

# A BETTER, SAFER FUTURE FOR CENTRAL AUSTRALIA

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## *MEDIA RELEASE*

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Prime Minister, Chief Minister of the Northern Territory

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The Australian and Northern Territory Governments have today announced a landmark package for Central Australia that will improve community safety, tackle alcohol-related harm, and provide more opportunities for young people.

The Northern Territory and Australian Governments will continue to work with the Central Australian community on longer-term solutions to the issues locals are facing.

As experts and community leaders have pointed out, alcohol restrictions alone will not address the underlying causes of antisocial behaviour. The issues are complex and have developed over decades.

The Northern Territory Government will bring forward legislation next week to strengthen alcohol restrictions so that town camps and communities will revert to dry zones. This new legislation will follow a local decision making process, where Community Alcohol Plans will be developed by the community and then must be approved by the Director of Liquor Licensing. Communities that want to opt-out of a dry-zone will need 60% of the population to vote in support of the Community Alcohol Plan.

Local areas will be able to choose to remain dry, or select tailored restrictions which work for them.

To address the decline in services and investment over the last decade in particular, the Australian Government will invest \$250 million in a plan for *A Better, Safer Future for Central Australia*. This plan will focus on:

1. **Improved community safety and cohesion** – through more youth engagement and diversion programs.
2. **Job creation** – particularly in the communities that surround Alice Springs – including urgent changes as part of replacing the failed Community Development Program (CDP).

3. **Better services** – by improving health services in surrounding communities, there will be less pressure on Alice Springs.
4. Preventing and addressing the issues caused by **Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders** – including better responding through the health and justice systems.
5. **Investing in families** – including by better supporting elders and parents, boosting domestic violence services.
6. **On country learning** – improving school attendance and completion through caring for culture and country.

These actions by the Northern Territory and Australian Governments are based on the recommendations of Central Australian Regional Controller, Dorrelle Anderson.

For too long decisions about Central Australia have been made in Canberra. This time, the Australian Government will take a new approach by listening to communities first.

Today's announcements are in addition to the \$48 million investment in community safety announced by the Australian Government on 24 January, which included:

1. \$14.2 in additional funding for extra high visibility police and law enforcement operations including targeting grog running, and increasing liquor licensing compliance inspectors and boosting security guards in public places.
2. A \$2m investment to improve CCTV, lighting and safety measures throughout Alice Springs.
3. \$5.6m for additional emergency accommodation and safe spaces to give young people a place to go to at night and boost the effectiveness of the night patrol program which will commence shortly to help get young people off the streets.
4. \$2m for the Tangentyere Women's Family Safety Group to boost Domestic Violence services.
5. \$25m to extend funding for safety and community services which are currently scheduled to end in June 2023 to provide certainty to providers and their employees and ensure this work continues.

The Australian Government's landmark investment in the Northern Territory will be delivered in partnership with the local community. Because the most effective solutions come from the local community.

The Australian Government will work with the local community, organisations, the Central Australian Regional Controller, the Northern Territory Government, businesses, local government and in line with the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.

PRIME MINISTER OF AUSTRALIA