

“The only problem is not getting enough!” Substance abuse & rural workplace culture

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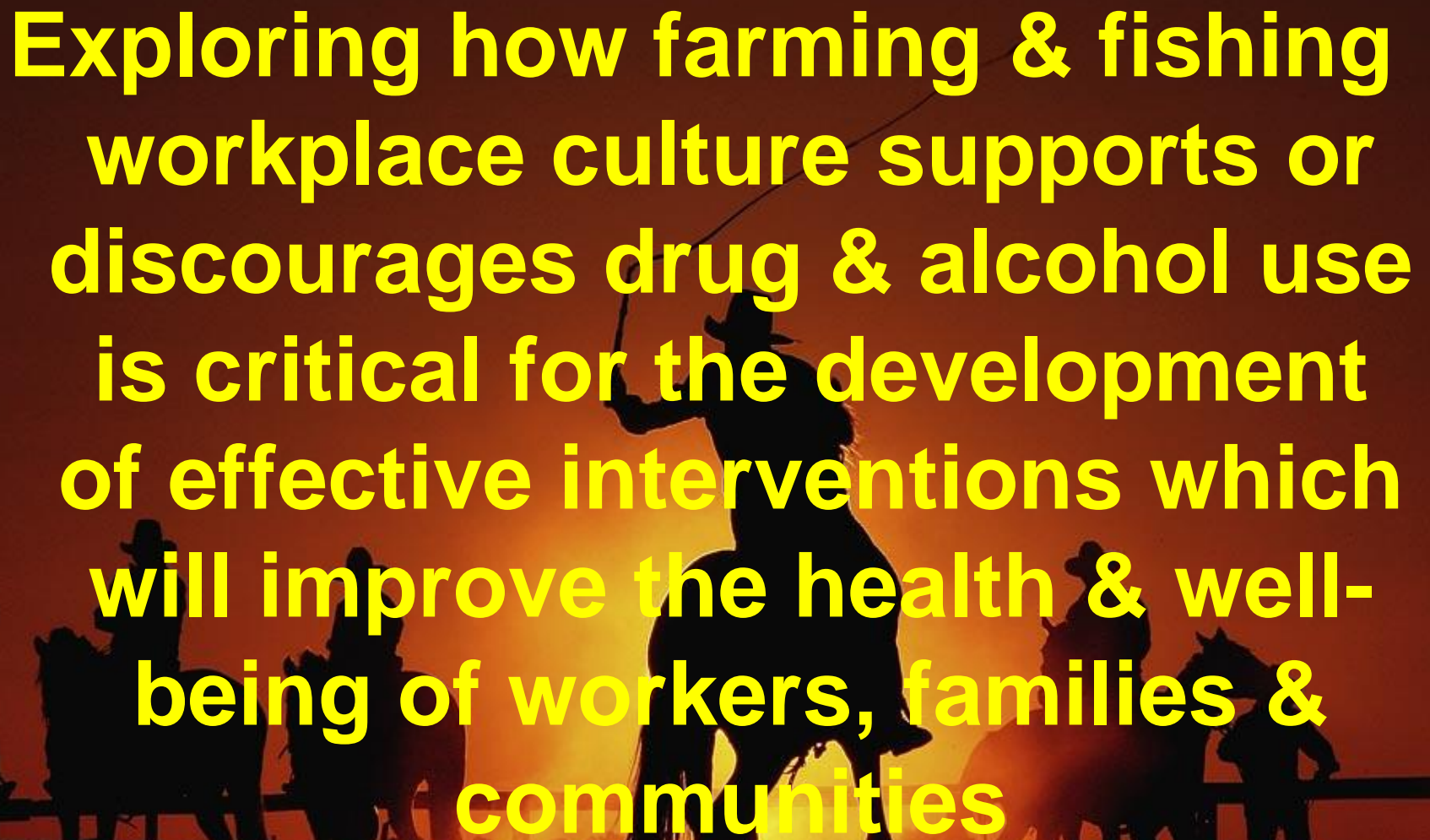
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Drug and alcohol use by farming and fishing workers



