



KATHERINE
ALCOHOL
MANAGEMENT PLAN
A PLAN FOR EVERYONE
2007

Draft for discussion only

Comments on the Plan should be lodged by Friday 30 March 2007 to:

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

The Katherine region has a population of 19,079 people and over 200,000 tourists pass through our town each year, eager to visit the natural wonders and experience our rich cultural heritage.



In the consultation undertaken for the development of this Alcohol Management Plan, members of our community have commented that Katherine is an attractive place to live and work, we have highly skilled professionals, good quality schools, health services, and an abundance of sport available for all age groups.

These attributes keep our local economy strong and promote the steady growth needed for us all to enjoy our "Top End" lifestyle.

But Katherine is also known for its "hard drinking culture" and the statistics of alcohol consumption per person, indicates our region is more than double the national average. The displays of public drunkenness and antisocial behaviour are part of a much deeper seated problem that must be addressed if we are to continue to enjoy our unique lifestyle.

To tackle the problem, we need a sustained effort to educate the community and the support of the Northern Territory and Australian Government to provide the infrastructure and services to assist those afflicted with alcohol addiction.

There is no one easy solution and we must all work together to achieve the balance of supply control, harm and demand reduction that we'll need for Katherine to maintain its status as a vibrant, attractive and safe place to live, work and visit.

I encourage everyone to actively participate and support the key initiatives in this Plan.

Michael Berto
Chairman
Katherine Region Harmony Group
March 2007

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Katherine Region Harmony Group (KRHG) has a leadership role in fostering the development and implementation of projects and initiatives designed to address social issues, with particular emphasis on substance misuse, youth, itinerants and prevention of crime.

The KRHG was formed in 2003. Its membership comprises representatives from the Community, non Government organisations, Local Government, the Northern Territory and the Australian Government. The KRHG has a large stakeholder group and a number of working parties that provide advice to the Executive. This advice will be crucial to the implementation of the strategies and actions contained in the Alcohol Management Plan for Katherine.

Katherine is the fourth largest town in the Northern Territory (after Darwin, Palmerston and Alice Springs) is located approximately 310 kilometres south-east of Darwin on the Katherine River. The township of Katherine covers an area of 526 square kilometres and had a population of 9,481 at the Census conducted in 2001. It is also the hub for a region that covers approximately 350,000 square kilometres with a population of 19,079. This figure includes 7,834 Indigenous people living in Aboriginal communities, some in quite remote parts of the region.

Katherine as the regional 'hub' attracts regular visitors from the outlying communities, as well as an influx of tourists visiting the region. This gives rise to a number of challenges in relation to the management of alcohol.

2. BACKGROUND

Alcohol Management Plans are developed under the auspices of the Northern Territory Government's Alcohol Framework. Recommendation 17 of the Alcohol Framework states:

"The Office of Alcohol Policy and Coordination should promote and support the development of Regional and Local Alcohol Management Plans. It should work with the Inter Departmental Committee on Alcohol Policy to ensure that all relevant Northern Territory Government agencies participate fully in the planning processes".

Katherine Region Harmony Group successfully applied to the Northern Territory Office of Alcohol Policy for grant funds to engage a consultant to develop an Alcohol Management Plan in March 2006. Success Works Pty Ltd was engaged in June 2006 and undertook this project in three phases:

Phase 1: Examination of existing written materials and documents

Phase 2: Consultations from 21-25 August 2006 with service providers, business, residents and Aboriginal people living in the long grass – A report summarising the findings was completed in September 2006.

Phase 3: Consultations from 18-22 September 2006 with key stakeholders which focused on ideas and solutions for consideration – A Final report was completed in October 2006 outlining 32 Recommendations.

The consultation process established the following:

- Katherine is a desirable and attractive place to live.
- While public drunkenness and associated 'antisocial behaviour' are amongst the issues impacting on the town, they are not the most significant issues for

those who live and work there. The relative isolation of the town and region and the difficulty in attracting and retaining staff, lack of diversity in shops and high prices are all considered to be more significant.

