

**LIQUOR CONTROL AMENDMENT (BANNED DRINKERS REGISTER) BILL 2023**

*Second Reading*

Resumed from 13 June.

**MS A.E. KENT (Kalgoorlie)** [10.48 am]: I rise today to talk about the Liquor Control Amendment (Banned Drinkers Register) Bill 2023. Preventing and reducing alcohol-related crime is an ongoing priority for the Cook Labor government. The state's vastness and diversity present unique challenges in developing ways we can help and protect individuals and communities at risk of alcohol-related harm.

Following consultation with industry, local governments, police and the community, the state government established a pilot program, the banned drinkers register, about three years ago to target harmful levels of alcohol use by controlling access to takeaway packaged liquor. In December 2020, the first BDR trial commenced in the Pilbara. Subsequent BDR trials commenced in the Kimberley in July 2021 and in the goldfields in March 2022.

The state government provides scanners and IT support for systems that ensure that banned drinkers—those with barring notices or prohibition orders against them—are declined sale and have their IDs scanned. The BDR works alongside other liquor control interventions to reduce high-risk individuals' access to liquor. However, trials and pilots are in place for a reason. It has given the Cook government a chance to evaluate the banned drinkers register in the Kimberley and the Pilbara. The evaluations showed that there are insufficient pathways to the BDR and that the BDR is administratively burdensome and does not capture family and domestic violence. They also showed that health damage or other alcohol-related harm often occurs outside licensed venues; licensees can opt out of the BDR because it is not mandatory; and secondary supply, whereby someone supplies alcohol to someone who is on the BDR, can undermine its effectiveness. The Cook Labor government is a responsible government because it took this information and is making the banned drinkers legislation stronger.

This bill will create a register of people prohibited from purchasing packaged liquor and establish a head of power for the minister to have authority to determine banned drinker areas. Importantly, it will provide new pathways onto the banned drinkers register, including through the establishment of a banned drinkers order that can be made on application to the director of Liquor Licensing by a medical practitioner, social worker or other prescribed persons. Under the bill, a banned drinkers order can also be issued by the police—this is an important point—for any alcohol-related offence, including driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or family violence. Police BDOs will be an automatic three, six or 12-month ban that will escalate based on the number of offences. It will also become an offence to supply packaged liquor to someone known to be on the BDR. The supplier will be subject to a fine or a BDO that will limit their ability to further supply alcohol.

It is no secret that alcohol-related harm is a tough and complex issue that many in Western Australia face. The goldfields is not on its own in this regard. Alcohol-related harm refers to the abuse of alcohol and can have other significant impacts on the rate of domestic violence, child abuse, crime and antisocial behaviour, which in some areas is prolific. In my electorate of Kalgoorlie and in the goldfields and other remote areas of the state, I recognise the concerted efforts by the police, government and local authorities to tackle the social issues that the misuse of alcohol causes. Unfortunately, the alleviation of alcohol-related harm is a multifaceted problem. No one policy can solve this, but coordination is vital in tackling the issue. The effects of alcohol use are often felt by the most vulnerable in our community, such as children and families subject to domestic violence. This BDR tool can only assist in reducing alcohol-related harm to individuals, families and the wider community. Family and domestic violence is devastating families and communities across Western Australia at an alarming rate. It has serious and ongoing impacts on women's health, including injuries, homicide and poor mental health, and exposes children and young people to trauma that can impact them for the rest of their lives.

The tragedy of family and domestic violence was highlighted in 16 Days in WA statistics in November 2022. Sixty-five per cent of assaults reported in Western Australia last year related to family and domestic violence. That number was up 15 per cent from 2019. Forty-eight per cent—or 28—victims of homicide and related offences in Western Australia, which include murder, attempted murder and manslaughter, were related to family and domestic violence. Family violence continues to be a driver of gender inequality in the areas of employment participation and financial security. Family and domestic violence is also the leading cause of homelessness for women and children. Family and domestic violence is experienced at disproportionately higher rates by Aboriginal and culturally and linguistically diverse women and children, people with disability, and people who identify as LGBTQI+. We all have a duty to try whatever measures we can to eliminate these awful facts and statistics.

I have mentioned previously in this house that the Australian Hotel Association (WA) chief executive, Bradley Woods, commented last year that the association has been advocating for the banned drinkers register for more than 12 years. Mr Woods said he believes the technology allows authorities to intervene with problematic drinkers, particularly those who are repeat offender drinkers who have committed offences of violence or domestic assault.

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Thursday, 15 June 2023]

p2920b-2935a

Ms Alison Kent; Mr Mark Folkard; Ms Meredith Hammat; Mr David Scaife; Ms Jodie Hanns; Mr Simon Millman; Mr Peter Rundle; Mr Reece Whitby

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He said this is a far better system than just introducing blanket bans restricting alcohol supply to everyone in the community because it targets individuals who have ongoing problems with alcohol.

I have talked about the BDR to many people in my electorate and one of the main things that keeps being raised, be it from women's refuges, police or victims, is the need for stronger measures in the BDR to help stop FDV. This government has listened. Specifically, this legislation sets out that a police officer will be able to make a banned drinker order for a person who is charged with an alcohol-related offence or is bound by a family violence restraining order if the police officer who makes the family violence restraining order believes on reasonable grounds that the person was affected by liquor at the time of engaging in the conduct to which the family violence restraining order relates.

This legislation will help many Western Australian families. The government has taken on board the consultation and feedback, and the changes to the legislation are in line with this. I am extremely proud to commend this bill to the house.

**MR M.J. FOLKARD (Burns Beach)** [10.56 am]: I rise in support of the Liquor Control Amendment (Banned Drinkers Register) Bill 2023. Before I commence, I take this opportunity to state my thoughts on Constable Anthony Woods and his family and his peers who attended and worked with him on the night of the tragic incident that occurred in Ascot. My thoughts are with the Belmont police and what they are going through. It has brought on a bit of melancholy in me because I have dealt with that kind of incident in many years past.

Today I have the privilege of addressing the house on a topic I hold close to my heart. In a past life I was a liquor and gaming detective who was responsible for investigating liquor-related crime and I was seen as an expert in the field. It is not only me stating that; case law reflects that.

Alcohol is a drug. If it were registered today as a new drug for community consumption, it would never get approval—never. If the alcohol and liquor industry acted in a responsible and professional manner, a banned drinkers register would never have been needed. My experience with the industry from a policing perspective is that the number of poor and unprofessional licensees has never been greater. I have seen alcohol-related murders, sexual assaults and grievous bodily harm stabbings and have attended countless domestic violence incidents. I have held drivers in my arms as they have died as a result of road traffic crashes related to alcohol. I do not need to be reminded about the need for this legislation. Liquor reform is a topic I hold close to my heart. I have seen the damage alcohol has done to our community. Remember this: alcohol has done more damage to our community than all other drugs combined. To consume it is a privilege, not a right. In this speech I will attempt to explore the history of liquor reform in Western Australia and the various aspects of liquor reform, including the banned drinkers register, minimum floor pricing, the relationship between violence and alcohol, and the relationship between domestic violence and alcohol.

WA has a rich history of liquor reform that reflects the ongoing efforts to balance the social, economic and health considerations associated with alcohol consumption. The journey towards liquor reform in WA can be traced back to the late nineteenth century when concerns about harmful effects of excessive drinking began to emerge. One of the significant milestones in Western Australia's liquor reform was the introduction of early licensing laws. Who cannot remember the "six o'clock swill"? In the mid-twentieth century, bars and hotels had strict closing times, which reflected that. During the 1960s and 1970s, there was a growing recognition of the need for more comprehensive liquor licence regulations. Reforms began to focus on improving the standards and conditions of licensed venues promoting responsible service of alcohol and addressing the impact of alcohol on the public health and safety of our community. This period saw the emergence of guidelines and regulations surrounding the responsible service of alcohol, including training programs for staff and the promotion of responsible drinking behaviours.

In the 1980s and 1990s, WA witnessed a further shift of liquor reform with an emphasis on harm-minimisation strategies. Who can remember the closure of Steves or the restriction of Steves in Nedlands? That is a perfect example. This included introduction measures such as breathalyser testing, restrictions on advertising and the promotion of alcohol and initiatives aimed at reducing drink-driving incidents. Those reforms aimed to create a safer drinking culture to reduce the negative impacts associated with excessive alcohol consumption. It was this government that introduced "What you blow is what you go" legislation—the Road Traffic Act 1974, a significant reform. That reform was requested by police over 35 years ago before it was implemented by this government. Do not forget that. It took 35 years to bring in that change.

