

# **Alcohol and Licensed Premises: Best Practice in Policing**

**A Monograph for Police and Policy Makers**

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April 2003

Funded by the National Drug Law Enforcement Research Fund,  
an initiative of the National Drug Strategy

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ISBN 0642 47420 6

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Opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of the National Drug Law Enforcement Research Fund (NDLERF) Board of Management or the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing.

The research on which this report is based, was funded by the National Drug Law Enforcement Research Fund, an initiative of the National Drug Strategy.

Published by the Australasian Centre for Policing Research, 298 Payneham Road, Payneham SA 5070, on behalf of the NDLERF Board of Management.

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## Acknowledgements

This Monograph was produced through a grant from the National Drug Law Enforcement Research Fund (NDLERF). It was undertaken by a consortium comprising of the National Centre for Education and Training on Addiction, Queensland Police and South Australia Police.

The Monograph involved extensive consultation and input from a wide range of key players including researchers and police officers in the field. The authors are grateful for the generous contributions provided by many individuals and organisations and acknowledge the input of:

Alcohol Concern, UK  
 Australian Hoteliers Association, Western Australia  
 Robert Ali, Drug and Alcohol Services Council, South Australia  
 Lucia Arman, Office of Youth and Employment  
 Frank Bancelhon, Sergeant, Western Australia Police  
 Helen Begg, New South Wales Police  
 Gordana Blazevic, BDR Consulting, Queensland  
 Gary Bowden, Sergeant, New South Wales Police  
 Jennifer Burgess, South Australia Police  
 Tanya Chikritzhs, National Drug Research Institute, Curtin University, Western Australia  
 Catherine Coates, New Zealand Police  
 David Curd, Community Solutions, Queensland  
 Barry Davey, Sergeant, Western Australia Police  
 Ann Deehan, Home Office, UK  
 Phil Eager, Senior Sergeant, Victoria Police  
 Karen Foster, Victoria Police  
 Toby Freeman, National Centre for Education and Training on Addiction  
 Anne Fricker, Drug and Alcohol Services Council, South Australia  
 Steve Guest, Senior Sergeant, Western Australia Police  
 Mark Gunnaway, Sergeant, Western Australia Police  
 Damian Hanson, Senior Sergeant, Queensland Police  
 Darren Harland, Senior Sergeant, Queensland Police  
 Naomi Henrickson, Alcohol and Other Drugs Program, Department of Health, WA  
 Hugh Highman, Office of Racing, Gaming Liquor, Western Australia  
 Adrienne Isnard, Townsville City Safe  
 Steve James, Inspector, Victoria Police  
 Graham Lough, Inspector, South Australia Police  
 Jenny Madden, Community Solutions, Queensland  
 Mike Maguire, Professor, Home Office, UK  
 Jane Malyschko, National Centre for Education and Training on Addiction  
 Katherine Mann, Queensland Police

Joanne McDonald, National Centre for Education and Training on Addiction  
Tanya McGrane, Drug Programs Coordination Unit, New South Wales  
Mark McPherson, New South Wales Police  
Scott Mitchell, Senior Sergeant, Northern Territory Police  
Barry Newell, Western Australia Police  
Ken Pease, Professor, UK  
Tim Pfitzner, Acting Sergeant, South Australia Police  
Paul Ralphs, Sergeant, South Australia Police  
Tim Read, Home Office, UK  
Mick Reilly, Sergeant, Western Australia Police  
Jonathan P Shepherd, Professor, Wales  
Alec Stevens, Senior Sergeant, South Australia Police  
Phil Swanton, Plain Clothes Constable, Dorset Police, UK  
Neil Thomas, Victoria Police  
GregTrew, Senior Sergeant, Western Australia Police  
AllanTrifonoff, South Australia Police  
Ernie Vlasits, QLD Tourism & Racing  
Melissa Ward, Detective Sergeant, Australian Federal Police (ACT Policing)  
Phil Warrick, Detective Inspector, South Australia Police  
Greg Weller, Australian Hoteliers Association, Northern Territory  
John Wiggers, Hunter Centre for Health Advancement  
Andrew Willsmore, Australian Hoteliers Association, Canberra

## Foreword

### Background

The National Drug Law Enforcement Research Fund (NDLERF) was established by the Ministerial Council on Drug Strategy (MCDS) in 1999 to initiate projects consistent with the *National Drug Strategic Framework 1998-99 to 2002-03 (NDSF)*. To achieve this end, NDLERF promotes quality evidence-based practice in drug law enforcement to prevent and reduce the harmful effects of licit and illicit drug use in Australia.

A consortium, comprising the National Centre for Education and Training on Addiction (NCETA) (Flinders University), South Australia Police (SAPOL) and Queensland Police Service (QPS), was established to undertake this NDLERF funded project involving the development of a monograph that describes best practice in the policing of licensed premises.

### The Project Team

The Project Team comprised:

- Professor Ann M Roche (NCETA)  
Detective Inspector Phil Warrick (SAPOL)
- Inspectors Felix Grayson and Peter Mansfield (QPS); and
- Sergeant Samantha Doherty (SAPOL) who was engaged as the project officer.

### The Aim

The aim of the project was to develop a document for police services across Australia that identifies best practice strategies to reduce alcohol-related harms in and around licensed premises.

### The Project Brief

The Project Brief specified development of a report that:

1. Highlighted best practice in international policing (and other regulatory responses that could be used by police) to reduce alcohol-related harms associated with licensed premises.
2. Identified innovative practices that aim to reduce alcohol-related harms associated with licensed premises located in rural and remote areas and with a high proportion of Indigenous inhabitants.
3. Identified environmental features and serving practices of licensed premises that are associated with low levels of alcohol-related harm, and the methods that police can use to encourage adoption of these.
4. Identified any particularly useful legislative tools that are in operation internationally.
5. Summarised policy, operational and project-based documentation from police services concerning their responses to policing licensed premises.
6. Identified gaps that exist in the knowledge base on this issue and made recommendations on how these gaps could be addressed.

In addition to addressing alcohol-related harms associated with licensed premises, the project group extended its examination of alcohol-related harms to include licensed drinking events.

## Target Audience

This Monograph has been developed specifically for operational police, their managers and policy makers. It is also intended that the Monograph be a useful tool for those from the full range of other disciplines with an interest in this area.

## Methodology

The Monograph development involved three distinct phases:

1. Conducting a review of the international literature on policing and licensing issues regarding alcohol-related harms in and around licensed premises.
2. Assessing key documents to identify the legislative and organisational frameworks within which the policing of licensed premises occurs in Australia.
3. Consulting with key stakeholders in all Australian jurisdictions. These consultations focused on current innovations and best practice relevant to the policing of licensed premises.

## Literature Review

A literature search was undertaken that focused on identifying:

- policing and other approaches to the reduction of alcohol-related harm associated with licensed premises, and
- strategies to reduce the alcohol-related harm associated with licensed premises that are located in rural/remote regions and regions with a high proportion of Indigenous inhabitants.

The literature search included published and unpublished literature on policing and licensing issues regarding alcohol-related harms in and around licensed premises and other licensed drinking environments.

Database searches were conducted over a wide variety of subject areas such as criminology, law and legal studies, industrial relations, business, medical and allied health and other areas of science and social science (e.g. psychology, social anthropology and sociology).

The databases searched included, but were not limited to, the following:

### Criminology and Legal Studies

- AGIS: Attorney General's Information Service
- APAIS: Australian Public Affairs Information Service
- CINCH : Australian Criminology Database
- AUSTLII: Australasian Legal Information Institute
- CRIMINAL JUSTICE ABSTRACTS: books and reports
- AIC: Australian Institute of Criminology
- HOME OFFICE UK

### Health Sciences

MEDLINE: Database of the US National Library for Medicine

- AUSTHEALTH: Australian database covering health research
- DRUG: Database of the Alcohol and other Drugs Council of Australia
- EMBASE: International coverage of many journals not found in other biomedical databases

- PSYCHLIT: International psychological literature  
PROJECT CORK DATABASE: US database covering all aspects of alcohol problems
- ETOH: International. Covers all aspects of alcohol research, including psychology, sociology, treatment and prevention.

#### Multidisciplinary Databases

- KINETICA: Australian Library Holdings  
BRITISH: Library catalogue
- SOCIAL SCIENCES CITATION INDEX: Sociological abstracts
- SOCIOLOGICAL ABSTRACTS: Subject areas include sociological aspects of medicine, law, violence, the family and group interactions  
WILSON SOCIAL SCIENCE ABSTRACTS: International coverage including criminal justice and corrections, community health family studies, law and criminology, planning and public administration, policy studies, psychology and psychiatry, social work and public welfare, sociology and urban studies.

#### Statistical Databases

- ABS: Australian Bureau of Statistics
- NSW BCS: New South Wales Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research
- AIC: Australia Institute of Criminology
- AIHW: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare  
NIBRS: National Incident Based Reporting System (US).

#### Assessment of Key Documents

A search was also conducted for legislative tools identified as useful in addressing harms associated with licensed premises. In addition, official police policies, operational planning documents, project reports and summaries of Australian trials were collected, compared and assessed via communication with a range of key stakeholders. Where these indicated good practice they have been discussed or presented as case summaries.

#### Key Stakeholder Consultation

Consultation occurred with a wide range of police and non-police representatives across Australian jurisdictions. Many key stakeholders were identified as a result of consultation with the National Police Drug and Alcohol Coordinating Committee (NPDACC). This cooperation evidenced support for the project by Commissioners of Police across Australia.

Key informant input was used as a pathway to identification of useful research and operational practices. Key informants also provided further clarification of formal reports and literature.

#### Inclusion Criteria

The primary source of information used for development of this Monograph was empirically supported illustrations of best practice. However, the research process identified that much of what might constitute good or best practice strategies for policing licensed premises has not been subjected to rigorous scientific investigation.

Absence of empirical evidence did not exclude the strategy where it was consistent with established principles of best practice. In addition, activities not directly supported by empirical evidence were included where there was consensus that they constituted best practice.

Anecdotal information provided by key informants was included where there was consensus or where it was consistent with empirical evidence.

### **Document Structure**

This document is presented in seven chapters addressing the following topics:

1. Alcohol use and misuse in Australia
2. Licensed premises, alcohol-related harms and policing
3. Drinking environments: physical and regulatory issues
4. Policing licensed drinking environments
5. Problem-solving and intelligence
6. Collaborative strategies
7. Summary and future directions

Each chapter identifies key findings and summary points. The Executive Summary presents these in a condensed format together with two central tables developed for the Monograph.

## Executive Summary

### Project Aim

The aim of this project was to document best practice in the policing of licensed premises through consolidation of the existing knowledge base on policing of licensed premises into a single monograph.

### Context

Police spend a considerable proportion of their time dealing with alcohol-related offences. Such offences include violence and other behavioural problems related to alcohol consumption, public intoxication, traffic offences and theft or damage to property. Many of these problems are related to the way in which licensees conduct their business. Key issues include:

- the way alcohol is served
- the physical environment in which alcohol is consumed
- the ways in which relevant regulatory frameworks are enforced.

A growing body of evidence demonstrates that the demographic characteristics of patrons (being young, male and single) and setting characteristics of licensed premises (crowding, poor entertainment, cheap drinks) are major contributors to alcohol-related problems in and around licensed premises. Levels of patron intoxication have also been found to be an important factor. These are factors that are amenable to change.

Police enforcement strategies have been shown to be effective at increasing rates of refusal to serve alcohol to obviously intoxicated and under age customers by licensed premises staff, and in reducing alcohol-related crime and reducing alcohol-related injuries.

Strategies that are complementary to formal enforcement are of particular importance in Australia for two reasons:

- civil law suits are very seldom used against licensees, thus removing one of the major incentives for licensees to introduce responsible hospitality policies and practices
- police face considerable difficulties in the routine enforcement of liquor licensing laws due to perceived difficulties in obtaining successful prosecutions and problems in operationally defining the existing licensing laws.

The literature suggests that there has been a dilution of officer knowledge and skills regarding policing of licensed premises. This Monograph aims to provide a range of tools that have been shown to be useful to police in minimising alcohol-related harms in and around licensed premises.

The application of these 'tools' should be assessed in the context of local intelligence and specific geographic, temporal and socio-demographic crime and disorder problems. A 'one size fits all' approach to policing licensed drinking environments should be avoided, especially in culturally sensitive areas such as Indigenous drinking.

Key issues and findings from each chapter of the Monograph are presented below followed by the recommendations that were identified for future work in this area.

## Chapter 1. Alcohol Use and Misuse in Australia

Much drinking in Australia is excessive and risky. Age, gender, culture and drinking location all impact on patterns and harms. Alcohol-related problems place considerable strain on services responsible for managing them. Groups at elevated risk of harm include young people, predominantly males but increasingly females, young adult women, members of Indigenous communities and those living in rural and remote locations.

Patterns and locations of drinking exacerbate vulnerability to alcohol-related harms. Although most licensed drinking environments are associated with few problems, a significant proportion of alcohol-related harm occurs in and around licensed premises. Licensed drinking environments require diligent attention from law enforcement agencies. There is substantial untapped potential to improve the role of police in reducing harms associated with licensed premises, in particular those associated with risky Indigenous drinking.

### Key Findings

1. Drinking is a prominent feature of Australian society.
2. Excessive single occasion drinking is associated with an elevated risk of acute harm including medical complications, damage to property and risk of physical and psychological injury and death from accidents and interpersonal violence.
3. A large proportion of drinking is considered unsafe in terms of risk of death and injury from acute and chronic harms according to the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Drinking Guidelines.
4. High-risk drinking is most prevalent among 14 to 24 year olds.
5. Young men and women and Indigenous people are at high risk of excessive drinking and experiencing acute alcohol-related harms.
6. Young men (14 to 25) are at greater risk of death (from acute causes) from drinking than any other age group.
7. Social, cultural and geographical differences exist that impact on drinking patterns and harms.
8. Drinking environments and locations contribute significantly to alcohol-related problems.
9. Many alcohol-related problems stemming from licensed premises can be prevented through appropriate enforcement activities.
10. Police have an important but largely under-utilised role in reducing the risk of alcohol-related harms.

## Chapter 2. Licensed Premises, Alcohol-Related Harms and Policing

Licensed premises in Australia are numerous and diverse. A small number of licensed venues account for a large number of alcohol-related incidents, particularly assaults involving young men as either the victim or offender. Hotels are a major contributor to alcohol-related assaults, especially where there is late closing or close proximity to other licensed venues. Focusing police activities on hotels that have late night drinking and predominantly young adult patrons may assist in reducing alcohol-related incidents and harms. It also has potential to reduce the high police workload associated with responding to and managing alcohol-related crime, violence and disorder in or near licensed drinking environments. Specific police attention is required in relation to activities such as 'sly grogging'.

**Key Findings:**

1. There are over nine thousand licensed premises operating in Australia.
2. A large number of licensed events are also conducted in Australia each year.
3. A small proportion of licensed premises is associated with the majority of alcohol-related incidents.
4. Studies reveal that alcohol-related assaults are most likely to occur in inner city hotels, in the early hours of Saturday and Sunday mornings and mostly involve young adult males.
5. Research shows that as many as 60% of all police attendances and 90% of late night calls (10pm to 2am) involve alcohol.
6. A large proportion of alcohol-related incidents associated with licensed venues are not reported to police.

**Chapter 3. Licensed Drinking Environments: Physical and Regulatory Issues****Part I**

Best practice in policing licensed drinking locations and their environment involves addressing the physical environment. This requires collaboration. Police can collaborate with licensed venue operators in design and re-design of licensed premises to reduce the likelihood and severity of harms. Liquor authorities and local government can intervene to ensure premises are designed to eliminate crowding, congestion and excessive noise and smoke. Addressing physical factors will reduce the risk of alcohol-related harms, including aggression and violence. Local government can, in conjunction with police, modify environments around licensed venues to reduce the risk of harms caused to or by alcohol-affected people.

**Part II**

The behaviour and practices of licensed venue operators and staff, police, liquor authorities, local government and local business can contribute to the incidence of alcohol-related problems. Police can contribute to changes in behaviour through enforcement and proactive policing activities.

Eleven principles were identified as key elements of good practice in managing the physical and social environments of licensed premises and events as shown in Table 3.4 (from Chapter 3) below.

**Table 3.4: Principles of Good Practice in Policing Licensed Drinking Environments**

Licensing policies	Ensure liquor licence decisions consider community and patron safety in the context of potential crime, violence, disorder, and emergency incidents arising from patrons attending or leaving the premises.
Management policies	Ensure management practices comply with legislative requirements, and reduce risk of harm to staff and patrons.
Staff training and education policies	Ensure bar staff, security and management understand their legal obligations and are able to manage intoxicated, violent and aggressive incidents.
Responsible service policies	Ensure staff understand and engage in responsible server practices,

**Table 3.4 continued**

Premises design policies	Ensure the premises are designed in a way that eliminates or limits crowding, excessive heat and smoke, and assists with observations of patron behaviour.
Responsible marketing policies	Ensure the licensed premises is promoted in a way that does not encourage violent, disorderly or criminal behaviour, and ensure alcohol promotions do not encourage excessive consumption.
Communication policies	Encourage licensed venue operators to communicate with each other and the police about incidents and problem patrons.
Community education policies	Reduce alcohol-related social disorder by improving public awareness of liquor and other laws and the impact of alcohol-affected behaviour on the safety and comfort of local residents and other entertainment precinct users, by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identifying and reinforcing acceptable standards of behaviour</li> <li>• encouraging reporting of offending to the police.</li> </ul>
Public transport policies	Ensure sufficient public transport is available, to disperse patrons quickly and to prevent drink driving.
Collaborative crime reduction policies	Establish communication and cooperation between police, licensees, liquor authorities, local councils and the community and develop collaborative strategies to reduce alcohol-related incidents, ensuring accountability to agreed actions.
Enforcement policies	Ensure a visible police presence at and around licensed venues and events, and ensure action is taken against staff and patrons for breaches of liquor and other legislation.

#### **Chapter 4. Policing Licensed Drinking Environments**

Police can reduce alcohol-related harms associated with licensed drinking environments through enforcement of liquor laws and enforcement of a number of other laws to address alcohol-related problems that occur in the vicinity of licensed drinking environments. These laws can regulate behaviours of licensed venue operators and their staff (including crowd controllers). Police can also use laws to regulate behaviour of patrons who are on, or have recently left, a licensed premises. Enforcement of liquor and public order laws can act as a deterrent to offending by licensed venue operators, their staff and patrons.

Liquor and public disorder laws exist in conjunction with other regulatory mechanisms to encourage safe practices and reduce alcohol-related harms, for example, responsible server strategies. In some Indigenous communities, local regulations have been developed that specifically address harmful drinking behaviour. There is an important role for police in supporting and fostering such local initiatives.

Enforcement activities can be either proactive or reactive. Reactive enforcement relies heavily on ad hoc responses to incidents and has limited effect on crime reduction and public satisfaction. In contrast, proactive policing of licensed premises, which uses enforcement as a tool, assists early identification of problem practices and locations and development of responses that can reduce the incidence and severity of alcohol-related harms. Because proactive enforcement often involves a visible police presence it has a deterrent and educational effect on licensed venue practices, patron behaviour and social attitudes.

Barriers to policing licensed drinking environments have been identified. Activities that address police officers' knowledge and skills are needed. Workforce development and capacity building which relies on development and implementation of training and education programs by officers with integrated liquor licensing, crime and disorder reduction and problem-solving skills are also needed.

All jurisdictions currently possess mechanisms to encourage a sharper focus on licensed drinking environments. These mechanisms exist in the form of policy, prosecutorial, administrative and operational activities - activities that are not always well coordinated. Improving coordination and cooperation may be enhanced by clear corporate goals and defined outputs to guide appropriate and relevant policing activities.

There is scope for amendments to legislation to facilitate best practice policing of licensed drinking environments. This may be achieved by a review of liquor laws across Australia. Legislative reviews may include evaluation of practices, such as the effect of infringement notice systems, on levels of policing licensed premises and a reduction of alcohol-related harms.

#### **Key Findings:**

1. Police have a primary and legislated responsibility for policing licensed premises and reducing alcohol-related crime, violence, disorder and harms.
2. Liquor laws are a valuable tool in reducing alcohol-related incidents and harms associated with licensed drinking environments.
3. Enforcement of liquor laws can deter future offending.
4. Enforcement is most valuable when accompanied by strategies that encourage responsible server practices and modifications to social and physical features of drinking environments.
5. Enforcement improves reporting of alcohol-related incidents and assists subsequent proactive strategies.
6. Enforcement can reduce the incidence and severity of harms.
7. Enforcement and intelligence should be interdependent.
8. Legislative amendments may result in more effective policing of licensed drinking environments and reduce alcohol-related harms.
9. Proactive and reactive policing of licensed drinking environments are most likely to be effective where officers develop skills that integrate knowledge of liquor laws with collaborative crime reduction and problem-solving methodologies.

## **Chapter 5. Problem-Solving and Intelligence**

Problem oriented (proactive) policing is an imperative for best practice policing of licensed drinking environments. It involves use of problem-solving methods to reduce alcohol-related harms associated with licensed venues and their environs and necessitates understanding of individual, social and environmental factors that contribute to alcohol-related problems.

Intelligence processes mediate the relationship between reactive strategies, usually involving enforcement, and proactive problem-solving activities, which may also use enforcement to reduce alcohol-related problems and harms. Intelligence processes rely on data collection and analysis for development of best practice methods. The majority of police data systems do not provide meaningful intelligence. In response, a range of data collection systems and strategies have been developed (see Chapter 5 for details).

A range of factors is known to interfere with officers' willingness and ability to collect intelligence and need to be addressed.

Reliance on police data as a single source of intelligence is also problematic. Additional information sources are available to guide policy, project and operational responses.

The shift within Australian police jurisdictions towards intelligence-led, problem-solving approaches to crime and disorder reduction has highlighted the need to review data collection practices to fulfil corporate and local needs.

#### **Key Findings:**

1. Intelligence-led, proactive policing is the most effective form of policing.
2. Intelligence-led policing helps to reduce opportunity and desire to offend.
3. Intelligence is a key component of proactive policing and collaborative problem-solving strategies.
4. Intelligence-led policing and problem-solving strategies are more effective when they involve intra-organisational and external collaboration.
5. Problem-solving is enhanced by mapping alcohol-related incidents occurring in and around licensed drinking environments.
6. Incident data (incorporating police attendance, arrest and victim data) can provide information relating to geographic and temporal changes to alcohol-related problems.
7. Additional data sources are available and useful to police in mapping alcohol-related incidents and harms and to validate police intelligence.
8. Police intelligence data is currently incomplete for a range of structural and behavioural reasons.

## **Chapter 6. Collaborative Strategies**

A range of collaborative strategies can be successfully implemented to address alcohol-related violence and disorder associated with licensed drinking environments. Success relies on the simultaneous use of several mutually reinforcing strategies (Holder et al, 2000). Police alone do not possess the skills or resources needed. Nor do they hold total responsibility for alcohol-related harm reduction associated with licensed drinking environments.

Police agencies have been successful partners in collaborative responses. Collaboration across and between levels of government, across agencies and within the police organisation is crucial.

Recent activities responding to problems in remote Indigenous communities involved a multi-level and collaborative approach with support between community members and local government and non-government organisations and across government portfolios.

#### **Key Findings:**

1. A large degree of overlap exists between outcomes sought by police, health, liquor and local government authorities and the community in relation to alcohol-related harms in Australia.
2. All stakeholders can contribute to alcohol-related harm reduction.
3. National Drug Strategy documents recognise and reinforce the value of collaborative approaches in achieving a reduction in drug problems in Australia.

4. Knowledge of contributing factors provides information to encourage, support, guide and assist licensed venue operators, government and non-government organisations and the community to collaborate to eliminate or reduce harms.
5. Positive outcomes of collaboration include improved compliance with legislation, improved server practices and a safe and yet profitable licensed drinking environment.
6. Sufficient common ground exists for both police and liquor authorities to collaborate to reduce alcohol-related problems.
7. Accords as a collaborative effort have demonstrated some success in the reduction of alcohol-related harms in and around licensed drinking venues.
8. Substantial resources are required to reduce alcohol-related harms in Australian society.
9. Strategies that engage collaboration at the jurisdictional level have also been successful.
10. It has been shown that police have the ability to play a leadership role in reducing alcohol-related incidents and harms.
11. Sustained success is more likely when there is political support and direction to alcohol-related harm reduction activities. However, responses must engage local representatives and involve a local focus sensitive to available physical and human resources.
12. Past experience, especially where evaluated, is a valuable guide for future activities.
13. The success of future collaborative strategies involves consideration of features of the social and physical drinking environment that contribute to harms, knowledge about effectiveness of different styles of enforcement activities, use of problem-solving methodologies and the use of intelligence derived from police and non-police sources.

## Chapter 7. Summary and Future Directions

Chapter 7 provides a comprehensive summary of issues addressed throughout the Monograph and presents a set of recommendations to advance work in this area. It also provides a summary of five organisational factors (S.P.I.C.E.) that have been detailed throughout the Monograph as contributing to best practice in reducing alcohol-related harms in and around licensed drinking environments, as illustrated below.

**Table 7.1: Best Practice in Policing Licensed Drinking Establishments: Five Key Organisational Factors (S.P.I.C.E.)**

Strategic Direction:	Establish <i>strategic direction</i> for policing licensed premises and alcohol-related harms
Proactive Policing:	<i>Proactively</i> police licensed venues, events and harms
Intelligence:	Establish <i>intelligence gathering and analysis</i> practices and systems that drive and evaluate police responses
Collaboration & Integration:	<i>Collaborate</i> with liquor authorities, emergency and service providers (government and non-government), health and welfare agencies and local communities to develop integrated responses to reduce alcohol-related incidents and harms
Enforcement:	<i>Enforcement</i> of liquor and other legislation impacting on management and behaviour

**Recommendations**

1. Develop a local coordinated approach for police to implement relevant sections of the *National Alcohol Strategy Action Plan 2001 to 2003-04*.
2. Develop common evaluation procedures and a reporting protocol to record detail of policing strategies that aim to address alcohol-related problems associated with licensed drinking locations.
3. Develop clear and specific key performance indicators for police agencies to report activities that aim to reduce alcohol-related harms associated with licensed premises.
4. Develop a national database to identify the prevalence of alcohol incidents attended by, or reported to, police.
5. Undertake research to identify the costs to police agencies in Australia of alcohol-related harms associated with licensed premises.
6. Conduct further research into the patterns, locations and harms associated with youth drinking, especially in rural and remote areas.
7. Conduct research to identify and examine initiatives that address Indigenous alcohol issues and develop guidelines to assist police to develop meaningful activities to address mutual needs.
8. Conduct research to identify and examine whether infringement notice systems are valuable in reducing excessive alcohol consumption and alcohol-related harms.
9. Conduct research to identify and examine the governance of liquor legislation by liquor authorities.
10. Conduct research to identify knowledge of operational police of liquor laws and practices to effectively police licensed premises.
11. Use findings of research regarding the knowledge base of police officers to identify training needs and develop communication strategies to build motivation and capacity of operational police to effectively deal with problems in and around licensed premises.

## Chapter 1 : Alcohol Use and Misuse in Australia

Identifying best practice in the policing of licensed premises is examined in the wider context of alcohol's role in Australian society at large. It is within this context that alcohol's impact on the role and workload of police is highlighted.

The high prevalence of alcohol misuse in Australia places considerable demand on police resources. This chapter outlines the negative effects of alcohol misuse and the characteristics of problematic drinking patterns. The social role of alcohol in Australia is described in terms of:

- prevalence of alcohol use and misuse in Australia
- harms associated with alcohol misuse
- social and economic costs of alcohol-related harms to Australian society
- the consequent demands placed on police resources.

Alcohol is an important feature of Australian social, cultural and interpersonal interactions. It is the most widely used drug<sup>1</sup> in Australia, consumed by approximately 12 million Australians aged 14 years and over (81% of the population). Regular consumption of small to moderate amounts of alcohol has been shown to have beneficial health effects, particularly in reducing risks of heart disease among the older population. Despite this, much drinking occurs that places the drinker and others at risk of harm (Marmot & Brunner, 1991; NHMRC, 2001). Harms associated with excessive drinking include premature death, high rates of illness, and injury arising from medical complications (including overdose, or alcoholic poisoning), interpersonal violence, accidents and suicide.

Risk of individual and social harm is exacerbated when drinking occurs in public venues such as pubs and clubs. Social and physical features of licensed premises associated with likelihood of harm include crowding, poor quality entertainment, and poor management and server practices. About 30% of all alcohol sold is consumed on licensed premises (Lang, Stockwell, Rydon & Gamble, 1992) and licensed premises are strongly implicated in risky patterns of drinking. One in four patrons leaving licensed premises have been reported to have average blood alcohol levels (BAL) of 0.10mg/100mL and one in 10 exceed 0.15mg/100mL (Stockwell, Lang & Rydon, 1993).

Individual, group and environmental factors all contribute to increased risk of accidents and offending. These factors include personality and attitudes (predisposed and learned), social beliefs and related behavioural standards, and the physical and social environment in which drinking occurs.

Harms associated with alcohol are increased in a social climate where individual drinking rights are placed above the safety, comfort and well being of other individuals and the community at large. There are diverse and often polarised opinions in Australia regarding control of alcohol-related problems. Opinions about individual rights and responsibilities are the subject of public debate, particularly regarding crime and disorder issues. Nevertheless, effective controls exist (through legalisation, regulation and public policy) to protect individuals and society from alcohol-related harms.

<sup>1</sup> Alcohol is classified as a drug because of its effects on mental and physical functioning. Negative effects include impaired coordination, slowed reflexes, visual and speech impairments, tiredness, impaired judgement, heightened aggression, and increased excitability and risk taking.

Decisions to police licensed premises to reduce alcohol-related harms are influenced by social attitudes related to the individual's 'right' to consume alcohol when and how they choose. However, it is important that the rights of an individual do not impinge on the rights of other members of the community or the protection of social order.

## Drinking in Australia

*[Licensed premises] are prime sites for intoxication and violence between (typically) young males. Precisely because of the predictability of violence in these locations they offer an opportunity for violence prevention.*  
(Indermaur, 1999)

Per capita pure alcohol consumption in Australia is identified to be as high as 9.61 litres per annum (Heale, Stockwell, Dietze, Chikritzhs & Cataolon, 2000). Although this figure equals approximately two standard drinks per person per day, research shows that many Australians drink large amounts of alcohol on a single drinking occasion. It is this pattern of excessive drinking which is cause for concern rather than drinking per se.

*39 percent of alcohol consumed puts drinkers at risk of chronic harm, while 51 percent of consumption puts them at risk of acute harm, by exceeding the new National Drinking Guidelines.*  
(National Drug Research Institute, 2002)

In addition, the pattern and amount of alcohol consumed on a single occasion and in particular settings can impact significantly on the risk of harm.

*Patterns of drinking may refer to several aspects of drinking behavior, including temporal variations in drinking, the number and characteristics of heavy drinking occasions, the settings where drinking takes place, the activities associated with drinking, the personal characteristics of the drinkers and their drinking confederates, the types of beverage consumed, and the clusters of drinking norms and behaviors often referred to as drinking cultures. In short, pattern of drinking differs from volume of alcohol consumption. Levels of drinking refers to how much people drink, while patterns of drinking refers to how they drink and the circumstances in which they drink.*  
(Rehm et al, 1996 cited in Single & Leino, 1998)

## Harmful Drinking

### Low-Risk Drinking Guidelines

*If Australia could become a nation of low risk drinkers instead of a nation of high risk drinkers a great number of injuries, illnesses and deaths could be prevented.*  
(National Drug Research Institute, 2002)

In recognition of the risk of acute harm, the NHMRC developed the Australian Alcohol Guidelines (NHMRC, 2001). The Guidelines highlight potential long-term (chronic) and short-term (acute) harms associated with:

- excessive single occasion drinking
- concentrated periods of high consumption
- drinking patterns associated with dependence.

