



Media Release

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Supporting regional communities to reduce alcohol-related harms

The Western Australian Council of Social Services (WACOSS) and the Western Australian Network of Alcohol and other Drug Agencies (WANADA) call on the State Government to support community engagement in reducing alcohol related harms in the Pilbara Region.

The Pilbara has some of the highest levels of alcohol consumption in Australia, with those in the Pilbara drinking on average 21.1 litres per person per annum, compared with an average of 11.4 litres per person across the State.

Pilbara Manager of WACOSS, Sarah Turner, said that the proposed liquor restrictions across the region will positively contribute to improving the health and wellbeing of communities.

“Our local community services are behind the proposed liquor restrictions. We see first-hand the harms experienced by people as a result of high levels of alcohol consumption. This includes hospitalisations, road traffic accidents, workplace safety, and general and mental health. It is essential that we, as a community and a region, all contribute to the solution.”

Currently, the Liquor Commission has granted a stay on the restrictions, pending the hearing of an appeal from the Australian Hotels Association. It is essential that any appeal process includes public consultation, including from those local services with expertise in addressing harms associated with alcohol.

“We strongly encourage everyone to learn about why the proposed restrictions are recommended,” said Sarah Turner “and we call on everyone to contribute to the creation of supportive environments that assist communities to reduce their alcohol consumption. This includes ensuring we have sufficient services to meet their health and wellbeing needs.”

Chief Executive Officer of WANADA, Jill Rundle, highlighted how many regional communities are already working together to reduce harms.

“The Kimberley Coronial Inquest into youth suicides highlighted success stories related to liquor restrictions in that region, and has also called for region-wide restrictions.”

“The evidence is clear: the community benefits from whole-of-population initiatives when the whole of the community has been affected. Everyone has a role in reducing the harms associated with alcohol.”

Ends.

Media Contacts:

WACOSS – Laurene Coller, Communications Officer, laurene@wacoss.org.au, 0419 316 557

WANADA – Deanne Ferris, Communications Officer, Deanne.ferri@wanada.org.au, 08 6557 9400