

Mornington Island

Mornington Island is located in the Gulf of Carpentaria and recorded an estimated resident population of about 1,120 people at 30 June 2007. The average annual growth rate from 2002 to 2007 was 1.8 per cent.

The community is made up of the Lardil, Yungkal and Kaiadilt tribes. The original people of Mornington Island were the Lardil tribe, which formerly occupied the North Wellesley Islands. Yungkal tribal lands include the islands between Mornington and the mainland. The Kaiadilt tribal group occupied the South Wellesley Islands.

Services to the community

Community services on Mornington Island include a hospital, community health service, an ambulance service, an aged persons' hostel, environmental health support, a Community Justice Group, a Magistrates Court, a women's shelter, child safety services and support, a public library, family and domestic violence services, schooling to year 10, TAFE courses provided through Lower Gulf TAFE in Normanton, Police Citizens Youth Club (PCYC) and an arts centre. There are ten police officer positions. A Queensland Corrective Services (QCS) Probation and Parole office provides sentencing support to visiting judges and Magistrates, and supervision and monitoring of offenders.

The Queensland Government also provides funding support for the delivery and management of public intoxication programs, men's group, community patrol, youth leadership, youth services, a Sport and Recreation Officer, a State Emergency Service, the Rural Fire Brigade, and voluntary marine rescue and homelessness programs.

An Alcohol Management Plan commenced on Mornington Island on 28 November 2003 (see Table 1).

The Government Champions for Mornington Island are Commissioner Bob Atkinson, Queensland Police Service, and Michael Kinnane, Director-General, Department of Local Government, Sport and Recreation.



Key initiatives

Mornington Island was the first community to sign a Local Indigenous Partnership Agreement (LIPA) in May 2007. The LIPA is currently being redeveloped in association with the Mount Isa Government Coordination Office. At a community meeting in November 2008 residents put forward their priorities and initiatives. The next Negotiation Table is scheduled for March 2009.

Government Champions visited the community on 24 and 25 November 2008, where they met with Council and conducted a public meeting. They also attended the Mornington Island State School Presentation Night, where they presented awards to outstanding students. Steve Renouf also presented sports awards during the evening.

Traditional Owners of the Wellesley Islands in the Gulf of Carpentaria were formally recognised as Native Title holders at a hearing on Mornington Island on 9 December 2008. The township of Gununa is excluded from the claim area, allowing the Mornington Shire Council to continue to deliver and build necessary services and infrastructure in the community.

The PCYC conducted a successful program - '12 Days of Christmas Campaign' - over the Christmas New Year period. Each day over 300 people enjoyed a variety of indoor and outdoor leisure activities and barbeques.

A youth retreat is being established within the PCYC grounds. The retreat will take the form of an annexe to the existing structure, delivering diversionary and social activities for young people.

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The Mornington Island Safe Haven Service currently has a Family Support Worker and Youth Worker engaged with families and services in the community. It has recently received a youth night patrol vehicle.

Two Mornington Island health workers have completed *Certificate III in Indigenous Primary Health Care* and one has completed a *Diploma in Indigenous Primary Health Care*.

In November 2008, the government announced that there will be no change to the existing carriage limit for Mornington Island at this time. The zero carriage limits will continue which means no alcohol is allowed in the Mornington Shire. Home-brew is automatically banned in all zero carriage limit communities. The package of additional services to support alcohol reform in the Mornington Shire includes additional police, health treatment (drug and alcohol), and diversionary services. A men's program commenced in December 2008.

A Community Alcohol Project Officer is scheduled to begin service delivery by March 2009. This position will provide community education, prevention and early intervention services. Weekly Men's Group meetings and a community patrol begin operation early in 2009.

In February, Mornington Shire Council will utilise LIPA funding to employ a Steering Committee Coordinator to support the committee and assist with capacity building in the community.