Table 1.1 presents a summary of safe consumption levels provided by the 2001 Guidelines (NHMRC, 2001).

**Table 1.1: Summary of Guidelines for Low-Risk Drinking**

1. Alcohol consumption at levels shown below is not recommended for people who:
  - have a condition made worse by drinking
  - are on medication
  - are under 18 years of age
  - are pregnant
  - are about to engage in activities involving risk or a degree of skill (eg driving, flying, water sports, ski-ing, operating machinery).
2. Otherwise risk levels, measured in standard drinks, for the following patterns are as follows:

Short-term risk of harm				Long-term risk of harm			
	Low-risk	Risky	High-risk		Low-risk	Risky	High-risk
<b>Males</b>				<b>Males</b>			
<i>On any one day</i>	Up to 6 on any one day, no more than 3 days per week	7 - 10 on any one day	11 or more on any one day	<i>Drinks per day on an average day</i>	Up to 4	5 - 6	7 or more
				<i>Per week</i>	Up to 28	29 - 42	43 or more
<b>Females</b>				<b>Females</b>			
<i>On any one day</i>	Up to 4 on any one day, no more than 3 days per week	5 - 6	7 or more	<i>Drinks per day on an average day</i>	Up to 2	3 - 4	5 or more
				<i>Per week</i>	Up to 14	15 - 28	29 or more

Source: NHMRC (2001)

According to NHMRC Guidelines, safe levels of consumption are also determined by physiological differences between individual drinkers such as age, gender, pregnancy and physical build. This is in addition to the amount, frequency and patterns of drinking.

Drinking patterns which place individuals at risk of short-term (acute) harm differ from those impacting on risk of long-term (chronic) harm (Heale et al, 2000). Short-term harms are associated with heavy single occasion drinking, and chronic harms result from consistent high levels of drinking over many months and years (NHMRC, 2001).

**Table 1.2: An Overview of the Range of Health Risks for Both Categories of Harm**

Long-Term (Chronic) Harms	Short-Term (Acute) Harms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• alcoholic liver cirrhosis</li> <li>• alcohol dependence</li> <li>• alcoholic poly neuropathy – nerve damage leading to loss of sensation, pins and needles and possibly muscle weakness</li> <li>• alcoholic cardiomyopathy – weakened heart muscle that impairs the efficiency of the heart to pump blood</li> <li>• stroke</li> <li>• female breast cancer</li> <li>• cancers of the mouth, throat and oesophagus</li> <li>• brain damage including dementia and short-term memory loss</li> <li>• epilepsy</li> <li>• hypertension</li> <li>• oesophageal varices</li> <li>• chronic pancreatitis</li> <li>• reduced sexual potency and capacity in men</li> </ul>	<p>physical injury, psychological harms and death arising from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• falls and other injuries</li> <li>• physical assaults</li> <li>• sexual assault</li> <li>• domestic violence</li> <li>• road traffic accidents</li> <li>• occupational and machinery injuries</li> <li>• fires</li> <li>• drowning</li> <li>• child abuse</li> <li>• unprotected sex leading to transfer of STDs</li> <li>• alcohol overdose</li> <li>• interaction with other drugs</li> <li>• dehydration</li> <li>• sleep disturbances</li> <li>• raised blood pressure</li> <li>• shortness of breath</li> </ul>

Source: Chikritzhs, Jonas, Heale, Dietze, Hanlin and Stockwell (1999); NHMRC (2001)

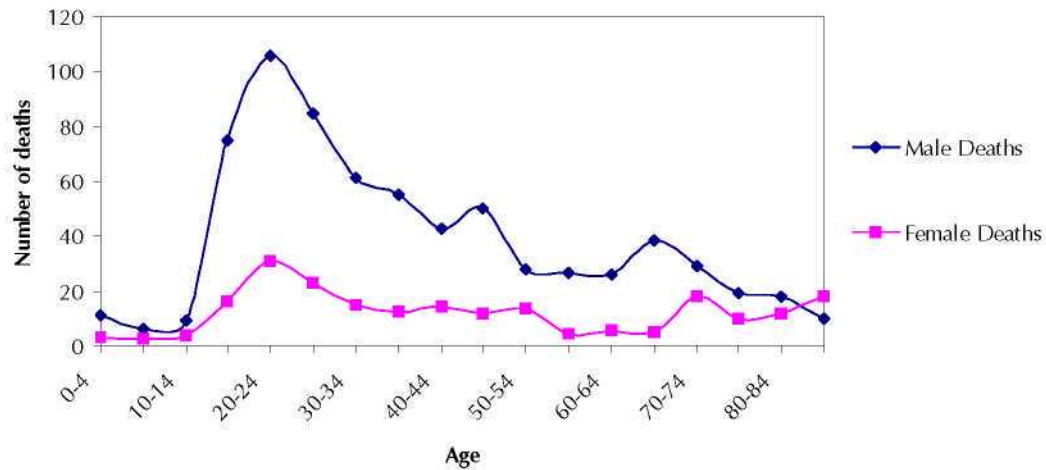
## Prevalence of Alcohol-Related Harms

Alcohol-related harms are more common than is frequently recognised, and particular groups in the community are at elevated risk of incurring such harms. These groups include young people (especially males), women, those living in rural and remote areas and Indigenous Australians.

In Australia more than 900 people die annually from injuries and diseases associated with short-term (acute) drinking (Chikritzhs et al, 1999). A further 2,400 Australians die annually from chronic alcohol-related problems. Males account for the majority of both acute and chronic alcohol-caused deaths in Australia (70%). Alcohol-related harms also account for nearly 100,000 hospital admissions per year and an undefined number of medical consultations (Chikritzhs et al, 1999; Fitzsimmons & Cooper-Stanbury, 2000). Males comprise over two-thirds of all alcohol-related hospitalisations. Major causes are falls, assaults and traffic accident injury (Chikritzhs et al, 1999). Incidents that result in acute alcohol-related harm have direct human and financial resource implications for police agencies.

More men, especially young men, die from acute alcohol-related incidents than women (see Figure 1.1). From their late teens to late 20s, men are at substantially increased risk of dying from short-term effects of alcohol. This reflects the heavy drinking patterns of men in younger age groups (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2002a). Young men are more likely to be involved in violent incidents when drinking and to engage in risk-taking behaviour generally (Taylor & Chermack, 1993; Australian Institute of Criminology, 2001). High-risk drinking tends to decrease with increased age and maturity.

**Figure 1.1: Age and Gender Distribution Among Deaths Resulting from Alcohol-Caused Short-Term (Acute) Conditions, 1997**



Source: Chikritzhs et al (2000)

There is a large literature on alcohol-related injuries presenting at hospital emergency departments. In one such study, 61 % of patients with a violent injury were found to have positive blood alcohol levels (Macdonald, Wells, Giesbrecht & Cherpitel, 1999). Eighty five percent of patients with violent injuries reported consuming beer in the six hours before the injury, 26% reported consuming wine and 59% reported consuming liquor.

Such studies have also found that the role of alcohol in sustaining injuries is mediated by the context in which it is usually consumed (Cherpitel, Parés, Rodés & Rosovsky, 1993; Cherpitel, Tam, Midanik, Caetano & Greenfield, 1995; Cherpitel, 1996; 1997). In an examination of drinking styles of patients presenting with alcohol-related injuries in hospital, Cherpitel and colleagues (1993) found that location of drinking and injury were related. Overall, drinkers were more likely than non-drinkers to report being injured in someone else's home, a restaurant or bar. Further, those who drank at a restaurant or bar were more likely to be involved in motor vehicle accidents than non-drinkers.

## Drinking and Alcohol-Related Harms Among Young People

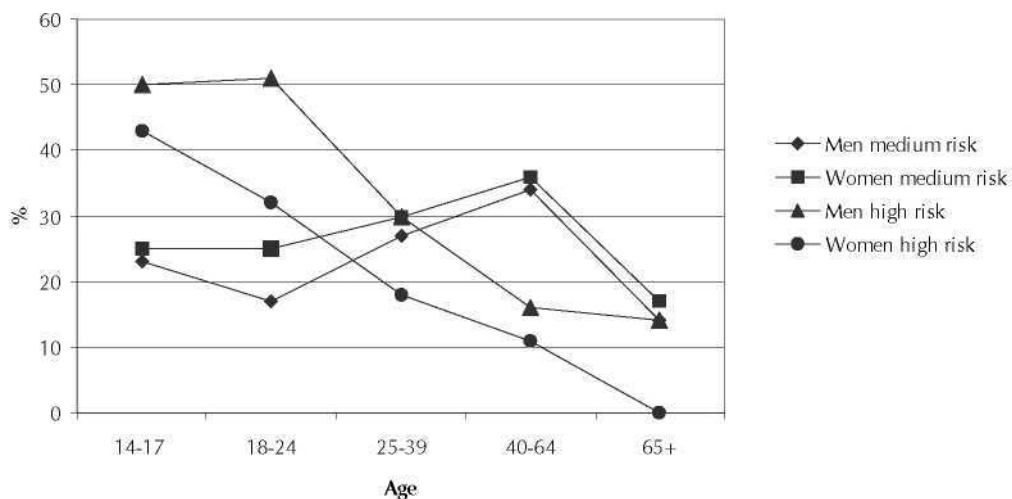
Drinking alcohol is a rite of passage for young people and an integral part of youth culture (de Crespigny, 1999; Leigh, 1999; Rossow, Pape & Wichstrom, 1999; Holder et al, 2000; Grube & Nygaard, 2001). Preferred drinking venues for young people aged 20-29 years, particularly males, are pubs, clubs and wine bars (refer Table 1.3). Both licensed venues and youth are risk factors for acute alcohol-related harms. As such, specific and appropriate support and attention from police, health and social service agencies is required when the two mix.

**Table 1.3: Venues at Which Alcohol is Most Commonly Consumed**

	14-19 yrs (%)		20-29 yrs (%)		30-39 yrs (%)		40+ yrs (%)	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
Own home	61	64	77	76	85	89	84	8
Friend's house	64	68	66	64	65	68	42	5
Parties	60	73	61	64	55	50	43	4
Restaurants/cafes	26	25	52	67	53	69	47	5
Pubs, clubs, winebars	39	36	74	70	61	57	48	3

Source: 2001 National Drug Strategy Household Survey, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2002b)

Drinking among young people is increasingly problematic. Over the past decade there has been growing concern over the hazardous drinking patterns of young people. Ease of access to alcohol is associated with increased consumption by youth and increasingly hazardous consumption. Figure 1.2 illustrates high-risk drinking patterns of young people compared to older age groups. The high level of risky drinking among both males and females aged 14 to 17 years is of particular concern. Much of the drinking of this age group occurs in licensed premises.

**Figure 1.2: Proportion of Alcohol Consumed at Medium and High-Risk Levels for Acute Harms by Age and Gender**

Source: Heale et al (2000)

One-third of 14 to 19 year old males, and one-quarter of 14 to 19 year old females drink alcohol at least weekly (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2002a). Three-quarters of 14 to 17 year olds and two-thirds of 18 to 24 year olds who drink, consume alcohol at medium to high-risk levels (Heale et al, 2000). High-risk alcohol consumption among 14 to 17 year olds occurs at similar levels for both males and females (50% and 43% respectively) (Heale et al, 2000).

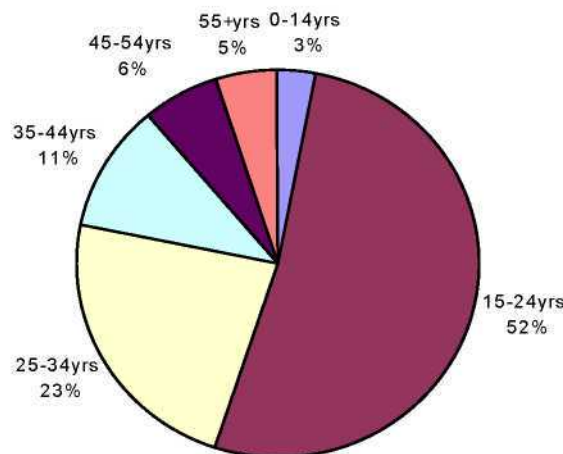
Many young people deliberately drink to 'get drunk'. Their beverage choices are influenced by low price, taste, high alcohol volume and peer preferences (Shanahan & Hewitt, 1999; McBride, Farrington & Midford, 2000). Young heavy drinkers tend to exhibit lower levels of concern about the social consequences of drunken behaviour (Shanahan & Hewitt, 1999). The risk of alcohol-related harm among young people is exacerbated by inexperience with drinking and drinking environments (McBride et al, 2000).

*Younger people, ... are greatly over-represented in the statistics for alcohol-related injury. We have previously found that over half of serious and fatal road injuries in Australia involve people aged between 15 and 24 years, and a further quarter involve 25 to 34 year olds.*

(National Drug Research Institute, 2002)

The high prevalence of inappropriate and excessive drinking among young people is associated with a correspondingly high level of road trauma. Figure 1.3 illustrates the increased risk of serious road injury among this age group. Various strategies have been developed to minimise the inappropriate use of alcohol by young people and the potential harmful consequences of alcohol use. Policing strategies that target drinking among older teenagers and young adults hold potential to reduce alcohol-related road trauma.

**Figure 1.3: Overall Age Distribution Among Alcohol-Related Serious Road Injury Occurrences on Australian Roads (excluding Victoria) 1990-1997**



Source: Chikritzhs, Stockwell, Heale, Dietze & Webb (2000)

Commitment to specific strategies is needed to address young people's access to alcohol both on and off licensed premises. Levels of risky drinking and alcohol-related problems among youth highlight a role for police in enforcing liquor legislation and targeting underage drinking. Problem drinking behaviour among young adults who consume alcohol in licensed venues is also an area for focused police activity. Effective police action can reduce alcohol-related violence and disorder and excessive consumption among this high-risk group.

## Women's Drinking

Drinking is now common amongst young adult Australian women. Excessive drinking is a growing problem among this group (Single & Rohl, 1997; Roche & Deehan, 2002). Women's drinking patterns show increases in the frequency of drinking and amount of alcohol consumed, and a diminishing gap between drinking styles of men and women (Temple, 1987; White, Brick & Hansell, 1993; Shanahan & Hewitt, 1999; Roche & Deehan, 2002).

Location of drinking has also been found to affect the type and amount of alcohol consumed by young adult women (de Crespigny, 1999). In a South Australian study de Crespigny, Vincent and Ask (1999) found that spirits and cocktails were drunk more at clubs, and these locations were associated with cheap drinks promotions, leading to more intended and unintended intoxication and related harms among female patrons.

Although alcohol-related deaths among women 20 to 24 years of age are considerably lower than for their male counterparts, rates of high-risk drinking are comparatively high. Women's drinking patterns increase their risk of harms from alcohol, especially when they attempt to replicate the drinking styles of their male counterparts. In addition, intoxication exposes women to a different set of problems than men. Compared to men, women are less likely to engage in offending behaviour or to react with heightened aggression when provoked (Hoaken & Pihl, 2000). However, they are more likely to be vulnerable to the risk of violence in the form of sexual assault from strangers or acquaintances, particularly when drinking occurs in a public environment. This is a growing area of concern in light of increased incidents of 'drink-spiking' in licensed premises.

## Drinking in Rural and Remote Areas

Drinking rates are largely consistent across Australian States and Territories but regional differences exist. The Northern Territory as well as rural, remote and country locations across Australia are associated with more problematic drinking and alcohol-related deaths than metropolitan areas (Chikritzhs et al, 1999; Gray & Chikritzhs, 2000). These problems generally involve young men and, to a lesser extent, young women. A range of factors result in significant alcohol-related problems in country, rural and remote areas. These include the prominent social role of the local pub or sporting club, strong peer expectations to drink as part of social interactions, and limited alternative options for socialising.

Injury from road accidents is a major form of alcohol-related harm in rural and remote areas. Motor vehicle accidents are a significant cause of injury and death among young males. These rates are higher in rural and remote areas than metropolitan areas (NHMRC, 1996). Some of the reasons that drinking and drink driving are particularly problematic in rural and remote areas include:

- high exposure of young people to excessive drinking in pubs and sporting clubs
- high rates of drink driving as a result of absent or limited public transport and long travelling distances
- increased risk of undetected traffic accidents
- difficulties and delays accessing emergency medical services for major physical trauma
- less opportunity for public health intervention and education relating to the risks of drinking
- limited number of police available to enforce laws and deter offending and related harms.

Special attention is required by police to address alcohol-related problems in rural and remote areas. Careful consideration is required by police who are in a position to comment on liquor applications that aim to increase alcohol availability, through new or existing outlets in rural and remote areas.

## Drinking Among Indigenous Australians

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are particularly at risk of harms associated with alcohol. In comparison to non-Indigenous Australians, they are less likely to drink, but those that do are more likely to drink at high to very high levels of risk (Commonwealth Department of Health and Human Services, 1994; Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care, 2000).

Alcohol-related deaths are three to five times greater in the Indigenous than non-Indigenous Australian community (Chikritzhs et al, 1999). Alcohol-related violence and aggression, including assault, have also been identified as particular problems for the Indigenous community. Alcohol has also been identified as a contributing factor in approximately 10% of Indigenous deaths.

A high proportion of alcohol-related injuries also occur among the Indigenous population. For example, more than 83% of fatal road accidents involving Aboriginals in WA between 1980-1990 were alcohol-related. It has been estimated that up to 50% of Indigenous injuries are alcohol-related (Gladman, Hunter, McDermott, Merritt & Tulip, 1997). One WA study found that Indigenous males and females were nine and 13 times (respectively) more likely than non-Indigenous males and females to be hospitalised for alcohol-related injuries.

Gladman et al's (1997) study found that alcohol injuries corresponded with the opening hours of the local canteen (the only legal source of alcohol). This finding also corresponds with the pattern of alcohol consumption within the wider community. This issue of access and availability is one that has been subject to close scrutiny. Application of various controls over availability have proven to be successful harm reduction strategies in some Indigenous communities.

Alcohol-related harms within Indigenous communities can be severely exacerbated through practices known as 'sly grogging'. An important role exists for police to act proactively in relation to these activities. Community collaboration and negotiation is required to determine context specific strategies. Police involvement is strongly encouraged in relation to this issue.

In a recent national survey, 95% of Indigenous people nominated alcohol as the most serious problem confronting their community, ranked above unemployment, poverty, racism and deaths in custody. Alcohol was nominated as responsible for causing the most drug-related deaths and excessive drinking as the greatest cause of concern to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

There are geographical differences in levels of harmful and hazardous alcohol consumption among the Indigenous population (Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care, 2000). In remote areas, local policies and programs that control and regulate the supply of alcohol can reduce harmful and hazardous drinking (Gray & Chikritzhs, 2000) and can be employed to address pivotal areas of concern such as 'sly grogging'.

A wide range of alcohol-related harms are experienced by Aboriginal communities. As noted above, Indigenous Australians are more likely to be non-drinkers than non-Indigenous Australians, but a high proportion of those who drink do so at hazardous and harmful levels (Perkins, Sanson-Fisher, Blunden, Lunnay, Redman & Hensley, 1994). Indigenous Australians are also more likely to binge drink than non-Indigenous Australians. In the study by Perkins and colleagues (1994), 75% of

males and 86% of females reported binge drinking in the previous week (defined as more than six standard drinks for females and 10 for males). As a result, many of the harms associated with alcohol for these populations are more likely to be episodic (or single occasion) in nature.

### **Indigenous Australians: Drinking Locations and Harms**

There are differences between the drinking locations of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. Structural, political and social circumstances have led to higher levels of public drinking by Indigenous Australians in locations other than licensed venues. Nevertheless, licensed venues are the dominant source of alcohol. The manner in which a licensed venue is operated, maintained, supervised and policed can impact directly on the potential for alcohol-related harms. A number of unique supply control measures have been implemented in Indigenous communities to reduce the incidence and severity of alcohol-related harms resulting from take-away sales. Police can play an important role by working with licensed venue operators and local communities to develop, implement and enforce activities that aim to reduce the amount of alcohol supplied by licensed venues. For instance, particular vigilance may be warranted where licences are being renewed. Police may have important and relevant data pertinent to issuing or renewing licences. Police may also have a role in circumstances where licensees hold the credit cards of Indigenous patrons or use other manipulative mechanisms that can contribute to alcohol-related harms among Indigenous communities.

Public drinking by Indigenous Australians is a factor that contributes to the greater likelihood of apprehension (or detention)<sup>2</sup> for public drunkenness and alcohol-related violence than that experienced by non-Indigenous Australians. Drinking in open public areas is more likely to be observed by police and is more likely to result in an intervention.

Drinking in public areas may increase the likelihood of intoxication, possibly as a result of fewer controls over the amount of alcohol consumed. A range of controls have been implemented to respond to drinking harms associated with off-licence alcohol consumption among Indigenous drinkers. Restricted hours of availability of take-away alcohol has been found to decrease drinking, criminal offending and incidence and severity of alcohol-related harms in some Indigenous communities (Douglas, 1998). Imposing an alcohol levy, cask wine levy and restrictions on the sale of two litre casks was also found to reduce consumption in some areas of the Northern Territory (Douglas, 1998). Restricting the volume of alcohol that can be purchased for take-aways can also be an effective harm reduction strategy.

These findings suggest that reducing the supply of alcohol will generally have positive outcomes for Indigenous Australians. To improve overall health status, lower levels of alcohol consumption among many Indigenous people is a social imperative. Similarly, a reduction in the supply of alcohol has benefits for police who are responsible for managing the range of incidents in which alcohol is implicated.

<sup>2</sup> Apprehension results from legislation that makes public drunkenness an offence. In contrast, detention for public intoxication, while legislated in some jurisdictions, is used as a means to ensure the safety and well being of the intoxicated person. Detention can be temporary for the purpose of delivering a person into the care of medical providers or family members where appropriate and possible. Detention in police custody occurs when alternative arrangements cannot be made. Detention is not an offence and does not lead to a criminal conviction.

## Short-Term (Acute) Drinking Harms and Policing

Drinking patterns associated with short-term (acute) harms are the major area of concern to police. The potential for crime, disorder, violence and traffic accidents leading to injury and death increases with level of consumption and degree of alcohol-related impairment. The effects of alcohol include impaired coordination, speech, and cognitive function<sup>3</sup>.

Police knowledge and understanding of patterns of consumption can inform responses. Research data can provide much of this information. Locally derived and timely intelligence data can also enhance knowledge. Together these information sources can guide the choice of response and its application. For instance, it is known that a high proportion of alcohol-related violence increases over weekends and late at night (Murdoch, Pihl & Ross, 1990; Midford, Masters, Phillips, Daly, Stockwell & Gahegan, 1998; Teece & Williams, 2000). It is also known that young people at licensed premises tend to drink large amounts of alcohol, which is associated with acute harm. The role for police involvement in acute alcohol-related harms includes crime, violence, disorder and accidents. Examples of these are presented in Table 1.4.

**Table 1.4: Alcohol-Related Harms and the Role of Police**

<b>Crime</b>	<b>Violence</b>
Offences against property such as malicious damage	Offences against the person such as assault, murder, manslaughter, and sexual violence
<b>Disorder</b>	<b>Accidental</b>
Summary behavioural offences such as offensive language and disorderly behaviour	Injuries caused by falls and similar trauma injuries

## Costs of Alcohol-Related Harms

In addition to the heavy burden of health and social problems associated with alcohol and licensed premises there is also a substantial economic cost borne by society. The financial costs of alcohol-related problems to the Australian community have been estimated at \$7.6 billion dollars per annum (1998-1 999), compared with approximately \$6.1 billion from illicit drugs and \$21.1 billion from tobacco (see Table 1.5) (Collins & Lapsley, 2002). The costs of distribution of human and physical resources to address alcohol-related harms is a key consideration for police and health services. Anecdotal information suggests that police expenditure has been disproportionately distributed in favour of illicit drug activities. This has been reflected in business plans across police agencies in Australia that have largely focused on key outputs that specifically address illicit drugs.

<sup>3</sup> Cognitive functioning includes the ability to perceive, think, reason, plan, interpret information, monitor behaviours and solve problems (McMurrin, 1999; NHMRC, 2001).

Table 1.5: Costs of Drug Abuse 1998-1999

	Alcohol \$m	Tobacco \$m	Illicit Drugs \$m	All Drugs \$m
<b>Tangible</b>	57,541	77,58	51,10	18,34
<b>Intangible</b>	26,019	193,47	<b>99</b>	16,09
<b>Total</b>	73,560	261,06	60,07	34,44
<b>% of Total</b>	2%2.0%	6%12	<b>1%76</b>	100

Source: Collins & Lapsley (2002)

The tangible and intangible costs of alcohol-related mortality and morbidity have been defined in terms of impact on paid and unpaid production, health care<sup>4</sup> and road accidents<sup>5</sup> (Collins & Lapsley, 2002). Estimates of costs of alcohol consumption are conservative. They do not fully capture costs of alcohol misuse relating to victimisation, enforcement (other than for road accidents) and judicial and welfare processes including:

- domestic violence and neglect
- child abuse
- sexual assault
- offences against public order.

It is not the purpose of this document to investigate these latter issues, but it is expected that they will be positively affected by addressing alcohol-related harms in and around licensed premises.

## Summary

Prevalence and patterns of drinking in Australia are largely characterised by regular, often excessive, drinking by significant proportions of the Australian population. Age, gender, culture and drinking location all impact on drinking patterns and harms. Current patterns of drinking result in a wide range of personal and social harms and place considerable strain on the services responsible for managing acute and chronic alcohol-related harms. Particular groups in the community at elevated risk of harm from excessive and inappropriate patterns of alcohol consumption include young people, predominantly males but increasingly females, young adult women, members of Indigenous communities and those living in rural and remote locations.

In addition to excessive drinking, a range of factors external to the individual increase the probability of social and individual alcohol-related harms. Patterns and locations of drinking exacerbate vulnerability to alcohol-related harms. A significant proportion of alcohol-related harm occurs in and around licensed premises, which are a major drinking location in Australia. Licensed drinking environments bring with them a special range of concerns that require diligent attention from law enforcement agencies.

<sup>4</sup> Health care costs include medical services, hospital bed days and nursing home bed days.

<sup>5</sup> Road accident costs include vehicle damage, insurance administration, accident investigation, travel delays, ambulance and rescue services and legal and court costs.

As the 'public' drinking arena is more easily controlled than private locations there is an enormous opportunity to reduce harms. In particular, there is substantial untapped potential to improve the role of police in reducing harms associated with licensed premises.

## Key Findings: Alcohol Use and Misuse in Australia

1. Drinking is a prominent feature of Australian society.
2. Excessive single occasion drinking is associated with an elevated risk of acute harm including medical complications, damage to property and risk of physical and psychological injury and death from accidents and interpersonal violence.
3. A large proportion of drinking is considered unsafe in terms of risk of death and injury from acute and chronic harms according to the NHMRC Drinking Guidelines.
4. High-risk drinking is most prevalent among 14 to 24 year olds.
5. Young men and women and Indigenous peoples are at high risk of excessive drinking and experiencing acute alcohol-related harms.
6. Young men (14 to 25) are at greater risk of death (from acute causes) from drinking than any other age group.
7. Social, cultural and geographical differences exist that impact on drinking patterns and harms.
8. Drinking environments and locations contribute significantly to alcohol-related problems.
9. Many alcohol-related problems stemming from licensed premises can be prevented through appropriate enforcement activities.
10. Police have an important but largely under-utilised role in reducing the risk of alcohol-related harms.

## Chapter 2: Licensed Premises, Alcohol-Related Harms and Policing

Licensed premises are a primary source of alcohol in Australia and provide a social location for access and consumption.

The number, density, diversity and location of licensed premises impact on the capacity of police to effectively manage compliance with liquor laws and alcohol-related incidents that occur within them (or as a result of their existence).

This chapter examines the prevalence of alcohol-related incidents that require police attention. It presents a descriptive and statistical overview of:

- the number of licensed premises in Australia
- the proportion of operational police attendances attributable to alcohol-related incidents occurring in these locations
- the characteristics of alcohol-related offending and victimisation.

### Liquor Outlets and Alcohol Availability in Australia

The dominant social role of alcohol in Australia has resulted in the proliferation of licensed drinking venues. In addition to the traditional corner pub, entertainment strips consisting of a high volume of licensed venues are a common feature of the Australian drinking scene. The increasing urban sprawl associated with decentralisation of businesses has led to a growth in the number and diversity of licensed drinking locations in suburbia. Entertainment strips previously associated with city centres are being replicated in suburban areas. Some major shopping precincts now incorporate a mix of retail and entertainment facilities including licensed premises. Many licensed premises, if not most, cause few problems and generally enhance community amenity. However, there is a small proportion that are the source of substantial concern and social disruption.

### The Impact of Free Trade Laws on Licensed Venues

The recent growth in the number and diversity of liquor outlets has been facilitated by several factors, including a shift in the early 1990s from trade protection to a significant loosening of trade restrictions, whereby administrative and judicial determinations favour 'free trade' considerations over harm reduction philosophies. There is a continued tension between free trade imperatives and the legal and social requirement to control the number, diversity and adverse practices of licensed venues.

The decentralisation and proliferation of licensed premises within small geographic areas has resulted in the growth of city centre management strategies such as accords and safety action projects. Such strategies have been developed largely in response to the negative impact licensed drinking venues can have on local businesses and residential communities and growing concern over public safety and a decline in community 'amenity'.

Public amenity has emerged as an important consideration for new liquor licence proposals. Submissions are sought from service providers, such as the police and local councils, regarding the impact the premises has, or will potentially have, on local residents. Establishing the evidence of an impact on public amenity often relies on indications of harms, such as the number of assaults shown to be connected with the premises, the amount of noise emanating from the premises and damage caused by patrons frequenting nearby streets. A range of agencies recognise that they have joint responsibility to address the impact of licensed venues on the amenity of a local community. These include the police, licensees, local councils, security and transport providers.

## Licensed Premises in Australia

There are currently over nine thousand licensed premises<sup>6</sup> and licensed clubs in Australia. New South Wales has the largest number of licensed premises, followed by Queensland and Victoria. The distribution of licensed premises reflects population levels and higher levels of domestic and international tourism on the eastern seaboard (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1999a). Table 2.1 shows State and Territory populations (not adjusted for age or gender) and the number of licensed premises in each State/Territory. Together these venues employ about 150,000 people (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1999b).

**Table 2.1: Number of Licensed Premises by State/Territory**

State/Territory	Number of licensed premises <sup>a</sup> (% of total)		Population (1,000s) <sup>b</sup> (% of total)	
New South Wales	3,20	(235.17)	6,34	(33.82)
Victoria	1,68	(118.48)	4,66	(24.85)
Queensland	1,910	(620.96)	3,45	(18.43)
South Australia	940	(710.32)	1,48	(7.93)
Western Australia	819	(18.99)	1,83	(9.76)
Tasmania	380	(24.17)	47	(2.51)
Northern Territory	72	(0.79)	19	(1.01)
Australian Capital Territory	102	(01.11)	38	(2.02)
Total Australia	91,11		18,75	

Source: <sup>a</sup>Australian Bureau of Statistics (1999a); <sup>b</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (1999b)

While these figures are a useful indicator of the number of licensed premises, they do not provide a complete picture of the extent of locations in which public drinking occurs. For example, substantial social drinking occurs by virtue of single occasion licences for special events, such as:

- open air concerts
- bachelor and spinster balls
- wine and beer festivals
- New Year's Eve events
- motor racing and other sporting events.

