PREVENTING ALCOHOL-RELATED CRIME THROUGH COMMUNITY ACTION: THE SURFERS PARADISE SAFETY ACTION PROJECT

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Abstract: *The Surfers Paradise Safety Action Project, the initial phase of which was implemented in 1993, was a community-based initiative designed to reduce violence in and around licensed venues in the central business district of an international tourist area on Queensland AUS's Gold Coast. This paper describes specific aspects of the implementation of the Surfers project, and presents the results of the evaluation. Findings showed marked reductions in violence and crime (inside and outside venues) and in practices that promote the irresponsible use of alcohol (such as binge drinking incentives), as well as improvements in security practices, entertainment, handling of patrons, and transport policies.*

Activities in 18 nightclubs were observed by teams of students

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using a structured observation schedule in the summers of 1993 (before the project) and of 1994 (after the major features of the project had been implemented). Police and security data showed: pre-project increases in assaults, indecent acts, stealing, and drunk and disorderly incidents; stabilization in the initial stages of the project; and sharp declines following the period in which a Code of Practice was instituted. Verbal abuse declined by 82%; arguments by 68%; and physical assaults by 52%. However, there are indications that nightclubs became more "upmarket," suggesting that displacement of problem patrons may have been at least partly responsible for the impact of the project. In addition, observational data collected over the summer of 1996 indicate that violence has returned to pre-project levels, and that compliance with the Code of Practice has almost ceased. It is hypothesized that only a system of regulation that integrates self-regulation, community monitoring, and formal enforcement can ensure that the achievements of community interventions are maintained on an indefinite basis.

The main purpose of this paper is to report the manner of implementation and the results of a community-based intervention designed to reduce alcohol-related crime, violence, and disorder in and around licensed premises in a major tourist location. The project, carried out between March and December 1993, involved a partnership of a university research team; police, health, and other government agencies; and community and business groups, and was extremely successful in the short term in reducing violence and other offenses. The absence of a formal control group and the difficulties involved in measuring displacement prevent precise quantification of the causal impact of the intervention. However, the project was less successful in the long term, for reasons that are reasonably well-understood but difficult to control. A second major objective of the paper is therefore to reflect on the lessons arising from the project for effective long term regulation of licensed premises.

The chapter by Macintyre and Homel in this volume is a sequel to the present chapter, and reports the results of a specialized sub-study of the problem of crowding and aggression in nightclubs that was undertaken as part of the Surfers Paradise Safety Action Project. That chapter should be read in conjunction with the present one to gain a more complete overview of the study's

findings with respect to the design and management of nightclubs. Details of the Surfers Project are also reported in Blazevic (1996), Carvolth (1993), Carvolth et al. (1996), Homel and Clark (1994), Homel et al. (1994), Mcllwain (1994), and Mcllwain and Hauritz (1996).

PARADISE LOST: THE CONTEXT AND THE PROBLEM

Surfers Paradise, located at the center of the Gold Coast region of southern Queensland, AUS is an international tourist resort not dissimilar to Miami, FL in style and climate. Renowned for its fine beaches, casual lifestyle, subtropical temperatures, sunshine, and tourist facilities, the Gold Coast attracts international and interstate visitors, students and "backpackers", affluent young adults, young families seeking employment, and retirees who, often with large super-annuation endowments, want to enjoy a high quality of life in their later years. Given the large and diverse population of more than a quarter of a million permanent residents and millions of visitors each year, a vibrant and sophisticated hospitality industry is required to provide the entertainment and leisure services that can satisfy both formal government regulations and the informal standards sought by the community.

While a vibrant entertainment industry brings considerable economic benefits, it can also create major problems, especially when entertainment is equated with alcohol consumption and licensed venues are concentrated in a small area. The physical transformation of Surfers Paradise in the 1960s and 1970s from a quaint seaside town to an area of high-rise apartment blocks and international hotels was accompanied by an explosive growth in the number of bars, nightclubs, restaurants, and registered clubs. There are approximately 187 licensed premises in the immediate area, and by late 1992 there were 22 nightclubs (not counting a number of cafes and restaurants) in the small central business district (CBD), located within a few hundred meters of each other. The chapter by Macintyre and Homel in this volume examines the relationship between crowding and aggression in six of these nightclubs, and includes a description of the atmosphere in these venues. It also contains a diagram depicting the location of the 22 nightclubs and the number of security incidents detected in the vicinity of each over a six-month period (see Figure 1 on page 99). The diagram shows that nearly two thirds of all recorded incidents occurred around four clubs.

The incidence of violence and disorder in Surfers Paradise had become a matter of major community concern by the time of the present study. The security data depicted in the diagram were collected by a company (employed by the Civic Committee of the Surfers Paradise Chamber of Commerce) with instructions to patrol the mall area and help keep the peace, especially in the early hours of the morning, when hundreds of drunken revellers emerged from the nightclubs. Two years previously, agitation from residents and from the Gold Coast City Council had resulted in construction by the state government of a police booth in the mall, helping to give police a public presence and facilitating occasional "sweeps" of the area to crack down on drunkenness and disorder. Despite these initiatives, there were many commercial vacancies, business profitability declined, and the media increasingly referred to the area as "Slurpers Paradise" and "Surfers Sleaze."

Practices adopted by the nightclubs did nothing to improve Surfers' image. Encouraged by a political environment that rejected "paternalistic" regulation and embraced a "free enterprise liquor system" to promote tourism *[Queensland Legislative Assembly Hansard,* 1992, p. 5178), licensees engaged in extensive price discounting, extending to free drinks for several hours on some nights and free cocktails all night for women. A journalist commented that "the girls get as pissed as parrots on the jungle juice and the blokes who are still standing try to move in on the drunks" (Mcllwain, 1994, Appendix A). A club advertised that "$100 Slave Money will be given for every alcoholic drink purchased. Female and male slaves will be auctioned on each Slave Night... each slave purchased will spend one hour with his/her slave master on the night... Slaves have the right to refuse any unreasonable request" (Mcllwain, 1994, Appendix A). The reputation of Surfers for cheap liquor, sex, and drugs helped to ensure a large turnover of patrons but a less certain turnover of profits for the nightclubs; indeed, many were in financial difficulty. Managers blamed a quiescent Liquor Licensing Division, which was operating under a new Liquor Act that transformed proactive "inspectors" into reactive "investigators," for allowing too many licenses in a very small area and for not cracking down on "cowboy operators."

There is a large literature on alcohol, licensed premises and violence (see Homel and Clark, 1994, and Graham and Homel, in press). A clear finding of previous research is that inappropriate

drinks promotions that encourage mass intoxication are a major risk factor for violence. Also of critical importance are subtle interactions among several factors, including groups of young males, crowding, lack of comfort, aggressive bar staff and security personnel, and inept methods for dealing with drunken patrons (Graham et al., 1980; Homel et al., 1992). All these factors were present in abundance in Surfers Paradise. It is therefore not surprising that surveys conducted between March and June 1993, involving 701 residents of surrounding areas and 81 businesspeople working in the immediate neighborhood, revealed that a large number of people had had some experience with violence. The groundswell of community and business concern, combined with the constant media attention, ensured that the proposal for a broadly based community response to the problem was warmly received.

The business survey was carried out by the project officer and her assistant, and involved the delivery of questionnaires to every commercial outlet in the CBD. The survey of residents was conducted by the Gold Coast City Council as part of its contribution to the project, and was based on a sample of 2,000 residents randomly drawn from the electoral rolls. The response rate was 43.5%, which decreased to 35% when incomplete responses were discarded. More older than younger people responded to the community survey, so a special survey was carried out by the evaluation team to elicit the experiences and opinions of young patrons. This latter survey was carried out in the mall between 11:30 p.m. and 3:00 a.m. on two Friday nights in May 1993, and yielded 79 interviews before being peremptorily terminated because of fear for the safety of the student interviewers. (When asked "How safe do you feel tonight?", one drunken patron produced a handgun, declaring that he felt quite safe, while another waved a knife in the face of the two female interviewers.)

Thirty-seven percent of the residents and businesspeople reported witnessing at least one assault in Surfers Paradise in the previous six months, and 5% had themselves been assaulted. Nearly all the respondents to the community survey who had been assaulted more than once in the previous six months were aged 18 to 24, a result consistent with the responses of the patrons, 60% of whom had witnessed at least one violent incident in the mall in the previous year. It is noteworthy, however, that 84.8% of the patrons felt "comfortable" or "very safe" on the streets, and were not particularly concerned about the nightclubs

as a cause of violence. While patrons supported the licensing of bouncers (79.8%) and more police patrols near venues (73.4%), they opposed closing times earlier than 3:00 a.m. (81%) and reductions in the number of licenses (76%).

The attitudes of the patrons were clearly out of line with those of the residential and business communities. Nearly three-quarters (71%) of these groups considered it unsafe to be on the streets of Surfers Paradise at night, and 72.6% agreed that there were too many intoxicated people in the area at night. Women were more fearful than men, believing that there should be less competition among clubs, and businesspeople were more pessimistic than residents on such issues as the increasing incidence of drunken brawling and of street offenses and the extensive use of drugs. It appears that the greater pessimism of businesspeople grew out of their constant, close exposure to the problems. Nevertheless, all groups — residents, businesspeople, and patrons — were united in their belief that there were too few police in the area, reflecting a strong general tendency in the community to rely on external regulation and state resources to solve an acute local problem.

In summary, the rapid growth of Surfers Paradise as a major international tourist destination had brought, by the early 1990s, a massive physical infrastructure and healthy business profits, but levels of alcohol-related disorder and violence that were viewed as unacceptable by most groups except, importantly, some of the patrons themselves. It was generally believed that police resources were stretched to the limits, and that more police and a stronger response from the Queensland Liquor Licensing Division were required to deal with the problem. A great deal was at stake. A $4 billion dollar tourist industry was threatened by international media reports of violence against tourists (the effect on the Japanese was viewed as especially worrisome). The local business community was being adversely affected. And the nightclubs that were seen by many as the cause of the problem were themselves struggling financially in a fiercely competitive environment created by deregulation and characterized by wholesale price discounting and prurient entertainment emphasizing sex and alcohol.

COMMUNITY ACTION DIRECTED AT LICENSED VENUES

One of the most common ways of attempting to minimize alcohol-related harm in licensed premises is through responsible beverage service programs. These programs, which have as objectives both the prevention of intoxication and the nonviolent refusal of service to already intoxicated patrons, are very common in North America. This is partly because of licensing requirements in some jurisdictions, but more importantly because of licensees' desire to reduce their exposure to multi-million dollar lawsuits arising from vicarious liability over the actions of patrons served to intoxication on their premises (Homel and Clark, 1994; Stockwell et al., 1994). The programs are therefore, in the main, a response to legal pressures.

