory Intelligence and Co-ordination Centre (TICC)

The TICC has been established since November 2017, with a range of government agencies co-locating at the Centre. Further expansion of the role and capacity of the TICC will be the subject of future work and addressed in a future progress report.

Establish the Alcohol Review Implementation Team

The Alcohol Review Implementation Team (ARIT) in the Department of the Chief Minister was established in October 2017 and is due to conclude its work at the end of 2019. ARIT is responsible for driving reforms and to ensure effective and coordinated engagement with relevant stakeholders, industry and community NGOs.

Establishment of an Industry Reference Group

The Industry Reference Group comprises 11 members from on-licence establishments and restaurants to provide industry-focussed advice to Government. The Industry Reference Group have met regularly since 15 December 2017.

Complete and Ongoing

Release the Alcohol Harm Minimisation Action Plan 2018–2019 and publish six-monthly progress reports


You can contact the Alcohol Review Implementation Team either by emailing alcohol.review@nt.gov.au or leaving feedback on our website alcoholreform.nt.gov.au