- The factors underlying the alcohol misuse in Katherine include systemic factors such as racism, the hard drinking culture in the NT and lack of alternative activities; community factors such as lack of strong community leadership, peer pressure and dispossession from land, culture and family; and individual factors such as grief, loss, depression, boredom and loss of pride and self esteem.
- A range of strategies have already been tried to control the supply and use of alcohol in Katherine and the Katherine Region with limited success. The Kalkaringi Social Club and licensing restrictions were identified as being reasonably successful. Limited success was also ascribed to the demand reduction strategies at Venndale Rehabilitation Centre, the Katherine Harmony Intervention, Transport and Outreach Service (KHITOS) program, the Community Patrol operated by Kalano and the Sobering Up Shelter operated by Mission Australia.
- Most indicate that while public drunkenness involving Aboriginal people living in the long grass is an issue that needs to be addressed, alcohol misuse and abuse is a problem for a broad cross section of the community. There was a strong feeling that the Alcohol Management Plan for Katherine should not single out or further stereotype Aboriginal people.
- Recommended strategies for the future include many directed towards additional supply control measures together with others directed at reducing demand and reducing individual harm. People felt that the strategies that would make a real difference included building capacity and economic potential in the outlying communities; focussing on keeping young people engaged with schooling; improving the level of service integration and targeted service delivery and increasing respect for and pride in the Aboriginal heritage and culture of the area.

3. KATHERINE ALCOHOL MANAGEMENT PLAN VISION

Katherine Region Harmony Group's stated mission is to improve the quality of life and social harmony of Communities in the Katherine region.

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

4. FOCUS AREAS AND STRATEGIES

The key initiatives outlined are directed towards achieving a balance of supply, harm and demand reduction measures.

4.1 SUPPLY REDUCTION

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

The Katherine Region Harmony Group will work in partnership with the Katherine Town Council to develop a proposal to trial a portion of the Central Business District (CBD) of Katherine as a 'Public Dry Area' under Part 8 of the *NT Liquor Act*.

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.

4.1.2 Liquor Accord

The liquor accord is a new 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. Members include Kirby's Hotel, RSL Katherine, Crossways Hotel, Katherine Country Club, Katherine Stores, Riverview Caravan Park and the Red Gum Caravan Park.

4.1.3 Improved Patrols

The coordinated effort of the NT Police, Kalano Community Patrol, Katherine Town Council, Youth Beat and Community Harmony programs 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 anti social behaviour and complement other harm reduction strategies.

4.2 HARM REDUCTION

4.2.1 Meet the needs of short term visitors

The need to address significant numbers of itinerants in Katherine is a high priority for the Katherine Region Harmony Group. 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.

4.2.2 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.

4.2.3 Court ordered interventions

For those members of our community with alcohol dependence who come before the 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.