There is a small literature that suggests that responsible serving programs can have positive effects on levels of intoxication and on alcohol-related problems (Carvolth, 1991; Saltz, 1987; Wagenaar and Holder, 1991). It would therefore seem desirable to incorporate their principles into any community intervention that has licensed venues as a target. An example of such a program is provided by Putnam et al. (1993), who report the results of a successful community intervention on Rhode Island. The intervention involved server training as well as publicity campaigns, local task force activities, and community forums, and was supported by training of police and increased levels of enforcement with respect to alcohol-related accidents and crimes. Holder (1993) also reports a conceptual and operational basis for community prevention programs that combine community mobilization, responsible serving, underage drinking awareness and enforcement, drink-driving enforcement, and reduced alcohol access to avoid injury.

The importance of action by licensees to introduce responsible host practices is obvious. Yet there is an emerging literature — consistent with the public health perspective advocated by Holder (1993) — suggesting that community regulation of alcohol-related disorder and violence must utilize other strategies as well. Among these are safety audits of the immediate area (where teams of observers walk around, especially at night, identifying and recording unsafe features of the physical environment), and the introduction of procedures that empower residents to resolve problems with licensed establishments (Alcohol Advisory Council of Western Australia, 1989; Gilling, 1993; Lakeland and Durham, 1991; Parkdale Focus Community, 1995). These additional strategies are of particular importance in Australia, partly because civil law-

suits are very seldom used against licensees, thus removing one of the major incentives for licensees to introduce server training programs, and partly because liquor licensing laws are not very effectively enforced on a routine basis (Homel and Clark, 1994; Stockwell, 1994).

Perhaps as a response to the vacuum created by an inadequate regime of legal regulation, action projects targeting licensed premises have proliferated in recent years in Australia. The chapters in this volume by Stockwell and by Felson and his colleagues report two major initiatives, the "Freo Respects You" project in Fremantle, W. AUS and the "Geelong Accord" in Victoria. The Fremantle project involved alcohol researchers, the Hotels' Association, police, and licensees, and was designed to increase levels of responsible serving of alcohol and to provide training for licensees, managers and bar staff. Although participation by venues was limited, a range of positive outcomes was achieved, including a drop in the number of patrons exiting intervention sites with blood-alcohol levels in excess of .08. The Geelong Accord was a cooperative effort involving police, the Liquor Control Commission and hotel licensees, although in practice police took on the main leadership role. The major strategy of the Accord was to stop "pub hopping" by means of entry and exit controls, with the result that serious assault rates have been reduced.

It could be argued that both the Fremantle and Geelong initiatives were "top down" rather than community-initiated interventions, despite the levels of cooperation achieved at the local level. In fact most "community" projects seem to require at least some external resources or initiative to get them going, even if the level of community involvement and empowerment eventually achieved is quite high. One of the most important community-based projects, the Melbourne Westend Forum (Melbourne City Council, 1991), arose from the recommendation of a government-funded group, the Victorian Community Council Against Violence, and was funded through the Ministry for Police. Nevertheless, a high level of community involvement was achieved through public meetings, safety audits, and five task groups focused on, respectively, town planning and urban design; traffic and bylaws; venue management and cultural attitudes; policing; and transport. The main aim of the project was to reduce violence in and around the West End, an area with a concentration of nightclubs and other licensed venues. No quantitative evaluation was carried out, so it is not possible to determine the impact of the project, although

qualitative evidence suggests a substantial short-term effect. Despite the lack of formal evidence of long-term effectiveness, the Westend Forum is important for the vigor with which it was implemented and for the level of inter-agency cooperation and community involvement achieved.

Other "safety action projects" that have emerged recently in Australia include the Eastside Sydney Project (Lander, 1995) and several in South Australia (Fisher, 1993; Walsh, 1993). Specialists are also emerging in the staging of major events such as New Year's Eve, so that they are promoted as positive celebrations rather than as dysfunctional events characterized by high levels of disorder and violence (Magnificent Events Company, 1996). Significantly, the methods developed by these specialists rely explicitly on situational crime prevention concepts, as well as on theories of ritual and of community (Dunstan and McDonald, 1996).

Based on the literature, features that characterize successful community interventions include: strong directive leadership during the establishment period; the mobilization of community groups concerned about violence and disorder; the implementation of a multi-agency approach involving licensees, local government, police, health and other groups; the use of safety audits to engage the local community and identify risks; a focus on the way licensed venues are managed (particularly those that cater to large numbers of young people); the "re-education" of patrons concerning their role as consumers of "quality hospitality;" and attention to situational factors, including serving practices, that promote intoxication and violent confrontations. Attempts were made to learn from these lessons in the design and implementation of the Surfers Paradise Safety Action Project.

PROJECT DESIGN

Objectives

The aims of the project were to reduce alcohol-related violence and disorder in and around Cavill Mall, the major nightclub and entertainment area, and as a result to improve the image of Surfers as a tourist destination and to reduce fear of crime victimization by patrons, residents, tourists, and local businesses. Specifically, the objectives were:

- To reduce violence in and around the Cavill Mall/Orchid Avenue area and immediate surrounds of Surfers Paradise, especially violence occurring inside and in the immediate vicinity of licensed premises,
- To reduce public disorder, including problems associated with intoxication, in and around the area.,
- To reduce the amount of drinking and driving arising from alcohol consumption in licensed premises in the area,
- To reduce the fear of crime victimization by patrons of licensed premises and by tourists, residents, businesspeople and shoppers in the area,
- To improve the public image of Surfers Paradise so that it is seen as a safer and more attractive locale by all sectors of the community, especially overseas tourists,
- To maintain the profitability of nightclubs and other licensed premises in the area,
- To increase revenue from tourism in Surfers Paradise.

Strategies

The senior author obtained federal funds in late 1992 for a demonstration project in Surfers Paradise, with funding to be directed through the Gold Coast City Council. Major stakeholders were the council, the Queensland Health Department (who had as a major policy objective the reduction of alcohol-related violence), and the university research team (as designers and evaluators).

The project design was based on three major strategies:

- The creation of a *Community Forum,* along the lines of the Melbourne Westend Forum, and the subsequent development of community-based *Task Groups* and the implementation of a safety audit,
- The development and implementation of *risk assessments* and *Model House Policies* in licensed premises by the Project Officer and the Queensland Health Department, and the subsequent development and implementation of a *Code of Practice* by nightclub managers,
- Improvements in the *external regulation* of licensed premises by police and liquor licensing inspectors, with a particular emphasis on preventive rather than reactive strategies, a focus on the prevention of assaults by bouncers

and on compliance with provisions of the Liquor Act prohibiting the serving of intoxicated persons.

The key features of these strategies are described in the following sections. The first two strategies were fully implemented by the end of the Implementation Year (December 1993), but the problem of how external regulation should be delivered was never satisfactorily resolved, and remains a major unsolved problem.

Evaluation Design

The project commenced in March 1993 and concluded, for evaluation purposes, in December 1993. Year 1 (1992) was the *Pre-Implementation Year.* It was conceived as a baseline year when no community activity to reduce alcohol-related violence was undertaken, other than reactive policing of venues and immediate environs. Year 2 (1993), the *Implementation Year,* consisted of three periods:

PERIOD 1:	January - March 1993	Pre-Project
PERIOD 2:	April - July 1993	Development of Code of Practice
PERIOD 3:	August - December 1993	Code of Practice operational

Year 3 (1994) was the beginning of the Maintenance Period as the community, through a Monitoring Committee, sought to maintain compliance with the Code of Practice by venue managers. It commenced in January 1994 and is ongoing.

The evaluation was based on multiple databases, including community surveys, interviews with licensees, direct observation of licensed premises, incidents recorded by security companies, and official police records. The design was based on a comparison of baseline or pre-implementation measures of violence and other problems, with the same measures taken after the project had been operating for nine months (April to December 1993). Details of the timing of the data collection and of the procedures used are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Databases Constructed to Evaluate the Surfers Paradise Project

	DATABASE	FIRST WAVE	SECOND WAVE
CONTEXT			
	Community Survey	March 1993	March 1994[a]
	Business Survey	April-May 1993	March 1994[a]
	Young Patrons Survey	June 1993	March 1994[a]
OUTCOMES			
Internal Environments	Venue Observations	Jan-Feb 1993	Jan-Feb 1994
	Risk Assessments	April-May 1993	Oct-Nov 1993
External Environments	Security Observations	1992 (PERIODS 1-3)	1993 (PERIODS 1-3)
	Police Records	1992 (PERIODS 1-3)	1993 (PERIODS 1-3)

(a) These surveys were not conducted, for reasons discussed in the text.

The community, business, and young patrons' surveys were designed to be repeated within a few months of the completion of the implementation period. The patrons' survey was not repeated because of the security risks described previously. The community survey was not repeated because the council did not want to risk public opinion just before an election. Subsequently, and of some importance to the sustainability of the project beyond the implementation period, the state government amalgamated the Gold Coast City Council with an adjoining local government area, creating a new bureaucracy and a new group of politicians who had had no involvement in the project and who had, initially, other priorities. In the light of these developments, the decision was made not to repeat the business survey.

The results of the three community context surveys are summarized in the introduction to this chapter. More details may be found in Mcllwain (1994) and in Homel et al. (1994). The designs of the outcomes data series are described together with the results, in a later section.

When the project was planned, considerable thought was given to the possibility of a control area or areas. The key requirements were comparability in terms of social and demographic characteristics and in terms of the degree of alcohol-related problems experienced, and sufficient distance so that the control area would not be affected by what would be happening in Surfers Paradise (through displacement or diffusion of benefits). Propinquity ruled out other areas on the Gold Coast, but coastal resorts to the north remained as possibilities. However, the realities of funding were such that in the end the idea of even one control area had to be abandoned. A single control area would have doubled the costs of data collection, two areas would have tripled the costs, and so on.

A further argument was put forth that, in any case, Surfers is absolutely unique, and that no control area is possible. Given its unique place as a national and international holiday destination there is some truth in this argument, but there is in addition the more general problem that in any "N = 1" community study the concept of a control area is problematic. How can one establish comparability, and how are differences in outcome measures between single "experimental" and "control" areas to be interpreted? In our view, it is more appropriate in an evaluation of an intervention in one community to base inferences about the causal impact of the project on "internal linkages," on variations over time in "input" and "output" variables, and on experience with replications in other communities.

With respect to "internal linkages," previous research (Homel and Clark, 1994) has shown that, among other factors, levels of intoxication and the way intoxication is managed are strong predictors of aggression and violence in licensed premises. If it can be shown not only that aggression and violence declined after the project, but that levels of intoxication declined and that methods of handling the problem in nightclubs improved, then there are good grounds for concluding that the project may well have been at least partially responsible for the observed reductions in aggression. This is particularly the case if the project can be demon-

strated to have influenced in a positive way the management of licensed premises.

Monitoring variations over time in a community, particularly if a "treatment" is introduced and then withdrawn, is analogous to experimentation with a single subject using something like an ABA design. In the case of Surfers Paradise, baseline levels of violence and many other factors were established, the intervention was carried out, further measures were taken, and then, as we shall see, critical elements of the intervention started to decay. The decay was reflected in a third set of measures that showed a return to pre-project management practices and an increase in violence. Although unfortunate for the community, this pattern increases one's confidence that the project itself, and not some unknown exogenous factors, caused the initial decline in violence.

