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Celebrating 40 years of sector and community leadership, 1967 - 2007

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23 July 2008

The Secretary
Senate Community Affairs Committee
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Inquiry into petrol sniffing and substance abuse in Central Australia

Dear Mr Humphery,

The Alcohol and other Drugs Council of Australia (ADCA) is pleased to respond to your invitation on 25 June 2008 to provide a submission to the Inquiry into petrol sniffing and substance abuse in Central Australia.

In January 2008, ADCA won a tender to provide an inhalants information clearinghouse. The project came about from the work of the National Inhalant Abuse Taskforce, which recommended that the establishment of a national inhalant abuse clearinghouse be developed - which is now known as the National Inhalants Information Service (NIIS).

The NIIS has filled a vital missing information gap on inhalant abuse, and will help to increase knowledge and awareness of this issue across Australia. The new website and service also aims to enhance the ability for people to respond to inhalant abuse in Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities.

As part of the project, ADCA is also conducting a comprehensive audit of the current websites and printable resources that address petrol sniffing and substance abuse issues.

Funding for the project was made available through the Ministerial Council on Drug Strategy Cost Shared Funding Model. The project is managed by the Drugs Policy and Services Branch of the Victorian Department of Human Services and undertaken by ADCA.

In June 2008 the NIIS, which comprises of a website and database, was officially launched in Alice Springs by Blair McFarland (CEO Central Australian Youth Link-Up Service, NT Australian of the Year finalist; and joint winner of the Prime Ministers Award for Excellence and Outstanding contribution to Drug and Alcohol Endeavours at the National Drug and Alcohol Awards and member of the NIIS Stakeholder Group).

The unique central web-based service provides immediate online information about inhalant abuse, which includes petrol sniffing, chroming, and glue sniffing, to communities across Australia. The service is also particularly relevant for parents, teachers, young people, and frontline workers in the alcohol and other drug (AOD) sector.

People wanting to know more about inhalant abuse can now log onto the NIIS website at www.inhalantsinfo.org.au to read or download information about inhalants used in Australia, treatment guidelines, where to go for help, user stories, new resources, and projects. There are also links to other sites and major reports on inhalant use. In addition the service also offers everything you'd expect from a traditional library, including an "Ask a Librarian" reference service, and free document delivery.

ADCA believes the new NIIS website and support service will significantly assist with addressing the effectiveness and adequacy of resources currently provided on petrol sniffing and substance abuse in central Australia.

If the Senate Affairs Committee requires any additional information in relation to this web service please contact the Manager of the National Resource Centre, ADCA Jane Shelling on (02) 6281 0686 or at jane.shelling@adca.org.au

ADCA does not see it necessary to provide any further information to the Committee by way of presentation to the Inquiry.

Yours Sincerely



David Templeman
Chief Executive Officer
Alcohol and other Drugs Council of Australia