16 September 2003
Alcohol Framework to further tackle anti-social behaviour

The NT Government is continuing to tackle anti-social behaviour in the community through the development of a new Alcohol Framework for the Northern Territory, Minister for Racing, Gaming and Licensing Syd Stirling said today.

The Framework will become a crucial part of Government’s Five Point Plan to address alcohol-related anti-social behaviour.

Announcing the next steps to be taken in developing the Framework, Mr Stirling said the aim was to strike the right balance between reducing levels of alcohol-related harm in the community and ensuring Territorians were able to enjoy a drink.

"Most Territorians use alcohol sensibly, but there is a minority of people whose excessive drinking can lead them to harm themselves and others," Mr Stirling said.

"It is this sort of behaviour that we are targeting in the development of this new Framework.

"Government will be examining all issues of community concern surrounding alcohol, including health, enforcement, economic, community amenity and licensing issues."

As well as releasing a Terms of Reference to guide the development of the Framework, Mr Stirling today also announced that former Territory Minister and radio identity Daryl Manzie and Acting Director of Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Donna Ah Chee had been chosen to head the process.

"Mr Manzie is a valuable member of the Territory community and will bring many years of experience and understanding to this important position," Mr Stirling said.

"Ms Ah Chee has worked hard to reduce anti-social behaviour caused by excessive alcohol consumption in Central Australia. Her background, as well as her particular capacity to work with Indigenous communities and organisations, will be a huge asset as we pursue this difficult task.

"Their role will be to canvass the views of the community and key stakeholders – such as the AHA, Clubs NT, liquor licensees, police, local government bodies, Aboriginal organisations, community groups, educators and health workers – about their issues of concern in relation to alcohol.

"They will then draw that information together and use it to form the basis of the Framework."

Mr Stirling said lawyer Gordon Renouf had been employed as full-time Project Director during the development of the Alcohol Framework.
Mr Renouf most recently worked as the Director of the National Pro Bono Resource Centre. He has provided consultancy services to the Australian Investments and Securities Commission in relation to ‘book up’ and Indigenous consumer education, as well as to the NT Legal Aid Commission and various community organisations.

Mr Stirling said the Alcohol Framework would tie in with other work being done by Government to combat anti-social behaviour, including the Itinerants’ Strategy and the Parliamentary Substance Abuse Committee. It will also take into consideration other relevant reports, including the National Competition Policy Review of the NT Liquor Act.

An interim report is expected to be presented to Government in December 2003, with a final report delivered by May 2004.

**Terms of Reference attached.**

On 3 April 2003, the Minister for Racing, Gaming and Licensing announced a Framework to develop new directions on liquor policy as part of the Government’s Five Point Plan to further address alcohol-related anti-social behaviour.

These Terms of Reference will guide the development of that Framework.

**Terms of Reference for developing an Alcohol Framework for the Northern Territory**

1. Identify the principal alcohol-related health, enforcement, economic, community amenity and licensing issues of concern to Territorians.

2. Review existing strategies or new strategies that may be effectively undertaken by government or non-government agencies to reduce levels of alcohol-related harm and identify current resources available, including those which might be differently directed to this outcome.


4. Consider all recommendations arising from submissions made to recent reviews of the NT Liquor Act, including reports from the Select Committee on Substance Use in the Community, the Itinerants Working Party and the National Competition Policy Review, and any other relevant documents or studies and determine the feasibility of designing and implementing suggested activities in the NT context.

5. Review previous strategies introduced in the NT and strategies adopted in other jurisdictions that may have a positive impact on minimising problems associated with alcohol consumption in the NT.

6. Ensure that the interests of key stakeholders such as the AHA, Clubs NT, liquor licensees, Police, local government bodies, Aboriginal organisations, community groups, educators and health workers are considered in the development of the Framework.
7. Examine the role and powers of the Licensing Commission itself and the Commission’s relationship to other government Agencies (including Police and Health) in the licensing and regulation of the sale, supply and consumption of alcohol.

8. Further consider the role of the Commission in the setting of public policy over alcohol related matters relative to the role of the Territory and Local Governments.

9. Examine the use of Accords which recognise the need for a coordinated effort in reducing alcohol related problems and employ strategies to encourage co-operation between government agencies, licensees and local communities.

10. Identify the nature and role of community standards to determine and influence acceptable standards of behaviour and explore appropriate methods to establish and encourage compliance with such standards.

11. Address any other issues that may be relevant to the implementation of the Framework.

12. Circulate papers as required for discussion with interested parties and relevant stakeholders.

13. Provide an interim report to the Minister by December 2003 and a final report to the Minister by May 2004.

GOVERNMENT’S FIVE POINT PLAN TO ADDRESS ALCOHOL-RELATED ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

Under its Five Point Plan, Government will:

1. legislate against the practice of book-up for alcohol, including a ban on the use of credit cards for book-up;

2. maintain the current arrangements for alcohol sales on Sundays pending the development of a comprehensive, whole-of-Government liquor strategy;

3. consider a reduction in the number of licensed outlets;

4. conduct a major overhaul of the Liquor Act; and

5. develop harm minimisation strategies that encourage responsible attitudes towards alcohol consumption.