Finally, the question of causal impact is related to the issue of the *replicability* of outcomes. If the intervention model can be shown to produce similar results in diverse localities, it is reasonable to conclude that some components of the model are having a direct impact on the causes of violence. These critical components should be able to be isolated through process evaluation and the analysis of outcomes. The initial success of the Surfers Project led to funding for replications in three cities in North Queensland (Cairns, Townsville and Mackay). These projects began in March 1994, and employ the same outcomes measures as the Surfers Project (Mcllwain and Hauritz, 1996). When results from the replication projects become available, much more will be known about how robust the intervention model is and what the critical elements are.

Our emphasis on internal linkages (or mechanisms) and on monitoring over time, combined with a study of context through replication, is consistent with the "scientific realist" approach to evaluation proposed by Pawson and Tilley (1994). This method seems to be a practical and methodologically defensible alternative to the traditional but costly quasi-experimental design involving large numbers of experimental and control communities.

The other major design problem we faced was the measurement of *displacement.* One of the most likely outcomes of a project like Surfers is that nightclub patrons who like to get drunk cheaply or who enjoy relatively downmarket venues will move to new locations. The extent of displacement can, in principle, be assessed by talking to patrons and licensees in both the target area and adjoining locations; by comparing patron characteristics

before and after the intervention; and by measuring rates of crime, disorder, and drunkenness in areas likely to affected by displacement. Some evidence based on the first two strategies is presented later in this chapter; work based on the third strategy, using police records, is in progress.

It should be recalled that there is also a positive side to the displacement problem; sometimes crime prevention programs aimed at reducing opportunities to offend have unexpected and positive benefits in other areas or on other kinds of offenses (Clarke and Weisburd, 1994). This phenomenon of "reverse displacement" is known as "diffusion of crime control benefits," and almost certainly occurred to some extent during the present study.

Of course, if displacement of crime to other areas did occur, it is not evidence that the project necessarily failed in its objectives: It could as easily be argued that what is needed is a Surfers Paradise Safety Action Project in all areas on the Gold Coast (and elsewhere), so that there are fewer places to which alcohol-related problems can be displaced.

IMPLEMENTATION

Steering Committee

An initial meeting convened by the Surfers Paradise Civic Committee was held in January 1993. Those members of the community who wished to express their concerns about issues related to violence and safety in their area were invited. A Steering Committee, composed of representatives of the Queensland City Council, Health Department, Police Service, Liquor Licensing Division, Gold Coast Tourism, Griffith University and the Chamber of Commerce was elected and made responsible for directing the jointly proposed community project. The duty of the Steering Committee was to ensure not only that the priorities set by the community representatives would be adhered to, but also that the focus on the micro-environment of Surfers Paradise and its idiosyncrasies would not be widened to include outlying areas. The notions of community ownership of its problems and, therefore, community responsibility for the solution to those problems, were to be paramount.

Project Officer

The Steering Committee elected a Project Officer (Mcllwain) whose responsibilities were to:-

- Provide co-ordination of all elements of the project.
- Facilitate development of the Community Forum as an essential support vehicle for the project.
- Liaise with Liquor Licensing investigators and the Police Service to develop programs of awareness, surveillance and compliance with the Liquor Act.
- Incorporate the use of the Risk Assessment Policy Checklist in assessing how responsibly licensees manage their venues, and work cooperatively with them to develop responsible hospitality practices.
- Coordinate any training required from Patron Care (a Health Department Host Responsibility training program) or other sources.

Community Forum

Drawing on the results of the resident survey described previously, a major Community Forum was conducted on May 14, 1993. The Community Forum was preceded by several meetings of the Steering Committee with the Project Officer, to discuss not only the framework of the forum but also the presumption from the viewpoint of the community that alcohol and violence were in some way linked. Thus the Community Forum, while allowing free and open discussion among all participants, would have to be oriented toward recognition of the role that alcohol played in Surfers Paradise's public disorder, the manner in which alcohol was delivered to consumers, and the actual nature of drinking events. The main purpose of the Community Forum was to offer the people of Surfers Paradise the opportunity to take ownership of and responsibility for their own problems. Of paramount importance was that the forum conclude with outlined strategies for problem resolution, rather than yet another agreement on the extent of the problem.

From this Community Forum, four Task Groups were formed. These were:

- Safety of Public Spaces Task Group
- Security and Policing Task Group

- Community Monitoring Task Group
- Venue Management Task Group

Safety Of Public Spaces Task Group

The purpose of this task group was to examine the physical environment within public spaces, and the role each environmental factor played either individually or interactively in preventing Surfers Paradise from being a safe recreational area for a broad cross section of people. This examination was undertaken using a Safety Audit of the CBD area of Surfers Paradise. Surfers is a 24-hour town, and for this reason the audit was conducted over that entire time in two-hour blocks by 11 teams of people. Auditors were drawn from the community through extensive advertising and television coverage. No particular age group was targeted, and a broad cross section of residents and non-resident workers responded. Auditors were able to choose the area and time most suitable, and with an allocated leader they set off with a questionnaire for guidance, a cue sheet, torches, pens and paper.

As the auditors progressed through the week innovative testing strategies evolved, such as walking onto the unlit beach of Surfers Paradise at night and screaming to see if anyone on the nearest footpath could hear, and having children try to reach telephones in the event of emergency calls. The emphasis was on the subjective feelings and perceptions of participants. At the completion of each team's audit an hour was spent collating the results, putting them in order of priority, and recommending solutions. Final results were grouped into areas related to the Gold Coast City Council, private organizations, and the police.

Security and Policing Task Group

The Security and Policing Task Group was concerned with the "around licensed premises" aspect of the problem of violence and disorder. This task group, whose members were drawn mainly from the police, security firms, and managers of nearby shopping and office complexes, aimed to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and information among police, the commercial sector of Surfers Paradise, security personnel, and representatives of public transport bodies. The group utilized its resources to:

- Implement and monitor the concept of Neighborhood Watch in the commercial sector of the Surfers Paradise CBD.
- Pilot an appropriately recognized registration and training program for security personnel, giving consideration to the Queensland Security Providers Act which at that time had been proposed but not enacted.
- Ensure, through coordination with all licensees and the commercial sector, that only trained security personnel were employed in the Surfers Paradise CBD.
- Implement a trial program of shuttle bus services to ensure safe transport for patrons out of the nightclub area (and to reduce the incidence of drinking and driving).

Probably the most important achievements of the group were in the areas of training and in improved relationships between police and security personnel. The security guards employed by the Civic Committee to patrol the mall area had had a limited impact on violence and disorder, and police and security had not come to terms with working together. More seriously, bouncers had a very poor reputation for crowd control, and were frequently reported to the police or the Gold Coast Sexual Assault Service for assaults on patrons. Although the problem of poorly trained, edgy, and aggressive bouncers was probably no worse than in other states (Homel et al. 1992; Victorian Community Council Against Violence, 1990), publicity about several major assaults by bouncers had compelled the state government to develop legislation mandating licensing and training.

The Project Officer chaired meetings of the task group that helped to resolve the conflicts between police and security operatives. This resulted in agreement with a proposal put forward by local businesspeople that the streets of Surfers be jointly patrolled by police and police-approved security firms. Separate meetings restricted to security personnel helped to create a sense of group identity and contributed to a process whereby they negotiated a degree of "professional legitimacy" with police and the business community. These protracted, and at times heated, meetings led to the adoption in September 1993 of full crowd control and security training for all bouncers. This was quickly followed by security management training for licensees and some police. The training, provided by a professional security training organization, included: ethics and good practice; management skills; staff recruitment; conflict resolution; venue security; civil and criminal

law related to the operation of public venues; licensing law; the (proposed) Security Providers Bill; major incidents and emergencies; and incident reporting (Advanced Techniques, 1994; Mcllwain, 1994).

The major problem unresolved by the task group concerned strategies for policing the mall and the venues themselves. Local police were committed to "Operation Cleanout," which involved periodic sweeps of the streets in the early hours of the morning to arrest drunken or disorderly patrons. The attention of police was drawn to the success of strategies in England that involved friendly visits with venue managers by uniformed police at random times. This strategy, in contrast to Operation Cleanout, focused on compliance by managers with the Liquor Act, rather than on patron peccadilloes, and relied on general deterrence through a visible but unpredictable police presence rather than arrests (Jeffs and Saunders, 1983).

Although the police agreed in principle with the proposal, in practice little preventive policing along the lines suggested appears to have taken place during the implementation period. However, police goodwill was put in concrete form by the formation in November 1993 of a Liquor Investigation Squad, with the goals of collating information on liquor licenses, liaising with the Queensland Liquor Licensing Division, and conducting plainclothes and uniformed operations in licensed venues.

Community Monitoring Task Group

The primary aim of this task group was to develop a positive image of Surfers Paradise and to disseminate information about the achievements of the Safety Action Project. However, the workload entailed in the other task groups meant that this group soon ceased to function, and the role of media liaison devolved to the Project Officer. Fortunately, the perceived success of the project from its earliest stages meant that the media beat a path to the Project Officer's door, and many newspaper and television reports about the "new-look" Surfers appeared. Whether these reports influenced public perceptions of safety in the area cannot be known, since the second wave of community and business surveys was not conducted as planned. It is indisputable, however, that the positive media coverage gave project participants a boost, and was a key factor in generating great commitment and enthusiasm-critical elements in community action projects.

Venue Management Task Group

Although the initial focus of the project was to conduct the safety audit through the Safety of Public Spaces Task Group, at the same time the Project Officer was concentrating on developing a working relationship with the licensees. By not focusing on their irresponsible practices, the licensees for the first time were not simply the focus of blame. Instead they were being asked to outline their perception of the problem of rising violence and public disorder in Surfers Paradise, and to identify those factors they thought were significant. It appeared that at no time previously had the licensees been involved in the process of problem identification in their own community, and had never been asked to contribute to solutions. They were a marginalized group requiring a sense of identity and legitimacy within the community in which they operated million-dollar businesses.

The aims of this task group were to develop ways of delivering alcohol in a responsible manner, and to establish positive working relationships among the Surfers Paradise licensees, the Surfers Paradise Police, and the Queensland Liquor Licensing Division. A further aim was to encourage the involvement of licensees in decision making that affected the regulation of their liquor licenses. Central to effecting a reduction in alcohol-related violence was the hypothesis, supported by the literature, that if licensees were to adopt more responsible hospitality practices both within and around their premises then a decrease in drunkenness and unsafe drinking environments would follow. This meant that the task group focused on the actual event of drinking, on all those situational, environmental, social, economic and cultural factors that impinged on the behavior of licensees and influenced the degree of responsibility they accepted at the point of delivery of alcohol to the community.

The Venue Management Task Group consisted of the Project Officer and representatives of the Police Service, the Liquor Licensing Division, and licensees. It was the most complex task group but also the most important for the success of the project. The activities of this group are therefore described under a number of separate headings.

