

## > Night Venues and Entertainment Events Project (NVEEP) 2011 Results for the Western Australian Non-Metropolitan Area

This bulletin summarises results from the annual Night Venues and Entertainment Events Project (NVEEP) 2011 Patron Survey and Confidential Observational Checklist for the non-metropolitan areas in Western Australia.

### Project Overview

The Prevention Branch of the Drug and Alcohol Office coordinates the NVEEP. This is a collaborative initiative between the Western Australia Police, Department of Racing, Gaming and Liquor, WA Nightclub Association, Australian Hotels' Association (WA Branch), WA AIDS Council, National Drug Research Institute (NDRI), Western Australian Substance Users' Association (WASUA), and Industry.

The objectives of the Project are to monitor, develop and implement venue practices and policies that promote responsible attitudes towards drugs and alcohol and to implement environmental strategies to reduce drug and alcohol-related harms. People attending night venues and entertainment events, the entertainment industry and young people are targets of this initiative. The Project includes a comprehensive evaluation and monitoring component comprising a patron survey and a confidential observational checklist.

### Patron Survey Results

An annual survey of patrons aims to assess their support for drug-related policies, their awareness of harms, and experiences at venues and/or events. This year's survey recruited a random sample of the general population aged between 14–34 years, both in metropolitan and regional Western Australia via an online survey. An independent research company was commissioned to collect and analyse the responses.

### Respondent Demographics

A total of 405 respondents participated in the 2011 survey. Of these, 79 respondents were from non-metropolitan areas in Western Australia. The results described in this section only include responses from non-metropolitan participants. More females than males participated (59.5% and 40.5% respectively) and nearly half (43.9%) of the respondents were aged 25–34 years (16.7% aged 14–17 years and 39.4% aged 18–24 years). More than two in three respondents (72.1%) had been to a night venue or entertainment event in the last month (36.7% in the last week).

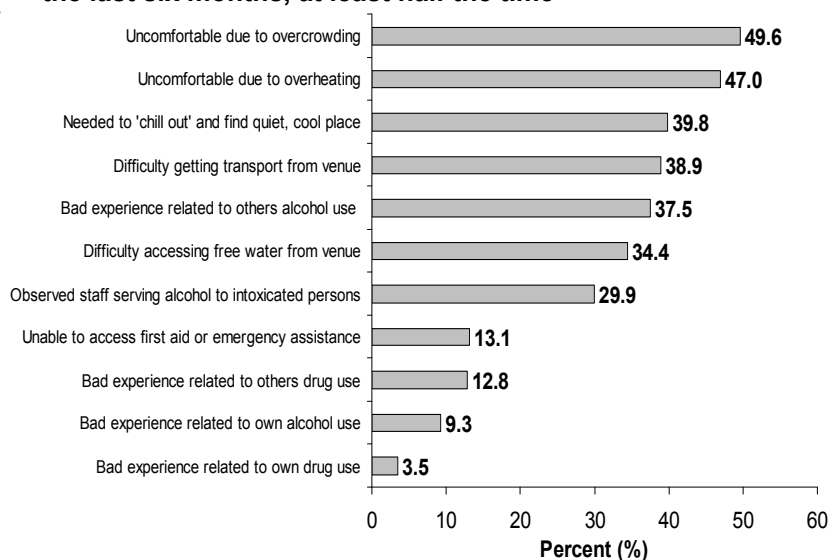
### Situations Experienced at Venues

In the six months prior to the survey, more than a third of respondents said they experienced at least half the time (Figure 1):

- discomfort due to overcrowding (49.6%);
  - discomfort due to overheating (47.0%);
  - needing to find a quiet place to 'chill out' (39.8%);
  - difficulty getting transport from a venue (38.9%);
  - a bad experience related to another patron's alcohol use (37.5%); and
  - difficulty accessing free water (34.4%).
- In addition:

- 29.9% observed staff serving alcohol to intoxicated persons; and
- 12.8% had a bad experience related to another patron's drug use.

**Figure 1. Situations experienced by respondents at venues in the last six months, at least half the time**



## Support for Drug and Alcohol-Related Policies

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of support for drug- and alcohol-related policies to reduce issues at night venues (Figure 2).

