

**NORTHERN TERRITORY LIQUOR COMMISSION**  
**DECISION NOTICE**

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**MATTER:** APPLICATION FOR GENERAL RESTRICTED AREA  
OVER BAGHETTI FAMILY OUTSTATION [2026]  
NTLiqComm 6

**FILE NO.:** LC2026/001

**APPLICANTS:** Residents of Baghetti Family Outstation

**AREA:** Approximately 20 km east of Bulman Weemol,  
Northern Territory 0852

**LEGISLATION:** Part 8 Division 3 of the *Liquor Act 2019* (NT)

**HEARD BEFORE:** Mr Russell Goldflam (Chairperson)  
Ms Ebony Abbott-McCormack (Health Member)  
Professor Phillip Carson (Health Member)

**DATE OF HEARING:** 28 January 2026

**DATE OF DECISION:** 26 February 2026

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**DECISION**

1. For the reasons set out below and in accordance with s 177 of the *Liquor Act 2019* (NT) (**the Act**) the Northern Territory Liquor Commission (**the Commission**) has determined to declare a general restricted area (**GRA**) over the Baghetti Family Outstation within the Arnhem Land Aboriginal Land Trust.
2. In accordance with s 172 of the Act, the Commission will declare a GRA by *Gazette* notice specifying that:
  - a. The boundary of the Baghetti Family Outstation GRA is the area bounded by the red line and the waypoints shown at Annexure One.
  - b. Other than in accordance with a permit issued under s 201 of the Act (**a liquor permit**) that has not been revoked or suspended, the following are prohibited in the GRAs:
    - i. The bringing of liquor into the area;
    - ii. The possession of liquor in the area;

- iii. The consumption of liquor in the area; and
    - iv. The sale, supply and service of liquor in the area.
  - c. The Director of Liquor Licensing (**the Director**) must consult with the Baghetti community and have regard to the Baghetti Family Outstation Community Alcohol Management Plan (**the Baghetti CAMP**) approved by the community on 18 December 2025, and as may be varied from time to time,<sup>1</sup> when considering:
    - i. an application for a liquor permit;
    - ii. the conditions of a liquor permit, including the places at which, the quantities of and the types of liquor that may be possessed and consumed by the permit holder;
    - iii. suspension of a permit; or
    - iv. revocation of a permit.
  - d. The Director may on their own initiative, provided they have taken reasonable steps to consult with the community, suspend a liquor permit of a resident of the GRA for a period of up to six months with immediate effect.
  - e. The declaration of the GRAs expires in 99 years.
- 3. By way of compliance with s 178 of the Act, the Commission has determined to publish information about the GRAs by posting this decision notice on the Commission's website, and by sending a copy of this decision notice to:
  - a. Arnhem Land Aboriginal Land Trust
  - b. Northern Land Council
  - c. NT Police
  - d. NT Attorney-General and Minister for Tourism and Hospitality
  - e. NT Minister for Alcohol Policy
  - f. Alcohol Policy, Northern Territory Department of Health
  - g. Office of Aboriginal Affairs, Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet

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<sup>1</sup> Exhibit One, pp 110 to 123

- h. Community Led Harm Reduction Unit (**CLHRU**), Northern Territory Department of Health
  - i. National Indigenous Australians Agency
4. The declaration of the GRA will take effect on the date of publication of the *Gazette* notice referred to above.
5. The Commission requests the Director, the Director of the CLHRU and the residents of the GRA to take reasonable steps to erect signs where a road or other customary route enters the GRA warning the public of the GRA, in accordance with s 181(2)(a) and (b) of the Act.

## **REASONS FOR DECISION**

### **Introduction**

6. The Baghetti Family Outstation, approximately 20km southeast of Bulman Weemol, has about 50 adult and 25 child residents. Baghetti Family Outstation is an Interim Alcohol Protected Area (**IAPA**) situated within the Arnhem Land Aboriginal Land Trust.
7. The relevant history, circumstances and legal issues pertaining to this matter are similar to those set out in the decision of the Commission dated 19 June 2024 to declare a GRA for Itchy Koo Park.<sup>2</sup> It is unnecessary to now repeat the detailed consideration of those matters set out in that decision.

### **The application**

8. On 24 December 2025, Mr Matthew Ah Mat, Principal Alcohol Action Officer, CLHRU, Department of Health, submitted an application on behalf of the residents of Baghetti Family Outstation, for a declaration that Baghetti Family Outstation be declared a GRA. The application was endorsed and signed by Ms Kristine B. Murray and Mr Alberto Ryan as traditional owners, elders and residents of the area.

