

**Submission  
No 281**

## **SYDNEY'S NIGHT TIME ECONOMY**

**Organisation:** Specialist Alcohol Management Services Pty Ltd - trading as Three Cheers Training

**Date Received:** 28 June 2019

# THREE CHEERS TRAINING

SPECIALIST ALCOHOL MANAGEMENT SERVICES | BETTER FOR PATRONS. BETTER FOR BUSINESS. BETTER FOR THE COMMUNITY.

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28 June 2019

Submission to the Joint Select Committee on Sydney's night time economy

Written by: Sam Coffey

Director, Specialist Alcohol Management Services Pty Ltd T/A Three Cheers Training

**Subject: Special Alcohol Service Hospitality (SASH) is a win for patrons, business and the community**

Dear Select Committee,

The lockout laws were put in place to curb alcohol fuelled violence however they've had negative impacts on the prosperity of the licensed venue industry, their supplementary businesses and the vitality of Sydney's nightlife culture, the reputation for which has been damaged internationally.

There is, however, a proven method to manage licensed venues that improves community safety, improves individual and community health outcomes, enhances Sydney's night time economy and other directly relevant matters, plus improves business for the venues themselves. That method is the undertaking of the unique Three Cheers SASH (Special Alcohol Service Hospitality) patron management techniques by licensed venues.

Since 2009 I began working on a project, in consultation with members of the licensed venue industry, to see if there was a way that patrons could be managed that would improve their hospitality experience, take away potentially negative alcohol fuelled consequences e.g. violent incidents as well as some health concerns, and also improve business for the licensed venues themselves. This is how SASH was developed.

SASH is proactive patron management that focuses on patron psychology and physiology. It has its own unique theory which translates practically to standardised best approaches to scenarios that commonly arise in licensed venues. SASH guides patrons to best hospitality outcomes from the moment they arrive at the venue until the moment they leave and beyond.

Over the years SASH has proven itself anecdotally in a variety of different venues. During 2018 a year long trial of the program was overseen by Deakin University at a 500 person, popular venue in Sydney, thus providing key quantitative and qualitative data.

The full report on this trial has been added as an appendix to this submission, however the report's summary states;

**“Data Results:** Incident register data from (20 Jan '17 – 20 Jan '18) compared with incident register data from (20 Jan '18 – 20 Jan '19) show total incidents are down 56% in 2018 from 2017 figures; Approaching Intoxication down 55%, Intoxication down 75%, Violence down 500%, Aggression down 80%. There was a 5% increase in bar revenue in 2018 showing that the improved data statistics were not the result of a downturn in trade and indicate that the SASH program is of overall benefit to venue revenue. OAF management interviews reveal improvement in; hospitality patrons experience, enjoyment of staff in their roles, local amenity, relationships between staff and patrons.”

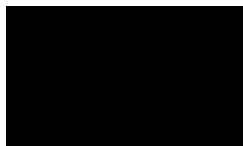
This trial was only at one venue so did not allow Deakin University to conclude conclusively that the SASH program is applicable to all licensed venues. This is why there is now a proposed multi-venue trial that takes in a variety of different venues which the University of New South Wales will be taking over the research arm for. Attached to this submission is the proposal for that trial which is presently seeking funding.

The Three Cheers SASH Program;

- Improves venue safety for both patrons and staff
- Improves safety in the local community and upholds local amenity
- Improves customer service and therefore enhances patron hospitality
- Improves staff enjoyment in their roles and therefore staff retention
- Improves a venue's relationship with the authorities (e.g. Police)
- Improves venue licence protection from liquor law breaches
- Improves venue reputation in the marketplace
- Improves revenue / profit in licensed venues

This program is a solution that allows vast improvements for patrons, the community and for business itself. It is a Win, Win, Win outcome for all involved.

Kind regards,



Sam Coffey

Director, Specialist Alcohol Management Services Pty Ltd

T/A Three Cheers Training

Email: 

# THREE CHEERS TRAINING

SPECIALIST ALCOHOL MANAGEMENT SERVICES | BETTER FOR PATRONS. BETTER FOR BUSINESS. BETTER FOR THE COMMUNITY.