Australian Government
**Rural Industries Research and
Development Corporation**

www.waterside.com.au/commercialfishing.htm

The background of the slide features a silhouette of several cowboys on horseback, likely participating in a rodeo event. The scene is set against a bright, orange and yellow sunset sky, which creates a strong backlighting effect. The cowboys are positioned across the lower half of the frame, with one in the center foreground appearing to be in the middle of a performance, possibly cutting a steer. The overall mood is dramatic and evocative of rural, agricultural life.

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Work related drug & alcohol use..What we do know

Relationship between AOD use & mental & physical problems, reduced workplace productivity, accidents, drink-driving & violence (Collins & Lapsley 2008). Co-occurrence of AOD & mental health problems is under-recognised & under-treated (Griffiths & Christensen 2008)

Workers are more likely to use AOD than those who are not employed (Pidd et al 2006)

Significant costs are associated with poorer physical & mental health; impacts on families, communities & others; reduced productivity & injury & accidents.

As a result there is an increasing focus on intervention strategies (Allsop & Pidd 2001).

There is a lack of data on which to base these interventions. Compounding this are methodological difficulties and inconsistent results of previous research.

Workplace has benefits as a place to target interventions

Some studies indicate that fishing & farming workers may use AOD at harmful levels

While the importance of workplace culture has been acknowledged, there is no data on this relating to fishing & farming

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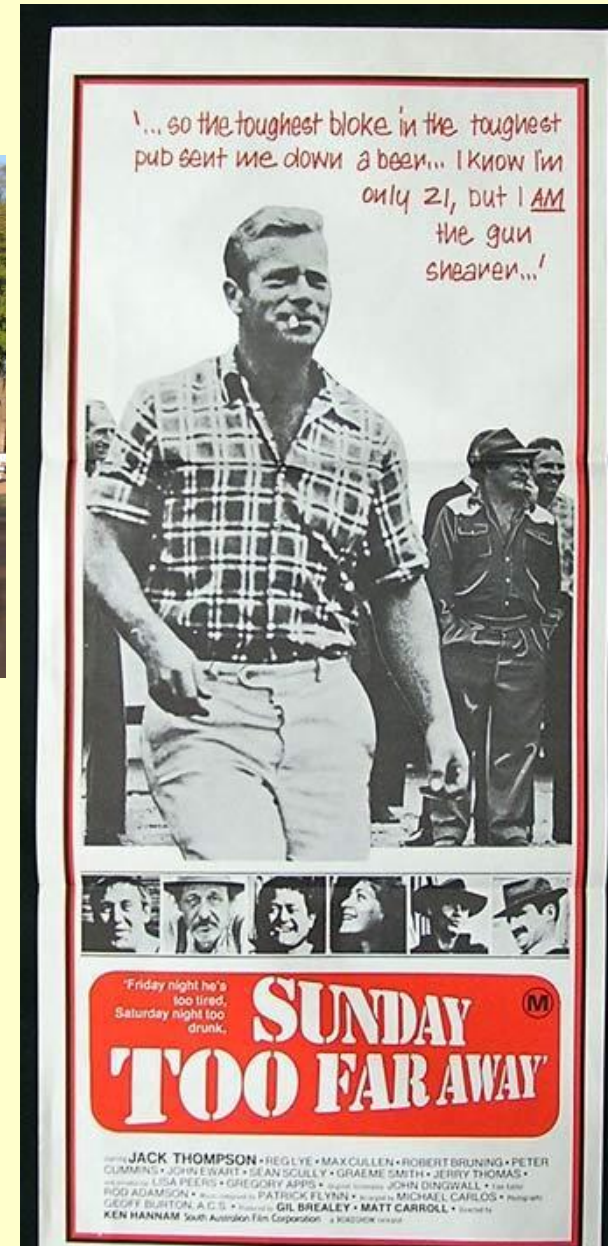


