Cairns City, far north Queensland: a city in paradise, but a unique challenge to crime prevention.

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Overview:

- The demographics of Cairns Far North Queensland,
- Alcohol-Related Assault Study,
- Defining the Late Night Entertainment Precinct (LNEP), Tourist & Backpacker Accommodation,
- Egress Routes & Hotspots
- Identified Issues,
- How Cairns is addressing these issues,
- What next ...
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1. Participants were asked to hand-draw what they perceived as the LNEP, ‘hotspots’ and any other areas of interest relating to alcohol-related person-to-person assault.

2. Data of alcohol-related assaults (A-RA) were collected from the police, the ED, licensed venues (by security) and the CCTV system.

What we found ...
Backpacker Hostels (n = 27)
Hotspots & Egress Routes

- 1 participant
- 2-5 participants
- 16-25 participants

500 meters
What else ...?

- A-RA incidents are declining, but severity of injuries is not.
- Verbal Abuse is more problematic and widespread than assault.
- Women as offenders in A-RA is increasing significantly.
- There is a spike in A-RA just before and just after lockout at 3am.
- Street-based security intervene to prevent injury in 40% of cases. Pointing et al (2012).
Identified Issues

• Lone female backpackers walking home from licensed venues in the early hours of the morning to their accommodation.
• Incidents are occurring on the fringes of the CBD outside the range of the CCTV cameras.
• Poor lighting on egress routes.
• Environmental ‘haggling’ over tree lopping for clear sight-lines.
• Early morning tourists and business owners mixing with late night revellers.
Identified Issues

• Business owners demanding ‘quick fix’ approaches rather than taking action recommended by Council Safety Officers.
• Cairns marketed as a ‘party town’ for backpackers.
• Chronic Homeless persons with ongoing alcohol and substance abuse issues.
• Youth violence and theft against tourists.
Addressing the Issues

Most important points:

1. Community government and non-government agencies co-operation and collaboration.
2. Evidence-based management for informed decision-making.
3. Sharing data among agencies through MOUs and local level agreements.
4. Negotiating the politics, media propaganda & outraged residents.
Addressing the Issues

Most important points:

5. The commitment of all licensed venue owners/managers ... not just *most*.

6. A negotiated and co-ordinated approach to plural policing – police, street-based security, venue security and CCTV camera operators.

7. Bureaucrats, red-tape and resources.

8. The importance of community-based researchers.
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