

Aboriginal Peak Organisations Northern Territory

An alliance of the CLC, NLC, CAALAS, NAAJA and AMSANT

MEDIA RELEASE

Listening to the community and experts on alcohol

3 December 2013

A ground-breaking report combining community views and expert recommendations on ways forward to address alcohol related harm in the NT has been released today, said Noel Hayes, spokesperson for the Aboriginal Peak Organisations NT (APO NT).

“APO NT members believe there is a dire need to address harmful effects of alcohol in the community, but we want an approach that is evidence based, and supported by the community – an approach which will deliver results for our peoples,” Mr Hayes said.

“Facilitating development of policy solutions to deal with alcohol related harm is a key priority for APO NT. That is why we brought Aboriginal community representatives, service providers and experts together.”

“APO NT calls on the NT and Commonwealth Governments to consider the Summit report; and to listen to community members, service providers and experts about ways to reduce alcohol related harm,” said Mr Hayes.

APO NT convened the Central Australian Grog Summit in Alice Springs in late July 2013 to discuss strategies to address alcohol related harm in the NT:

- The summit was attended by around 100 people from across the NT and included representatives from **Aboriginal communities and service providers**.
- The summit heard from a number of **experts with academic and community experience**.
- This **unique report** was developed as a resource following the Summit to capture summit outcomes.
- Comprehensive **multi-pronged approaches** to address grog in the NT are outlined in the Summit Report including proposed measures to:
 - Reduce supply as a circuit-breaker;
 - Address underlying issues and treatment, including FASD; and
 - Introduce more community-based approaches to address alcohol related harm.

At the landmark APO NT Grog Summit held in Darwin in late 2012 participants agreed that the approach to dealing with alcohol related harm should be **evidence-based, and not based on politics**. It was also agreed that for approaches to reduce alcohol related harm to be effective they need to be **holistic and community driven**. This was reiterated at the Central Australian Summit.

On 26 June 2013 APO NT called for a joint Territory/Commonwealth government Board of Inquiry into Alcohol in the Northern Territory to provide a roadmap for action by communities, professionals, and Government to work together to solve the problems of alcohol related harm in our communities.

On 31 July 2013 at the Central Australian Grog Summit, representatives from Aboriginal organisations and communities **endorsed the call for a Board of Inquiry**. A copy of the proposed Terms of Reference framed to provide the data and evidence that is needed to develop a comprehensive, evidence-based blueprint for tackling alcohol harm is attached.

For further information, contact Roslyn Cook, Advocacy Manager CAALAS on 0412 835 519 or via e-mail to Roslyn.Cook@caalas.com.au .

Copies of the report are available to download at: <http://www.apont.org.au/attachments/article/71/Central%20Australian%20Grog%20Summit%20Report%20FINAL%207%20November%202013.pdf> or in hard copy by contacting our office on 08 8944 6628.