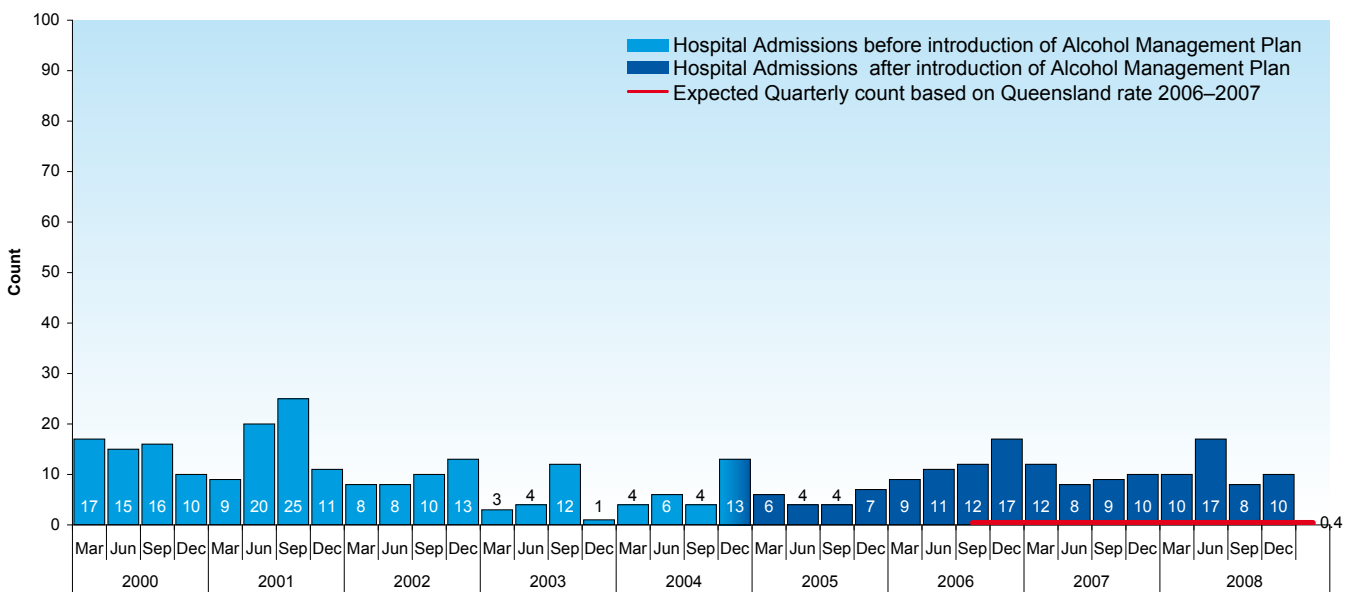
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Hospital Admissions for Assault

Quarterly counts of hospitalisations for assault for people from Mornington Island continue to be highly variable with quarterly counts ranging from four up to 17 since the introduction of alcohol restrictions on 28 November 2003.

There was an average of 11.3 hospitalisations for assault reported per quarter for people from Mornington Island over the 12 months to 31 December 2008. This compares with an expected count of 0.4 per quarter (estimated by applying the 2006-07 Queensland rate to the population count of Mornington Island in 2007).

Figure 36: Quarterly number of hospital admissions for assault, March quarter 2000 to December quarter 2008, Mornington Island (a)



(a) These data are limited due to a range of factors. They must be read with reference to the notes at the end of this report.
Source: Queensland Health, unpublished data

Persons Convicted (breaches of section 168B of the *Liquor Act 1992*)

Since the introduction of the Alcohol Management Plan, there has been a total of 331 persons convicted of 545 breaches of alcohol carriage restrictions in Mornington Island. In the December quarter 2008, nine persons were convicted (individuals convicted are not necessarily residents of the community). More than half of the persons convicted in 2008 were convicted in the September quarter (38 of 71).

Figure 37: Number of persons convicted for alcohol carriage offences, March quarter 2007 to December quarter 2008, Mornington Island.



Source: Department of Justice and Attorney-General unpublished data. These data are limited by a range of factors. They must be read with reference to the notes at the end of this report.