<sup>5</sup> Licensed premises include pubs, taverns and bars, hotels, or similar businesses (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1999a).

Activities to tackle alcohol-related incidents in and around licensed premises and events can assist in reducing alcohol-related harms. This may result from increased awareness of alcohol-related harms, better understanding of legislation relating to licensed premises and intoxicated behaviours, and changes to social attitudes about alcohol-related violence and disorder.

## Alcohol-Related Crime, Violence, Disorder and Harms

Safety, social disruption and violence in and around licensed premises are areas of growing concern in many communities (Homel, Tomsen & Thommeny, 1992; Lang & Rumbold, 1997; Graham et al, 1998; Graham, West & Wells, 2000; Pemanen, 1998). Increasing attention has been directed toward the prediction, management and containment of alcohol-related problems associated with licensed premises. Licensed drinking locations have been described as one of the most common, predictable and public sites for violence, particularly where there is a concentration of such places (eg entertainment zone hot spots) (Indermaur, 1999). These areas are, unsurprisingly, prime sites for intoxication and violence, typically between young males. The predictability of violence in these locations offers opportunity for violence prevention (Indermaur, 1999) and an enhanced role for police involvement.

While alcohol is involved in up to one-half of all violent crime (White & Humeniuk, 1994), violence and aggression are not caused by any one factor or circumstance, whether biological, sociological, psychological or pharmacological (Eron, 2000). The interactive effect that alcohol plays in relation to violence appears to pivot around two factors:

- individual propensity toward violence
- influence of immediate environment on individual and group behaviour.

Undesired behaviours are facilitated by the combination of certain types of drinking environments and individuals. The scope for police intervention is increasingly recognised in these situations.

The risk of violent behaviour is unevenly distributed over populations of drinkers and drinking events (Pemanen, 1998). Alcohol-related violence tends to cluster in certain types of individuals, settings and (sub)cultures. The group most at risk of alcohol-related harms are men, particularly young intoxicated men (Homel, Tomsen & Thommeny, 1992; Homel & Clark, 1994; Graham, Schmidt & Gillis, 1996; Macintyre & Homel, 1997; Graham et al, 1998; Hauritz, Homel, McIlwain, Burrows & Townsley, 1998a; Rossow et al, 1999; Hoaken & Pihl, 2000).

### Consumption, Intoxication and Alcohol-Related Harms

The amount of alcohol consumed contributes to the risk of violence (Roche, Watt, Purdie, McClure & Green, 2001). Grossly intoxicated people are less likely to initiate violence but are more likely to become the victim of alcohol-related aggression and to suffer harms from injuries such as falls (McLeod, Stockwell, Stevens & Phillips, 1998). Homicide victims who initiate their attack are also more likely than other offenders to be affected by alcohol (Wolfgang & Strohm, 1956 cited in Murdoch et al, 1990).

While intoxication does not always lead to offending, there is an increased likelihood that perpetrators of violence will be intoxicated (Murdoch et al, 1990). In addition, certain drinking patterns increase the risk of violent behaviour occurring. While a disproportionate amount of alcohol-related violence occurs in conjunction with public drinking, further clustering is to be found among types of drinking locations (Graham, LaRoque, Yetman, Ross & Guistra, 1980; Homel, Tomsen & Thommeny, 1991b).

### The Drinking Environment, Intoxication and Alcohol-Related Harms

Recent research suggests that physical and social environments contribute significantly to the likelihood of violence. Regular violence in public drinking locations cannot simply be blamed on rowdy patrons, excused as something natural and unstoppable or be attributed to the ingestion of a legal drug (Homel, Tomsen & Thommeny, 1991 a). Continuous patterns of violence in such locations have been found to be related to local situational variables such as management practices, government legislation, regulation and enforcement (Arnold & Laidler, 1994).

### Social Attitudes, Intoxication and Harms

Individual and social attitudes about drunken behaviour also contribute to alcohol-related aggression and violence and resulting harms (Homel & Clark, 1994; Graham et al, 1998). Attitudes are known to permit (to varying degrees) ordinarily unacceptable drunken behaviour that can include interpersonal violence (Graham et al, 1998; Tomsen, 1997). These attitudes, referred to as 'deviance disavowal' or 'time-out', are the result of a social belief that aggression is caused by alcohol, not the individual. Consequently, alcohol-related offenders are often perceived as less at fault than sober offenders. Similarly, individuals feel less responsibility for offences they commit while intoxicated.

### Problems Associated with Drinking at Licensed Venues and Events

Studies show that drinking in licensed venues is associated with high levels of alcohol-related problems including violence and aggression (Homel & Clark, 1994; Homel et al, 1991 a; Ireland, 1995). A NSW study (Stevenson, 1996) found that total alcohol sales were significantly and positively correlated with the rate of malicious damage to property, assault and offensive behaviour, regardless of type of alcohol (as shown in Table 2.2).

**Table 2.2: Association Between Criminal Activity and Type of Outlet**

Type of Outlet	Criminal Activity Correlation
Hotel sales	Assault
Off-licences, clubs and hotels alcohol sales	Offensive behaviour
Sales volume by off-licences, hotels and restaurants	Malicious damage to property

The relationship between alcohol and violence has been studied extensively. Murdoch et al (1990) examined more than 9,000 crimes in 11 countries and reported that nearly two-thirds of violent offenders were drinking at the time of the crime and nearly half the victims were intoxicated when victimised. An understanding of the extent and nature of alcohol-related problems can help police officers, their agencies and policy makers to develop strategies to:

- respond to alcohol-related harms
- reduce the occurrence of alcohol-related incidents
- reduce the severity of harms arising from alcohol-related incidents
- reduce organisational expenditure on responding to and investigating alcohol-related incidents
- reduce the social impact of alcohol-related incidents.

Alcohol does not always result in violence, crime or disorder, and not all licensed premises are associated with harm. Despite this, some types of licensed establishments are associated with higher levels of aggression (Homel & Clark, 1994) or higher levels of incidents such as drink driving (Gruenewald, Stockwell, Beel & Dyskin, 1999). Considine, Walker, Wiggers, Daly, Hazell and Fairhall (1998) found only 5% of 400 licensed premises had a higher than average number of alcohol-related incidents. Briscoe and Donnelly (2001) recently found that 60-80% of all assaults in licensed premises in inner city areas of Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong occurred in hotels. Those with late trading hours were associated with the most assaults. The majority of these were common assaults and assaults occasioning actual bodily harm, they usually occurred in the early hours of Saturday and Sunday mornings, and regularly involved young adult males.

Young men aged between 18 and 30 have been found to be the most common drinkers in licensed premises and the group most likely to drink to intoxication. Alcohol can stimulate aggression and impact negatively on cognitive abilities. As such, young men who drink heavily and frequent hotels are at greater risk of engaging in criminal, violent and disorderly behaviour and risk-taking. Premises frequented by this age group are particularly susceptible to problem behaviour. This situation is exacerbated in entertainment precincts where there is a high concentration of licensed venues. In response, police, researchers, local councils and liquor authorities have focused greater attention on licensed premises and entertainment precincts and have attempted to develop strategies to prevent or curtail potential problems without imposing on the positive and desirable social aspects of licensed premises.

It is unreasonable to eliminate licensed venues as a key source of social entertainment for the community, particularly young people. It is therefore important to identify ways to reduce individual and social harms associated with these environments. This includes identifying scope for intervention by managers of licensed premises and police in either a proactive or enforcement role. To date, insufficient attention has been directed to programs that modify behaviours of patrons and licensed venue operators in regard to excessive drinking. As a result, the potential role for police in actively and positively engaging in policing licensed premises has been largely over-looked.

## Police Response to Alcohol-Related Crime and Disorder

It is well known that alcohol plays a large part in the daily operational activities of police. However, many police agencies do not routinely and accurately measure the full extent of the impact of alcohol on police activities. This is largely because police data systems vary in their ability to collect and measure information that quantifies the involvement of alcohol in crime, violence and disorder incidents. Nonetheless, there are estimates of the extent to which it impacts on police workload.

Studies inquiring into victim and police perceptions of offender's intoxication, as well as offender self-reported intoxication, are legitimate means by which to investigate the relationships between alcohol, violence and disorders. A New South Wales study found that alcohol was involved in 62% of all police attendances, 73% of assaults, 77% of street offences and 40% of domestic violence incidents (Ireland & Thommeny, 1993). International surveys indicate that many crime victims report the offender as under the influence of alcohol. The rate of victims reporting the offender as affected by alcohol at the time of the offence was found to be 40% in a British study (Home Office, 2000) and 35% in a USA study (Greenfeld, 1998). Correspondingly, about 36% of convicted offenders in the USA report alcohol use at the time of their offence (Greenfeld, 1998).

An overview of research findings relating to the proportion of offences for which alcohol has been identified as a contributing factor is shown in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3: Studies Involving Alcohol in Crime, Violence and Disorder

Country (year)	Offence Type	% Alcohol Relationship
Australia (Mouzos, 2000)	Homicides: • victim and offender • offender only • victim only	44.8% 9.2% 5.5%
Australia (James & Hallinan, 1995)	Homicide • victim and offender	>33%
New South Wales, Australia (NSW Police) <sup>7</sup> (Ireland & Thommeny, 1993)	Calls 10pm – 2am All calls (n=684) Public order Offensive behaviour Assault Offensive language Noise Damage Domestic violence Street offences Drink driving	90% 62% 77% 84% 73% 70% 59% 58% 40% 77% 100%
Queensland, Australia (Arro, Crook & Fenton, 1992)	All police attendances Serious assault Assault Street disturbance Noise complaint Domestic disturbance Suicide Steal with violence	25% 82.4% 45.9% 62.8% 46% 53.3% 63.6% 66.7%
New South Wales (Robb, in Ireland & Thommeny, 1993)	Serious assault <sup>8</sup>	40%
Britain (Home Office, 2000)	Offenders <sup>9</sup>	40%
United Kingdom <sup>10</sup> (Jefferies & Saunders, 1983)	Assault offenders Breach of peace Criminal damage	80% >80% 90%
Sweden (Roslund & Larson, 1979)	Homicides <sup>11</sup>	65%
USA (Greenfeld, 1998)	Convicted violence offenders <sup>12</sup>	36%
USA (Murdoch et al, 1990)	Homicide and assault offenders	>50% (significantly more than criminals committing non-violent crime)
Los Angeles, USA (Goodman et al, 1986, cited in Riedel, 2000)	Murder victims Detectable level BAC 1.10 mg/ml or >	46% 30%

<sup>7</sup> Using an incident survey card for police recording own or victim observations of alcohol intoxication.

<sup>8</sup> Derived from police report data 1971 and 1987.

<sup>9</sup> Victim perceptions that offender was under the influence of alcohol.

<sup>10</sup> Identified as alcohol consumed within 4 hours preceding arrest.

<sup>11</sup> Self-reported consumption by offenders just prior to attack.

<sup>12</sup> Victim perceptions of alcohol use by offender.

## Under-Reporting of Alcohol-Related Offences

A large proportion of alcohol-related offending remains unreported. Levels as high as 79% are indicated by non-fatal assault data in Australia (Australian Institute of Criminology, 2001). The 1998 Australian Crime and Safety Survey (ACSS) (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1998)<sup>13</sup> measured crime victimisation by prevalence, incidence and average number of incidents per victim. The survey found high levels of under-reporting to police which were attributed to police procedures and attitudes, victim attitudes and data collection methodology. Reasons cited for data discrepancies included:

- inquiry by police but no report made
- insufficient information provided to police
- insufficient evidence to warrant submission of report
- incorrect coding by offence category
- the Crime and Safety Survey only related to residents of Australia who were 15 years and over, and female victims of sexual assault who were 18 years and older (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1998).

There were 618,300 people aged 15 years and over (4.3% of the Australian population) who reported being a victim of assault in 1998. Fourteen percent of these occurred in pubs and clubs<sup>14</sup>. However, only 15% of assaults occurring in these locations were reported to police, compared to a rate of 27.7% for all assaults (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1998) (refer Table 2.4).

In 1998, 47,300 sexual assaults against 30,100 victims were reported to police (0.4% of the population) (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1998). Five percent (1,500) of these occurred in a pub or club. Only a third (32.6%) of sexual assault incidents were reported to police. Reporting levels for assaults and sexual assaults are presented in Table 2.5.

**Table 2.4: Self-Reported Notification of Victimisation to the Police for Assaults (Aggravated and Non-Aggravated) and Sexual Assaults, 1998**

Description	Proportion reported to police (%)	Proportion not reported to police (%)
Assault	27.7	72.3
Aggravated assault <sup>15</sup>	37.1	62.9
Non-aggravated assault	20.1	79.9
Assault in pub/club	14.6	85.4
Sexual assault <sup>16</sup>	67.4	32.6

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (1998)

<sup>13</sup> The Australian Crime and Safety Survey involved 42,200 respondents 15 years and over (81.26% response rate) and data relating to 20,900 households (81.6% response rate) over the 2 weeks commencing 6/4/1999 and related to victimisation over the previous 12 months (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1998).

<sup>14</sup> Pubs/clubs relates to incidents occurring in a place of entertainment such as a pub or nightclub, including the car park (excludes family violence) (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1998, p. 44).

<sup>15</sup> Aggravated assault is defined as an incident where there was more than one offender, a weapon was used, or the victim was injured (Australian Institute of Criminology, 2001).

<sup>16</sup> Sexual assault is defined as an incident of a sexual nature involving physical contact, including rape, indecent assault and assault with intent to sexually assault (not sexual harassment) for females 18 years and over (Australian Institute of Criminology, 2001).

**Table 2.5: Rate of Reporting of Assaults Resulting in Physical Injury, 1998**

Description	Proportion reported to police (%)	Proportion not reported to police (%)
Hospital admissions	64.7	35.3
Other injury	37.6	62.4
No physical injury	24.4	75.6

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (1998)

## Alcohol-Related Offending, Victimisation and Gender Differences

Violence is common in some pubs and clubs. Research shows that men are as much as five times more likely than women to be a victim of violence in licensed premises (James & Hallinan, 1995). Males are also more likely than females to be violent when consuming alcohol. Previous offending predicts future offending (Poldrugo, 1998). The challenge for police is to improve their understanding of the dynamics of drinking location, offenders and victims, and the potential harms of excessive drinking. An anticipated outcome would be more proactive attention to licensed premises and improved responses to reported incidents.

## Police Culture and Alcohol-Related Problems In and Around Licensed Premises

Australians have traditionally been highly tolerant of intoxication and anti-social intoxicated behaviour. Police responses have been shaped by social attitudes that previously excused intoxicated behaviour. Limited responses by police to intoxicated behaviour and associated problems reflect out-of-date community attitudes and expectations. Over the past decade, however, tolerance and exemption from enforcement efforts has been steadily decreasing. There is substantial potential for police to be at the forefront of changes to social attitudes by:

- demonstrating a commitment to policing environmental features of licensed premises and their surrounds
- encouraging and facilitating reporting of victimisation
- investigating offending in and around licensed premises.

As in the general community, social expectations and interactions shape police attitudes and behaviour. There is evidence to suggest that use and misuse of alcohol, particularly binge drinking and alcohol dependence, are dominant features of police culture (Richmond, Wodak, Kehoe & Heather, 1998). This results from the social role of alcohol and its use in managing work-related stress and building camaraderie.

In a New South Wales study of police, almost half (48%) of male respondents and more than two-fifths (40%) of the female respondents reported excessive alcohol consumption that included continuous hazardous or harmful consumption and binge drinking. Excessive drinking was found to be more prevalent among younger police (Richmond et al, 1998). It is this younger group who are most represented in operational policing activities. As a result, police experience cognitive conflict when they are required to police licensed premises which are often their own preferred drinking locations and where patron behaviour often mirrors their own (Cisin, 1978 cited in Evans et al, 1999).

The social drinking culture and acceptance of deviant behaviour while intoxicated have been shown to inhibit optimal police management of alcohol-related violence. Research has indicated that pub violence is often viewed as 'brawls' by police, licensed premises staff and others, with an underpinning assumption that all parties freely engaged (Homel, 1990). However, evidence indicates this is not the case, commonly finding that one party was more intoxicated, younger and smaller than the other, and that this person did not usually incite violence (Homel & Tomsen, 1993).

## Summary

Licensed premises in Australia are numerous and diverse. Research provides valuable information to assist police to identify and respond to vulnerable drinking locations. There is evidence to suggest a small number of licensed venues account for a large number of alcohol-related incidents, particularly assaults. The majority of assaults in these locations involve young men as either the victim or offender. Hotels in particular have been identified as a major contributor to alcohol-related assaults, particularly hotels with late closing and located in close proximity to other licensed venues.

Focusing police activities on hotels that have late night drinking and predominantly young adult patrons may assist in reducing alcohol-related incidents and harms. Research evidence is a useful means by which to support and guide risk management in targeting alcohol-related offending. This has potential to reduce the high police workload associated with responding to and managing alcohol-related crime, violence and disorder in or near licensed drinking environments.

In addition to licence type and hours of operation, a range of physical and social features of licensed drinking environments have been found to contribute to alcohol-related crime, violence and disorder. These issues are identified and discussed in Chapter 3. Strategies are also highlighted that may reduce or eliminate adverse effects associated with licensed environments.

## Key Findings: Licensed Premises, Alcohol-Related Harms and Policing

1. There are over nine thousand licensed premises operating in Australia.
2. A large number of licensed events are also conducted in Australia each year.
3. A small proportion of licensed premises is associated with the majority of alcohol-related incidents.
4. Studies reveal that alcohol-related assaults are most likely to occur in inner city hotels, in the early hours of Saturday and Sunday mornings and mostly involve young adult males.
5. Research shows that as many as 60% of all police attendances and 90% of late night calls (10pm to 2am) involve alcohol.
6. A large proportion of alcohol-related incidents associated with licensed venues are not reported to police.

## Chapter 3: Licensed Drinking Environments: Physical and Regulatory Issues

This chapter is presented in two parts. The first part examines features of the *physical environment* and the second addresses *regulatory practices* that contribute to alcohol-related harms within the vicinity of licensed drinking locations. It outlines responses that may help to reduce intoxicated offending and harms.

Although police regularly deal with alcohol-related incidents they do not always have responsibility or power to address the social and physical factors that contribute to problems and harms. Nevertheless, police can initiate, lead and guide a wide range of activities to reduce alcohol-related disorder, offending, victimisation and harms.

Knowledge of the range of practical and achievable responses to reduce alcohol-related incidents and harms can help police identify key stakeholders and enact sound problem-solving strategies.

Extensive research has identified important, but not always obvious, physical and regulatory features of licensed premises and their environs that impact on individual and group behaviour and increase the probability of alcohol-related harms (Tomsen, 1989; Homel et al, 1992; Lang & Rumbold, 1997; Tomsen, 1997; Graham et al, 1998; Hauritz et al, 1998a; Hauritz, Homel, McIlwain, Burrows & Townsley, 1998b; Pemanen, 1998; Shepherd, 1998; McMurrin, 1999; Murgraff, Parrott & Bennet, 1999; Parks & Zetes-Zanatta, 1999; Cameron, 2000; Graham et al, 2000). It is important that police are aware of these factors because they enhance the success of response strategies aimed at reducing alcohol-related incidents and harms. Knowledge of the physical and regulatory aspects of drinking environments can improve the capacity of police to provide practical guidance to prevent the incidence, repetition, and severity of alcohol-related incidents.

A function of licensed premises and events is to confine alcohol consumption within a designated geographical location and other prescribed parameters. As such, a range of legislative and regulatory controls exist which impact on the hours of operation, the number of patrons permitted, the age of patrons and the method of serving of alcoholic beverages. In recent years, a range of strategies has been developed to prevent or minimise intoxication in licensed premises, including an increased emphasis on controlling provision of alcoholic beverages to intoxicated patrons. Intoxication among patrons of licensed premises remains a major cause of concern and a principal contributor to alcohol-related harm. Intoxicated patrons often engage in behaviour that leads to problems within the licensed premises and surrounding areas.

Licensed premises can contribute to a large amount of crime and disorder in nearby public areas. It is therefore important that police collaborate with other agencies to limit the impact of licensed premises on these adjoining public areas. It is also important that the physical and regulatory features of the surrounding environment do not increase the risk of harms to intoxicated people or others. Factors that influence alcohol-related harms within and around licensed drinking environments are outlined in Table 3.1 and expanded upon in the subsequent section.

**Table 3.1: Internal and External Factors of the Physical and Social Environment of Licensed Premises that Impact on Alcohol-Related Harms**

	Physical Environment Factors	Regulatory Factors
Internal	Crowding Entertainment Lighting Seating Bar placement Drinks containers Bar size Ventilation Air-conditioning Entrances and exits Cleanliness Physical hazards Provision of food	Intoxication Drinks promotions Social mix Patron type (age, gender) Permissive attitudes Attitudes re drunken deportment Licensed venue policies and practices Crowd controller/door staff behaviour and practices Bar staff behaviour and practices Management practices and policies Police activities and responses Enforcement of legislation
External	Road design Rubbish bins Location of public phones Location of amenities Location of cab ranks Location of bus facilities Number of taxi ranks Cleanliness of environment Design of city, town or entertainment centre Number of licensed venues Density of licensed venues Number and type of other businesses Operating hours of licensed venues Lighting CCTV Location of fast food outlets Proximity of licensed premises to domestic premises	Visibility of police Communication between security personnel and police Behaviour of licensed premises security staff Behaviour of police Enforcement activities of police Dry zone Type of licensed premises (mix) Enforcement of legislation

## Part I: The Physical Environment

The incidence and severity of alcohol-related problems in licensed venues and their environs are linked to physical features of these locations. These features include:

- high concentration of people
- crowd congestion
- services that do not cater for demand
- physical hazards arising from type and placement of furniture
- lighting that facilitates deviance and increases anonymity
- insufficient and unclean toilets.

The potential for these features to be problematic is heightened when they co-exist with the consumption of alcohol, as occurs in a licensed drinking venue. For example, licensed premises and events are often associated with crowding. Crowding increases the chance of accidental contact and alcohol affects the ability of individuals to appropriately deal with this contact.

Crowding and alcohol are both irritants, which, in combination can increase anxiety and reduce tolerance. This may lead to aggression and violence. Crowding also increases anonymity and reduces a sense of accountability. As a consequence, it is less likely that an individual will intervene to prevent conflict situations occurring or worsening. In a conflict situation, the anonymity afforded by crowded settings may have numerous negative consequences including increased severity of injury. It may also result in an unwillingness to supply information to police.

A range of factors in the physical environment are outlined here. Attention is drawn to the relevance of these factors for best practice in policing of licensed premises. In some instances, the role for police may not be immediately apparent. However, a principal tenet of best practice is 'collaboration' and it is essential that police are fully aware of all issues that pertain to reducing alcohol-related harms associated with licensed premises.

Over recent years there has been considerable attention focused on strategies to reduce alcohol-related harms associated with the physical drinking environment. A range of strategies and possible responses are outlined in Table 3.2 and discussed in the section below.

**Table 3.2: Reducing Alcohol-Related Harms Associated with the Physical Environment of Licensed Premises**

Issue	Response
Crowding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• consider design of licensed premises when determining maximum patron numbers</li> <li>• comply with patron numbers as per liquor licence to reduce crowding</li> <li>• design/re-design of premises to assist traffic flow and prevent congestion in high traffic areas</li> <li>• set and adhere to minimum staff to patron ratios for bar, management and security staff</li> <li>• monitor patron numbers and limit or eliminate pass outs to assist compliance with patron numbers</li> <li>• remove or limit physical barriers such as seats and tables in high traffic flow areas</li> <li>• display signage regarding maximum capacity</li> <li>• incorporate monitored CCTV surveillance into licensed premises design to identify problems and assist investigation of serious offences</li> <li>• seek planning opinions from local council, health and other providers</li> </ul>
Lighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensure visibility of all areas and patrons</li> <li>• balance lighting so bright light will not act as an irritant and low light will not encourage offending</li> </ul>
Ventilation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ventilate premises to remove smoke</li> <li>• use effective climate control to prevent premises from becoming too hot</li> <li>• limit smoking to well ventilated areas (or eliminate smoking inside licensed premises)</li> </ul>

Table 3.2 continued

Issue	Response
Bars	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensure accessibility</li> <li>• ensure placement does not interfere with passage of traffic</li> <li>• raise bar areas so staff can view patron behaviour to minimise risk of harm</li> <li>• increase size or number of bar areas to limit congestion</li> <li>• replace traditional glassware with tempered glass</li> </ul>
Staffing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensure availability of sufficient staff to manage the number of patrons</li> <li>• establish communication systems to help staff seek and provide assistance with problems</li> <li>• establish communication systems to enable communication of problems and potential problems to police and nearby licensees</li> </ul>
Cleanliness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensure toilets are clean, accessible and regularly monitored by security staff</li> <li>• ensure cleanliness of bathroom, food preparation areas, eating facilities and bars</li> </ul>
Physical hazards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• remove obstacles such as stairs to bathroom facilities and between bars</li> <li>• eliminate seating in high traffic areas such as around bars, on or near dance floors</li> <li>• provide areas for patrons to relax</li> <li>• ensure seating does not interfere with walkway and dance areas</li> <li>• ensure placement of street furniture does not create a hazard</li> <li>• provide and highlight emergency exits</li> <li>• provide drink containers that minimise risk of harms in violent and disorderly incidents</li> </ul>
Urban design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• design roads and footpaths to reduce risk of pedestrian injuries</li> <li>• provide public phones to enable calls for assistance, for example to emergency services, relatives/friends or for transport</li> <li>• provide toilets in well-lit and monitored areas</li> <li>• locate taxi ranks and bus stops close to licensed premises to assist crowd dispersal and reduce chances of victimisation, pedestrian accidents and drink driving</li> <li>• reduce density of licensed premises to limit 'pub-hopping'</li> <li>• consider proximity of licensed venues to residential premises, businesses and restaurants and their impact on economic viability and potential for harm and discomfort amongst users of these areas</li> <li>• ensure lighting deters congregation and builds a sense of personal safety</li> <li>• incorporate monitored CCTV to deter offending</li> <li>• ensure fast food outlets do not become a congregating place for intoxicated people</li> <li>• ensure operating hours do not adversely affect residential comfort and safety</li> </ul>

## Crowding

*Most aggression occurs through social interaction and typically involves a sequence of aggressive acts by more than one person.*

(Graham et al, 1998)

Overcrowding contributes directly and indirectly to alcohol-related aggression and violence in licensed venues. A number of factors contribute to aggression and violence including accidental contact between patrons, as well as increases in temperature, smoke and noise (Homel et al, 1991 b; Homel et al, 1992; Stockwell et al, 1993; Homel & Clark, 1994; Macintyre & Homel, 1994; Macintyre & Homel, 1997; Graham et al, 1998; Hauritz et al, 1998b; Graham et al, 2000; Briscoe & Donnelly, 2001). Patrons drink more alcohol to overcome discomfort associated with crowding and increased consumption can lead to a lowered tolerance to social and environmental irritants.

The maximum number of patrons for new licences and applications for premises alterations are determined primarily by local councils. Imposing an upper limit on patron numbers is intended to limit or reduce the negative effects of crowding such as intoxicated frustration and aggression. It also helps emergency service personnel to manage emergency incidents and facilitates safe exit from the premises.

Door staff play a key role in regulating patron numbers. They regulate entry and exit points, implement policies restricting availability of pass outs, and assist in maintaining control over patron numbers (Lang & Rumbold, 1997). In addition, adequate door staffing, crowd control and entry regulation limit 'pub-hopping'<sup>17</sup>, which has been known to result in inter-group conflict, fights, crime and public disorder (Felson, Berends, Richardson & Veno, 1997).

The impact of over-crowding on frustration levels, aggression and violence is most strongly associated with crowding around bars, in walkways and on dance floors (Macintyre & Homel, 1997). As such, the internal layout of the premises and placement of furniture are important considerations for licensees, police and partner agencies, such as fire and health.

Crowding also interferes with the ability of staff to determine if an individual is intoxicated. This stems from:

- pressure to serve quickly resulting in reduced attention to indicators of intoxication
- purchase of a number of drinks by one patron on behalf of other, often unseen, patrons
- high levels of noise which interfere with staff ability to hear verbal cues of intoxication, as well as verbal confrontation that may lead to aggressive acts.

These factors may also adversely influence the desire and capacity of staff to assess and seek confirmation of proof of age by purchasers and consumers of alcoholic beverages. As a consequence, service to underage patrons may occur, placing the licensee, their staff and the patron at risk of legal action.

Separate entrance and exit points may also help limit congestion and associated negative effects (Macintyre & Homel, 1994). Careful location of exit points can also help minimise interaction between drinking patrons and local businesses and their patrons.

<sup>17</sup> 'Pub-hopping' is the practice of moving from one licensed drinking location to another in a geographical area (Felson et al, 1997).

To adequately monitor concentrations of patrons in licensed venues police agencies increasingly engage in collaborative exercises with service providers such as health, fire and liquor licensing authorities to conduct safety audits. The aim of safety audits is to proactively identify hazards, problem practices and legislative breaches and to encourage licensees to eliminate environmental factors that may contribute to harm (Macintyre & Homel, 1997).

Enhancing public awareness can contribute significantly to management of alcohol-related harm in licensed premises. The prominent display of signs relating to the maximum number of patrons helps licensees and their staff to regulate patron access and remind patrons of the legal responsibility of staff in relation to liquor laws. Signs addressing acceptable drinking behaviours, intoxication and underage sale also inform patrons of their own responsibilities in relation to liquor laws.

Information conveyed through posters, beer mats and coasters, as well as publicly displayed house policies relating to patron behaviour is useful to:

- improve patron awareness of their responsibilities
- reinforce standards of acceptable (and unacceptable) behaviour
- help reduce intoxication that may lead to acute harms (Reilly et al, 1998).

In the environments around licensed venues, signs that clearly identify public transport points, amenities and physical surveillance (ie CCTV) assist with dispersal of patrons, thereby limiting potential for violence, crime and disorder. Establishment of 'dry zones' around the vicinity of licensed venues limits the potentially negative impact of off-premises sales on residential neighbours, entertainment precincts and tourist locations (Ramsay, 1990). As a consequence, community perceptions of safety improve in conjunction with a reduction in alcohol-related problems.

### **Lighting**

Lighting can reduce crime and disorder by facilitating surveillance, decreasing perceptions of anonymity and deterring loitering. Good lighting also reduces the fear of crime among patrons of entertainment precincts. Within the licensed venue optimal lighting conditions achieve balance between too much light, which can irritate patrons, and too little light, which hinders observation of patron behaviour and may contribute to crime and disorder associated with perceived anonymity.

In areas outside licensed venues good quality lighting discourages loitering thereby reducing congregations of people who may engage in conflict, noise, disorderly behaviour and criminal offending. Good lighting also eliminates dark spots and increases visibility of activities, opportunities for natural surveillance and effectiveness of artificial surveillance systems. The effect of good lighting can therefore reduce demand for police resources.

### **Ventilation**

Poor ventilation and inefficient air-conditioning contribute to the amount of heat and smoke in a drinking location. Heat and smoke exacerbate physical discomfort, which heightens irritation and leads to increased alcohol consumption. The consequence is increased risk of intoxication, aggression, social disruption and violence.

## **Bars**

A well-designed premises enables observation of patron behaviour, which enhances identification and resolution of crime, violence and disorderly behaviour. As such, it is useful to design and locate bars that facilitate observation of patrons by bar staff. Designing bar areas that are physically higher than surrounding floor area facilitates observation of patrons and provides a safer environment for staff (Portman Group, 1998).

