

## **Joint Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs**

### **ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

#### **Inquiry into Community Safety, Support Services and Job Opportunities in the Northern Territory**

**Department/Agency:** National Indigenous Australians Agency

**Topic:** Data used to support decision to sunset.

**Member:** Marion Scrymgour

**Question reference number:** 0001

**Type of question:** Hansard, pages 2-3, Wednesday, 19 October 2022

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer:** Wednesday, 26 October 2022

**Number of pages:** 2

#### **Question:**

Ms SCRYMGOUR: Sam, it's great to see you. In terms of alcohol, I recently went through the document from the review that NIAA had conducted, plus also the KPMG review and other reviews that were done leading up to the Stronger Futures legislation or the sunset. In relation to alcohol, is it possible for NIAA to table for us the data in that space that they talk about for the decisions that were taken to hand over? What gave them confidence in the alcohol management plans, and particularly was there any community-specific replacement harm minimisation being provided to NIAA so that the sunset of all of the alcohol measures under Stronger Futures gave them confidence? I've heard a lot of comments that there is no evidence that Stronger Futures didn't have impacts on violence and other issues. Can we please get information in relation to that evidence?

Mr Jeffries: Yes, we can certainly table information. Tom, do you want to talk to the question now? Otherwise we can certainly respond in relation to that question.

Mr Dyer: I'd probably just add, with regard to what the reviews were finding, again both reviews found it's very difficult to pinpoint any positive results of the Stronger Futures legislation, and that is probably due to the fact that the Northern Territory government has that underlying legislation that goes broader than the remote communities. When the Stronger Futures act sunsetted in a sense, it lifted off the Northern Territory remote communities. But of 73 remote communities in the Northern Territory, 67 remained covered by NT legislation managing alcohol, and obviously since then there has been a lot of press about the NT implementing an opt-in process to allow further communities to opt into alcohol management.

Ms SCRYMGOUR: Thank you, Tom, but can you still answer or are you able to provide, please, the data that was used to allow NIAA or the Commonwealth to sunset and to transfer that responsibility back to the Northern Territory?

Mr Dyer: Yes, we can provide that. That will allow that background data as well to be fully shown.

**Answer:**

The NIAA led the [Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory: Sunset Review](#) in 2022 (Sunset Review). The scope of the review was to assess the impact of the *Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory Act (2012)* (SFNT Act) and Part 10 of the *Classification (Publications, Films and Computer Games) Act 1995* (Classification Act) and identify the implications of them sunseting.

With regards to alcohol, the Sunset Review considered a range of material, including 27 independent reviews, government reviews, academic research on alcohol regulations and government plans to address alcohol-related harm. Three key reports were considered:

1. The [Independent Review of Northern Territory and Commonwealth Laws in Reducing Alcohol-Related Harm](#), Minter Ellison, 2015;
2. The [Review of Stronger Futures Measures](#) by the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights 2016; and,
3. The [Review of Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory Act \(2012\)](#), KPMG, 2016.

The Sunset Review found it was not possible to determine if the SFNT Act was effective at reducing alcohol-related harm. This was because of insufficient data and the NT Government measures aimed at addressing alcohol misuse being implemented in parallel to the Commonwealth legislation.

The Sunset Review concluded the Australian Government does not require ongoing legislative instruments to address community issues associated with alcohol and the NT Government is well placed to deliver its jurisdictional responsibilities. The Sunset Review noted both the Australian and NT Governments have a mutual interest in improving outcomes for Aboriginal peoples and are working together to achieve outcomes.

The level of support provided for alcohol-related harm reduction measures has continued since the commencement of the Stronger Futures Act.

- Under the Indigenous Advancement Strategy, the NIAA provided close to \$13 million in funding, from 2021-22 through 2022-23, to organisations for alcohol and other drug support and residential rehabilitation activities in the NT.
- A further \$22 million in funding, from 2021-22 through 2023-24, is provided through the National Partnership on Northern Territory Remote Aboriginal Investment for alcohol-related harm minimisation activities.

In August 2021, the Australian Government announced an additional \$66 million from 2021-22 through 2024-25 to enhance First Nations alcohol and other drug treatment services nationally as part of its Closing the Gap commitments.