### **Consultation**

9. Section 175 of the Act requires the Director to give notice of a proposed GRA to various persons. The Director notified:
  - The Northern Land Council
  - Roper Gulf Regional Council
  - Northern Territory Police
  - Sunrise Health Service Aboriginal Corporation

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<sup>2</sup> *Application for General Restricted Area over Itchy Koo Park [2024] NTLiqComm 25*

10. None of these stakeholders except the NT Police raised concerns about the application. The Commission is satisfied that the Director complied with the requirements to notify stakeholders.
11. Section 175 also requires the Director to take reasonable steps to consult with the people who reside in the area. The Baghetti CAMP was developed over a period of 12 months of consultations. The Commission is satisfied that the community members are well aware of the circumstances of the application, and support it.

### **Director's Report**

12. In accordance with s 176 of the Act, on 16 January 2026, the Director provided the Commission with a report (**the Director's report**) comprising:
  - a. Application for GRAs dated 24 December 2025
  - b. Record of Administrative Interests and Information for Baghetti Family Outstation
  - c. Baghetti CAMP, 18 December 2025
  - d. Residents' letter in support of the application and the Baghetti CAMP dated 18 December 2025
  - e. Plan of Baghetti Family Outstation IAPA
  - f. Correspondence with stakeholders
  - g. "BUSHTEL" community profile for Baghetti Family Outstation

### **Police response**

13. In a letter dated 6 January 2026 to the NT Commissioner of Police, the chairperson said:

[T]he Commission notes that there is an apparently prevalent but erroneous belief, including by some senior members of NT Police, that unlike residents of GRAs, residents of Interim Alcohol Protected Areas (IAPAs) can not apply for or be issued with a liquor permit by the Director of Liquor Licensing. This is despite the fact that s 170A(5) of the *Liquor Act 2019* (NT) expressly and clearly provides that the liquor permit scheme for residents of GRAs is also available for residents of IAPAs. The Commission makes the following recommendation at paragraph [22] of the [Woodycupildya [2026] NTLiqComm 2] decision notice:

The Commission recommends that both NT Police and other agencies who deliver services to the bush take steps to correct this misconception: whether a community is on an IAPA or a GRA, its members are entitled to apply to the Director for a liquor permit.

I would be grateful if you would broadcast this recommendation to your members. Although this particular GRA declaration affects only a small number of people, and although the Commission has to date received and determined similar applications from only a small number of communities, there are currently over 300 IAPAs in the jurisdiction, affecting some thousands of Territorians.

14. Despite this recommendation, on 27 January 2026, the day before the scheduled hearing of the application, a submission was received from the Darwin Police Station, opposing the application. Unfortunately, the submission was premised on exactly the same prevalent misconception that had prompted the chairperson to write to the Commissioner of Police three weeks previously.

### **The hearing**

15. On 28 January 2026, the applications proceeded as a public hearing. Community members Ms Kristine Murray, Mr Alberto Ryan, Mr Kenny Ryan Snr, Mr Francis Murray, Mr Gerry Martin and Mr Christopher Gordon appeared for the applicant, by video conference from Bulman. The applicants spoke clearly and strongly in support of the application.
16. Ms Auricht and Mr Wood appeared for the Director. The Commission thanks everyone who participated in the hearing for their attendance and assistance.
17. The Director's report was received into evidence by the Commission, along with the NT Police objection dated 27 January 2026, and a plan of the proposed GRA boundary.
18. Mr Wood informed the Commission that on receiving the objection from NT Police, he had attempted to contact a senior officer at the Darwin Police Station, but his call had not yet been returned. Mr Wood made an application that the Commission adjourn the hearing, to provide a further opportunity to both NT Police and Mr Ah Mat (who, unusually in the hearing of GRA applications with which he has been involved, was not in attendance) to be heard. The applicants, who had gone to the trouble to travel to Bulman in order to attend the hearing, opposed the application. The Commission refused the application, and the hearing proceeded.
19. On 29 January 2026, Mr Wood wrote to the Commission, stating:

I have spoken with Superintendent Daniel Bell and clarified the issues; he is aware of the misapprehension and is working to get the message out. He is comfortable with the matter and also the safeguards that are in place in terms of the granting of a permit which includes an examination of the fitness of the applicant to be granted a permit, and the public interest.