Self-Regulation Versus State Enforcement

The regulation of liquor licenses has always been a particularly difficult issue for the licensees. Like liquor acts in other states, the Queensland Liquor Act 1992 is a powerful piece of legislation. Yet the policy of the Queensland Liquor Licensing Division to abandon a "paternalistic" role, to deregulate, and to allow the market to find its own level of operation, had undermined the licensees' confidence in the division's regulatory powers. The division is also hampered by limited resources; it has about 14 investigators to cover an area larger than Western Europe.

The licensees were frustrated by a perceived lack of enforcement of the Act and an apparent unwillingness by the Division to address the increase in liquor permits in an already saturated marketplace. Almost all licensees knew they were able to "get away" with irresponsible practices and had done so for quite some time in order to survive competition during an economic recession. However, with small profit margins and few prospects for improvement, and the threat of more liquor permits being granted, they had lost confidence in the possibility of change.

This is not to offer an excuse for the behavior of the licensees, but without regulation of a large number of licensed venues all vying for the same market, they were easily able to rationalize their actions. The role of the project regarding this issue was to engender in the licensees an acceptance of responsibility for the control of their own behavior within a community context, regardless of the extent of external enforcement. However, gaining a commitment from them to take self-regulation seriously promised to be difficult. The assumption was made that the shift would be achieved only if the approach was one that delivered valuable benefits to them, both commercially and socially. Additionally, the licensees, as participants in the proposed framework of self-regulation, had to feel totally involved, with their own suggestions for change being taken seriously by police and Liquor Licensing.

In summary, the task group aimed to achieve a move to greater self-regulation by shifting the emphasis of licensed venues from alcohol to entertainment, with an emphasis on sound, responsible host practices.

Risk Assessments, Model House Policies, and the Code of Practice

The shift from alcohol to entertainment was achieved in part through the administration of the Risk Assessment Policy Checklist, and through the Model House Policies developed from them. The risk assessments offered licensees the opportunity to focus on those areas of their businesses that could be optimized for profit and where the standards of serving practices could be raised.

The risk assessments were conducted by the Project Officer in April 1993 with the manager, one bar staff employee, and one security employee from each of eight licensed venues. The assessments were repeated in November. The instrument was adapted from the work of Stockwell et al., (1993), and involved separate structured interviews with management and staff, as well as observations of the venue layout, signage, promotions and other operational features of the venue (Carvolth, 1993, 1995). Inter-rater reliability (94%) of the 16 items was established through concurrent ratings taken across three reviews by an independent rater. The 5-point items comprising the checklist are presented in Table 2.

Customized reports from the risk assessments led to the development of individual Model House Policies for each licensee. However, although individual reports and House Policies were prepared, the issues that arose from the risk assessments were dealt with in a *group* setting (the task group). The most pervasive factor in the irresponsible practices of Surfers Paradise licensees was competition, and to have introduced further suggestions as to how each club could "better" itself and increase its profit over others would have only served to fuel and perpetuate that competitive environment. Individual suggestions regarding changes to premises or practices were verbally fed back in informal meetings with licensees. In essence, the individual Model House Policies became the property of the licensees as a group.

Meetings of this and other task groups were never conducted within the formal framework of motions, amendments and minutes. The meetings were forums of open discussion, of conflict and of conciliation, of resolution and consolidation. As an experienced group therapist, the Project Officer concentrated on facilitation rather than formal chairmanship, and for this reason each meeting of the Venue Management Task Group was held in a licensed venue. Prior to the project, licensees were reticent about

Table 2: Brief Descriptions of Items Comprising the Risk Assessment Policy Checklist

ITEM	DESCRIPTION
DISCOUNTING	Happy hours and other binge drinking incentives vs. discounting low or non alcohol drinks, snacks and so on.
PRICING	Differential pricing on low vs. standard alcohol beer.
INFORMATION FOR STAFF	House policies: From verbal instruction to admit/serve underage and intoxicated patrons, through to written responsible policies.
INFORMATION FOR CUSTOMERS	Signage: From promotions for binge drinking, through to responsible promotions and legal requirements.
UNDERAGE POLICIES	Instructions regarding admitting and serving underage persons.
LOW AND NON ALCOHOL	Availability of a range of low or non alcohol drinks.
INTOXICATION	Drunkenness. Instructions regarding entry and serving.
FOOD	Times and range of snacks/meals available.
ENTERTAINMENT	Promoting all-male, heavy drinking crowd, through to varied and attracting mixed clientele, responsible atmosphere.
TRANSPORT POLICIES	Nature and extent of the transport strategy.
SERVE SIZE	Degree of restriction on size of glasses, on jugs and on drink strength.
STAFF DRINKING	Policy on staff drinking at the venue, during and outside their rostered hours.
PROBLEM PATRON	Problem drinking customer. Strategy for dealing with such patrons.
COMMUNITY RELATIONS	Extent of involvement, perceived involvement and likelihood of support from community and stakeholder groups.
PERSONNEL	Preferred staff style, recruitment, communication, management and support.
SECURITY	Preferred security style, recruitment and training.

giving their competitors access to their clubs, but by the close of the first stage of the project in December 1993, they felt free to visit other premises either formally for meetings or socially. This reflected their growing cohesiveness as a group.

An important outcome of the group meetings was a consensus on the problems involved in operating nightclubs in the area. The prime concerns included:

- The issue of forced 3:00 a.m. closure in a tourist destination that operated 24 hours per day and that included a 24-hour casino against which they had to compete.
- The problem of homeless or alienated youths and street gangs who drank outside the venues and often fought with each other.
- The presence of hot-dog stands that encouraged those drinking in the street to congregate.
- The media's negative portrayal of licensees' behavior and lack of responsibility to their patrons.
- Police rostering that left few police operational after 4:00 a.m.
- An abundance of inexperienced police.
- A lack of response by police to calls from licensed premises.
- "Bouncer bashing," i.e., criticism about the quality of security provided.
- The unwillingness of police to allow security personnel to intervene in situations close to licensed venues.

To complement the strategies of risk assessments, Model House Policies, and democratic problem solving, ongoing training was provided in the areas of responsible hospitality practices, management of personnel, care of patrons, crowd control techniques, and harm minimization principles. The negotiation in a group setting of the outcomes of the risk assessments and the discussion and resolution of the agreed problems of running licensed venues, together with the training, provided the framework and the impetus for the formulation of a Code of Practice. This process was further boosted by a visit in July 1993 by a group of nightclub managers from Melbourne who had been heavily involved in the Westend Forum. These licensees had extensive experience with self-regulation in a competitive environment, and were able to convey the message, in a credible fashion, that responsibility and profitability were compatible.

By August 2, 1993 the licensed venues, with the exception of only one licensee, had put into place their Code of Practice. Each venue prominently displayed the written code. With assistance from the Gold Coast City Council, a colorful location map was al-

located to each foyer and toilet area of the venues. The maps displayed public amenities in international symbols and featured emergency numbers for 24-hour assistance. This was an initiative of the Safety of Public Spaces Task Group which recognized from safety audit results that no such directive maps were available for patrons. A reproduction of the Code of Practice appears in Appendix 1.

Monitoring Committee

Compliance with the Code of Practice was overseen by a Monitoring Committee. This committee was chaired by the Project Officer, with members drawn from the Australian Hotels Association, the nightclub licensees, the Health Department, the Chamber of Commerce, the Gold Coast City Council, representatives of local five-star hotels, the Restaurant and Caterers Association, and the Gold Coast Tourism Bureau.

The Monitoring Committee's role was one of arbitration and conciliation between and within the community and the licensees. The work of this committee was critical to the success of the project, for it enabled licensees to monitor their compliance with the code they had developed. Non-compliance by any licensee was immediately brought to the attention of the Chairperson of the Monitoring Committee. Examples of incidents that came to the attention of the committee included distribution of free drinks, masturbation in public by male patrons following a private strip-show in a club, the advertising of "specials" on alcohol, and overcrowding. Within days of notification, the Monitoring Committee would meet and open the issue for discussion, with the licensee involved present. The purpose of this discussion was to produce a workable solution that would reduce the likelihood of the event recurring.

Input into the discussion of the non-complying behavior was based on the expertise of all the groups represented on the committee. This assisted the licensee in the implementation of strategies to avoid non-compliance in the future, and provided both peer support and pressure to change. Problem-solving strategies included: making suggestions about information that could be given to staff; the citation of previously successful ways of managing an equivalent problem; providing reports of relevant research findings; offering health promotion options; and providing access to international networks to assure tourists of the safety of the area after damaging publicity. It was also clearly understood

that should the problem not be addressed by the licensee, the Monitoring Committee would be required to brief the Police Service and the Liquor Licensing Division on the problem.

It should be recalled that the committee came into existence not only because of community demand for some involvement in regulation, but also because the formal agencies of control — the police and the Liquor Licensing Division — were perceived by venue managers to be operating ineffectively. For these reasons, the Monitoring Committee did not have any police or Liquor Licensing representatives as members. Its purpose was to offer a forum for informal regulation by community pressure and education, rather than engage in formal enforcement. The committee appeared to perform this role quite effectively, reflecting the fact that the presence of prominent civic and business leaders, as well as business "peers," can be a powerful instrument of persuasion. In practice, the Monitoring Committee operated at an intermediate level in a hierarchy of control, representing community interests and intervening at a point between pure self-regulation by licensees on the one hand and a centralized "command and control" system of state regulation on the other.

Notwithstanding the success of the committee, it became clear during the implementation year that although the informal community control that it exercised was an essential feature of a system of self-regulation, the committee could not on its own prevent all irresponsible or illegal practices by licensees. Formal action by police and/or Liquor Licensing investigators would be required on some occasions. The Monitoring Committee could greatly enhance the role of these official agencies it they chose to act. In retrospect, however, it is apparent that a satisfactory model of cooperation at local and headquarters levels among the committee, police, and Liquor Licensing — one that *could be sustained over time and would keep violence at low levels* — had not yet been developed.

RESULTS: PARADISE REGAINED

Risk Assessments

It will be recalled that the Risk Assessment Policy Checklist is a tool devised to assess: how well venue managers deal with the provision of alcohol and pricing; what responsible practices are being used; and how entertainment as well as alcohol is promoted (see Table 2). Interviews were conducted with the manager, one bar staff employee, and one security employee in each of eight venues at the beginning of the implementation period (April 1993) and following the introduction of the Code of Practice in November 1993.

Table 3: Mean Scores Across Eight Venues on The Risk Assessment Policy Checklist

RISK ASSESSMENT ITEMS	APRIL 1993	NOVEMBER 1993	p^a
Discounting	-1.9	+1.5	.018
Pricing	-1.8	-0.9	.018
Information for staff	-0.3	+1.6	.043
Information for customer	+0.1	+1.9	.018
Under age policies	+0.6	+1.6	.028
Non or low alcohol	-0.5	+0.8	.043
Intoxication	-1.1	+1.4	.012
Food	0.0	+1.6	.043
Entertainment	-0.4	+1.1	.018
Transport policies	-1.9	+0.6	.018
Serve size	+0.3	+1.8	.043
Staff drink	+0.1	0.0	.317
Problem patron	+0.1	+1.6	.028
Community relations	-0.3	+0.1	.018
Personnel	+0.8	+1.8	.094
Security	-0.4	+1.6	.018
TOTAL	**-6.6**	**+18.1**	

(a) Changes were tested for statistical significance using the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test.

