

Our ref: BR03/1638

Mr Neil Laurie  
Clerk of the Parliament  
Parliament House  
Alice and George Streets  
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

I refer to a petition tabled in Parliament on 30 April 2003 concerning the Napranum Community Alcohol Management Plan.

One of the principal strategies of the Government's *Meeting Challenges, Making Choices* response to the Cape York Justice Study Report is for the implementation of liquor restrictions in nineteen identified Indigenous communities to minimise the harm caused by liquor abuse and misuse.

During 2002-2003, the Government has developed a comprehensive alcohol management program. This program comprises three key elements - the establishment of statutory community justice groups, the development of alcohol management plans, and the declaration of alcohol restricted areas.

Alcohol management plans are not legal documents and do not have the force of law. These plans indicate the actions, strategies and priorities that communities have identified that might help in reducing the negative effects of alcohol abuse. The plans are used to guide Indigenous community justice groups in making future recommendations about the management of alcohol consumption and supply in their communities. Such recommendations may deal with conditions placed on community canteen licences, canteen trading hours, types and strengths of liquor sold at community canteens and the amount of packaged alcohol that individuals may have in their possession in public places.

Recommendations can also be made to the Minister administering the *Liquor Act 1992* about the supply of alcohol from liquor outlets outside the Indigenous community area but which may affect the quality of life on Indigenous communities. However, I am advised that the Liquor Licensing Division, Department of Tourism, Racing and Fair Trading would not take any action on individual licences by imposing restrictions without full and open consultation with those who might be impacted by such action.

Alcohol management plans may also identify community needs and guide community action in partnership with government in areas such as health, justice, family and child safety, and education.

On 9 June 2003, following consideration of the recommendations of the Napranum Community Alcohol Management Plan, the state government enacted *Liquor Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2003*. This regulation prohibits alcohol in the entire Napranum Aboriginal Council community area except for the Napranum Tavern and Peninsula Development Road. Trading hours for the Napranum Tavern are set at 3-7pm Monday to Thursday, 2-9pm Friday, and noon to 6pm Saturday.

On 28 and 29 July 2003, meetings to address issues associated with the alcohol management plan were held between state government representatives and Weipa and Napranum stakeholders. Matters such as communication, signage, impacts on the Weipa community, outcomes to date, and assessment and review processes were canvassed. It was agreed that the Napranum Community Justice Group, together with Weipa stakeholders, would meet on a regular basis to discuss the range of outcomes arising out of the implementation of the alcohol management plan, and develop responses where appropriate.

A recent example of local cooperation is that Comalco Aluminium Limited has provided funding to the Napranum Community Justice Group to assist in a review being undertaken of the Napranum Alcohol Management Plan.

Yours sincerely

Judy Spence MP  
**Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy**