



## Drugs, Substance Abuse and Addiction

Policy Category: D. Care for People

Issued: June 2008

### Principles

*The Australian Greens believe that:*

1. The Australian Greens do not support the legalisation of currently illegal drugs.
2. a harm minimisation approach is the best way to reduce the negative effects of drug use and drug regulation.
3. harm minimisation policies and programs are those directed towards reducing the adverse health, social and economic consequences of drug use, to the individual user and the community.
4. the use of illegal and legal drugs (including alcohol and tobacco), and some regulatory approaches, can have a wide range of adverse health, social and economic effects.
5. the regulation of personal use of currently illegal drugs is best addressed primarily within a health and social framework, with legal support.
6. imprisonment for personal use of illicit drugs, when not associated with other crimes, is not an appropriate solution to drug dependence.
7. a funding mix should be adopted to enable supply reduction, demand reduction and harm reduction.
8. information and education programs should be available to enable informed debate about the effects of all drugs, including prescription, non-prescription, legal and illegal drugs.
9. policy and programs should be adopted that are evidence-based and subject to continuous evaluation.
10. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities must control, to the greatest extent possible, the development and management of harm minimisation policies and programs in their communities.

### Goals

*The Australian Greens want:*

11. a reduction in deaths, disease, crime and corruption resulting from drug use.
12. reduced consumption of illegal and legal drugs where this leads to a decrease in problems associated with harmful drug use.
13. the cost to government and the community of regulating drug use to be reduced with improved health and social outcomes.
14. improved efficacy of all management, treatment and other regulatory and judicial responses to drug use in the community, to maximise harm reduction, supply reduction and demand reduction.

## Measures

### *The Australian Greens will:*

15. establish an Australian Drugs Policy Institute to undertake research trials and evaluation of policy and treatment programs.
16. provide free information on substance use, especially for young people.
17. ban all advertising and all sponsorship of tobacco products.
18. establish an independent body to regulate alcohol advertising.
19. ban donations from the tobacco, alcohol and pharmaceutical industries to political parties.
20. reform alcohol taxation so that the tax rate is based on alcohol content rather than beverage type, and allocate the income to fund alcohol and drug education and treatment.
21. reduce the effects of passive smoking, by introducing a ban on smoking in defined public spaces.
22. continue restrictions on the sale of alcohol and tobacco products to people under the age of 18.
23. prohibit advertising promotions for alcohol that encourage excessive drinking.
24. introduce the regulated use of cannabis for specified medical purposes, such as intractable pain.
25. support the comprehensive roll out of Opal non-sniffable fuel throughout regions of Australia where petrol sniffing and trafficking is a problem, with associated diversionary and rehabilitation programs.
26. support serious penalties for driving while under the influence of alcohol and other drugs that impair cognitive or psychomotor skills.
27. introduce a system of sanctions for personal use of illicit drugs, when not associated with other crimes, that include measures such as education, counselling and treatment, commensurate with specific cases and circumstances.
28. support criminal penalties for drug dealers.
29. increase availability of diversion to rehabilitation and treatment programs as a sentencing alternative for people convicted of crimes committed to support a personal addiction to drugs.
30. promote relationships between relevant agencies and local communities to address problems associated with illegal drug use.
31. make drug substitution treatments available under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, and compensate pharmacists for costs of dispensing treatment.
32. extend the range of counselling and treatment programs covered by Medicare.
33. increase the availability of harm reduction programs, including needle and syringe exchanges and medically supervised injecting rooms and implement a rigorous scientific trial of prescribed heroin to registered users in line with the proposed 1996 ACT government heroin trial.

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