

## A SUBMISSION – ALCOHOL POLICIES and LEGISLATION REVIEW – NT GOVERNMENT

Apart from a couple years working in Alice Springs and Katherine, our 43 years as a Territorian have been spent in Darwin. A little over 4 years ago we down sized from a quiet neighbourhood in Ludmilla to an apartment in the Parap shopping precinct. From our balcony we have an un-obstructed view of most of the front façade of Parap Tavern and parts of Parap Rd. and Drysdale St. along with several office buildings and other apartment complexes.

Some refer to our new neighbour as a war zone; anti-social behaviour, fuelled by alcohol, is out of control. The availability of alcoholic drink is a major factor - there are eight liquor licenses within a few hundred meters of where we live – three are take a way. Both itinerants and patrons of the Tavern contribute to the problem.

Below, we list four suggestions on how alcohol related anti-social behaviour might be reduced in an urban environment. For each suggestion we propose a possible action plan.

**1) Reduce the number of Liquor Licenses with emphasis on limiting the number of take- a- way bottle shops in any given area.** Local community consultation must be part of the process. A buy back scheme may be the only viable option – we can't see natural attrition as an answer. A reduction in trading hours would be a welcome first step followed by legislation restricting the number licences available in any given area.

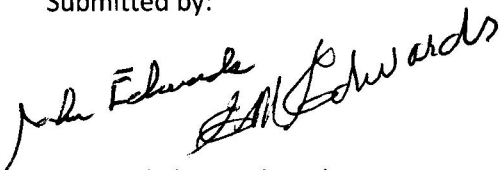
**2) Strict enforcement of all legislation associated with the serving of alcohol within licensed premises and at the point of sale in take- a-way shops.** 'Mobile units' could be established to patrol, monitor and record non-compliant issues. The unit should have some 'coercive powers' to address some issues and thereby reduce police involvement. The ability to issue infringement notices might be an option.

**3) Enforcement of the legislation pertaining to loitering, public drunkenness and/or drinking in a prohibited area.** We believe that the re-introduction of the banned drinkers' registry must be complimented with the enforcement of current (or new) legislation governing anti-social behaviour. The enforcement, in part, could be done by mobile units that not only patrol an area but are also 'on call' by the public. The Housing Commission's Safety Patrols and the Larrakia Night Patrols come to mind.

**4) Promote the importance of reporting an incident or making a complaint.** An advertising and educational campaign will most likely be required to let people know what's happening. As part of the campaign a circular/pamphlet explaining what to do and/or who to contact, would be useful. Personal experience has shown that many residents will not 'dob someone in' or 'whinge' about a person's behaviour while others, mostly the young or visitors from interstate, contribute (un-wittingly) to the anti-social problem. It's ok to say no.

Finally, we strongly support the government's "Alcohol Policies and Legislation Review", the reintroduction of the banned drinker's register and the 400 sq. m limit placed on the display areas in bottle shops.

Submitted by:



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