



Australian Government

Australian Institute of Criminology

Research challenges with the ACT policing strategies for licensed premises project

Lance Smith

Australian Institute of Criminology

**Young people, risk and resilience: The challenges of alcohol,
drugs and violence conference
Melbourne 7th & 8th March 2011**



Purpose of presentation

- To provide an overview of the current situation in the Canberra CBD nightlife and young people
- To highlight some of the research methodologies used for this evaluation study
- To discuss some of the difficulties that were associated with this type of research
- To briefly outline some of the results that were gained from these research methods



Overview

- **The evaluation**
 - Crime trends with young offenders
 - Policing strategies undertaken
- **Research methods**
 - Basic Description
 - Problems experienced and overcome
- **Some basic findings**
- **General recommendations**



The evaluation

- **The evaluation sought to learn:**
 - The precise nature of alcohol related crime associated with license premises in key areas in the ACT
 - Were policing strategies implemented according to design – what factors impacted on this?
 - What impact do the various strategies have on:
 - Level of compliance with legislation by licensees
 - Patterns of consumption and problematic drinking behaviour
 - Nature and level of alcohol related crime

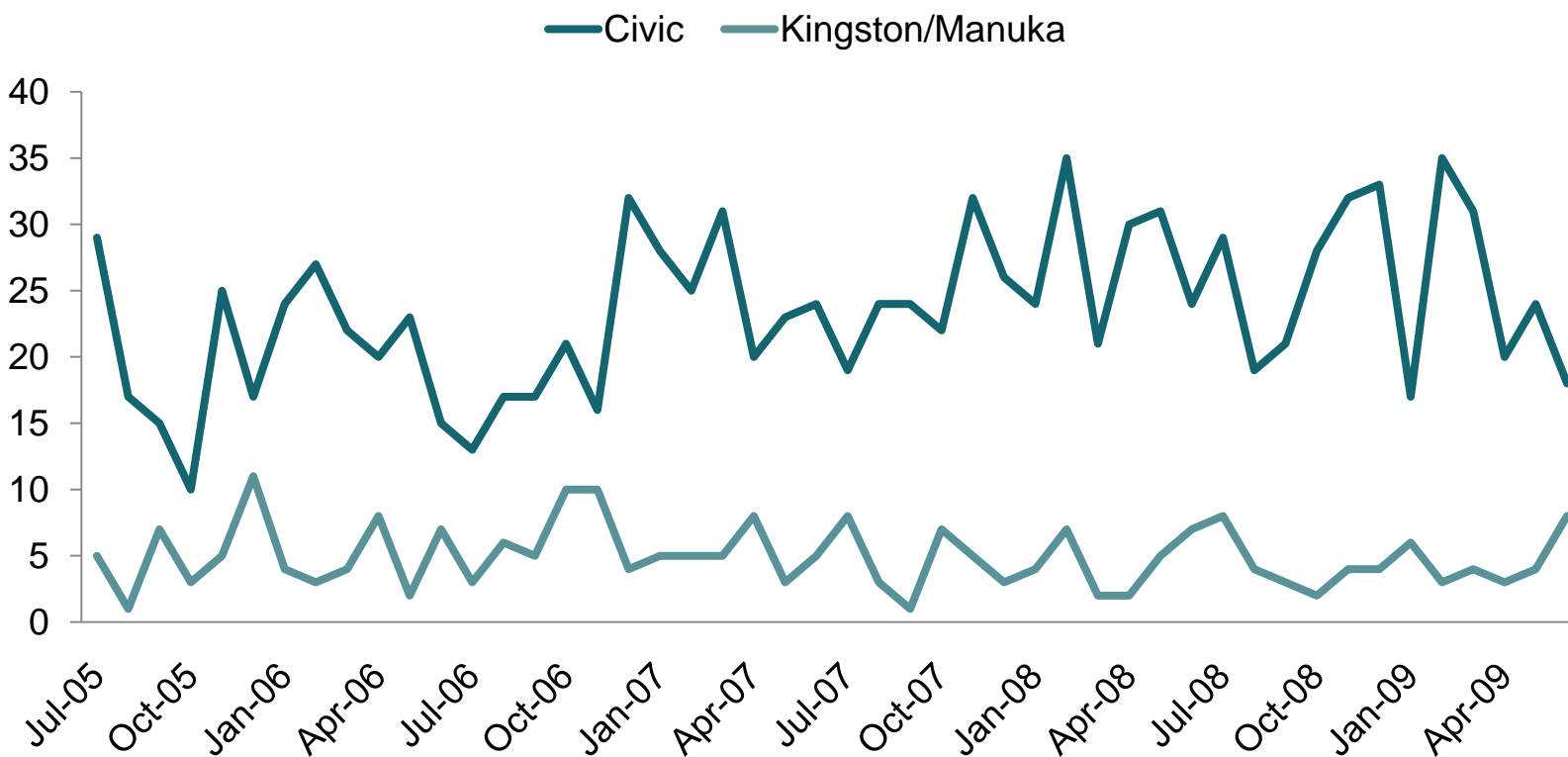


The evaluation (cont'd)

- **Canberra represents a compact high density entertainment area in Civic**
- **This area is heavily dominated by young people**
- **The area faces many challenges from violence, dangerous drinking levels, lack of transport facilities among other problems**



Number of assaults in entertainment areas



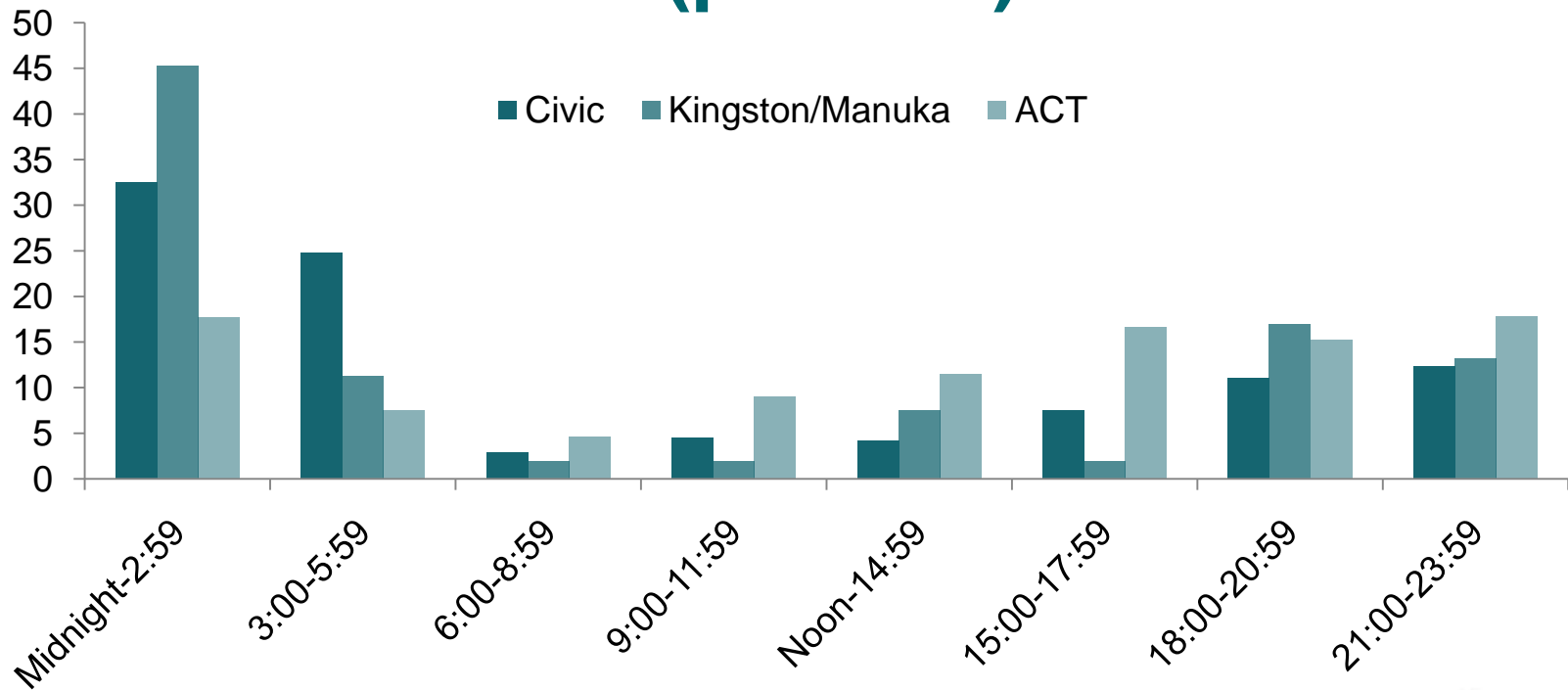
Assault includes aggravated assault, non-aggravated assault and assault police. Excludes other acts intended to cause injury.

