



MEDIA RELEASE

'ICE' SELECT COMMITTEE

15 July 2015

Katherine Public Hearing, Forum and Site Visit

The 'Ice' Select Committee visited Katherine yesterday to gain a better understanding about the impact that 'ice' is having on the community and what actions the Government can take to address the issue. Following hearings with the Association of Alcohol and Other Drug Agencies NT and Venndale Rehabilitation Centre, concerned residents and representatives from a wide range of organisations were invited to share their views and experience about the issues they face, and the steps needed to minimise the harm to individuals, families and the community.

"The available data indicates that 'ice' is an emerging issue in Katherine, and the community is clearly worried that if we don't nip it in the bud the NT could end up experiencing similar problems to what is happening in regional centres in Victoria and New South Wales," Chair of the Committee, Mr Nathan Barrett MLA, said. Two of the main concerns raised by service providers were the lack of detox beds available in the NT and the need to up skill Alcohol and Other Drug Workers in 'ice' specific treatment and rehabilitation methods.

"While the Committee will be making high-level recommendations regarding demand, supply and harm minimisation", Mr Barrett noted that "localised solutions are also required to complement the Government's efforts; everyone has a role to play in dealing with this situation."

The Committee heard that one of the biggest stumbling blocks for Police was the community's reluctance to report ice-related activity. "It is evident from many of the comments made that fear of retribution in such a close-knit town has resulted in underreporting." Mr Barrett said. How best to counter young people's perception of 'ice' as a harmless party drug was also raised as an issue of concern.

"On behalf of the Committee, I would like to thank the Katherine community for such a great turn out today and for sharing their concerns and ideas with us. It has been a very productive session and of great assistance to the Committee," Mr Barrett said.

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