Tilpa pub Tourism NSW
http://www.visitnsw.com/Tilpa_Pub_p805.aspx



http://www.travelpod.com/travel-photo/jimandelle/gone_north_2006/1158732780/trip_north_2006_126.jpg/tpod.html

Smoke breaks, after work drinks and end of season celebrations have been common workplace rituals relied on for team building, camaraderie & relaxation



<http://www.google.com.au/imgres?imgurl=http://www.moviemem.com/images/pictures/tore/S/SUNDAYTOOFARAWAYDAYBILL.jpg&imgrefurl=http>

Last drinks for another bush tradition

Sydney Morning Herald, February 15, 2006

The outback's Bachelor and Spinster balls, one of Australia's most cherished traditions and notorious for binge drinking, casual sex and dust, are at risk of dying out.... "B and S" balls - regulars insist that the initials stand for beer and sex - are a magnet for young stockmen, shearers and the jackaroos and jillaroos who work at sheep or cattle farms.... "B and S balls are a coming-of-age ritual for kids in the bush. They throw food dye at each other, tear their clothes off, root in the corners.... They're good country kids - they don't do drugs but they do like a drink. They'll drive a thousand kilometres just to come to a well-known ball. It's a tradition we need to hold on to."



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A mate reckons he worked for a bloke...used to pour beer on his cornflakes in the morning....Then there's the lie....The most crays ever been caught in the world is from the front bar at the pub (de Monchaux 1999)

I used to smoke and if my old man caught me he'd give me a hiding. He said to me "The day you start work is the day you can smoke cigarettes". I left school...and jumped on the crayboat the very next day...and I lit up a cigarette on the boat....I reminded him what he'd said and he replied, "Fair enough" (de Monchaux 1999)



<http://www.fourseasonsanglers.com/liqourStore.html>

Project Aims

Describe farm & fishing workers perceptions & patterns of drug & alcohol use, & resulting physical, mental & social harms

Examine the relationship between farm & fishing workers' alcohol & drug use; levels of related harms & general health & workplace participation

Provide recommendations to inform the development of an industry intervention package

Project Methodology

- 7 sites in Victoria and NSW
- Industries include grain, cotton, mixed farming, sugar & fishing
- Semi structured interviews with key informants & family members
- Semi structured interviews & survey with fishing & farming workers
- Casual, seasonal, mobile workers; employers; women & men will be included in worker interviews