The early 2000s marked a significant turning point in liquor reform with a renewed focus on alcohol-related violence and its impact on our communities. Several states and territories in Australia introduced lockout laws and restricted trading hours for licensed venues in areas known for high levels of alcohol-related violence. Those measures aimed to reduce the availability of alcohol during peak times to create a safer nightlife environment. We did it here in Western Australia. More recent liquor-reform efforts have focused on addressing issues such as alcohol-related harm in Indigenous communities, alcohol-related harm with young people and the impact of alcohol on mental health. The introduction of mandatory ID scanning in some jurisdictions, and I include Northbridge in that, along

with continued investment in education and awareness campaigns, reflects the ongoing efforts to address the multifaceted challenges associated with alcohol consumption.

It is important to note that liquor reform in Western Australia is an ongoing process with various stakeholders continuously working to strike a balance between promoting responsible drinking, supporting the hospitality industry and protecting public health and safety. The history of liquor reform in WA demonstrates a commitment to addressing the evolving social and health concerns associated with alcohol consumption, and it highlights the importance of evidence-based strategies and collaborative approaches to achieve meaningful change.

In recent years, there has been an increased focus on addressing harms associated with alcohol, particularly in relation to public health, violence and community wellbeing. This has led to a more holistic approach to alcohol reform, encompassing not only regulation of licensed venues, but also initiatives aimed at changing cultural norms and attitudes towards alcohol consumption. Good evidence of this is the recent opening of a licensed premise in Perth that does not sell alcohol at all. It was in the media as recently as last week. One area that has received significant attention is the promotion of responsible drinking practices in relation to alcohol-related harm in specific populations such as our youth. Furthermore, the impact of alcohol on mental health has been a key consideration in liquor reform efforts. Recognising the link between alcohol misuse and the mental health problem strategies that have been implemented ensures adequate support and resources are available to the individuals experiencing co-occurring mental health and alcohol-related issues. The role of technology and data collection has played a significant role in shaping liquor reform in WA. Banned drinking registers, as I mentioned earlier, were implemented to restrict the sale of alcohol to individuals with a history of alcohol-related offending. Those registers help track and monitor those individuals who are at risk of harmful alcohol consumption, allowing for targeted intervention and support.

Additionally, the availability and accessibility of alcohol may have been addressed through various policy measures. Those include restricted trading hours and density restrictions on liquor venues. This government introduced those reforms. This government introduced lockout laws in certain areas in Northbridge. I think Fremantle has lockout laws as well, but I will take that on advice. Those measures aim to create safer drinking environments, reduce alcohol-related violence and minimise the social and health impacts of excessive drinking. It is worth noting liquor reform in Australia is a complex and involving process. The approach to liquor regulation varies between states and territories, reflecting the diverse needs and priorities of different regions. It is a pretty strong statement when considering how it is reflected here in WA. The diversity presents opportunities for learning various approaches and sharing best practices to inform ongoing reform and efforts overall.

Liquor reform in WA continues to be a collaborative effort involving government agencies, health professionals, community organisations, industry stakeholders and the public. By addressing the multifaceted challenges associated with liquor consumption and incorporating evidence-based strategies, WA is striving to create a culture of responsible drinking, reduce alcohol-related harm and foster a healthier and safer community for all.

Banned drinkers registers are systems that maintain and record individuals identified as problematic drinkers, having engaged in alcohol-related offending. Those registers play a crucial role in liquor reform by imposing restrictions on the individuals, aiming to prevent repeated incidents and encouraging individuals to seek necessary support and rehabilitation. The advantages of implementing banned drinkers registers are multifaceted. Firstly, they serve as a deterrent for individuals with a history of alcohol-related offending. By restricting their access to alcohol, we send a clear message that such behaviours will not be tolerated and the consequences will be enforced. This discourages problematic drinkers from continuing their harmful behaviours and encourages them to seek help and to engage in rehabilitation programs. Secondly, banned drinkers registers promote accountability. By keeping a comprehensive record of individuals with alcohol-related issues, authorities can closely monitor their actions and intervene when necessary. This can range from offering support and resources to enforcing stricter measures if deemed necessary. Through this system we can encourage individuals to take responsibility for their own actions and to motivate them to make positive changes in their lives. Furthermore, liquor ban registers provide an opportunity for early intervention and rehabilitation. By identifying individuals with alcohol-related problems, we can connect them with appropriate support services, treatment programs or counselling. This approach focuses on addressing the underlying causes of alcohol misuse, helping individuals break free from the cycle of harmful behaviours, and promoting a healthier lifestyle.

I will now talk a bit about minimum floor pricing because I think that, in conjunction with banned liquor registers, is something that needs to be considered. Minimum floor pricing is the establishment of a baseline price for alcoholic beverages. It ensures that alcohol is not sold below a certain price. This strategy is aimed at discouraging the availability of cheap, low-quality alcohol that often leads to harmful binge drinking and the associated social consequences. By setting a minimum price, we can promote responsible drinking habits and deter the consumption of excessive volumes of alcohol.

There are several advantages with the implementation of minimum floor pricing. Firstly, it helps reduce alcohol-related harm by addressing the issue of alcohol affordability. Cheap alcohol tends to attract vulnerable populations, including young people and individuals with alcohol dependency issues. By increasing the price, we can limit the accessibility of alcohol to these groups, subsequently curbing alcohol misuse and its negative impacts on individuals and communities. Secondly, minimum floor pricing can contribute to a more level playing field within the alcohol industry. Some retailers engage in aggressive discounting practices—I have seen it in my own electorate—leading to an unhealthy competition focused solely on price. By introducing a minimum price, we encourage fair competition based on the quality and diversity of alcoholic beverages, fostering a healthier market for both producers and consumers. Minimum floor pricing in the Northern Territory resulted in a 40 to 60 per cent reduction in alcohol-related medical presentations to Northern Territory medical services. That 20 per cent variance relates to the values presented by different studies and is based on the studies I have read. It is something we have to consider. Lastly, minimum floor pricing has the potential to generate revenue for the government. The additional funds raised from the price difference could be allocated to initiatives aimed at preventing and addressing alcohol-related harms, such as education campaigns, treatment programs and support services. This would not only enhance public health and safety, but also provide a sustainable source of funding for alcohol-related initiatives.

It is essential to acknowledge the complex relationship between violence and alcohol. Although alcohol does not directly cause violence, it has been consistently linked to increased aggression and a higher likelihood of violent incidents. Understanding this relationship is crucial in formulating effective liquor reform strategies and addressing the underlying causes of alcohol-related violence. Research has shown that alcohol consumption can impair judgement, lower inhibitions and increase aggression levels.

[Member's time extended.]

**Mr M.J. FOLKARD:** The relationship between alcohol and domestic violence is a deeply concerning issue that requires our attention. Although it is crucial to recognise that alcohol is not the sole cause of domestic violence, it can be a contributing factor that exacerbates the frequency and severity of incidents. Understanding this relationship is essential to formulating effective strategies to address domestic violence and its connection to alcohol. Research has consistently shown a correlation between alcohol consumption and domestic violence. Alcohol can intensify pre-existing conflicts and lead to a higher likelihood of physical, emotional or sexual abuse within intimate relationships. There are several ways in which alcohol can contribute to the occurrence of domestic violence. Alcohol impairs cognitive functions and reduces self-control. Under the influence of alcohol, individuals may be more likely to engage in aggressive behaviours, including domestic violence. The diminished ability to think rationally and exercise restraint can lead to a breakdown in communication and an increase in violent incidents. Alcohol consumption can increase aggression levels and distort one's perception of social cues and situations. Minor disagreements or conflicts that might have been resolved peacefully can escalate into violent confrontations due to heightened aggression influenced by alcohol. I have seen that lead to murders. I have been there and cleaned them up.

Alcohol can further exacerbate existing power imbalances within relationships. It can embolden individuals who already have controlling tendencies, leading to a greater likelihood of abusive behaviour and/or that most hideous part of domestic violence, coercive control. Additionally, alcohol can impair the ability of victims to protect themselves or to seek help, making them more vulnerable to continued abuse. In some cases, individuals have used alcohol as an excuse for their violent behaviour and attempted to shift blame away from themselves to booze. This can perpetuate a cycle of abuse, as alcohol becomes the rationalisation for their actions rather than taking personal responsibility for their behaviour.

I have spoken of the history of liquor reform in Western Australia that can be traced back to the nineteenth century, when concerns about the social and health impacts of excessive drinking began to emerge. The temperance movement gained momentum, advocating for the reduction or elimination of alcohol consumption. However, complete prohibition was ultimately rejected and instead, efforts focused on regulating the sale and consumption of alcohol.

Alcohol-related violence has been a major focus of liquor reform in WA and across Australia. Recognising the association between alcohol consumption and violent behaviour, measures were introduced to reduce alcohol-related violence. These included lockout laws, which restricted entry to licensed venues after a certain time; again, Northbridge is the best example of this in WA. Further, there was the introduction of mandatory ID scanning to identify and prevent the entry to licensed premises of individuals with a history of violent behaviour or alcohol-related offences. We have that now; they have to produce a driver's licence to get into licensed premises in Northbridge.