Open-plan locations optimise observation, but also increase the likelihood of conflict between groups, the number of participants in an incident and the severity of inter-personal conflict (Portman Group, 1998). One strategy for large and potentially crowded or congested drinking environments is to provide two or three bar areas. Real or artificial barriers, such as plants, pools of lighting, and solid and semi-solid partitions, provide a sense of private space yet enable areas to be observed.

## **Amenities**

Clean drinking environments are more desirable places to drink. A clean environment sets a standard for patrons. Maintaining a clean licensed venue provides increased opportunity for staff to monitor and address problem behaviours.

Areas around toilets have been found to be a key location for disorder. Public toilets within licensed venues and in the nearby environment provide an environment where people affected by alcohol may be susceptible to victimisation. This is particularly so where these facilities are not well lit, monitored or in a very visible area. It is therefore important that toilet facilities are readily visible and accessible to bar staff, well maintained and clean (Portman Group, 1998).

## **Physical Hazards**

### *Furniture*

Selection and placement of furniture impact on the potential for harm in licensed premises through use as a weapon or a barrier. Provision of furniture enhances patrons' comfort, but it is vital that it is installed so as to minimise its potential use as a weapon. Inappropriate placement of furniture may also create physical barriers that lead to congestion in walkways and around bars and dance floors (Macintyre & Homel, 1997) or impede interventions in violent confrontations or when assisting ill or injured patrons or staff. It can also impede the ability of staff to observe behaviour.

### *Glass ware*

Research has shown that bar glasses are often used as weapons in pub violence, predominantly resulting in injuries to the face. Use of toughened (annealed) glassware can reduce the number and severity of injuries from bar glasses (Shepherd, Price & Shenfine, 1990; Shepherd, Shapland & Scully, 1990; Shepherd, 1998). The use of such glassware has also been found to reduce accidental injuries to bar staff by eliminating the sharp glass shards that result when traditional glassware is broken (Shepherd, 1998). Toughened glass is less breakable than traditional glass, less prone to deterioration from wear and tear and if the glass does break it shatters into small blunt fragments instead of sharp shards.

Increasingly, foam cups have been used as containers for alcohol at major sporting events. Elimination of canned and bottled drinks has reduced the risk of harms associated with unruly intoxicated behaviours at such events. In Indigenous communities, local regulations have also restricted sale of alcohol in glassware. This was motivated, in part, by the high level of injuries from glass beverage containers, often purchased from licensed venues (Gray, Saggars, Atkinson, Sputore

& Bourbon, 2000). Police are increasingly involved as consultants or on collaborative committees intended to identify, implement and enforce such practical and readily available harm reduction strategies.

### **Urban Design**

Licensed venues impact on local business, local community and society as a whole. Local government plays an important role in reducing alcohol-related harms that occur within and in the vicinity of licensed venues. Cooperation between police and local government is vital in identifying and reducing problems.

### *Venue Density*

The concentration of licensed venues within defined geographical areas is associated with an influx of people, particularly young people, into the area. Increased patron density is potentially problematic where similar operating hours result in patrons entering and leaving the local community en masse. This can result in excessive noise (often late at night), and places additional demands on services such as police and public transport (Marsh & Kibby, 1992). Some remedial strategies have involved agreements between licensees to stagger closing times. It may be difficult to maintain these agreements however, particularly if closing earlier than competitors economically disadvantages a venue (Felson et al, 1997; Lang & Rumbold, 1997).

Police are often well positioned to advise on new liquor licence applications or applications for extended operating hours. Best practice in policing licensed premises requires consideration of venue density when advising on approval of new licences or extended trading permits.

### *Street Design*

Physical features that encourage or facilitate congregation affect the ability of patrons to disperse on leaving a licensed venue or event. Seating, for example, provides the opportunity to sit and linger. Milling crowds, even in relatively small numbers, can act as physical barriers to movement of other patrons and members of the community.

It is important that safe exit points are provided from licensed premises, particularly since alcohol is a predominant feature of pedestrian injuries and deaths. Barriers at the road verge in front of licensed venues have been demonstrated to help prevent injuries to alcohol-impaired pedestrians. They may also prevent violent confrontations from spilling onto roadways.

Police knowledge of these design issues can be beneficial in the development and implementation of local policies regarding venue design and modifications.

### *Closed Circuit Television*

Closed circuit television (CCTV) is useful for observing areas that cannot be easily or naturally observed within and around licensed venues. This acts as a deterrent to misbehaviour, particularly where the public is aware that they are monitored and action may be taken for deviance disclosed via this medium. CCTV can:

- increase the accountability of security officers and other staff
- assist in identifying offenders
- provide evidence of violence occurring in and around the premises
- provide evidence of other serious crimes occurring in or involving people at the premises
- assist in identifying physical hazards and guide improved venue design.

The use of CCTV in town centres has been particularly useful in reducing offending and minimising the severity of alcohol-related harms. When monitored, this form of surveillance provides early warning of potential problems, assists prompt police response and enables monitoring of incidents for use as evidence (Portman Group, 1998).

#### *Public Transport*

Well-placed and frequently serviced bus stops and taxi stands can reduce concentrations of intoxicated patrons and improve patron safety by reducing the opportunity for crime including drink driving and disorder. It may be easier to provide these services in areas with high concentrations of licensed premises than in those that are more isolated. Licensed venues in more isolated areas (such as newer areas) may require greater levels of negotiation to ensure the availability of transport. To overcome this, some remotely located licensed venues provide free or cheap bus services to ferry patrons home during closing times.

Some public transport providers are also known to offer free bus services on weekends and for special events such as New Year's Eve celebrations. This is often negotiated through a whole-of-government approach to managing major public events. Other strategies to respond to transport problems have included:

- cooperation with public transport providers to increase the number, frequency and operating times of services
- adjusting opening hours to coincide with transport services
- staggering closing times amongst venues in close proximity to reduce simultaneous demands on transport.

Police can play a pivotal role in negotiating with local councils and local transport service providers and licensees to maximise the availability of appropriate public transport.

#### *Venue Location*

High concentrations of licensed venues may result in a mix of intoxicated and sober people, particularly when these venues are located in close proximity to shopping malls, theatre complexes and the like. This may reduce perceived safety and adversely impact on unlicensed businesses. Strategies to reduce the potential for harms from licensed premises in the vicinity of retail businesses and unlicensed entertainment facilities may include:

- regulating opening and closing times
- limiting supply of liquor to meals only during simultaneous operating times
- locating access and exit points of licensed premises separately from those of retail outlets.

#### *Amenities*

Public toilets provide an environment where people affected by alcohol may be susceptible to victimisation, particularly if facilities are not well lit, monitored or in a very visible area.

#### **Summary**

Best practice in policing licensed drinking locations and their environment involves addressing the many features of the physical environment that impact on alcohol-related offending and harms. This requires collaboration with a number of agencies to develop an integrated response. Police can collaborate with licensed venue operators in design and re-design of licensed premises to reduce the likelihood and severity of harms. Liquor authorities and local government can intervene to ensure premises are designed to eliminate crowding, congestion and excessive noise and

smoke. Addressing these physical factors will reduce the risk of alcohol-related harms, including aggression and violence. Local government can, in conjunction with police, modify environments around licensed venues to reduce the risk of harms caused to or by alcohol-affected people.

The capacity of liquor authorities and local government to address physical features of licensed drinking environments is facilitated by police activities. Police who attend licensed venues and their environs can observe features of the physical environment that contribute to alcohol-related offending and harms. These observations can help police to initiate, lead, guide and participate in collaborative activities that aim to address these features and thereby reduce alcohol-related problems in and around licensed drinking environments.

## Part II: Regulatory Practices

In addition to the physical features of a licensed environment a range of other factors also impact on the potential for adverse alcohol-related incidents. These factors involve the regulation of a wide range of features of drinking environments. They are more complex and varied than the physical features of a drinking environment described above, but they are no less potent in terms of their potential contribution to harm and require particularly careful consideration because of their complexity. Table 3.3 outlines strategies found to be successful in addressing these features of the social environment.

**Table 3.3: Regulatory Factors and Responses that Impact on Potential for Harm in Licensed Premises**

Issues	Responses
Staffing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• facilitate and encourage responsible service training</li> <li>• develop and display a house policy that publicises standards of dress and behaviour</li> <li>• provide training about legislation and managing patrons</li> <li>• identify to police any illicit drug activity, prostitution, sexual assault and other offending occurring in and around the premises</li> <li>• work with other service providers to ensure access by patrons to transport</li> <li>• avoid unsafe drinks promotions and promotions that encourage deviant behaviour</li> <li>• review hours of operation</li> <li>• establish and fulfil codes of practice</li> <li>• serve substantial and low salt foods</li> <li>• avoid bar staff over serving</li> <li>• control admission to prevent intoxicated patrons entering</li> <li>• promote soft drinks for designated drivers</li> <li>• develop intoxication indicators for use by bar staff</li> <li>• limit free and cheap drinks promotions</li> <li>• ensure sufficient ratio of staff to patrons</li> <li>• ensure staff comply with legislation and house policies</li> <li>• display signs about intoxication and underage offences</li> <li>• provide good quality entertainment suitable for the patron group</li> </ul>

Table 3.3 continued

Issues	Responses
Security staff behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• assist in identification of underage patrons</li> <li>• identify intoxicated, disorderly and offensive patrons</li> <li>• attain skills in behaviour management and negotiation</li> <li>• assist to facilitate transport for ejected, intoxicated and underage patrons</li> <li>• record incidents</li> <li>• assist exit of customers</li> <li>• improve accountability by uniforms, visible identification and establishment of a senior security officer to oversee and document all activities</li> </ul>
Bar staff behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• attain skills in identification of intoxicated and underage patrons</li> <li>• attain skills in management of unruly patrons and incidents</li> <li>• know and understand legislative provisions about service to intoxicated and underage patrons</li> <li>• request age identification</li> <li>• reduce patron frustration and agitation by effectively managing behaviour</li> <li>• improve accountability by wearing uniforms, visible identification and establishment of a senior bar staff member to guide and assist other staff</li> </ul>
Local business operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensure consistency in patron management between nearby licensed venues</li> <li>• ensure unlicensed businesses do not encourage unnecessary loitering and congestion of patrons by encouraging dine-in eating</li> <li>• ensure other businesses assist with cleanliness of local environment by providing rubbish disposal facilities for take-away foods</li> </ul>
Neighbourhood crime and disorder reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• encourage neighbourhood members to report crime, disorder and community safety problems</li> <li>• enable community representation in development of collaborative strategies</li> <li>• assist local neighbourhood members with submissions relating to liquor licensing decisions</li> <li>• facilitate reporting disorderly or criminal behaviour to the police</li> <li>• ensure local business and community members affected by alcohol-related problems participate in collaborative strategies to reduce the potential and impact of alcohol-related harms</li> </ul>
Activities of local authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• participation of fire, health and local councils in safety audits</li> <li>• adhere to liquor licensing determinations</li> <li>• neighbourhood submissions re licences</li> <li>• local council submissions re licences</li> <li>• liquor licensing decisions re legislative breaches</li> <li>• regulate crowd controllers</li> <li>• environmental design considerations relating to social mix</li> </ul>
Police responses/ Enforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• implement problem-solving methodologies</li> <li>• provide training for police regarding liquor laws, conflict resolution, and interagency community partnership development and maintenance</li> <li>• ensure police are involved in training of others</li> <li>• encourage licensed premises staff to seek assistance from police with aggressive patrons</li> <li>• provide licensed premises with intelligence and information that will help them to identify and respond to problems</li> <li>• police management of intoxicated patrons</li> <li>• police management of crime and disorder incidents</li> <li>• intelligence-led (proactive) policing activities</li> </ul>

## Management Practices

To prevent alcohol-related problems, including violence, a shift in thinking is required from considering offenders and their motivations to understanding offences and the settings in which they occur. In the case of licensed premises, this requires a focus on the role of external enforcement and internal management practices that contribute to unsafe and problematic environments (Hauritz et al, 1998b). The quality and style of management by licensed venue operators has been consistently identified as a significant situational factor impacting on the level of alcohol-related problems (Arnold & Laidler, 1994). The prominence of environmental factors makes it difficult for licensees to argue that regular violence is caused solely by individual patrons and is not the responsibility of management (Homel et al, 1991 a).

Effective management of licensed premises involves the following:

- staff are visible and accessible to patrons in need of assistance
- there are sufficient numbers of staff, particularly management and security staff, to manage the volume of people and any potential problems
- staff are proactive in encouraging patrons to seek assistance if they experience offensive or aggressive behaviour.

Reduction of harm and maintenance of the licensed premises' reputation is enhanced by provision of public telephones, assistance in calling taxis and ensuring that patrons who are threatened can access transport safely.

### *House Policies*

House policies that specify acceptable and unacceptable behaviours are useful in preventing and managing misbehaviour. Resources exist to improve patron awareness of the legal and social implications of intoxication and the sale of liquor to minors. These resources are available from liquor licensing authorities and health agencies in each State-based jurisdiction in Australia. Prominent display of key information may support licensees in fulfilling their legislated responsibilities. Police can monitor the display of these materials, advise on their availability or assist collaborative committees overseeing licensed premises to ensure that that they are obtained.

### *Codes of Practice*

Codes of practice have been developed at a number of locations across Australia as part of 'accords'. The codes are developed through collaboration between licensees and others to address activities such as drinks promotions, opening and closing times, movement of patrons between venues and other features of venue operations (Lang & Rumbold, 1997). Codes of practice are most useful where incidents relating to alcohol and crime and disorder have increased and as a result of licensed venues operating in close proximity. Success of accords in reducing alcohol-related harms requires continued commitment by licensees, including self-enforcement of the accord agreement (Lang & Rumbold, 1997). Active police enforcement of liquor laws has also been found to be a valuable contribution to accords.

### *Identifying and Reporting Crime and Disorder*

As a result of the potential for civil and criminal litigation resulting from crime and disorder associated with licensed premises, services are increasingly recognising the value of maintaining an 'operating log'. In Western Australia for instance, this strategy has proved to be useful for audit and crime investigation purposes.

West Virginia University introduced a program involving availability of free and non-alcoholic drinks into student union bars designed to reduce binge drinking and related disorder. The program reported a reduction of 32% in incidents related to public intoxication and 14% in the number of students charged with drunken driving. An unexpected effect was a reduction in bar-hopping, ie where patrons move from venue to venue.

#### *Drinks Promotions*

Promotions that encourage high levels of alcohol consumption over a short period of time are associated with intoxication and alcohol-related harms. These promotions may include cheap drinks, periods of free drinks, paid entry and free drinks, and two-for-one offers. Drinking in rounds (or 'shouts') also increases alcohol consumption and associated risks (Homel & Clark, 1994). Drink promotions are particularly problematic among young drinkers, who frequently drink in public environments, often to excess, and are attracted to inexpensive, high alcohol content drinks.

There are various legislative and self-regulatory mechanisms relating to alcohol advertising in Australia. Health agencies also produce a range of materials encouraging responsible server practices. However, there are no direct controls over drink promotions to limit excessive consumption. Police, through their presence and by enforcing liquor laws, are well placed to gather information, identify problems to liquor authorities and encourage premises to adopt less harmful approaches and reduce inappropriate promotions.

Promotion of low alcohol drinks and alcohol-free alternatives is useful in reducing intoxication. Supplying free tap water is another valuable practice that has been adopted by many premises. In response to drink driving laws, some premises have run campaigns involving supply of soft drinks free of charge to designated drivers. This reinforces awareness of potential harms associated with drinking and results in a 'sober' companion who can assist friends to limit their intoxication or intoxicated behaviours.

#### *Entertainment*

Boredom and poor quality entertainment contribute to increased alcohol consumption and the potential for aggression and disruptive behaviour. Studies show that boredom levels and alcohol consumption are lower where good quality bands and other forms of entertainment are provided. In addition, video screens and video games have been found to reduce patron boredom and therefore potential for aggression (Homel & Tomsen, 1993). However, licensed premises operators should be mindful to ensure that entertainment on this medium is not overly violent or sexual.

#### *Availability of Food*

Availability of food is associated with a reduced risk of aggression (Graham et al, 1980), largely because food slows down the absorption of alcohol into the body. It may also be that venues that offer food tend to attract less aggressive individuals (Wedel, Pieters, Pikaar & Ockhuizen, 1991). Environmental management of student drinking venues in the United States has demonstrated the effectiveness of food availability in reducing crime and disorder. The University of Arizona installed and publicised policies to manage its annual homecoming event, which had a history of alcohol-related crime and disorder problems. The policy included a greater availability of food and non-alcoholic drinks. The police received a lower number of calls relating to the event. Given the increasing concern about alcohol-related problem behaviour among Australian youth, including university students (Roche & Inglis, 1999), these practical harm reduction strategies hold considerable merit.

### *Operating Hours*

Operating hours are a crucial factor in policing licensed premises. Absence of controls over closing times can be problematic, particularly where licensed venues are decentralised and in close proximity to residential neighbourhoods. Late closing times increase demand for services such as public transport. Insufficient transport facilities may in turn increase drink driving. Staggered closing times may reduce simultaneous exit of large numbers of people from premises. Extended trading permits have been found to contribute to increased alcohol-related assaults and drink driving, thereby increasing demands on police and other emergency service providers (Chikritzhs, Stockwell & Masters, 1997). In the current climate of deregulation in Australia, there is a trend for trading hours to be extended rather than reduced. While this may decrease the overall concentrations of intoxicated people on the street at any one time, it does not appear to reduce assault or drink driving offences.

Relaxing operating hours has important operational and resource implications for police agencies and can result in the need for increased police numbers on more expensive shifts. Police have a central role to play in ensuring consideration of these factors in moves to renew, extend or modify licences.

### *Intoxication*

*...[O]ne of the most important situational determinants [of alcohol-related problems] is alcohol intoxication.*

(Graham et al, 1998)

Prevention of intoxication represents the cornerstone of best practice in relation to licensed premises. A major aim of addressing social and physical features of the licensed drinking environment is to reduce the incidence of intoxication. Intoxication is known to increase the likelihood of aggression, violence and accidental injuries among intoxicated people and other members of the community.

The group most at risk of alcohol-related harms are men, particularly young intoxicated men (Homel et al, 1992; Homel & Clark, 1994; Graham et al, 1996; Macintyre & Homel, 1997; Rossow et al, 1999; Hoaken & Pihl, 2000). While intoxication does not always lead to offending, there is a strong and important association between violence and intoxication.

The risk of violence is also associated with the amount of alcohol consumed. Studies show that grossly intoxicated people are less likely to initiate violence but are more likely to become the victim of alcohol-related aggression in the licensed drinking environment and on leaving, and are more likely to suffer harms from injuries such as falls (McLeod et al, 1998).

Mild and moderate levels of intoxication also impair cognitive functioning and can increase the likelihood of aggressive and violent responses to irritation. However, intoxication laws (per liquor legislation) do not target these individuals. Generally, a grossly intoxicated person is most likely to be identified and refused service, often leading to ejection. This can be problematic if the person is shifted to an external and often hazardous environment, separated from peers, not assisted to transport and unable to access medical assistance in the event of unconsciousness.

While liquor laws are designed to prohibit activities such as selling or supplying liquor to intoxicated and underage patrons, research shows that these practices exist (Stockwell et al, 1993; Homel & Clark, 1994; Evans et al, 1999; Andreasson, Lindewald & Rehnman, 2000). Such activities are among the major contributors to alcohol-related harms associated with licensed drinking environments.

### Security Staff Behaviour

*Edgy and aggressive bouncers have been observed to initiate fights or further encourage them on several occasions. Some were even observed to leave premises while they were on duty in order to continue a fight with departing patrons. More often they have been seen to show a good measure of indifference to violence.*

(Homel & Tomsen, 1993)

Security staff may be a positive or negative factor in the incidence and severity of harm arising from aggression and violence. A number of studies have found that security staff contribute to a high proportion of violent incidents. They were witnessed either creating violence, using excessive physical force, shifting the problem to the street and observing or participating in the continuance of violence (Homel et al, 1991b; Homel et al, 1992; Wells, Graham & West, 1998). Nevertheless, security staff have significant potential to manage, control and reduce harms associated with intoxication. Their potential can be enhanced by:

- training in negotiation skills
- improved recording practices of incidents
- use of CCTV
- changes to police management of violence involving patrons and crowd controllers
- improved identification of crowd controllers
- continued regulation of crowd controllers and their behaviour.

### Bar Staff Behaviour

#### *Safe Server Practices*

Bar staff are often not aware of their legal and social responsibilities. As a consequence, training and education materials have been developed to improve server practices and thereby reduce harms. Unfortunately, utilisation of these training programs is not legislated and is often over-ridden by considerations regarding profitable operation of the premises.

Poor serving practices have been addressed to varying degrees through collaboration between liquor authorities, police and licensees. In some Western Australian police districts, accord activities have resulted in joint development of education sessions for licensees and their managers. In the United States successful responsible service programs are underpinned by legal sanctions embedded in broader community interventions (Homel & Clark, 1994).

The nature of the industry also impacts on who receives training. Unfortunately, the nature of the industry hinders efforts to train bar staff, as this group experiences high staff turnover. Systems need to be established so information about appropriate server practices filters through to existing and new staff. This may be facilitated by house policies that identify legal and social issues and incorporate penalties for staff breaches of guidelines. Allocating an educative and oversighting role for new staff to senior bar (and security) staff may also be useful. It is possible to achieve practice change such as this through collaborative agreement (eg accords). Success is most likely where such a strategy is legislated as part of a broader, industry-driven strategy to enhance professionalisation.

Police have a valuable role to play in addressing server practices in the absence of legislated controls over bar staff training. Police can participate in the development of codes of practice, which raise licensee willingness to implement responsible server training. They may also contribute to development of responsible server training packages. Police can also remind bar staff of safe

practices during proactive activities within licensed venues. Encouraging venue operators to ensure that responsible server practices occur is an important element of strategies to address problem drinking locations.

#### *Behaviour and Incident Management*

Development of responsible server training programs affirms the need for staff to be skilled in managing problem behaviours. It is not sufficient to simply train bar staff in responsible server practices, even though the identification of intoxicated patrons, promoting responsible drinking, and refusing service to these people can lead to reduced blood alcohol levels among patrons (Russ & Geller, 1987). Building staff competence in negotiation skills can also be a valuable strategy in avoiding serious incidents.

Appropriate management of patrons who are violent or disorderly or damage property can act as a disincentive to other similar behaviours. Appropriate management of problem patrons may also deter them from frequenting the premises.

#### **Local Business Operations**

Retail outlets in the vicinity of licensed premises can be adversely effected by venue operations, such as congregation of intoxicated patrons in fast food outlets leading to intergroup rivalry (Homel et al, 1992; Tomsen, 1997). Additional strategies are needed to limit problems in these locations. It is necessary for many of these premises to supplement service staff with security staff to identify and respond to potential problems, particularly late at night. High concentrations of intoxicated patrons in fast food outlets place demands on police to manage incidents. It is important that police activities addressing licensed venues include attention to late night food outlets to deter offending and reduce harms.

Retail outlets can enhance safe passage of patrons from licensed venues through various strategies, for example by maintaining good lighting in their premises over busy entertainment periods, even though they may not be open for trade. This may reduce the likelihood of their premises being damaged due to the deterrent effects of good lighting on deviance. Police can encourage strategies such as this as part of collaborative activities that aim to reduce the impact of licensed venues' operations on local businesses.

#### **Neighbourhood Crime and Disorder**

##### *Crime and Disorder Reporting*

Quality of police data impacts on the ability to address problems associated with licensed premises. A challenge for police is to encourage local community members to report all offending. This is problematic because it increases the amount of paperwork for apparently minor problems and requires development of a database to allow easy collation and analysis of information.

Improving understanding of police personnel about the value of recording this information is crucial. It is also important to find a way to encourage reporting of incidents to police. It is equally important that police and community members do not feel that reporting crime and disorder problems is a time-wasting process. Programs such as Neighbourhood Watch could provide a useful model to encourage and assist information gathering and sharing. Activities with a clear 'crime and disorder' reduction focus can achieve potentially useful outcomes.

### *Risk Assessments*

Licensed premises, and those responsible for them, have been encouraged to undertake 'risk assessments'. Various 'risk-measurement processes' have been developed to aid this exercise. It has been noted that many good managers instinctively use 'risk-management processes', but others require specific training and support in this regard. Police and liquor authorities may also instigate risk assessments in the form of safety audits. A focus on venue management leads 'inward' to specific contexts and person-to-person interactions, as well as 'outward' to the local community and the larger arena in which laws and regulations are created and enforced (Hauritz et al, 1998b). It is here that a vital interface between licensees, patrons and police can occur.

### **Police Responses**

Police can help reduce alcohol-related offending and harms associated with licensed drinking locations by enforcement and involvement in intelligence-led (proactive) and collaborative strategies. These issues are of major relevance to best practice in the policing of licensed drinking environments. Below is an extract from Table 3.3 that identifies the issues of enforcement, intelligence and collaboration as crucial in police responses. These will be addressed in Chapters 4, 5 and 6.

Police responses/ Enforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• implement problem-solving methodologies</li> <li>• provide training for police regarding liquor laws, conflict resolution, and interagency community partnership development and maintenance</li> <li>• ensure police are involved in training of others</li> <li>• encourage licensed premises staff to seek assistance from police with aggressive patrons</li> <li>• provide licensed premises with intelligence and information that will help them to identify and respond to problems</li> <li>• police management of intoxicated patrons</li> <li>• police management of crime and disorder incidents</li> <li>• intelligence-led (proactive) policing activities</li> </ul>
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### **Summary**

The behaviour and practices of licensed venue operators and staff, police, liquor authorities, local government and local business all contribute to the incidence of alcohol-related problems. All of these stakeholders are capable of operating in a way that can reduce the likelihood and severity of alcohol-related harms.

Police are most able to contribute to changes in behaviour through enforcement and proactive policing activities. It is vital that these police activities include collaboration to ensure best practice in the policing of licensed drinking environments. Police can initiate, lead and participate in the development and implementation of activities with stakeholders to reduce alcohol-related harms in and around licensed premises.

Success in reducing intoxication, offending and harms will most likely occur by simultaneously addressing many negative features of licensed drinking environments (Lang & Rumbold, 1997; Inglis & Roche, 1999). Participation of appropriate agencies and service providers will enhance likelihood of success.

Structural mechanisms are required to support development and implementation of collaborative responses to assist stakeholders in reducing alcohol-related harms. Mechanisms can include development of a memorandum of understanding, a code of practice or actions (and related reporting protocols). Regardless of their form, these mechanisms operate as a formal contract between participants and can be broadly referred to as policies.

Policy development helps to identify agencies with responsibility for addressing certain features of licensed drinking environments. Policies can operate within the police organisation. They may constitute a formal memorandum of understanding between key stakeholders. This provides the means for authorities to achieve common outcomes while addressing their own legislated and organisational responsibilities. Alternatively, policies may take the form of guidelines that, for example, help licensed venue operators and event managers to operate safe drinking environments.

When all social regulatory and physical factors are examined together, eleven principles emerge as key elements of good practice in managing the physical and social environments of licensed premises and events. These are detailed in Table 3.4 below.

**Table 3.4: Principles of Good Practice in Policing Licensed Drinking Environments**

Licensing policies	Ensure liquor licence decisions consider community and patron safety in the context of potential crime, violence, disorder, and emergency incidents arising from patrons attending or leaving the premises.
Management policies	Ensure management practices comply with legislative requirements, and reduce risk of harm to staff and patrons.
Staff training and education policies	Ensure bar staff, security and management understand their legal obligations and are able to manage intoxicated, violent and aggressive incidents.
Responsible service policies	Ensure staff understand and engage in responsible server practices.
Premises design policies	Ensure the premises are designed in a way that eliminates or limits crowding, excessive heat and smoke, and assists with observations of patron behaviour.
Responsible marketing policies	Ensure the licensed premises is promoted in a way that does not encourage violent, disorderly or criminal behaviour, and ensure alcohol promotions do not encourage excessive consumption.
Communication policies	Encourage licensed venue operators to communicate with each other and the police about incidents and problem patrons.
Community education policies	<p>Reduce alcohol-related social disorder by improving public awareness of liquor and other laws and the impact of alcohol-affected behaviour on the safety and comfort of local residents and other entertainment precinct users, by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>identifying and reinforcing acceptable standards of behaviour</li> <li>encouraging reporting of offending to police.</li> </ul>

**Table 3.4 continued**

Public transport policies	Ensure sufficient public transport is available, to disperse patrons quickly and to prevent drink driving.
Collaborative crime reduction policies	Establish communication and cooperation between police, licensees, liquor authorities, local councils and the community and develop collaborative strategies to reduce alcohol-related incidents, ensuring accountability to agreed actions.
Enforcement policies	Ensure a visible police presence at and around licensed venues and events, and ensure action is taken against staff and patrons for breaches of liquor and other legislation.

## Chapter 4: Policing Licensed Drinking Environments

Enforcement of liquor laws has been identified as valuable in reducing problems within and around licensed drinking environments. Across Australia a number of laws regulate licensed drinking environments. These laws and the associated organisational structures vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, but they all reflect a police responsibility to reduce alcohol-related incidents and harms. This chapter:

- identifies the role of legislation in reducing alcohol-related harms
- cites jurisdictional legislation that regulates licensed drinking environments and crowd controllers
- provides a jurisdictional overview of police activities surrounding liquor laws and licensed drinking environments
- identifies the range of laws that are available as enforcement tools for police
- provides evidence of the efficacy of reactive and proactive enforcement in reducing alcohol-related harms.

### Liquor Laws

Enforcement is a key element of best practice in policing licensed premises. Liquor laws are the principal mechanism for reducing alcohol-related harms in and around the licensed drinking environment (Stockwell, 1997a; Hauritz et al, 1998b).

An intention of liquor laws is to ensure drinking environments are safe. This is achieved by focusing on the management and operation of licensed drinking environments, as well as the behaviour of patrons. Liquor laws also enable consideration of the actual and potential negative impact of licensed venues and events on the local community. This occurs through licence application, variation and revocation proceedings. Specifically, liquor legislation aims to:

- encourage compliance with established standards
- use enforcement and fear of enforcement to assist with compliance
- detect, punish and deter non-compliance
- maintain profitability of licensed premises
- ensure payment of government taxes and fees relating to the sale of liquor (Hutchinson, 2000).

Liquor legislation complements the strategies, responses and considerations outlined in the previous chapter regarding policing licensed drinking environments. It does this through:

- management practices such as alcohol pricing and promotions
- responsible hospitality practices relating to venue operations and server practices
- regulating patron behaviours
- restrictions on the supply of liquor (Carvolth, 1998; Wiggers, Considine, Hazell, Haile, Rees & Daly, 2001; Wiggers, 2000; Tommey, Wagenaar, Gehan, Kilian, Murray & Percy, 2001; Saltz, 1997; Melville, James & Penman, 1996; Delewski & Saltz, 1990; Andreasson, Lindewald & Rehnman, 2000; Wells et al, 1998; Macintyre & Homel, 1997; Hauritz et al, 1998; Homel & Tomsen, 1993; Macintyre & Homel, 1994; Reynolds, 1995; Stockwell et al, 1993; Stockwell, 1997b).

A range of laws are commonly available for policing licensed drinking venues. Liquor legislation and the legislated role of police varies between jurisdictions and in some Indigenous communities. Table 4.1 provides an overview of legal provisions that influence drinking behaviour and may impact on harms in and around licensed drinking environments.

