

**0684 SAFER BARS WA – REDUCING VIOLENCE IN AND AROUND LICENSED PREMISES**

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**Background** Evidence has shown the causal link between alcohol consumption and violence is indisputable. In Western Australia (WA), the number of alcohol related assaults markedly increased by 52.1% from 1991/1992 to 1997/1998. Licensed premises are locations that are at high risk for alcohol intoxication and illicit drug use. The Safer Bars program, developed in Canada in the late 1990's, resulted in a 30% reduction in violent incidences in bars where it has been trialled. Safer Bars WA, funded by the WA Government, has been adapted to the Australian context. It is a training program aimed to develop the skills and abilities of those who work in licensed premises to reduce aggression, violence and injury in these settings.

**Objectives** Of the Pilot Project are to: increase capacity of bar staff to prevent aggression, violence and injury in and around bars; reduce the number of violent incidents and injuries in and around bars; increase awareness of the links between alcohol and illicit drugs and violence; increase support for safer bar environments; increase collaboration between key stakeholders; reduce fear of violence for bar staff and patrons; develop training to best meet the needs of bar staff in WA.

**Discussion and conclusions** The state of this current pilot project will be discussed along with recommendations for the further development and use of the Safer Bars model within Australia. 1. Drug and Alcohol Office (2003). 2001 National Drug Strategy Household Survey – first results for WA.