Liquor reform efforts have also been aimed at addressing the specific challenges faced by Indigenous communities in relation to alcohol-related harms. These communities often experience higher rates of alcohol-related violence, health issues, and social dislocation. Collaborative approaches involving Indigenous communities, government agencies and support services have been implemented to develop culturally sensitive strategies that address these issues. The banned drinkers register is one of those approaches.

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Despite significant progress, liquor reform in WA continues to face challenges. One of the ongoing challenges is balancing economic considerations with public health and safety concerns. The hospitality industry plays a significant role in the economy, and striking a balance between supporting the industry and implementing effective harm reduction measures can be complex. Further, addressing a deeply ingrained drinking culture and promoting responsible drinking practices requires long-term efforts and community engagement.

New challenges, such as the rise of online alcohol sales and the availability of high-strength and premixed alcoholic beverages, require continued ongoing adaptation and regulation to ensure public health and safety. The ability to purchase alcohol online and its accessibility to underage kids is of genuine concern.

Liquor reform requires collaboration between various stakeholders, including government agencies, industry representatives, community organisations and health professionals. Building and maintaining effective partnerships is essential for successful reform initiatives.

In the 1970s and 1980s there was a growing recognition of the health impacts of alcohol misuse. This period saw the emergence of community-driven movements for stronger liquor controls, particularly targeting issues around alcohol-related violence, underage drinking and harm to vulnerable populations. The WA government responded by implementing various reforms, including stricter licensing regulations, enforcement measures and public health campaigns. The twenty-first century has brought further shifts in liquor reform. Recognising the need for evidence-based approaches, governments focused on implementing harm minimisation strategies. This included initiatives such as responsible service of alcohol training, restrictions on alcohol advertising, community awareness campaigns and the introduction of lockout laws to reduce alcohol-related violence in nightlife precincts. Furthermore, discussions around minimum floor pricing have gained traction in recent years. Advocates for this reform argue that setting a minimum price for alcohol can contribute to reducing alcohol consumption and related harms. The adoption of minimum floor pricing varies across Australia and its territories. Ongoing debates and pilot programs have been undertaken to evaluate the efficiency of promoting responsible drinking and reducing alcohol-related harms.

It is important to note that liquor reform in Australia is an ongoing process as governments, community organisations and researchers continue to review and refine strategies to ensure wellbeing and safety for individuals and communities. By learning from our past experiences and implementing evidence-based measures, WA and our government continues to strive for a balanced approach to liquor reform that addresses the complex challenges associated with alcohol consumption.

In conclusion, liquor reform in WA has evolved over time, with a focus on promoting responsible drinking, reducing alcohol-related harms and addressing issues such as domestic violence. Through a combination of measures, including minimum floor pricing, the banned drinkers register and targeted intervention programs, we can work towards a safer and healthier society. By understanding the complex relationship between alcohol and violence, particularly domestic violence, we can develop comprehensive strategies that address the underlying factors that promote and support those affected. I hope that we continue to foster a culture of responsible drinking and strive towards a future in which individuals and communities thrive, free from the devastating effects of alcohol-related harm.

The best thing about this legislation is that it is only one part of addressing the problem. We need comprehensive support services along with the banned drinkers register to actually move forward. I know that this is a way that our government, the Cook government, will continue to move forward in this space. With that, I commend the bill to the house.

**MS M.J. HAMMAT (Mirrabooka — Parliamentary Secretary)** [11.23 am]: I also rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Liquor Control Amendment (Banned Drinkers Register) Bill 2023. I think that others before me have spoken quite eloquently about the intent and content of this bill. In my comments, I will not be able to compete with the member for Burns Beach, who made reference to cleaning up murder scenes; unfortunately, I have no such colour in my contribution! But I want to talk about this bill because I think it is an important policy initiative. It is one part of a broader piece of work to address the harm that is caused by alcohol to not only individuals, but also the broader community. I think that point has been well made by others. This is a specific initiative designed to do a particular thing, but it is by no means the only thing that is being done to address the harm caused by alcohol. I think we probably all well understand that there is a range of further initiatives that could and perhaps should be pursued if we are serious about minimising that risk.

This is a specific policy of government. It is designed to target individuals who have a particular problem with the consumption of alcohol, whether it is particularly harmful for those individuals or perhaps for their families or other people around them. The legislation is designed to ensure that liquor stores will be able to identify individuals who have been prohibited from purchasing alcohol for a particular reason. Individuals will be required to produce ID when they purchase alcohol, which will be scanned and will flag to the retailer whether the individual has been prohibited from purchasing alcohol—whether they have been put on the banned drinkers register, as it is called. It will be effective in stopping the supply of alcohol to those for whom alcohol is a problem, but will not disrupt the

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Thursday, 15 June 2023]

p2920b-2935a

Ms Alison Kent; Mr Mark Folkard; Ms Meredith Hammat; Mr David Scaife; Ms Jodie Hanns; Mr Simon Millman; Mr Peter Rundle; Mr Reece Whitby

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supply for other people in the community who enjoy alcohol at moderate and safe levels. I think we all understand that alcohol is very pervasive in our community. The member for Burns Beach talked about the temperance movement and activities that were designed to encourage widespread bans of alcohol. They are simply not effective. They do not enjoy widespread support because many people—the majority of the population, in fact—enjoy alcohol in moderate, safe levels. It is not necessary to have a wideranging ban because the majority of people consume alcohol responsibly. This initiative is about banning the sale of alcohol to certain individuals while allowing the rest of the community to continue to enjoy it.

People will come to be placed on the banned drinkers register in a couple of ways. People can voluntarily put their name on it; however, unsurprisingly, that is not regularly taken up. It is more likely that people will have their name included on the register because they have been subject to some kind of prohibition order or banning notice.

As others have said, the government initiated a trial in the Pilbara in 2021 to see how this could work in practice. It was based on a similar scheme that was introduced in the Northern Territory in 2017, I believe. The trial in the Pilbara was then effectively extended to include the Kimberley and goldfields, and a new trial has recently been put in place in Carnarvon and Gascoyne Junction. It is interesting to note that the Pilbara trial was substantially evaluated by the University of Western Australia in a report that was released in September last year. I had a look at that evaluation and found it very interesting to read. It makes the point that there is broad support for the policy from retailers and from those groups that are engaged in advocacy for the hospitality industry or liquor retailers generally, so there is support at an industry level for this kind of targeted approach.

Another interesting finding of that evaluation was that both direct and indirect benefits arose from having the banned drinkers register in place. The direct impact is quite obviously that it makes it more difficult for those individuals on the register to purchase and access alcohol. One of the indirect benefits that the evaluation identified was that the introduction of the banned drinkers register initiated a broader community discussion about alcohol use in the community and its harmful effects, encouraging people to voluntarily make changes to their alcohol consumption. They might be people for whom alcohol consumption is not a problem, but evidence tells us that we would all benefit from reducing our level of alcohol consumption. I think the current health advice is that there is no safe level of alcohol consumption and the best course of action is for people to eliminate it entirely. Of course, most people take a risk approach to that and perhaps do not eliminate alcohol altogether, but reducing consumption can deliver significant health benefits. I think that is another really interesting outcome from that evaluation. The evaluation was widely supported. As people expected, the system whereby scanning devices were supplied to retailers was implemented, and that underlines the important work undertaken by the department to consult and work with industry on the introduction of this initiative. That implementation was expected and accepted by retailers and there was good support for the policy as a targeted and sustainable approach to the misuse of alcohol. It is really important that the policy is not only targeted, but also sustainable over the long term.

The report included a number of recommendations designed to improve the operation of the system. One of the things the report noted was that industry expected that a greater number of people would be included on that register. The report identified that the number of people was generally low because of the pathways to being included on the banned drinkers register. I said at the outset that there are a couple of ways that people could do that. That is one of the issues that we are seeking to address in this bill by providing additional pathways for people to be named and included on the banned drinkers register. One of those pathways will be the establishment of a banned drinker order, which can be made on application to the director of Liquor Licensing by a medical practitioner, social worker or other prescribed person. It reflects the reality that many people in our community—in hospitals, social work or other sorts of arrangements—are often in a position to observe the harmful effects of alcohol, so it will give them the capacity to take steps to put in place some limitations for those people.

A BDO can also be issued by the police for any alcohol-related offence, including driving under the influence or a family and domestic violence offence. When police issue a banned drinker order, there will be an automatic three, six or 12-month ban, which will be escalated based on the number of offences. Earlier I referred to the Northern Territory, which put in place a similar scheme. That scheme was initially introduced, then repealed, then reintroduced in 2017, so it has gone through a few different iterations. The Northern Territory scheme allows for the police to include people on the banned drinker register. Interaction with the police has proven to be the way the majority of people are included on the register.