## **Joint Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs**

### ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

#### Inquiry into Community Safety, Support Services and Job Opportunities in the Northern Territory

**Department/Agency:** National Indigenous Australians Agency

**Topic:** Drivers or factors of alcohol consumption

**Member:** Gordon Reid MP

**Question reference number:** 0003

**Type of question:** Hansard, page 7, Wednesday, 19 October 2022

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer:** Wednesday, 26 October 2022

**Number of pages:** 2

#### **Question:**

Dr REID: What factors do you think are driving alcohol consumption, particularly in First Nations communities that you're covering?

Ms Hartmann: That's probably not one I can specifically answer off the cuff, I'm afraid; I would have to take that on notice, unless my colleagues can answer that question. We'll take that one on notice. I'd just rather get back to you with a more fulsome answer than I could do credit to right now.

#### **Answer:**

Alcohol consumption is a complex, multi-determined behaviour, influenced by a range of biological and environmental factors, social and economic determinants and emotional wellbeing factors, including trauma, coping with stress, and peer pressure<sup>1</sup>.

In their review of the harmful use of alcohol among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, Gray et al. (2018) found the effects of alcohol on individuals are not simply a product of the substance itself. The amounts of alcohol consumed, the way in which it is consumed and the ways in which people behave under its influence are conditioned by: the characteristics of alcoholic beverages themselves and their availability, price and marketing; individual characteristics of drinkers and their life experiences and social and emotional wellbeing; and wider sociocultural settings, including the social determinants of health. For Indigenous Australians, the social determinants contributing to their current health status

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<sup>1</sup> House of Representatives Standing Committee on Indigenous Affairs (2015), Alcohol, hurting people and harming communities: Inquiry in to the harmful use of alcohol in Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander communities

include current and past inequalities, intergenerational trauma, racism and higher levels of emotional and social distress<sup>2</sup>.

Since the late 1970s, various inquiries have highlighted the link between Indigenous social disadvantage, poor health and high levels of alcohol use as a legacy of past policies<sup>3, 4, 5, 6</sup>. While colonialism and dispossession are not the cause of all harmful alcohol use among Indigenous Australians, observed drinking patterns are a response both to this history and the current social conditions that have arisen from it, as they are among Indigenous peoples elsewhere<sup>7, 8</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> Gray D, Cartwright K, Stearne A, Siggers S, Wilkes E & Wilson M (2018). Review of the harmful use of alcohol among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet.

<sup>3</sup> House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs (1977) Alcohol problems of Aboriginals: final report. Canberra: House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs; as cited in Gray et al. (2018).

<sup>4</sup> National Aboriginal Health Strategy Working Party (1989) A national Aboriginal health strategy. Canberra: Department of Aboriginal Affairs; as cited in Gray et al. (2018).

<sup>5</sup> Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (1991) Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody: National reports [Vol 1-5], and regional reports. Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service; as cited in Gray et al. (2018).

<sup>6</sup> Commonwealth of Australia (1995) Alcohol report, race discrimination, human rights and the distribution of alcohol. Canberra: Race Discrimination Commissioner; as cited in Gray et al. (2018).

<sup>7</sup> Siggers S, Gray D (1998) Dealing with alcohol: Indigenous usage in Australia, New Zealand and Canada. Melbourne: Cambridge University Press; as cited in Gray et al. (2018).

<sup>8</sup> Kirmayer LJ, Brass GM, Tait CL (2000) The mental health of Aboriginal peoples: transformations of identity and community. Canadian Journal of Psychiatry;45: 607-616; as cited in (Gray et al. 2018).

## **Joint Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs**

### ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

#### Inquiry into Community Safety, Support Services and Job Opportunities in the Northern Territory

**Department/Agency:** National Indigenous Australians Agency

**Topic:** Key stakeholders for reviews

**Senator:** Senator Lidia Thorpe

**Question reference number:** 0004

**Type of question:** Hansard, pages 4-5, Wednesday, 19 October 2022

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer:** Wednesday, 26 October 2022

**Number of pages:** 2

#### **Question:**

Senator THORPE: My next question is has your recent review included any direct input from communities about their experience with Stronger Futures and taken into account community views?

Ms Hartmann: So the reviews that were undertaken in 2015 and 2016 didn't seek community views; rather, there were a number of key stakeholders that were consulted and interviewed as part of that review process, and the deep consultation with communities actually occurred as part of the 2011 NT emergency response evaluation, where community views were sought. But in the reviews in 2015 and 2016 the stakeholders that were consulted with did not include community.

