



Strategic Plan 2014 - 2019

This document, the Alcohol Tobacco and Other Drug Association ACT's (ATODA) third strategic plan, outlines the vision, values, strategic goals, outcomes and decision-making processes of the organisation from 2014 – 2019.

Acknowledgements

ATODA acknowledges the Traditional Owners and continuing custodians of the lands of the ACT and pays its respects to the Elders, ancestors and families.

ATODA acknowledges individual and agency stakeholders for their ongoing contributions to our organisation and to preventing and reducing the harms from ATOD in the ACT. This strategic plan has been developed with input from various mechanisms including ATODA reference groups, the member and stakeholder survey, a strategic planning workshop following the 2013 Annual General Meeting. ATODA is grateful for the many contributions, particularly those of the Board, members, Secretariat and consultants Dr Stephen Mugford and Mr David McDonald.

Our vision, values and mission

ATODA's vision is an ACT community with the lowest possible levels of alcohol, tobacco and other drug (ATOD) related harm, as a result of the ATOD and related sectors evidence-informed prevention, treatment and harm reduction policies and services.

ATODA works collaboratively to provide expertise and leadership in the areas of social policy, sector and workforce development, research, coordination, partnerships, communication, education, information and resources. ATODA is an evidence-informed organisation.

The ways we work, and the outcomes we strive to achieve, reflect our commitment to the values of population health, human rights, social justice and reconciliation between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and other Australians.

The mission of ATODA is to be the peak body representing and supporting the ATOD sector in the ACT.

Background and context

ATODA has been in staffed operation since 1 July 2010. The first two strategic plans of the organisation reflected its development and sustainability needs, and were of shorter duration to allow closer reflection and monitoring of activities by the Board, members, Secretariat and stakeholders. By doing so, the early strategic plans ensured that the sector could have confidence that ATODA was well placed to identify and undertake work related to priority actions identified by the sector at that time, and into the future. As ATODA has now reached this important point in its development, this strategic plan places greater emphasis on the priorities of

members, the sector and other stakeholders to prevent and reduce the harms associated with ATOD.

This strategic plan covers the period of 2014 to 2019, and offers realistic aspirations, with achievable goals, to frame ATODA's work into the coming years within an environment of constant policy and service delivery change and reform in both the ACT and across Australia.

This document should be read in conjunction with ATODA's:

- Constitution (note: to be revised with the membership in 2014)
- Reconciliation Action Plan
- Annual Reports
- Annual Financial Statements

The ATODA Board is also developing an internal Governance and Viability Plan, which focused on the short-term stability and long-term viability and complements this strategic plan.

Environmental scan

The impact of ATOD on our community remains clear, particularly for people who are experiencing disadvantage. The increasingly complex needs of people accessing drug treatment and other support services mean that a focus on the quality of services remains essential. The individuals who work within our sector span multidisciplinary backgrounds and contribute across a range of professional fields including treatment and support, consumer expertise, research and policy. Essential to the strength, productivity and innovation of our sector are positive working relationships to better ensure sector viability, evidence-based public policy and resilient and healthy communities.

Challenging times lie ahead, with significant concurrent national and ACT reform agendas in the ATOD and broader health and allied sectors. Additionally, tightening fiscal environments are likely to change the context in which the sector, and ATODA, operates. As a consequence, this strategic plan seeks to define what is really important to ATODA, acknowledging the specialist role of our sector, the evidence base which underpins it, and how this is translated into the provision of quality services and policy development.

Policy context

ATODA works within a complex policy environment, however the two primary policy documents that underpin its work are the *ACT Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Strategy 2010 - 2014* and the *National Drug Strategy 2010 - 2015*.

Monitoring and Reporting

This strategic plan will be monitored by the ATODA Board and Secretariat. In particular, ATODA will report to its membership and stakeholders on progress in implementing its strategic plan and movement towards attaining the plan's goals through the Annual Report and Annual General Meeting.

Key partners and stakeholders

ATODA engages with a network of stakeholders including:

- ATODA members including specialist ATOD services providers
- Territory, State and Federal Governments
- Policy workers and policy makers
- Consumer groups and representatives
- Researchers and research institutions
- Community members with an interest in addressing ATOD related harm
- Peak bodies and services in allied sectors
- ATOD sector peak bodies
- Relevant Territory and Federal Ministers and their departments
- Media

ATODA's structure

Funding arrangements

Outside of membership fees, ATODA does not receive funding to be a peak body *per se*, rather its funding continues to be project based with activities focused largely on capacity building. This means that the other work conducted by ATODA, such as its high quality policy work, remains predominantly unfunded.

ATODA is currently funded by ACT Health, the Australian Government Department of Health, its membership and other small grants. ATODA has 3.3 fulltime equivalent staff.

Organisational structure

ATODA works in partnership with a range of stakeholders to inform and conduct its work.



Representation and reference groups

ATODA is represented on several key reference and decision-making groups within the ACT sector. These groups can inform the work of ATODA while concurrently ATODA informs their work, they include:

- ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tobacco Control Strategy Advisory Group
- ACT Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Strategy Evaluation Group
- ACT ATOD Reconciliation Working Group
- ACT ATOD Specialist Executive Group
- ACT ATOD Workers Group
- ACT Grant Recipients Network
- Alexander Maconochie Centre Health Policies and Services Advisory Group

ACT ATOD Workers Group

Approximately 80% of ATODA's work has a capacity building focus. As such, workers are a major constituency of ATODA and the target group and recipient of the majority of its services. Worker representation is built into the fabric of the organisation. By way of background, the ACT ATOD Workers Group guided three years of sector support activities that led to the establishment of ATODA as the sector's peak body. The group is built into the structure of the organisation including through the Constitution, by including a designated position on the ATODA Board, and its core activities. The group acts as a reference structure to a large proportion of ATODA's work.

