

18/6/19

**Submission to the NT Legislative Assembly Economic Policy Scrutiny Committee
Northern Territory Liquor Bill**

CAYLUS has been working to reduce the supply for misuse of common intoxicating retail substances since 2002. This includes inedible alcoholic substances like methylated spirits, vanilla essence and mouthwash. We have been able to make good progress in Alice Springs and the remote area we support in Central Australia despite a lack of a regulatory framework to require good management of such substances.

CAYLUS is unique in the NT in that we have federal funding that we can use to resource safe storage strategies, such as steel cages. Also our capacity to communicate with interstate corporations and engage in media has meant that retailers are responsive to our proposals for measures to protect the community and prevent harm. However, our success in working with retailers relies on retailers' voluntary efforts and these come and go over time as staff turnover or priorities of the retailer's shift. Consequently, since 2009 we have lobbied the NT Government to add safe storage provisions to the NT VSAP Act. This lobbying was done in partnership with the NT Police, Health Department and AMITY, who were part of a Health Department Safe Storage reference group in 2010 that made a cabinet submission that was not acted on.

This current update of the Liquor laws creates the opportunity to learn from CAYLUS success and create a regulatory framework applying to retail products that contain Alcohol so that other parts of the NT can benefit from the safe storage practices that we have orchestrated in our region. As outlined, there has been a considerable amount of thought gone into how this would operate to minimise the obligations of retailers but also prevent substance misuse.

CAYLUS would like to make the following recommendations

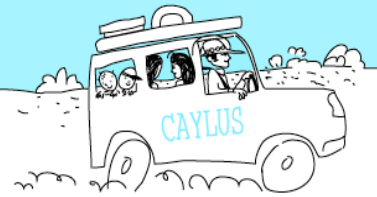
Recommendation: That the Bill be amended by the addition of the following or similar to allow for the control of inedible substances containing alcohol: s150 (3): That the sale and storage of inedible substances containing alcohol may be prescribed by regulation

Recommendation: That the Committee recommends that a similar provision be added to the *Medicines, Poisons and Therapeutic Good Act* to allow for similar regulation of the sale of methylated spirits.

Please find attached a copy of our submission on the exposure draft of the bill which provides further information on our work. I am happy to be contacted if you require further information.

Yours sincerely,

Tristan Ray
Policy and Project Manager



26/4/19

Comment on the exposure draft of the NT Liquor Bill 2019

Section 5 Inedible substances containing alcohol

CAYLUS has many years of experience supporting retailers in the good-management of potentially intoxicating retail products. Based on this we offer a suggestion around legislating safe management requirements for retail products containing alcohol that are targeted for intoxication such as methylated spirits.

Supply reduction through safe storage requirements

Since 2002 we have worked with retailers in Alice Springs and the region to restrict supply of inhalants and more recently methylated spirits on the request of the NT Police. In this work we have relied on our long-term relationships with the local retailers and have enacted a number of strategies that have been undertaken on a voluntary basis by retailers and which have reduced the availability of potentially dangerous substances in Alice Springs and our region.

In relation to inhalants this work would be much more straightforward if the NT Volatile Substance Abuse Prevention (VSAP) Act had provisions regarding safe storage of inhalants. CAYLUS has proposed this to the NT Health Department on many occasions since 2002 but no safe storage amendments have been made. In 2010 the NT Health Department formed an Advisory Group on the Security and Safe Storage of Volatile Substances that helped develop a cabinet submission to move towards adding safe storage to the VSAP legislation. However, the then Minister declined to take any action. CAYLUS has attempted to resurrect this amendment on subsequent occasions through discussions with NT Health but has had no success.

The safe storage proposal in 2010 was that the police could require a specific shop to develop a safe storage plan within 28 days. In our proposal the store could call on the Health Department for assistance to develop the plan. The plan would then be accepted by the CHO and would become enforceable by the police. This approach means a plan can be developed for a specific store by the retailer rather than having a generic plan that may not suit the specific circumstances.

There are a range of retail products containing alcohol that are commonly targeted for drinking in Alice Springs. Currently Methylated Spirits is the biggest issue. We propose that consideration be given to either adding safe storage requirements for retail products containing alcohol to the Liquor Act, along the lines of the 2010 proposal or to developing a wider piece of legislation that covers volatile substances as well as products containing alcohol.

For further detail please contact Tristan Ray, CAYLUS Policy and Projects Manager on 0427181727 or email tristan@caylus.org.au