One of the other issues identified by this evaluation is what is called secondary supply. This is when one person buys alcohol and supplies it to another person who is on the banned drinkers register so is not able to purchase it themselves. The bill will address that by making it an offence to supply packaged liquor to someone who is known to be on the banned drinkers register. If people do that, they can be subject to fines or banned themselves.

The bill is designed to enhance the operation of the system based on the feedback that we have received, which is based on the evaluation that has been conducted. The bill recognises that a number of harmful effects arise in the

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Thursday, 15 June 2023]

p2920b-2935a

Ms Alison Kent; Mr Mark Folkard; Ms Meredith Hammat; Mr David Scaife; Ms Jodie Hanns; Mr Simon Millman; Mr Peter Rundle; Mr Reece Whitby

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community from alcohol consumption, and I want to make a few comments about that. I want to acknowledge that this is one strategy out of a range of things being undertaken at a government level, both state and federal, to minimise the effects of alcohol. There is good reason for that. Other speakers before me have canvassed the effects of alcohol consumption on not just individuals, but also families and the community. We often think about those costs in terms of health costs and how an individual's health might be affected, but there are clear social and economic costs that arise from the consumption of alcohol in our community as well.

I turn to the cost of alcohol because the impact of this cost at both a state and national level has been documented on different occasions. It is sobering—no pun intended—to contemplate the effects. We know that alcohol contributes to a range of different health impacts. It can result in cancer of the mouth, oesophagus, breasts, liver or bowel. The consumption of alcohol has been linked to a number of different kinds of cancers. I will quote from a document from the Cancer Council of Western Australia, dated May 2022. It states —

On average, **3 West Australians die** from alcohol-caused cancers each week in WA.

That is a significant number. It continues —

Over **1,000 people are hospitalised** due to alcohol-caused cancers each year in WA.

Alcohol is a significant contributor. It is also a contributor to accidents, injury and death—some of those as a result of misadventure when people are under the effects of alcohol. Over 1 000 people each month in Western Australia are hospitalised as a result of alcohol-caused injuries. Alcohol also has an impact on hospitalisations related to mental and neurological disorders. In 2017, 284 Western Australians lost their lives due to alcohol-caused injuries. That is not an insignificant number. Some of those people died on roads when people were under the influence of alcohol or alcohol was identified as a primary cause of death. Some people have died in waterways. I also note the more recent education campaign undertaken to highlight the risks associated with people swimming after they have been drinking, and I congratulate those organisations for highlighting those risks. Alcohol contributes significantly to the overall burden of injury and disease in Australia, and Western Australia in particular.

Alcohol is also associated with a number of incidents of family and domestic violence. In 2021, police attended more than 25 alcohol-related incidents of family and domestic violence each day. Earlier I mentioned alcohol's impact on mental health. People are probably aware that alcohol is a depressant, and its extended use over a long period can contribute to increased stress, anxiety and depression. It is also important to note that alcohol can have devastating effects on unborn children when mothers consume alcohol during their pregnancy, both in terms of increasing the risk of miscarriage, stillbirth and low birth weight and its connection to foetal alcohol spectrum disorder. FASD can have devastating and lifelong consequences for people whose birth mother consumed alcohol at harmful levels while they were carrying them.

It is important not to underestimate the impact that alcohol has right across our community. Clearly, when there is excessive consumption in smaller communities and when people are drinking at sustained and dangerous levels, those impacts are more problematic for not just the individual, but also the immediate family members and community. The impact is significant, and for those reasons it is quite appropriate that governments can—and have, over a long period—turn their minds to the question of how to minimise and reduce not only the level of consumption, but also the negative impacts of alcohol consumption in our community.

In the time available, I want to touch on some of the negative impacts. Banning the sale of alcohol to some individuals is one part of a much larger piece of work that is being done by not only state governments, but also the federal government to ensure that we have appropriate policy settings to minimise harm in the community. One of those pieces of work is to control the supply and availability of alcohol, which this bill will do. Of course, we do that more broadly in the community by raising prices through the taxation of alcohol. That has been used as a strategy to control and reduce the sale of cigarettes. We make sure that beverages are not available at an excessively cheap price, and there is an absolute correlation between raising the minimum floor price and reducing the access that others might have to alcohol. It is particularly important with what are referred to as alcopops—products that are attractive to young drinkers and often are priced accordingly, sometimes to attract people who are underage to start drinking. We need to ensure that there is a proper price for them. The use of minimum unit pricing was one of the strategies pursued in the Northern Territory when it introduced a raft of legislative reforms designed to address the excessive consumption of alcohol there. It is done by having a floor price and using a variety of ways to do that, but most commonly through the federal government's ability to impose taxation regulations. It is also done by regulating the physical availability of alcohol. There is a very obvious correlation between going to the shop and purchasing alcohol and how much people drink.

[Member's time extended.]

**Ms M.J. HAMMAT:** We have retail laws that restrict when and how alcohol can be sold. Alcohol outlets need to meet these restrictions and there are very clear requirements for licensees of particular establishments. Taking

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Thursday, 15 June 2023]

p2920b-2935a

Ms Alison Kent; Mr Mark Folkard; Ms Meredith Hammat; Mr David Scaife; Ms Jodie Hanns; Mr Simon Millman; Mr Peter Rundle; Mr Reece Whitby

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steps to ensure that people do not have wholesale availability to alcohol 24/7 will have an impact on their ability to purchase it. Much of that is regulated by state governments.

We need to ensure that we look at the context in which people are drinking and modify the circumstances in which people drink. This government has had a policy of encouraging small bars as a way of ensuring that people who want to enjoy alcohol in moderation have the appropriate facilities to do so, whereas other settings might be designed to encourage a more excessive consumption of alcohol. It is about providing a range of different social settings and circumstances so that people who want to go out and have a drink with a friend or a neighbour can do so in an environment that is not conducive to drinking to excess—maybe just having one glass of wine and going home or whatever. It is about looking at strategies to modify the drinking context to ensure that we are not encouraging people to drink to excess.

Restrictions on marketing are also incredibly important. Over a long period, we have seen regulation in this space to ensure that young people in particular are not exposed to alcohol marketing. There are clearly challenges with that, but we can see that that has been used to good effect over time, particularly in the use of sponsorships and direct promotions. Again, I reflect on the work that was undertaken to restrict the sale of cigarettes and similar approaches to not allow the sorts of products that we know are harmful to health to sponsor sporting activities and large events. Clearly, education plays an important role, and much of that occurs in a school setting. We need to ensure that we provide young people with good information and education about the harmful effects of alcohol and encourage them to pursue strategies so that they do not consume alcohol to excess.

It is also about putting in place appropriate treatment and early intervention services. I think that is an important part of the overall puzzle. We need to ensure that appropriate support is available for people who seek to reduce their consumption or eliminate alcohol from their life. As others have said before me—I think it is a really important point—alcohol is a drug; it is addictive. There is no doubt that people who have been drinking at harmful levels but who are seeking to make a change require support to do that. It is an addiction for some parts of the population, and proper treatment and intervention services are required to support people to stop drinking at harmful levels. That is a really essential piece of the overall puzzle to ensure that we address the harmful effects of alcohol in the community.

I will not go into all of them today, but this government is pursuing a number of strategies across the state to work with communities and provide environments that are supportive of those communities that want to do better by their community members. I am thinking of the Target 120 program, which works very closely with young offenders and their families to help make a difference in the trajectory of the lives of those young people. Working in a way that is considered and embedded in the community is vitally important to address some of the things that arise as a result of alcohol consumption in the community.

With that, I will bring my comments to an end. In conclusion, I want to reflect on the fact that we understand that alcohol plays a particular role in the Australian context. Many other cultures around the world have a very different relationship with alcohol from that in Australia. It is often an important part of our celebrations. I have a friend from Argentina who drinks a little, not a lot. Her reflection is that she finds it striking that she is so often asked why she does not drink, as though it is some kind of curio or abnormality. Australians assume that in any social setting people will have a drink. That is not true in other parts of the world. I think we have a cultural issue with alcohol that we need to take seriously. We are doing that. Both federal and state governments are addressing that and looking at a range of different ways that we can make a change to the consumption of alcohol by both targeting drinkers who have particular problems, as this legislation will do, and working across a wide range of policy levers to reduce the harmful effects of alcohol on individuals, families and communities so that we can enjoy alcohol in moderation and not see the terrible consequences and impacts that we sometimes see when alcohol is abused.

With that, I commend the minister for his work on this bill and I commend it to the house.

**MR D.A.E. SCAIFE (Cockburn)** [11.46 am]: I rise today to contribute to the debate on the Liquor Control Amendment (Banned Drinkers Register) Bill 2023. It is a really hard act to follow the member for Mirrabooka and the member for Burns Beach. I will give a contribution that is, in many ways, similar to the contribution of the member for Mirrabooka by reflecting on the bill, but also particularly the broader policy context of alcohol consumption in Australia.