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## **LICENSED VENUE TRIAL OF; THREE CHEERS SASH (SPECIAL ALCOHOL SERVICE HOSPITALITY) PROGRAM AT THE OXFORD ART FACTORY (OAF)**

Three Cheers Training, Oxford Art Factory, Prof. Peter Miller & Dr. Nic Droste of Deakin University's Centre for Drug, Alcohol and Addiction Research (CEDAAR)

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**Background:** Three Cheers Training's "Special Alcohol Service Hospitality" (SASH) has been deployed in various alcohol licensed venues since December 2009. The training aims to decrease incidents of patron intoxication, violence and aggression, as well as improving: the hospitality patrons experience, enjoyment of staff in their roles, relationships between staff and patrons, local amenity, venue culture and revenue. This trial seeks to test in a single venue whether the training meets its goals.

**Method:** Oxford Art Factory (OAF) is the study's licensed venue; a 500 person capacity, live music venue in Darlinghurst, Sydney. All their staff (management, bar staff, security etc.) were trained in SASH and the venue committed to properly implement SASH techniques to the standard they saw as a best fit for them. The study compares OAF's incident register data prior to implementation (2017) of SASH to post implementation (2018). Data catalogues incidents for approaching intoxication, intoxication, violence and aggression. Bar sales revenue between the two periods (2017 & 2018) was also compared. Data was collected and analysis was conducted in consultation with Deakin University. Interviews were conducted with OAF's General Manager / Licensee, their Bar Managers and Security Manager for their assessment of SASH in the OAF.

**Data Results:** Incident register data from (20 Jan '17 – 20 Jan '18) compared with incident register data from (20 Jan '18 – 20 Jan '19) show total incidents are down 56% in 2018 from 2017 figures; Approaching Intoxication down 55%, Intoxication down 75%, Violence down 500%, Aggression down 80%. There was a 5% increase in bar revenue in 2018 showing that the improved data statistics were not the result of a downturn in trade and indicate that the SASH program is of overall benefit to venue revenue. OAF management interviews reveal improvement in; hospitality patrons experience, enjoyment of staff in their roles, local amenity, relationships between staff and patrons.

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### **SASH COURSE INTRODUCTION**

SASH consists of proactive patron management techniques for licensed venues to integrate into their everyday operations. It is hospitality and safety outcome focused.

SASH is informed by world-leading research evidence from the fields of psychology, physiology and alcohol and other drug (AOD) research. It has its own unique theory which translates practically to standardised best approaches to 12 common scenarios that arise in licensed venues e.g. general service, saving a patron from intoxication, hosting party groups etc.

SASH theory has 3 foundations; Mood, Assist and Water (MAW). SASH demonstrates how to positively manage and influence patron mood, how to assist patrons in a hospitable manner so that they make the right choices, and how to hospitably keep patrons hydrated with water due to the dehydrating effects of alcohol.

### **IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS OF SASH INTO OAF**

SASH is implemented into a venue by firstly training its staff (management, bar staff, security etc.) online through the SASH course theory and the step-by-

step guide as how to deal with the 12 common scenarios that arise in licensed venues. This is then followed by conducting demonstrations and role-plays face-to-face with trainees so they can observe and practise the SASH techniques as well as refresh the content of the course.

OAF staff undertook the course via Three Cheers Training's online Learning Management System (LMS) platform. This was then followed by a Three Cheers trainer speaking at two of OAF's staff meetings to refresh the course, demonstrate some of the techniques and conduct some basic role-plays with the OAF staff.

Four site visits were then made by the Three Cheers trainer / assessor to OAF whilst the venue was in service so as to evaluate if SASH was being put in place in the venue's operations properly, and to encourage staff to put it into action where it was not. These visits were conducted before the trial period began so as not to interfere with the trial's results.

The site visits were followed the following week by a meeting between Three Cheers Training and OAF management where feedback was provided to OAF both verbally and in

written reports to assist OAF to improve in relevant areas so that SASH was being properly activated. It was found to be imperative to the project that the highest management insisted to their management and staff

that they wanted to see SASH implemented. This essentially was the key to pushing the management and therefore the staff initially into action.

### STATISTICAL DATA BREAKDOWN

DATA was taken from Oxford Art Factory's 2017 and 2018 incident registers and compared. SASH was implemented on 20 January 2018, therefore this analysis is a comparison pre and post intervention.

RESULTS: 2018 **incidents were down 56%** on 2017 figures. The below table shows how the raw incident data breaks down into categories. Each number represents a count of Ask To Leave (ATL) incidents.

Bar sale comparisons between 2017 and 2018, provided confidentially by OAF's accountant, show a **revenue increase of 5%** for the 2018 year.

	<b>Refuse Service i.e. approaching intoxication</b>	<b>Intoxication</b>	<b>Violence</b>	<b>Aggression</b>
20 Jan 2017 – 20 Jan 2018	443	4	5	5
20 Jan 2018 – 20 Jan 2019	199	1	0	1
Number Difference	244	3	5	4
% Difference	<b>55% ↓</b>	<b>75% ↓</b>	<b>No violent incidents recorded</b>	<b>80% ↓</b>

## **INTERVIEWS WITH OAF MANAGEMENT**

The following qualitative data was obtained via separate interviews with the General Manager / Licensee, Bar Manager, Assistant Bar Manager and Head of Security.

### **OAF EXPERIENCE OF SASH**

In the beginning staff and management were skeptical that patrons would respond positively to the SASH techniques, particularly the method where water is offered out to patrons both proactively and preemptively to help delay or prevent intoxication. That skepticism changed as they began trialing SASH properly, and could see the good results plus the positive way the patrons respond to it.

*"It took a while for staff to get over the fear of providing the water, helping patrons to stay hydrated. I too, in the beginning, was of that same mindset. I was afraid that it was an unnatural thing to do, that it would upset patrons and be seen as uncool. I was surprised at how well it went over. Now water has become a natural part of the service. Everyone (staff) is on board, they realise it's the next level of customer service and care."* – **Bar Manager**

*"At first staff were hesitant, but everyone was pleasantly surprised as to how well it (SASH) was taken."* – **Assistant Bar Manager**

Management also identified that staff enjoyed their roles more because of the increased, positive interaction with patrons.

*"You talk and get to meet more people. It*

*totally makes you like your job better, people are so thankful. It definitely pushes job satisfaction up."* – **Bar Manager**

**Security personnel also report** benefits from the implementation of SASH:

*"The program is so positive. The relationship between patrons and guards has become so positive. Incidents are down and before where we would have to ATL (Ask To Leave) a patron, they'd get aggressive, cause an argument; now we intercept them earlier, speak to them, get some water into them and they don't get aggressive anymore, cause they can see we're on their side and we don't have to ATL them."* – **Head of Security**

Management also report improvements in the way security interacts with the patrons.

*"Security in venues quite often just stand there with their arms crossed and are just there to ask people to leave, they're not hospitable. But as the Three Cheers (SASH) course says, it's all about hospitality. I've noticed our security have become a lot more hospitality based, it's made the guards think about the patron experience and realise that they're part of the team that helps us achieve that. It puts it in their hands, it means they can approach patrons, interact with them and give water when needed, which is kind of like a peace offering at times."* – **Bar Manager**

Support and encouragement from senior management, particularly initially from the licensee, was found to be a key motivator for staff to implement SASH.

*“Mark (General Manager / Licensee) told me to just give out the water, as much as we needed to fulfill the (SASH) program. So it was great to have that support from him, it meant we could just go for it without any reservations.” – Head of Security*

Over the course of the year the OAF team have become better at implementing SASH:

*“Staff keep getting better at working with Three Cheers (SASH). Staff get better at interacting with patrons, they become more expert at implementing it (SASH), at getting people on-board with the program.” – General Manager / Licensee*

*“It’s (SASH) become a seamless thing. It’s become second nature.” – Assistant Bar Manager*

As the incident record data shows there was an apparent decrease in incidents at OAF in 2018 as compared to 2017. This was achieved with similar numbers of patrons in attendance over the 2 years as shown by the revenue data that actually shows a small increase of 5% in 2018 as compared to 2017. This demonstrates that SASH is potentially a positive influence on revenue, or at least, is revenue neutral. Importantly, beyond the cost neutrality, having positive trends in social outcomes such as these means that any sort of regulatory action is unlikely and may even be reversed; both of which would have substantial economic benefit. The below quotes suggests some potential mechanisms:

*“If no one reaches intoxication it means they can stay longer and enjoy what the venue has to offer more. Getting to them early keeps people together, keeps groups together, keeps couples together and thereby maintains revenue. It’s a cost effective preventative measure.” – General Manager / Licensee*

*“It doesn’t surprise me that revenue increased a bit. It’s clear that by saving patrons from intoxication they stay on for longer than they otherwise would with their friends. They’ll have another drink or two.” – Bar Manager*

## **PATRON EXPERIENCE OF SASH**

There’s broad consensus amongst OAF staff, management and security that patrons respond very positively to SASH.

