

RACING, GAMING AND LICENSING DIVISION – TREASURY

MONITORING THE IMPACT OF KAVA IN ARNHEMLAND

Introduction

With the commencement of licensed kava sales in Arnhemland, measures to document the impact of kava have been established. The impact of kava is being monitored by:

- Kava Monitoring Committees operating in certain communities;
- kava retail licensees;
- Northern Territory Government agencies; Police, Health and the Racing, Gaming and Licensing Division of Department of Justice.

Another aspect of monitoring is an evaluation of the impact of kava. The Licensing Commission has requested an evaluation of kava management plans in 2006/07.

The following activities are being undertaken in terms of ongoing monitoring.

1. Monitoring by Kava Monitoring Committees

Kava Monitoring Committees have been established in each kava licence area. The monitoring committees may consist of representatives from community agencies and may include:

- health clinic
- store
- school
- women's centre
- community council
- homeland resource centre
- land owners and/or clan leaders
- Police
- Racing, Gaming and Licensing
- kava retail licensee.

The purpose of the community based monitoring groups is to be a collection point for local information concerning the impact of kava in the community. Reports from agencies may include information about staff attendance and punctuality, incidents within the community that affect staff attendance, the formation of kava circles and the style of drinking being undertaken (social or binge) and participation in community events and ceremonies.

Some monitoring groups also discuss the use of kava profits which can only be used for community purposes.

2. Monitoring by kava retail licensees

As part of their commitment to responsible kava retailing, kava retail licensees are enacting a range of measures to reduce any harm that may arise from their kava retailing activities. These measures include

- facilitating meetings of their community Kava Monitoring Group
- monitoring community responses to the times and days of trade and amounts of kava the kava shop is selling
- recording the names, dates and amounts of all kava purchases
- liaising with the health clinic regarding any persons to whom kava should not be sold
- funding activities to enable the development for relevant and appropriate information for community members concerning responsible kava preparation and consumption
- distributing information concerning responsible kava use
- other harm minimisation approaches used in the kava shop or supported in the community.

It should be noted that when kava licensees seek the annual renewal of their licence, they are required to report to the Licensing Commission on the harm minimisation initiatives they have undertaken or supported during the previous year.

3. Monitoring of sales levels by the wholesale licensee

The kava wholesale licensee reports on a quarterly basis to the Racing, Gaming and Licensing (RGL) Division on sales to each kava retail licensee. By reporting the sale amounts, both the wholesale licensee and the RGL Division are able to monitor changes in apparent consumption. These changes are discussed with Police and Health officers so that appropriate action can be taken when kava abuse may be occurring.

4. Monitoring by Northern Territory Government agencies

The Northern Territory Government agencies of Police, Health and the Racing, Gaming and Licensing Division of Treasury, are recording data related to the impact of kava. The following measures are being collected:

Racing, Gaming and Licensing (RGL) Division, Department of Justice

- Number of kava licence areas declared - (annually)
- Number of wholesale and retail licences issued - (annually)
- Total kilograms sold per retailer - (per quarter and annually)
- Total dollar value of sales per retailers - (per quarter and annually)
- Number of individual sales per retailer - (per quarter and annually)

- Number of complaints lodged with the Licensing Commission or Division - (per quarter and annually).

Police

- Number of call outs in response to kava related incidents - (annually)
- Number of persons apprehended for kava related incidents - (annually)
- Number of persons charged with kava related offences - (annually)
- Number of persons convicted with kava related offences - (annually)
- Number of kava seizures - (annually)
- Number of kilograms of kava seized - (annually)
- Number of seized vehicles - (annually).

Department of Health and Community Services

- Number of kava related admissions to government hospitals - (per quarter and annually)
- Number of cannabis related admissions from Arnhemland communities to Cowdy Ward, Darwin hospital - (annually)

Notes:

1. A separate code has been agreed and allocated to kava so that kava related admissions will be collected as part of the standard admissions processes at all government hospitals.
2. Most health clinics in East Arnhemland operate independently from the Department of Health and Community Services. Staff located in government and independent clinics will be surveyed as part of the community impact monitoring being undertaken by the Menzies School of Health Research.