I say at the outset that the contributions from the members for Burns Beach and Mirrabooka made me reflect on whether I am particularly well suited—or maybe particularly ill-suited—to speak on this bill because I am a self-identified wovser! Those who know me well will know that I am a teetotaller. I have not drunk probably since I was about 21. I grew up in a family in which there was not a culture of drinking. I moved to Perth for university and indulged a little bit, but decided when I was about 21 that it really was not for me. I gave it up then and I have not touched it since. I raise this because I want to reflect on something that the member for Mirrabooka said about the Australian culture of drinking and the friend of hers who is treated as a sort of curiosity because she does not drink much. That is certainly my experience as a teetotaller, particularly a young teetotaller. I was still at university



**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Thursday, 15 June 2023]

p2920b-2935a

Ms Alison Kent; Mr Mark Folkard; Ms Meredith Hammat; Mr David Scaife; Ms Jodie Hanns; Mr Simon Millman; Mr Peter Rundle; Mr Reece Whitby

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when I was 21, 22 and 23 and when I was at events and not drinking, people would always ask; they always thought it was really strange that I was not drinking. When they asked me why I did not drink, I used to passive aggressively reply and say, “Why do you drink?” It is part of our culture, but I think that is changing. As I understand it, the generations coming through after my generation are drinking less than generations before. I saw that when I lived in the United Kingdom during my postgraduate studies. Where there are much more multicultural communities, and especially Muslim and Hindu communities, there is much greater acceptance of a non-drinking culture and more options for non-drinkers, if they want to drink something other than water or a soft drink. That is a good thing and is something that I would like to see happen more in Australia. I have certainly noticed a difference over the last decade and that there is now greater acceptance of it.

I want to explain a little bit about how I came to that position. Non-drinking is a funny kind of cultural thing that was passed down through my family. It was originally a religious thing, because my grandfather—my father’s father—was heavily involved with the Church of Christ and was a member of the Christian temperance movement. We even have the pledge that he would have signed. I could not find the copy of the pledge that he signed, but I found a copy of a pledge from Amherst College in the United States. I will read it to the chamber because I think it is such an interesting moment in history. The temperance pledge, signed by officers and students at Amherst College in the United States, states —

Whereas the undersigned, Officers and Students in Amherst College are convinced that it is best for us to dispense with Ardent Spirit, Wine, Opium and Tobacco, as articles of luxury and diet ... therefore,

**Resolved:** that relying on Divine aid we hereby pledge to one another our mutual promise, that while connected with this Institution, we will abstain entirely from These articles, except as medicine, and the use of wine at the Lord’s Supper.

I understand that the medicinal exception to the pledge was called upon by some people perhaps unnecessarily over the years! As it turns out, my father became what I used to call a militant atheist. The apple fell further from the tree in terms of the Christian part of the Christian temperance movement, but he culturally continued the temperance part of the temperance movement. My father was a non-drinker, and that has been passed down to me as well. Something that we can take from the temperance movement is that, as evidenced by what I have just read out, it was very conservative and strict. It called upon divine aid and things like God’s wrath to keep people in line when it came to the use of liquor. We know from the prohibition era in the United States that having a complete blanket or society-wide prohibition on alcohol generally does not work and leads to all sorts of unintended consequences, such as the bootleg supply of alcohol and a lack of regulation of things like alcohol content and alcohol consumption, because it pushes it underground. As the member for Mirrabooka said, alcohol can be consumed in moderation over the course of a person’s life with very few ill effects. It is part of our culture. It is not necessary to ban alcohol as people would find workarounds for it. However, as a self-identified wowsler, I have concerns about alcohol consumption generally in Australia.

I tend not to speak about my concerns about the Australian drinking culture because I think people will obviously disregard what I have to say, given my personal experience. A study from just a couple of years ago by the National Drug Research Institute at Curtin University found that the cost of alcohol consumption to the Australian economy is something like \$67 billion a year. That includes costs associated with ill health and lost productivity in the workplace, as well as costs associated with indirect effects unfortunately associated with excessive alcohol consumption, like increased crime, family and domestic violence and child abuse. Australia needs to keep having the conversation about how we manage the use of alcohol, in not just particular communities but all communities. To put it bluntly, I think plenty of day drinking happens in the western suburbs, Acting Speaker.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms A.E. Kent):** I hope you are not referring to me!

**Mr D.A.E. SCAIFE:** No, and I am not referring to the members for Churchlands or Nedlands either!

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Just checking.

**Mr D.A.E. SCAIFE:** My point is that alcohol abuse is happening everywhere. We are talking about having banned drinkers registers that will apply to particular communities, but there are pockets of alcohol abuse right throughout Australia. We need to be careful that we implement reforms in a way that will address particular problems in communities in the Pilbara, the Kimberley and the Gascoyne, but we also need to be cognisant that this issue is not necessarily defined by geography or culture. We should not pigeonhole this as an issue that affects only Aboriginal or regional communities. I strongly support the banned drinkers register and this bill. I think it is a really necessary step and reform for the regions concerned—I will get to my reasons for that shortly—but I also think it is important for us to lead a general conversation about alcohol consumption and alcohol abuse in all communities.

In that respect, I want to single out and congratulate something that people might have forgotten, which is that when the Labor government was elected in 2017, it made a promise to phase out alcohol advertising on Public Transport

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Thursday, 15 June 2023]

p2920b-2935a

Ms Alison Kent; Mr Mark Folkard; Ms Meredith Hammat; Mr David Scaife; Ms Jodie Hanns; Mr Simon Millman; Mr Peter Rundle; Mr Reece Whitby

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Authority facilities. That commitment was followed through by the Minister for Transport, and now Deputy Premier. As I understand it, there were difficulties at the time around existing contracts for the advertising infrastructure on Public Transport Authority facilities, but the minister immediately moved to ban the advertising of alcohol on digital billboards and rail infrastructure. I think that was done in 2018, so a year after the election of the McGowan Labor government, now the Cook Labor government. That is yet further evidence of the Deputy Premier's hard work and her ability to do many things at once. I think that was a really responsible decision that the Deputy Premier made. I know that the government intends to implement further restrictions on alcohol advertising on PTA facilities as contracts expire and come up for renewal and the like. I acknowledge that this government has been leading the conversation on alcohol consumption, alcohol restrictions and the responsible drinking of alcohol since it was first elected. It is a credit to the government that it has done that. I also give credit to the Minister for Racing and Gaming for bringing this bill to this place. It is just one part of a plan to address alcohol abuse and dysfunction in particular regions of Western Australia.

I personally support a ban on the advertising of alcohol during sporting events. My view is that the federal government should take action on that. At the moment, it is still possible to advertise alcohol during sporting events on public holidays and weekends. I personally think that the ban should be extended to cover all sporting events. Sporting events are attended by children and young people, who are there to watch sporting figures whom they respect. By being present at sporting events, they are encouraged to be physically active and healthy, yet, at the same time, children, young people and adults are being exposed to harmful messages around the use of alcohol. A ban would be a really welcome step for the federal government to take. As I understand it, it is a federal government issue and not something that the state government could go alone on. I certainly encourage the federal government to look at introducing a ban, in conjunction with bans on other things like gambling advertisements.

I now turn specifically to the banned drinkers register and the reforms in this bill. The bill will tackle specific problems that have arisen in some of our regional communities. The experience of some regional communities in the Pilbara, Kimberley and Gascoyne has shown complex problems, about which I am not well versed to speak. In many of those communities, we have intergenerational trauma. Obviously, in our remote Aboriginal communities, we have the intergenerational dispossession of the land of Aboriginal people by the white population and all the disadvantages that come with that. There is also a range of other issues, which I am sure other members will be able to speak about much more eloquently than I can.

We know that alcohol use is a driver of harm in many communities in the Pilbara, Kimberley and Gascoyne. That has many flow-on effects in the lost enjoyment of life for people who are users of alcohol or affected by the actions of people who abuse alcohol. There are lost productivity opportunities for those communities, and there are other flow-on effects, as well. It produces crime and antisocial behaviour, and those features of alcohol abuse then themselves have knock-on effects in those communities. I read an ABC article about a month or so ago about tourists feeling that they should not be travelling in the Kimberley because of alcohol-related violence. Personally, it seemed to me that some of those complaints were probably overblown. The point is that if we allow a community's reputation to be built on alcohol abuse, related crime and antisocial behaviour, even if the reputation does not reflect reality, that can have flow-on effects on tourists going to the regions, and staff such as nurses, police officers and other first responders being attracted to those communities. It is critical that we take steps to both control alcohol consumption, alcohol-related violence and antisocial behaviour, and generate confidence in the affected communities and the general public that the government is taking these issues seriously and taking concrete actions to address them.

The government should do this in a variety of ways, and the member for Mirrabooka spoke about Target 120, which I think is a great intervention. Target 120 is led by the Minister for Community Services, the member for Wanneroo, and it was initiated by her predecessor as minister, the member for Fremantle. It is a great program that looks at the multifaceted ways in which we need to intervene as early as possible on the connection to support services, whether that is family and domestic violence services, child protection services or drug and alcohol counselling. We have increasingly rolled out the program as we have tested it, refined it and seen it become a success.

