

Northern Territory Licensing Commission – Review of Cheap and Problem Liquor Products

Preamble

Research available in the public domain and comment made in the popular press have helped the Commission form the view that high volume, low cost alcohol products sold as takeaway carry significant potential for harm. This applies particularly to four (4) and five (5) litre wine casks and other cheap alcohol products.

The Commission has identified evidence that such products are often the product of choice when harmful levels of alcohol consumption occur. In published research, Larrakia Nation has identified the issue among itinerant community members.

The Commission has formed a view that product limitations on these takeaway products could be effective at reducing alcohol related harm. In its review of the Alice Springs restrictions Menzies confirmed that the suite of product and supply restrictions was effective at reducing alcohol sales. The Commission further notes that similar aggregate reduction in sales can be seen wherever limits on cask wine sales are in place.

Consultations

Consultations with a wide range of stakeholders from the liquor industry, indigenous groups, public health professionals and community workers suggests that it is timely for the Commission to seek a broad range of views about such products.

A wide range of options are open to the Commission in addressing the harm caused by large volume cheap alcohol products. For this reason, the Commission considers it appropriate to conduct a wider consultation.

In determining the final format of consultations the Commission will first seek the advice of a range of key stakeholders, including affected councils, the Larrakia Nation and key Government agencies like Police and Health.

Decision of Licensing Commission

(as determined by 3 Commissioners on 9 July 2009 and ratified by the Full Commission on 5 August 2009)

The Commission has determined to undertake community wide consultations (including with all stakeholders) in the Darwin / Palmerston and rural areas with a view to ascertaining views on the restriction and/or removal of cheap and problem liquor products, particularly four and five litre wine casks, including hours of sale.