

Katherine Alcohol Management Plan

The Katherine Alcohol Management Plan has been developed as part of the Northern Territory Government's strong commitment to reducing alcohol related harm in Katherine. The Plan was developed by the Katherine Harmony Group, in consultation with the community, and responds to community concerns about antisocial behaviour and violence. The Plan builds on previous efforts to minimise the harm caused by alcohol.

The vision for the Katherine Alcohol Management Plan is to reduce the level of alcohol related harm for both individuals and the Katherine community.

The Plan has 3 key strategies aimed at reducing alcohol consumption and related harms:

- **Reducing supply** — restricting the availability and accessibility of alcohol;
- **Reducing harm** — influencing drinking choices and drinking environments and providing interventions that prevent further harm; and
- **Reducing demand** — changing individual attitudes to drinking and challenging community tolerance of harmful drinking patterns.

Goal 1: Reduce Supply

Establish a 'Dry Zone' over the central business district of Katherine.

During 2007, the Katherine Town Council developed a proposal for the Central Business District of Katherine to be declared a 'Public Dry Area' under Part 8 of the Liquor Act. In November 2007, the Licensing Commission determined that Katherine would become a "dry town" – with no drinking allowed in public areas.

This measure will prohibit the consumption and possession of alcohol within the area (apart from transporting liquor through the area) and will assist in the reduction of public drunkenness and antisocial behaviour.

Liquor Accord

The Liquor Accord is an initiative of the licensees in Katherine and establishes a united and consistent approach from participating licensees to the responsible sale and consumption of alcohol on licensed premises. Accord members include Katherine Hotel, Katherine Club, Crossways Hotel, Katherine Country Club, Katherine Sports and Recreation Club, Katherine Stores, Riverview Caravan Park and the Red Gum Caravan Park.

Improved Patrols

The coordinated effort of the NT Police, Kalano Community Patrol, Katherine Town Council, Youth Beat and the Department of Justice will be crucial to supporting the 'Dry Zone' initiative and the ongoing need to maintain a highly visible presence in Katherine.

Well developed protocols utilising the NT Police Social Order Strategy will continue to address the incidences of antisocial behaviour and complement other harm reduction strategies.

Goal 2: Reduce Harm

Meet the needs of short term visitors

The need to address significant numbers of itinerants in Katherine is a high priority. Options to accommodate the short term needs of regional visitors from outlying communities will be examined to find culturally appropriate alternatives to alleviate camping in the public spaces of Katherine.

The examination of a cost effective transport system to give outlying communities access to services will also be explored.

Targeted case management of at risk individuals, encompassing demand and harm reduction

This initiative will provide a focus on intervention for "at risk" individuals requiring referral and case management to treatment programs utilising the Sobering Up Shelter as a key intervention point.

Court ordered interventions

For those members of our community with alcohol dependence who come before the criminal justice system, treatment ordered by the Court (as part of pre-sentencing, bail or sentencing) can be effective in addressing that individual's alcohol issues. To be successful, the treatment service system will need to be robust in both capacity and capability.

Goal 3: Demand Reduction

Implement an effective healing pathway for those dependent on alcohol

The development of 'Healing Pathway' will establish the linkages necessary for case management between services for alcohol dependent people. The initiative provides a formal structure linking early intervention with access to withdrawal and rehabilitation services and the "step up, step down" or post discharge programs necessary to sustain long term abstinence from alcohol.

Responsible drinking campaign

An education campaign to promote responsible drinking behaviour and raise awareness of the risks to personal health and safety will also be part of the overall demand reduction strategy of the Alcohol Management Plan. This will include a school based education campaign to influence our younger members of the community.

Community Participation and Review

An Alcohol Reference Group will provide a focus for ongoing community participation, monitoring and communication across Government, the Katherine Town Council and other stakeholder groups. A review of the Plan, with community input, will be conducted in 2008.

Liquor Supply Plan

The Licensing Commission has published a Liquor Supply Plan for the Katherine Region. The Plan includes:

- Retaining the existing restrictions on trading hours and the “light beer” before midday restriction for Katherine;
- Takeaway sales only permitted between 2pm and 8pm daily;
- No sales of cask or fortified wine in containers larger than 2 litres, and cask and fortified wines sales limited to 2pm to 6pm each day, with only one cask or one bottle of fortified wine per person per day;
- No drive through takeaway sales to taxi drivers on duty;
- No purchaser takeaway products to be kept on licensed premises for later collection;
- A requirement on licensees to provide liquor products sales figures, for both on and off premises sales, as directed by the Commission;
- Camera surveillance in the alcohol service areas of all licensed stores and off-licenses;
- Staff servicing alcohol to hold a Responsible Service of Alcohol Certificate within one month of commencing employment or as soon as practicable thereafter; and
- Takeaway conditions to apply to all relevant premises in Katherine, Mataranka, Victoria River and Pine Creek.

Other Activities

The Katherine Alcohol Management Plan has been developed as part of a range of alcohol management initiatives across the Territory:

- Widespread antisocial behaviour initiatives;
- New legislation that extends dry areas to houses and public places;
- Alcohol Courts and additional treatment options for offenders;
- Community education aimed at reducing risky drinking;
- Review of alcohol treatment services;
- A rewrite of the Liquor Act;
- A moratorium on new takeaway licenses, to be reviewed in due course; and
- Work with the Australian Government, peak bodies and other key stakeholders to reduce alcohol related harm and improve services.