# Submission to the Review of alcohol policies and legislation: Alcohol harm reduction framework

Alcohol is causing devastation to the health and well-being of individuals, families, and communities across the Northern Territory. Because of this the Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE) welcomed the opportunity to make a submission to the Gunner Government to address the fundamental components required for a strong alcohol harm reduction framework. The submission calls on the Gunner Government to continue to stand up to those with vested interests who seek to profit from alcohol harm in the Territory.

The joint submission sets out five principles that should underpin the framework’s development and implementation.

1. Policy development processes must be informed by the evidence.
2. An alcohol harm reduction framework must take a public health approach that prioritises prevention.
3. The development of an alcohol harm reduction framework must be open and transparent.
4. Community engagement is necessary to ensure that the health and safety of Territorians is considered at every stage.
5. An alcohol harm reduction framework must be a strategy aimed at reducing the negative impact on all Territorians.

The submission sends a clear message to the Gunner Government to employ an alcohol harm reduction framework that addresses four key areas across the health and regulatory systems in the NT to improve the health and well-being of all Territorians, regardless of race, gender, socio-economic status and geographic factors.

## Recommendations

This submission includes a total of 53 recommendations (the first ten listed below) made to the Gunner Government. If taken on board, the recommendations would greatly assist the Gunner Government in accomplishing lasting change.

1. Introduce a minimum unit price for alcohol set at $1.50 per standard drink.
2. Index the minimum unit price against average ordinary time wages to ensure its effect is not diminished over time.
3. The Northern Territory Government advocate that the Commonwealth Government abolish the Wine Equalisation Tax (WET) and apply a volumetric tax for all alcohol products.
4. Amend the Liquor Act to include and define licence categories.
5. Amend the Liquor Act to include an annual licence renewal process.
6. Introduce a risk-based licensing fee system for all licence types that (as a minimum) offsets the cost of alcohol-related harm borne by government and the community. At a minimum, a system should calculate fees according to licence type, occupancy, trading hours, location, volume of gross liquor sold and number of licences owned by an operator.
7. Amend the Liquor Act to incorporate and require standard trading hours on Monday to Saturday of 10am-midnight for on-licence premises, and retain 10am-10pm on Sunday. The capacity to apply conditions to licences and reduce trading hours for high risk venues and/or venues in high risk locations should also be retained.
8. Introduce designated precincts for late night venues, based on the density of outlets and late trading in these locations. Late night precincts would include:
	* on-licence premises trading be able to apply to trade until 2am subject to a risk assessment
	* drink restrictions after midnight
	* ID scanning mandatory for all licensed premises and linked to the Banned Drinker Register to prevent patrons on the register from purchasing and consuming alcohol.
9. Amend the Liquor Act to incorporate and require standard closing times for all takeaway liquor outlets to be no earlier than 10am and no later than 10pm, including public holidays.
	* Retain restrictions in areas where later opening times and earlier closing times for takeaway alcohol are in place and continue to allow the Director-General to apply these conditions on licences where appropriate.
10. Amend the Liquor Act to:
	* incorporate the Guideline for applying for a takeaway liquor licence, and
	* require the freeze on new takeaway liquor licences to apply to licence transfers in addition to new takeaway licences.

[view the submission](https://fare.org.au/wp-content/uploads/NT-Submission-FINAL-3-July-2017-1.pdf)