**Table 4.1: Liquor Laws Relating to Licensed Premises and Police Powers and Functions**

Licensed Premises Management and Staff	Patrons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sale or supply of liquor to intoxicated patrons</li> <li>• sale or supply of liquor to minors</li> <li>• excluding people from remaining or entering licensed premises due to intoxication, offensive or disorderly behaviour</li> <li>• failing to require patrons to leave</li> <li>• hindering police or failing to comply with lawful requirements or directions</li> <li>• compliance with trading hours</li> <li>• requirement to keep licences on licensed premises</li> <li>• displaying permits and complying with conditions</li> <li>• cleanliness of licensed premises</li> <li>• maintenance of licensed premises</li> <li>• notices of bar trading hours</li> <li>• provision of sexually explicit entertainment</li> <li>• notice of absence from licensed premises</li> <li>• change in control of licensed premises</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• purchase, possession and consumption of liquor by minors</li> <li>• purchase of liquor on behalf of minors</li> <li>• entry to restricted areas by minor</li> <li>• minors producing false identification</li> <li>• consumption of liquor in certain public places</li> <li>• being on licensed premises after hours</li> <li>• being on licensed premises for unlawful purposes</li> <li>• remaining on or returning after having been required to leave due to intoxication, disorderly or offensive behaviour</li> <li>• supply restrictions in certain Indigenous communities</li> <li>• restrictions on locations of public drinking such as 'dry areas'</li> </ul>
Police Powers	Administrative Functions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• enforce licence conditions</li> <li>• enter licensed premises and apprehend persons for drunk, disorderly or offensive behaviour</li> <li>• enter and inspect public venues where there is serious risk of injury or damage due to over-crowding and take action to reduce risk</li> <li>• enter licensed premises and examine the premises and documents and records</li> <li>• require name, address and identification of persons suspected of being under 18 years</li> <li>• general powers of arrest</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• probity checking</li> <li>• application interventions</li> <li>• submissions relating to licence variations and applications</li> <li>• initiating disciplinary proceedings</li> <li>• initiating actions relating to amenity (peace and good order)</li> <li>• prosecution of offences detected by police</li> </ul>

Source: Australian State and Territory Liquor Acts, Liquor Regulations and associated legislation.

## Liquor Laws and Other Regulatory Mechanisms in Indigenous Communities

Many Indigenous communities in Australia have locally specific liquor laws. These laws have been enacted so that Indigenous communities can regulate alcohol consumption and thereby reduce alcohol-related harms. Legislation regulates supply at certain times, on certain days and the type and amount of alcohol purchased.

Managing the illegal sale of alcohol in Indigenous communities (known as 'sly-grogging') is an important enforcement activity for police. Sly-grog activities can undermine local activities to reduce alcohol-related harms. Sly-grog activities include importing alcohol to dry communities, third party sales of alcohol to Indigenous citizens, supply outside of regulated hours and supply of alcohol in amounts, packaging and of a type that contravenes local agreements and laws.

## Other Legislative Provisions

The existence and enforcement of a range of local, State and Territory, and Commonwealth laws can be used to reduce problems associated with licensed premises. These include:

- drink drive laws
- laws that regulate public order, such as disorderly and offensive behaviour and language and urinating in a public place
- assault and sexual assault laws
- illicit drug laws
- laws that regulate and control security and investigation agents (crowd controllers)
- consorting laws
- common law powers relating to breaches of the peace
- laws requiring safe operation of public venues.

In operational terms, police fulfil their legislated responsibilities when they:

- gather evidence of breaches of liquor laws by licensed venue operators and their patrons
- present evidence of liquor law breaches to liquor authorities for administrative or legal action to be taken
- assist licensed premises operators to identify and respond to social and environmental features that are precursors to harms
- collaborate with liquor licensing authorities and other agencies such as health, fire services and local council to ensure the establishment and continuance of safe premises
- use intelligence for targeted (proactive) strategies
- prosecute criminal and disorderly behaviours
- work with government, non-government, local business and residential stakeholders to identify and respond to alcohol-related crime and disorder associated with licensed drinking environments.

## Enforcement

By virtue of their legislated responsibility, police play a crucial role in identifying and responding to criminal, violent and disorderly incidents. A well-maintained police presence can deter offending and aid early identification of potential problems. It can also facilitate identification and

enforcement of breaches of liquor and other laws, and thereby contribute to a reduction in alcohol-related harms (McKnight & Streff, 1994; Burns, Flaherty, Ireland & Frances, 1995; Abate, 1997; Homel, Hauritz, Wortley, McIlwain & Carvolth, 1997; Lang & Rumbold, 1997; Hauritz et al, 1998b; Smith, Wiggers, Considine, Daly & Collins, 2001).

Enforcement acts as a deterrent to repeat offending and discourages offending by others. It may also prompt changes to management, server and patron behaviours and thus reduce the likelihood of future alcohol-related incidents. Enforcing laws related to serving intoxicated patrons and targeting alcohol-related offences have been found to:

- reduce alcohol-related assaults (Lang & Rumbold, 1997; Jeffs & Saunders, 1983; Homel & Clark, 1994)
- increase apprehensions for crime and assaults (Burns et al, 1995)
- reduce drink drive offences from licensed premises (McKnight & Streff, 1994)
- reduce alcohol-related injuries from all causes (Hingson, 1996; Holder, Saltz, Grube, Voas, Gruenewald & Treno, 1997; Holder et al, 2000)
- increase refusals for service to intoxicated patrons.

The two case illustrations below provide evidence of the benefits of enforcement in licensed drinking environments. Identified benefits include:

- improved collaboration with licensees
- reduced crime and disorder
- reduced incidence and severity of assaults
- improved practices of licensed venue operators.

#### **Case Illustration 4.1: Enforcement in a British Seaside Tourist Location**

A British study found that strict enforcement of liquor laws, facilitated through increased uniformed policing of licensed premises, resulted in a 20% reduction in arrests for alcohol-related offences (Jeffs & Saunders, 1983). This strategy was implemented to respond to seasonal increases in alcohol-related problems in a seaside town and measured the impact of strict enforcement of liquor laws on public order arrests. The policing response involved an increase in visible police presence during licensed premises' operating hours, two to three times per week. Patrol officers specifically targeted the detection and prevention of drunkenness and underage drinking.

#### **Case Illustration 4.2: Enforcement of licensed premises 'hot spots' in New South Wales**

A New South Wales study found the enforcement activities resulted in positive outcomes, although it did not replicate the findings of the Jeffs and Saunders study (1983) (Burns et al, 1995). This study aimed to test the effect of liquor laws on criminal offending, particularly assaults. Licensed premises 'hot spots' were identified and targeted by uniform patrols and resulted in an increase in reported assaults, a decrease in the severity of assaults and a decrease in related hospital admissions. They concluded that these positive outcomes resulted from:

- increased opportunity to observe and respond to violent acts
- availability of police to receive reports of victimisation.

Both studies described above found that police-initiated communication was pivotal in the success of these strategies and involved:

- meetings with the licensees to inform them of pending activities and to encourage commitment to reduce excessive drinking
- checking for underage and intoxicated patrons
- speaking with licensed premises staff at attendances to reinforce laws and explain the reasons for police presence.

Both studies also demonstrated the benefits of pre-warning licensees of police operations. Pre-warning can help licensees and staff to understand their responsibilities and publicise police activities to the community. This can improve awareness of laws and may reinforce acceptable standards of behaviour.

Enforcement and activities to improve server practices, such as staff training, have also been identified as valuable in alcohol-related harm reduction. Homel and Clark (1994) found police enforcement of liquor laws is more effective when accompanied by staff training that includes:

- non-violent management of intoxicated patrons
- responsible server practices
- negotiation to minimise problems when refusing entry to, or ejecting patrons.

Police presence within a licensed drinking location can increase detection and reporting of crime and disorder incidents. The shift toward intelligence-led policing has alleviated victim concerns and legitimised policing strategies aimed at 'targeting' licensed venues (Stockwell 1997). Intelligence-led policing can provide an objective evidence-base with readily sustainable justifications for targeted policing activities. Both uniformed and plain-clothes presence at licensed drinking locations can reduce the prevalence and severity of alcohol-related incidents, and breaches of liquor laws (McKnight & Streff, 1994; McKnight, 1996; Grube, 1997).

Liquor laws can be applied proactively to identify or respond to potential management problems, server practices or patron behaviour. Police can also use liquor laws reactively to respond to offending by licensed venue operators and patrons.

## Reactive Enforcement

Reactive enforcement occurs where police respond to incidents of crime, disorder and violence in and around licensed premises on demand. This may result in either formal or informal action by police depending on available evidence. Irrespective of the action taken, it is useful to gather intelligence on attendances to assist in developing a case for liquor licensing action or for targeted policing activities.

Reactive policing activities that result from reported crime and disorder can assist enforcement and guide subsequent proactive strategies. Relying solely on reported incidents (reactive enforcement) as a means of addressing alcohol-related harms is inadequate and fraught with problems.

## Proactive Enforcement

*Studies of preventive patrol, response times and investigations showed that reacting to incidents, had, at best, very limited effects on crime and public satisfaction.*  
(Rowlands, 1992)

Policing licensed premises proactively has the potential to reinforce public awareness that alcohol misuse, drunkenness, and resulting crime and disorder are neither desirable nor tolerated. As a result, there is scope for police to influence social attitudes relating to alcohol misuse and associated harms. Proactive and reactive activities can reduce alcohol-related violence and disorder by confronting permissive social attitudes and behaviours.

Proactive enforcement involves the use of legislation to encourage compliance. It is facilitated by intelligence systems that gather information about actual and potential problems. Information can be used to guide proactive activities with licensees to address and correct unlawful and potentially harmful management and server practices. In effect, intelligence holdings provide the basis of collaborative problem-solving strategies and demonstrate police commitment to alcohol-related harm reduction.

It is important that enforcement practices and intelligence processes are interdependent. Identification of 'hot spots' through intelligence systems enables effective and efficient deployment of human and physical resources. Reductions in alcohol-related harms are enhanced by operational attention to policing these 'hot spots' when police are prepared to enforce liquor laws. Intelligence holdings provide evidence to support police when seeking cooperation of licensees in addressing problems.

## Barriers to Policing Licensed Drinking Environments

Proactive and reactive enforcement can facilitate effective and safe management of premises. However, police representatives from around Australia and research evidence have found poor compliance with liquor laws and poor operational commitment to policing licensed premises (Stockwell, 1997a; Findlay et al, 2002). There is scope for policing activities to achieve best practice. Best practice in policing licensed premises requires awareness of barriers that may impact on effective policing of these locations. This knowledge can inform efforts among police agencies to redress any shortfalls in activities that address alcohol-related problems within and in the vicinity of licensed drinking locations.

**Table 4.2: Barriers to Policing Licensed Drinking Locations**

- social attitudes that permit greater deviance while intoxicated than normally acceptable (an expectancy that alcohol will be associated with deviance) (Homel & Clark, 1994; Graham et al, 2000)
- effects of social attitudes on police responses to alcohol-related crime, violence and disorder (Richmond et al, 1998)
- poor police knowledge, understanding and confidence in policing licensing laws (Lang & Rumbold, 1997; Smith et al, 2001; Findlay, Sheehan, Davey, Brodie & Rynne, 2002)
- police preferences for apprehension (reactive) rather than crime reduction (proactive) activities

- inadequate personnel allocation for police responses (Middleton, 1992; MRL Research Group, 1993)
- perceptions of insufficient penalties for liquor law breaches (Smith et al, 2001)
- lack of knowledge about the effects of alcohol and a failure to see potential for harm from drinking (Cisin, 1978, cited in Evans & Carvolth, 1999)
- a shift away from a centralised (or squad) approach to policing licensed premises (Ireland, 1995).

## Policing Activities: A Shift in Approach

*The creation of a specialist liquor police or civilian inspectors has frequently been associated with overly close, even corrupt relationships with the liquor industry.*  
(Rydon, 1995)

Until the 1990s, specialist licensing squads had primary responsibility for policing licensed premises. A range of efficiency and integrity factors were found to be associated with 'squad' policing (Ireland, 1995). Consequently, liquor licensing authorities were established to administer some legislative requirements of liquor laws. Managing legislative breaches and encouraging safe practices nonetheless remains core business of operational police (Fowler, Allsop, Melville & Wilkinson, 2000).

This shift is illustrated by the replacement in the mid 1990s of licensing squads in New South Wales (Ireland, 1993) with a policing strategy that:

- incorporated alcohol-related crime, violence and disorder within strategic planning
- broadened responses to include wider alcohol-related crime problems rather than the narrower licensing concept
- identified regulation as one part of a broader strategy
- identified the need to focus on trouble hot spots more generally, focusing on problem premises specifically
- applied broader legislative provisions rather than reliance on licensing laws.

While 'squads' have been identified as being potentially problematic, it appears that their elimination may have contributed to a less than optimal level of attention to policing licensed premises. Currently, reactive strategies dominate the policing of licensed premises. These strategies are inherently limited in their range and scope and do not constitute best practice when used in isolation.

Organisational structures for responding to alcohol issues vary across Australian police jurisdictions. Nevertheless, Australian police agencies provide policy, prosecutorial and operational attention to liquor laws designed to reduce incidents and harms associated with licensed drinking environments. Best practice in policing licensed drinking environments arises from ongoing intra-organisational cooperation and collaboration involving:

- local general duties, plain-clothes and intelligence personnel, managers and operational planning officers
- areas responsible for prosecution of liquor laws
- corporate intelligence sections

- policy and project areas that focus on guiding organisational and operational policies, projects and strategic planning
- pre-service and in-service training providers.

Table 4.3 outlines activities of Australian police agencies focused predominantly on alcohol problems. They address both Indigenous and non-Indigenous activities. These activities are in addition to general policing responses to licensed premises and alcohol-related problems by operational police officers that include targeted policing operations, and traffic policing activities that address drink driving and related activities.

**Table 4.3: Overview of Structures Relating to Policing Licensed Premises by Jurisdiction**

Jurisdiction	Section / Branch and Synopsis
Australian Capital Territory	<p data-bbox="544 734 963 768">Drug and Alcohol Policy Coordinator</p> <ul data-bbox="544 770 1331 927" style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• develops and implements training programs through collaboration within the agency and with external stakeholders in the alcohol field. Collaborates with ACT Liquor Inspectors to ensure compliance with legislation and to promote responsible service</li> </ul> <p data-bbox="544 952 836 985">City Beat Squad Sergeants</p> <ul data-bbox="544 987 1147 1021" style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• collaborate with the Liquor Licensing Board (LLB)</li> </ul> <p data-bbox="544 1046 668 1079">Drug Team</p> <ul data-bbox="544 1081 1054 1115" style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• collaborates with LLB regarding licensees</li> </ul>
New South Wales	<p data-bbox="544 1153 1283 1187">Crime Agencies: Organised Crime (Firearms, Gaming and Liquor)</p> <ul data-bbox="544 1189 1315 1290" style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• detects, monitors and prosecutes organised crime including that related to alcohol, which may include theft, and subsequent supply, of alcohol and extortion</li> </ul> <p data-bbox="544 1314 1051 1348">Court and Legal Services: Prosecutor's Office</p> <ul data-bbox="544 1350 1270 1413" style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• assists all areas of the Service to understand and implement the law, including brief handling, breaches and prosecutions</li> </ul> <p data-bbox="544 1438 1107 1471">Licensing Officers - In each Local Area Command</p> <ul data-bbox="544 1473 1299 1574" style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• involved in prevention, detection, and prosecution to address supply reduction, demand reduction and harm reduction (both the individual and the community)</li> </ul> <p data-bbox="544 1599 804 1632">State Licensing Council</p> <ul data-bbox="544 1635 1331 1736" style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• comprised of representatives from across the Service and provides a forum for discussion, support, education, project management, advice, and submissions</li> </ul> <p data-bbox="544 1760 932 1794">Drug Programs Coordination Team</p> <ul data-bbox="544 1796 1307 1973" style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• coordinates advice, monitoring and review of policy and assists with the implementation of policy (including education)</li> <li>• in partnership with the Prosecutor's Office, develops and implements an intensive course 'Minimisation of Alcohol-Related Crime' (MARC) for police and some members from the Department of Gaming and Racing</li> </ul>

Table 4.3 continued

Jurisdiction	Section / Branch and Synopsis
Northern Territory	<p>Drug and Alcohol Policy Section</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• develops policy, projects and research activities with a specific focus on National Drug Strategy activities</li> <li>• covers illicit and licit drug issues including alcohol</li> <li>• provides opinion and assistance for liquor licensing queries from operational police</li> </ul> <p>Officers in Charge of Service Areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• responsible for reviewing applications for liquor licences in conjunction with Drug and Alcohol Policy Section</li> <li>• coordinate liquor-policing activities with the Liquor Commission</li> </ul>
Queensland	<p>Drug and Alcohol Coordination (DAC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• develops and coordinates strategies, policies and initiatives to address drug- and alcohol-related harms</li> <li>• provides training to police (recruit and in-service) across the State on drug and alcohol issues</li> </ul> <p>A Senior Sergeant located in DAC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• fulfils a liaison role with Liquor Licensing and has portfolio responsibilities in the liquor licensing area</li> </ul>
South Australia	<p>Licensing and Gaming Advice Section (LAGAS)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• predominantly administrative and prosecutorial</li> <li>• limited training and operational activity</li> <li>• works closely with Office of the Licensing and Gambling Commissioner</li> <li>• attached to State Intelligence Branch, Crime Support Service</li> </ul> <p>Drug and Alcohol Policy Section</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• undertakes policy, project and research activities with a specific focus on National Drug Strategy activities</li> <li>• covers illicit and licit drug issues including alcohol</li> </ul> <p>Liquor Contact Officers (in some Local Service Areas)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• officers can nominate to focus on licensed premises as part of their operational duties</li> </ul> <p>Drug Action Teams</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• role includes attention to alcohol-related problems</li> </ul>
Tasmania	<p>Drug and Alcohol Policy Coordination</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• develops policy, projects and research activities and supports operational districts to implement initiatives that support State and National Drug Strategy outcomes</li> </ul> <p>District Liquor Licensing Sections</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide specialist liquor licensing law enforcement support within operational districts</li> <li>• work closely with staff from the Liquor Licensing Commission to detect, prevent and prosecute breaches of legislation</li> </ul>

Table 4.3 continued

Jurisdiction	Section / Branch and Synopsis
Victoria	Drug and Alcohol Policy Coordination <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>policy, project and research activities with a specific focus on National Drug Strategy activities</li> </ul>
	Liquor Licensing Bureau (Police) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>sits within the Prosecutions Division and has a number of different roles</li> <li>acts as the interface between Liquor Licensing Victoria and General Policing to process and manage liquor licence applications</li> <li>provides specialist advice to police and public, collates information on problem premises in conjunction with Regional Liquor Licensing Inspectors</li> <li>prosecutorial role relating to licence applications and objections</li> <li>contributes to collation of information on problem premises</li> </ul>
	Liquor Licensing Inspectors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>attached to regions</li> <li>provide comment on liquor licence applications, variations and revocations</li> </ul>
	Alcohol and Drug Coordination Unit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>predominantly administrative and prosecutorial</li> <li>works closely with Directorate of Racing, Gaming and Liquor</li> <li>training of recruits and outside agencies in alcohol- and drug-related problems</li> <li>provides opinion and support on liquor-related problems to operational police</li> <li>policy and project activities with a focus on alcohol and drug activities</li> <li>attached to Crime Support Services, Crime Command</li> </ul>
Western Australia	Alcohol and Drug Advisers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>attached to Police Districts</li> <li>provide advice and attend district related alcohol and licensed premises problems</li> <li>limited prosecutorial and training function</li> </ul>
	District Support Groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>support groups attached to each Police District</li> <li>attend problems with licensed premises</li> <li>responsible for reviewing local Liquor Licence applications</li> </ul>
	Liquor Accord - Attached to Perth District <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>attend to, and work with approved managers of licensed premises to solve liquor-related problems in their premises</li> </ul>

Source: National Police Drug and Alcohol Coordinators

Activities that specifically address Indigenous alcohol-related problems occur at corporate and local levels and address these problems to varying extents. Given the significant impact of drinking in rural and metropolitan Indigenous communities it is important for police agencies to review their activities to ensure sufficient and appropriate activity is occurring in this area. Also see relevant sections in Chapter 6.

Indigenous officers (sworn and unsworn) and non-Indigenous officers can help develop activities with a specific focus on the negative consequences of alcohol and licensed drinking locations with regard to Indigenous peoples. An increased number of specialist Indigenous officers across operational and policy areas with specific and targeted responsibility to reduce alcohol-related problems would be valuable. However, an increased focus on alcohol-related problems involving specialist Indigenous officers is dependent on activities that result in increased recruitment and retention of these officers within the police service.

## Workforce Development and Capacity Building

A consequence of the shift away from squad policing is the dilution of officer knowledge and skills. Policing licensed premises is enhanced in a culture that prioritises and legitimises this activity through workplace practice, support, guidance and mentoring. A corporate priority to alcohol-related problems and harm reduction is more likely to be adopted by operational personnel who see themselves as competent to perform the relevant tasks.

### Education and Training

Education and training are imperative if operational police and their managers are to seriously and effectively address the policing of licensed drinking locations. Fowler et al (2000) identify 'how' and 'why' factors, which, accompanied by a practical orientation to learning experiences underlie effective education. 'Why' factors relate to understanding the importance and relevance of policing licensed premises to the police agency, the individual officer and the community. 'How' factors provide the mechanism by which police can respond to reduce alcohol-related offending and harms. Education and training about 'how' and 'why' to police licensed drinking environments is most useful when supported by knowledge, or preceded by education about liquor and other crime and disorder laws.

Education strategies are more likely to be successful where they use a problem-solving methodology using practical examples. Practical examples that are simple and reinforce salient concepts and activities are often used for officer training and development. Although policing alcohol-related harms and licensed venues is more complex, they offer a meaningful and practical subject for the development of problem-solving skills and capacity building.

### Mentoring and Experiential Learning

'Learning by doing' is often viewed by police to be the most useful and preferred means of officer development (Fowler et al, 2000). Experiential learning can also be more cost effective than theoretical learning. Experiential learning is most likely to be successful when specialist officers guide it, or when the officer being trained has a good grasp of the relevant legislation. A negative consequence of this type of specialist officer mentoring is that many of these officers have limited or no experience in collaborative crime and disorder reduction activities (Fowler et al, 2000). Similarly, many do not know or understand problem-solving methodologies.

To address shortfalls in specialist officer knowledge it is important for police agencies to ensure an integration of skills regarding collaborative crime reduction, problem-solving and liquor licensing. Together these officers can develop training and education packages aimed at officer development and capacity building at the broader level.

## Proactive Responses: A Challenge to Performance Measurement

Unlike enforcement, the effectiveness of proactive strategies on reducing crime, violence and disorder is difficult to measure. As a result, preventative activities are often not a high priority in determining or assessing individual and team performance. This occurs because proactive strategies are not readily seen as meaningful and legitimate to crime and disorder reduction.

Individual, team and organisation performance evaluation is required to raise the perceived value of proactive policing of licensed drinking environments, and thereby reduce alcohol-related incidents and harms. Traditionally, this occurs through the development of corporate goals that identify output measures against stated objectives. At the local level, corporate objectives are supplemented with localised priorities. Whether directed at the corporate or local level, development of meaningful performance indicators is essential.

Establishment of meaningful performance indicators relies on an improved knowledge and appreciation of the value of proactive policing in reducing alcohol-related crime, violence and disorder. Once established, performance indicators need to be communicated to operational police, their managers and policy makers to ensure relevant and appropriate activity occurs. Failure to initiate, coordinate and implement strategies that support organisational goals may be counter-productive.

Establishing clear and measurable performance outputs also involves knowing and understanding issues that contribute to alcohol-related problems. This knowledge is obtained from the results of national and jurisdictional crime surveys as well as police data relating to incidents, victimisation and offending. This knowledge can inform corporate directions designed to reduce alcohol-related incidents.

Well-defined outputs and performance indicators can assist operational police to avoid activities that do not fulfil identified organisational objectives and outputs (non-core business). They may also help police, the community and other agencies to better understand the police role overall, especially in relation to specific problems associated with operation and activities of licensed premises.

## A Supportive and Responsive Legislative System

*There is promising evidence that certain enforcement strategies may be highly effective but there is often limited political and bureaucratic will to pursue these in many jurisdictions.*

(Stockwell, 1997a)

In some jurisdictions, policing of licensed drinking environments may be affected by the cumbersome and time-consuming nature of liquor laws. There are perceptions that the correlation between effort and anticipated outcomes may deter enforcement, particularly of offences relating to licensed venue operations. Anecdotal evidence from various police jurisdictions suggests that although liquor laws are not serious offences (by statutory definition) many police remain apprehensive about enforcing these laws. This is further compounded where licensees are well

resourced in terms of legal representation to protect their professional reputation and profitability. This has impacted on the number and success of prosecutions against licensed venue operators initiated by operational police. As a consequence, breaches of liquor laws continue.

In some Australian jurisdictions, infringement notices have been introduced to encourage an increased police presence in licensed drinking environments.<sup>18</sup> Infringement notices are intended to:

- simplify and streamline police processes for breaches of specified liquor laws
- alleviate preparation and presentation of time-consuming briefs of evidence
- penalise offending commensurate with commission of the offence
- provide a penalty that is more appropriate to the offence.

Infringement notice systems, however, do not prevent formal proceedings where a series of similar offences are identified. Formal proceedings may include disciplinary action, warnings or licence cancellation. Formal proceedings may also be initiated where the infringement notices are contested and unpaid. The effectiveness of infringement notices as a strategy to reduce alcohol-related harms and improve server practices has not been formally evaluated<sup>19</sup>. Table 4.4 identifies a range of positive and negative outcomes which may be associated with this system of enforcement.

**Table 4.4: Potential Positive and Negative Outcomes of Infringement Notice Systems for Liquor Law Breaches**

Positives	Negatives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• increased police presence</li> <li>• reduced time spent responding to breaches of liquor laws</li> <li>• improved licensed venue operations</li> <li>• improved compliance with liquor laws and harm reduction principles</li> <li>• reduction in the number of breaches of liquor laws</li> <li>• changes to understanding among patrons of liquor laws and standards of acceptable behaviour</li> <li>• reduction in alcohol-related harms</li> <li>• a net reduction in time spent on reactive enforcement</li> <li>• increased opportunity for proactive results</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• insufficient detail recorded of offences</li> <li>• insufficient evidence available for prosecution of offences that are not contested (not explained)</li> <li>• insufficient offence details available when a course of conduct is identified and disciplinary action is deemed appropriate</li> <li>• high numbers of infringements leading to prosecution</li> <li>• infringement notices that are contested may need further and extensive investigation for a successful prosecution. This may impact on the quality of evidence caused by a delayed investigation</li> </ul>

<sup>18</sup> Infringement notices may be issued for specified offences contained within the Registered Clubs Act (NSW) No 31, 1976: Registered Clubs Regulations (NSW) 1996: Liquor Act (NSW) No 147, 1982: Liquor Regulations (NSW) 1996: Local Government Act (NSW) 1993: Summary Offences Act (NSW) 1998.

<sup>19</sup> A useful example of evaluating the efficacy of an expiation notice system as an alternative to more formal processes was conducted by Christie, P. (1998). *Cannabis Offences under the Cannabis Expiation Notice Scheme in South Australia*, Working Paper No 1. Drug and Alcohol Services Council.

It would be useful to conduct a national review of existing liquor legislation and regulations to investigate the:

- impact of current laws (and related procedures) on police enforcement of liquor offences
- impact of current laws on proactive policing strategies
- influence of current laws on improving practices of licensed venue operators
- impact of current laws (and related procedures) on the quality of evidence gathered and available for prosecution.

## Summary

Enforcement of liquor laws is a valuable way for police to reduce alcohol-related harms associated with licensed drinking environments. Police can also enforce a number of other laws to address alcohol-related problems that occur in the vicinity of licensed drinking environments. These laws can regulate behaviours of licensed venue operators and their staff (including crowd controllers). Police can also use laws to regulate behaviour of patrons who are on, or have recently left, a licensed premises. Enforcement of liquor and public order laws can act as a deterrent to offending by licensed venue operators, their staff and patrons.

Liquor and public disorder laws exist in conjunction with other regulatory mechanisms to encourage safe practices and reduce alcohol-related harms. For example, responsible server strategies have been developed and are frequently used to improve licensed venue operations. In some Indigenous communities, local regulations have been developed that specifically address harmful drinking behaviour.

Enforcement activities can be either proactive or reactive. Reactive enforcement relies heavily on ad hoc responses to incidents. It has been argued that reactive enforcement has limited effect on crime reduction and public satisfaction. In contrast, proactive policing of licensed premises, which uses enforcement as a tool, is effective. Proactive enforcement assists early identification of problem practices and locations and development of responses that can reduce the incidence and severity of alcohol-related harms. Because proactive enforcement often involves a visible police presence it has a deterrent and educational effect on licensed venue practices, patron behaviour and social attitudes.

Barriers to policing licensed drinking environments have been identified and it is recognised that activities addressing officer knowledge and skills are needed. Workforce development and capacity building relies on the development and implementation of training and education programs by officers with integrated liquor licensing, crime and disorder reduction and problem-solving skills.

All jurisdictions currently possess mechanisms to encourage a sharper focus on licensed drinking environments. These mechanisms exist in the form of policy, prosecutorial, administrative and operational activities - activities that are not always well coordinated. Improving coordination and cooperation may be enhanced by clear corporate goals and defined outputs to guide appropriate and relevant policing activities.

Establishing proactive activities associated with licensed premises as an organisational priority may help reduce alcohol-related harms. This is most likely to be achieved by development of corporate goals and output measures that direct local activities and are linked to meaningful performance indicators for operational personnel.

There is scope for amendments to legislation to facilitate best practice policing of licensed drinking environments. This may be achieved by a review of liquor laws across Australia. Legislative reviews may include evaluation of practices, such as the effect of infringement notice systems on levels of policing licensed premises and a reduction of alcohol-related harms.

## Key Findings: Policing Licensed Drinking Environments

1. Police have a primary and legislated responsibility for policing licensed premises and reducing alcohol-related crime, violence, disorder and harms.
2. Liquor laws are a valuable tool in reducing alcohol-related incidents and harms associated with licensed drinking environments.
3. Enforcement of liquor laws can deter future offending.
4. Enforcement is most valuable when accompanied by strategies that encourage responsible server practices and modifications to social and physical features of drinking environments.
5. Enforcement improves reporting of alcohol-related incidents and assists subsequent proactive strategies.
6. Enforcement can reduce the incidence and severity of harms.
7. Enforcement and intelligence should be interdependent.
8. Legislative amendments may result in more effective policing of licensed drinking environments and reduce alcohol-related harms.
9. Proactive and reactive policing of licensed drinking environments are most likely to be effective where officers develop skills that integrate knowledge of liquor laws with collaborative crime reduction and problem-solving methodologies.

## Chapter 5: Problem-Solving and Intelligence

Intelligence gathering helps build a reliable picture of the impact of licensed drinking venues and events on individual and community safety. It can reveal the extent and nature of such problems and provide guidance to proactive policing activities including enforcement (see Chapter 4) and collaborative activities (see Chapter 6). This chapter discusses:

- the evolution of intelligence-led policing
- Goldstein's theory of Problem Oriented Policing
- the interface between problem-solving and intelligence-led policing
- the value of intelligence-led policing in proactive policing and collaborative approaches to reducing crime, disorder and harm
- research evidence that can guide policing of licensed drinking environments.

Recommendations are made regarding future activities to enhance the value and efficacy of intelligence for operational police in their efforts to achieve best practice in policing licensed premises.

The previous chapter identified proactive enforcement as a useful tool to respond to offending and deter similar or repeated offending among licensed venue operators and patrons. Proactive enforcement is one part of a problem-solving approach to reducing alcohol-related harms associated with licensed drinking environments.