Another way in which we are tackling the issues that are caused by, or at least exacerbated by, alcohol consumption in some of the regional areas is the banned drinkers register.

[Member's time extended.]

**Mr D.A.E. SCAIFE:** The banned drinkers register began as a trial in the Pilbara and has been ongoing since 2021. I want to digress a little and talk about the importance of running programs like this as trials. I talked earlier about the potential for unintended consequences of things like prohibition. There are always risks of a series of unintended consequences when a policy like a banned drinkers register is introduced. People will find ways of working around the system. People will not comply with the system, for whatever reason. The policy may drive people to products with higher alcohol content that they can get through other means. As a good process in public policy development, it is important to trial and evaluate these programs.

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Thursday, 15 June 2023]

p2920b-2935a

Ms Alison Kent; Mr Mark Folkard; Ms Meredith Hammat; Mr David Scaife; Ms Jodie Hanns; Mr Simon Millman; Mr Peter Rundle; Mr Reece Whitby

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Some members might know that in the last couple of years I have been undertaking my master's degree in public policy part-time through the Australian National University. I hope that I will be finished by this time next year. I have just done a unit on evidence and analysis in public policy, and one of the real takeaways from that unit, for me, was the need to run trials and do really robust evaluations before proceeding to roll out programs more widely because it can save taxpayers enormous amounts of money and allow governments to refine programs and make sure they are more targeted early on.

This is what the government did in the case of the banned drinkers register. It has been a trial since 2021 in the Pilbara. The government allowed the trial to run its course. It was and still is a voluntary register in the Pilbara. The government asked the University of Western Australia to undertake an evaluation of the trial, and the evaluation showed a number of issues with the rollout of the banned drinkers register. For example, the evaluation found that the number of people registered on the BDR presenting to stores was relatively low. It found that the connection of people on the BDR with support services was not as strong as it could be. It found that there were sometimes issues with the scanning and IT system infrastructure provided. This is particularly important: it found that there were limited pathways to registration on the BDR. People were being put on the BDR, but how they got there was quite restricted. Some categories of antisocial activity and criminal behaviour, which people would expect would lead to being placed on the BDR such as family and domestic violence, did not lead to someone being placed on the BDR. There was a gap; the community would probably expect that someone who engaged in family and domestic violence and had been charged and convicted might be put on the banned drinkers register, but that was not one of the pathways to being placed on the BDR. That was an outcome of the evaluation.

As a result of that, the evaluators made recommendations. They thought that there should be more pathways to BDR registration and a strengthening of the linkages between people on the BDR and support services. There was also a need to look at ways of preventing secondary supply and improving participation in the BDR, which meant making sure not only that premises are using the BDR, but also that it is being used consistently so people are captured by the system.

I really want to commend the government for conducting a trial and then evaluating that trial because too often governments over the decades have not done that. We saw that under the previous federal Liberal government; it basically did not evaluate programs. When it did evaluate programs, even if the evaluation came back negative, it would just disregard it and carry on because it thought it was a law unto itself. I want to congratulate the government on really responsible public policymaking here.

What this bill really addresses is the recommendations that came out of the evaluation. For example, I spoke about the evaluation finding that pathways to registration on the BDR were limited, so under this bill new pathways will be created with the establishment of what is called a banned drinkers order, which will be able to be made on application to the director of Liquor Licensing by a medical practitioner, social worker or other prescribed persons. Those sorts of health and welfare and social work professionals will have a way, if they come across alcohol-related abuse, to apply for someone to be placed on the banned drinkers register via a banned drinker order.

Importantly, going back to the point I made about family violence, a banned drinkers order can also be issued by the police for alcohol-related offences, including offences like driving under the influence or family and domestic violence offences in which alcohol has been involved. I think that that is a really significant reform and it is consistent with the recommendations of the evaluation that was undertaken independently by the University of Western Australia. Related to that, the banned drinker orders that can be issued by the police will automatically be, first, a three-month ban, a six-month ban and then a 12-month ban, based on the number of offences that have occurred. There is an escalation in the length of time that people are placed on the register. That is really important as not only a deterrent mechanism but also a recognition that as people commit more offences, that might suggest that the problem is greater, so it is important for them to be restricted from alcohol consumption for a longer time.

The second change that I want to highlight is that the bill will combat secondary supply. Secondary supply is when somebody who is not on the banned drinkers register purchases alcohol on behalf of someone who is on the BDR. They will go into the store, purchase it and take it out and hand it over, and perhaps take cash off the person who is on the BDR. Currently, secondary supply is permissible under the trial. This bill will make secondary supply an offence to deter people from engaging in this behaviour and create consequences if people do engage in the behaviour of secondary supply. Importantly, someone who engages in secondary supply could not only suffer the penal consequence of a fine, but also be subjected to a banned drinkers order. That means that person will then be banned for a time from purchasing alcohol that they can then supply to other people. I think that is a really important reform in that we do not have just a fine that will be imposed but we will restrict someone who is engaged in secondary supply from continuing to engage in that behaviour.

Another thing is that this bill will make the banned drinkers register mandatory in the regions in which it will apply. I think that is very important. I think it is sensible that the trial was voluntary to begin with. It is important for the

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Thursday, 15 June 2023]

p2920b-2935a

Ms Alison Kent; Mr Mark Folkard; Ms Meredith Hammat; Mr David Scaife; Ms Jodie Hanns; Mr Simon Millman; Mr Peter Rundle; Mr Reece Whitby

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self-determination of the regional communities involved that the policy was originally voluntary but now that it has been trialled for a time—as I understand it, in conversation with other members and advisers, the BDR is very strongly supported in those communities now—the government can now confidently move to a mandatory framework. That means that all premises and all people will know that they will be subject to the same regulatory framework. It means people cannot work around it by trying to find a premises that is not using the BDR. It helps to crack down on things such as store shopping, so I really welcome that.

I congratulate the minister and the government on the work that they have done to trial something that is sometimes contentious. There are opponents to these sorts of measures, but the government has done it in a responsible way through a series of voluntary trials. Now it has evaluated those trials and looked at the recommendations of that independent evaluation and brought forward responsible and reasonable legislation in the form of this bill, which will close some of those loopholes and strengthen the ability for support services like social workers and drug and alcohol counsellors to refer people onto the BDR, so this is very good legislation.

The last thing I want to touch on in my last few minutes is the situation in Carnarvon, because the most recent trial of the BDR rollout has been in the Gascoyne region and in Carnarvon. A series of reforms have happened in relation to Carnarvon and I want to distinguish between them. The trial of the banned drinkers register was expanded to Carnarvon, but alongside that the director of Liquor Licensing introduced other restrictions in that community relating to takeaway alcohol, volumetric restrictions and restrictions at certain times of the week or when particular events are on in town. I welcome those.

The contrast has been quite clear to me between the way this issue was handled by the opposition when I was first elected to this chamber, and how it has been dealt with in the past six months. When I was first elected to this chamber, for the first couple of years, the previous member for North West Central was an absolute animal about making hay of crime and antisocial behaviour in Carnarvon to the point that I thought he was irresponsibly running down his own community. The opposition used to frequently bludgeon the government. The member changed and suddenly the opposition went incredibly quiet on the issue, and I think that is a shame because I think the opposition should be right behind the government on the changes it is making in the community. It is disappointing that we have not had more vocal support from the opposition on this. It is clear that the minister and the director of Liquor Licensing had to step in in that situation and bring in reasonable reforms because the local liquor accord was not doing the job that needed to be done. I think the opposition should reflect on the way in which the former member for North West Central conducted himself on this issue and the way the opposition has conducted itself since.

**MS J.L. HANNS (Collie–Preston — Parliamentary Secretary)** [12.17 pm]: I rise to make a very short contribution to the Liquor Control Amendment (Banned Drinkers Register) Bill 2023. I, too, commend the minister and the director of Liquor Licensing for taking a very proactive approach to a very serious issue, particularly in those communities that the member for Cockburn has just spent time outlining. I do not want this to appear as though I am contradicting what I have just said, but I want to outline that my electorate of Collie–Preston is home to the Ferguson Valley, which contains 13 wineries and two breweries. Those are very, very important places, and the food, agriculture and wine industry is incredibly important in Collie–Preston. But I use that example to contrast the fact that those particular operators adopt very responsible drinking approaches, in contrast with what we are addressing in this bill, which is the people who cannot act responsibly with alcohol—in this case, particularly the licensees in Carnarvon, if we use the example to which the member for Cockburn alluded. This bill focuses on ensuring that problem drinkers have restricted access to alcohol. That is incredibly important, and it is a shame that I do not have longer, member for Mount Lawley.