4.3 DEMAND REDUCTION

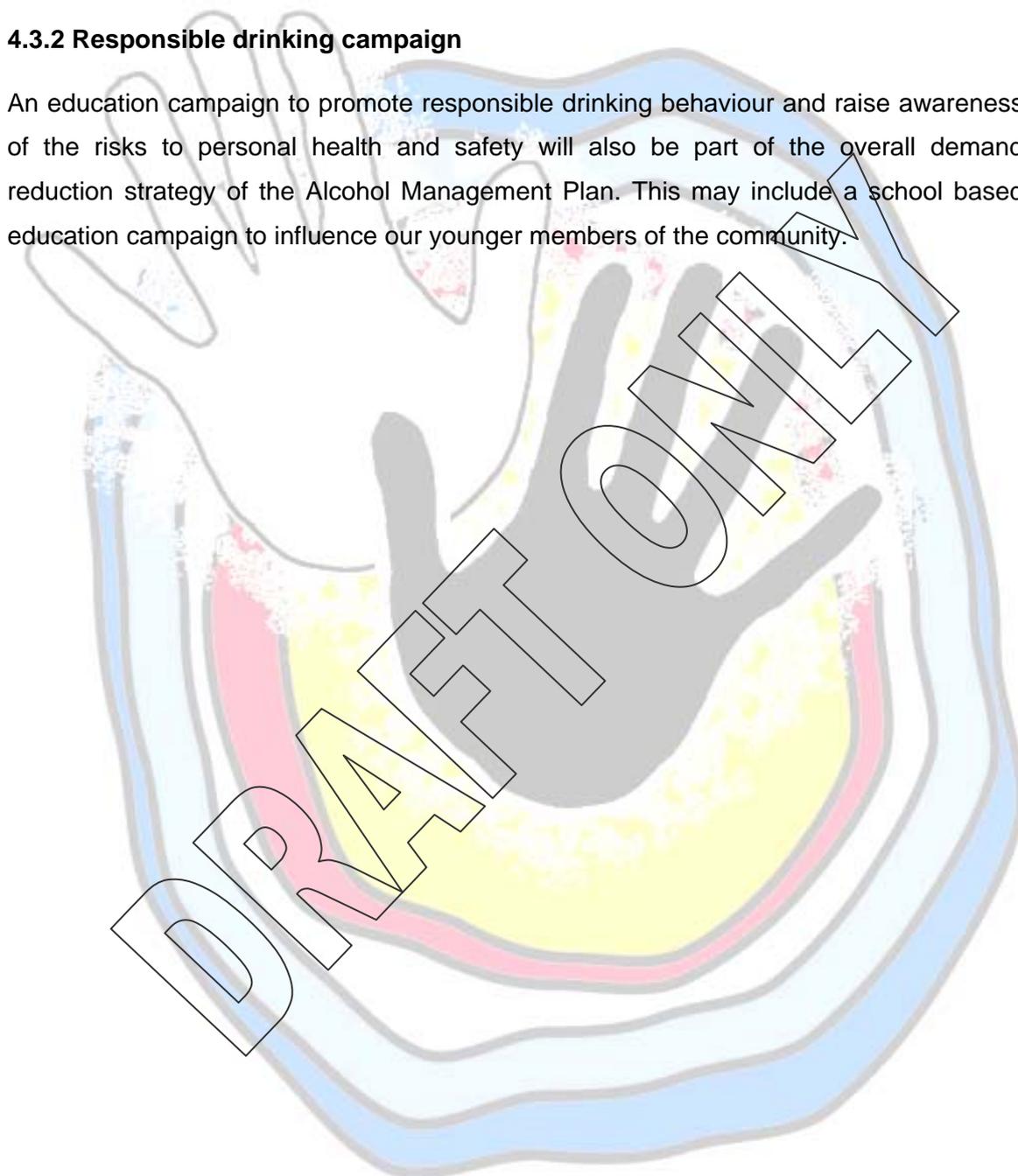
4.3.1 Implement an effective healing pathway for alcohol dependent

The development of a 'Healing Pathway' will establish the linkages necessary for case management between services provided for people afflicted with alcohol addiction. The initiative provides a formal structure linking early intervention with access to withdrawal

and rehabilitation services and the step down or post discharge programs necessary to sustain long term abstinence from alcohol.

4.3.2 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 may include a school based education campaign to influence our younger members of the community.



5. Action Plan

Focus Area	Key Initiatives	Actions	Primary Partners
SUPPLY MANAGEMENT	Dry Zone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define Public Restricted Area 	KRHG
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public and service provider consultation 	KTC
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council recommendation 	KTC
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to Licensing Commission 	KTC
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify role and procedures of Police, Community Patrol and Council Rangers, Youth Beat, KHITOS 	Police, Kalano, KTC, Mission Australia
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop short-term accommodation camp such as Bicentennial camp property for regional visitors 	Kalano, NTG, ICC, KTC, KRHG
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicity and Education Campaign 	RGL, KTC, NGOs, Licensees
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enforcement and patrols 	Police, KTC, Kalano
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor and review 	KRHG
	Liquor Accord	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a Liquor Accord for Katherine 	Licensees, KRHG, RGL
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify voluntary components 	Licensees, RGL
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify other accord components that may require regulation 	KRHG, RGL
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examine option of Alcohol Swipe Card for Katherine 	Licensees, RGL
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring and enforcement 	Licensees, RGL
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reciprocal representation for KRHG and Liquor Accord Group 	KRHG & Licensee nomination
	Improved Patrols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop protocol for coordinated Police, Community and Council Patrols utilising NT Police <i>Social Order Strategy</i> 	Police, Kalano, KTC, Mission Australia
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Patrol Committee comprising Police, Kalano, KTC and Mission Australia to brief KRHG on patrol outcomes 	Police, Kalano, KTC, Mission Australia, KRHG, DHCS
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Police and Kalano to develop training program as a pathway to full time employment for patrol officers 	Kalano, Police, CDU, DEET
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Combined cross cultural awareness training for Police and Patrol Officers 	DOJ to suggest relevant agency