In Table 3, a positive score indicates responsible practices, and a negative score irresponsible practices (the theoretical minima

and maxima are -2 and +2). There were significant changes on all but two items (Staff Drinking and Personnel). These results are impressive, given the short period of time in which licensees had to make changes after the introduction of the Code of Practice. However, the fact that the Project Officer and not the evaluation team carried out the tests means that the risk of an unintentional bias toward positive outcomes cannot be ruled out. While the results do not necessarily reflect changes in practice, they do suggest substantial shifts in policy and, to some extent, shifts in practice. Because the risk assessments were not conducted under operational conditions, it is not possible to assess from these results whether policy was fully implemented. For this, direct observation is required.

Venue Observations

Activities in 18 nightclubs in the central area of Surfers Paradise were observed by teams of students during January and February 1993 (before the project) and January and February 1994 (after the main features of the project had been implemented). The venues were identified from the Licensed Premises List (Liquor Licensing Division).Cafeterias and restaurants were excluded. Of these 18 licensed premises, two were forced to close due to poor business or a breach of the Liquor Act, thus reducing the sample to 16 in 1994.

A structured, systematic observation technique was employed, based on an observation schedule of some 20 pages consisting of hundreds of items. These items covered details of the physical and social environments, patron characteristics, bar and security staff, drinking patterns, serving practices, and aggression and violence. The schedule was almost identical with the instrument developed in Sydney by Homel and his students (Homel and Clark, 1994).

A group of 22 university students acted as patron-observers within the selected venues. About half of the students participated in both years but were sent to different venues in 1994. Students were divided into mixed-sex groups of three or four to ensure their safety when leaving in the early hours of the morning. Several training sessions were conducted to ensure that they were thoroughly familiar with the aims of the project and the observation schedule. It was emphasized during training that observers were there for scientific purposes, and that although they should act as normal patrons, their job was not to have a good

time but to observe as comprehensively and as accurately as possible. A limit of one alcoholic drink per hour was imposed for each observer. Observers' responses to items in the observation schedule were calibrated for consistency within and across groups. Each observer completed the survey form in isolation as soon as possible after the visit. At a subsequent meeting, inconsistencies between observers were checked and agreement established.

All observation sessions were of about two hours duration and were unobtrusive. Fifty-six visits were conducted in January 1993, and 43 in January 1994. Thus there were 99 visits in all, for a total of about 200 hours of observation. Except where premises had closed down (two cases), the same clubs were visited in each year. In 1993, 57.2% of the visits were to clubs that closed at 5:00 a.m. or later; the figure in 1994 was 73.5%. In other words, more clubs were closing later in 1994. All visits were on Thursday, Friday or Saturday nights. The breakdown for 1993 was: Thursday - 17, Friday - 19 and Saturday - 20. The breakdown for 1994 was: Thursday - 13, Friday - 13, Saturday - 16 (day was not recorded in one case). Thus, the days of visits were comparable in the two years. Times of visits were also comparable, except that in 1994 there was a slight unintended bias toward pre-midnight starts. Since most aggression and drunkenness occurs in the early hours of the morning, 1994 rates may be slightly underestimated.

All changes that were significant at the .10 level are listed in Table 4. Tests were based either on the Pearson chi-square with gamma as a measure of strength of association (for ordinal data), or the Mann-Whitney test for numerical measures (such as the estimated percentage of patrons in business suits). For numerical variables means rather than medians are reported, together with effect sizes (mean differences divided by the pooled standard deviations).

Not unexpectedly, relatively few aspects of the physical environment of venues changed. Lighting, seating capacity, seating styles, appearance, decor, and ventilation remained more or less constant. What did improve was cleanliness, bar access, and the availability of public transport, consistent with the activities of the Venue Management Task Group.

Clearly, a major response of venue managers was to employ many more private security officers. Interestingly, this coincided with a marked decline in a visible police presence. The effects of training were also apparent in the greater friendliness of bounc-

ers, the more rigorous enforcement of age-identification checks at the door, and a reduced level of non-directed patrolling or aimless "roaming about" by bouncers.

Many changes were apparent in the social environment. Bar crowding decreased, consistent with the observation that bar access was easier, although overall crowding levels appeared to remain the same. The musical style moved from thrash, heavy metal or acid to more "mainstream" genres, with greater use of Top 40 hits and popular "classics." Patrons seemed to be friendlier and more relaxed, with less blatant sexual activity and competition and less hostility, rowdiness, and swearing. The only negative change appeared to be that the women were less cheerful. Apart from this, the extent to which patrons appeared to be entertained did not change. Significantly, food was available in the great majority of visits in 1994.

Perhaps the greatest changes occurred in the appearance of patrons. Dressing up, particularly in business suits, was far more common in 1994 than 1993. This could mean that an entirely new type of patron was attracted to more "upmarket" venues, or that the same patrons responded to the project initiatives by improving their dress standards. While it is impossible to decide between these alternatives from the observational data, discussions with venue managers lead us to conclude, tentatively, that both processes occurred simultaneously. That is, some patrons, such as those observed in 1993 in manual working gear or those seeking to "pick up" a sexual partner, moved to other venues, while others kept coming but altered their dress and behavior. The age and gender profile did not alter, nor did the size or gender composition of groups.

Significantly, cover charges and prices of drinks did not appear to change, consistent with licensee and press reports that business was very good in the summer of 1994 (Mcllwain, 1994). Since the overall numbers of patrons appeared to be as high or higher in 1994 as in the same period in 1993, it is possible to conclude, tentatively, that at least in the initial post-implementation period the project achieved the objective of maintaining or improving profitability.

Table 4: Venue Observations - Significant Changes (10% Level), 1993 to 1994

Variable	1993 (n=56%) or mean[a]	1994 (n=43) % or mean[a]	*p*[b]	Gamma or Effect Size[c]
Physical Environment				
Bar Access			.06	.51
Convenient	75.0	90.2		
Inconvenient	25.0	9.8		
Cleanliness of Premises			.07	.39
Clean	62.5	79.1		
Dirty	37.5	20.9		
Male Toilets			.07	.35
Clean	44.6	62.8		
Dirty	55.4	37.2		
Public Transport			.003	.50
Available	21.4	54.8		
Limited	37.5	23.8		
None	41.1	21.4		
Security				
Use of Private Security			.001	.88
No	98.2	77.8		
Yes	1.8	22.2		
Visible Police Presence			.10	.49
No	82.1	93.0		
Yes	17.9	7.0		
Friendliness of Bouncers			.07	.32
Cheerful	12.5	11.6		
Pleasant/Relaxed	42.9	65.1		
Non-Committal	30.4	20.9		
Distant, Rude, Edgy	14.3	2.3		
ID Requested at Door			.001	.55
Rigorous	14.3	41.9		
Haphazard	3.6	14.0		
Selective	23.2	16.3		
No check	58.9	27.9		
Bouncer Patrol of Aisles and Bars			.08	.37
No	76.8	60.5		
Yes	23.2	39.5		

Variable	1993 (n=56%) or mean[a]	1994 (n=43) % or mean[a]	p^b	Gamma or Effect Size[c]
Non-Specific Bouncer Patrolling			.01	.72
No	76.8	95.3		
Yes	23.2	4.7		
Social Environment				
Bar Crowding			.03	.60
High	23.2	7.0		
Medium/Low	76.8	93.0		
Voice Noise Level			.10	.07
Quiet	55.4	53.5		
Medium	25.0	39.5		
Loud	19.6	7.0		
Style of Music				
No Top 40	46.4	27.9	.06	.38
Top 40	53.6	72.1		
No classics (e.g., "American Pie"	80.4	62.8	.05	.42
Some classics	19.6	37.2		
Food Available			.03	.48
None	35.7	16.3		
Some	64.3	83.7		
Sexual Activity-Males				
No heavy necking, touching	67.9	93.0	.002	.73
Heavy necking, touching	32.1	7.0		
No flagrant fondling	82.1	97.7	.01	.80
Flagrant fondling	17.9	2.3		
Sexual Activity-Females				
No heavy necking, touching	71.4	90.7	.02	.59
Heavy necking, touching	28.6	9.3		
No flagrant fondling	87.5	97.7	.07	.71
Flagrant fondling	12.5	2.3		
Sexual Competition Among Females			.02	.44
Low	55.4	32.6		
None	44.6	67.4		
Individual "Cheerfulness"-Females			.07	.29
High/Medium	30.4	11.6		
Low	53.6	72.1		
Not cheerful at all	16.1	16.3		

Variable	1993 (n=56%) or mean[a]	1994 (n=43) % or mean[a]	*p*[b]	Gamma or Effect Size[c]
Hostility-Males			.06	.39
Medium/Low	43.6	25.6		
None	56.4	74.4		
Hostility-Females			.07	.43
Medium/Low	29.1	14.0		
None	70.9	86.0		
Rowdiness-Males			.003	.51
High/Medium	39.3	18.6		
Low	35.7	23.3		
None	25.0	58.1		
Rowdiness-Females			.009	.53
High/Medium	16.1	4.7		
Low	46.4	27.9		
None	37.5	67.4		
Swearing-Males			.007	.51
High/Medium	28.6	7.0		
Low	42.9	39.5		
None	28.6	53.5		
Observed "Deviant" Behavior			.03	.43
No "deviant" behavior	48.2	70.0		
Some "deviant" behavior	51.8	30.0		
Patrons				
Ethnicity of Patrons			0.02	.58
No Asian patrons	23.2	53.5		
Some Asian patrons	76.8	46.5		
% "marginal" patrons ("down and out")	mean = 4.7%	mean = 6.0%	.04	.09
% single males	14.5	10.0	.06	.10
% single females	9.2	4.3	.02	.54
% males dressed in manual working gear	6.1	2.7	.04	.21
% Patrons Dressed in Business Suits				
Males	0.6	46.3	.00	2.4
Females	0.3	39.4	.00	2.3
% Patrons "Dressed Up"				
Males	3.3	41.3	.00	1.9
Females	10.4	48.4	.00	1.7

Variable	1993 (n=56%) or mean[a]	1994 (n=43) % or mean[a]	p^b	Gamma or Effect Size[c]
Bar Staff				
Ethnicity of Bar Staff				
% Anglo	91.0	97.0	.00	.42
% Pacific Islanders	2.4	0.0	.01	.60
Alcohol/Drug Consumption and Costs				
Drinking Rates (In Terms of "Standard Drinks")-Male			.04	.42
High (>4/hour)	19.6	4.7		
Medium (3-4/hour)	46.4	41.9		
Low/very low (<3/hour)	33.9	53.5		
Drunkenness-Male			.01	.48
High	10.7	4.7		
Medium	35.7	20.9		
Low	48.2	46.5		
None	5.4	27.0		
Round "Shouting"			.00	.59
High/Medium	42.9	16.3		
Low	50.0	55.8		
None	7.1	27.9		
% Males Consuming Low Alcohol Beer	mean = 1.7 %	mean = 4.6%	.05	.32
% Consuming Beer from Large Glasses (1.5 standard drinks)				
Males	12.7	.07	.00	.75
Females	9.2	.00	.00	1.00
Responsible Serving Practices				
Underage Drinking Warning			.006	.52
No	69.6	41.9		
Yes	30.4	58.1		
House Policy Notice			.000	.79
No	92.9	60.5		
Yes	7.1	39.5		
Other Publicity			.09	.43
No	89.3	76.7		
Yes	10.7	23.2		
Publicity to Patrons-All Types			.001	.68
None	49.4	53.6		
Some	14.0	86.0		