There was a high level of support for the proposed policies. The most strongly supported strategies included:

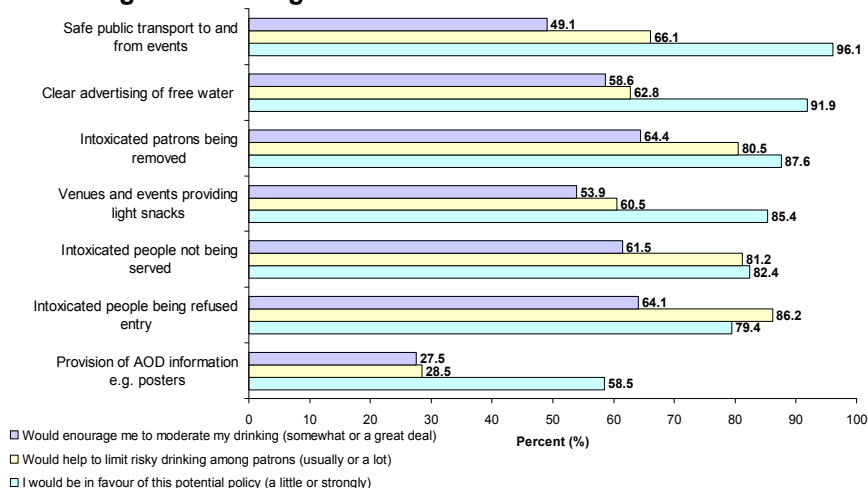
- safe public transport being available to and from major events (96.1%);
- venues and events to clearly advertise the availability of free water (91.9%); and
- crowd controllers making sure drunk or intoxicated people are removed from venues (87.6%).

Respondents were also asked to indicate the extent to which these

policies would 1) encourage them to moderate their own drinking behaviour, and 2) help to limit risky drinking amongst other patrons. The strategies which received the highest levels of agreement were:

- crowd controllers making sure intoxicated people are not permitted to enter venues (64.1% and 86.2% respectively), and are removed from venues (64.4% and 80.5% respectively); and
- venue managers to ensure staff do not serve alcohol to intoxicated patrons (61.5% and 81.2% respectively).

**Figure 2. Attitudes towards the introduction of policies as a way of reducing issues at night venues/entertainment events**



## Observational Checklist Results

An independent research group conducted the observational checklists, with individual venues not publicly identified. The observations involved assessing and recording the behaviour of venue staff and patrons, together with various physical aspects of the venue. A structured checklist was used to assess the degree to which strategies that can reduce drug and alcohol-related harm are implemented. The structured checklist is designed to minimise observer bias and enhance reliability and validity of the data. However, some of the checklist items require subjective assessments to be made and in this respect, standardised training is provided for the auditors.

Six types of night venues were assessed; hotels, taverns, nightclubs, small bars, clubs and special facilities. All observational checklists were conducted during peak times (7pm to 2am).

## Venues Observed

A total of 27 licensed night venues were observed in the Western Australian non-metropolitan area. Of these, 12 were hotels, 10 were taverns, 2 nightclubs and 3 special facilities/small bar.

### Crowding

The estimated overall crowd capacity at the time of observation was less than three quarters full for 81.5% of night venues. Bottlenecking in bar areas was observed at 18.5% of observed venues.

### Measures to Increase Comfort to Patrons

Overall, the noise level was observed to be very or painfully loud in 15.4% of venues, with six venues having very or painfully loud noise on the dance floor. 'Chill out' areas were observed in 73.1% of venues.

### Overall Safety

Out of those venues observed, 33.3% allowed drinks on the dance floor; 11.1% used plastic drinking vessels instead of glass; 81.5% provided free tap-water; and 74.1% did not have fixtures/features likely to cause harm.

### Signs of Drug and Alcohol use

Staff were observed serving someone who was already intoxicated in 15.4% of venues. Intoxicated patrons (slurred speech, poor balance/co-ordination and loud speech/aggression) were observed in 37% of venues.

### Access to Transport

It was observed that 25.9% of venues were within reasonable walking distance from a taxi rank and 3.7% from a bus stop. A further 23.8% of venues had a public telephone outside and near by.

### Promotional Materials

Regional venues were more likely to promote Responsible Service of Alcohol (70.4%) and alcohol brands (66.7%) compared to promoting alcohol promotions/specials to patrons (37%) or drinking water (11.1%).