Civic includes all offences recorded as having occurred in the City. Kingston/Manuka includes all offences recorded as having occurred in Kingston and streets located within the Manuka entertainment precinct (incl. Bougainville St, Canberra Ave, Captain Cook Ct, Flinders Way, Franklin St, Furneaux St and Palmerston Ln).

Source: ACT PROMIS database



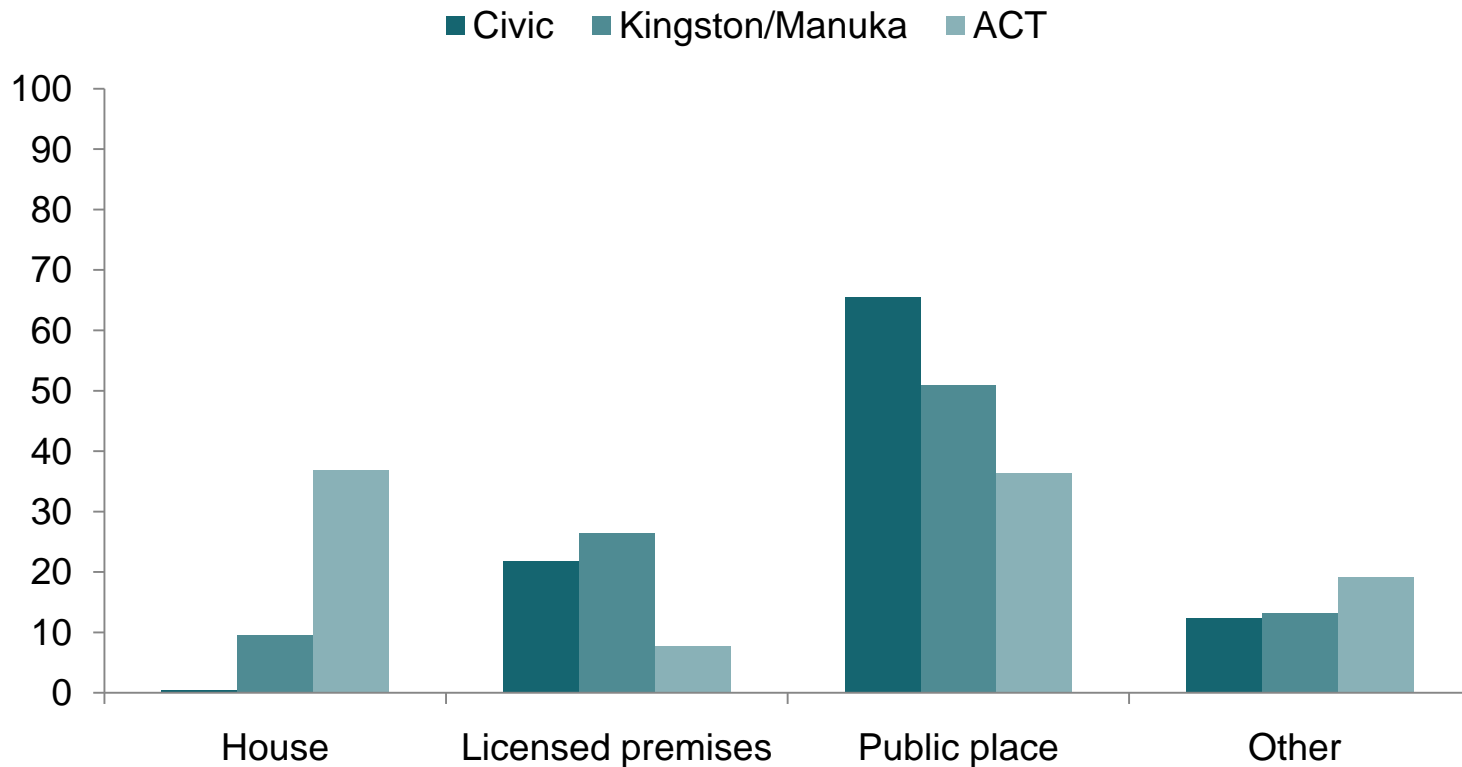
Recorded assaults by time and region (percent)



