

**DRUG AND ALCOHOL STRATEGY
2007 - 2010**



Drug and Alcohol Strategy

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Sydney is committed to responding to alcohol and drug-related issues in order to improve safety for City residents, businesses and visitors, as well as people who are dependent on drugs and / or alcohol.

To respond to the impacts of illicit drug use, the City has prepared a Drug and Alcohol Strategy which outlines the unique role of local government in responding to these harms, and how we can work with our key partners.

The Drug and Alcohol Strategy aims to:

1. Reduce drug and alcohol-related crime and anti-social behaviour.
2. Minimise the negative impacts of drug and alcohol use in the public domain.
3. Reduce negative impacts from licensed premises (especially in areas with high densities).
4. Reduce drug and alcohol related harm amongst priority populations – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, young people, people in the Gay Lesbian Bisexual Transgender (GLBT) communities and people who are homeless.
5. Improve access by the City community to information on drug and alcohol related harms, and how they can respond to these harms.
6. Advocate to other levels of government for enhanced responses to alcohol and drug related impacts (on people and places) where appropriate.
7. Reduce drug and alcohol related accidents and injuries.

The Drug and Alcohol Strategy will meet these objectives through integrated approaches that include:

- Providing well coordinated enforcement
- Delivering public education initiatives
- Delivering infrastructure that responds to drug and alcohol use hotspots
- Providing and supporting innovative design to improve public safety in licensed premises and public spaces
- Supporting early intervention and diversionary programs for priority populations

1. INTRODUCTION

The use of and dependence on drugs and alcohol have significant negative impacts on morbidity, mortality, public health, family welfare, crime and community safety, educational attainment, economic development and social inclusion. Accordingly, reducing the impacts of these harms is key priority for the City of Sydney.

The City of Sydney Drug & Alcohol Strategy focuses on the very specific role of local government in addressing drug and alcohol related impacts. It is not the intention of this strategy to identify what other agencies should be doing, but rather to define why and how local government can respond directly to these issues, working with other agencies.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Role of Local Government

Nationally, there has been a significant shift in local government responses to drug and alcohol issues. Until recently, relatively few local governments saw themselves as playing a direct role in identifying and addressing alcohol and drug issues. In the late 1990s, Australia experienced a rapid escalation of drug overdoses and discarded syringes associated with heroin use, as well as considerable community concern corresponding to high profile political and media debates. As a result, many local governments became actively involved in these debates.

Local government has a very specific and unique role in relation to addressing drug and alcohol related impacts. Of the three tiers of government, councils are often the most directly impacted by drug and alcohol harms. These impacts are experienced to some degree by all members of our City community. The role of local government is different, yet complementary to health and law enforcement roles. Local government not only bears the impacts, but is ideally located to respond directly to these impacts, as well as advocating for a response from other tiers of government.

Local government responses to drug and alcohol issues are generated by a number of factors including:

- Legislative requirements and obligations (Alcohol Free Zones, Planning Consent).
- Provision of related services (eg: homelessness services)
- Community expectation (Development of localised approaches to drug and alcohol issues, for example through Community Drug Action Teams)

Many of the specific contributions are consistent with the traditional roles of local government including:

- Public space management
- Planning and development
- Compliance and regulation
- Recreational and community facilities
- Community services

2.2 Legislative and Policy Context

Commonwealth - Policy

The **National Drug Strategy** is a cooperative venture between Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments and the non-government sector. Its aims are to improve health, social and economic outcomes for Australians by preventing the uptake of harmful drug use and reducing the harmful effects of licit and illicit drugs. The **National Drug Strategic Framework**, describes how this will be achieved, and encompasses the following strategies:

- National Illicit Drug Strategy
- National Alcohol Strategy 2006-2009. Its four priority areas are: intoxication, public safety and amenity, health impacts, and cultural place and availability.
- National Tobacco Strategy
- National Indigenous Drug Strategy
- National School Drug Education Strategy

State - Policy

NSW Government policy on drugs is shaped by the **National Drug Strategic Framework** and, since 1999, by the recommendations of the NSW Drug Summit contained in the **NSW Government's Plan of Action**.

The *NSW Government's Plan of Action* outlines a broad range of strategies including a community drug information strategy, expanding prevention and early intervention services, improving access to treatment services and increasing the number of drug courts. The *State Plan* also includes strategies that address alcohol-related crime and anti-social behaviour.

Local Government

Council's obligations to address drug and alcohol issues are defined in the following areas of NSW State legislation.

The City's Charter under **the Local Government Act (1993)** requires Council to take responsibility for managing public land. The Local Government Act gives Councils the power to issue and enforce orders that aim to prevent activities that place members of the public at risk.

A range of other legislation such as the **Environmental Planning and Assessment Act (1979)** and **the Roads Act (1993)** also provide Council with a range of responsibilities and functions including public health and safety.

Under the **Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997**, the Environment Protection Agency (EPA) is the "Appropriate Regulatory Authority" if a site is found to have been used to manufacture illegal drugs (a clandestine laboratory). Where materials classified as dangerous under the Dangerous Goods Code are detected, the Contaminated Land Management Act can be triggered.

The EPA is the agency with the responsibility of investigating and addressing significant risk of harm (s6). EPA can direct a public authority (which includes a council) to undertake specified clean-up action, with a right of recovery (s35) which can be registered as a charge on the land (s40).

City of Sydney

The Drug and Alcohol Strategy is designed to complement the following City of Sydney documents:

- Late Night Trading Premises Discussion Paper
- Kings Cross Licensed Premises Research Report
- Youth Interagency Strategy and Action Plan

The Strategy will also complement the following documents under development as at January 2007:

- Draft Late Night Trading Premises Development Control Plan
- Draft Safe City Strategy
- Draft Road Safety Strategy
- Draft Oxford Street Safety Strategy
- Draft Homelessness Strategy
- Draft Street Drinking Strategy
- Draft Open Space and Recreation Needs Study
- Draft City Plan Development Control Plan

3.0 ALCOHOL IN THE CITY – A BRIEF OVERVIEW

3.1 Definition: Alcohol is a legal, regulated drug, and licensed premises are custodians of its legal and responsible supply.

3.2 Locations and related impacts

On any day in Sydney visitors, workers or residents consume alcohol in regulated, semi-regulated and unregulated environments.