*“Patrons give a lot of positive feedback, they say “thanks” when we interact with them, give them some water, help them manage their night.” – Bar Manager*

*“In staff meetings, staff will bring up that patrons are receiving it well.” – Assistant Bar Manager*

*“Patrons have been gracious and thankful to receive it (SASH).” – General Manager / Licensee*

*“You can see the difference. They (patrons) are now very positive towards the guards. The patrons are very happy, they even say thanks for the water and that it (SASH) should be done everywhere. They thank us when they leave, they’ll pat us on the shoulder and say “thanks for the night”, say they’ll be back another time.” – Head of Security*



The hospitality outcome focused techniques of SASH are credited with how well patrons receive it.

*“It’s under the radar, it’s an offering rather than trying to get them (patrons) to do something they don’t want to do.”* – **Bar Manager**

*“The water is a great tool but it’s mainly about the interaction. The training shows how to best deal with each situation, how to approach and speak to the patrons. It works.”* – **Head of Security**

## HYDRATION

As keeping patrons hydrated is such a key part of the course, SASH aims to offer water out to patrons from early on and to make it a commonplace thing around the venue to see patrons staying hydrated as they go.

*“Multiple people drinking (water) in a room makes it not a big deal if someone is given one by staff or security. The old association with water is that you’re at risk of intoxication or sober, now it’s not about that it’s just about people staying hydrated.”* – **Assistant Bar Manager**

*“A lot of bars start offering water when it’s a warning, but at OAF now it’s just about staying hydrated.”* – **Bar Manager**

The key point of difference is the way that SASH is implemented and engages patrons early, in a context where others receive water as well, may create an environment where, over time, patrons may naturally begin to self-manage better e.g. to ask for the water themselves.

*“I’ll walk through the crowd with a bottle*

*or 2 of water and people (patrons) will stop me and ask for it. They’re grateful.”* – **Assistant Bar Manager**

*“Patrons are taking the initiative to ask for the water themselves. That’s a massive difference from the beginning (of the trial). They understand now that it (water) works and is a good thing. Patrons will come to the water station, we’ll take cases of water through the crowd and they’ll take them.”* – **Assistant Bar Manager**

## COMMENTARY FROM DEAKIN UNIVERSITY – Prof. Peter Miller and Dr Nic Droste

Traditional Responsible Service of Alcohol (RSA) training courses have long been inadequate for preparing venue staff to work in a hospitality environment where patrons may be intoxicated, let alone unhappy or antagonistic. RSA legislation in Australia is woefully underpowered in terms of the ability to prevent alcohol harm from occurring. Further, the premise of RSA legislation and training acts far too late; once people are becoming a problem and showing signs of intoxication. The evidence is clear that the BAC of people who are showing signs of intoxication will continue to rise for around an hour after their last drink. The key is taking a preventative or engaging approach.

The SASH program stands out as a positive reframing of this approach, by shifting the focus onto *hospitality*.

Engaging with patrons early is the best form of harm prevention, and it’s great hospitality. Prevention becomes active. Crucially, the program also takes a

whole-of-venue approach. But even more importantly, it equips all staff the skill to prevent undue intoxication and related harms and provides a coordinated approach, when communicating about intoxication becomes the norm for staff.

The results presented in this case study conducted at Oxford Art Factory are a promising first step in reviewing the effectiveness of the SASH program. The introduction of the SASH method here is associated with a sizable reduction in recorded incidents related to service refusal, intoxication and aggression, and a complete cessation of recorded violent incidents. These results are accompanied by a small increase in reported revenue. But this increase is much more noticeable because it occurs in the context of a purported downturn in the surrounding night-time economy. In this context, it may well be that the economic value of the program is substantially greater than it first appears, although this requires more robust and expansive trialling.

It must be emphasised that this is an early stage evaluation of the program, and a number of limitations to the evaluation design prevent it from being generalised to all other venues at this early stage.

Firstly, and most importantly, OAF represents a single venue case study. Their entertainment offerings and business model cannot be generalised to other venues. Further, OAF staff – despite initial hesitations – were participants in the trial under a management who were enthusiastic

and committed to the implementation of the SASH model. It is likely that this commitment from the venue played a part in the success of the SASH trial at OAF (and OAF staff should be commended for their willingness to engage with the program).

An additional limitation stems from the self-reported nature of the data, however OAF have no known vested interest in demonstrating a positive outcome for the SASH program in this trial.