**Mr S.A. Millman:** Sorry, I will be very quick.

**Ms J.L. HANNS:** In saying that, from my role as a teacher and, more recently, deputy principal, before coming to this place, I know the impact on families of children in schools and young children before they even reach schools; their very important natural development in problematic families is very much hindered, which is a tragedy for not only those families but also communities and governments as a whole. When there is dysfunction related to problem drinking—or other drugs, but I will focus on problem drinking—families are impacted to the point at which external services and the government have to step in to support them. That is not only a cost to the community, but is also an absolute tragedy for the young people being raised in dysfunctional houses, particularly with problem drinking.

I am going to give a couple of examples here of community organisations in my electorate that have stepped in to provide very much needed support for people with drug and alcohol issues. In my experience as a teacher and deputy principal, I think that this is right across the state and it is not a reflection on Collie Senior High School, where I spent a lot of my time working. I have also worked in the Pilbara and at Eastern Hills Senior High School. It is a problem right across the state. When I use these examples, they are not specific to Collie–Preston. At times young children have come to school saying that there is no food in the cupboard at home because mum and dad have

**Extract from *Hansard***

[ASSEMBLY — Thursday, 15 June 2023]

p2920b-2935a

Ms Alison Kent; Mr Mark Folkard; Ms Meredith Hammat; Mr David Scaife; Ms Jodie Hanns; Mr Simon Millman; Mr Peter Rundle; Mr Reece Whitby

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been drinking and could not afford to buy food. That is the stark reality of what this particular issue actually causes in homes across Western Australia.

I would like to give a very big thankyou to Foodbank of Western Australia, which has recently provided an outreach service to the south west. It has a van that goes around the south west areas. Up until now, people had to go into the central pickup point in Bunbury. It has now added a Collie–Preston, Capel and Donnybrook service to its outreach in my electorate. It does fantastic work for people in food poverty right across the state. At our local Catholic church, Father Gerald provides a meal service on Tuesday evenings. That is not an advertisement for those services, but I just want to say that he personally takes donations of food items, cooks with them—he is an amazing cook—and opens the doors of the church every Tuesday evening to people who do not have food in the cupboard. I want to reflect on the amazing support services from other providers around the community such as Waratah Support Centre (South West Region) Inc, which provides family and domestic violence services that are accessible to people in my area of the south west.

I want to give a huge thankyou to Minister Winton and her predecessor Minister McGurk for the work being done in the area of child protection. I particularly would love to say thank you for the approach that this government has taken around the Target 120 program. That is the way that we change the lives of people in families in which, for whatever reason, whether it is other drugs or alcohol abuse in this case, there is an inability to parent effectively. In my experience of the conversations I had with people with Target 120 working in their area, people say that this government has got that approach right. That wraparound support service for the whole family means that generations of younger people have hope and the ability to live within a functional family. I think that is the most important thing for our communities and governments around Australia. That is the way that we help people make their lives and their families' lives better for generations. As governments, if we get to the very fortunate position of not having to spend much money on those services because those programs have worked, we will be able to reinvest that money into other important things within communities. I would like to finish off by commending the bill to the house and thanking the minister for her incredible work on this.

**MR S.A. MILLMAN (Mount Lawley — Parliamentary Secretary)** [12.23 pm]: I rise to make a very brief contribution to this debate of the Liquor Control Amendment (Banned Drinkers Register) Bill 2023, cognisant that the member for Roe is keen to make a contribution. I thank the Whip for corralling all the speakers who were keen to make a contribution to this important legislation and making sure that we kept our contributions brief. The reason I felt compelled to rise to speak on this motion is twofold. I will be very quick. Firstly, we have a very complicated relationship with alcohol in our community and society. On the one hand, as the member for Mount Lawley, I am a very big fan of the small bars and restaurants and the responsible service of alcohol that makes my community so vibrant. Secondly, I have a couple of friends who have birthdays this week. Each of them will have enjoyed a quiet beverage to mark their birthdays. Firstly, happy birthday to John Croxford, whose birthday was on Monday. I also wish happy birthday to Angelo Merlacco, whose birthday was on Tuesday. I am sorry I have not called him back. I look forward to catching up with him.

**Ms M.M. Quirk:** Tell him he is waiting by *Hansard*!

**Mr S.A. MILLMAN:** Yes!

I also wish happy birthday to Peter Quinlan, who celebrates his birthday tomorrow. I am sure that each of those individuals will or have responsibly enjoyed a beverage to mark the occasion.

The reason I stood to make a very brief contribution is because I am honoured to be the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Health. A number of organisations have come to me with proposals for tackling alcohol-related harm. One of the great attributes of this government and this minister in particular is that she does not take a one-size-fits-all approach. We have different mechanisms and regimes that are targeted, responsive and multifaceted. I think that is a real testament to the intellectual capacity that we bring to the challenges we face.

I want to very briefly mention some of the organisations that have come to me to talk about their concerns with alcohol-related harm and acknowledge the work they do in the service of our community. I want to acknowledge Mr Ashley Reid, who is the CEO of Cancer Council Western Australia. He has often spoken to me not just about alcohol-related harm, but on a lot of cancer-causing issues. I also acknowledge Jill Rundle, the CEO of the Western Australian Network of Alcohol and other Drug Agencies; Dr Erin Lalor, the CEO of the Alcohol and Drug Foundation and Professor Jonathan Carapetis, AM, who is the executive director of the Telethon Kids Institute and a person whom I have had many convivial dealings with. I want to put on record my gratitude for the work done by these organisations and the people leading them in the public health environment and in leading the debate and discussion on public health. It is fascinating.

Yesterday I was on a Zoom meeting with the Alcohol and other Drugs Consumer and Community Coalition. I had the opportunity to talk to people who are at the front line of these issues. One of the things that came up for debate

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Thursday, 15 June 2023]

p2920b-2935a

Ms Alison Kent; Mr Mark Folkard; Ms Meredith Hammat; Mr David Scaife; Ms Jodie Hanns; Mr Simon Millman; Mr Peter Rundle; Mr Reece Whitby

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was the introduction of a minimum unit price for alcohol. I mistakenly thought that this would be a universally accepted unanimous proposition. It was fascinating for me to hear that there were people on that Zoom call who expressed some concerns about that. I think as this government looks to tackle alcohol-related harm, not just in this legislation but in a broader context, that will be a really interesting part of the debate and discussion. It is not straightforward; it is a very complicated area. I commend those organisations for the work they do in public health and commend the minister for bringing this legislation before the Parliament. I add my voice to the chorus of support for this legislation.

**MR P.J. RUNDLE (Roe — Deputy Leader of the Opposition)** [12.27 pm]: I rise to make a relatively brief contribution to the debate on the Liquor Control Amendment (Banned Drinkers Register) Bill 2023 because my consideration in detail contribution will be very lengthy and I would like to ask many questions. I want to firstly point out something to some of our previous speakers, especially the member for Cockburn. The opposition has long supported the banned drinkers register with the appropriate structures in place. I was quite disappointed to hear his comments that the opposition has been quiet on this.

In actual fact, I will refer back to my own press release entitled “Calls for Enhanced Banned Drinkers Register in WA Finally Heard”. It states —

Shadow Racing and Gaming Minister Peter Rundle has welcomed the announcement of an enhanced Banned Drinkers Register (BDR), following years of calls from the Opposition and regional communities.

Mr Rundle said improvements to the scheme will allow more pathways to target problem drinkers rather than enforce blanket restrictions but warned wrap-around services also need to be implemented.

“This is a positive first step for communities impacted by alcohol-fuelled violence but support and rehabilitation services must also be in place for the BDR to be truly effective,” Mr Rundle said.

...

Mr Rundle said the BDR is an effective tool if implemented appropriately but the devil will be in the detail of the legislation required to enhance the scheme.

**Mr R.R. Whitby:** I think the member was referring to the broader issues in Carnarvon.

**Mr P.J. RUNDLE:** I am disappointed at the way he phrased it, because, as I said, we have actually been supportive of this initiative and we are supportive of this legislation, so I just thought I would put that on the record.

I also want to compliment the member for Collie–Preston, because I think she spoke very well in relation to her background in education, especially. We all understand that the challenges posed by excessive drinking and the like in any number of communities throughout Western Australia have an effect and a massive impact on our children through the likes of foetal alcohol spectrum disorder and other conditions, particularly in certain communities. The member for Collie–Preston, with her background in education, summed that up well. After listening to the member for Cockburn and a member like the member for Collie–Preston, who is very good quality and understands the education system and the impacts of alcohol, there is no doubt in my mind that we need to recognise that this state Labor government needs to think about things like the cashless welfare card as well. Rather than criticising the WA state opposition, it should take the time to lobby its federal colleagues, who seem to be more worried about civil liberties and certain other things than about actually putting food on the table for children in vulnerable communities.