Focus Area	Key Initiatives	Actions	Partners
HARM REDUCTION	Meeting the needs of short term visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KRHG and Kalano to meet to determine future management of Bicentennial Camp 	KRHG, Kalano, DPI
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a plan for short-term accommodation for regional visitors eg. Ceduna model. The plan to include existing residents, site cleanup, fencing, internal zoning, transitional accommodation, 24 x 7 management and security. 	Kalano, AHL, DLGHS, ICC, DPI, KTC, Regional Indigenous Leaders
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval and funding for short-term accommodation and operation 	NTG, ICC, ABA
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate options for a regional public transport system 	NTG, ICC
	Targeted case management of at risk individuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the functions that the Sobering Up Shelter plays in the provision of brief intervention services 	DHCS, Mission Australia
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on Sobering Up Shelter clients, identify most at risk clients for treatment 	Mission Australia, DHCS
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rebuild and relocate the Sobering Up Shelter 	Mission Australia, DHCS, ICC
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop integrated case management protocol with other services providers 	DHCS, ICC, NGOs
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an overall brief intervention strategy 	DHCS, KHAM
	Court Ordered Intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify possible court interventions for alcohol related crime in Katherine 	DOJ, DHCS, KRHG
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish an appropriate court-based system with attention on resource requirements & access to treatment. 	KRHG, KTC, Regional Communities, DOJ, DHCS

DEMAND REDUCTION	Implement an effective healing pathway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with DHCS and other regional health providers to acknowledge and recognise the effectiveness of a healing pathway 	KRHG, DHCS, KHAM
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Negotiate the elements of a healing pathway that link the Sobering Up Shelter; detoxification places at Katherine Hospital; rehabilitation places as per staged plan (be specific with action points on staging); and step-down/ post-discharge programs incorporating community based healing programs. 	DHCS, KHAM, Regional Communities
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek NTG support to provide dedicated detoxification places at Katherine Hospital 	KRHG
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist Wardaman Association to secure formalised and structured support from NTG/ICC for Dillinya 	KTC
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Venndale to its planned capacity 	DHCS, OATSIH, Kalano
	Responsible drinking campaign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement a Responsible Drinking information campaign based on the Peer Education model for use in Katherine Region. Campaign to be based on 'hard drinking culture' statistics for the Katherine Region. Campaign to include risk to personal health and responsible drinking behaviour and distribution 	DHCS, DOJ, KHAM, Licensees
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise public awareness of responsible drinking charters for the home and private gatherings by registering "Safe Parties" and reporting irresponsible behaviour to NT Police. 	KRHG, Police
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform and encourage the public about Restricted Premises status for private residences. 	DOJ, Police, DLGHS, Housing Associations
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise public awareness of programs and services available to address alcohol addiction 	DHCS, DOJ
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School based alcohol education campaign to warn of the dangers of risky behaviour when drinking, signs to look for, who to call, and the consequences of doing nothing. 	DEET, Police, DHCS, KHAM
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public display of community leaders working together to support Responsible Drinking campaign 	Mayor, Regional Indigenous Leaders
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and promote opportunities for multi-racial sporting events in Katherine which actively promote responsible use of alcohol 	KSUG, KTC

Acronyms

ABA – Aboriginal Benefit Account

AHL – Aboriginal Hostels Limited

DEET – Department of Employment, Education and Training

DHCS – Department of Health and Community Services

DLGHS – Department of Local Government Housing and Sport (Territory Housing)

DOJ – Department of Justice

DPI – Department of Planning and Infrastructure

ICC – Indigenous Coordination Centre

KHASM – Katherine Health and Substance Misuse Group

KRHG – Katherine Regional Harmony Group

KSUG – Katherine Sport User Group

KTC – Katherine Town Council

NGOs – Non Government Organisations

NTG – Northern Territory Government

OATSIH – Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health

RGL – Racing, Gaming and Licensing