Variable	1993 (n=56%) or mean[a]	1994 (n=43) % or mean[a]	p^b	Gamma or Effect Size[c]
Self-Testing Breathalyzers			.07	.22
In obvious locations	26.8	27.9		
In non-obvious locations	10.7	27.9		
None available	62.5	44.2		
Use of Gimmicks to Promote Consumption			.07	.42
No	67.9	83.7		
Yes	32.1	16.4		
Drinks Promotions-All Types			.02	.45
None	28.6	51.2		
Some	71.4	48.8		
Overall Rating in Terms of Responsible Serving			.002	.62
Very or somewhat responsible	40.4	74.3		
Not responsible	59.6	25.7		
Conflict/Aggression/Violence				
Aggressive Incidents Requiring Bar Staff to Defuse Them			.01	.72
No incidents	23.2	4.7		
At least one incident	76.8	95.3		
Number of incidents				
All non-physical (verbal abuse, arguments, challenges, threats)	mean=.43	mean=.09	.04	.41
All incidents (non-physical and physical)	.63	.16	.02	.40

(a) For some variables, missing values reduce the sample size. Percentages are reported for ordinal variables, and mean values (usually mean percentages) are presented for numerical variables. The transitions from percentages to means are shown at various points in the table.

(b) The test of statistical significance is Pearson's chi-square for ordinal data, and the Mann-Whitney test for numerical data.

(c) Gamma is presented for ordinal variables, and the effect size (difference between means divided by the pooled standard deviation) for numerical variables. Both statistics measure the magnitude of the change in the variable.

Corresponding to all these changes, levels of observed aggression and violence declined markedly in 1994. Aggressive and vio-

lent incidents occurred disproportionately in a small number of venues, with as many as four assaults being observed within one venue in a 1993 visit. Table 4 shows that total incidents (physical and non-physical) dropped from a mean of .63 per visit in 1993 to .16 per visit in 1994, while non-physical incidents dropped from .43 to .09. The drop for physical assaults was from .20 per visit (11 incidents) to .09 (4 incidents), but this decline was not statistically significant given the small numbers of incidents. Expressed as a rate per 100 hours of observation, physical assaults declined by 52%, from a rate of 9.8 to 4.7. The 1993 figure was close to the rate observed by Homel and Clark (1994) in some of the worst establishments in Sydney. Verbal abuse declined by 81.6%, from 12.5 to 2.3 per 100 hours, and arguments by 67.6%, from 7.1 to 2.3 per 100 hours.

In summary, the venue observations indicate that many of the changes in policy suggested by the risk assessments had actually been implemented. The impact of the Code of Practice was particularly apparent, with substantial improvements in responsible hospitality practices and consequent reductions in rates of drunkenness and in levels of aggression and violence. Venues overall became more mainstream in style and more up-market, and attracted better dressed and better behaved patrons.

Security Data

Several security companies had been contracted by the business community since 1990 to address issues of security affecting businesses in the Cavill Mall/ Orchid Avenue area. These companies provided security personnel five nights per week (Wednesday to Sunday: 9 p.m. to 5 a.m.), and supplied written records until April 1993. In April 1993 a more simple form of coding was developed by the evaluation team, enabling data to be recorded more uniformly and in less time. This revised format was used for the period April to December 1993. To the extent that this change in data collection methods had an impact on the results, it should have led to higher figures than the former method of recording, since it required less work to record incidents. The most common types of incidents encountered were drunk and disorderly behavior, urinating in public places, minor assaults, and general brawling. These incidents were observed mainly in the streets near only a few of the venues, especially where hot-dog stands were located.

Data for the 1990 period were very sparse and not considered reliable. Furthermore, a significant block of 1991 data (probably December) was not dated and appeared to be in error, so 1991 data were also not included in the analysis. In addition, data for December 1993 could not be included as the security company only collected data for the first week. Consequently, the data available for comparison are for the periods January to November 1992 and January to November 1993. These periods have been divided, for analytical purposes, into the three time spans described in the project design: pre-project (January to March), development of the Code of Practice (April to July), and post-Code of Practice (August to November). If the project was successful in reducing street incidents, a drop between Period 3 in 1992 and Period 3 in 1993 would be expected. We might also expect the beginning of a trend downward when comparing the Period 2 figures, but there is no reason to expect a drop between 1992 and 1993 in Period 1. Results are in Table 5.

Table 5: Incidents Recorded by Security Companies for 1992 and 1993

PERIOD	INCIDENTS			
	OBS 92	EXP 92	OBS 93	EXP 93
1. JAN-MAR	235	213.5	192	213.5
2. APR-JULY	215	165.0	115	165.0
3. AUG-NOV	141	95.5	50	95.5

Note: OBS = Observed frequency; EXP = Expected frequency under the null hypothesis of constant numbers of offenses in 1992 and 1993.

It can be seen from Table 5 that there was a decline in the number of recorded incidents in each of the time periods between 1992 and 1993. The decline in Period 1 was 18.3%, which increased to 46.5% for Period 2 and to 64.5% for Period 3. This suggests that although there was a downward trend in incidents recorded by security staff before the project began, the project may have contributed to an acceleration of the trend. Of course, it is not possible to know whether the December data would have changed the picture for Period 3 had they been recorded accurately.

In Table 5, recorded incidents are presented together with expected numbers of incidents under the null hypothesis that there is no change in offending between 1992 and 1993. Thus, for Period 1, the expected frequencies are calculated by taking the average of the 1992 and 1993 figures, yielding 165.5 as the best estimate of the number of incidents in each year under the null hypothesis. The observed and expected frequencies for both years can then be compared using the standard chi square test. (It is important to distinguish this use of the chi-square test from its application to a two-way contingency table/This latter analysis tests the null hypothesis of no association between year and time period; that is, it tests whether the proportion of incidents occurring in each time period is the same in the two years. This is a useful test, but it does not directly test changes in offense frequencies within time periods between the two years.)

Using the simple chi-square procedure, it can be shown that the decline in incidents was statistically significant in each time period. The decline for Period 1 was marginally significant (Chi-square = 4.33, 1 d.f., p=.O4), but was much more significant for Period 2 (chi-square =30.30, p=.00) and for Period 3 (chi-square = 43.36, p=.00). Declines were most marked between 11 p.m. and 3 a.m.

In summary, the security data suggest that the project may have influenced street incidents, since declines in incidents were more marked after the project began and particularly after the Code of Practice was implemented. These declines are the more believable since the changed recording method in April 1993 may have contributed to more incidents being recorded. However, it should be kept in mind that police were also active in Cavill Mall during the period of the project, and that security staff may at times have been left with relatively little to do because of the intensity of police activity. This makes examination of police data important.

Police Data

Police occurrence sheets at Surfers Paradise Police Station for the period January 1, 1992 to December 31, 1993 were examined. All occurrences recorded for the Surfers Paradise CBD were coded and analyzed. Occurrence sheets relate to events, not offenders, so one brawl involving five people was listed as one occurrence. Incidents (occurrences) were used as the unit of analysis regardless of whether an arrest took place, and were grouped into the

following offense categories: serious and minor assault; indecent behavior, obscene language, willful exposure; stealing; disturbances other than noise, i.e., offensive language, resisting arrest, street disturbance; drunk and disorderly conduct; and all other offenses, including *inter alia* armed holdups, drug-related offenses and break and enter.

The same logic and time periods were used as in the analysis of security data. In this case we do not have the problem of incomplete December data, so the last period represents data for August to December, inclusive for both years.

Interpretation of police data is problematic for the present evaluation because of mass arrests arising from Operation Cleanout. Therefore, an attempt was made to identify all incidents resulting from an Operation Cleanout swoop and omit them from the analysis. We were only partially successful in this endeavor, since in a number of cases where Operation Cleanout offenses were recorded in the occurrence sheets, it was not possible to determine exactly how many incidents occurred and how they should be classified according to the offenses involved. In addition, it is almost certain that some incidents occurring during Operation Cleanout were not so identified on the occurrence sheets and therefore may have slipped into the analysis, particularly in coding disturbances (street offenses and resisting arrest).

Table 6 shows occurrences broken down by offense categories. Using the expected frequencies tabulated, for assault there was a significant increase in 1993 for Period 1 (chi-square = 9.09, 1 d.f. p = .003), and no significant difference for Periods 2 and 3. However, the decline for Period 3 was very close to statistical significance, with a chi-square of 3.48 (p = .062). The actual decline in assaults in Period 3 was 34%, which in real terms is quite substantial, especially in comparison with the 167% increase in Period 1 (before the project began). This pattern of an increase in Period 1 in 1993 compared with the same period in 1992, a static pattern in Period 2, and a substantial decline in Period 3 characterized all the offense categories analyzed except for street disturbances, which were largely generated by Operation Cleanout.

Table 6: Police-Recorded Incidents by Offense Category for 1992 and 1993

PERIOD	ASSAULT				INDECENT ACT			
	OBS 92	EXP 92	OBS 93	EXP 93	OBS 92	EXP 92	OBS 93	EXP 93
JAN-MAR	12	22.0	32	22.0	4	15.5	27	15.5
APR-JUL	22	23.0	24	23.0	12	10.0	8	10.0
AUG-DEC	50	41.5	33	41.5	30	23.0	16	23.0
	STEALING				DISTURBANCES			
JAN-MAR	6	15.5	19	15.5	36	53.5	71	53.5
APR-JUL	29	10.0	34	10 .0	28	60.0	92	60.0
AUG-DEC	37	23.0	17	23.0	66	80.0	94	80.0
	DRUNK AND DISORDERLY				ALL OTHERS			
JAN-MAR	149	196.0	243	196.0	17		42	
APR-JUL	181	184.5	188	184.5	85		112	
AUG-DEC	258	202.0	146	202.0	21		40	

Note: OBS = Observed Frequency; EXP = Expected Frequency under the null hypothesis of constant numbers of offenses in 1992 and 1993.

It is worth noting that if serious assaults are separated from less serious assaults, there was a statistically significant decline for Period 3. Serious assaults occurring in Period 1 were 0 in 1992 and 2 in 1993; 1 in Period 2 in both years; but 10 in Period 3 in 1992 and 2 in the same period in 1993. The numbers in Periods 1 and 2 are too small for statistical analysis, but the decline in Period 3 is statistically significant, with a chi-square of 5.30 (P-.021).