### Problem Oriented Policing

Research has identified intelligence-led, proactive policing as the most effective form of policing (Sherman, 1997). Police efforts that use Problem Oriented Policing (POP) strategies to reduce or manage problems associated with licensed premises constitute best practice policing. Intelligence-led policing philosophies are a development of Goldstein's (1979) theory of POP. Growing acceptance of POP has been accompanied by appreciation of interventions aimed at reducing or preventing crime by addressing factors that may lead to crime.

In recent years, traditional reactive policing styles have been increasingly supplemented by proactive approaches that incorporate problem-solving philosophies. Correspondingly, problem oriented policing has led to an improvement in community understanding of crime and disorder and policing responses. Potential and actual outcomes of POP include:

- reduced opportunity for crime by addressing physical features that contribute to crime and disorder (as discussed in Chapter 4)
- reduced desire to offend by creating disincentives to offending such as fear of apprehension (Chapters 4 and 5), resulting in
- reduced crime and disorder
- a subsequent reduction in the incidence and severity of harms.

The physical and social features of licensed drinking environments may operate individually or collectively to precipitate crime, disorder and victimisation. Addressing these environmental factors, coupled with the use of enforcement activities, may reduce alcohol-related problems in licensed drinking environments. Goldstein's POP methods of policing may inform environmental planning and social policies to reduce precipitative conditions by examining individual, social, institutional and environmental causes of crime and disorder (Goldstein, 1990). In dealing with the perceived cause of one problem, Goldstein (1979) foresaw potential flow-on effects that may alter conditions and lead to other crime and disorder. In this context, identifying problem drinking locations and their antecedent conditions can help officers develop activities that eliminate or reduce the likelihood of alcohol-related incidents or harm.

Table 5.1 identifies ten problem-solving principles that may assist in achieving best practice in policing licensed drinking environments. The table identifies the inter-connections between intelligence, collaboration, proactive strategies and enforcement in solving problems associated with alcohol-related harm.

**Table 5.1: Ten Problem-Solving Principles to Guide Reduction in Alcohol-Related Harms In and Around Licensed Premises and Events**

1. Incorporate principles of State, Territory and national policy documents into corporate goals and strategies and operational practices.
2. Examine activities from other police service areas and agencies for their relevance to managing the local alcohol and licensed premises problem.
3. Develop localised responses sensitive to local conditions.
4. Implement intelligence collection programs that are effective, low resource-intensive, and accessible to assist 'hot spot' identification.
5. Analyse and use intelligence data to guide resource allocation and deployment.
6. Apply a harm reduction approach.
7. Use enforcement of laws as a tool to reduce alcohol-related incidents and resulting harms.
8. Collaborate with other government and community stakeholders.
9. Consider research findings and related statistics in determining local responses to the problem.
10. Evaluate activities and share findings.

POP provides an opportunity for police to assist licensees to take corrective action to deter and limit future offending and related harms among staff and patrons. This can occur through modified practices or environments. It also improves knowledge of laws amongst licensed venue operators and patrons.

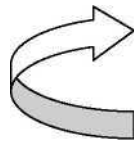
Problem oriented practices can also raise levels of satisfaction among police. This occurs through recognising that not only enforcement, but also education, guidance and cooperation can have a meaningful effect on limiting repeat offending, victimisation and rates of recidivism.

Reactive (incident driven) policing limits opportunity for individual and organisational identification of factors that contribute to crime and disorder and associated harms. Reactive strategies can also lead to repeated attendances at locations, often resulting in frustration at not solving the problem. Consequently, positive responses can be undervalued by the responding police officer (Rowlands, 1992).

## Intelligence-Led Policing

Proactive policing relies heavily on intelligence to guide problem-solving activities. Intelligence-led policing (ILP) is therefore a tool for effective problem-solving. ILP provides opportunity for ongoing analysis of crime trends associated with alcohol-related problems. Analysis helps identify licensed premises 'hot spots', rogue licensees and crowd controllers and problem drinkers. Operational policing responses can then be proactively developed to address offending behaviour and criminal targets. Disrupting progress of criminal behaviours or limiting opportunity to offend may reduce the incidence and/or seriousness of alcohol-related crime and disorder problems and associated harms.

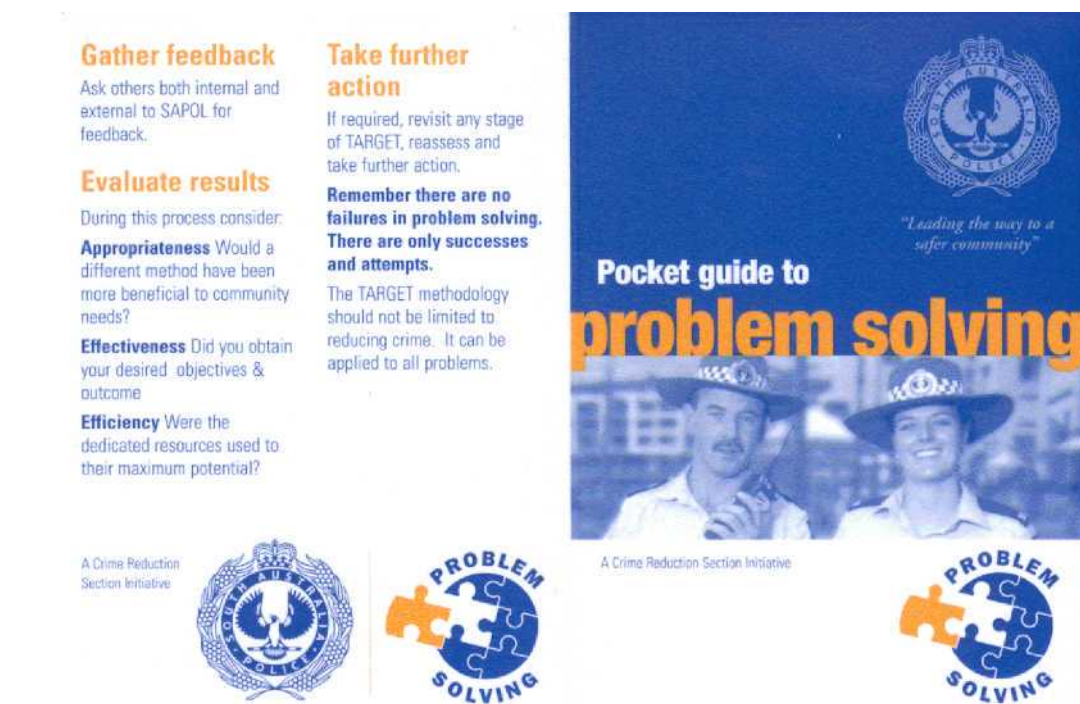
Even in isolation, ILP is a valuable tool for addressing crime and disorder problems. The success of ILP activities is enhanced when complemented with collaborative crime and disorder reduction activities. These activities, which may include operational and non-operational strategies, all rely on sound intelligence products sourced from within and outside the police agency. Effective ILP activities and collaborative strategies that rely on problem-solving aim to include:



- problem analysis
- strategy development
- strategy implementation
- strategy review.

South Australia Police as part of its intelligence practices implemented a 'TARGET' strategy to guide problem-solving activities (SAPOL, 1 999). While not developed specifically for policing licensed premises it is of significant value to ensure a thorough approach to address crime and disorder problems. The Crime Reduction Section (SAPOL) recently produced 'The guide to problem solving' and a communication strategy to ensure all staff engage the problem-solving methodologies. The 'Pocket guide to problem solving' is reproduced in Figure 5.1 below and provides a summary of the processes (SAPOL, 2002)<sup>20</sup>.

Figure 5.1: 'Pocket guide to problem solving' (SAPOL, 2002)



<sup>20</sup> These documents are available at [www.police.sa.gov.au/crime\\_reduction\\_section](http://www.police.sa.gov.au/crime_reduction_section)



### Timely & accurate information

Means accurate information used in a timely fashion. Identify and verify there is an actual or potential problem.

Consider:

**Realistic** What can be achieved?

**Impact** Who is affected?

**Seriousness** How urgent is it?

**Complexity** How involved is it?

**Solvability** How complicated is it?

**Public Interest**

### Analysis

Analysis should provide cause(s) of the problem.

**Who, What, When, Where, Why and How?**

When dealing with crime problems, apply this methodology to the victim, offender and the location.

### Resource allocation and tactical deployment

Consider both long and short term goals.

It is a good idea to brainstorm ideas in a group to determine the best plan.

**Consider the 3 E's:**

**Engineering** What structural change needs to occur?

**Enforcement** What policing tactics can be used to address the problem? i.e. Hot spot management, disruptive tactics, partner participation.

**Education** What training, promotion needs are required for staff, stakeholders, general public, sponsors or targeted groups.

**Consider all available options**

The success of intelligence activities surrounding licensed premises relies on organisational support for identified priorities and willingness by operational police to act on these priorities. Shortfalls in police attention to licensed premises can limit knowledge of problems associated with these locations. Shortfalls can also impact on the ability to understand and respond appropriately to alcohol-related problems and harms associated with licensed drinking environments. Overcoming such shortfalls involves:

- analysis of the relationship between police attendances and alcohol consumption
- collection and analysis of data relating to all police attendances (incidents), victims and offenders
- development of a common database for all police information
- analysis of data from a range of external sources to determine intelligence-led policing strategies
- establishment of links between offending, victimisation and specific licensed drinking locations and/or venues (rather than geographic area or location type)
- development of data collection and analysis programs that are relevant to both corporate planning needs and operational policing needs
- improvements in accessibility to data
- elimination of cumbersome data entry and analysis systems
- development of forms for operational police that enable them to capture required data
- use of intelligence product to guide enforcement, crime reduction activities and collaborative problem-solving strategies.

## Intelligence Gathering and Analysis

Collecting and collating data specific to alcohol-related problems associated with licensed drinking environments has often received attention only at the local level. Local attention may be limited to collection and collation of data by a small number of officers who have an understanding of, and interest in, the policing of licensed premises.

Mapping alcohol-related incidents and harms within and around licensed drinking environments enhances the ability to proactively target problem premises. Table 5.2 outlines the benefits of collecting and analysing data relating to incidents within and around licensed drinking environments.

**Table 5.2: Benefits of Intelligence Collection and Data Analysis for Alcohol-Related Harm Reduction**

1. Ensures commitment to national strategies.
2. Enhances deployment of resources.
3. Establishes an evidence-base to inform decisions to target problem locations and events.
4. Measures the effectiveness of proactive attention to targeted problem locations and evaluates the effectiveness of enforcement activities.
5. Gathers evidence to assist prosecutions against licensed venue operators, and for submissions related to liquor licence applications, variations and revocations.
6. Gathers evidence for arguments to amend liquor legislation.
7. Gathers evidence to inform policy development or amendment.
8. Supports submissions for additional human and physical resources.
9. Assists in reducing alcohol-related crime, violence, disorder and associated harms.

Although data systems vary across Australia, standard practice involves police examination of data relating to incident attendances and recorded on apprehension reports, victim reports, accident reports, intelligence reports (incident reports). These data sources provide valuable intelligence and often simultaneously fulfil a range of other organisational requirements. Data may be used in reports of crime and victimisation trends, development of business plans, reviews of organisational practices and to support acquisition of resources.

Across police jurisdictions incident recording systems provide opportunity for operational police to flag alcohol-related incidents. Many systems can be interrogated to identify the name and location of licensed premises associated with alcohol-related problems. Some systems also enable identification of incidents that occur in the proximity of licensed venues.

Many intelligence processes and systems are not designed specifically to gather and analyse information regarding alcohol-related problems associated with licensed venues. As such, they may not fully capture information that could assist development of various targeted crime reduction strategies that relate to licensed drinking environments. For example, they may not require operational police to comment on:

- the presence and impact of alcohol on an incident
- whether the incident occurred within or in the vicinity of a licensed venue
- if either party had been drinking at a licensed premises or event.

Information linking alcohol-related incidents with licensed premises is valuable, particularly where a licensed drinking venue continually serves patrons to intoxication and where alcohol-affected patrons engage in violent interactions. Information is also valuable for identifying premises that are a major contributor to drink driving offences. Information that is intelligence and evidence-based may assist in deployment of operational police to the premises at specific 'problem times' (target hardening) and direct crime reduction activities. Crime reduction activities may include collaborative strategies that focus on improving server practices and modification of environmental irritants.

Incident data derived from police systems can provide information regarding geographic and temporal patterns in alcohol-related incidents. Resulting data can be compared with alcohol sales data, where available, to enhance understanding of alcohol and licensed premises problems (Stevenson, 1996).

## Alternative Data Sources

Data from surveys relating to drug use, victimisation and offending are a useful guide to problem-solving and development and implementation of targeted police activities. When used as an adjunct to police data holdings they enable a broader and more complete picture of alcohol-related problems associated with licensed drinking environments.

Homicide data is a useful example of an additional data source for problem-solving. This is particularly pertinent as murder is an extreme consequence of an assault. In Australia, autopsy information reveals that almost two in five male, and one in five female, murder victims were under the influence of alcohol when killed, and more than one-third of both male and female offenders were under the influence of alcohol at the time of offending (Mouzos, 2000). These findings are consistent with an earlier Australian homicide study (James & Hallinan, 1995) that found:

- over-consumption of alcohol was a contributing factor in 14% of homicides involving a sharp instrument
- over a quarter of homicides resulted from assaults with fists, feet or blunt instruments, and a quarter of these incidents involved alcohol
- alcohol was present in nearly one-third of offenders and one-quarter of victims
- offenders were predominantly male (10:1)
- more than half of male offenders were in the 15-29 year age group
- male murder victims were three times more likely to be affected by alcohol than female victims.

Table 5.3 identifies a range of additional information systems that can assist development of problem-solving and intelligence-led policing strategies. This list is not exhaustive. Sources are included on the basis that they have a specific focus (in full or in part) on alcohol, relate to Australia, are readily accessible (usually through the Internet) and are easy to read.

**Table 5.3: Additional Intelligence Sources for Problem-Solving and Intelligence-Led Policing Activities**

Document and Web Address	Summary of Document
National Drug Strategy Household Survey <a href="http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.html">http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.html</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• population-based survey estimates of alcohol (and other drug) use among Australians</li> <li>• reports frequency and levels of consumption of alcohol, and age and gender patterns of drinking</li> <li>• reports estimates of alcohol-related victimisation among Australians, and alcohol-related injuries</li> </ul>
Patterns of Drug Use in Australia 1985-95 (NDS) <a href="http://www.health.gov.au/pubhlth/strategy/drugs/nds/">http://www.health.gov.au/pubhlth/strategy/drugs/nds/</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• prevalence of alcohol use, age of initiation, recent use and frequency of drinking, heavy drinking and attitudes about amounts consumed among Australians</li> </ul>
Counting the Cost: Estimates of the Social Costs of Drug Abuse in Australia: National Drug Strategy: Monograph 49 <a href="http://www.nationaldrugstrategy.gov.au/resources/publist.htm">http://www.nationaldrugstrategy.gov.au/resources/publist.htm</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• estimates of the social costs of alcohol misuse in Australia</li> <li>• identifies the high proportion of avoidable costs of alcohol misuse</li> </ul>
Australian Crime: Facts and Figures 2000 (AIC) <a href="http://www.aic.gov.au/">http://www.aic.gov.au/</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• population survey data on the volume of crime in Australia</li> <li>• information on victimisation and offence location</li> </ul>
Statistics on Drug Use in Australia, 2000 <a href="http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.html">http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.html</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• consolidated data on alcohol use in Australia</li> <li>• alcohol consumption, patterns, sales data and alcohol-related risks</li> </ul>
Australian Alcohol Guidelines <a href="http://www.nhmrc.gov.au">http://www.nhmrc.gov.au</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• low-risk drinking behaviours</li> <li>• social and individual risks and harms associated with alcohol misuse</li> </ul>
National Alcohol Indicators Project <a href="http://www.curtin.edu.au/curtin/centre/ncrpda/publications/naip.html">http://www.curtin.edu.au/curtin/centre/ncrpda/publications/naip.html</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• series of publications reporting alcohol trends and harms in Australia at the national, State and local levels</li> </ul>
National Alcohol Strategy: A Plan for Action 2001 to 2003-04 <a href="http://www.nationaldrugstrategy.gov.au/resources/publist.htm">http://www.nationaldrugstrategy.gov.au/resources/publist.htm</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• overview of alcohol-related harms as they impact on a range of government and non-government organisations</li> <li>• the key national policy document for policy and practice direction to reduce alcohol-related harms</li> </ul>
Clubs, Pubs, Taverns and Bars Australia, 1997-1998 Publication available for purchase through <a href="http://www.abs.gov.au/">http://www.abs.gov.au/</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• number, type, income, profitability and employment of licensed venues and businesses in Australia</li> </ul>
Crime and Safety Australia (ABS) Publication available for purchase through <a href="http://www.abs.gov.au/">http://www.abs.gov.au/</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• survey information related to interpersonal violence of property crime</li> <li>• number of offences occurring in licensed venues</li> <li>• relationships between victims and offenders</li> <li>• reports low levels of reporting to police and factors that impact on this problem</li> </ul>

Table 5.3 continued

Document and Web Address	Summary of Document
Global Status Report on Alcohol (WHO) <a href="http://www.who.int/substance_abuse/pubs_alcohol.htm">http://www.who.int/substance_abuse/pubs_alcohol.htm</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• global overview of drinking patterns and the burden of alcohol-related disease and injury</li> <li>• socio-demographic and cultural issues, consumption and prevalence data, health effects and production, trade and industry data</li> <li>• overview of national policy responses to alcohol-related harms</li> </ul>

Police data is often incomplete. Interrogation of a number of discrete databases is required to identify the extent and nature of alcohol-related offending, victimisation and harms associated with licensed drinking locations (Briscoe & Donnelly, 2001). Factors found to impede intelligence gathering and recording associated with alcohol and licensed drinking locations include:

- high levels of under-reporting of alcohol-related victimisation (Australian Institute of Criminology, 2001)
- perceptions of the involvement of alcohol in crime and disorder incidents (Briscoe & Donnelly, 2001)
- perceived degree of impact of alcohol on the incident (Briscoe & Donnelly, 2001)
- delayed reporting (Briscoe & Donnelly, 2001)
- low attribution of seriousness allocated to alcohol by operational police (Cisin, 1978, cited in Evans & Carvolth, 1999)
- limited examples of the value of collecting and recording such data (absence or lack of intelligence product)
- preferences for reactive policing strategies
- databases that infer a low priority to alcohol issues may lead to a perception of lesser importance, and may be more difficult to obtain relevant and timely data.

Impediments to obtaining and accessing useful intelligence often result from dependence on local arrest data to identify problem licensed drinking locations. Relying solely on arrest data to guide targeted strategies is of limited value, as many incidents requiring police attention do not result in an apprehension. Alternatives to arrest include strategies and actions such as issuing a summons and discretion to caution for certain offences. Failure to make an arrest may also result from insufficient evidence, victim reluctance to proceed with action or the inability to locate an accused.

Briscoe and Donnelly (2001) maintain that supplementing police records with external data sources is useful in validating police intelligence data. Timeliness of exchange of intelligence is a key factor for police in identifying and developing strategies that respond to problem drinking and problem venues.

## Useful Intelligence Tools

A range of intelligence gathering tools have been developed to record and document the incidence and extent of alcohol-related problems associated with licensed drinking locations. This information can improve knowledge and awareness at the local level regarding incidence, location and timing of alcohol-related problems associated with specific licensed drinking environments. Intelligence gathering tools are valuable in guiding proactive and collaborative strategies. Examples are provided in the following case illustrations.

### Case Illustration 5.1: The Linking Project (New South Wales)

New South Wales Police and the Hunter Centre for Health Advancement (NSW) have worked in collaboration on the 'Linking Project'. This project aims to improve knowledge of licensed premises associated with alcohol-related harms by requiring police to complete an incident report for alcohol-related police attendances (refer to Figure 5.1 at the end of this chapter).

Data collected on the incident report is collated and then analysed by the Centre. Generic data related to problem locations is provided to the police to assist with intelligence-led responses. The Centre retains data that specifies problem locations. This data is used by the Centre to approach problem licensed premises and undertake activities that attempt to remedy alcohol-related problems at these locations.

The incident report is a valuable template for future policing activities directed toward identifying and responding to alcohol-related problems. However, an inability by police to access the more detailed information may be problematic. An incomplete picture may hamper efforts to develop and implement the most appropriate proactive police activities. It is important that information sharing is transparent and fulfils mutually agreed goals.

As in the example cited above, police use a range of data collection tools that do not directly add value to intelligence holdings. For example, in some jurisdictions, data from drug diversion and public intoxication forms, completed by police, are not kept in a central and accessible data system. This approach may contribute to a greater health focus regarding alcohol and drug misuse, but may not fully help to reduce problems and harms. This is because resulting information cannot readily be used to target problem locations and other antecedent conditions. Case Illustration 5.1 has in some ways attempted to overcome these problems by providing broad information for police to develop responses, while simultaneously retaining detail for preventative activities by the Hunter Centre.

Just how much detail is necessary to guide police harm reduction activities? In the current climate, which encourages collaboration, shared data is likely to become an issue of increased debate and potential conflict. This conflict may be avoided by providing clear guidelines for information sharing and reporting outputs which do not discourage police from collecting information for which they are not the custodians. Operational police need to be informed of the benefits, both direct and indirect, of shared data collection systems. A demonstration of direct or indirect benefits for police crime and disorder and harm reduction is required to ensure ongoing support for shared data collections that rely on police input.

## Last Drink Surveys

Another useful intelligence gathering tool is the data referred to as 'last drinks' data. Police in New South Wales, Western Australia, New Zealand, Canada and Wales (UK) have used surveys to gather information regarding location of 'last drink' when investigating alcohol-related incidents (Ireland & Thommeny 1993; Kinross, 1997; Bijoux, 1998; Kulis, 1998). These surveys ask police to record observations and subjective impressions of the degree of intoxication of people coming to the notice of police. Some also inquire about the location and time of the last drink. The New Zealand Police last drink survey is shown in Figure 5.2 at the end of this chapter.

Information about location of last drink for offenders helps establish a link between the drinking location with certain crime and disorder problems. For example, Kinross in Canada (Kinross 1997) and Gruenewald and colleagues (Gruenewald et al, 1999) in Perth, Australia found last drink information from drink drivers could reliably identify premises that served patrons to intoxication. Last drink data collection is recommended as an effective, if under-utilised, tool for best practice in policing licensed premises.

While these surveys are useful, officers from Queensland Police and Western Australia Police have developed broader integrated strategies to record, analyse and respond to problems associated with licensed drinking environments. Systems implemented by the Queensland Police and Western Australia Police have been developed in an effort to normalise intelligence gathering about alcohol-related problems by operational police. The impediments and challenges for implementation and use of these systems are discussed in the case illustrations below.

### **Case Illustration 5.2: Liquor Enforcement and Proactive Strategies (LEAPS), Queensland**

LEAPS is a Queensland Police initiative developed to respond specifically to alcohol-related violence and disorder in and around licensed premises. LEAPS emphasises a focus on intelligence gathering and analysis from a range of sources to lead and guide proactive strategies.

Intelligence data is screened, analysed and entered onto a purpose designed computer program. Resulting data and information is combined with information from the general policing data system and analysed to provide evidence for liquor licensing action and to identify 'hot spots' so that licensed premises inspections and enforcement activities can be targeted.

The LEAPS data collection processes have been evaluated and found to offer a systematic, impartial and accurate method of recording alcohol-related incidents in and around or associated with licensed premises (Roche & Inglis, 1999). The Gold Coast LEAPS program is relatively new and the long-term success of the strategy in improving public order, property security and road safety issues has not yet been determined (Roche & Inglis, 1999). Implementation of Phase II has been evaluated and the outcomes are yet to be reported. Nevertheless, the program provides a benchmark for development of specific tools for intelligence gathering to identify and target problem premises. The Liquor Enforcement and Proactive Strategies (LEAPS) incident form is reproduced as Figure 5.3 at the end of this chapter.

### **Case Illustration 5.3: Police Alcohol and Drug Reporting Incident System (PADRIS), Western Australia**

The Western Australia Police Drug and Alcohol Coordination Unit developed PADRIS (Guest, 1999) as a means of:

- obtaining accurate information relating to alcohol and other drug incidents involving licensed premises
- producing intelligence for operational policing practices
- assisting with management and deployment of human and physical resources surrounding responses to alcohol- and drug-related incidents
- evaluating performance of operational police.

PADRIS was trialed over 12 months commencing 1 December 1998 and relied on a computer system that had the capacity to collect and analyse data in combination with existing police computer data sources. A PADRIS incident report form was designed to capture incidents that did not result in apprehensions or victim reports. Intelligence data was recorded by police in an incident report note book. The PADRIS incident report is reproduced at Figure 5.4 at the end of this chapter.

There is potential for PADRIS to analyse and respond to alcohol-related crime and disorder associated with licensed premises. However, it was identified through the trial that insufficient commitment to the program undermined its post-trial adoption (Guest, 1999). Examination of PADRIS incident reports revealed that a large proportion of operational police did not embrace this program, reflected by the poor number and quality of reports submitted. Nevertheless, it appears that the PADRIS system may be a useful tool for mapping and responding to alcohol-related incidents. A climate more receptive to intelligence-led policing and the need to reduce alcohol-related crime and disorder is clearly indicated.

## **Summary**

Problem oriented (proactive) policing is an imperative for best practice policing of licensed drinking environments. Problem oriented policing involves the use of problem-solving methods to reduce alcohol-related harms associated with licensed venues and their environs. Problem-solving necessitates an understanding of the many individual, social and environmental factors that contribute to alcohol-related problems and harms in society.

Intelligence processes mediate the relationship between reactive strategies, usually involving enforcement, and proactive problem-solving activities, which may also use enforcement to reduce alcohol-related problems and harms. Intelligence processes rely on data collection and analysis for development of best practice methods to target problem premises and adverse behaviour by patrons and licensed venue operators.

Intelligence practices are most likely to be successful where organisational structures and priorities encourage attention to policing alcohol-related problems and licensed venues. Intelligence contributes to development of a corporate and operational focus on alcohol-related problems associated with licensed drinking environments.

A key component of an organisational focus on best practice policing of licensed drinking environments involves development of relevant and accessible data collection and analysis systems. The majority of police data systems do not guarantee meaningful intelligence. In response, a range of data collection systems and strategies have been developed and were highlighted in this chapter.

Although data systems aim to improve police responses to alcohol-related problems, their existence does not ensure that collection will occur. A number of factors are known to interfere with officers' willingness and ability to collect intelligence. Addressing these cultural and structural factors may assist police agencies to better respond to the serious problems of alcohol-related incidents occurring in and around licensed drinking locations.

Reliance on police data as a single source of intelligence is also problematic. Additional information sources are available to guide policy, project and operational responses to reduce alcohol-related problems associated with licensed drinking environments. A number of these data sources were identified in this chapter.



The shift within Australian police jurisdictions towards intelligence-led, problem-solving approaches to crime and disorder reduction has revealed the need for a review of data collection practices. Improved police data systems will be valuable in reducing the economic and social costs of alcohol-related harms. In addition to fulfilling corporate need, intelligence gathering processes and systems need to fulfil local needs.

Both intelligence-led policing and collaboration are viewed as valuable components of problem oriented policing. The next chapter investigates collaborative strategies at the national, State/Territory and local levels that have enhanced police understanding of alcohol-related crime and disorder problems, and which have assisted police and other agencies to direct resources to these issues.

## Key Findings: Problem-Solving and Intelligence



1. Intelligence-led, proactive policing is the most effective form of policing.
2. Intelligence-led policing helps to reduce opportunity and desire to offend.
3. Intelligence is a key component of proactive policing and collaborative problem-solving strategies.
4. Intelligence-led policing and problem-solving strategies are more effective when they involve intra-organisational and external collaboration.
5. Problem-solving is enhanced by mapping alcohol-related incidents occurring in and around licensed drinking environments.
6. Incident data (incorporating police attendance, arrest and victim data) can provide information relating to geographic and temporal changes to alcohol-related problems.
7. Additional data sources are available and useful to police in mapping alcohol-related incidents and harms and to validate police intelligence.
8. Police intelligence data is currently incomplete for a range of structural and behavioural reasons.

Figure 5.2: Linking Project NSW

		145456			
<b>The Linking Project</b>			<b>Data Recording Card</b>		
<b>INCIDENT DETAILS</b>					
DATE		TIME		COPS	
PLACE No.		STREET			
SUBURB			POSTCODE		
<b>OFFENDER DETAILS</b>			<b>OFFENDER NOT PRESENT</b> (Tick box) <input type="checkbox"/>		
GENDER	M / F	D.O.B		AGE	
P/CODE					
OFFENDER WAS (circle)	alone	with 2-6 other people	with 6-12 other people	with more than 12 other people	
LAC	Hunter Valley   Lake Macquarie   Lower Hunter   Manning Great Lakes   Newcastle   Waratah   Brisbane Waters   Tuggerah				
OFFICER			DUTY TYPE	HWY   GD   DET   LIC   Other	
<b>OFFENCE DETAILS</b>					
OFFENCE OR INCIDENT TYPE (please circle)	PCA	Domestic Violence	Break & Enter	Malicious Damage	Stealing
	Drugs	Offensiveness	Underage Drinking	Noise Complaint	Intoxicated Person
	Assault				
Other (please record)					
STATE OF INTOXICATION (please circle)	NIL	SLIGHTLY	MODERATELY	WELL	
LAST PLACE ALCOHOL WAS CONSUMED	<b>LICENSED PREMISES</b> (write name of premises) .....				
	<b>or NON-LICENSED</b> (circle and name) ..... 1. Sporting/Social Club event (function license)      5. Main Street 2. Private Residence      6. Shopping Centre 3. Public Park      7. Sports Ground 4. Beach      8. Other.....				

Source: New South Wales Police

Figure 5.3: Last Drink Survey NZ Police

 ALCOHOL HEALTHWATCH	..... CENTRAL 	<b>LDS FORM</b> (Last Drink Survey)
---	---	--

TO BE COMPLETED BY ARRESTING OFFICER ONLY IF OFFENDER HAS CONSUMED ALCOHOL PRIOR TO ARREST OR OFFENCE

1. OFFENDER'S FULL NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ MALE/FEMALE \_\_\_\_\_  
 RACE: \_\_\_\_\_ AGE: \_\_\_\_\_ yrs. RES. SUBURB: \_\_\_\_\_
2. DAY: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: / / TIME (of offence) \_\_\_\_\_ 00:00  
 CHARGE (s) \_\_\_\_\_  
 READING(s): BREATH: \_\_\_\_\_ BLOOD: \_\_\_\_\_ ARREST/SUMMONS \_\_\_\_\_  
 WHAT HAPPENED: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
3. LAST DRINKS:
  - a) Where did you have your last drink? Premise: \_\_\_\_\_  
 St/Rd: \_\_\_\_\_
  - b) What time did you have your last drink? \_\_\_\_\_ 00:00
  - c) Where did you buy your last drink? Premise: \_\_\_\_\_  
 St/Rd: \_\_\_\_\_
  - d) What were you drinking? Beer: ☐ Wine: ☐ Spirits: ☐
  - e) How much? \_\_\_\_\_ Brand: \_\_\_\_\_
  - f) How long were you at the premises? Hours: ☐ Mins: ☐
  - g) Have you consumed alcohol at any other premise tonight during the last four hours? Yes: ☐ No: ☐
  - h) Where?(if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

Figure 5.3 continued

4. WHERE LOCATED:  
Where was the offender located?

Inside licensed premises:      Namely: \_\_\_\_\_  
Outside licensed premises:      Namely: \_\_\_\_\_  
Other: \_\_\_\_\_

5. LEVEL OF INTOXICATION (Arresting Officer to assess at time of arrest)

(a)		(b)	
tick		<u>Signs Exhibited</u>	tick
1	Had no alcohol	Eyes glazed/bloodshot	
2		Unsteady	
3		Lack of motor skills	
4		Slurring	
5	Slight to medium	Aggressive	
6		Argumentative	
7		Breath smells of alcohol	
8		Face flushed	
9	Heavy to extreme	Repeating him/herself	
10		Other	
	Unconscious or 1K		

6. ARRESTING OFFICER:

FULL NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ RANK: \_\_\_\_\_  
STATION: \_\_\_\_\_ QID: \_\_\_\_\_ SECTION: \_\_\_\_\_  
FILE/TON NO.: \_\_\_\_\_ PRN: \_\_\_\_\_

7. QUESTIONS 1 & 3 (IF NOT ARRESTING OFFICER) COMPLETED BY:

FULL NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ RANK: \_\_\_\_\_  
STATION: \_\_\_\_\_ QID: \_\_\_\_\_ SECTION: \_\_\_\_\_

8. TO BE COMPLETED BY WATCHHOUSE CTO OPERATOR


FILE/TON NO.: _____ PRN: _____	Checked by watchhouse S/Sgt: _____
--------------------------------	--

PLEASE LEAVE IN WATCHHOUSE OR FORWARD TO SGT. MIKE LOPDELL, LIQUOR LICENSING,  
STANLEY STREET POLICE.