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Source: ACT PROMIS database



Location of recorded assault offences



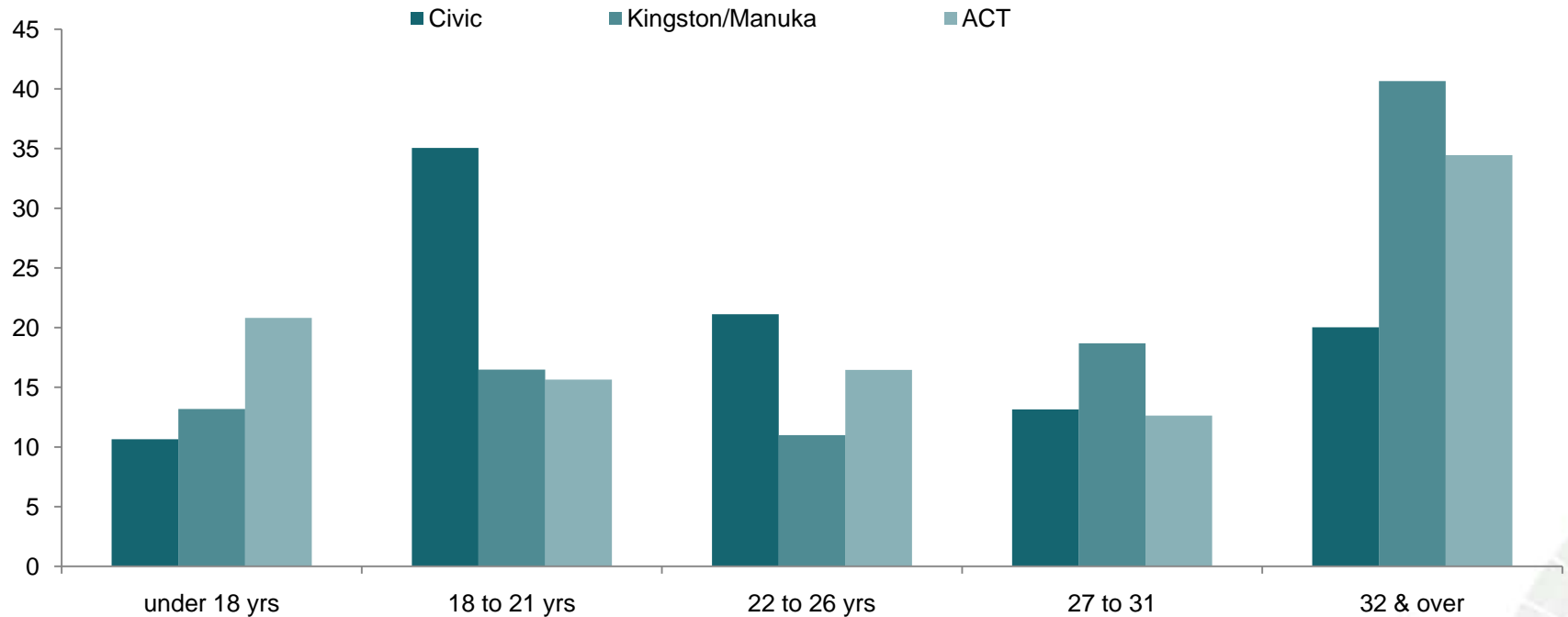
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Source: ACT PROMIS database



Assault offenders apprehended by ACT Police, by age of offender (percent)