Overall, results of the analysis of police data are consistent with the other research findings. The number of recorded inci-

dents was higher across the board at the beginning of 1993 than for the same period in 1992, but the gap between 1992 and 1993 began to narrow after the appointment of the Project Officer. After the introduction of the Code of Practice, there was an overall drop in occurrences, including stealing and indecent acts. The outcome for stealing may reflect the fact that there were fewer drunks on the streets to victimize, while the result for indecent acts may have been caused partly by the improvements in standards of entertainment. Perhaps most significantly, given that reducing rates of intoxication was one of the main aims of the project, there was a large drop in the number of incidents of drunk and disorderly behavior after the introduction of the Code of Practice.

Of central importance to the evaluation is the 34% decline in Period 3 in the number of assaults, which was marginally statistically significant. The decline in serious assaults, although the numbers involved are very small, was significant for Period 3.

Displacement

The evidence from the four data sets, taken together, strongly supports the contention that there was a real reduction in violence, crime, and disorder in the Surfers Paradise CBD, especially after the Code of Practice was introduced. A key question, however, is the extent of displacement to neighboring areas.

Evidence from the venue observations suggests that to some extent a new, better dressed and better behaved group of patrons was attracted to the "new look" nightclubs. On the other hand, licensees observed that many of the old patrons were still around, but were better behaved. In addition, there are indications from the observational data that "marginal patrons" increased in number (i.e., people who looked "down and out"), so the hypothesis of a complete transformation to an upmarket clientele is not fully supported.

An alternative way of investigating displacement is to examine police statistics for adjoining areas. At the time of writing, this analysis was being carried out as a separate study, but it is worth noting in the present discussion that the statistics for the whole Surfers Paradise Police Division, although showing a general increase in offending between 1992 and 1993, show much lower rates of increase for Period 3 (August to December) than for the other periods. For example, assaults increased 27% for the whole Division in the January to March period between 1992 and 1993, compared with a 7% increase for Period 3. For other offense cate-

gories such as indecent behavior, a similar pattern was evident (14% for August to December compared with a 300% increase for January to March) (Scanlan, 1994). If extensive displacement to venues outside the Surfers CBD but within the police division had taken place after the Code of Practice was introduced (quite a likely scenario), larger increases in Period 3 statistics for the division might have been expected. The data are consistent with, although they do not prove, the hypothesis that there was a net reduction in crime in the police division in Period 3, in comparison with what would have occurred if the project had not taken place.

Recent Trends: Paradise Lost Again?

The intensive intervention ceased in December 1993 as the Project Officer eased herself out of the many roles that she had assumed during the implementation period. As indicated earlier, it was intended that maintenance of change in licensed venues become process-dependent rather than person-dependent, with the Monitoring Committee playing a crucial role in maintaining compliance with the Code of Practice.

In order to assess the effectiveness of the processes put in place for the ongoing maintenance period, a third wave of observational data was collected during January and February 1996 (two years after the second wave of data collection). Forty-eight visits were made to 17 venues in the Surfers CBD, using the same procedures as previously. Most students involved in the data collection had not been involved in the earlier studies. Data on aggression and violence are summarized in Table 7.

It. is apparent that all forms of aggression had increased between 1994 and 1996, with the 1996 assault rate being comparable with, although not quite as high as, the pre-project rate. Arguments, challenges, and threats appeared to be at record levels. These data are consistent with the statistics on male drunkenness and hostility, which also show a return to the levels of early 1993. As noted earlier, these results do at least strengthen confidence that the initial decline in violence was directly caused by the Code of Practice and other aspects of the intervention.

Table 7: Venue Observations: Rates of Aggression and Violence per 100 Hours Observation, 1993, 1994 and 1996

Type of Aggression	1993 (n=56)	1994 (n=43)	1996 (n=48)
Verbal Abuse	12.50	2.33	8.34
Arguments	7.15	2.33	13.54
Challenges/Threats	1.79	0.00	9.38
Physical Assaults	9.82	4.65	8.34

When presented with these figures at a meeting in mid-1996, several licensees agreed that the figures reflected reality. They argued that adherence to the Code of Practice was now an economic liability since so many licensees were flaunting its provisions in order to secure short-term profits. The licensees we spoke to were unanimous that the Liquor Licensing Division had still failed to discipline the errant operators, although they also pointed to an increased drug problem associated particularly with "rave parties." On the positive side, however, our observation is that the community itself is in a much better position to respond to the problem of increased drunkenness and violence than was the case in 1992. There are at least three indicators of this "improved community health."

First, as Blazevic (1996) points out, there is now a "culture of collaboration" in the area, with imaginative solutions being proposed for problems such as "schoolies week," when thousands of young people descend on the area to make merry at the end of the school year. Secondly, although the traditional call for more police to be deployed in a visible fashion outside nightclubs is still being made, key groups in the community, especially the majority of licensees, now recognize that strong enforcement by the Liquor Licensing Division, including the closure of establishments not complying with the Liquor Act, is essential to reduce violence and disorder. Significantly, these groups are now prepared to employ sophisticated political pressure to effect change — arguably a legacy of their training in community action, and apparently also a response to the bad news contained in the most recent set of observational data.

Thirdly, since the implementation phase of the project, the Surfers Paradise Licensed Venues Association has been formed.

This association employs a full-time Administrative Officer, fully funds security for the taxi ranks in the CBD, and has proposed to the Gold Coast City Council that all traders in the CBD contribute to a security levy. Moreover, through the association the licensees have received a significant amount of state government funding to oversee an evaluation of public drunkenness initiatives. These activities, together with their involvement in many key community groups, suggest that the licensees have moved evolved considerably from their marginalized status prior to the project, and are in a unique position to once again make a major contribution to improving safety in Surfers.

TOWARD A PERMANENT REDUCTION IN ALCOHOL-RELATED VIOLENCE

Critical Factors for Violence Reduction

At one level the Surfers Paradise Safety Action Project succeeded, at least for a period, because it changed a number of situational factors such as intoxicated patrons and aggressive bouncers. The importance of a range of elements like these has been reasonably well-established by research (Graham and Homel, in press), and clearly any intervention should aim to manipulate simultaneously as many of these known risk factors as possible if the chances of reducing violence and other alcohol-related harms are to be optimized. The real question is how to carry out these manipulations in a community setting where people are intent on drinking and making merry and where licensees want to make money. A number of lessons can be learned from the Surfers project in this respect.

One important lesson is that the community sought the change, and a strong sense of *militancy* could be channeled for creative action. This meant that key decision makers in local government and in business could be persuaded easily to seek alternatives to the traditional reliance on heavy policing, especially since it was obvious that "more of the same" — mass arrests of intoxicated young adults on a reactive basis — would not achieve any sustainable change, even if enough police could be found to continue the blitzes. Moreover, everyone was aware that businesses were losing money because of the area's poor reputation.

There is nothing quite as effective as a shared economic incentive to promote cooperative action for change!

A second lesson is that *licensees need to be empowered and motivated* as primary decision makers in the process of change. Historically in Australia they have not been accountable to the community and have not, in fact, been seen generally as responsible businesspeople who typically would be members of the local Chamber of Commerce. For the licensees the "community" tends to be faceless, in contrast to the young adults for whose business they compete by way of cheap drinks, gimmicks, and sensationally advertised events. Yet when the Gold Coast licensees were persuaded that responsible hospitality practices could be economically viable, and they were provided with a framework for change, they quickly demonstrated that they had known all along what the problems were and how they could be fixed. The Code of Practice was, in most important respects, a product of their own knowledge and experience.

A third lesson is that the *media* can be used as a positive force for change. Initially, parts of the local press portrayed the moves to responsible hospitality practices as bad news for patrons, which naturally provoked a negative reaction toward licensees. However, when the goals of the project were explained to the journalists, and the beneficial results started to become apparent, this negative portrayal was reversed. The media became a vehicle for community education about responsible drinking, and the initiatives of the project received much wider public support. The good press acted in turn to reinforce the actions of the licensees. Nevertheless, the media coverage alone was probably not sufficient to reeducate young patrons about what they should be seeking as discerning consumers of nightclub entertainment. Change at this level clearly requires that young adults experience a quality product sufficiently frequently to alter their expectations concerning acceptable practices.

A fourth, somewhat unexpected, conclusion of the project was that the *gender* of the Project Officer was a crucial factor in gaining licensees' confidence and commitment. The reality in Australia is that the majority of licensees are male and the "drinking culture" is driven by male values and standards, with an emphasis on control and dominance within drinking environments. Practices that encourage excessive drinking and aberrant behavior are encouraged and often seen as a rite of passage for young men entering adulthood. In this context, it seems that the female Proj-

ect Officer was not perceived as posing a challenge or a threat to the male licensees, and was less likely than a man to encounter resistance when attempting to persuade licensees to adopt more responsible alcohol policies. In a curious way — and the impression is purely subjective, requiring further analysis — the female Project Officer played the role of a grieving mother, calling her errant sons to account for their delinquent ways.

A final, perhaps most important lesson from the Surfers Project is that a community-based Monitoring Committee is essential to underpin the attempts at self-regulation by licensees, especially when some irresponsible practices (such as heavy price discounting) are not actually illegal. The licensees must have a forum in which non-compliance with the Code of Practice can be addressed and dealt with. *This forum should not include representatives of the formal agencies of control if it is to retain the trust, confidence, and cooperation of the licensees. However, the formal control agencies, especially the liquor licensing authority, must be willing to act against errant operators, based on information provided, when they breach a regulation and fail to heed the directives of the community forum.* Nothing will undermine self-regulation more quickly and more effectively than the sight of "cowboys" who exploit their industry peers with impunity. On the other hand, if licensees can see that others are "playing the game," they will be prepared to make considerable efforts, and even financial sacrifices, to comply with the Code of Practice.

Implementation for Sustainable Change

Our conclusions with respect to the role and composition of the Monitoring Committee are relevant not only to the question of how to achieve an initial reduction in violence in and around licensed venues, but also to the question of how a reduction in violence can be sustained. The experience in Surfers Paradise during the maintenance phase (post-1993) is instructive.

The second round of funding that would see the project go into the maintenance phase came jointly from the Queensland Health and the Queensland Police Service, with personnel from both agencies working together part-time. Unfortunately, the health funding did not continue after six months, but the police funding continued for a further year, allowing the appointment of an unsworn police officer as project coordinator for the first 18 months of the maintenance period. On the face of it, both police and

community would benefit from this arrangement: the project would continue for another year or two, while the police would gain a high profile with a successful community policing project. What neither party anticipated was the effect that a formal regulatory body at the helm would have on what had been a "community-owned" effort.

Although not apparent at first, it became obvious some months into the maintenance phase that the licensees were complying, if at all, because of the pressure of the law. Their working relationships with police remained positive, but with an unsworn police officer as the project coordinator they felt there was no arena in which informal arrangements could safely be made. The Monitoring Committee, which had previously struck a crucial balance between formal and informal regulation, lost its neutrality by inviting police and licensing inspectors to become members. As a result, the licensees may have become reluctant to discuss inappropriate practices for fear of retribution. This is not a criticism of the relationship that police attempted to build with the licensees, but an observation that it was clearly too early in the project to expect two groups that had traditionally been in conflict to be comfortable working together in an informal regulatory environment.

