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Government announces new policy directions on liquor

Minister for Racing, Gaming and Licensing Syd Stirling today unveiled the NT Government’s Five Point Plan to further address community concern over anti-social behaviour caused by excessive alcohol consumption.

Mr Stirling said enjoying a drink was an integral part of the Territory lifestyle, but it was equally important to minimise the harm caused by alcohol abuse.

"This plan is another key part of our whole-of-Government strategies designed to address social issues," Mr Stirling said.

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.

"Government recognises the growing concern in the community about anti-social behaviour and the number of violent assaults in which alcohol plays a major part," Mr Stirling said.

"The Plan is another step in dealing with this important social issue and legislation will be in place by the end of the year.

"Industry groups like the AHA have been calling for an overhaul of the Liquor Act recognising that some of the legislation is based on outdated legislation from other jurisdictions."

Mr Stirling said the Five Point Plan would be used along with other strategies currently addressing anti-social behaviour, such as the Itinerants Strategy.

"It will also link into the work already done on Government’s Illicit Drug Strategy as well as the Select Committee on Substance Abuse," he said.