

PACKAGED LIQUOR SALES — KALGOORLIE, COOLGARDIE AND BOULDER

315. Mr M.P. MURRAY to the Minister for Racing and Gaming:

- (1) Does the minister support the Director of Liquor Licensing's proposal to remove packaged liquor sales on Sundays from Kalgoorlie, Coolgardie and Boulder?
- (2) If so, what is the justification for this proposal?
- (3) Are other areas, such as Port Hedland, Broome and Geraldton, being considered for similar restrictions; and, if not, why not?

Mr T.K. WALDRON replied:

I thank the member for the question.

- (1)–(3) In the case of Kalgoorlie, the police have gone to the Director of Liquor Licensing and said that they have real concerns about liquor consumption in Kalgoorlie and that region. They have brought forward facts to the director. This is a decision for the director, as the member knows—the independent director. The director then goes out and asks the liquor licensees to show cause why he should not do anything. That process then takes place, as is happening in the Pilbara as well. Then, the opportunity is there for the local liquor accords and the local licensees et cetera to make comment. I know that the director is away on leave at the moment. When he returns, he has agreed to go to the Pilbara to meet with licensees and the accord to hear their side of the story, and I am sure he will probably do the same in Kalgoorlie and that area.

There are a couple of other things that I need to say. I met with the Department of Health, and I think in the case of the Pilbara, the health department also asked, but not in the case of Kalgoorlie. The Director of Liquor Licensing must then weigh up the evidence presented to him by the police. As members know, one of the objects of the Liquor Control Act is to minimise the harm that liquor brings. The act allows for intervention by police, and by the health department, to ask the director to consider it. The director will always look at the situation and ask them to show cause. A number of things have been put forward. I am very confident that the Director of Liquor Licensing, over the time that I have been involved, has made very level decisions. In the case of Kununurra, where the director put on —

Mr M.P. Murray: In Kalgoorlie it was a mess.

Mr T.K. WALDRON: Let me tell the member about Kununurra, just so that he understands how it works. The director put restrictions on in Kununurra, after consulting with the council et cetera.

Mr M.P. Murray interjected.

Mr T.K. WALDRON: No. He went out there twice. I was actually at the meetings. He asked the council to put forward in the first place what it thought should happen, which did not happen. He then put some restrictions on up there. Complaints came in about those restrictions. I went up there, and he went up there at a later date, and the point that was made was that they supported the restrictions, but not the timing. Since then, the timing has been changed. So, the director listened to what the public said. He did it correctly. That is what he is doing, and he will do the same thing in these areas. I have spoken to the member for Kalgoorlie about this. A couple of things have been put forward that I think have some merit. Some of them I personally think the director would need to consider very closely before bringing them in, but that is his decision. He will make that decision, and I am sure that, as he has done in the past, he will do that with balance. I think a lot of scaremongering goes on because the director goes out and asks licensees to show cause why not. That is what he has to do under the act, which, I must say, was changed in 2007 under the previous government. I support the way it happens. I am also reviewing the act, because there are a couple of areas in the act, even with this process, that I think can be improved, and that is one of the reasons we are having a review of the act.