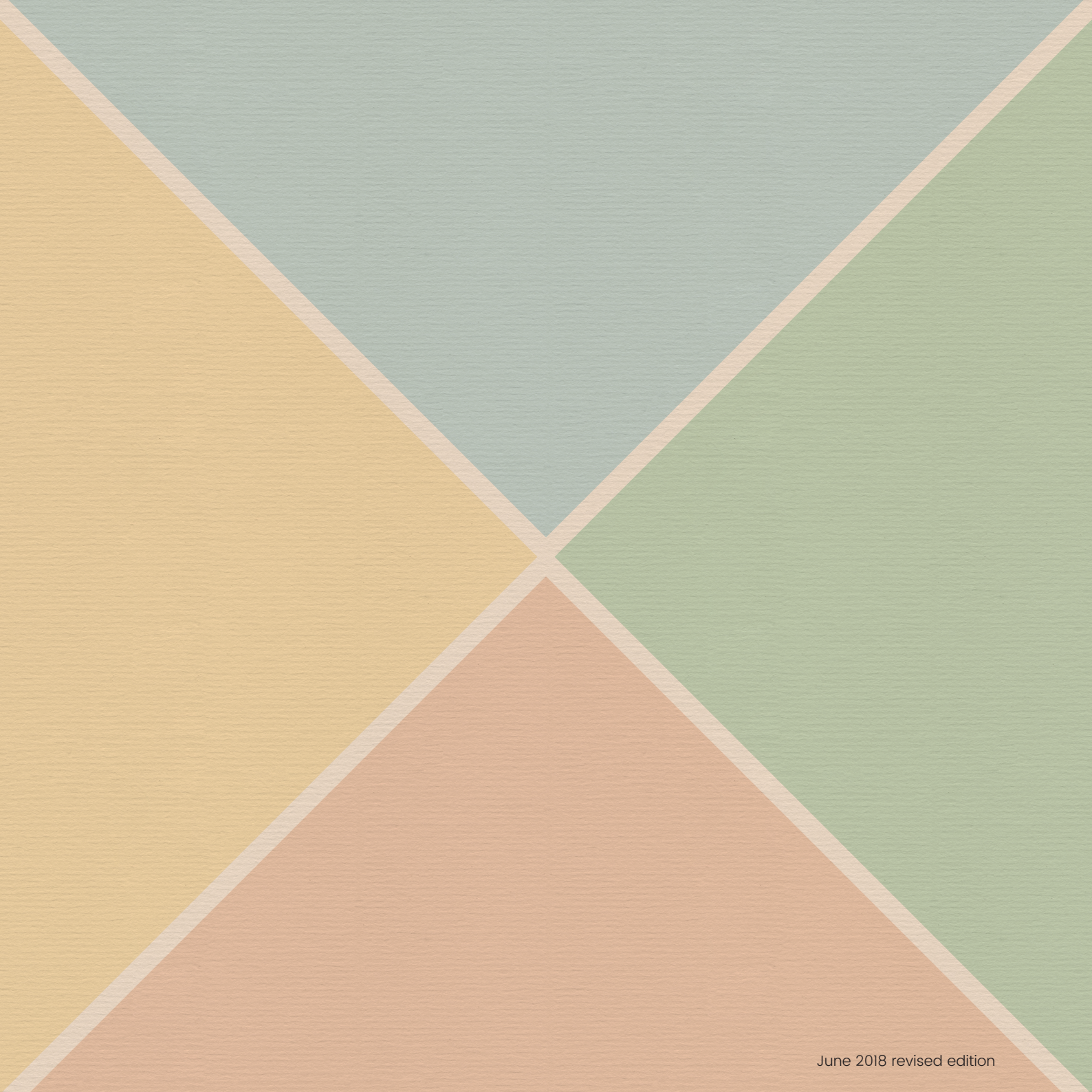


# Northern Territory Government Response to the **Alcohol Policies** and **Legislation Review Final Report**

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## ONE ABOUT

# THE ALCOHOL POLICIES AND LEGISLATION REVIEW (THE REVIEW)

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In March 2017, the Northern Territory Government commissioned the Alcohol Policies and Legislation Review to deliver a cohesive approach to alcohol harm reduction.

The review was conducted under the *Inquiries Act*, reflecting how seriously the Government views the misuse of alcohol in the community.

The Hon Justice Trevor Riley chaired the Expert Advisory Panel for the review which comprised of the following members:

- Professor Richard Matthews, recent Deputy Director-General, New South Wales Department of Health
- Mr Denys Stedman, Lead Partner at KPMG Northern Territory, with extensive experience in providing business advisory services to the tourism, hospitality and liquor industries in the Territory
- Ms Trish Angus, Katherine-born Aboriginal woman and former long-term senior NT Government public servant who is currently on the board of the Top End Health Service

The Expert Advisory Panel conducted broad public consultation throughout May to July 2017 with key stakeholders, communities and businesses. The Expert Advisory Panel conducted numerous public forums across the Territory and received over 138 written submissions.