## **ASSESSMENT OF THE APPLICATION**

20. Section 177 of the Act requires the Commission to consider:
  - a. the application;
  - b. the Director's report; and
  - c. the public interest and community impact requirements.

### **The application is irregular but not invalid**

21. The Commission finds that the application complies with the requirements for applicants set out at s 174 of the Act. Section 3 of the application ("Consent of the registered owner of the area"), presumably because of an oversight, was not completed. As the registered owner of Baghetti Family Outstation is the Arnhem Land Aboriginal Land Trust, the application is irregular, because the registered owner has not formally consented to it. However, the Commission accepts that Kristine B Murray and Alberto Ryan are, as they state elsewhere in the application, traditional owners and residents of Baghetti Family Outstation. A similar issue arose in similar circumstances when the Commission considered an application for a GRA over Itchy Koo Park. For the reasons given at paragraphs [41] to [54] of [2024] NTLiqComm 25 in that matter, the Commission now finds that despite these irregularities, the application now under consideration is valid.
22. In making this finding, the Commission has also had regard to: (a) the attendance at the hearing by Kristine Murray, Alberto Ryan, Francis Murray, Kenny Ryan Snr, Gerry Martin and Christopher Gordon; and (b) the signing of a letter dated 18 December 2025 in support of the application by Lincoln Martin, Paddy Ryan, Julia Weetra and Elijah Murray/Cooper. The Commission accepts that each of these ten persons is a Baghetti Family Outstation resident and traditional owner.
23. The Commission now turns to consider the substance of the application.
24. In addition to requiring that an application be in the approved form, s 174 provides that it must include:
  - a. a detailed explanation of the restriction being proposed;
  - b. a detailed description of the proposed general restricted area;
  - c. the reasons for the proposed restriction; and
  - d. a copy of a community alcohol plan, if any.
25. The Commission is satisfied that the applicant has provided sufficient detail of the restrictions it proposes, and, noting that they are supported by the Director, the Commission considers that those restrictions are appropriate, as reflected in this decision.

26. The Commission notes that its determination of the boundaries it has specified is solely for the limited purpose of declaring the GRA. The Commission does not intend or purport to determine, declare or affect the property rights of Baghetti traditional owners vis a vis the property rights of traditional owners of any neighbouring community areas, or of any other person.
27. The Commission is satisfied with the applicant's reasons for imposing the restrictions that have been proposed.
28. The applicant has prepared and provided a community alcohol plan. GRA applicants are not required to develop a community alcohol plan, but the Commission commends the applicant for having done so, and strongly encourages any future applicants to do so. The Commission accepts that the Baghetti CAMP has been developed by the community, has the support of the community, and is strong. The Commission notes that the plan is compliant with regulation 111B(2) of the *Liquor Regulations*, which prescribes that a community alcohol plan must include measures aimed at:
  - a. managing the supply of alcohol in the community;
  - b. reducing demand for alcohol in the community; and
  - c. reducing harm or risks of harm that may be caused the consumption of alcohol in the community.
29. The Commission finds that the Baghetti CAMP is fit for purpose and thoughtfully formulated.

### **Whether issuing the licence is in the public interest**

30. To determine whether the declaration of the GRA is in the public interest, the Commission is required to consider how the making of the declaration would advance the following objectives set out in s 49(2) of the Act:
  - (a) minimising the harm or ill-health caused to people, or a group of people, by the consumption of liquor;
  - (b) ensuring liquor is sold, supplied, served and consumed on or in licensed premises in a responsible manner;
  - (c) safeguarding public order and safety, particularly when large numbers of people would be attracted to licensed premises or an area adjacent to those premises;
  - (d) protecting the safety, health and welfare of people who use licensed premises;
  - (e) increasing cultural, recreational, employment or tourism benefits for the local community area;
  - (f) promoting compliance with this Act and other relevant laws of the Territory;

- (g) ensuring each person involved in the business conducted at licensed premises receives training suitable to the person's role in the business;
- (h) preventing the giving of credit in sales of liquor to people;
- (i) preventing practices that encourage irresponsible drinking;
- (j) reducing or limiting increases in anti-social behaviour.

31. Having considered each of these objectives, and having particular regard to the contents of the Baghetti CAMP, the Commission is comfortably satisfied that it is in the public interest to declare the GRA.