Licensed Premises

The City of Sydney accommodates nearly 2000 licensed premises, where alcohol is consumed in a regulated environment:

- 327 are hotels, of these 94 have a Place of Public Entertainment license (PoPE), and 76 have an Outdoor Dining Footway License (ODFL).
- 53 are Registered Clubs, of these 9 have PoPEs, and 1 has an ODFL.
- 41 are nightclubs, of these 14 have PoPEs, 2 have ODFL
- Breakdown of hotels, registered clubs and nightclubs by suburb as classified by the Office of Liquor Gaming and Racing (OLGR) 2006:

SUBURB	HOTELS	CLUBS	NIGHTCLUBS
Alexandria	8	1	
Annandale	4		
Camperdown	5	1	1
Chippendale	8	1	
Circular Quay	1		
Darling Harbour	7		1
Darlinghurst	15	1	12
East Sydney	3		
Eastlakes		1	
Enmore	1		
Erskineville	4	1	
Forest Lodge	2		
Glebe	10	1	
Haymarket	2		
Kings Cross	12	1	8
Millers Point	3		
Moore Park	1	1	
Newtown	16	1	1
Paddington	16	3	2
Potts Point	1		4
Pymont	7		
Redfern	13	2	
Rosebery	1	1	
Rushcutters Bay	3		
St Peters	5		
Surry Hills	18	3	1
Sydney	136	31	9
Sydney Cove	1		
Tempe	1	3	
The Rocks	6		1
Ultimo	4		

Walsh Bay	1		1
Waterloo	7		
Woolloomooloo	5		
TOTAL	327	53	41

The City also contains the greatest concentration of 24-hour, and late-night trading licensed premises in Australia and several distinct entertainment precincts.

Concentrations of licensed premises with extended trading hours provide greater opportunities for alcohol to be consumed, and can result in more people becoming intoxicated. Increased numbers of intoxicated people in public spaces can result in increased impacts on safety and amenity. There may also be conflicts between land uses which can increase the impacts further.

Entertainment precinct characteristics can change over time. Problem areas and problem premises can change into well regulated areas with compliant premises which attract a better patron. The Rocks is a good example of this type of change.

Following the Late Night Trading Premises report to Council, staff are investigating measures for cumulative impacts to provide planners with criteria to assess development applications for new licensed premises.

Large Public Events

The City regularly hosts large events where alcohol consumption is part of the celebrations. Annual events such as the New Year's Eve celebrations and Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras parade have international reputations which draw local, interstate and international visitors. Some areas during large scale events are licensed and are regulated or semi-regulated environments. The impacts of alcohol during large events relate to:

- Waste management.
- Accidents and injuries.
- Potential anti-social and criminal behaviour.

Public Domain

The consumption of alcohol in the public domain is a problem affecting many cities internationally, and Sydney is no exception. Public intoxication can take many forms, including:

Patrons leaving licensed premises

Patrons may continue to drink alcohol in public areas. This group tends to consume alcohol near licensed premises and/or along pedestrian corridors to transport, accommodation or other licensed premises. Potential impacts from patrons leaving licensed premises are:

- Moderate to high noise and waste impacts.
- Anti-social and criminal behaviours, such as malicious damage.
- Pedestrian safety once people are intoxicated.

Chronic, alcohol-addicted individuals and groups

These are people who consume alcohol in public locations on a daily or regular basis. Often, but not always, these people are either homeless and/or socially isolated, and congregate in public spaces. These "street drinkers" usually purchase alcohol from liquor retail outlets. Depending on the location, this activity

can create conflicts between street drinkers and commuters, residents and workers. Impacts from this activity are:

- High noise and waste impacts.
- Accompanying anti-social and criminal behaviours.

Recreational drinkers in public spaces

This activity is mostly engaged in by groups of people who may lack access to private spaces in which to socialise. This includes young people who may be under the legal drinking age, backpackers whose accommodation space is limited or does not permit consumption of alcohol, and visitors and locals picnicing and consuming alcohol in City parks. This activity has relatively few conflicts, impacts for the City of Sydney mainly involve:

- Low noise and waste-related impacts.
- Some anti-social and criminal behaviours, such as malicious damage.

Non-licensed premises

These include residential dwellings, workplaces, and B.Y.O. restaurants & Vessels. These locations are not subject to Responsible Service of Alcohol regulations and may result in increased levels of intoxication, along with the following increased negative impacts in the public domain (eg. when B.Y.O. vessels dock, or patrons leave restaurants):

- Moderate to high noise and waste impacts.
- Pedestrian safety with higher levels of intoxication.

3.3 Alcohol related crime and safety

There are many well-documented harms associated with alcohol intoxication and dependence. This section relates to those impacts directly encountered by Council.

Alcohol and crime

There is a growing body of research that demonstrates the relationship between alcohol and crime – “criminological research over many years has highlighted the prominent role of alcohol in criminal offending, especially in offences involving violence”.¹

Recent studies have highlighted the negative neighborhood consequences (eg. drunkenness and property damage) of an increased concentration of licensed premises in an area;² the costs of injuries sustained through assaults after alcohol-consumption;³ the less than vigorous enforcement of responsible service of alcohol regimes;⁴ and the fact that there are a small number of licensed premises that account for crime and disorder in particular areas (“12% of Inner Sydney hotels accounted for 60% of assaults on hotel premises”).⁵ Given these findings and the emerging evidence of the role played by alcohol in (violent) crime, there has been

¹ Homel, R. (1997) ‘Preventing Alcohol-Related Injuries’, in O’Malley, P. and Sutton, A. (eds) *Crime Prevention in Australia: Issues in Policy and Research*, The Federation Press, Annandale, page 217.

² Donnelly, N.; Poynton, S.; Weatherburn, D.; Bamford, E. and Nottage, J. (2006) ‘Liquor outlet concentrations and alcohol-related neighbourhood problems’, *Alcohol Studies Bulletin*, No. 8, NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research, Sydney.

³ Poynton, S.; Donnelly, N.; Weatherburn, D.; Fulde, G. and Scott, L. (2005) ‘The role of alcohol injuries presenting to St Vincent’s Hospital Emergency Department and the associated short-term costs’, *Alcohol Studies Bulletin*, No. 6, NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research, Sydney.

⁴ Donnelly, N. and Briscoe, S. (2002) ‘Young adults’ experience of responsible service practice in NSW’, *Alcohol Studies Bulletin*, No. 3, NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research, Sydney.

⁵ Briscoe, S. and Donnelly, N. (2001) ‘Assaults on licensed premises in inner-urban areas’, *Alcohol Studies Bulletin*, No. 2, NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research, Sydney.

increasing focus on licensed premises as a means of preventing crime.

Crimes in the City of Sydney LGA in which alcohol was a factor⁶:

- 75% of Offensive Conduct crimes were alcohol related.
- 59% of Assault crimes were alcohol related.
- 52% of Sexual Assault crimes were alcohol related.
- 40% of Malicious Damage to Property crimes were alcohol related.

Community perceptions and safety

Drug and Alcohol Abuse was the most common Crime and Community Safety Issue mentioned by the 3385 respondents to the City's 2006 Household Survey.

