HOME GROWN SOLUTIONS

Gerry Wood, the Independent Member for Nelson, says the Government should be using mandatory rehabilitation centres for drunks as the last resort and using other options such as healing centres as a first option.

Gerry says there is no doubt that the majority of people in mandatory rehabilitation centres will be Aboriginal because they are the most visible when it comes to anti social behaviour.

Gerry says the Government should be looking at Aboriginal people being part of the solution and he agrees with Minister Robyn Lambley that centres closer to their country would be a better choice.

He says he raised healing centres as an option in the last sittings of Parliament but received no feedback on the idea.

Healing centres allow people to go back to the bush, sometimes away from their families, to have an opportunity to get some clear space in their lives supported by caring people.

Gerry says that involving Aboriginal people as part of the solution would mean that Aboriginal people are not left out of the process. He knows of a number of healing centres in the Top End and they should be tried as the initial option and if clients are not willing to stay there or leave there without consent, then the more secure mandatory centres should be the next option.

Gerry says he does not oppose mandatory rehabilitation but it has to have proper safeguards similar to the mandatory detention rules under the Mental Act which involves many checks and balances to make sure people’s rights are protected as well as the community’s rights.

_Cessi foro gallinarum sed surgo_