Source: Bijoux (1998)

Figure 5.4: LEAPS Incident Report

Confidential - Unauthorised possession of this document is an offence



**GOLD COAST POLICE**  
SURFERS PARADISE DIVISION

I.R No.: \_\_\_\_\_

INCIDENT REPORT			
Name of Premises: _____	License No: _____		
Address: _____			
Licensee: _____	Nominee: _____	First Name: _____	
Day: _____	Date: _____	Time: _____	
PERSONS SPOKEN TO			
Surname: _____	First Names: _____	Position: _____	
INCIDENT INFORMATION			
HOW THIS INCIDENT RELATES TO THE PREMISES			
OFFENDER (1) ACTION TAKEN			
Surname: _____	First Names: _____	D.O.B. _____	
No: _____	Street: _____	Suburb: _____	Post Code: _____
Short Title: _____		Section No: _____	
Crime No: _____	Infringement Notice No: _____	Caution Only: (X) <input type="checkbox"/>	
NOTE:			
Where this offender commits more than one (1) offence, the full details should be included in the Incident Information section together with the details of any subsequent offender(s)			
REPORTING OFFICER			
Surname: _____	Initials: _____	Rank: _____	Rego No: _____
Station: _____	Telephone: _____	Notebook: _____	
Page: _____	Signature: _____		
Office use Only			
Incident Report Faxed to L.L.D (07) 3224 7314 on: _____			By: _____

Figure 5.5: PADRIS Incident Report

PART A – Forward to D.I.S.C.		<b>P.A.D.R.I.S. NOTE BOOK</b>		NO. <b>028503</b>	
Time <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> hours		Date <input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/>			
Place/Premises		<input type="text"/>			
Number/Street		<input type="text"/>			
Town/Suburb		<input type="text"/>			
Refers to Master Action Report No.		<input type="text"/>			
<b>PERSON SPOKEN TO</b>					
Surname		<input type="text"/>			
Given Names		<input type="text"/>			
Male <input type="checkbox"/>	Female <input type="checkbox"/>	D.O.B. <input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/>			
Number/Street		<input type="text"/>			
Town/Suburb		Postcode		<input type="text"/>	
Vehicle Reg No.		State		<input type="text"/>	
Make/Colour		<input type="text"/>			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Applicable box		<b>REASON SPOKEN TO</b>			
CODE (See above list)		<input type="text"/>			
Other _____					
<b>Incident Related to</b>					
<input type="checkbox"/> On Licensed Premises	<input type="checkbox"/> Alcohol Related	<input type="checkbox"/> Drug Related			
<input type="checkbox"/> Related to Lic Prem.	<input type="checkbox"/> Alcohol & Drug Related	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable			
<input type="checkbox"/> Not Related to Lic. Prem.					
Signature _____					Regimental No. <input type="text"/>

## Chapter 6: Collaborative Strategies

Collaboration is viewed as the corner-stone of best practice in efforts to reduce alcohol-related incidents and harms associated with licensed drinking environments. Collaboration enables integration of a range of complementary responses. This chapter:

- identifies the different levels of collaboration that guide responses to alcohol-related problems
- discusses the benefits of collaboration
- identifies the importance of collaboration within police agencies and provides an overview of areas that contribute to alcohol-related harm reduction
- discusses interagency collaboration and its benefits for reducing alcohol-related harms associated with licensed drinking environments
- discusses collaborative approaches at the local level that respond to problem drinking locations and alcohol-related harms
- presents a table of collaboration features that contribute to best practice in the policing of licensed drinking environments.

*Alcohol issues do not fit into the scope of responsibility of any one agency. Police are called upon to address issues such as public drunkenness and assaults, but have no expertise or responsibility in health matters or social welfare. Nor are alcohol-related issues the core business of any one arm or level of Government. In these circumstances, it may be necessary for one Government department to take a lead agency role with respect to other departments.*

(Fitzgerald, 2001)

An important component of problem oriented policing is collaboration. Collaboration has long been a strategy used by police to respond to crime, violence and disorder. It can also provide police with a greater understanding of the many approaches available to address problem drinking in Australia. It also may identify the range of resources available to respond to alcohol-related harms and how these resources may be used to ensure prolonged success.

Over the past decade, there has been an increased appreciation across governments of the value of collaboration. Positive outcomes of collaborative approaches to alcohol-related crime, disorder and harm reduction include improved compliance with legislation and improved server practices. For example, police, fire services, liquor and health authorities and local government can collaborate to identify social and physical features of licensed drinking locations that may lead to alcohol-related problems and harms. Collaboration is also a mechanism to guide licensed venue operators to address negative features of the social or physical environment.

Organisational support for operational police to undertake collaborative work is important. An organisational focus on collaborative approaches to alcohol-related crime and disorder reduction is most likely to occur where a whole-of-government approach emphasises this as a legitimate activity and priority.

Collaboration also assists information and evidence gathering from both internal and external stakeholders, such as academic research, national surveys, police derived data and community information. Improved knowledge of factors that precipitate alcohol-related problems, and the location and type of these problems may provide direction for problem-solving activities and can be used to:

- encourage interagency and community collaboration to eliminate or reduce harms
- provide support, guidance and assistance to licensed premises to address precursors of harm.

## Legislating for Collaboration

In the United Kingdom, the value of integrated approaches to crime and disorder reduction has achieved such recognition that collaboration has been enacted in legislation. The Crime and Disorder Act (UK) 1998 provides a framework for action to reduce alcohol-related problems. It conceptualises crime reduction as the legislated collaborative responsibility of police, local authorities, and health and probation agencies. Local responses are encouraged through collaborative processes and are audited to ensure a commitment to crime reduction. Auditing is seen as a means for setting strategic priorities and evaluating performance on the basis of existing and purpose-designed data collection systems.

Similar legislative supports do not exist in Australia. Nevertheless, collaborative activities at national, jurisdictional, corporate and local levels continue to emerge and develop in response to the growing awareness of the social and individual costs of alcohol misuse. Many of these activities result from guidelines developed within the:

- National Alcohol Strategy (NAS) (Ministerial Council on Drug Strategy, 2001 b)
- National Drug Strategic Framework (NDSF) (Ministerial Council on Drug Strategy, 1998)
- Directions in Australasian Policing (DAP) (Australasian Police Ministers' Council, 2003).

A brief overview of these strategies is presented in Boxes 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3 at the end of this chapter.

The Steering Committee for the Review of Commonwealth/State Service Provision (SCRCSSP) identified that defined outputs are a positive influence on strategic decision making and resource allocation can increase accountability to government (SCRCSSP, 1999). A Police Working Group and Police Practitioners' Group developed a standard set of outputs against which community safety and satisfaction are measured (SCRCSSP, 1999). As a result of these activities and after consultation between Australian police jurisdictions the measures for organisational performance measurement were developed against the following four themes:

- Community Safety and Support
- Crime Investigation
- Road Safety and Traffic Management
- Services to Judicial Processes.

These areas of performance measurement provide a strategic and accountability framework for police efforts to reduce alcohol-related crime and disorder.

## National Collaboration to Reduce Alcohol-Related Harms

The past decade has seen an expansion at the national level in appreciation of the role of collaboration in responding to drug problems in Australia (Ministerial Council on Drug Strategy, 1998; 2001 a; 2001 b). Australia's National Drug Strategy has resulted in partnerships between the Commonwealth, State and Territory governments and their agencies (Ministerial Council on Drug Strategy, 2001a).

Police have played a central role in development of the NAS. The aim of the NAS is to focus attention on activities that can reduce the incidence and impact of alcohol-related harms on Australian society (Ministerial Council on Drug Strategy, 1 998). Police participate in development and implementation of responses to alcohol-related problems and harms through:

- participation in the Intergovernmental Committee on Drugs (IGCD)
- the National Police Drug and Alcohol Coordinating Committee  
the Senior Officers' Group (SOG)<sup>21</sup>
- the National Expert Advisory Committee on Alcohol (NEACA)
- the National Anti-Crime Strategy.

As with earlier drug strategies, the NAS emphasises the importance of collaboration between government and non-government agencies, community groups, researchers and business and industry representatives to reduce problems associated with alcohol (Ministerial Council on Drug Strategy, 2001b). For police, the value of collaboration is a reduction of alcohol-related crime, violence and disorder incidents and associated harms. This is reinforced in the document *Directions in Australasian Policing July 2002 -June 2005* (Australasian Police Ministers' Council, 2003).

Strategies at the jurisdictional level have developed in response to the need for interagency and inter-jurisdictional collaboration. Collaboration improves stakeholder knowledge of challenges that confront government and non-government organisations. Collaboration at this level also provides opportunity to develop responses that attempt to meet the needs of all stakeholders.

## Collaboration Within the Police Agency

Alcohol-related problems impact on various police areas, patrol and traffic officers, liquor licensing and prosecution officers, policy and project staff, intelligence officers and analysts and crime investigators (see Table 4.3). Best practice in policing licensed drinking environments requires ongoing cooperation and collaboration between these areas.

There are differences in skills and specialisation among police. Consequently, individual officers may view alcohol-related incidents differently. Some may pursue crime reduction and harm reduction activities, while others may prefer reactive policing styles.

Effective and consistent responses to alcohol-related incidents and harms require officers to appreciate the extent of problems and value of proactive activities. Collaboration and cooperation among police can assist development of skills and abilities that enhance responses to alcohol-related problems. Organisational direction for responding to alcohol-related harms can also assist development of activities that address problems or minimise harms, reduce the amount of time dedicated to reactive activities and increase the opportunity for proactive activities.

<sup>21</sup> This group includes Commissioners of Police.

Collaboration among police and police agencies aids identification of pre-service and in-service training needs and best practice methods of training delivery. Specialist liquor licensing staff can provide a necessary and coordinated link between operational police and managers and liquor authorities. These specialist officers can assist in training needs analyses for operational personnel and operate as a resource to guide operational policing activities. Their value to the police organisation is likely to be enhanced in an organisational culture that prioritises policing licensed venues and associated alcohol-related problems. However, the existence of these specialist officers does not absolve operational police who have a more general focus from their responsibility to initiate and lead collaborative approaches with police and external stakeholders.

## Inter-Organisational Collaboration

Police, health, liquor and local government authorities and the community are all affected by the complexity of alcohol-related problems and harms associated with licensed drinking environments. There has been an expansion in collaborative activities to address alcohol-related problems. This highlights growing recognition that no single agency or group is sufficiently skilled or resourced to reduce alcohol-related problems in isolation.

Collaboration between government agencies has resulted, in part, from National Drug Strategy activities. It is recognised that a whole-of-government approach, incorporating representation from community groups, is cost effective and advantageous to alcohol-related harm reduction. Carnegie and Denham (1999) identify that cost effectiveness can be measured by changes to rates of morbidity and mortality, offending and recidivism, apprehension, productivity, mental health, child abuse and family violence.

Collaboration offers a significant challenge to stakeholders who respond to alcohol-related harms. It is often difficult to work together to fulfil different needs and expectations, while sharing the common goal of alcohol-related harm reduction. However, leadership, clearly defined goals and accountabilities, protocols for information exchange, and a willingness to share success, as well as failure, can all contribute to sustained success.

## Police and Liquor Authority Relationships

For police, collaboration with liquor authorities is pivotal in reducing alcohol-related harms. Liquor licensing authorities have primary responsibility for administration of liquor laws in Australian jurisdictions, but police also share responsibility for enforcement and administration of many liquor laws. This overlap of responsibilities necessitates collaboration. Effective collaboration between police and liquor authorities can aid regulation of the liquor industry and contribute to a reduction in alcohol-related harms associated with licensed premises. Collaboration also enhances mutual understanding of each other's roles and responsibilities. Table 6.1 highlights areas of responsibility of liquor authorities in Australia.

**Table 6.1: Responsibility of Liquor Licensing Authorities in Australian Jurisdictions**

Licensing	Harm Minimisation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• facilitate a diversity of liquor outlets for the community</li> <li>• ensure public amenity of licensed premises</li> <li>• develop and maintain an effective licensing system</li> <li>• ensure industry growth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensure responsible service relating to sale, supply and consumption of alcohol</li> <li>• manage public consultation</li> <li>• facilitate and/or participate in partnerships to reduce alcohol-related harms</li> </ul>
Regulation	Policy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• regulate the supply of liquor in accordance with liquor legislation</li> <li>• ensure profitability of licensed premises and events</li> <li>• respond to community complaints</li> <li>• administer processes for breaches of liquor laws</li> <li>• identify and respond to breaches of liquor laws</li> <li>• monitor operations of licensed premises and ensure compliance with liquor laws</li> <li>• facilitate joint agency safety audits (police, fire, health, ambulance and local governments) to address environmental problems</li> <li>• work with police to ensure effective enforcement activities and sound prosecutions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• develop responsible service tools, guidelines training and education resources</li> <li>• initiate legislative review</li> <li>• collaborate to develop and deliver information to licensees to improve practices and reduce harm</li> <li>• work with agencies responsible for regulation of crowd controllers to address problems arising in the licensed drinking environments</li> <li>• develop memorandums of agreement with police that acknowledge and assist mutual achievement of objectives</li> </ul>

Identification of common ground is important in guiding collaboration between police and liquor authorities. Identification of mutually desired outcomes may assist progress of harm reduction activities. One area of significant progress, for example, has been the development of responsible service guidelines across Australian jurisdictions.

Responsible service initiatives were derived from the USA. They were initially developed to reduce the incidence of drink driving and its social and individual costs. Licensed venue operators cooperated because responsible service can reduce the likelihood of litigation from people directly, or indirectly, injured or killed as a consequence of drink driving.

Responsible service initiatives acknowledge the direct links between alcohol and acute harms. In Australia, responsible service has contributed to lower blood alcohol concentrations of patrons and a decrease in server practices that lead to intoxication and intoxicated offending (Lang, Stockwell, Rydon & Beel, 1998). In some locations, police cooperate with liquor and health authorities and the liquor industry in enforcement and education activities to facilitate responsible service (Hawks, Rydon, Stockwell, White, Chikritzhs & Heale, 1999; Stockwell, 2001; McKnight & Streff, 1994; Smith & Walton, 1996).

Collaboration between liquor authorities, police and agencies that regulate crowd controllers is important to ensure thorough probity checking of licence applicants and security staff. Collaboration also helps in gathering evidence for action against rogue licensees, gaining intelligence to guide proactive strategies and identifying, proposing and responding to legislative, policy and practice changes.

## Collaborative Responses with Major Public Events

Over recent years there has been a proliferation of major public events. The social role of alcohol in Australia has resulted in many of these events being licensed. In response, safe management guidelines have been developed to reduce incidents and harms. Guidelines are intended as a means of ensuring communication and collaboration between event organisers, police and other emergency services, service providers and liquor authorities. The following illustration is an example of a planning guide for event managers co-developed by Queensland Police and Queensland Department of Tourism, Sport and Racing.

### **Case Illustration 6.1: Planning Guide for Event Managers: Alcohol Safety and Event Management, Queensland**

This guide recognises the importance of safe management of public events. The guide helps event organisers to reduce risks associated with licensed events. Planning events is encouraged through key stakeholder collaboration. Collaboration checklists enable event organisers to identify key stakeholders, which include police and other emergency services, liquor authorities, local government and service providers.

The guide encourages development of an Event Management Plan. This plan, which is similar in many ways to police operation orders, ensures accountabilities are established that identify staff and stakeholder responses to emergency, crime and disorder incidents.

Information and checklists are provided to aid development of the Event Management Plan. Key stakeholders are expected to contribute to event planning as it relates to their agency's responsibility. Participation in pre-event briefings and de-briefs are identified as essential for successful and safe events.

Collaborative efforts to address alcohol-related harms extend beyond activities of police and liquor authorities. The Northern Territory's Living With Alcohol Program (LWAP) illustrates the scope for public health, police, Government, and government and non-government organisations to collaborate to reduce harms associated with alcohol and licensed drinking environments. This strategy demonstrates the success of a combined operational and strategic collaboration to address problems associated with excessive drinking across a large and diverse population, including Indigenous communities.

### Case Illustration 6.2: Living With Alcohol Program (LWAP), Northern Territory

#### Problem:

A comprehensive public health strategy was developed in response to high levels of acute alcohol-related harms in the Northern Territory.

#### Response:

The LWAP commenced in 1992 and was funded by a Territory-imposed levy on standard alcohol drinks. The proceeds were routed back into alcohol harm reduction activities including increased treatment, public education and prevention and enforcement activities. LWAP interventions addressed reductions in individual drinking, total consumption for the Territory and alcohol-related harms (Stockwell et al, 2001)<sup>22</sup>. The LWAP also acknowledged that a reduction in the overall amount of alcohol consumed by a community could reduce alcohol-related harms.

#### Outcomes:

The strategy resulted in reduced excessive drinking and alcohol-related deaths and injuries, including those from acute alcohol-related conditions such as alcohol overdose and road trauma.

#### Lessons:

In 1997, the High Court ruled against the ability of State and Territory Governments to collect revenue by increasing taxes. This action has been seen to have a negative impact on the continued success of the LWA Program (Mitchell, 2002).

While Stockwell et al (2001) identify that alternative funding mechanisms were developed, anecdotal evidence suggests that this does not compare favourably with the extensive funding received through the alcohol levy. Although not formally investigated, this reduction in funding is believed to have negatively impacted on the Program. Establishing a correlation between reduced funding and increased alcohol problems could reinforce the need for significant funding to enable success of a comprehensive multi-level approach.

## Collaboration at the Local Level

Local conditions, personnel abilities and characteristics, physical and human resources, and liquor laws vary within and between jurisdictions. It is important, therefore, that collaboration identifies local problems that contribute to alcohol-related harms. Identification of local problems should then inform best use of available resources.

<sup>22</sup> The alcohol levy resulted in over \$6 million per annum available for the LWA Program and related activities (Mitchell, 2002). Over the evaluation of the first four years of its operation the Program contributed to (Stockwell et al, 2001):

- reductions in drinking at high-risk and hazardous levels following the LWA Program (particularly among men)
- an overall increase in responsible drinking
  - a significant ( $p < 0.005$ ) reduction of more than a quarter of night-time road accident injuries requiring hospitalisation
- a significant reduction in the numbers of alcohol-related road traffic injuries
- an average reduction of over one-third ( $p < 0.005$ ) of road fatalities
  - a significant reduction (19%) in acute alcohol-related deaths.

Wholesale replication of activities, such as liquor accords and safety action projects, may not always result in success because of the many local level factors that contribute to alcohol-related harms in and around licensed premises (Lang & Rumbold, 1997; Inglis & Roche, 1999; Gray, 2000). Notwithstanding this, there are valuable lessons to be learned from activities undertaken in other localities.

Collaborative strategies that have involved process and outcome evaluations are extremely valuable as a guide for future activities. They can prevent replication of earlier mistakes and guide new and refined approaches. Findings of evaluations can also contribute to evidence to support proposed legislative, practice and policy changes. Many examples of collaborative approaches that address crime and disorder reduction (generally) and alcohol-related harm reduction (specifically) are available to police.

## Accords

In Australia, some of the earliest collaborative responses to alcohol-related problems associated with licensed premises were liquor accords. One of the major aims of accords is to ensure responsible service of alcohol without resorting to legislative change, which could potentially result in more restrictive laws (Hawks et al, 1999). Local liquor accords have commonly involved police and licensees and have been supported to varying degrees by local government, licensing authorities, liquor licensing associations and local communities (Lang & Rumbold, 1997).

During the 1980s, deregulation of the liquor industry and free trade protection resulted in an increase in the number, diversity and concentration of licensed venues in Australia. In many instances, this resulted in increased levels of alcohol-related problems. Consequently, concerns grew about alcohol misuse and harms, which led to the development of accords (and accord type activities) across Australia.

Accords aimed to reduce the number and severity of alcohol-related problems by establishing agreements to informally regulate licensed venue operations. Licensees, police and liquor authorities usually collaborated to develop a code of conduct. These agreements acknowledged that a large proportion of violent and disorderly behaviour occurs outside licensed premises, often by patrons who became intoxicated within a licensed venue.

Commitment of all licensees in a given area was identified as essential for compliance with agreements and a reduction of alcohol-related incidents and harms. However, participation in accords was often adversely affected by competition and profit considerations.

Future success of accords hinges on ongoing licensee commitment to established codes of conduct. Open dialogue between licensees and other stakeholders, especially police, is beneficial in resolving problems of compliance with agreements. Homel and colleagues (1997) identified a range of additional features important to maintaining accord success, including activities that:

- improve community accountability of licensees
- use media to assist with positive change
- reduce reliance on an individual (project officer) as the key to success
- replace reliance on an individual with dependence on the process for success
- implement a monitoring committee to ensure self-regulation
- engage political support
- normalise community change

- recognise that accords and safety action projects have resulted from an observed failure of liquor legislation and enforcement to reduce alcohol-related harms.

Failure of accords has been attributed to:

- an absence of legislative support
- withdrawal of cooperation by licensed venue operators
- low levels of enforcement by police
- failure to engage in responsible beverage service by licensed premises staff.

The following case illustrations provide examples of accord activities across Australia. They identify antecedent conditions (problems), responses, outcomes, difficulties and lessons learned. Relevant publications and program participants can provide more detailed information on these.

### **Case Illustration 6.3: West End Forum Project**

#### **Problem:**

The West End Forum Project commenced in 1990 and attempted to reduce alcohol-related violence and disorder in and around licensed drinking establishments in Melbourne's main entertainment strip. It was the forerunner to future liquor accords in Australia (Lang & Rumbold, 1997).

#### **Response:**

The West End Forum Project aimed to reduce opportunities for alcohol-related offences. Licensees and police collaborated to address a range of issues by establishing a licensee 'code of conduct'. By using the opportunity reduction model the Project attempted to tackle many of the social and physical features of the licensed drinking environments. It also relied on enforcement to reduce offending by licensed venue operators and patrons. The Project had three main strategies:

- use of safety audits and responsible server training to encourage safe practices and reduce excessive alcohol consumption
- increase police presence to raise the risk of apprehension as an incentive to improved practices
- development of a 'Code of Practice' between the participants to guide and encourage compliance among participants.

#### **Outcomes:**

Success, such as reduced number and severity of assaults, was achieved in some areas.

#### **Lessons:**

The project identified that codes of conduct are often problematic. This is because they are not legislated and rely on willingness of all local licensees to participate.

Leadership and accountabilities were identified as essential for success of similar projects in the future. It was identified that this could be achieved by well-documented aims and outcomes, development of performance indicators and an evaluation.

### Case Illustration 6.4: Surfers Paradise Safety Action Project

#### Problem:

The Surfers Paradise Safety Action Project, which commenced in 1993, aimed to reduce alcohol-related problems in and around licensed drinking locations. It recognised that many assaults involved intoxicated people and many of these individuals had been drinking in licensed venues. The high concentration of licensed venues contributed to the large number of violence and disorder problems.

#### Response:

The Project involved members from local council, police, businesses, nightclubs and researchers. A range of structural supports were developed (Hauritz et al, 1998a), including:

- funding through local government
- development of a steering committee
- development of a community forum to identify risk factors and guide responses
- implementation of task groups to address specific issues
- encouragement of the development of a Code of Conduct for licensed venue operators
- risk assessments to guide licensed premises management practices
- integration of licensees with other local businesses
- using cooperating licensees to encourage participation of others
- employment of a project officer with effective communication and interpersonal skills, who managed interagency politics.

The Project incorporated an evaluation that involved community surveys, key informant interviews, in-premises observations and police and security data.

#### Outcomes:

Positive outcomes included:

- reduced promotions encouraging binge drinking
- reduced intoxication
- reduced violence and street offences.

However, like the West End Forum Project, reductions in violence were not sustained. Two years after the intervention, aggression and unsafe drinking had returned to pre-intervention levels (Hauritz et al, 1998a).

#### Lessons:

Evaluation of the Project identified leadership as integral to continued success. Leadership provides coordination of project activities and partners. Ideally the leadership/coordination position should be funded to ensure a dedicated focus on harm reduction activities.

### Case Illustration 6.5: Geelong Local Industry Accord

#### Problem:

The Geelong Accord involved collaboration between police to reduce interpersonal violence on streets, lanes and open space by decreasing movement between venues (Felson et al, 1997; Lang & Rumbold, 1997).

#### Response:

A written code of conduct was co-developed to assist self-regulation of licensed venue operator activities. Strategies developed to reduce street offending associated with licensed venue operations included:

- an entry charge after 11pm to discourage pub-hopping
- eliminating the use of pass outs that had been found to facilitate pub-hopping
- elimination of existing happy hours and drinks promotions to reduce intoxication and alcohol-related crime, violence, disorder and harms.

#### Outcomes:

Outcomes included a reduction of violence over a three-year period.

#### Lessons:

Success was found to have resulted from self-regulation that was influenced by enforcement and fear of enforcement on code of conduct. Enforcement followed attempts to address liquor legislation breaches, which occurred under the guidance of the established Code of Conduct Best Practice Committee. This committee reviewed, advised and reminded licensees of their commitment to the Accord agreement and the requirements of liquor legislation.

A police sergeant was made responsible for a cluster of pubs, a strategy to which the prolonged success of the project was attributed in part. This approach was implemented to overcome leadership problems of earlier accords.

Success was also attributed in part to a stable licensee group who maintained commitment to the agreement. This was facilitated by the town's isolated location.

The Geelong Local Industry Accord attempted to improve and coordinate police responses to alcohol-related problems by allocating responsibility to a police sergeant for a cluster of pubs (Felson et al, 1997; Lang & Rumbold, 1997). Responsibility for accountability in this way can be useful for a number of reasons, which include:

- reinforcement of the serious nature of alcohol-related offending on harms and their impact on policing
- recognition of the higher-level coordination skills needed to ensure police activity in this area
- provision of an accountability structure within the police agency
- recognition of leadership skills and abilities of senior operational police.

Accords continue to operate in Australia and still have the potential to reduce alcohol-related violence associated with licensed premises. To ensure success, accords require substantial resources. These have traditionally been obtained through high levels of goodwill and cooperation. Perhaps most importantly, a pivotal coordination point is required. This often takes the form of a highly charismatic personality who can work well with everyone involved in the collaborative strategy. So far, this special combination of factors has proved to be challenging to achieve and maintain, particularly in the long term.

Findings from previous accords consistently highlight the importance of commitment by licensees to agreed objectives. Operational police contribute to accord success by sustained policing of licensed premises and their environs and enforcement of liquor laws<sup>23</sup> and ongoing leadership. Compliance with agreements is dependent upon police enforcement strategies that encourage self-regulation, often supported by peer coercion. Insufficient focus on policing licensed premises was argued, in the illustrations cited above, to impact on compliance by licensed venue operators in the implementation of responsible server activities. Failure to enforce legislation or a failure to implement policing strategies that consistently encourage legislative compliance among licensees is unlikely to encourage safe server practices.

## Indigenous Experiences

*Research suggests that restrictions imposed in isolation and without the wide support of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people are likely to be circumvented and limited in impact.*

*(Gray, 2000)*

Collaborative activities in Indigenous communities provide valuable insights into the development of localised responses to alcohol-related crime and disorder problems. Significant variations exist among Australia's Indigenous communities in relation to alcohol use and misuse and have resulted in different and unique responses to the management of problems.

The socio-cultural face of communities will influence the local response to alcohol. Local variations can be profoundly different. For instance, outback and remote communities either support drinking rights or alternatively control or prevent access to alcohol (d'Abbs, 1998).

Regulating the supply of alcohol has been identified as an important factor in reducing alcohol-related offending, victimisation and harms among Indigenous Australians. Restrictions on the sale of liquor, as in the case of dry communities, are a means to address alcohol problems in remote Indigenous communities. Alcohol supply restrictions rely on cooperation between government agencies, licensed venue operators and the local Indigenous and non-Indigenous community.

Restricting access to alcohol often operates alongside health, education, social welfare and recreational interventions to reduce alcohol use and misuse and individual and social harms. Interventions also recognise that many factors contribute to alcohol-related harms as well as the broader social and familial implications of harmful drinking.

Strategies are often led by, and must at least involve, members of the local Indigenous community. Representation from government and non-government services and organisations that operate in these locations and at the jurisdictional level is also important<sup>24</sup>.

<sup>23</sup> Particularly where offences relating to service to intoxicated and underage patrons are involved.

<sup>24</sup> A useful Internet site that summarises and provides key contacts for a range of Indigenous responses to alcohol-related problems is provided by the National Drug Research Institute (NDRI), Curtin University, Western Australia, <http://www.db.ndri.curtin.edu.au/>

It is important that education, welfare and medical services are part of collaborative responses to harmful drinking among Indigenous Australians. In delivering programs to Indigenous Australians, Commonwealth and State Governments have agreed to engage in partnerships and joint strategic planning and coordination between communities and across government to ensure empowerment, self-determination and self-management by Indigenous communities (Crime Prevention Unit, 2000).

A recent Queensland Government report identified control over the supply of liquor to be a top priority (Fitzgerald, 2001). The report recognises that individuals' rights to access and consume alcohol, while important and necessary, can impede harm reduction activities. Nevertheless, Fitzgerald (2001) reinforces the value of integrated approaches that involve community and government collaboration to ensure the interests of the majority and/or the most adversely affected are represented and addressed.

The process of developing a collaborative response to the complex problem of Indigenous alcohol misuse can be time consuming. Nevertheless, time spent can have positive outcomes for drinkers, their families and the local community. The following case illustrations identify the benefits of collaboration and the complex processes necessary to develop an appropriate response to alcohol-related problems in Indigenous communities.

#### **Case Illustration 6.6: Reducing Alcohol Consumption and Harms, Halls Creek, Western Australia**

##### **Problem:**

Collaborative activity in the Halls Creek region of the Kimberley centred on the need to reduce high levels of problematic drinking among the mostly Indigenous community (Douglas, 1998).

##### **Response:**

The town's Alcohol Action Advisory Committee (AAAC)<sup>25</sup> developed a response strategy to reduce alcohol-related harms, decrease availability of alcohol (by restricting sales of liquor), enforce laws and improve education and services. The AAAC collaboration resulted in the development of a coordinated response defined by objectives and strategies to reduce alcohol misuse, offending and harms (Douglas, 1998).

##### **Outcomes:**

There were reductions in alcohol consumption and improvements to health and public order.