Specific Crime and Community Safety Issues Mentioned

Comment	Number
Drug & Alcohol Abuse	742
Crime	631
Community Safety	531
Vandalism and graffiti	220
Police patrol and presence	91
Syringes	87
Street Lighting	86

Alcohol, accidents and injuries

Alcohol related accidents and injuries are often associated with drink driving and drink walking. According to the NRMA, 31% of all pedestrians killed in Australia had a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of 0.05 grams of alcohol per 100ml of blood or more. 75% of pedestrian fatalities involving alcohol were heavily intoxicated, with a BAC of 0.15 or more.

Alcohol dependence and inequality

Most people are able to consume alcohol responsibly, and despite the proliferation of licensed premises within the City of Sydney, there are relatively few problems. Unfortunately some people are disproportionately affected by alcohol dependency. Those most at risk include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, people who are homeless, young people, Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender communities.

⁶ CoS LGA, July 2005 – June 2006, Bureau Of Crime Statistics And Research

4.0 DRUGS IN THE CITY – A BRIEF OVERVIEW

4.1 Definition: Drugs include all psychoactive substances, illicit or otherwise (excluding alcohol). Those drugs which impact most visibly in the City of Sydney are illicit drugs, particularly heroin, amphetamines and GHB (gamma hydroxy butyrate). (Please see appendix for definitions)

4.2 Locations and related impacts

The City of Sydney contains two of the largest illicit drug markets in Australia. Street based supply of illicit drugs is a unique feature among capital city councils. Another unique feature is Australia's sole Medically Supervised Injecting Centre (MSIC). With the exception of the MSIC, illicit drug consumption in Sydney is unregulated, and occurs in numerous locations and contexts, which have vastly different impacts and consequences for drug users and the City community.

Public Domain

Consumption of drugs in the public domain is the most visible form of drug-related activity. The City receives many complaints regarding this issue, mainly in relation to discarded injecting equipment. The consumption of drugs (including injecting) in the public domain is motivated by many factors. Historically users could be charged with the offence of self-administration if found with injecting equipment, leading to a culture of disposing of equipment as soon as possible after use. Injecting drug users are also sometimes homeless or in accommodation which may be compromised if injecting equipment were to be found, and do not have access to other disposal options. The effect of intoxication upon injecting a drug can complicate the ability to appropriately dispose of injecting equipment and being too far from the MSIC to inject and dispose of equipment there can also be a factor.

The impacts from consumption of drugs in the public domain include:

- Drug-related waste, including injecting-related waste, such as discarded syringes and injecting related paraphernalia.
- Distress to residents able to see public injecting, which is often concentrated in particular areas of the LGA, near supply locations. People injecting in public tend to prefer locations that are not frequented by pedestrians and other through-traffic, such as dead-end laneways in the inner city and public toilets. These locations can be used quite frequently, causing distress to residents able to see the activity.
- Opiate overdose is an especially serious issue in these locations, as there is a chance the person overdosing may not be able to receive medical attention in time, if they are injecting alone.
- Defecation, vomiting, and urination are regularly brought to the City's attention along with adverse public perceptions of drug users generally. Public intoxication by drug affected individuals (affected by heroin, prescription drugs and alcohol) is also prevalent.

Private Premises

Drug consumption regularly occurs in residential and commercial premises throughout the City of Sydney. According to Key Informant Studies undertaken by the National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre (NDARC), drug use at home is on the rise. This may be due to concern about being intercepted by drug detection dogs as well as increased attention to use of illicit drugs in licensed premises. Although they are less visible than in other settings, the impacts in these contexts include:

- Injecting drug activity on private property generates a stream of waste that is not accommodated by existing waste management arrangements. This has

occupational health and safety (OH&S) implications for City waste contractors.

- Poorly secured domestic and commercial waste containing used syringes may also be scattered on public streets by drug users searching for discarded syringes. Several commercial premises in Kings Cross have repeatedly experienced this problem. Used syringes in public locations have direct impacts on public health and on perceptions of safety.

Licensed Premises

The consumption of illicit drugs in licensed premises occurs in many of the City's entertainment precincts, and may also occur in conjunction with alcohol consumption. The most common drugs used in these settings include amphetamines (including ice) and ecstasy, but may also include cocaine, ketamine, GHB, cannabis and prescription drugs. Impacts include:

- Potential for the involvement of organised crime in distribution of drugs.
- Potential for overdose to be fatal, and often staff are poorly trained in how to respond and may prefer relocate the person off the premises.

Medically Supervised Injecting Centre (MSIC)

MSIC has had a very positive impact on the levels of street based injecting drug activity in the Kings Cross area. This includes a reduction in fatal overdoses as well as a substantial reduction in the level of discarded injecting equipment in the area. After five years of operation, the MSIC has resulted in:

- 9,000 registered injecting drug users treated;
- 5,380 referrals, nearly half to drug treatment and rehabilitation;
- 90 per cent reach to the local drug injecting population;
- 310,000 drug injections that would have otherwise occurred in less safe circumstances;
- 1,742 overdoses successfully resuscitated, with no deaths;
- An 84 per cent decrease in ambulance overdose callouts;
- Emergency department beds freed up for other medical crises;
- Improvements in safety and amenity for residents and businesses;
- An average of 250 injections taken off Kings Cross streets every day;
- Reduced drug-related crime in Kings Cross;
- Increasing local support for the Centre, with higher levels of support from those who live closer to the facility, and 80 per cent support from residents who have been living in the area for more than five years.

Clandestine Laboratories

Clandestine Laboratories is the term used to describe places where illegal drugs are manufactured. They are most often discovered in rural and remote areas, but in recent years smaller labs in urban areas have become more common. There are a range of potential impacts from clandestine laboratories:

- Public health and safety and the environment may be adversely affected because the manufacturing process involves toxic, and /or explosive chemicals and waste.

4.3 Drug related crime and safety

There are many, well document harms associated with drug dependence. This section relates to those impacts directly encountered council.

Changing Use Patterns

There have been recent changes in drug use patterns, such as "increased use of methamphetamines" (ice, meth or crystal) and a "continued increase in the misuse of

a growing number of pharmaceutical preparations, such as morphine, methadone and benzodiazepines”⁷. Availability, strength, and type of drugs used is constantly shifting. Changing use patterns can have unexpected impacts. Occasional increases in the availability of cocaine for example, can result in significant increases in discarded injecting equipment, due to the drug’s short acting nature. Other factors such as enforcement and planning-related activities can also have displacement effects on localised drug activity. Responses to drug use impacts need to be flexible to accommodate these shifts.

Drugs and crime

Involvement in crime compounds the harms caused by illicit drug use. Overwhelmingly drug related crime in the LGA has decreased or remained stable⁸, with the following exceptions, which are mainly possession related offences:

- An increase in fraud and steal from dwelling 1996 – 2006
- An increase in possession of amphetamines, cannabis, ecstasy and ‘other drugs’ (eg. pharmaceuticals) 1996 – 2006
- Localised increases in possession of amphetamines of nearly 15%

Street based drug dealing is also a concern for many City residents and businesses, particularly in Kings Cross, Woolloomooloo, Redfern and Waterloo. The street based drug markets attract illicit drug users from across metropolitan Sydney and generate considerable fear and anger for residents and businesses near these locations. Many street based drug users may consume their drugs close to the site of purchase, and thus drug dealing and drug consumption are interrelated issues for the City of Sydney.