Senator THORPE: Who were the stakeholders?

Ms Hartmann: I do have a list of them, so let me just grab them for you. I'm getting them from my colleague, very helpfully. Do you want me to go through the list? I have it in front of me?

Senator THORPE: I'm happy to take that on notice.

Ms Hartmann: Yes, no problem at all. We can send that across.

#### **Answer:**

In 2016, KPMG undertook a [Review of Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory Act \(2012\)](#). In conducting the review, KPMG undertook a desk-top analysis of existing data and reports, complemented by targeted consultations with stakeholders, including Australian and NT Government officials.

The selection of stakeholders for consultation reflected the review's focus on assessing the effectiveness of the following special measures under the Stronger Futures Act: Tackling Alcohol Abuse; Land Reform; and Food Security (primarily licensing of community stores).

Issues, trends and developments identified in the desk-top analysis were discussed in the targeted stakeholder consultations. The stakeholder consultations also assisted KPMG in identifying proxy information sources, where available.

The full list of stakeholders who were consulted is listed in section 5 (page 43) of the review.

In 2015, Minter Ellison undertook an [Independent review of the effectiveness of Northern Territory and Commonwealth laws in reducing alcohol-related harm](#) as required by s 28 of the Stronger Futures Act.

In conducting the review, Minter Ellison completed a 'desktop' analysis of existing material created by, or provided to, the inquiry by the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Indigenous Affairs into the topic of the harmful use of alcohol in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The 2015 review did not collect any new or specific evidence or data for the purposes of the review.

The scope of the review was limited to the effectiveness of:

- Part 2 of the Stronger Futures Act and instruments made for the purposes of Part 2 of the Stronger Futures Act;
- the *Liquor Act* (NT) and the Liquor Regulations (NT);
- the *Alcohol Reform (Substance Misuse Assessment and Referral for Treatment Court) Act 2011* (NT) and instruments made under that Act; and
- the *Alcohol Reform (Prevention of Alcohol-related Crime and Substance Misuse) Act* (NT) and instruments made under that Act.

The review considered secondary materials, including submissions made by community stakeholders and individuals to the Standing Committee, listed in section 5 (page 9) of the review.

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### **ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

#### **Inquiry into Community Services, Support Services and Job Opportunities in the Northern Territory**

**Department/Agency:** National Indigenous Australians Agency

**Topic:** Consultation with communities

**Senator:** Senator Lidia Thorpe

**Question reference number:** 0005

**Type of question:** Hansard, pages 5-6, Wednesday, 19 October 2022

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer:** Wednesday, 26 October 2022

**Number of pages:** 2

#### **Question:**

Senator THORPE: Sorry. So there's been an intervention on people's lives that removed the racial discrimination laws to be able to discriminate, and my question is: when is the Australian government, through your agency, going to talk to the Aboriginal people who have been under this racist regime? Are there any plans for the government to talk to the people that this affects? When? How? Basically that's my question, just so I can let the community know, because they're waiting.

Ms Jackson: On the issue of Stronger Futures, I think the question is better directed to the Northern Territory government, who will be appearing shortly, and they have been consulting on the arrangements. But in terms of your broader question, we do have a range of offices around the country. The NIAA's staff are in regular contact with communities and community organisations on a range of issues, and we certainly have the ability, through our national and regional presence, to bring those views in through to our policy settings.

Senator THORPE: I have one more question, Chair.

CHAIR: Sorry, I need to go back to Melissa Price, because she had real difficulty at the start of this.

Senator THORPE: I just wanted to ask—

CHAIR: Sorry, the time limit which we allocated previously you've run over.

Senator THORPE: Just following up on that last question, could I ask the NIAA to please provide information about what their plans are to talk to community and what they have been, on notice?

**Answer:**

The National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) worked with the Northern Territory (NT) Government and key community representatives, including land councils and the Aboriginal Peak Organisations NT (APO NT) in relation to the sunseting of the Stronger Futures legislation.

Stakeholders who participated in the 2016 review are included in the answer to QoN 0006.

The Northern Territory Government led consultation with communities on the changes to alcohol restrictions as a result of the sunseting of Stronger Futures legislation.

More broadly, the NIAA has a staff presence in 55 locations across the country, 19 of which are in the Northern Territory. The 19 locations include 14 occupied remote sites, 4 regional centres and Darwin. The NIAA also has premises in 39 other locations that while not currently occupied, some are used for fly-in-fly out and/or awaiting assignment of new Government Engagement Offices.