On 19 October 2017, the Alcohol Policies and Legislation Review Final Report (the Report) was delivered to Government by the Chair of the Expert Advisory Panel. The Report provides 220 recommendations on reforms to alcohol policy and legislation which were categorised in the Report under:

1. Whole of Government
2. Regulatory Framework
3. Harm Minimisation
4. Managing Harms

The Report acknowledges that the current regulatory framework for alcohol in the Northern Territory is not fit for purpose and that the NT Government needs to deliver a cohesive approach to alcohol harm minimisation for all Territorians.

# TWO ABOUT THE NT GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO THE REVIEW

Upon receiving the Report, the NT Government took a number of immediate actions. These included:

- publicly releasing the Report on 19 October 2017
- approving in-principle support for the consideration of implementing all of the recommendations of the Report, except for the recommendation that all takeaway sales are banned on Sundays
- establishing the Alcohol Review Implementation Team in the Department of the Chief Minister to drive reforms and coordinate engagement with stakeholders (implementing a specific recommendation of the Report)

In the month following the release of the Report, the NT Government:

- repealed the 400m<sup>2</sup> floor space requirement for liquor stores (legislation enacted in November 2017)
- committed to re-instating the Liquor Commission, with decisions to be made based on a new public interest and community impact test (legislation introduced in February 2018)
- extended and expanded the moratorium on takeaway licences through regulation
- established an Industry Reference Group (on-license) to advise Government on recommendations that concern industry, such as licensing fees, collection of data, review of the advertising code of practice and the drafting of a new *Liquor Act*
- rolled out the Communications and Engagement Plan – Phase One, an initial consultation plan to raise awareness across relevant business, industry and non-government organisations (NGOs)

It was quickly acknowledged that a significant body of work needed to be done by NT Government agencies to develop a comprehensive response to the Report's recommendations, and as such Government's response to the Report was deferred to early 2018.

This document delivers on Government's promise to provide a comprehensive response which outlines what Government has done, what it is doing and what it plans do, in order to action the recommendations of the Report.

The NT Government Response comprises two important elements:

1. The Table of Recommendations: The Northern Territory Government's position on the Alcohol Policies and Legislation Review Final Report's recommendations – this closes the loop on the Review process and is necessary for good governance and transparency
2. The Northern Territory Alcohol Harm Minimisation Action Plan 2018–2019 (the Action Plan) – the Action Plan sets out the policy and legislative reforms, enforcement and compliance activities and harm management strategies/services that the NT Government is committed to delivering, in order to minimise harms associated with alcohol misuse.

The Alcohol Review and Implementation Team, established in the Department of the Chief Minister will provide six-monthly reports in the 2018 and 2019 calendar years to monitor the progress of these two elements. The first report will be due in August 2018.

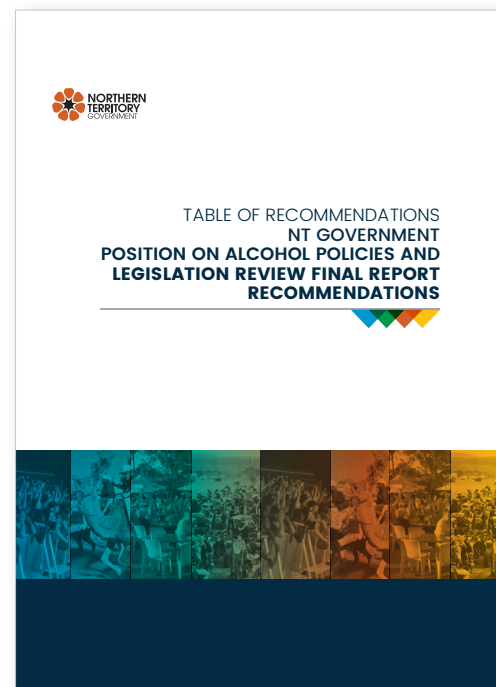
# THREE GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE REPORT'S RECOMMENDATIONS

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The Report contains 220 recommendations. The NT Government has 'supported' 187 of the Report's recommendations and 'supported in-principle' 32 recommendations. The only recommendation the Government has not supported is the recommendation that all takeaway sales are banned on Sundays (recommendation 2.5.6). For clarity, the following terms are defined:

- *supported* – this means that Government supports the recommendation without amendment or condition
- *supported in-principle* – this means that Government endorses the general concept, principle or outcome of the recommendation, but may wish to achieve the outcome in a slightly different manner to how the recommendation prescribes
- *not supported* – this means that the general concept, principle or outcome of the recommendation is rejected by Government and will not be implemented

For full details as to how Government has responded to each recommendation, see the Table of Recommendations: The Northern Territory Government's Response to the Alcohol Policies and Legislation Review Final Report's recommendations.



# FOUR THE NORTHERN TERRITORY ALCOHOL HARM MINIMISATION ACTION PLAN 2018-2019

The Northern Territory Alcohol Harm Minimisation Action Plan 2018-2019 (the Action Plan) comprises of four key themes:

- **Strengthening Community Responses – Healthy Communities and Effective and Accessible Treatment**
- **Effective Liquor Regulation**
- **Research, Data and Evaluation**
- **Comprehensive, Collaborative & Coordinated Approach**

The Action Plan contains tangible actions that Government is committed to in the immediate, medium and long term to ensure the Northern Territory minimises harms related to alcohol.

For more information, see the Northern Territory Alcohol Harm Minimisation Action Plan 2018-2019.

