**MEDIA RELEASE**

**DRAG NET APPROACH WON’T WORK**

Peter Styles MLA

Date 6th May 2011

The Country Liberals will continue to oppose the Henderson Government’s alcohol laws despite their passage through the Territory Parliament last night.

Shadow Minister for Alcohol Policy, Peter Styles, said the changes affect anybody who wants to buy takeaway alcohol, rather than targeting habitual drunks.

“The Country Liberals don’t see the need for a banned drinkers’ register because problem drinkers placed in protective custody three times in six months will trigger the process towards mandatory rehabilitation,” Mr Styles said.

Habitual drunks will be issued with a control order to keep them off the streets. If that’s breached they will undergo mandatory alcohol rehabilitation.

Despite the raft of new legislation introduced by the Government, there is still no capacity for police to get problem drinkers off the streets.

“The Labor Government’s grog bans will in no way reduce the number of drunks that people encounter on a daily basis in their parks and streets.”

“Nor have the tough grog restrictions in Alice Springs, Tennant Creek, Katherine resulted in a reduction in violent crime against the person.”

“Under the Government’s rules, being placed on the banned drinkers’ register does not automatically result in mandatory rehabilitation. The Country Liberals will apply a tougher approach to dealing with problem drunks.”

“In Alice Springs alone, more than 100 people are admitted to sobering up shelters more than 11 times a year. On a Territory wide basis, I estimate at least 800 people would be in sobering up shelters more than 11 times a year.

“In 2009-10, approximately 385 people attended residential rehabilitation for alcohol addiction across the Territory, yet the Government has only committed an extra $2.5million in the budget for Alcohol and Other Drugs services.”

“The Country Liberals will re-allocate the $4.6million the Government is spending to roll-out the banned drinkers’ register to boost rehabilitation services.”

Further comment: Peter Styles 0411 640 660