##### **Lessons learned:**

Representation from a number of agencies and community groups is a key factor in collaborative efforts to address harms associated with alcohol misuse in Indigenous communities. Ideally, there will be representation from police, health, community welfare, religious groups, and the Aboriginal Legal Service and community members.

<sup>25</sup> The AAAC was implemented in the Halls Creek Community to manage development of a 'Sobering up Shelter', a strategy that arose from the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (Douglas, 1998).

### Case Illustration 6.7: Coober Pedy Alcohol Strategy

#### Problem:

In 1999, under direction of the South Australian State Cabinet, a plan was commissioned to address alcohol misuse in Coober Pedy (Crime Prevention Unit, 2000).

#### Response:

An interagency working group was established by the Attorney-General's Crime Prevention Unit to develop the Coober Pedy Alcohol Strategy. This approach recognised that support for development of the Strategy needed to extend beyond the local community.

An 'Alcohol Strategy Implementation Committee' with representation from relevant government and non-government organisations in Adelaide developed a plan to address alcohol-related problems in the region. The Implementation Committee was tasked to:

- identify resources
- obtain and direct funding to the community
- develop financial management and reporting protocols
- support implementation of strategies
- encourage and facilitate collaboration
- monitor and evaluate activities
- report to Ministers and recommend further action.

A community based 'Alcohol Strategy Advisory Committee' was also established. This committee involved representatives from a number of agencies and groups with an interest in the Strategy or alcohol problems in the Coober Pedy community. Functions of this group included:

- monitoring implementation of the Strategy
- receiving information about each Strategy area
- advising organisations of services to improve coordination
- providing advice to the Alcohol Strategy Implementation Committee.

Development of the Strategy involved consultation with over 20 public agencies, retail outlets, community groups and Indigenous representatives within Coober Pedy. There was also consultation with State health, welfare, education, police and the Aboriginal Drug and Alcohol Council. Consultation was required to identify issues of concern to the community. Identified response areas included:

- supply and demand reduction
- harm minimisation
- rehabilitation
- prevention/education.

#### Outcomes:

Strategy outcomes have not yet been reported. Nevertheless, the concept of this Strategy is valuable because it provides a useful example of the processes and structures involved in the development of a collaborative response.

## Best Practice in Collaboration

Best practice in policing licensed drinking environments involves collaboration. Collaboration can occur at the intra-agency and interagency levels. It can also occur across the whole-of-government or between the Commonwealth, States and Territories. Table 6.2 summarises best practice collaborative approaches. These approaches are recommended as a guide for police who initiate, lead and participate in activities to reduce alcohol-related harms associated with licensed drinking environments.

**Table 6.2: Best Practice Activities to Assist Collaborative Efforts to Reduce Alcohol-Related Problems Associated with Licensed Drinking Environments**

Structural Approaches	Legislative and Procedural Practices
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• implement intelligence-led activities</li> <li>• seek communication and cooperation of internal stakeholders</li> <li>• implement continuous consultation with all stakeholders</li> <li>• develop a code of practice</li> <li>• obtain funding for activities</li> <li>• develop a steering committee representing all stakeholders</li> <li>• identify activities and outputs and establish task groups to achieve these</li> <li>• ensure activities are evidence based and intelligence-led</li> <li>• ensure open and continual communication between participating stakeholders and other community collaborative members</li> <li>• establish and fund a coordination and leadership role</li> <li>• incorporate responses to alcohol related problems associated with licensed premises as key strategy areas in State and Territory level plans, police business plans and local crime and disorder reduction strategies</li> <li>• identify performance outputs for all stakeholders in activities to reduce alcohol-related problems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• enforce liquor laws</li> <li>• enforce other laws related to crime and disorder</li> <li>• engage proactive enforcement and prevention strategies</li> <li>• increase police presence within and near licensed premises</li> <li>• review legislation and propose changes that assist enforcement and compliance</li> <li>• improve police understanding of liquor laws</li> <li>• enhance the quality of evidence collected and prosecution briefs</li> <li>• ensure an understanding of harm reduction and incorporate this into policing strategies</li> </ul>

Table 6.2 continued

Licensed Premises Practices	Collaborative Practices
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• encourage responsible service</li> <li>• identify environmental contributors to harm</li> <li>• improve awareness of social responsibility among licensees and staff</li> <li>• enforce laws relating to sale of alcohol to intoxicated patrons and minors</li> <li>• encourage compliance with codes of conduct</li> <li>• encourage common and complementary practices among licensees</li> <li>• encourage provision of food</li> <li>• improve accountability of staff, including crowd controllers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide a complaints resolution process that resolves poor practices</li> <li>• identify local issues and resources from the perspective of all stakeholders</li> <li>• develop and promulgate information to reduce problem drinking</li> <li>• deliver information through schools, local community groups and licensed premises</li> <li>• conduct risk assessments</li> <li>• provide amenities in the environs of licensed premises</li> <li>• provide feedback on performance of partner agencies</li> <li>• identify opportunities for improved responses</li> </ul>

## Summary

It is evident that a range of collaborative strategies can be successfully implemented to address alcohol-related violence and disorder associated with licensed drinking environments. There is increasingly good evidence that the key to success is to use several mutually reinforcing strategies simultaneously (Holder et al, 2000). However, police alone do not always possess the skills or resources needed to implement identified strategies. They also do not hold total responsibility for alcohol-related harm reduction associated with licensed drinking environments.

Nevertheless, police agencies have been successful partners in collaborative responses designed to reduce alcohol-related incidents and harms associated with licensed drinking locations. Continued success will involve appreciation of the complexity of the problems and identification of partners that are willing and able to contribute to alcohol-related harm reduction. This will not always be easy, as collaborative approaches often involve challenges and barriers.

Challenges are most likely to be overcome in a political and organisational environment that prioritises alcohol-related harms as a key strategy area and provides associated direction and resources. Collaboration across and between levels of government, across agencies and within the police organisation is crucial. These approaches also ensure communication between the levels that can enable changes to policy, practice and legislation.

Recent activities responding to problems in remote Indigenous communities involved a multi-level and collaborative approach with support between community members and local government and non-government organisations and across government portfolios.

A key feature of any collaborative strategy is an integrated response that addresses the social, physical and individual features of licensed drinking environments. It is important that such responses recognise that just as these features interact to contribute to problems, interaction between response strategies and stakeholders is crucial to minimise incidents and harms.

## Key Findings: Collaborative Strategies

1. A large degree of overlap exists between outcomes sought by police, health, liquor and local government authorities and the community in relation to alcohol-related harms in Australia.
2. All stakeholders can contribute to alcohol-related harm reduction.
3. National Drug Strategy documents recognise and reinforce the value of collaborative approaches in achieving a reduction in drug problems in Australia.
4. Knowledge of contributing factors provides information to encourage, support, guide and assist licensed venue operators, government and non-government organisations and the community to collaborate to eliminate or reduce harms.
5. Positive outcomes of collaboration include improved compliance with legislation, improved server practices and a safe and yet profitable licensed drinking environment.
6. Sufficient common ground exists for both police and liquor authorities to collaborate to reduce alcohol-related problems.
7. Accords as a collaborative effort have demonstrated some success in the reduction of alcohol-related harms in and around licensed drinking venues.
8. Substantial resources are required to reduce alcohol-related harms in Australian society.
9. Strategies that engage collaboration at the jurisdictional level have also been successful.
10. It has been shown that police have the ability to play a leadership role in reducing alcohol-related incidents and harms.
11. Sustained success is more likely when there is political support and direction to alcohol-related harm reduction activities. However, responses must engage local representatives and involve a local focus sensitive to available physical and human resources.
12. Past experience, especially where evaluated, is a valuable guide for future activities.
13. The success of future collaborative strategies involves consideration of features of the social and physical drinking environment that contribute to harms, knowledge about effectiveness of different styles of enforcement activities, use of problem-solving methodologies and the use of intelligence derived from police and non-police sources.

**Box 6.1: National Drug Strategic Framework 1998-1999 to 2002-03 (Summary)  
(Ministerial Council on Drug Strategy, 1998)**

Under the National Drug Strategy State and Territory governments are responsible for providing leadership within their respective jurisdictions. They are responsible for policy and development, implementation and evaluation and delivery for police, health and education services to reduce drug-related harm.

The functions of State and Territory Governments under the National Drug Strategic Framework include:

- establishing a comprehensive strategy that enables community and specialist involvement in policy and program development, including development of advisory structures
- developing and implementing their own drug strategies from the perspectives of law enforcement and population health, based on local priorities
- collaborating in national policy and strategy development
- controlling the supply of illicit drugs through specialist drug law enforcement units and 'general duties' police officers
- enforcing the regulation of pharmaceutical drugs
- enforcing laws regulating the consumption and availability of alcohol and developing and enforcing legislation relating to tobacco
- implementing harm reduction strategies to prevent drink driving
- designing, developing and implementing public information and education programs aimed at discouraging the uptake and reducing the level of harmful drug use and reducing drug-related harm
- ensuring that drug treatment services are provided in a manner consistent with the philosophy of the National Drug Strategic Framework and taking into account priorities within their jurisdiction
- assessing measures that allow police to exercise discretion in diverting drug users away from the criminal justice system into appropriate treatment options
- encouraging police and health services to develop joint guidelines that prevent conflict between police duties and health services designed to reduce drug-related harm, such as needle and syringe exchange programs
- providing public sector health services or funding for community-based organisations to provide drug prevention and treatment programs
- developing effective and comprehensive professional education and training, research and evaluation strategies, in close cooperation with other jurisdictions so as to achieve consistency
- establishing an appropriate public policy framework to deal with drug-related harm in areas such as housing, school-based drug education, criminal justice and juvenile justice, and liquor licensing
- analysing and monitoring patterns of drug use and drug-related harm
- monitoring outcomes, reporting on performance at the jurisdictional level, and contributing to cross-jurisdictional and national surveys and research.

Many of these functions are also carried out by Commonwealth agencies; in many cases, they are cooperative exercises between the Commonwealth and States and Territories.

**Box 6.2: National Alcohol Strategy: A Plan for Action 2001 to 2003-2004 (Summary)  
(Ministerial Council on Drug Strategy, 2001b)**

**Goal:**

Build a healthier and safer community by minimising alcohol-related harm to the individual, family and society, while recognising the potential social and health benefits from alcohol.

**Aims:**

- reduce the incidence of premature mortality related to misuse of alcohol
- reduce the incidence of acute and chronic morbidity (disease and injury) related to misuse of alcohol
- reduce the incidence of social disorder, family disruption, violence, including domestic violence, and other crime related to misuse of alcohol
- reduce the level of economic loss to Australian society related to misuse of alcohol.

**Underlying Principles:**

- *a coordinated, integrated approach*
- *a partnership approach* that requires a multidisciplinary approach and the support, cooperation and collaboration of all levels of government, professional associations, non-government organisations and community groups as well as the alcohol beverage and hospitality industry. Developing partnerships underpins all of the key strategy areas for action under the National Alcohol Strategy
- *a balanced approach* between prevention and treatment strategies (which acknowledges potential health and social benefits of low-risk alcohol consumption and recognises significant harms caused by high-risk patterns of alcohol consumption), public health, law enforcement and educational strategies and supply, demand and harm reduction approaches. Harm reduction in this context applies to reducing harms associated with single episodes of high-risk alcohol use as well as the long-term chronic effects of high-risk alcohol consumption, high-risk drinking behaviours and unsafe drinking environments
- *evidence-based policy and practice*
- *social justice* by developing strategies responsive to settings of local communities that are culturally responsive and meet the needs of marginalised groups.

**Box 6.3: Directions in Australasian Policing 2002-2005 (Summary)**  
**(Australasian Police Ministers' Council, 2003)**

*Directions in Australasian Policing 2003-2005* was developed to improve the direction of policing, enhance cooperation between police services, and improve overall service delivery (Australasian Police Ministers' Council, 2003). Although not developed specifically for alcohol-related incidents and harms this document is a key policy document for police agencies in fulfilling their role. Within its framework the document emphasises responsibility for accountability, contestability, continuous improvement and the application of best practice in policing. Developed through collaboration between Australasian police services, it recognises the impact of social change and economic restraints on police services and reinforces the need for crime reduction through police service delivery that is:

- coordinated
- intelligence-led
- problem-oriented
- cohesive
- cooperative
- innovative
- responsive to community needs.

## Chapter 7: Summary and Future Directions

This document has outlined the range of factors that contribute to best practice in the policing of licensed premises. It has addressed diverse issues that contribute to problems associated with licensed premises and has detailed the complex array of areas that are relevant to police. The way alcohol and drinking is viewed by the general public, and also by police, is crucial. Similarly, the range of policing approaches and strategies that can be implemented to address problem areas such as licensed premises is equally important. This Monograph has mapped out these areas and used them as the basis from which to derive directions on best practice.

This chapter summarises the key issues identified within the Monograph. In addition, a number of knowledge gaps are highlighted in relation to *best practice in policing licensed premises*. Options to address these gaps are discussed and strategies to achieve best practice in policing licensed premises, and thereby reduce alcohol-related harms, are recommended.

The high prevalence of drinking in Australia is associated with significant individual and social harms. Many of these harms place substantial demands on the human and physical resources of police agencies. Yet, in comparison to these demands and their costs, they have received relatively little attention. As a consequence, police agencies have had only a limited impact on alcohol-related crime, disorder and harm reduction especially in relation to licensed premises. Achieving best practice in the policing of licensed premises requires a multi-faceted response to this complex area of police work.

### **Risk and Vulnerability Factors**

Although there is a less than optimal focus by police on licensed drinking locations, knowledge about the effects of alcohol on the individual are well known. For example, alcohol is known to affect individual mental and physical functioning and reasoning. The drinking location and setting also has a significant impact on drinking patterns and drinking behaviour.

A significant amount of research on the nature, extent and contributors to alcohol-related harms has been undertaken. The harms most relevant to police are those associated with criminal offending and victimisation, interpersonal violence, social disorder and accidents. All of these can lead to physical, psychological and social injury, or death. The negative effects of alcohol on reasoning and decision making can contribute to acts of violence, disorder and motor vehicle accidents. Geographical, cultural, gender and demographic differences in drinking style have reinforced the need for local and purpose designed approaches to reduce alcohol-related harms.

Acute (or short-term) alcohol-related harms are concentrated among young drinkers, usually males and often those drinking in licensed venues. A general predisposition to risk-taking behaviour among young people heightens the risk of alcohol-related harm. Harms among this group are also adversely affected by inexperience with drinking and by lower levels of concern about drinking consequences. Increasingly, young women are also engaging in hazardous and harmful drinking and, by virtue of their physiological make-up, are more vulnerable to intoxication and associated problems.

Drinking in rural and remote areas is also especially problematic, particularly for young people, for a number of social and structural reasons. Social drinking is often a key feature of the sporting and recreational activities in these areas. Accessing social events usually involves driving. Deterring drink driving is more difficult in rural and remote areas because there are fewer police and fewer alternative forms of transportation. Similarly, poor access to medical assistance for serious trauma, such as that associated with drink driving accidents, exacerbates the risk of injury or death.

Drinking among Indigenous Australians is generally less prevalent than among white Australians. However, among those Indigenous persons who do drink, high-risk drinking is more common. Patterns and locations of drinking also may vary, with a higher level of purchase from licensed premises but with consumption occurring off site.

### **Problems Associated with Licensed Premises**

Some of the harms associated with drinking occur within the licensed drinking location. However, many more occur in the vicinity of licensed venues. Incidents and harms often result from continuation of conflict initiated inside the licensed premises. Other incidents and harms arise from interactions between alcohol-affected patrons and others on leaving a venue. These problems can also involve patrons of other licensed venues, and this is one reason that high concentrations of licensed drinking environments can be problematic.

A significant proportion of drinking in Australia takes place in licensed venues and at licensed drinking events, with many of the alcohol-related harms occurring in or near these locations. However, not all licensed premises are associated with a high incidence of harm. Hotels and entertainment precincts are often the major locations for alcohol-related harms in metropolitan and major country areas. This is particularly the case where these premises attract young and inexperienced drinkers. Nevertheless, social drinking locations are an important and integral part of Australian life. The challenge for police is to enable social drinking while ensuring the safety and well being of drinkers, neighbourhood members and the general community.

Extended trading hours have been shown to adversely impact on alcohol-related offending, particularly drink driving. They also put added strain on police agencies that must provide resources to respond to increased numbers of problems that extend into the early hours of the morning. Providing a high level of police resources overnight is expensive and can adversely affect service provision at other times of the day.

It is important for police to know about:

- problematic drinking locations
- major at-risk groups
- common problems associated with excessive drinking.

Such knowledge can help police develop targeted crime, violence and disorder reduction activities in order to reduce the incidence and severity of harms, offending and victimisation associated with excessive drinking.

It is equally important for police to be aware that social attitudes in relation to alcohol can adversely influence, or be perceived to condone, alcohol-related problems including aggression. Many police hold similarly inappropriate or indifferent attitudes that dampen responses to alcohol-related incidents. This is particularly so among young police who drink, often heavily, in the same social settings in which they work. Higher levels of tolerance have been shown to lead to greater acceptance of deviance among intoxicated people.

Other factors that adversely impact on policing liquor laws and licensed premises include:

- poor understanding and lack of confidence in administering these laws
- preference for reactive policing
- insufficient resources allocated to this problem
- difficulties with prosecution
- low levels of knowledge of the negative and harmful effects of excessive drinking.

Much research has been undertaken that focuses on the social and physical features of public drinking environments. This research resulted from increasing levels of concern regarding public drinking and its implications for law and order and public safety. In addition, research has demonstrated that the harms associated with drinking in these locations are extremely costly to the individual, community and service agencies.

### **Policing Licensed Premises**

Changing social and physical features of licensed drinking environments to reduce alcohol-related harms is achievable. Such change requires strategic and sustained input and resourcing by police, liquor authorities and other government and non-government organisations.

Police understanding of potentially problematic physical and social features of licensed premises is essential. It enables problem identification, strategy initiation and increased participation in collaborative strategies. The agencies that collaborate in strategies to reduce alcohol-related harms have a legal and/or social responsibility for public safety, public amenity or the profit of businesses. There is a range of civil processes and legal requirements that agencies can use to influence the practice of licensees.

Police are empowered most directly to influence the social drinking environment. This occurs through the laws relating to management and server practices and behaviours, and security staff and patron behaviours. Many of these laws are contained within jurisdictional liquor legislation and they exist in addition to the range of criminal, street, drug and traffic offences.

Enforcement of laws has a deterrent effect on future offending by an individual and on offending by others. Similarly, fear of enforcement of laws can also positively impact on offending. To reduce offending by either means it is important that action is taken for breaches of liquor laws. An increased police presence in licensed drinking environments will deter offending by creating fear of apprehension (if deviance were to occur) and reinforcing the belief that laws will be enforced.

A visible police presence also enables improved communication between licensed venue operators and staff. If this communication is approached in a positive manner there can be valuable information sharing. This information may:

- aid investigation of serious crimes
- enable improved responses to intoxicated patrons by staff
- lead to changes in the social and physical drinking environment.

An improved relationship between police and licensed venue operators requires a proactive police presence. However, an increased presence should be guided by intelligence data to optimise the use of finite police resources, and to avoid unfairly or inappropriately targeting licensees. This approach to crime reduction is likely to help police agencies overcome difficulties traditionally experienced with proactive strategies.

Best practice in the policing of licensed premises involves enforcement and proactive strategies and both of these approaches involve problem-solving methodologies. Problem-solving is an important feature of determining national, jurisdictional, organisational and operational responses to alcohol-related problems and licensed drinking venues. Problem-solving incorporates the need to consider legislation, policy directions, corporate and political commitment, research, collaboration, enforcement and evaluation as a means to reduce alcohol-related offending and harms. In addition, it is necessary to encourage local input and participation in responses, whether at the policy, organisational or operational level.

Intelligence gathering and analysis are also essential to ensuring appropriate and efficacious use of human and physical resources. They involve a continual process of problem analysis, strategy development, implementation and review. This is necessary to ensure best practice responses to reduce alcohol-related harms associated with licensed drinking locations.

An organisational focus on the policing of licensed premises is useful. Police organisations are accountable to the community and government for their operational practices. State and Territory governments and their police agencies cooperated in development of the National Drug Strategy and this provides an evidence-based direction for police to contribute to improvement in safety and amenity of licensed venues. It is important for police agencies to translate relevant features of strategies such as the National Alcohol Strategy and the National Drug Strategic Framework into corporate planning processes, with clearly and operationally defined and actionable deliverables and outputs.

To enable police service areas and police agencies to report successes and identify areas for national and local attention it is important that problems and harms are measured. At present, variation exists between information collected and analysed by jurisdictions. A need exists to implement systems that are supported by operational police that can be used to inform local and corporate needs. Most importantly, these systems need to provide a true picture of the level of alcohol-related crime, violence and disorder incidents occurring within, and associated with, the many different types of licensed venues.

Effective intelligence gathering and reporting programs enable information to be presented to liquor authorities and licensed venue operators. This in turn provides an opportunity for problems to be addressed at an early stage - an important element of best practice. Intelligence may also inform proposals for legislative and policy amendments, and requests for increased staffing or physical resources either within the agency or at a political level are also better supported with such information and evidence.

Table 7.1 identifies five organisational factors (S.P.I.C.E.) that have been detailed throughout the Monograph as contributing to best practice in reducing alcohol-related harms in and around licensed drinking environments.

**Table 7.1: Best Practice in Policing Licensed Drinking Establishments: Five Key Organisational Factors (S.P.I.C.E.)**

StrATEGIC DIRECTION:	Establish <i>strategic direction</i> for policing licensed premises and alcohol-related harms
PROACTIVE POLICING:	<i>Proactively</i> police licensed venues, events and harms
Intelligence:	Establish <i>intelligence gathering and analysis</i> practices and systems that drive and evaluate police responses
COLLABORATION & INTEGRATION:	<i>Collaborate</i> with liquor authorities, emergency and service providers (government and non-government), health and welfare agencies and local communities to develop integrated responses to reduce alcohol-related incidents and harms
ENFORCEMENT:	<i>Enforcement</i> of liquor and other legislation impacting on management and behaviour

Bringing together the pieces of this very complex, social and often political problem area is a challenge. Best practice can be achieved through the development and maintenance of collaboration, which will enable operational police to achieve a reduction in crime and disorder. Increasingly, this occurs at interagency (with government and non-government organisations), inter-jurisdictional and inter-governmental levels, and also involves interested community members. To a lesser degree, there has been intra-organisational collaboration in the areas responsible for policing, prosecution, policy, intelligence and corporate decision making regarding alcohol problems and licensed venue operations.

Collaboration is important and an invaluable means of responding to alcohol-related problems. It acknowledges the diversity of the problem and enables implementation of localised responses for local problems. Collaboration also provides the opportunity to bring together traditional adversaries to overcome problems. Collaborative efforts can inform all partners of each other's roles and functions and the problems encountered. Collaboration may also tap into a greater pool of physical and human resources.

This Monograph has identified a range of factors which are key contributors to alcohol-related harms associated with licensed drinking environments. The Monograph also provided a range of tools to assist police to respond to these problems. These tools are also useful in gaining an understanding of the role of other stakeholders. Knowing and appreciating problems associated with alcohol and licensed premises and ways to address these problems will aid collaborative efforts and help reduce alcohol-related crime, violence, offending and harms and ultimately achieve best practice in the policing of licensed premises.

In the process of developing the Monograph a number of gaps were identified. Clearer understanding of these gaps can inform police and policy makers of areas for further inquiry and research to enhance achievement of *best practice in policing licensed premises*. On this basis the following recommendations have been made.

## Recommendations

### **1. Develop a coordinated approach for police to implement relevant sections of the *National Alcohol Strategy Action Plan 2001 to 2003-04***

The National Alcohol Strategy identifies a number of strategies to reduce alcohol-related harms that are relevant to police. A number of these strategies also relate to ways that police can independently, or through collaboration, reduce harms associated with drinking in and around licensed premises. It is important that police agencies are encouraged to identify and implement activities within this National Drug Strategy document.

Development of an implementation strategy by police agencies to report progress against recommendations of the National Alcohol Strategy is important. This process may increase the focus of police agencies on alcohol-related harms. It may also provide a valuable opportunity for police agencies to collaborate and share knowledge and resources.

### **2. Develop common evaluation procedures and a reporting protocol to record detail of policing strategies that aim to address alcohol-related problems associated with licensed drinking locations**

The predominant source of literature located and assessed in development of this Monograph was obtained from academic publications. In only a few cases was information available that directly reported on operational policing activities. Key informants contacted were not aware of, or did not reveal, police evaluations relevant to this project. This shortfall in the 'grey' literature is problematic. It is strongly recommended that police be encouraged to increase the level of evaluation and reporting activities undertaken on programs related to this area. It is only through this process, and sharing of such information, that the strengths and weaknesses of innovative strategies can be assessed.

It is however noted that there is an increased level of evaluation of operational policing activities in general. The emerging focus on evaluation of operational activities provides an opportunity to capture useful information on best practice in policing licensed premises.

Identification and development of a common evaluation tool for operational activities and projects could be both a useful and timely activity. The success of such an activity would rest on the establishment of a database to collect and disseminate information useful to operational planners and project officers.

### **3. Develop clear and specific key performance indicators for police agencies to report activities that aim to reduce alcohol-related harms associated with licensed premises**

The appropriate level of attention by operational police and their managers, project officers and policy makers is dependent on organisational and individual acknowledgment of, and commitment to, policing alcohol-related problems associated with licensed drinking environments.

Increasingly police agencies require outputs to be reported against performance indicators. Unlike illicit drug issues, strategic direction that prioritises alcohol-related offending and victimisation is often not afforded its own unique performance indicators. Because alcohol-related problems are embedded among other performance indicators they do not always receive attention that is proportional to the size of the problem.

Implementation of the National Alcohol Strategy Action Plan 2001 to 2003-04 may be useful to guide police strategic directions and the development of appropriate and specific performance indicators.

#### **4. Develop a national database to identify the prevalence of alcohol incidents attended by, or reported to, police**

In Australia there is an absence of standard recording protocols for alcohol-related problems. Australian police agencies differ in the data they collect. Some police agencies do not uniformly collect data related to incidents in and around licensed drinking environments.

The absence of uniform reporting and recording processes has resulted in the need to generalise from studies conducted on small population samples, often over a limited time period. This approach provides scope for police to challenge the validity and reliability of such data.

Police agencies stand to benefit greatly when they record more precise details of alcohol-related problems associated with a variety of locations, including licensed premises.

Timely data is important to successfully target licensed premises 'hot spots'. Analysis of intelligence data over short time intervals is an important means by which to identify and address potential problems in and around licensed drinking environments.

Development of agreed recording protocols that identify and record alcohol-related problems could provide more information about the financial and social impact of alcohol on policing in the areas of crime, violence, disorder and emergency incidents. Availability of such data for analysis at the local level, in a timely manner, has the potential to guide improvements in police strategies that aim to reduce alcohol-related problems associated with licensed premises.

#### **5. Undertake research to identify the costs to police agencies in Australia of alcohol-related harms associated with licensed premises**

Research shows (see Table 2.3) that alcohol-related problems consume a significant portion of police resources. Collins and Lapsley (2002) reported on the social cost of alcohol abuse in Australia in 1998-1999. Separate to, or in combination with Recommendation 4 (above), an in depth study of the tangible and intangible impact of alcohol-related problems on policing would be valuable. Such a study would improve the knowledge base for:

- police agencies to prioritise resources to address alcohol-related harms
- police to make informed decisions regarding new liquor licence applications or variations
- police agencies and governments to determine human and physical resource implications
- the allocation of appropriate levels of funding to address alcohol-related problems in society.

#### **6. Conduct further research into the patterns, locations and harms associated with youth drinking, especially in rural and remote areas**

The research literature reveals that although drinking rates are largely consistent across Australian States and Territories, regional differences exist. In the context of young people's drinking the true nature and extent of these regional differences may not be fully appreciated. Further research into the impact of the social drinking environment including sporting clubs and local pubs in rural and remote areas is necessary. Such research could inform policy makers of the contribution of rural and remote social drinking environments to the high incidence of drink driving, youth suicide and other intentional and unintentional injuries. This would have the potential to guide operational policing activities and collaborative approaches to reduce the incidence of alcohol-related harms to this at-risk group.

**7. Conduct research to identify and examine initiatives that address Indigenous alcohol issues and develop guidelines to assist police to develop meaningful activities to address mutual needs**

Drinking among Indigenous Australians is particularly problematic. It also entails special challenges for police. Social and cultural factors within sections of Indigenous communities, between Indigenous groups and between police and Indigenous groups require particular attention. Any initiatives necessitate collaboration between key parties. The success of such strategies is also dependent on cooperation from licensed venue operators. Licensees often view financial considerations as the major determinant of harm reduction strategies that might be adopted. Restrictions on sales of alcohol, for example, can also lead to dissent among sectors of Indigenous communities.

Police have often played a role in strategies that attempt to address alcohol-related harms in communities with large numbers of Indigenous Australians. It is important for these strategies, and the lessons learned to be reported, fully assessed and modified or emulated where appropriate.

A shortfall exists in information about police activities undertaken to address Indigenous drinking problems. Identification and development of a common evaluation tool for strategies that aim to reduce alcohol-related harms among Indigenous Australians and which engage police, would be a valuable resource. The success of such an activity would rest on the establishment of a database to collect and disseminate information useful to operational planners and project officers.

**8. Conduct research to identify and examine whether infringement notice systems are valuable in reducing excessive alcohol consumption and alcohol-related harms**

Police jurisdictions differ in their approach to policing breaches of liquor laws. Some have infringement notices as a tool. This is in addition to the ability to deal with matters by way of a summons. It is not clear how, or if, the different approaches to proceeding against persons who breach liquor laws impact on alcohol-related offending and victimisation. It is also not clear how different regimes may affect police capacity and motivation to police licensed premises and liquor offences.

It would be useful to conduct a national review of existing liquor legislation and regulations to investigate the:

- impact of current laws (and related procedures) on police enforcement of liquor offences
- impact of current laws on proactive policing strategies
- influence of current laws on improving practices of licensed venue operators
- impact of current laws (and related procedures) on the quality of evidence gathered and available for prosecution.

**9. Conduct research to identify and examine the governance of liquor legislation by liquor authorities**

Across Australia liquor authorities have the primary responsibility to ensure compliance with, and enforcement of, liquor laws. Concern has been raised over the difficulty of managing alcohol-related harms and the simultaneous management of an orderly alcohol market.

Current liquor licensing processes across Australia permit the potential issuance of licences. There has been criticism of the relative lack of importance given to harm reduction when determining the suitability of applications.

Liquor authorities are authorised to hear and determine matters at conciliation. It would be valuable for an inquiry to be conducted into whether the complex nature and aims of liquor legislation and all interested parties are fully and fairly represented through the conciliation process.

**10. Conduct research to identify knowledge of operational police of liquor laws and practices to effectively police licensed premises**

Literature suggests that there has been a dilution of officer knowledge and skills regarding policing of licensed premises. Often a few individual officers with an interest in this function carry out legitimate activities on behalf of the majority. To develop pre-service and in-service training to improve policing of licensed premises it is important to gauge the knowledge base of operational members.

**11. Use findings of research regarding the knowledge base of police officers to identify training needs and develop communication strategies to build motivation and capacity of operational police to effectively deal with problems in and around licensed premises**

It is not sufficient for liquor laws to be taught and reinforced. The complex nature of liquor laws through their intention to meet competing interests often leads to confusion and frustration. To overcome this, provision of ongoing training and education that builds capacity of individual officers is important. The success of training will be enhanced in a work environment that provides opportunities (that result from intelligence-led practices and strategic direction) to apply and practise these skills.

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