



MEDIA RELEASE

Hon. John Hatzistergos MLC
Attorney General
Minister for Industrial Relations

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NAMBUCCA PROGRAM TO PROTECT WOMEN FROM VIOLENCE

A Nambucca Shire Council program to protect women from violence in and around licensed premises has received a \$50,000 grant from the Rees Government, NSW Attorney General John Hatzistergos announced today.

"Women are entitled to enjoy a night out without being subjected to harassment and violence," Mr Hatzistergos said.

The *Safer Women Around Nambucca Shire (SWANS)* program will conduct safety audits of licensed premises, examining issues such as lighting, security and staff management.

"The project coordinators will work with publicans and other licensees to implement strategies to reduce potential risks to women at Nambucca Heads, Macksville and Bowraville," Mr Hatzistergos said.

Mr Hatzistergos said the program would also introduce a People's Choice Award, in which the community would vote for what they think is the safest venue in the Nambucca Shire.

"A venue with a reputation for putting safety first is likely to attract more patrons, so it makes good business sense for licensees to get involved in the SWANS project," Mr Hatzistergos said.

More than 50 per cent of assaults in the Nambucca Shire are alcohol-related, according to the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research Crime Map 2007, with a high proportion occurring on Friday and Saturday nights.

"Council has already taken steps to reduce alcohol-related violence by creating an Alcohol Free Zone in Nambucca Heads and similar zones may soon be established in other parts of the Nambucca shire," Mr Hatzistergos said.

"The SWANS project will add an extra dimension to council's ongoing campaign to create a safer community."

Mr Hatzistergos said SWANS is modelled on the *Safer Times 'Round Albury Wodonga – For Women* program, which won an Australian Violence Prevention Award in 2001.

What: Official Launch of the SWANS Project
Where: Nambucca Heads RSL following the Nambucca Valley Liquor Accord
When: Tuesday 17 November at 12:30pm