



---

# MEDIA RELEASE

## Substance Abuse in the Community

---

28 June 2002

### Community Consultations

The Northern Territory Parliamentary Committee inquiring into substance abuse is commencing its community consultations program, with meetings and briefings to be held in Alice Springs and selected communities in the region from 2 to 4 July 2002.

These meetings will be chaired by the Member for Barkly, Mr Elliot McAdam, MLA. The other Committee Members are:

Ms Marion Scrymgour, MLA, Member for Arafura  
Dr Chris Burns, MLA, Member for Johnston  
Ms Sue Carter, MLA, Member for Port Darwin  
Dr Richard Lim, MLA, Member for Greatorex  
Mr Gerry Wood, MLA, Member for Nelson

Established by the Northern Territory Legislative Assembly in late-2001, the Committee is charged with inquiring into substance abuse issues, including trends in the use of the various legal and illegal drugs and their impact in the Territory at the urban, regional and community level, as well as the services currently available for addressing the problems.

The Committee is to report to the Legislative Assembly on these issues, recommending appropriate policies and services for the prevention and treatment of substance abuse.

The initial focus for the Committee is on alcohol abuse, petrol and other inhalant sniffing and the use of cannabis.

As well as meeting with the traditional owners and representational organisations in Alice Springs, meetings will be held at Yuendumu, Mutitjulu and Hermannsburg.

In particular, the Committee is keen to look at the Mt Theo/Yuendumu petrol sniffing program, of which there have been favourable reports. There is also evidence that coordinated approaches to the problems surrounding substance abuse on a community-wide basis can be positive.

Mr McAdam said that the problems arising from substance abuse are well known and documented. It is now time to look at what does and what does not work, so that positive steps can be taken to alleviate the devastation which it causes to Indigenous and other Territory communities. He said the Committee is particularly keen to look at the coordination of effort at all levels to ensure that maximum value is obtained from the funds available.

While this round of meetings and briefings is investigative, the Committee will be holding public hearings in all major centres at a future time. It has advertised extensively for input to its deliberations.

Further information and details on how to provide submissions to the Committee can be found on the following [page](#) or by contacting the Committee Secretariat on telephone 8946 1429.