Drug Overdose

Drug overdose differs depending on which substance is involved. Some types of overdose may be physically or psychologically harmful, but are not fatal. Overdoses from opiates (eg. heroin) which require ambulance attendance, have declined in recent years. There are likely to be a number of factors involved, including a brief shortage of heroin in 2001, the effect of the MSIC in reducing street-based injecting and overdose, enforcement activities such as use of drug detection dogs, and a shift in potency, availability and consumption patterns, with an increase in use of amphetamines (including ice) and cocaine.⁹

Drug-related Waste

Drug related waste has a considerable impact on public perceptions of safety. Waste is mainly related to injecting drug use, and although more of this waste finds its way into the household waste stream, syringes discarded in public spaces attract the most fear and attention. Injecting equipment has been available through Needle Syringe Programs since 1986, and has clearly demonstrated benefits in reducing rates of Blood Borne Infections (mainly HIV and hepatitis C) among people who inject drugs.

The City implemented a Syringe Management Strategy in 2005 that includes a range of strategies to minimise injecting related waste, including a network of 63 Community Sharps Bins across the LGA. Statistics from collection and clean up in

⁷ Illicit Drug Reporting System (IDRS) 2006

⁸ NSW Police crime statistics for the CoS LGA, released through the Bureau Of Crime Statistics And Research (BOCSAR)

⁹ Population Health Division. *The health of the people of New South Wales - Report of the Chief Health Officer*. Sydney: NSW Department of Health. Available at: http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/public-health/chorep/beh/beh_illiambuloc.htm. Accessed (12.1.2007).

these locations show that for every 100 syringes disposed of, 98 are placed in the Community Sharps Bin, and only two are collected from within a 10 metre radius around the bin.

5.0 DRUG AND ALCOHOL IMPACTS IN PRIORITY POPULATIONS

There are large portions of the population who consume drugs in a moderate, controlled manner which has relatively few impacts on themselves as drug users, the community and on Council. Unfortunately some people are disproportionately affected by drug dependency. The following groups have a significant presence in the City of Sydney LGA, and rates of alcohol and/or drug use in these groups are often higher than in the general community.

- **Homeless people with drug and / or alcohol dependence**
Homelessness is commonly the result of alcohol dependency and an increasing number of people are becoming homeless and experiencing psychosis related to use of amphetamines, especially “ice”. Homeless people often experience dual diagnosis, where concurrent alcohol and/or drug use and mental health issues exacerbate treatment options.
- **Young people (under 25 years old)**
The City of Sydney accommodates and attracts large numbers of young people. Binge drinking rates and consumption of ready-mixed drinks among young men and women are on the rise. Experimental or recreational use of illicit drugs is also significant, and some levels of use could be considered dependent.¹⁰
- **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities**
Nearly 20 per cent of Indigenous people drink at risky or high risk levels, over the long term, compared with about 10 per cent of the non Indigenous population¹¹. Rates of recent illicit drug use among Indigenous Australians, at 26.9 %, are also higher than in the general community aged 14+ (15.9 %).¹² Illicit drug dependence increases the rate of involvement in crime, at least in part because of the high costs associated with funding illicit drug dependence.¹³ The City of Sydney LGA contains areas where the population of Indigenous Australians is higher than in the general community: 2001 Census data indicates that Indigenous Australians people make up more than 3% of the Redfern and 8% of the Waterloo population.
- **Gay and lesbian communities**
Gay and lesbian communities are present in significant numbers in parts of the City of Sydney LGA. Drug use in these communities is significantly higher than in the general community. The Sydney Gay Community Periodic Survey 2003, indicates that close to 73% of gay men living or socialising in Sydney reported using at least one non-prescription drug in the previous six months. The Australian Longitudinal Study of Women’s health shows that recreational drug use is more prevalent among bisexual and lesbian women, with 58.2% aged between 22 and 27 reporting illicit drug use in the previous 12 months. The GLBT communities are also experiencing problematic use of GHB with increasing numbers of people experiencing overdose in both social settings and alone.

¹⁰ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2005. 2004 National Drug Strategy Household Survey: State and territory supplement. AIHW cat. no. PHE 61. Canberra: AIHW.

¹¹ Commonwealth of Australia 2005

¹² Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2005. 2004 National Drug Strategy Household Survey: State and territory supplement. AIHW cat. no. PHE 61. Canberra: AIHW.

¹³ Blumstein, A., Cohen, J., Roth, J.A. & Visher, C.A. 1986, *Criminal Careers and Career Criminals*, vol. 1, National Academy Press, Washington DC.

6.0 DRUG AND ALCOHOL STRATEGY

Aim: To reduce the impacts of illicit drug and alcohol use in the City of Sydney.

Objectives:

1. Reduce drug and alcohol-related crime and anti-social behaviour.
2. Minimise the negative impacts of drug and alcohol use in the public domain.
3. Reduce negative impacts from licensed premises (especially in areas with high densities).
4. Reduce drug and alcohol related harm amongst priority populations – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, young people, people in the Gay Lesbian Bisexual Transgender (GLBT) communities and people who are homeless.
5. Improve access by the City community to information on drug and alcohol related harms, and how they can respond to these harms.
6. Advocate to other levels of government for enhanced responses to alcohol and drug related impacts (on people and places) where appropriate.
7. Reduce drug and alcohol related accidents and injuries.

Key Principles:

The City of Sydney is committed to responding to alcohol and drug-related issues in order to improve safety for City residents, businesses and visitors, as well as people who use or are dependent on drugs and alcohol.

1. Systematic, multi-faceted responses are required. Singular, stand-alone responses do not generally solve complex drug and alcohol-related issues.
2. While interim measures may have short-term benefits, a long-term commitment is essential to tackle the impacts of drug and alcohol-related harm.
3. Integrated responses must complement state and commonwealth programs, and existing regulatory and health structures.
4. The City will work with other stakeholders, including drug and alcohol users and those affected by their use. The burden of drug and alcohol dependence is shared by the entire community, as is the responsibility for tackling this burden.
5. The principle of social inclusivity is reflected through a commitment to reducing the impact of alcohol and drug dependence on priority populations – young people, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and people who are homeless.
6. Harm minimisation is a key principle. While the elimination of drug and alcohol harms is a desirable outcome, this may not be realistic. Where possible, the harms associated with alcohol and drug use, and its impacts should be minimised.
7. There are always opportunities to intervene in drug and alcohol-related problems, and we must engage simultaneously at many stages in the cycle including prevention, reduction, regulation and containment.