Defining work related drug & alcohol use

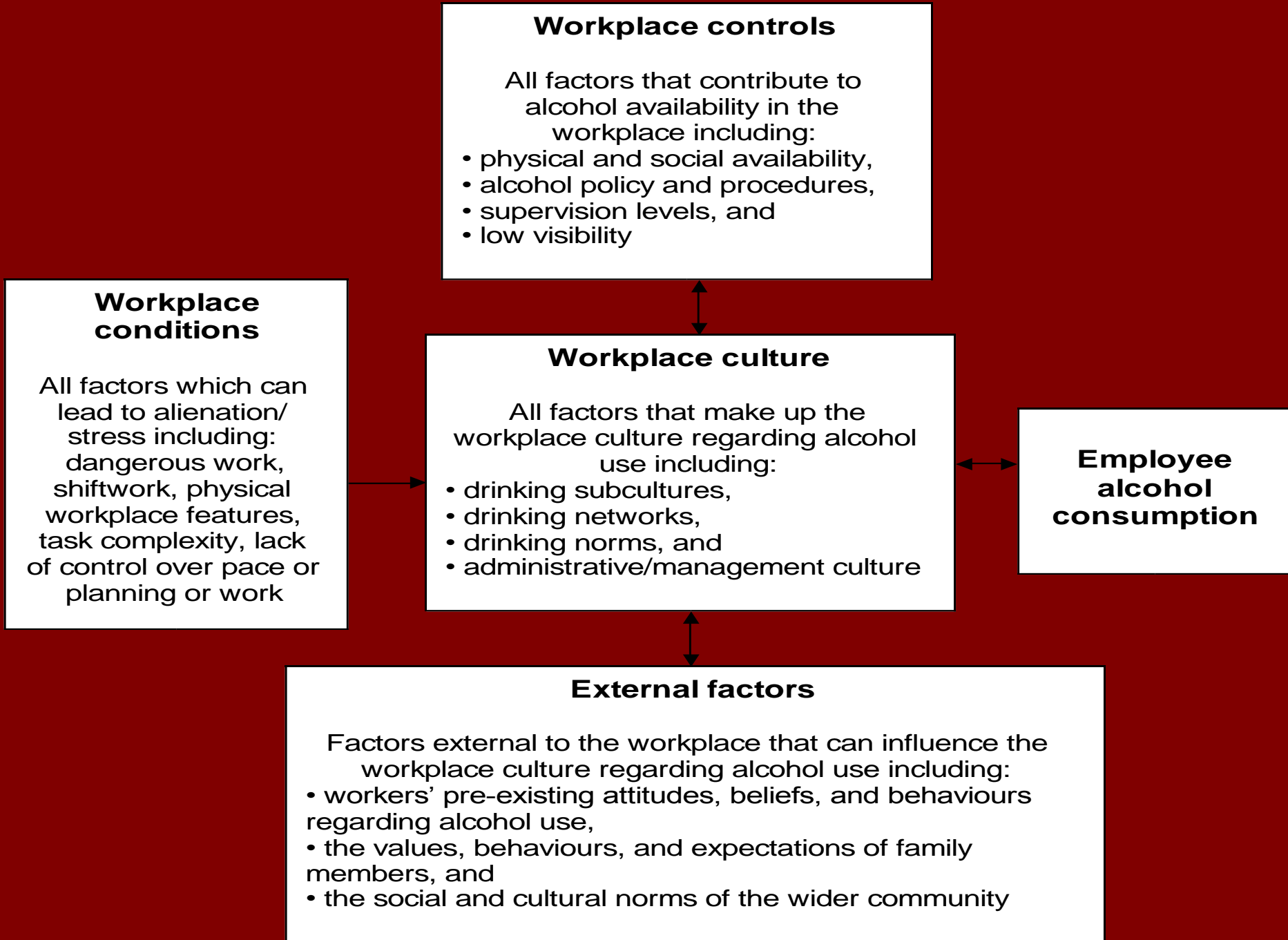
'Workplace alcohol and illicit drug use' refers to a wider definition that includes alcohol and/or drugs consumed within work hours or immediately before commencing work. It also includes consumption that occurs outside of normal working hours that may be influenced by workplace culture, norms or expectations or that could have an effect on the person's capacity to perform their work (ASCC 2007a)

Workplace culture

While some empirical & anecdotal evidence indicates that drug & alcohol use may be prevalent in certain fishing & farming sectors, there is a knowledge gap concerning how industry workplace culture supports or discourages this use.

To account for individual and community differences in patterns and levels of use, this research employs the interactional workplace culture model of Pidd et al (2006).

This research builds on this model by incorporating drug use, and by identifying and expanding knowledge relating to workplace culture, conditions, controls and external factors relevant to fishing and farming.