**Whether the issue of the licence will have a significant adverse impact on the community**

32. To determine whether it is satisfied that the declaration of the GRA will not have a significant adverse impact on the community, the Commission must consider the matters set out at s 49(3) of the Act, which are:

- (a) the risk of undue offence, annoyance, disturbance or inconvenience to persons who reside or work in the vicinity of the proposed licensed premises or who are using, or travelling to or from, a place of public worship, a hospital or a school;
- (b) the geographic area that would be affected;
- (c) the risk of harm from the excessive or inappropriate consumption of liquor;
- (d) the people or community who would be affected;
- (e) the effect on culture, recreation, employment and tourism;
- (f) the effect on social amenities and public health;
- (g) the ratio of existing liquor licences and authorities in the community to the population of the community;
- (h) the effect of the volume of liquor sales on the community;
- (i) the community impact assessment guidelines issued under s 50;<sup>3</sup>
- (j) any other matter prescribed by regulation.<sup>4</sup>

33. The Commission is satisfied that the declaration of the GRA will have a modestly beneficial impact on the community, having particular regard to the s 49(3)(d) and (e) matters. If the declaration were not made, the interim alcohol protected area would continue, and the Baghetti traditional owners and other

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<sup>3</sup> In the view of the Commission, no such guidelines are currently in force.

<sup>4</sup> There are no such "other" matters prescribed by regulation.

residents would justifiably feel frustrated and disempowered. Conversely, issuing the GRA is a gesture of respect and acknowledgement to the Baghetti community. Noting that the regulation of liquor on Aboriginal land in the Northern Territory has in recent years been subject to various statutory changes, the Commission considers that the declaration of the GRA will provide a measure of certainty to the community regarding the management of alcohol into the future.

### **The liquor permit scheme**

34. Part 8 Division 6 of the Act establishes a permit scheme administered by the Director, who determines applications by persons to bring liquor into a GRA, possess or control liquor in a GRA, and consume liquor in a GRA. The Director also has the power to revoke a liquor permit, and pursuant to this decision, will also have the power to suspend a liquor permit for up to six months.
35. This decision requires the Director to administer the permit scheme for the GRA in consultation with the community and in accordance with the Baghetti CAMP. The Commission considers that consultation by the Director with the Baghetti Traditional Owners group when making a decision to issue, suspend or revoke a liquor permit would constitute effective compliance with the requirement to consult with the community.
36. The Commission notes that the Act provides that permit holders can entertain invited guests who do not live in the GRA, and supply them with liquor, which they can drink. However, the only people allowed to bring liquor into a GRA are people with a liquor permit for that GRA. So, if, for example, a permit holder in Baghetti hosts a birthday party, they can invite guests who live in another community, and give them alcohol to drink. However, those guests must not bring alcohol with them into the GRA. And if there are guests at the party who live within the GRA, they can only drink if they have their own liquor permit. The Commission has not made these rules. They are rules that parliament made when it enacted s 204 of the *Liquor Act* in 2019.
37. The Commission has considered whether to include a condition that permit holders only be allowed to bring a particular quantity or type of liquor onto the GRA. The Commission thinks it is unnecessary to include this type of condition. The Commission considers that the particular conditions of a particular liquor permit should be worked out by the Director in consultation with the community.

### **Expiry**

38. Section 172(3)(c) of the Act provides that the declaration of a GRA must specify when the declaration expires. If the law clearly authorised the Commission to decline to fix an expiry date for a GRA declaration, the Commission would not have fixed an expiry date in this matter. The Commission has specified an expiry date in the distant future.

## Other issues

39. In accordance with the applicants' preference stated at the hearing, the Commission has made provision for:
- a. the Director to suspend a liquor permit; and
  - b. for warning signs to be placed at entrances to the GRA.

## The objects of the Act

40. Section 3(4) of the Act provides that in performing its functions, the Commission must have regard to the primary and secondary purposes of the Act. The Commission considers that making the GRA declaration together with the conditions it has determined to impose, is consistent with the purposes of the Act.

## NOTICE OF RIGHTS

41. Section 31(1) read with s 177(2) of the Act provide that the decision set out in this decision notice is reviewable by the Northern Territory Civil and Administrative Tribunal (**NTCAT**). Section 94(3) of the *NTCAT Act* provides that an application for review of a reviewable decision must be lodged within 28 days of the date of the decision.
42. In accordance with section 31(2) of the Act, the persons who may apply to NTCAT for a review of this decision are the applicant, the Director and NT Police.



Russell Goldflam

CHAIRPERSON  
NORTHERN TERRITORY LIQUOR COMMISSION  
26 February 2026

On behalf of Commissioners Goldflam, Abbott-McCormack, Carson

# Annexure One