OBJECTIVE 1:

REDUCING DRUG AND ALCOHOL-RELATED CRIME AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

There is a significant relationship between alcohol and drug dependence and crime. Overwhelmingly, it is the responsibility of law enforcement agencies, such as the NSW Police to respond to these crimes. Local government however, does have a role. To reduce drug and alcohol-related crime the City will focus on:

- Alcohol-related assaults
- Drink spiking
- Drug dealing

Alcohol Related Assault

The City will:

- Pilot joint high-visibility patrolling with the City Rangers and NSW Police in key entertainment precincts during peak times for assaults.
- Contribute to the development of the NSW Government patron education campaign, about appropriate behaviour and disseminate the materials across all licensed premises in the City.
- Continue to deliver innovative messages about appropriate behaviour during our landmark events, such as New Year's Eve.
- Consider the addition of a new condition of approval for all major public events in the City, such as the Sydney Gay & Lesbian Mardi Gras Parade, requiring organisers to provide messages about appropriate crowd behaviour.
- Continue to provide a responsive Safety Camera CCTV network to assist police to apprehend the perpetrators of assaults.

Drink Spiking

The City will:

- Deliver a drink spiking public awareness campaign during summer each year.
- Deliver an education initiative targeting the responsiveness of licensed premises bar staff, duty managers and security staff during spring each year.
- Work with all liquor licensing accords, NSW Police, Royal Prince Alfred Hospital Sexual Assault Service and the AIDS Council of NSW (ACON).

Drug dealing

The supply of illicit drugs is a crime, and the NSW Police are responsible for responding to this crime.

The City will:

- Continue to provide a responsive Safety Camera CCTV network, enabling the NSW Police to apprehend drug dealers.
- Activate public space for legitimate uses, such as entertainment and outdoor footway dining to discourage drug dealing.
- Review Plan of Management requirements so that premises with a nightclub license are to include a Harm Minimisation Plan, which will reduce the likelihood of drug dealing occurring.

OBJECTIVE 2:

MINIMISING THE NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF DRUG AND ALCOHOL USE IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN

The impacts of alcohol and drug use and dependence are most visible in the City's public spaces. Poor amenity impacts on community perceptions of safety and order. To improve public amenity, the City will target:

- Drinking in public spaces
- Public injecting and discarded syringes

Drinking in public spaces

Whilst the majority of people who consume alcohol in the City's public spaces, do so responsibly, there are some groups who generate similar adverse impacts such as waste, noise, obstruction of footpaths, harassment of passers-by and in some cases damage to public property, assault and other criminal activity. These incidents occur around the clock, and around major events in the City. On a day to day basis, the key populations generating public complaint and concern are:

- Chronic alcohol-addicted "street drinkers".
- Intoxicated "weekend warriors" - patrons exiting licensed venues, who continue to drink as they make their way home or to the next pub.
- Young people.

The City will:

- Continue to deliver innovative public space design that aims to reduce harmful alcohol consumption via good landscaping, lighting and change of use.
- Provide public toilets in entertainment precincts and in areas which have a high level of public drinking activity.
- Prohibit alcohol consumption in high conflict public spaces (ie: spaces with high pedestrian volumes or adjacent residential uses) via the establishment of Alcohol Free Zones on roads and footways and Alcohol Prohibited Areas in public parks.
- Implement the City of Sydney Street Drinking Strategy to respond to the specific issues generated and faced by chronic alcohol addicted groups and individuals.
- Establish managed access points and licensed areas during large scale public events, such as New Year's Eve.
- Develop policy and procedures relating to "Alcohol and Major Events" for inclusion in the CoS Events Management Policy.

Public injecting and discarded injecting equipment

Public drug injecting and the associated waste is a significant issue in the City, with numerous hotspots across the entire LGA. The City takes this issue very seriously, and has developed a Syringe Management Plan 2005-09.

The City will

- Continue to provide a fast, coordinated and efficient response to public injecting and the associated waste.
- Continue to install community sharps bins in response to injecting hotspots.
- Continue to educate City residents and businesses on what to do if they find a discarded syringe, via the "Who To Call" card which promotes the free call 24 hour Needle Clean Up Hotline.

- Increase the number of disposal options for all people who generate sharps (including people with diabetes and other medical conditions) via the pharmacy disposal project.
- Develop a pilot project with the Kirketon Road Centre in relation to injecting waste and impact on sensitive areas, such as playgrounds and schools.

OBJECTIVE 3:

REDUCING IMPACTS FROM LICENSED PREMISES

Licensed premises add vibrancy to the City's day and late night economy. As a global City, many venues in key entertainment precincts City operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. These venues attract both local and international visitors.

Unfortunately there are impacts associated with these types of land uses, including noise, crime and littering. These impacts are exacerbated by the volume of visitors, access to transport, trading hours, management practices, level of enforcement and compliance activity and proximity to residential areas. The full implementation of the smoking ban legislation in July 2007 is also expected to generate specific impacts.

To address the impacts from licensed premises the City will prioritise the following issues:

- Participation in liquor licensing accords
- Enhanced regulation and compliance in licensed premises
- Noise
- Crime in licensed premises
- Impacts from use of illicit drugs in licensed premises
- Cumulative impacts in areas with high densities of licensed premises.
- Impacts from Smoking Ban Legislation
- Queues
- Plans of management

Participation in liquor licensing accords

Licensing Accords are local voluntary agreements between police, councils, licensed venues, and other community stakeholders aimed at reducing alcohol related harm associated with licensed premises. As at December 2006, there are 7 operational licensing accords that Council works with including: Sydney CBD, City North, Kings Cross, Surry Hills, South Sydney, Licensed Motor Vessels and Darling Harbour. A Newtown Licensing Accord is currently under development.

The City has a long history of supporting liquor licensing accords, as they complement licensing enforcement, and offer licensees the opportunity to learn new legislative requirements, and ways to improve compliance.

The City will:

- Continue to support existing accords through provision of incident books, the delivery of education campaigns for licensed venues and through attendance at relevant accord executive committees and meetings.
- Support the development of new accords and have input into aims, objectives and strategies of existing accords.
- Work with the Kings Cross Licensing Accord (the oldest accord in NSW) to celebrate its 10th anniversary in 2007.

- Convene an annual meeting of all accord presidents to deliver strategic, whole of LGA responses to alcohol-related crime and anti-social behaviour.
- Investigate opportunities for BYO premises to engage with local licensing accords.
- Continue to encourage accord membership via the City's Standard Conditions of Consent.

Enhanced regulation and compliance in licensed premises

Well coordinated enforcement and compliance activities in licensed premises aim to improve the management of all venues and reduce the number of venues with significant performance issues. City Licensed Premises staff may revoke POPE (Place of Public Entertainment) licenses for breaches of the POPE approval, including amenity, fire safety and life safety issues.