All told, this case study is a promising and positive first demonstration of the SASH program. Further evaluation of the program in a broader range of venues and nightlife contexts is warranted. Supporting alternative ways to reduce alcohol-related harm in nightlife precincts should always be considered a core concern of government and these promising results to encourage State governments to consider interventions which both reduce alcohol-related harm and enhance business. But this must be done from an evidence informed perspective, using pilot evidence like this to inform trials that can then give definitive data on effectiveness. All policy interventions should be evaluated independently. Using any other approach is poor practice and reduces community and business benefit alike.

### **Three Cheers Training Comments**

Thank you to Mark Gerber (General Manager / Licensee) and his OAF team for taking the trial on.

# Special Alcohol Service Hospitality (SASH) Research plan and proposal

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## INTRODUCTION

The negative consequences of alcohol misuse impose a significant burden of harm on society<sup>1</sup>, primarily through increased alcohol-related social disruption, violence, crime and economic costs<sup>2,3</sup>. In Australia, alcohol-related crime alone accounted for 11% of the total social cost of alcohol misuse in 2004/2005, costing an estimated AUD\$1.7 billion<sup>4</sup>. The largest single component of this cost (43%) was for policing<sup>4</sup>. Approximately half (40%–50%) of all alcohol-related crime is violent crime associated with heavy episodic drinking<sup>5</sup>, the occurrence of which is concentrated on weekend nights and early mornings, and typically around late-night licensed venues and areas with a high-density of licensed venues<sup>6,7</sup>.

Multi-component interventions aimed at reducing alcohol-related harms are welcomed by communities<sup>8</sup> and effective in reducing alcohol-related crime. A recent cluster randomised control trial (RCT) by researchers at UNSW, for example, evaluated the impact and benefit-cost of a multi-component intervention (increasing community and liquor licensees' awareness, police activity, and feedback) on crimes typically associated with alcohol-related violence. This study found a statistically significant and cost-beneficial reduction in alcohol-related sexual assaults: a 64% reduction in the experimental relative to control communities, equivalent to five fewer alcohol-related sexual assaults, with a net social benefit estimated as AUD\$4k<sup>9</sup>. Similarly, a 20-community cluster RCT published in 2014, called the Alcohol Action in Rural Communities (AARC) project, reported an estimated 40% reduction in alcohol-related verbal abuse and 32% reduction in alcohol-related street offences ( $p = 0.06$ ) [25]. The AARC project was also cost-beneficial, returning \$1.37 and \$1.75 to the communities for every \$1 invested<sup>10</sup>.

To date, however, there have been no evaluations of venue-based programs that specifically target the responsible service of alcohol. One such program is the Three Cheers Program (TCP) run by Special Alcohol Service Hospitality (SASH). SASH consists of proactive, not reactive, patron management techniques for licensed venues to put in place during service. It has been developed and deployed in a variety of licensed venues since 2009 with very positive feedback and reported outcomes. SASH is hospitality and safety outcome focused. SASH aims to reduce rates of intoxication and associated negative incidents, e.g. alcohol fuelled violence. SASH aims to improve; customer satisfaction, venue safety, staff enjoyment in their roles, staff retention, alcohol licence protection, safety in the local community, local amenity, the venue's relationship with the authorities, the venue's generated revenue and the venue's overall reputation.

SASH focuses on patron psychology and physiology. It has its own unique theory which translates practically to standardised best approaches to scenarios that commonly arise in licensed venues. SASH guides patrons to best hospitality outcomes from the moment they arrive at the venue until the moment they leave and beyond.

### ***Potential significance of the study***

In a period of onerous regulation governing licensed venues in NSW, this project represents an opportunity for industry and government to demonstrate proactivity in addressing alcohol-related violence and disorder and fostering positive cultural change.

Despite strong anecdotal evidence to the positive effect of the TCP since its inception in 2009, the program has not received a formal independent evaluation. This evaluation will seek to formally identify program outcomes, including the benefits and costs of the TCP as well as clients' levels of satisfaction with it. It will identify options for further tailoring of the program to better meet the needs of clients and key stakeholders and, consequently, improve its impact in preventing a range of harms among those attending licensed premises (e.g. intoxication, assaults, sexual assaults, injuries and accidents). This project could also have a substantial impact on community responses to alcohol and other drug related harm in nightlife precincts by improving the standard of RSA training and practice. This evaluation will also provide direct and comprehensive evidence about the cost of a public safety program and potentially encourage the further introduction/expansion of such services in other key nightlife districts around Australia and internationally.

This document is a brief description of the overall research plan to evaluate the Special Alcohol Service Hospitality (SASH), including a description of the proposed next phase trial in the City of Sydney and Inner-West suburb of Newtown. The research is a joint venture between Three Cheers Training and the University of New South Wales.