In addition to regular local engagement with community, the NIAA also engages on community-based issues through Australian Government funded service providers.

The NIAA is also uniquely positioned to support other Australian Government agency engagement with community and service providers and do so through both formal and informal mechanisms. The NIAA also participates, as appropriate, in community engagement led by the Northern Territory Government.



## Joint Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs

### ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

#### Inquiry into Community Safety, Support Services and Job Opportunities in the Northern Territory

**Department/Agency:** National Indigenous Australians Agency

**Topic:** Planning for sunseting/transition

**Member:** Marion Scrymgour MP

**Question reference number:** 0006

**Type of question:** Hansard, page 7, Wednesday, 19 October 2022

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer:** Wednesday, 26 October 2022

**Number of pages:** 3

#### **Question:**

Ms SCRYMGOUR: Just for expedience, because we only get limited time: what planning did NIAA undertake for this transition, knowing that there was going to be this sunseting? Surely, given the investment in the Northern Territory and in these communities under Stronger Futures, the agency that was chartered with this would have done some planning in terms of this transition. So can somebody please answer or table for our information what that planning was for that transition from NIAA or Commonwealth control back to the Northern Territory government?

Ms Jackson: We talked about the transition arrangements in some detail today, but in the interests of the detail you're looking for we'll take the question on notice. We do have more detail around the meetings we've had with the Northern Territory government in the planning. As Mr Dyer indicated, we always knew there was a sunseting clause, and we'd been planning for this and working with the Northern Territory government. So we'll take that on notice and give you that more detail.

#### **Answer:**

In December 2020 a taskforce was established in the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) to lead consideration of the Australian Government's response to the sunseting of the *Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory Act 2012* (Stronger Futures Act) and Part 10 of the *Classification (Publications, Films and Computer Games) Act 1995* (Classifications Act).

The taskforce led the Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory: Sunset Review. The scope of the review was to assess the impact of the Stronger Futures Act and Part 10 of the Classification Act and identify the implications of them sunseting. It also recommended future actions to address aspects of alcohol misuse, land reform, food security and prohibited materials policy ceasing under the legislation that are of continuing relevance. The findings were intended to assist the Australian Government and the NT Government to consider

arrangements to address these matters when the legislation ceases. The final draft of the Sunset Review was finalised in October 2021 and shared with the NT Government and consulted with key stakeholders. The draft was finalised by the former Minister on 6 April 2022, following consideration of stakeholder engagement.

Formal engagement with NT Government to discuss approaches to sunseting of the Stronger Futures Act commenced in April 2021, noting the NT Government were aware of the sunset provision in the Act.

The timeline below outlines key events prior to the sunseting of the Stronger Futures legislation.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Action</b>
December 2020	NIAA Taskforce established to review the <i>Stronger Futures in the Northern Territories Act 2012</i> and lead engagement with the NT Government on recommendations and approach
7 April 2021	NIAA officials met with the NT Government to discuss the sunseting of the Stronger Futures Act to sunset.
20 August 2021	NIAA and NT Government send joint correspondence to the Land Councils seeking a meeting to discuss the sunseting arrangements.
October 2021	NIAA Sunset Review of the Stronger Futures legislation complete
27 October 2021	The former Minister for Indigenous Australians, the Hon Ken Wyatt AM MP wrote to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, the Hon Selena Uibo MLA noting the findings of the draft Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory: Sunset Review. Former Minister Wyatt also wrote to the former Minister for Communications, Urban Infrastructure, Cities and the Arts, the Hon Paul Fletcher MP regarding the preliminary findings of the Sunset Review for Part 10 of the <i>Classification (Publications, Films and Computer Games) Act 1995</i> (Classification Act).
28 October 2021	NT Government provide an overview of options for the Stronger Futures legislation at the Closing the Gap Partnership Working Group meeting.
11 November 2021	NIAA circulated the draft Stronger Futures Sunset Review and a paper outlining suggested sunseting approaches to Land Councils and APONT
15 November 2021	NIAA officials and NT Government met with APONT membership and outlined the potential sunset of the Stronger Futures Act and transition of elements to the Northern Territory. APONT members included Land Councils, Yilli Rreung Housing, NT Indigenous Business Network and NAAJA
3 December 2021	The Hon Selena Uibo MLA, wrote to the Hon Ken Wyatt AM MP to confirm the NT Government’s position to amend the Liquor Act 2019 (NT) and lead community-based consultations to determine what aspirations communities had with respect to alcohol. The NT Government also noted the limited effectiveness of Part 10 of the Classification Act due to advances in technology and that the NT establishing a remote stores licensing scheme was dependent on appropriate resourcing.
9 February 2022	NIAA and NT Government met with APONT stakeholders to discuss sunseting arrangements.