When new or existing licensed premises apply for a new licence, City Licensed Premises staff may lodge complaints or objections under the Liquor Act to the licensing court that may result in licences being refused or being imposed with additional conditions.

The City will:

- Prioritise joint operations with NSW Police and the Office of Liquor, Gaming & Racing (OLGR)
 - Increase the number of Licensing Compliance Officers to enable more frequent participation in joint operations.
 - Investigate the rostering of City rangers to ensure that enforcement can occur when venues are operating at key hours.
 - Advocate for an increase in numbers of compliance officers at OLGR.
 - Schedule joint operations targeting key entertainment precincts such as George Street Sydney, Darlinghurst Road, Kings Cross and Oxford Street, Darlinghurst.
- Pilot a new Specialist Kings Cross Licensing Compliance Officer. This position will be based out of the Kings Cross Neighbourhood Service Centre and will be responsible for monitoring compliance of all licensed premises in the Kings Cross Local Area Command. The position will:
 - Build relationships with local premises.
 - Work flexible hours.
 - Attend Kings Cross Licensing Accord meetings.
 - Implement strategies to address compliance issues.
 - Undertake proactive enforcement.
 - Undertake joint operations with other Council Licensing Compliance Officers and Police in Kings Cross.

Noise

The City receives numerous noise complaints that relate to licensed premises each year. We recognise that the primary responsibility on noise attenuation should be on licensed premises.

The City will:

- Develop an online information resource for residents and businesses on how to report and respond to noise issues. This will include rights and obligations and outline complaint making processes such as Section 104 complaints.

Crime in Licensed Premises

The City will:

- Consult Police to incorporate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) Principles (appendix 2), when development assessments for licensed premises are assessed.
- Deliver crime prevention education via the seven licensing accords on how venues can safeguard against crimes such as armed robbery, steal from person offences and drink spiking.
- Support the NSW Police to promote the reporting of crime by licensed premises.
- Advocate for improved vetting and regulation of security staff.
- Work with licensed premises to improve communication between venue security staff, especially in areas with concentrations of licensed premises (eg information sharing about patrons who have just been refused entry)

Illicit Drugs in Licensed Premises

The City will:

- Review Plan of Management requirements so that premises with a nightclub license are to include a Harm Minimisation Plan
- Review standard conditions of consent regarding the design and layout of toilets in licensed venues to discourage drug use and to prevent overdose deaths (ie: no flat metal surfaces inside cubicle and no floor to ceiling doors).
- Implement “Save a Mate” training for bar and security staff in licensed venues via the seven liquor licensing accords. The Save a Mate education program is specifically designed to build skills in managing alcohol and other drug-related emergencies.
- Participate in “G Force” which seeks to develop approaches to reduce the impacts of GHB use, especially in GLBT licensed venues. (appendix 2)
- Implement regular information sessions on illicit drugs for licensed venues at liquor accord meetings.

Cumulative Impacts in Areas with High Densities of Licensed Premises

A body of research notes that high densities of late night licensed premises generates cumulative impacts (eg: crime, litter, noise). These impacts are amplified by a lack of late night transport options and high pedestrian volumes attracted to entertainment precincts.

The City will:

- Undertake research into indicators of cumulative impacts in conjunction with other stakeholders such as NSW Police and NSW Health, including mapping of approvals in the past five years for all key entertainment precincts to identify if there has been a concentration of approvals in particular areas.
- Develop a framework for measuring cumulative impacts as a tool for determining when an area has reached a level of “saturation” with late night trading licensed premises investigate a definition for “high impact” venues.
- Develop a Late Night Trading Premises Development Control Plan.
- Consult Police to incorporate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) Principles (appendix 2), when development assessments for licensed premises are assessed. This is to identify opportunities for improved responses to potential impacts from licensed venue DA’s in areas with concentrations of licensed premises.

Impacts from Smoking Ban Legislation

The full Smoking Ban for Licensed Premises comes into effect in July 2007.

The City will:

- Create a Smoking Ban Working Party comprised of internal and external stakeholders.
- Deliver a management plan that responds to the impacts in a strategic, coordinated manner, including responses to issues such as littering, development consent, enforcement and noise attenuation measures.

Queuing

Footpath blockage caused by patrons queuing outside night clubs in the Kings Cross, Darlinghurst and City entertainment precincts is a significant issue late at night. This creates issues such as preventing entry to adjacent businesses and safety issues for people attempting to pass queues. This problem is intensified where several night-clubs are clustered.

The City will:

- Consider footpath overcrowding in the Late Night Trading Premises Development Control Plan.
- Pilot a removable bollard scheme for any new premise as a standard condition of consent. The owner of the premises would be responsible for paying for the removable bollards, the City would provide specifications of the bollard design during the consent approval process.

Responsible management of licensed premises

Poorly managed premises can encourage disorderly behaviour from patrons which may result in noise and other amenity impacts. To address these impacts,

The City will:

- Develop Plan of Management requirements for licensed premises.
- Encourage licensees to participate in licensing accords.

OBJECTIVE 4:

REDUCING DRUG AND ALCOHOL RELATED HARM AMONGST PRIORITY POPULATIONS

Some populations in the City are disproportionately affected by illicit drug and alcohol use and dependence. Intervention at key life stages can be crucial. The City will work with the following priority groups:

- Young people & juvenile offenders
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- GLBT communities
- Homeless people with drug and / or alcohol dependence

Young people

Young people experience significant rates of alcohol and illicit drug consumption. The periods of transition that young people experience in the process of moving from

child to adult place them at high risk of drug and alcohol use, they are also more likely to engage in high risk behaviours than the adult population.

The City will:

- Implement the Save a Mate education program specifically designed for alcohol and other drug-related emergencies in Council youth programs and services.
- Deliver and support targeted and flexible diversionary youth programs incorporating early intervention principles to reduce young people's involvement in drug related crime, anti social behaviour and the development of dependent drug and alcohol issues. These programs will target young people at key transition points, where interventions can occur most effectively.
- Pilot Responsible Service of Alcohol (RSA) / Responsible Conduct of Gambling (RCG) vocational training courses for young people in partnership with Training providers. If pilots are successful this project will be expanded to incorporate further partnerships with business.
- Continue to support the Safe Summer Survival (SSS) peer education project and the development of youth drug and alcohol resources.
- Participate in the Community Drug Strategy, Public Drunkenness Resource Development committee focussing on young people and young adults.
- Deliver drug and alcohol information and education as part of the City's Drivin' 4 Employment program.

Juvenile Offenders

A number of programs operate in the City of Sydney local government area to support young offenders with Drug and Alcohol issues including: the Youth Drug and Alcohol Court (YDAC), Juvenile Justice Employment Skilling Program, Post Release Support Program, and Local Offender Program

YDAC targets young offenders with illicit drug use problems who are motivated to undertake drug treatment. Many of the participants have never been assessed or been in a treatment program and more than half have a family member with drug and alcohol problems. The other support programs support young offenders post release, on supervision orders and those at risk of offending. Drug use is a contributing factor to offending for many young people in these programs.