### **THE OVERALL RESEARCH PLAN**

The research element of the SASH trial is managed by Dr Phillip Wadds (School of Social Sciences - Criminology) and Associate Professor Thomas Denson (School of Psychology). The research plan follows best practice for clinical trials of interventions (<https://www.australianclinicaltrials.gov.au/what-clinical-trial/phases-clinical-trials>) and the NSW Government Program Evaluation Guidelines ([https://arp.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/NSW%20Government%20Program%20Evaluation%20Guideline%20January%202016\\_1.pdf](https://arp.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/NSW%20Government%20Program%20Evaluation%20Guideline%20January%202016_1.pdf)).

Phase	Description	Status
Phase I Trial	Pilot: Phase I trials are done to test/pilot a new intervention for the first time in a small group of people (e.g. one venue) to evaluate safety and indicate possible effects (e.g. to determine best possible impact and identify unintended effects).	Completed
Phase II Trial	Case-Control study: Phase II trials are done to study an intervention in a larger group of people/venues to determine efficacy (that is, whether it works as intended) and to further evaluate its outcomes.	Current proposal

Phase III Trial	RCT or Stepped Wedge design: Phase III studies are done to study the efficacy of an intervention in large groups of trial participants (from several hundred to several thousand) by comparing the intervention to other standard or experimental interventions (or to non-interventional standard care).	Planned
Phase IV Trial	Phase IV studies are done after an intervention has been marketed. These studies are designed to monitor the effectiveness of the approved intervention in the general population over longer periods of time. They may also be used to investigate the use of the intervention in different conditions, or in combination with other interventions.	Planned

Phase I of the trial is now complete, and showed very strong outcomes, reducing overall recorded incidents at the pilot venue by 56% in 2018. Alongside significant reductions in recorded levels of ‘approaching intoxication (down 55%), intoxication (down 75%), and levels of recorded aggression (down 80%) and violence (down 500%), the economic evaluation demonstrated no adverse impact on venue revenue over this same period. Following on from this pilot trial, the next phase (Phase II), detailed below, is currently seeking funding to commence. It is planned that this intervention will ultimately be subject to each phase of clinical trials and that, subject to promising Phase II results, a large national Phase III trial, ideally funded via an Australian Research Council Linkage or National Health and Medical Research Council Grant will be conducted.

## **THE CURRENT PROPOSAL**

### **Trial details:**

The proposed program trial and evaluation (Phase II) will run over 12 months from the implementation of SASH into each venue. Ten volunteer venues located across the City of Sydney and Inner-West areas (5 from each) will receive the SASH intervention and their data will be investigated using a pre-post design in the first instance. To align this evaluation with best practice in research design, we will also seek to establish a matched control group of 10 venues that fall within the same categories in terms of capacity, trading hours and general area demographics to the intervention group. The data collected from all venues (intervention and control) will consist of:

1. Venue incident registers
2. Venue financial records
3. Liquor licensing breaches
4. Police recorded events/assaults
5. Patron surveys
6. Stakeholder interviews (venue staff, security, management)
7. Venue observations

All venues will be de-identified during data collection to ensure anonymity and all records will be kept in the strictest confidence.

SASH has already received written commitment to undertake the trial and evaluation from 10 licensed venues within the City of Sydney area (5 of which will randomly selected to be part of the intervention and control groups), and we are currently looking to identify another 10 venues in the Newtown area. Five of the current venues have offered to share financial records and we are in negotiation with the other five. Regardless of the final number, this is a major coup in terms of studies conducted in the liquor regulation space and represents an important insight into the business of running venues in NSW.

Key data gathered from incident registers will include: time/date of incident; Categories for Ask To Leave (ATLs) in Incident Register and why was it carried out; Patron demographics.

Staff feedback on SASH implementation will also be collected separately, only in intervention venues.

The evaluation of alternative interventions in this space represents an important option for government, industry and the community. At the moment, the trial and evaluation requires funding of \$40,000 to go alongside a \$40,000 in-kind contribution from UNSW, and a very substantial investment from Sam Coffey in terms of time and business profitability to try and conduct the best possible real-world trial.

