

**Submission
No 1**

INQUIRY INTO DRUG AND ALCOHOL TREATMENT

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3/2/12

The Director
General Purpose Standing Committee No 2
Legislative Council, Parliament House
Macquarie Street, Sydney NSW 2000

Adam Strahan

Re: Submissions on the
effectiveness of Current alcohol
and Drug policies with respect to
deterrence, treatment and rehabilitation

Dear Committee Members

I am an inmate in custody at Junee Correctional centre in NSW. This is not my first period of incarceration, but hopefully 'this will be my last. In my many years in prison I have witness many aspects of drug & alcohol; use and the affects of the use of the various substances. I have witnessed and participated in deterrence programs implemented to various correctional centres. I have seen inmates withdrawing from these substances and the effects it has on them, their families, fellow inmates and correctional staff. I have witness the response of these groups to the withdrawing and the support offered to them. I thank you for taking my submission

in this matter. I will give you an account of my knowledge of the above, and explain my theory to deal with these issues.

People who use Alcohol and drugs do so because of two reasons mainly - They want too and they need too to cope.

People who want to use alcohol do so to feel good, relax and destress. Most of these people do so responsibly most of the time. Every person I have met in my life has used alcohol in an irresponsible way at some point in time. They have either drunk too much, or then spewed it up, been asked to leave a licensed or no licensed premises, caused others to tell them to not have anymore, fallen over, damaged something accidentally or through lack of care for others. They will at times drive their car to licensed venues and home, they will do so affected by alcohol and take the risk of killing & injuring themselves or others, with out a level of care required to meet the decision taken and really do not understand the consequences.

People who use drugs and other "feel good" substances will at times do so responsibly and at some point in time will do so irresponsibly. What are drug and the things that make us feel good. They are Heroin, speed, ice, pot, coke, sugar, hamburgers

panadol, pain releasers, poker machines, adventures activities that include surfing, shooting, parachuting and swimming. They all have a way of making us 'feel good'.

What is the reason for the calling of this committee? I don't need to be told, because I already know. It's the effect that it has on others. These affects range from not being on time for work, oversleeping, to not being able to hold down a job, to crashing a partner whilst on these substances and doing so in the presence of the children to committing more serious crimes to gain money for their substances or feel good activities. People will say 'This is my drug'. Surfing, Jumping of a building or out of a plane. These activities will have a little effect on the wider community but as a society we broadcast the risks of doing so.

We do this, which is quite easy to do because people see the consequences of doing so irresponsibly is in their face. Surfing with big waves and sharks - not a good idea, Jumping of a building and out of a plane - Check your gear. We do the same with food - with sugar, fats and fastfood. We all love these things until we get fat and pimples. We have advertisements for this on the message doesn't get through all the time. This is because of the risk. The short term benefits and long term consequences.

So how do you stop what is causing us the grief? — the affects. When do you stop this? Do you wait until an alcoholic or social drinker has to many and Drives his truck at 0.15 (Blood Alcohol) and kills more people on the M4. The local Junkie shares his needle some more spready Aids and HepC to those who are recreational users who go home and sleep with there unknowing partner and passes it on to the children via breastmilk or a small cut.

You will never stop drug use or should I more correctly say drug abuse. Because use is one part that causes affects but the abuse of the 'feel good' the 'grief' the taking the 'risks' (with others).

Will you fix it now and you do it properly. You look at the cause for the abuse and it might be a separation with a partner (A loss) It may be 'fuck that was a great night' (the start). When we suffer we want to feel good. We turn to what makes this change and 'feel good'. Its going for a surf to get that change. Its punching or breaking something that we turn to if we cant have our wants. Because we go back to our immature behaviour instilled in us as children where we act out to get attention.

The average Junkie or drug addict will always turn to what makes them feel good when a crisis occurs

as will each person who is overweight, will eat a block of chocolate. The lack of support in these times of 'loss' and the lack of ability to open up about problems when they arise cause the problem of turning to 'feel good' substances and activities that were once a non affecting issue. The time prior to intervention is where the inroads will properly deal with the crises we are all affected by at some point in our lives, all of us. The dealing with the crisis which causes the effects properly and not with a bandaid is what is most important. The substitution of the feel good substance ~~and~~ with something that will not affect us is the only way.

In custody the Alcoholics will turn to pills or other feel good activities. The drug addicts to what ever they can. The spiral continues. To solve the problem in Jail so you don't have the worst of society, the irresponsible, the stupid from going back to society and affecting others again is the same as in society.

We must support, educate and provide substitution for the worst feel good substance in society. In Jail drugs are easily available when you want them - be it a pill from the clinic that you don't need or you can get easily of another inmate. The clinic will give them so they don't have to listen to the person or deal with

the behavior. like in society the Alcoholic will approach a family member for money and give it so they can help them feel good. The drug and alcohol programs in Jail are a load of crap. They do not work. The person going to Jail for any length of time will not be helped by these programs. When the courts lock someone away for 12 mths or 5 yrs and the person has been using drugs or alcohol for many years, I ask you to consider how does doing a course for 1 hr or 2hrs once or twice a week for 8-12 week help. It doesn't. The inmates go up tell the teacher what they want to hear often distract the other inmates, deal drugs and talk lies. We need to look at the reason why the people are coming to Jail - Drugs. using drugs because they make them feel good. what make a person feel so bad that they turn to drugs. They cant read or write and there by get a Job and have a home car family - The things in society that they cant have. what is the point in putting resource into short courses so inmates can pretend all is good to get parole back to society to the same area where the drugs are and not put resource into solving the problems. I say dont do drug and alcohol courses in Jail. Assess people fix the problems

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give them a chance. give the community a chance. How is it that a person can be on methadone for 20 yrs.

In prison the resource are already there. In a prison cell we have a tv with a video channel. usually 2 video channels. The Jails go and rent videos and play them to inmates. Sometimes we see a video about the running of the Jails. Well why not run education courses every day on these screens. All day 2 channel for learning to read and write and at different levels. Put the tv another out so all that is on is the courses. A channel for first Aid courses, A channel for those female inmates on parenting courses as well as for males. A channel for Jobs in the community on high demand. A Forklift course, a mining course a nursing course. Give the inmates worky books to study and be assessed and at the end of the week give them the reward of the tv channels back for another week. Study learn and reeducated between 9-5 and TV reward after. Teach budgeting, Health meals and living and things that will assist those on release. Do the same for those whom. but there wives and are rapist too not these crap courses. Support the victims of rape of children or those whom have to deal with

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the problems they face from using drugs, for instance people ~~spew~~ ^{spew} up methadone and sell it to others who drink that to 'feel good'. I haven't done this before and I can't imagine world. To look in the mirror and face oneself and ~~say~~ admit to them selves the putrid things they have done is hard. They need help to overcome this. To overcome been a male or female whore to support a drug habit. Not once or twice for years and we all can say whore or prostitute with out a breath. Well it means anal, oral and vaginal sex they really don't want to do.

I want to add that many people who are abused as children, suffer abuse via listening and witnessing arguments of drug and alcoholic carers and siblings need to be protected. The carers or sibling are often very sorry for these abuses and the knowledge of the childrens having to witness the affects. The people on drugs and Alcohol should not be around these children. The parents or drug affected person need the relationship with these children to recover and once recovered. In many instances A couple will end a relationship and a partner in this relationship may turn to drugs or alcohol at this time. The non resident parent is the most likely to use 'feel good'

substances to cope. This may cause their position in the family law side of things to be reduced and not gain an access order. There is a long drawn out process where couples will lie and exaggerate claims which damage people and the people choose to survive and medicate the pain with feel good activities. To ensure this doesn't occur a quicker process is required to resolve these disputes and the need to punish properly false claims in family law matters. The affects on the parties and community must be considered due to the 'feel good' substances. Mandatory sentencing for person whom drive whilst affected by Drugs and Alcohol when children are in the car. ~~this~~ Mandatory Periods of child withdrawal at every instants first or last for parents using hard drugs and continuing to abuse soft drugs and Alcohol in presents of children. How would you like it to be 7 yrs old and see no food in the cupboard and your baby brother needs his nappy changed but mum and dad are on 'the ~~red~~ nod' or gone to the Pub. I ask that you seek to implement some other Submissions. ① Anyone smoking cigarettes in a car or house where children under 12 travel in or live be given 10 days Jail for the

offence. 20 days for Second offence and so on.

- ① Any person Drink Driving be given 12 mths Jail for 2nd offences Mandatory
- ② Any Person Driving a car with a child be given 12 mths jail for 1st offence of low range Drink Driving, 18 mths Mid range 2 yrs High range
- ③ Same for those using drugs in vehicles with children.
- ④ A program be established that would require 60hrs of drink driving education drug use and substance abuse to be completed before any person is given a licence for the first time. The course would have 40hrs reading and questions followed by an assessment and 18hrs of Group meeting and 2hrs of one on one education at school level.
- ⑤ Person whom use drugs in front of children under 16 given 3 yrs Jail mandatory
- ⑥ Person whom are found to be using drug be given cards and vouchers for food and Bill instead of unemployment benefits.
- ⑦ Police officers be sacked for failure to report drug and Alcohol abuse to welfare departments within 24hr of seeing such where evidence where children reside.
- ⑧ When a report or arrest of a person using drugs whom is the parent of a child the other parent and school of the child be notified as soon as possible. *Thompson*