3 March 2022	NIAA, NT Government and APONT met at Community-Identified Aspirations (Alcohol) Steering Group Meeting to discuss sunseting arrangements for alcohol.
8 March 2022	NIAA attended the NT Aboriginal Health Forum to discuss the sunseting arrangements.
25 March 2022	Further engagement with NT Aboriginal Health Forum on SFNT
6 April 2022	Former Minister Wyatt endorsed the draft Sunset Review and wrote to Minister Uibo, confirming agreement to allow Stronger Futures Act to sunset based on the findings of the review and the NT Government’s offer to transition responsibility for alcohol, stores licensing and land management measures to NT legislation. Former Minister Wyatt also wrote to the Hon Paul Fletcher MP confirming the intention to sunset and noted the findings of the Sunset Review that the effectiveness of Part 10 of the Classifications Act had been diminished by rapid advancement in technology.
14 April 2022	NT Government informed NIAA it met with APONT to brief them on the NT Liquor Act 2019 amendments.
17 May 2022	NT Government passed the Associations and Liquor Amendment Bill 2022. ( <a href="#">Associations and Liquor Amendment Bill 2022</a> )  This included amending the <i>Liquor Act 2019</i> to include opt-in arrangements for communities affected by the sunseting.  This also included amendments to the <i>Associations Act 2003</i> to ensure that the expanded rights and interests provided to Community Living Area land owners under the Stronger Futures Act would continue.  <a href="#">Associations Act 2003 (NT)</a>  <a href="#">Liquor Act 2019 (NT)</a>
15 July 2022	NIAA and the NT Government wrote a joint letter to store managers/owners, and peak community organisations in the NT to advise them of the impact of the sunseting and NT Government’s plans to establish a remote stores licensing scheme.
17 July 2022	The <i>Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory Act 2012</i> sunset

## **Joint Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs**

### **ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

#### **Inquiry into Community Safety, Support Services and Job Opportunities in the Northern Territory**

**Department/Agency:** National Indigenous Australians Agency

**Topic:** Work with the NT Government on opt in / opt out

**Member:** Kate Chaney MP

**Question reference number:** 0007

**Type of question:** Hansard, page 7, Wednesday, 19 October 2022

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer:** Wednesday, 26 October 2022

**Number of pages:** 1

#### **Question:**

Ms SCRYMGOUR: Can I just ask, Rachael, did you work with the Northern Territory government on an opt-out or opt-in program in relation to those alcohol measures that came under Stronger Futures?

Ms Jackson: I'll take that on notice and come back.

#### **Answer:**

The National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) worked with the Northern Territory (NT) Government with regards to the transition of alcohol measures that came under the Stronger Futures Act, including identifying which communities would not be covered by *Liquor Act 2019* (NT) once the Stronger Futures Act sunsetted.

The NIAA did not work with the NT Government with regards to the development of their 'opt-in' or 'opt-out' approach taken for communities not covered by the *Liquor Act 2019* (NT) once Stronger Futures sunsetted.

## **Joint Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs**

### **ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

#### **Inquiry into Community Safety. Support Services and Job Opportunities in the Northern Territory**

**Department/Agency:** National Indigenous Australians Agency

**Topic:** List of stakeholders who were consulted as part of the SFNT Review 2016

**Member:** Kate Chaney MP

**Question reference number:** 0008

**Type of question:** Hansard, page 7, Wednesday, 19 October 2022

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**Number of pages:** 1

#### **Question:**

Ms CHANEY: My question I'm interested in the NIAA's opinion on is, if it's difficult to pinpoint any benefit from the Stronger Futures legislation, why is that? What can we learn about legislation going forward based on the last 10 years and your assessment of whether or not that was effective?