These structural difficulties were compounded by a perceived unwillingness by the Liquor Licensing Division to act on breaches of the Liquor Act by licensees. Although police generally maintained their vigilance with licensed premises, their attempts to enforce the act were, as the licensees saw it, constantly being undermined by the Liquor Licensing Division's lack of support. For their part, licensing investigators complained that the evidence that the police collected would not stand up in court. Whatever the truth of the matter, the licensees' perception appears to have contributed directly to the breakdown in compliance with the Code of Practice.

The problems encountered in getting the Monitoring Committee "right" underline the importance of strong project management. In principle *the Steering Committee* should take a leadership role in ensuring that conflicts between agencies are resolved and that appropriate structures are put in place. In practice, of course, members are engaged in a process of rapid learning, particularly in the early stages of a project, and the committee typically does not have the expertise, cohesion, or political muscle required to understand and act on these kinds of difficulties. Nev-

ertheless, our conclusion from the Surfers project is that these qualities can be developed within a few months with input from the Project Officer, and that the Steering Committee can play a pivotal role. Indeed, our perception is that a cohesive Steering Committee, regularly briefed on project developments, is essential for the long-term success of a community intervention in two crucial respects: *managing the transition between stages of the project,* and *providing political advocacy for the community change process.*

It appears that the actual sequencing of events is imperative in the implementation of various strategies. If licensees are not able to engage in the process of problem identification from their perspective at an early stage of the project, they are very difficult to "recapture" later in the project. By then they tend to believe that the problems have already been identified by others who are not in the industry, who do not understand the commercial implications, and who are unaware of the real nature and extent of management abuses going on within the area. Equally important is the timing of problem identification and the development of solutions. It was imperative, for example, that the safety audit be carried out very early in the life of the project. It is a high profile, non-threatening activity that requires a large amount of collaboration but generates a minimum of political conflict, and is an ideal way of focusing participants on data-based problem analysis as the springboard for further, more complex, actions.

Of further interest is the patterning that became apparent at a deeper level throughout the different phases of the Surfers project, as well as in the replication projects in North Queensland. During the Implementation Year when most of the key stakeholders are focusing on their positions within the project, and each task group is establishing its boundaries and terms of reference, much is being achieved. With strategies being implemented at a fairly hectic pace, and with change occurring regularly, community action projects are dynamic: hopes are raised, licensees enjoy their increased status in the community, and, generally, as the project nears the end of the Implementation Phase there is an increase in business confidence. It is at this point, however, that the projects appear to be at their most vulnerable. Participants can become complacent as they view the positive results, and funding bodies, having seen the objectives achieved, usually assume that no more external resources are required.

At this key transition point, and also at later points of transition, the Steering Committee must be aware of the need to move

the project from dependence on personnel, such as the Project Officer, to dependence on a process. A certain loss of momentum is probably inevitable at these times and should not be taken as a sign of failure, provided the key decisions are made to move the project to the next stage.

Part of the business of "moving the project on" is political advocacy. It is the responsibility of the Steering Committee to lobby politically for formalization of the processes of the project into government legislation or policy (for example, through amendments to the Liquor Act), or into the routine procedures of government agencies. The initial role of the Steering Committee is to be a high-profile support to the Project Officer, but eventually it must become the vehicle for the "normalizing " of the processes of community change. The commitment from Steering Committee members therefore needs to be particularly high. Within the framework of Safety Action projects committee members are the primary stakeholders and the representatives of the community that will undergo extensive change and disruption if it is to address and solve its problems of alcohol-related disorder and crime.

Future of Safety Action Projects

In a recent paper, Lang and Rumbold (1996) argue that the Melbourne Westend project and the Surfers Paradise Safety Action project have both failed, and that a new approach is required, emphasizing the changing of cultural attitudes toward alcohol and violence through community involvement and public education. They maintain that alcohol-related violence cannot be prevented by simple opportunity reduction strategies and enforcement measures alone, methods that they see as the basis of the Melbourne and Surfers projects.

One purpose of this chapter has been to describe in detail the complexities of the processes of community change, and to demonstrate that there is nothing "simple" about the implementation of effective opportunity reduction strategies or regulatory procedures. In one sense, this chapter is a case study illustrating the argument proposed in Volume 5 of *Crime Prevention Studies* (Homel, 1996), that situational prevention — indeed, *all* preventive work — is inherently political and inherently complex. Lang and Rumbold do, however, make a reasonable point: can one de-

scribe as anything other than a failure a project with an outcome such as that illustrated in Table 7?

In response to this challenge, several points can be made. First, and most obviously, few community projects anywhere in the world have succeeded in demonstrating any reduction in violence or other forms of alcohol-related harm, even for a short period. Admittedly, the evidence-we were able to collect falls short of absolute proof of effectiveness, for the reasons discussed earlier. But taken together, the data do support the contention of a causal impact. This is a substantial achievement.

Second, the fact that the project — and the other similar projects described in this volume and elsewhere — came into being in the first place indicates the failure of traditional modes of regulation. The decline in effectiveness during the maintenance period simply underlines the continuing failure of formal regulatory mechanisms, and demonstrates the inability of the responsible agencies, operating within a political environment of deregulation, to adopt new, more effective approaches even when a virtual blueprint for implementation is provided. In a real sense, it was not the project that failed but a political process that falsely pits strong state regulation against deregulation, without recognizing that public and private orderings are interdependent and that some kind of symbiosis between them is inevitable (Ayres and Braithwaite, 1992).

Third, it needs to be recalled that community projects are dynamic and pass through many phases, but that the lessons learned in earlier phases are seldom completely forgotten. Success, even if tasted briefly, is a heady brew that generates its own impetus for further change. Our analysis suggests that the Surfers Paradise community is much better prepared than before the Safety Action Project to adopt a problem-solving approach and to head in new directions that are "homegrown" and appropriate to local conditions. Our only plea as researchers is that those advocating new approaches take seriously the highly situational nature of much alcohol-related harm and the need for regulatory models that allow the voice of local people to be heard.

Safety action projects will, in our judgment, survive and thrive because at heart they seek to empower groups and individuals that have hitherto been largely ignored in the formulation of laws and policies concerning licensed venues. These projects facilitate the development of what Ayres and Braithwaite (1992) call *tripartism* — the empowering of citizen associations — thereby promot-

ing cooperation and self-regulation, while helping to avoid harmful forms of regulatory capture. Safety action projects also fit nicely into "Safe City" strategies being developed at the local government level in places throughout the world (Wekerle and Whitzman, 1995), and indeed have already begun to evolve into more general urban crime prevention programs in several cities in Queensland.

The combination of a problem-specific situational focus and a dynamic, community-based framework for change guarantees, in our view, that safety action projects will make an important contribution to the prevention of alcohol-related crime in the years ahead.

Acknowledgments: The research reported in this chapter was funded by a National Education Grant under the National Campaign Against Drug Abuse (now the National Drug Strategy), administered by the Commonwealth Department of Health, Housing, and Community Services; and by the Criminology Research Council. We would like to acknowledge the assistance of Dick Roebuck with project management, and Jeff Clark and Michael Townsley with data collection and analysis, as well as numerous Griffith University students who acted as patron-observers. The assistance of the Gold Coast City Council, Queensland Department of Health, the Queensland Police Service, the Surfers Paradise Chamber of Commerce, and the Queensland Liquor Licensing Division is also gratefully acknowledged.

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APPENDIX 1: GOLD COAST NIGHTCLUBS CODE OF PRACTICE

1. SECURITY

This establishment is strongly committed to providing quality entertainment in an atmosphere where patrons and staff are secure from threat and harassment.

To achieve this the following strategies are in place:

All security staff are trained, registered and identifiable, and give priority to the well being of our patrons.

Physical violence, harassment or threat will not be tolerated. Any patrons behaving in this manner will be asked to leave.

The Police will be called immediately if any act of serious violence occurs.

Any patron who feels threatened or harassed should immediately inform security staff.

2.SAFETY INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE VENUE

This venue has policies in place to ensure it is safe and contribute to the safety and enjoyment of the neighborhood for residents, staff and patrons.

To achieve this the following strategies are in place:

Any acts of vandalism and nuisance should be reported to the Manager who will notify the police. Patrons who notice general features of the neighborhood which they feel are unsafe should report their concerns to the manager. These will be reported to the police or the Code of Practice Monitoring Committee depending on the urgency of the situation.

Staff are trained in emergency procedures, and first aid is available in at the main management area.

Public telephones are readily available and emergency phone numbers are displayed nearby. The venue is safe and comfortable and conforms to all health, fire, licensing and council regulations.

3. STAFF RESPONSIBILITY

Our staff work as professionals in the entertainment industry and are trained to be welcoming, responsive and efficient.

To achieve this the following strategies are in place:

Staff are easily recognized by their name tags. They are trained to be hospitable, courteous, responsive and attentive and are aware of their legal responsibilities.

Door staff are welcoming and will inform patrons of the likely length of any wait for admission.

Complaints about staff should be made to the Manager.

4. RESPONSIBLE USE OF ALCOHOL

We are committed to the principles contained in the National Guidelines for the Responsible Serving of Alcohol.

To achieve this the following strategies are in place:

The law does not allow us to sell alcohol to anyone who is intoxicated or under the age of eighteen. It is an offense to allow intoxicated or disorderly persons to remain on the premises.

Staff will strictly enforce these laws and patrons will be asked to leave if they do not comply with these requirements or the reasonable requests of staff.

A good range of interesting non-alcoholic drinks are served and food and hot drinks are available. Advertising practices which invite the excessive consumption of alcohol, such as "Laybacks" and 'Flips' are not to be used.

Staff are happy to call a relative, a friend or a taxi when it is not safe for a person to drive.

Information about the responsible use of alcohol is available on the premises.

5. QUALITY SERVICE AND ENTERTAINMENT

The type of service and quality of entertainment are important components of the atmosphere of enjoyment we want to create for our customers.

To achieve this the following strategies are in place:

All bar and food areas are adequately staffed. Where available quiet areas for conversation are provided.

Local music and videos are promoted.

Entertainment provided does not promote violence, aggression or harassment.

6. HONEST AND ACCURATE ADVERTISING

Our advertising is honest and accurate and emphasizes our commitment to entertainment in a safe and enjoyable environment.

To achieve this the following strategies are in place:

At all time our advertising will reflect the values and philosophies of this Code of Practice.

It will not degrade or exploit any group in the community and will not promote our nightspot with gimmicks that encourage alcohol abuse or emphasize violence.

Conditions of entry will be clearly posted. This includes dress standards and the prior arrangements which must be made for large groups such as bus loads of people.

7. HOW TO USE OUR CODE OF PRACTICE

We provide easy access to information on our Code of Practice and clear procedure to get help or make complaints.

All staff are aware of the conditions in the Code and are happy to explain and implement its provisions.

Where it is thought we have not complied with our obligations under this Code of Practice, the matter should be reported to the Chairperson of the Monitoring Committee, Gillian Mclllwain.