Priority groups

There are population groups within the ACT community who carry a disproportionate burden of harm and ill health from ATOD. Within that context, this strategic plan recognises the need for deliberate actions to address the specific needs of these priority populations affected by ATOD across the work of the organisation including:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- ATOD service consumers
- People who inject drugs
- People with multiple and complex needs that include ATOD problems

Strategic outcomes

ATODA's strategic outcomes for 2014 – 2019 are:

1. High quality services

ATODA will deliver high quality services to its members and stakeholders. ATODA will also support individuals and agencies to develop, implement and evaluate high quality ATOD services. Quality, in this context, incorporates a range of interacting factors related to service consumer outcomes, workforce development, standards and processes.

2. Evidence-informed practice

ATODA will demonstrate evidence-informed practice in its activities. ATODA will also support individuals and agencies to develop, implement and evaluate evidence-informed practice. Evidence-informed practice, in this context, means ensuring that practice is guided by the best available research and information including that which identifies the potential benefits, harms and costs of an intervention.

3. Cohesive specialist sector

ATODA acknowledges the specialist and unique role of the ATOD sector and the importance of working towards a better understanding of who we are, what we do, what we achieve and how we achieve it. ATODA will demonstrate leadership, support unity and coherence, and articulate the value and strengths of the sector. The sector includes research, policy, practice and affected communities.

Strategic priorities

ATODA's strategic priorities for 2014 – 2019 are:

a. Improve the quality of service consumer participation

Not only is it a person's right to be involved in decisions that affect them, but it is also an indicator of their health and other outcomes, and of quality services. A degree of service consumer participation currently exists in the sector; however, ATODA's stakeholders have identified the quality of participation as a strategic priority at the individual, program, organisational, policy and sectoral levels.

b. Support the development of the workforce and services

The ongoing development and maintenance of a competent and professional workforce is an essential foundation of the sector. The workforce is multidisciplinary and works from a strong evidence base. Significant sector support and capacity building activities have already been established as core infrastructure of the ACT ATOD sector. The development of the workforce and services remains a strategic priority to ensure a continued high quality of service provision in light of the changing needs of the ACT community, and will continue to be driven by the workers for whom these activities are developed.

c. Improve research, policy, practice and participation collaborations

Strengthening collaborations between research, policy, practice and affected community participation can enable research translation; evidence informed decision-making and practice; targeted services; meaningful engagement and reduce policy gaps. Initiative such as the Canberra Collaboration and partnerships with the National AOD Centres of Excellence can support this priority.

d. Positive deployment of specialist ATOD expertise

The ATOD sector is a specialist sector that is often part of other supports, such as criminal justice and legal, mental health, employment, homelessness and child protection. Within the context of limited funding and specialist expertise, it is important to ensure that the resources available are deployed where they are most needed and will be most effectively and efficiently utilised.

Responding to areas of identified need

To add value and enable responsiveness, ATODA regularly engages with members and other stakeholders to determine areas of need and opportunity that are consistent with this strategic plan and reflect the funded and project work of ATODA (e.g. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities, tobacco, mental health, community mobilisation).

Summary table of strategic outcomes and priorities

The following table outlines the strategic outcomes and priorities for ATODA for the period of 2014 to 2019. This information is structured to outline:

- Our values;
- The specialist lenses we use;
- The ways we work;
- Our strategic outcomes;
- Our strategic priorities; and
- Examples of our activities that align with these.

This information will be useful in determining the focus of ATODA's work in the coming years, and can also be applied as a decision-making framework for setting priorities in capitalising on the opportunities that may arise in the future.

Our values	The specialist lenses we use	The ways we work	Our strategic outcomes (2014 – 2019)	Our strategic priorities (2014 – 2019)	Examples of our activities ¹ Each of these activities align with one or more of the strategic outcomes and priorities
Human rights Social justice Reconciliation	Cultural security Responding to the needs of those who most bear the burdens of harm Harm minimisation, including supply, demand and harm reduction Prevention and early intervention Population health Evidence Capacity building Health promotion	Leadership Accountable Collaborative Inclusive Reliable Responsive Reflective Effective Efficient Innovative Integrity	1. High quality services 2. Evidence-informed practice 3. Cohesive specialist sector	a. Improve the quality of service consumer participation b. Support the development of the workforce and services c. Improve policy, practice, participation and research collaborations d. Positive deployment of specialist ATOD expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACT eASSIST www.act-eassist.org.au • Canberra Drug Policy Series • Collaborations with mental health and youth peak bodies • Community and workers NRT program • eBulletins • Drug Services Forums • Expert and customisable training • Grant Recipients Network • Qualification Strategy • Services Directory www.directory.atoda.org.au • Service User Satisfaction and Outcomes Survey • State and Territory AOD Peaks Network • Workers Group • Workforce and Remuneration Profile • www.atoda.org.au

¹Note: these are examples of activities that ATODA has funding to deliver at the time of publication