Ms Hartmann: Thanks for the question. Part of the review that was done in 2016 focused on the first three years of operation of the Stronger Futures act, and the review found that in particular the land reform measures and the licensing regime legislation and policy framework created beneficial results. That was the finding of that review. That review is publicly available; I'm happy also to send that to you. It found overall that the first three years of operation of the act were largely effective. That's what that particular review found with regard to the legislation. The review that Minister Ellison undertook in 2015 concluded that there were no changes to the regulations, or to the legislation itself that were required. Minister Ellison found that the legislation was operating as intended, as a whole. Those are the two reviews that were done and that was the finding. Hopefully that answers the question.

#### **Answer:**

See [Review of Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory Act \(2012\)](#), KPMG, 2016 and [Independent Review of Northern Territory and Commonwealth Laws in Reducing Alcohol-Related Harm](#), Minister Ellison, 2015.

## **Joint Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs**

### **ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

#### **Inquiry into Community Safety, Support Services and Job Opportunities in the Northern Territory**

**Department/Agency:** National Indigenous Australians Agency

**Topic:** Alcohol data monitoring group

**Member:** Marion Scrymgour

**Question reference number:** 0009

**Type of question:** Hansard, page 9, Wednesday, 19 October 2022

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer:** Wednesday, 26 October 2022

**Number of pages:** 2

#### **Question:**

Ms SCRYMGOUR: I'm not sure who will answer this, but it's in relation to an announcement the minister made following the sunseting of Stronger Futures for an alcohol monitoring program to be established, particularly in Alice Springs. Can someone please tell me where that's up to? Has that been implemented? Has NIAA worked with both the non-government or community controlled health sector and the Northern Territory government to put that critical process in place that the minister made the announcement about upon the sunseting of Stronger Futures?

Ms Jackson: We are very aware of the minister's desire to have this working group and data available. I think Mr Dyer could talk to where it's up to. It's been very active with the Northern Territory government on this point.

Mr Dyer: Yes, we've been very active. We have a couple of groups that have been proposed to be repurposed and used to support the data. We're having conversations about that. There's also a proposal by the community sector for a new group to be established. Those conversations are still live, and it would be nice to settle those soon. Obviously, whenever we start a new governance group, we need to get everybody comfortable with that, so we're in that stage of working through to make sure that everyone is comfortable. Having said that, the Northern Territory government has been open to running forums and talking about trends, and recently we and APO NT sat through a briefing on where their analysis shows trends going.

Ms SCRYMGOUR: [Inaudible] NIAA take that on notice and provide that information. Given the investment from the Commonwealth that will continue through this process, can you place take on notice and provide that information. I get that everyone's talking. I think there's been a lot of talking. I would like to know what substantial outcomes are actually happening from this. It would be really good if I could get information about where things are at from NIAA's perspective, given the investment that is still coming into the Northern Territory from the Commonwealth, and also from the NT government's point of view. There

are a lot of issues at stake here, and I think it should be more than just lip service and talking about it. Please take that on notice.

Ms Jackson: Yes, we are happy to take that on notice.

**Answer:**

The National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) is working with the Northern Territory (NT) Government to monitor any changes in alcohol related harm following the sunset of the Stronger Futures legislation.

The NIAA, Association of Alcohol and other Drug Agencies NT (AADANT) and Aboriginal Peak Organisations NT (APO NT) are members of the Alcohol and Other Drugs Coordination Group, which is convened and chaired by the NT Government. The Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance NT (AMSANT) has a standing invitation. The group takes a data and evidence informed approach to coordinating effort. The last meeting of the group was 20 October 2022. This follows the group being re-established following the sunset of Stronger Futures.

The NIAA and APO NT are members of the Community Identified (Alcohol) Aspirations Steering Committee, which is convened and chaired by the NT Government. The Steering Committee last met on 29 September 2022 and the NT Government provided their interpretations of trends of alcohol harm since the Stronger Futures Act sunsetted.

The Steering Committee was active prior to sunset, meeting on 3 March 2022 and 15 July 2022 to ensure relevant stakeholders were aware of how the NT Government was progressing with consultations on the opt-in approach.

Going forward the Steering Committee will look at how solutions of supply and harm reduction can be developed with community.

The NIAA, the NT Government and AMSANT are bringing together a dedicated group that will focus on alcohol related data since the sunset of the Stronger Futures Act.

In the interim, the NT Government is sharing findings from data and operational intelligence on a bilateral basis with the NIAA.