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## MEDIA RELEASE

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**For immediate release**

### **BENDING THE RULES UNDERMINES CAMPAIGN AGAINST ALCOHOL ABUSE**

LNP Shadow Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Economic Development and Hinchinbrook MP, Andrew Cripps, today expressed his concern about reports that police are searching the baggage of Palm Islanders waiting for ferry services on the mainland in Townsville, outside of the regulated Palm Island Alcohol Management Plan restricted area.

Mr Cripps said while the LNP Opposition supported Alcohol Management Plans as part of the fight against alcohol fuelled violence, abuse and crime in Queensland's indigenous communities, he was alarmed that police would reportedly attempt to exercise powers afforded to them under the Palm Island AMP outside of the declared restricted area.

"The regulation establishing the Palm Island AMP covers the Palm Island Shire Council area. It does not extend to areas or people outside of that area, notwithstanding that they may ordinarily be residents of Palm Island. If police are attempting to enforce the provisions of the Palm Island AMP outside of the declared area, then that is a concern" said Mr Cripps.

Mr Cripps repeated previous calls by the LNP for a review of the effectiveness of AMP's and said the Opposition had warned the State Labor Government that the regulations would not be effective unless they were supported by well resourced rehabilitation programs in the local community and unless authorities enforcing compliance were also well resourced.

"The regulations under the existing AMP's apply to people when they are located in a particular place and all residents living in an AMP declared area, indigenous and non-indigenous, are subject to the regulations. Outside AMP declared areas, all Queenslanders, indigenous and non-indigenous, are subject to the provisions of the *Liquor Act*" he said.

"No one is permitted to consume alcohol in an unlicensed public place, but there are no laws that prohibit possession of alcohol, or allow police to conduct a search of someone's baggage looking for alcohol. However, let me make it absolutely clear, the LNP is not blaming our State's hard-working police for Labor's ineffective AMPs" said Mr Cripps.

"Alcohol fuelled violence, abuse and crime is a serious problem in Queensland's indigenous communities. AMP's are an important part of government and community efforts to address the problem, but allegations the regulations are not being applied appropriately undermines confidence in the law and compromises support for the AMP in the community" he said.

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