### **Evaluation framework:**

An overview of the overall framework proposed for the TCP program evaluation is provided below. Given that the evaluation framework for the TCP program is guided by the NSW *Government's Program Evaluation Guidelines*, it will comprise a process, outcome and economic evaluation:

- *The process evaluation* will assess the extent to which the TCP program is accessed by clients, the extent to which it meets the needs of clients and key stakeholders, and the level of satisfaction with the service.
- *The outcome evaluation* will measure a range of direct benefits of the TCP program including reductions in 'Ask to Leave' (ATL) incidents, recorded violence and other harms and any benefits linked to increased revenue for participating venues.
- *The economic evaluation* will use cost-benefit analysis to assess whether the economic benefits of the TCP program outweigh its costs. This evaluation requires obtaining two sets of data, each of which would be converted into monetary terms:
  - i. The cost of providing the TCP program; and
  - ii. The direct benefits of the TCP program;

The evaluation will obtain three sources of data: i) external data sets; ii) internal program-level data; and iii) interview and survey data.

#### *External data sets*

The external data sets to be accessed include: full venue incident registers and venue financial and administrative records. The interviews with key stakeholders will, in part, be used to identify any other benefits that we could measure using external data sets.

#### *Internal program level data*

These data will include information that is recorded by the TCP Trainers (pertaining to client information and level of program adherence, risk profile and services provided). Data will also be obtained in relation to TCP financial and administrative records (to quantify operating costs).

### *Interview and survey data*

These data will include surveys and interviews with clients and stakeholders (such as venue patrons, staff, management, Police, and private security).

### **Data analysis plan**

A mixed method approach will be used, which combines both qualitative and quantitative methods, to answer the key evaluation questions (process, outcomes and economic).

The qualitative analysis will comprise semi-structured interviews and will apply standard thematic analysis techniques to the responses. Interviews will be undertaken with a range of key stakeholders to ensure a wide range of potential program benefits are captured. This qualitative evaluation will also complement and add a deeper level of understanding to the findings of the quantitative component of this project. This form of data ‘triangulation’ is an important strategy for improving the validity of research findings as well as serving to locate critical themes in research.

The quantitative analysis will comprise a number of elements:

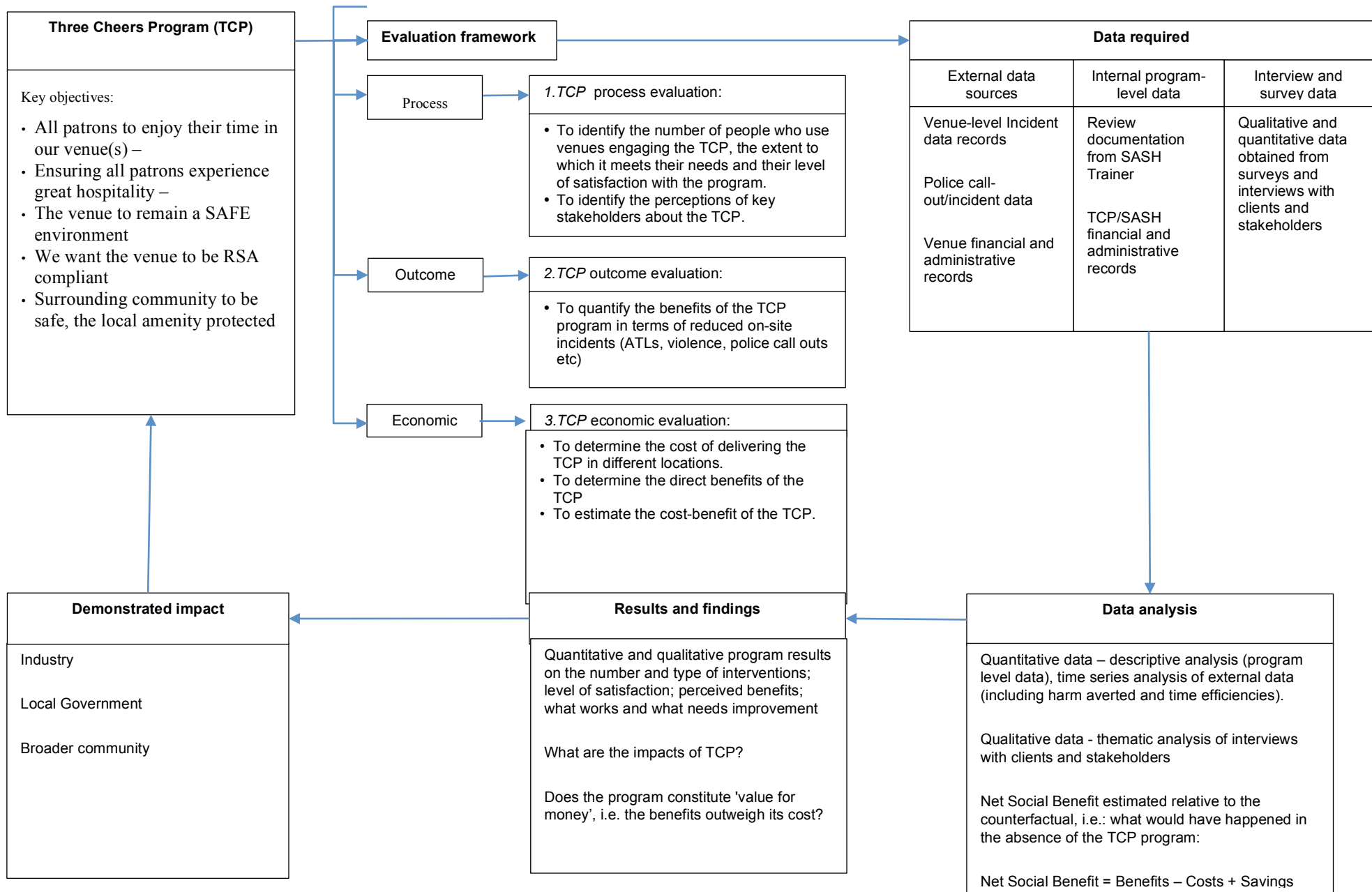
1. It will examine and report trend data in relation to incident registers for both the intervention and control groups. Poisson linear mixed modelling will be used to examine the change in the counts of ATL incidents, violence, police call outs, etc within and between venues over time.
2. It will rate the level of satisfaction with services received by conducting a standard satisfaction survey among patrons in both intervention and control venues (based on a five-point scale from 1 = very satisfied to 5 = very unsatisfied). Linear mixed modelling will be used to test for statistically significant differences in satisfaction, perceived benefits, etc between and within the intervention and control venues over time.
3. It will quantify the benefits of the program in terms of its impact on routinely collected data sets, such as police incidents and security incident registers. As noted in the NSW Treasury evaluation, a reliable evaluation technique is required to be able to differentiate the specific impact of the TCP program from the range of other activities implemented in the Sydney CBD with as much confidence as possible.
4. The cost to deliver the TCP program will be estimated based on internal SASH and venue financial data and reports.
5. The estimates of the tangible (direct) and intangible (indirect) benefits of the TCP program and the cost to provide it will be combined in a cost-benefit analysis (economic evaluation). Cost-benefit analysis is considered the gold standard in economic evaluation as it provides an estimate of the value of resources used by each program or initiative compared to the value of resources the initiative/program might save or create (i.e. the benefits). It enables the calculation of a cost-benefit ratio to support potential return on investment. Where possible we will also include benefits to program participants and staff in terms of reduced out of pocket expenses and/or improved efficiency.

The results and findings of the qualitative and quantitative analysis will be combined to provide an overview of the process, outcome and economic indicators of the TCP program. The outcome of the cost-benefit analysis will be reported as a Net Social Benefit, which is the sum of the Benefits - Costs + Savings, estimated relative to the counterfactual (i.e.: relative to what would have happened in the absence of the TCP program). Extensive sensitivity and uncertainty analysis will be conducted to test the validity of the results to variations in key parameters and/or assumptions.

## **Defining the program**

Another component of the evaluation will be to define the TCP program using an innovative technique that will allow it to be tailored to the resources and needs of different locations or communities, whilst at the same time ensuring a standardised risk and harm minimisation model, implementation of the critical success factors, which will help to ensure that the cost-beneficial program can be replicated. Resolving this tension between the need for a standardised program (so communities are confident that they are implementing an evidence-based program) and the need to adjust to different locations (so communities are comfortable that it is targeting their specific concerns) has been a difficult public health problem, but the evaluation team has devised a solution that we will apply to the TCP program. This will make the program easier to replicate elsewhere, once we have demonstrated its benefits and costs. This will also promote 'buy-in' from key stakeholders in different communities who will have to work together with the TCP in implementing the program to meet their local needs whilst maintaining the critical success factors of the program. The success of the TCP is a result of many factors: the requirement for strong and capable leadership; cost control management; attracting and maintaining highly motivated volunteers (staff, security, venue management); standards of induction, training and operating procedures, are just a few. Compromising any of the critical success factors can have a negative impact on the program, and consequently the cost benefit outcome.





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