The City will:

- Investigate opportunities to assist to provide employment opportunities (through the City of Sydney and associated employers) for young people in YDAC, and other juvenile offender programs.
- Pilot free gym access at the Juanita Nielsen Centre for young people who have completed detoxification and/or rehabilitation for alcohol and/or drug use. Regular exercise and opportunities to develop new peer networks at this time can be significantly contribute to continued recovery.
- Provide access for young offenders seeking employment to the Drivin' 4 Employment program.
- Provide homework support to assist young offenders to continue their education through the City of Sydney Libraries free online tutoring service. This service can be accessed through any computer through the City's website.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders

Redfern, Waterloo and adjoining suburbs contain few culturally-specific services to assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to abstain and recover from substance abuse. The result is often a level of alcohol abuse that has a devastating impact on individuals, their families and the wider community. The average life expectancy of Aboriginal people is almost 20 years lower than the wider Australian community¹⁴.

The City will:

- Propose the setting up of a “Day Centre” in conjunction with the Redfern Waterloo Authority (RWA) through the City’s draft Street Drinking Strategy. The Centre would provide the environment, opportunity and relevant supports to assist alcohol dependent ATSI people in the area to reduce alcohol consumption levels and/or recover from alcohol dependence. The Centre would aim to reduce the social and economic impacts of alcohol related problems on the local community. The Centre would also establish a model of best practice that could be duplicated in other areas where similar problems exist.

GLBT communities

Gay and lesbian communities are present in significant numbers in parts of the City of Sydney LGA. Drug use in these communities is significantly higher than in the general community.

The City will:

- Produce the City’s Drink Spiking campaign in consultation with the AIDS Council Of NSW (ACON) to ensure its continued relevance to the GLBT community, and to facilitate distribution of the campaign to GLBT venues through ACON’s networks.
- Continue to support targeted drug and alcohol community awareness campaigns for the GLBT communities.
- Continue with active membership of steering groups to ensure support and advocacy for initiatives to address GLBT drug and alcohol issues, including Project G, (to develop responses to harms from use of GHB) and the drug and alcohol STIGMA Working Group, (to ensure the implementation of strategies to address sexual health and drug and alcohol issues concurrently).

Homeless people with drug and / or alcohol dependence

Homelessness is often associated with alcohol or drug dependency and homeless people often experience alcohol and/or drug dependence with concurrent mental health issues, requiring more complex treatment options.

The City will:

- Continue to collaborate with key homelessness stakeholders through the City’s Homelessness unit to respond to impacts from alcohol or drug dependency.
- Implement the approaches to drug and alcohol dependence contained in the City’s draft Homelessness Strategy.

¹⁴ National Alcohol Strategy 2006-2009: Towards safer drinking cultures, Department of Health and Ageing, May 2006.

OBJECTIVE 5:

IMPROVING ACCESS OF THE CITY COMMUNITY TO INFORMATION ON DRUG AND ALCOHOL RELATED HARMS

Access to credible drug information increases understanding of the complexity of drug use and the nature of addiction, and how to respond at an individual, family and community level.

The City will:

- Promote “Di@yll” – Drug Information at Your Local Library, a state-wide online resource coordinated by the NSW State Library and accessible at all City of Sydney libraries.
- Continue to develop the drug and alcohol related information available on the City of Sydney website, and provide information links to key sites.
- Develop online information resources for residents on how to respond to noise complaints about licensed premises.
- Continue to disseminate the “Who to Call” card, promoting the state-wide Needle Clean Up Hotline to all households every two years.

OBJECTIVE 6:

ADVOCATING TO OTHER LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT

The City has an important role to play in ensuring that other levels of government continue to implement and support initiatives aimed at reducing drug and alcohol related impacts.

The City will:

- Advocate for enhanced transport to move intoxicated patrons out of the City after 12am (eg: Kings Cross & Town Hall Nightrider Bus Services).
- Advocate for improved policing resources.
- Advocate for additional Compliance Officers at the NSW Office of Liquor, Gaming and Racing.
- Advocate for provision of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander detox and rehabilitation services.
- Advocate for improved vetting and regulation of security staff.
- Advocate for initiatives to address GLBT and young people’s drug and alcohol issues.
- Advocate for the continued operation of the Medically Supervised Injecting Centre
- Advocate for improved inpatient services for drug and alcohol dependent people.
- Advocate for improved treatment options for people with Alcohol Related Brain Damage.

OBJECTIVE 7:

REDUCING DRUG AND ALCOHOL RELATED ACCIDENTS AND INJURIES

In addition to strategies to reduce the number of alcohol related accidents and injuries due to drink driving and drink walking, the City will place increased emphasis

on responses to drug driving and injuries caused by broken glass at large scale events.

The City will:

- Distribute alcohol information wallet cards (including information on standard drinks and steps to prevent drink walking accidents).
- Continue to deliver annual drink driving education via licensed venues across the City.
- Deliver a public education campaign about the dangers of "drink walking" and the risk of pedestrian accidents if intoxicated.
- Encourage residents and visitors to plan social events and organise appropriate transportation to ensure their safety.
- Discourage the use of glass at large scale events.

7. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Drug and Alcohol Strategy will be implemented over a three year period. To ensure that the Strategy is meeting key objectives and delivering outcomes, the City will:

- Establish a Drug and Alcohol Strategy Review Committee which will meet annually. The Committee will review the outcomes of Strategy actions for each year. It will be comprised of NSW Police, Office of Liquor Gaming and Racing, NSW Health and other key stakeholders.
- Report to Council regularly on the outcome of the Strategy.

APPENDIX 1 ACRONYMS

ACON – Aids Council of NSW

AGD - NSW Attorney Generals Department

AOD - Alcohol and Other Drugs

AOD STIGMA – AOD, Sexually Transmitted Infections and Gay Men Action Working Group

BOCSAR - Bureau Of Crime Statistics And Research

CoS - City of Sydney

CPTED - Crime Prevention through Environmental Design

OLGR - NSW Office of Licensing, Gaming & Racing

GHB - gamma hydroxy butyrate – anaesthetic depressant drug

GLBT - Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgender

IDRS - Illicit Drug Reporting System

LAC - Local Area Command

LGA - Local Government Area

LGDIP – Local Government Drug Information Project (NSW)

NDARC - National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre

NLGDAAC – National Drug and Alcohol Advisory Committee

NUAA – NSW Users and AIDS Association

MSIC - Medically Supervised Injecting Centre

RCG - Responsible Conduct of Gambling

RSA - Responsible Service of Alcohol

RWA - Redfern Waterloo Authority

YDAC – Youth Drug and Alcohol Court

APPENDIX 2 DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Alcohol: Alcohol is a liquid produced by the action of yeast on liquids containing sugars and starches (fermentation). Pure alcohol has no colour or taste. Alcoholic drinks vary in colour and taste because of other ingredients that are added to them. Alcohol is a depressant (appendix 3).

