Alcohol control policies (AMPs) in Indigenous communities in Queensland: Is a focus on supply control sustainable?

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# A complex regulatory history and policy environment across four phases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phases</th>
<th>Community</th>
<th>First alcohol restrictions with limits on possession and carriage</th>
<th>A period of review</th>
<th>Controls on alcohol availability further tightened during this time</th>
<th>A second period of review</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Prelude: from the 1990s to the Cape York Justice Study, 2001</strong></td>
<td><strong>Phase 1: 2002 to 2004</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>All alcohol prohibited</td>
<td><strong>Aurukun</strong></td>
<td>Carriage limit from 30 Dec 02</td>
<td>Tavern closes 27 Nov 08</td>
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<tr>
<td>Some alcohol permitted</td>
<td><strong>Doomadgee</strong></td>
<td>Carriage limit from 9 Jun 03</td>
<td>Carriage limit amended 2 Jan 09</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Napirran</strong></td>
<td>Zero carriage from 9 Jun 03</td>
<td>Tavern closes 1 Jul 08</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Lockhart River</strong></td>
<td>Zero carriage from 3 Oct 03</td>
<td>Canteen ceases 1 Nov 08</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Wooborrabindah</strong></td>
<td>Zero carriage from 3 Oct 03</td>
<td>Zero carriage from 1 Jul 08</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Wujal Wujal</strong></td>
<td>Zero carriage from 3 Oct 03</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Mornington Island</strong></td>
<td>Zero carriage from 28 Nov 03</td>
<td>Canteen closed 24 Jan 08</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Kuwartanyu</strong></td>
<td>Zero carriage from 5 Dec 03</td>
<td>Tavern closes 27 Nov 08</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Pommuruw</strong></td>
<td>Carriage limit from 5 Dec 03</td>
<td>Canteen changes 1 Dec 08</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Yarrabah</strong></td>
<td>Carriage limit from 6 Feb 04</td>
<td>Licence surrendered 1 Feb 08</td>
<td>Carriage limit amended 2 Jan 09</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Northern Peninsula Area †</strong></td>
<td>Carriage limit 14 Apr 04</td>
<td>Carriage limit amended 21 Dec 06</td>
<td>Abou Tavern ceases 31 Dec 08</td>
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<td><strong>Mapoon</strong></td>
<td>Carriage limit 14 Apr 04</td>
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<td><strong>Hopevale</strong></td>
<td>Carriage limit 14 Apr 04</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Cherbourg</strong></td>
<td>17 Dec 04 - no limits declared - some dry places declared</td>
<td>Carriage limit from 12 Mar 09</td>
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<td><strong>Palm Island</strong></td>
<td>Carriage limit 19 Jun 06</td>
<td>Coronation Tavern re-opened Sep 10</td>
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</table>

### Key intervention strategies

- Cape York Justice Study (2001)
- Meeting Challenges Making a Difference (2007) and Partnerships Quota
- Whole of Government Review of alcohol and other substances programs and services.
- Alcohol Reform Project (2009)
- Sale Communities
- Community Safety Plan

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Prohibition, restricted access, ‘minimizing harm’ conditions

Phase 1: 2002-2004: ‘MCMC’
- ‘restricted areas’ with alcohol ‘carriage limits’, illegal to possess prescribed amounts and types of liquor in targeted communities (S168B – Liquor Act).

Phase 2: 2005-2007: ‘minimising harm’
- evaluations and reviews by the Queensland Government brought recommendations for more stringent controls.
- ‘minimising harm’ provisions for ‘catchment’ licensed premises in regional centres.

Phase 3: 2008-2010: ‘dry as possible’
- 7 ‘canteens’ closed, 2 modified trading conditions
- Police powers to search and seize increased
- ‘attempting’ to take liquor into a ‘restricted area’ also became an offence (S168C – Liquor Act) alongside possession.

Phase 4: 2011- ~ ‘exit strategies’
- another period of review.

Points to note and questions raised

- AMPs ever-more-intense and complex restrictions on alcohol availability.
- There have been some favourable changes, but not in all communities.
- Still lacking support for demand reduction, rehabilitation, treatment and diversion as originally committed.
- Confusion, resentment, non-compliance and increased criminalisation appear still to be widespread.
- How much further can supply control and enforcement go?
- Current review of AMPs, announced in 2012, is very timely.
  - opportunity for steady and thoughtful policy revision,
  - based on comprehensive consultation and engagement with the affected populations and stakeholders
  - To retain any successful elements but also be wary of unforeseen consequences.
Acknowledgements

- NHMRC, Project Grant APP1042532 collaborating Investigators: Professor Steven Margolis, Associate Professor Reinhold Muller, Professor Adrian Miller, Associate Professor Anthony Shakeshaft, Professor Chris Doran, Laureate Professor Rob Sanson-Fisher, Professor Robyn McDermott, Dr Valmae Ypinazar and Mr Simon Towle. Thanks to Ms Bronwyn Honorato, Ms Michelle Fitts, Ms Jan Robertson, Dr Caryn West, Dr Valmae Ypinazar, Dr David Martin, Associate Professor Reinhold Muller and Professor Steven Margolis.

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