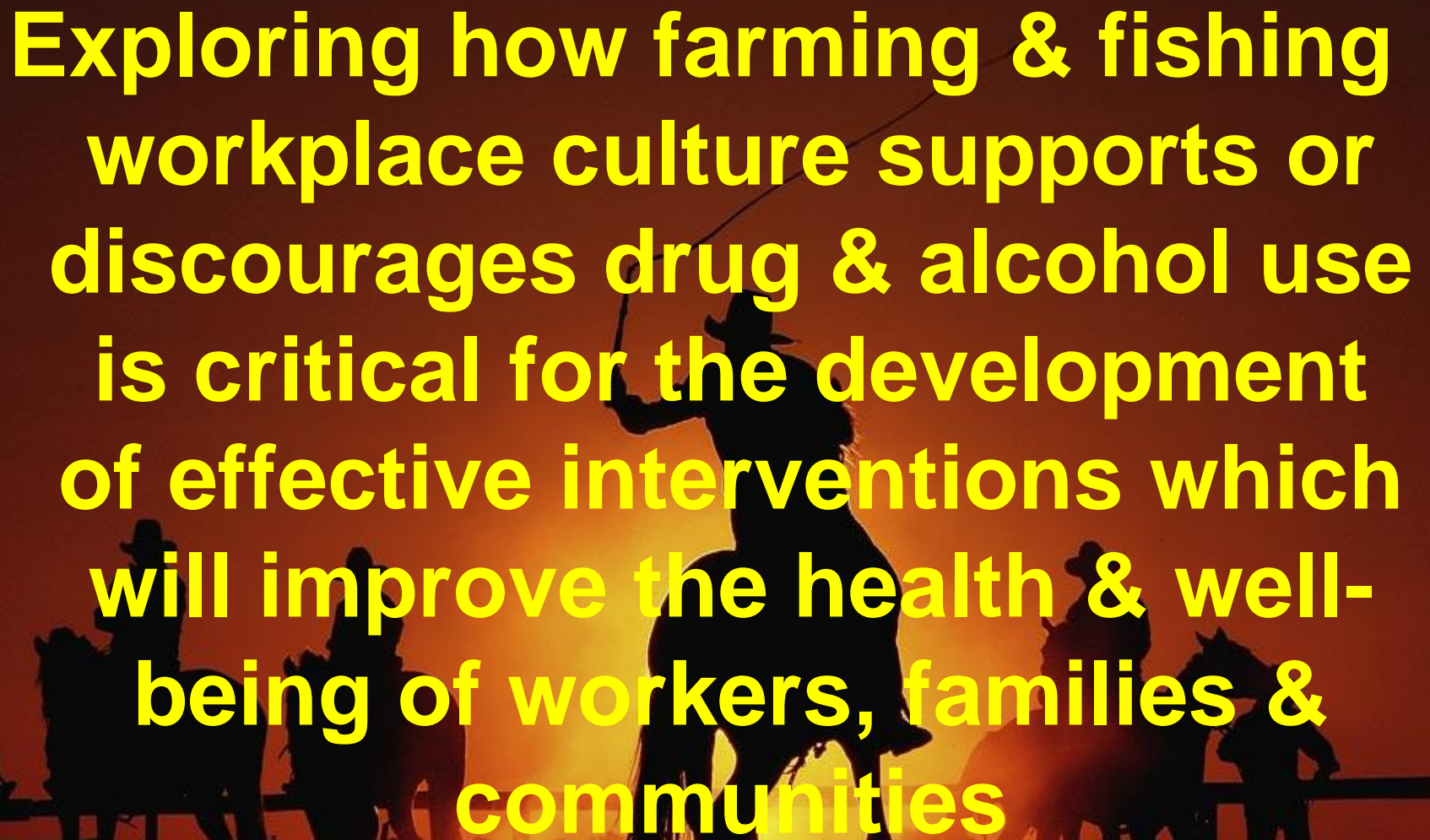


Model of the key relationships between the workplace environment and alcohol use (Pidd 2003)

Workplace conditions - hazardous industries, external industry stressors, shift work, seasonal work, degree of control over planning

Workplace controls - availability, drug & alcohol policies, supervision levels, low visibility

External factors— rurality, social & community norms, expectations of family members, non economic motivations for fishing & farming

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