Alcohol Free Zones It is an offence to drink alcohol on any street or footpath where an Alcohol Free Zone exists, 24 hours a day, seven days a week An AFZ can be enforced for a period of up to three years.

Alcohol Prohibited Areas: Alcohol Prohibited Areas relate to public places that are parks. These locations are indicated by the presence of standard ordinance signage prohibiting the consumption of alcohol.

Anti-social Behaviour: Behaviour which adversely affects neighbourhood amenity or social well-being occurring in a public place, associated with alcohol or drug-related intoxication including: loud noise, verbal assault, offensive behaviour or language, defecation, urination, vomiting, smashing bottles or glass, some forms of malicious damage and assault.

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED): Crime prevention through environmental design is a multi-disciplinary approach to deterring criminal behavior. CPTED strategies rely upon the ability to influence offender decisions that precede criminal acts. As of 2004, most implementations of CPTED occur solely within the built environment.¹⁵

Criminal incident: An offence punishable by law.

Day Centre: A proposed service targeting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the Redfern/Waterloo area with an alcohol dependence, providing: material support (food, showers etc); recreational and cultural activities; established links to health and other social supports; short to medium term accommodation of up to three months. The focus of the service is on encouraging a reduction in levels of alcohol consumed and eventual abstinence.

Demand Reduction: strategies to prevent uptake, reduce drug use and prevent harmful drug use. These include treatment, education and campaigns respecting decisions not to use.

Drugs: A drug is any substance (except food) which, when ingested (or smoked), affects the functioning of the mind, body, or both. In this document the term mainly refers to illicitly produced substances which it is against the law to produce, possess or consume, or pharmaceutical substances that have become part of the illicit market.

Drug Overdose:

A drug overdose occurs when a drug is ingested in quantities and/or concentrations large enough to cause illness or death. Drug overdose differs depending on which substance is involved. Some types of overdose may be physically or psychologically harmful, but are not fatal. Some drugs reduce breathing and heart-rate to the point

¹⁵ Wikipedia, accessed 17.01.2007

where they are insufficient to maintain body functions, in such cases immediate medical attention is needed. The main drugs involved in this type of overdose are opiates (including heroin and its synthetics, eg. Methadone), and GHB. Other types of overdose are attributable to stimulants, including amphetamines (and methamphetamines, which are stronger, a form of which is known as “ice”). These types of overdoses are characterised by extreme agitation and inability to eat or sleep, and can lead to psychological problems with prolonged use, including psychosis and formication (resulting in picking and scratching).

G Force: Established to provide a communication forum to address GHB and its precursors in the GLBT community. G Force has a primary focus of prevention and early intervention and community education. The membership of this working group consists of representatives from

- ACON
- City of Sydney Council
- GLBT licensed venues
- NDARC
- NSW Ambulance
- NSW Police
- NUUA
- St Vincents Hospital, Darlinghurst

Harm Reduction: strategies to reduce the harm associated with use for individuals and communities. These include needle syringe programs and education campaigns.

Harm Minimisation: Key drug and alcohol policy philosophy in Australia. Underpinned by the principles of supply reduction, demand reduction and harm reduction.

The Illicit Drug Reporting System (IDRS): National project funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing and coordinated by the National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre (NDARC) at the University of New South Wales.

Intoxicated Person’s Unit: Is a safe place where a person who is under the influence of an intoxicating substance may be taken to ‘sober up’ and recover from the effects of that substance.

Licensing Accord: “Is the formalisation of a coordinated and cooperative approach by the liquor industry and other stakeholders to deal with alcohol related problems in a local area”.¹⁶

Needle Syringe Programs: Aim to reduce the risk of HIV (and other blood borne infection) transmission in injecting drug users by providing education, and sterile injecting equipment to reduce the incidence of needle-sharing.

NSW Alcohol Summit: Held in 2003, the Summit brought together members of Parliament, experts and professionals, community representatives to discuss ways of dealing with alcohol in the community. No extra funding was earmarked for recommendations from the summit.

NSW Drug Summit: Held in 1999, the Summit brought together members of Parliament, experts and professionals, community representatives and people who

¹⁶ NSW Department Gaming & Racing 2005

use drugs to discuss ways of dealing with drugs in the community. Some projects from the Summit received funding (eg CDATs through funding for the Drugs and Community Action Strategy).

NSW Users and AIDS Association: Drug user advocacy group with HIV Focus.

Opioid: Opioids are narcotic drugs that are generally prescribed to manage pain. Codeine is an opioid used to relieve coughing. Many of these drugs can result in physical dependence and lead to withdrawal side effects when use stops. Methadone is a synthetic opioid used to help control dependence on heroin or other narcotics. Overdose of an opioid can be fatal, through depression of the respiratory system, resulting in hypoxia (lack of oxygen) and eventually death.

Public Amenity: The right of members of the community to enjoy public space unhindered.

Save A Mate: The Save a Mate education program is run by the Australian Red Cross, and is specifically designed to build skills in managing alcohol and other drug-related emergencies.

Street Drinking: Where excessive consumption of alcohol leads to anti-social behaviour in public spaces such as parks and streets. This is distinct from the activities of drinkers who congregate on footways outside licensed venues who create a distinct set of alcohol related issues. Street drinking is addressed in the City's Street Drinking Strategy 2006-2011.

Supply Reduction: strategies to disrupt the production and supply of drugs. These include law enforcement locally and internationally;

Drugs: A drug is any substance (except food) which, when ingested, affects the functioning of the mind, body, or both. In this document the term mainly refers to illicitly produced substances which it is against the law to produce, possess or consume, or pharmaceutical substances that have become part of the illicit market.

There are different ways to classify drugs, including their legal status or purpose. The most common way is to classify them according to their effects:

Depressants (which slow down the functioning of the central nervous system (CNS)) Includes: Alcohol, benzodiazepines (many sleeping pills, eg. valium, temaze), and subcategories:

- Opiates (heroin, morphine, codeine, methadone)
- Dissociative Anaesthetics (ketamine, GHB)
- Cannabinoids (cannabis)

Stimulants (which stimulate, or speed up the central nervous system)

Includes: Cocaine, Caffeine, Nicotine, and subcategories:

- Euphoric Empathogens (Ecstasy (MDMA), MDA)
- Amphetamines (speed) includes Methamphetamines (ice/crystal) which is stronger.

Hallucinogens (which distort sensory perception) Including: LSD, mushrooms

For more information please see: <http://www.erowid.org/>