Assault includes aggravated assault, non-aggravated assault and assault police.
Civic includes all offences recorded as having occurred in the City.
Source: ACT PROMIS database



2009/10 summer policing strategies

- **Frontline policing**
 - Beats team
 - Operation Unite
- **Monitoring, regulation and enforcement**
- **Intelligence gathering and analysis**



Responsible Liquor Licensing Project

- **Phase One: Education and Consultation**
- **Phase Two: Workshops**
- **Phase Three: Pre-arranged visits**
- **Phase Four: Enforcement**



Research methods

- **Information for the evaluation was collected through:**
 - Online community survey
 - Stakeholder interviews
 - Observational research
 - Place of last drinks form (completed by Civic Beats)
 - Analysis of official data



Online Community Survey

- While a general community response was sought there was a specific interest in obtaining feedback from young people

The Challenge

- Response to the survey was initially very slow using traditional means to advertise the survey such as print media



Online Community Survey

The solution

- New mediums were used to advertise the survey such as Facebook which helped improve sample numbers
- Although final response numbers were still small at approximately 100 respondents these numbers most likely would have been smaller only using traditional advertising means



Stakeholder Interviews

- The views on policing strategies and the current ‘situation’ of licensed premises owners, managers and security staff was sought after – however police and ORS workers were also interviewed.

The (expected) Challenge

- Gaining permission and trust from larger licensees often viewed as responsible for many of the problems naturally proved difficult



Stakeholder Interviews

The solution

- There was no real solution available however the Phase two of the RLLP strategy developed by ACT Police was used to network with some licensee's.
- Fortunately some licensee's were also quite keen on talking to someone about the problems being experienced
- These interviews turned out to be very worthwhile with several major premises being interviewed in the area



Interviews with Licensees

- **Preloading**
- **Culture of drinking**
- **Responsibility of patron**
- **Legislative problems**



Observational research

- Some previous studies have used this methodology and the researchers on this project felt it would be an invaluable form of research free of any one perspective

The Challenge(s)

- Safety and discretion of the researchers was paramount in this type of setting; however there were some other unforeseen challenges such as crowding



Observational research

The solution

- Multiple strategies were employed to counter any safety or discretionary concerns:
 - We went to venues in three's
 - We had an emergency contact person waiting
 - When possible seating that had a view of the whole licensed premise was chosen
 - Mobile phones were used to take notes about various aspects of the premise that were of interest
 - If approached by intoxicated patrons we would move to the next premise



Observational research

Unforeseen challenges

- Overcrowding in some premises made it difficult to find a safe vantage point to carry out observations
- Some queues to enter some premises disrupted the time schedule for visiting other premises
- One manager of a smaller bar recognised me and did his best to bustle out a highly intoxicated woman who could not stand



Place of last drinks form

- Used to gather information not captured in routine data collections
- Designed by AIC drawn upon examples used in WA
- Person of Interest or victim who consumed alcohol

The Challenge

- Implementation successful; completion inconsistent



Place of last drink forms

The solution

- The solution was a continued and on-going dialogue with ACT Police about the forms to ensure different beat teams were aware of their importance
- After several weekends of data collection sufficient data had been gathered to provide some useful results



Place of last drink forms

- **Results showed:**
 - 83% percent of incidents identified a licensed premise as the place of last drink (ruling out preloading)
 - Of this subgroup 78% indicated consuming the majority of their alcohol at the same premise they had their last drink (further ruling out preloading)
 - Majority of incidents occurred outside (82%) but within the vicinity of a licensed premise
 - One location responsible for the majority of incidents



Other results gathered through the course of this project showed....

- **A short term decrease in offences in the Civic area**
- **That there are many factors influencing the effectiveness of police strategies**



Recommendations

- A clear long term strategy
- Enforcement through intelligence led policing
- Monitoring alcohol related problems
- Workforce and organisational development
- Working with licensees, managers and security
- Alcohol counselling and treatment
- Developing strategies to reduce consumption
- Further research and evaluation



Changes to policing strategies for 2010/11 summer period

- New legislation
- New dedicated alcohol team in ACTP



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Questions?



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