MINISTER FOR ALCOHOL POLICY

ALICE SPRINGS ALCOHOL REFERENCE GROUP TO ADVISE ON GROG STRATEGY

20 March 2014

The Alice Springs community has been empowered to develop its own alcohol strategies with the formation of an Alcohol Reference Group by the Territory Government.

The Territory Government is supporting communities in regional centres to address alcohol issues by giving local stakeholders a voice in the development of Alcohol Management Plans to address local concerns and solutions.

Minister for Alcohol Policy, Dave Tollner today announced the membership of the Alice Springs Alcohol Reference Group (see below for full membership list) which will oversee development of the new plan. The new group comprises community members as well as industry and community organisations.

Mr Tollner believes the most effective solutions can come from within a community.

“Given the diversity of the Territory, we need to think of alcohol management strategies at the local level rather than falling for the trap of thinking a one-size-fits-all approach will work,” Mr Tollner said.

“Alice Springs has great community strength but alcohol is one of the key social and community challenges.

“The Territory Government has already taken a range of measures to crack down on alcohol-related antisocial behaviour in Alice Springs, including more police officers and a higher profile police presence around the town.

“I hope the work of this reference group, and the Alcohol Management Plan that will be drafted, identifies further real solutions to the town’s alcohol issues that can be supported by all stakeholders,” Mr Tollner said.

The Alcohol Reference Groups give local communities the opportunity to access the expertise of government agencies such as the Police, Health and Business to assist them in the development of solutions that meet the specific needs of their community.

Mr Tollner said addressing alcohol misuse requires a multi-faceted approach.

“We need not only to look at supply but also at demand initiatives and harm reduction strategies,” he said.

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“But just how effective each of these core response can be in a local context is best considered at that level.

“This government has introduced a range of alcohol initiatives targeting those three aspects. The Alcohol Reference Groups will play an important role on advising how best to tailor these measures for their local communities,” Mr Tollner said.

To tackle the problem drinker without penalising the responsible drinker, the government has introduced Mandatory Alcohol Treatment Orders, Alcohol Protection Orders and increased fines for people who refuse to leave licensed premises.

“I would like to wish members of the Alice Springs Reference Group well in their deliberations as they work towards the development of an Alcohol Management Plan for the town,” Mr Tollner said.

Membership of the Alice Springs Alcohol Reference Group

Damien Ryan (Chair), Alice Springs Town Council
Kay Eade, Chamber of Commerce
Jeff Huyben, Central Australian Tourism Association
Di Loechel, Australian Hotel Association (NT)
Eileen Hoosan, Central Australia Aboriginal Alcohol Programs Unit, supported by Phillip Allnutt
Dale Wakefield, Alice Springs Women’s Shelter
John Boffa, Central Australian Aboriginal Congress
Michael Liddle, Lhere Artepe Aboriginal Corporation, supported by David Kenny
Annette Partridge, Clubs NT Association
Matthew Osbourne, Liquor Stores Association

Attached: Alice Springs Alcohol Reference Group Terms of Reference.

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