New Report on Alcohol Consumption Welcomed

The Territory Government today welcomed the release of a new report into alcohol consumption and related harm in the Northern Territory that shows more action to reduce alcohol-related harm is required.

Minister for Alcohol Policy Delia Lawrie said the Harms from the Costs of Alcohol Consumption in the Northern Territory report, co-authored by Darwin doctor Steven Skov, confirms the enormous impact alcohol has across the Territory.

“We know that alcohol is a factor in over 50% of all reported assaults which is why we are delivering targeted initiatives across the Territory to combat excessive alcohol consumption,” Ms Lawrie said.

“This study costs the high level of alcohol consumption in the Territory at $642 million per year, and finds alcohol contributes to more deaths and hospitalisations in the Territory than anywhere else in Australia.”

The alcohol-related social cost to the Territory economy is estimated at $4,197 per person compared to $943 nationally including absenteeism from workplaces and reduced productivity, and use of police, ambulance and hospital resources.

“The social and economic costs of alcohol harm are unacceptable and while Government has introduced a raft of tough measures we will engage further with Territorians to toughen actions,” Ms Lawrie said.

Ms Lawrie said the Territory Government had delivered many initiatives that target alcohol consumption and supply.

“Reforms to date target the supply, consumption and abuse of alcohol so that the safety and wellbeing of Territorians is improved in the home and in public,” Ms Lawrie said.

Initiatives delivered by the Territory Government that target alcohol abuse include:

- New precinct legislation targeting problem drinkers, with banning orders and more on-the-spot fines for problem drinkers;
- New provisions to stamp out the production, supply and use of fake identification;
- New Awareness Campaign – Championship Moves;
- More Police – City Safe Patrols;
- First Response and Night Patrols;
- Mandatory Responsible Service of Alcohol training for all employees;
- Targeted trading hour and product restrictions;
- Introduction of the Alcohol Court;
- Increased rehabilitation and sobering up beds, now 300 across the Territory;
- Moratorium on takeaway licences; and
- Support for liquor accords.

“This Government's initiatives are in stark contrast to the CLP – their plan is to reopen the rivers of grog and sell more alcohol by increasing trading hours in Alice Springs,” Ms Lawrie said.

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