



Media Release

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ACT Budget Misses Opportunities: \$4 million for what?

The Alcohol Tobacco and Other Drug Association ACT (ATODA) is the sector peak body that seeks to prevent and reduce the harms associated with alcohol, tobacco and other drugs (ATOD) in the ACT community.

“ATODA acknowledges the challenging budgetary constraints of the ACT Government and therefore the limited resources the ACT community has to spend must be spent wisely,” said Carrie Fowlie, Executive Officer.

“ATODA strongly supports the ACT Government’s commitment to evidence based drug policies, as stated in the *ACT Alcohol Tobacco and Other Drug Strategy 2010 – 2014*.”

“This is why ATODA is disappointed that the major ATOD initiative funded through the Budget, to implement a roadside drug driving testing program at over \$4 million over 4 years, doesn’t have the evidence base to warrant the investment.”

“ATODA does not support impaired driving. ATODA supports evidence informed responses to improve road safety by reducing traffic fatalities, crashes and injuries due to impaired driving.”

“We need to remember that drug driving is not the same as drink driving. The courts have held that mandatory roadside blood alcohol concentration testing is acceptable because elevated levels of blood alcohol concentration and road crash risk are very clear.”

“There is no Australian or international evidence that adopting roadside drug testing has any impact on the incidence of traffic fatalities, crashes and injuries.”

“The ATOD sector has not seen a resource injection like this by the ACT Government in many years. So why, in such fiscally challenging times, would the Canberra community spend over \$1million a year on a road safety program that won’t improve road safety?”

“There are a myriad of evidence and needs based ATOD programs that could have been funded through this recurrent investment. These are clearly outlined in the *ACT Alcohol Tobacco and Other Drug Strategy 2010 – 2014* and included in ATODA’s budget submission.”

“The allocation of such significant resources to a program that is not likely to work represents a missed opportunity to prevent and reduce alcohol, tobacco and other drug related harms in the Canberra community.”

For further information or comment contact
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