That is what the state government should be doing. Government members need to lobby their federal colleagues, now that they are in place. We talk about the GST and all the other things the Premier referred to yesterday; this is an opportunity for state Labor Party members to actually lobby their federal colleagues about the cashless welfare card. As far as I am concerned, this is all part of it, and I am sure the minister would agree with me. The most important thing for those children is to have a good upbringing, a good education and food on the table for breakfast, lunch and dinner. That is all part of it, and I was really disappointed, on a personal level, to see the way in which the federal government came in straight after the election and said, “Oh, this is another mandate of the Liberal Party; we’ll remove the cashless welfare card.” What have we seen in various communities? An increased level of violence and other issues.

I agree with the member for Collie–Preston about the delivery of programs like Target 120 and other programs that the government has announced, but we need to see delivery of services in vulnerable communities. I look forward to wraparound services being provided in conjunction with the banned drinkers register. I do not take kindly to the comments made by the member for Cockburn about that, because there have been issues in any number of communities right across WA, so I thought I would respond to that. As I said in my press release, it is important to recognise the opposition’s ongoing support for this initiative.

I would also like to acknowledge the Australian Hotels Association WA and the Liquor Stores Association of WA, and the role they played in helping out in the background with this legislation. It is important to have industry groups

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Thursday, 15 June 2023]

p2920b-2935a

Ms Alison Kent; Mr Mark Folkard; Ms Meredith Hammat; Mr David Scaife; Ms Jodie Hanns; Mr Simon Millman; Mr Peter Rundle; Mr Reece Whitby

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working with the state government and to recognise the importance of those bodies to this legislation, which will no doubt pass through Parliament, and also to the voluntary trials of the banned drinkers register that have taken place over the last year or two.

Interestingly, I was in Broome a few weeks ago and while I was filling up at the petrol station my wife went in to grab a bottle of champagne. Of course, she came back and said, “I can’t pick up a bottle of champagne without my identification”, so I went into the liquor store with my driver’s licence and went through the process, which was quite informative for me. It certainly demonstrated to me the importance of providing proper identification to enable me to purchase that alcohol. I guess that was a hands-on example for me, and it was very effective in that location; there was a bit of a queue, but everyone seemed quite comfortable with the arrangement.

**Mr R.R. Whitby:** I hope you got the green tick and not the cross!

**Mr P.J. RUNDLE:** No, full approval, minister! No problems there.

**Dr D.J. Honey:** His past is catching up with him!

**Mr P.J. RUNDLE:** Yes, that is right!

Looking at the legislation, I have quite a few questions, as I said. I will not run through a massive list of them here and oblige the minister to cover them in his reply to the second reading debate; I would prefer to go through them during consideration in detail. As we know, the trial has been in place for a couple of years. It was interesting to listen to the member for Mirrabooka talking about people being able to place themselves on the register voluntarily. That is an interesting concept and it will be interesting to see how many people actually take it up. I also want to ask questions about banned drinker orders made on application by medical practitioners, social workers or other prescribed persons. I am curious to know more about the definitions of “social workers” and “prescribed persons”, and how qualified those people need to be.

I will also be interested to know more about a person on a BDR’s confidential information being released to the services available to assist them. This bill seeks to amend the privacy provisions of the act to allow the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries to provide information about those services to people on a BDR. I will be asking about that confidential information because according to the BDR information flyers that were provided by the government in the Gascoyne Junction region, no personal details will be recorded. I am curious to know how that will play out. I just thought I would point out that it says on the flyer that is out there at the moment that no personal details will be recorded.

I am curious about several other questions, such as how this will work for online sales. I think that will be an issue. I think that in one of the briefings Retail Drinks Australia brought up whether there would be any implications in the world of online sales and how that would play out. Another issue that I think we spoke about in estimates was carriage limits. I know that is not necessarily part of this legislation, but it may be a flow-on effect. Will people bring in loads of cartons of beer, wine, champagne or the like to locations that have the banned drinkers register? I think this is an element that needs to be carefully thought about by the government; it is something that tends to happen.

Another thing that is concerning some of those communities is the effect this legislation will have on tourism. As soon as publicity gets out there about a banned drinkers register in certain locations, it could potentially have an impact on tourism and the perception of people travelling through. They may think that they cannot get alcohol in those locations. As the minister knows, a tourist would be able to buy alcohol in those communities, but there may be a perception that they could not. Perception and reality is something that the government may need to think about and it should consider some sort of tourism or other campaign to help those communities out. My understanding is that people may have that perception and will say, “Look, I won’t be stopping there; I’ll fill up with alcohol in some other location and put it in my caravan and go on my merry way.” That will be an issue.

I explored this quite a bit in estimates with the takeaway alcohol management system machines and the apps. As the minister knows, connectivity is always an issue in the regions. That will be a challenge. We spoke about the information being downloaded every 24 hours and so on. My question is: Will we have a scenario whereby someone can go into one takeaway outlet, followed by another, followed by another? If, for argument’s sake, the internet is down, how will that connectivity work? How will that information be supplied to the next liquor store and the next one down the line? That is another issue that I will probably explore a bit more. As the minister knows, in the regions, unfortunately, connectivity is not always assured, especially in some of the more remote and outlying communities. I will be curious to see how we go there.

Another element that I think is worrying for some of our communities out there is the sporting clubs, small wineries, race clubs and race tracks. How will they be affected if they are in a community that is affected by the banned drinkers register? I will be seeking clarity on that, as well.

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I refer to police resources. As we know, the Minister for Police has challenges on his plate with the number of police resigning and the capacity to have enough resources out in the communities that will be affected by the banned drinkers register. I think that will be a real challenge, not just for the police minister, but also for the Minister for Racing and Gaming. But I am pleased to see that there will be better access, if you like, whereby police, medical staff and the like will be able to put people onto the banned drinkers register more readily and easily. Another question is: will the Department of Justice have the ability to use banned drinkers registration when sentencing offenders or when granting parole or bail; will it be a tool that the Department of Justice can use as a form of penalty in some way? With issues such as drink driving, domestic violence and assaults et cetera, I would have thought that the banned drinkers register could be a methodology that a judge could use when sentencing someone or granting them bail or parole. Those are some of my questions.

Certainly, in our party room we have strong support for the banned drinkers register. A couple of other things were brought up at the time of the briefings. How will secondary supply be monitored? I guess that is similar to the online scenario. How will that play out in the mixture of everything? We also talked about consultation and notification periods that were given to the local governments. How were the geographical boundaries set? I think I brought up in estimates the fact that Gascoyne Junction is 170-odd kilometres from Carnarvon, from memory. How did the government come upon that particular location rather than more highly populated locations such as Carnarvon? Those are some of the issues that are certainly on our mind. As I said, I have many questions to ask in consideration in detail; I would prefer to ask them then, rather than have the minister answer copious amounts of questions in his second reading response.

I refute the allegations of the member for Cockburn. I have always been supportive of the banned drinkers register. I think it is a good thing. As the member for Collie–Preston pointed out, it is the old story. We only get one chance to educate a child. We only get one chance to bring up a child. Some of these kids come from scenarios in which they do not even get breakfast on the table. Our schools do a great job providing lunch and in many cases running breakfast clubs for those children; I know that my wife has been involved in those in the school that she was teaching at. It is a challenge. When I hear those comments from the member for Cockburn, it is a little bit disappointing. We support this legislation, as I said in my press release at the time. This is an opportunity to actually reduce family and domestic violence. It is a chance to improve our communities and improve opportunities for our kids. There are no two ways about it: the opposition certainly supports this legislation, and I look forward to discussing it further at the consideration in detail stage.

**MR R.R. WHITBY (Baldivis — Minister for Racing and Gaming)** [12.48 pm] — in reply: As do I, member for Roe!

I appreciate the contributions from right around the chamber on the Liquor Control Amendment (Banned Drinkers Register) Bill 2023. I think it has been very deep and very enlightening, and I think many members have used their previous career experiences to help inform us about issues relating to alcohol and alcohol abuse. As the member for Roe pointed out, there were very valuable contributions from around the chamber.

First of all, I would like to acknowledge that the opposition—the party room of the Nationals WA—has considered this and has decided to support the legislation.

**Mr P.J. Rundle:** The joint party room, yes.

**Mr R.R. WHITBY:** The joint party room—great. I acknowledge at the outset that the opposition will be supporting this important legislation. It is fair and reasonable that the member had those questions, and I have listened to them carefully. There are many that I could respond to very quickly, but I appreciate that getting into the detail and getting assurances about the way things will operate is part of the obligation and role of an effective opposition, and we are very happy to respond to those things in consideration in detail. I will go to the contribution of all members including the member for Mount Lawley who used his opportunity to speak as a birthday shout-out. I really appreciate the role and contribution of all members. I feel like I should declare a conflict of interest from the outset, given this is a piece of legislation relating to liquor consumption.

Debate interrupted, pursuant to standing orders.

[Continued on page 2947.]