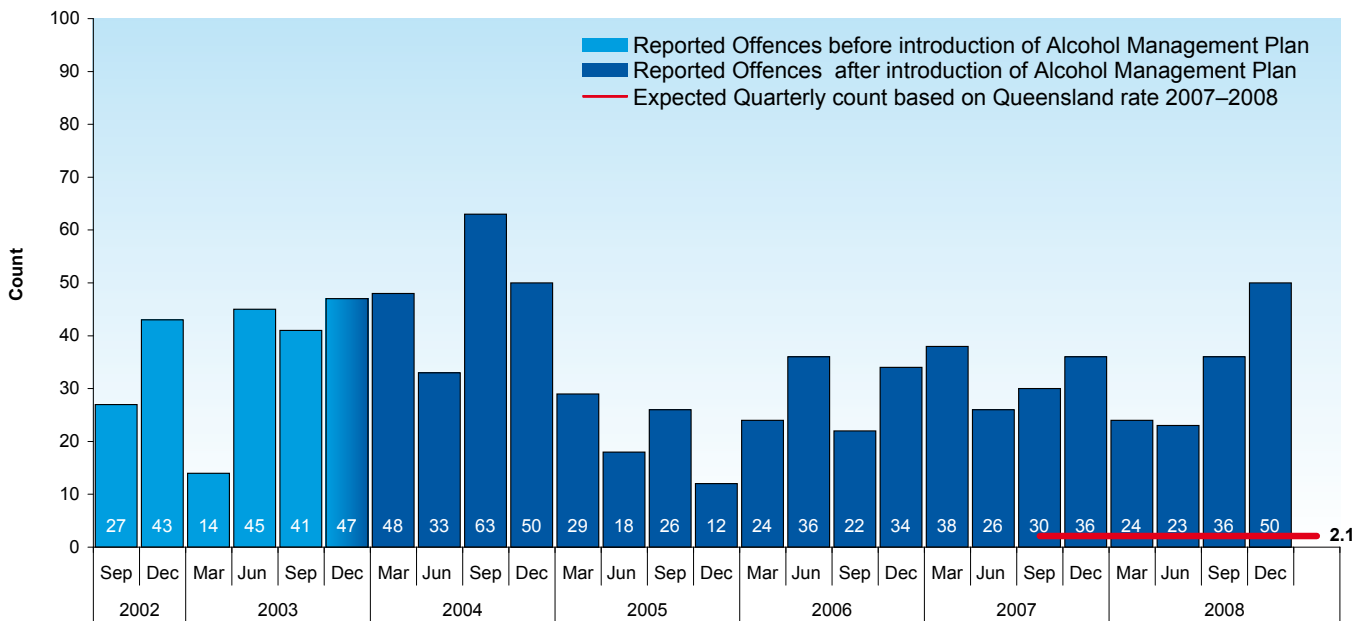
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Reported Offences Against the Person

Numbers of reported offences against the person continue to be highly variable for Mornington Island. Since the introduction of alcohol restrictions on 28 November 2003, the number of reported offences against the person on Mornington Island has ranged from

12 up to 63 per quarter. There was an average of 33.3 offences against the person reported per quarter on Mornington Island over the four quarters to 31 December 2008. This compares with an expected count of 2.1 per quarter (estimated by applying the 2007-08 Queensland rate to the population count of Mornington Island in 2007).

Figure 38: Quarterly number of reported offences against the person, September quarter 2002 to December quarter 2008, Mornington Island



(a) These data are limited due to a range of factors. They must be read with reference to the notes at the end of this report. Source: Queensland Police Service, unpublished data

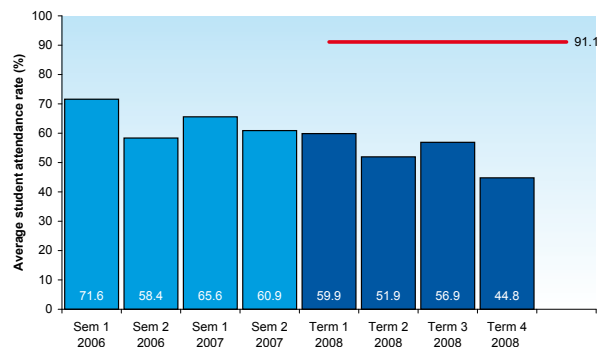
Child Safety

In the December quarter 2008, 25 Mornington Island children were subject to a substantiated notification of harm. Two Mornington Island children had more than one substantiated notification over the December quarter 2008. In the December quarter 2008, 15 Mornington Island children were admitted to finalised child protection orders.

School Attendance

In fourth term 2008, the average student attendance rate at Mornington Island State School was 44.8 per cent; the lowest rate achieved this year and some 12 percentage points lower than the third term rate of 56.9 per cent. This rate was close to the lowest fourth term attendance rate recorded in the discrete communities.

Figure 39: Average student attendance rate, preparatory to year 10, semester 1 2006 to term 4 2008, Mornington Island State School (a)



(a) These data are limited and must be read with reference to the notes at the end of this report. Source: Queensland Department of Education, Training and the Arts, unpublished data