

23 December 2015

The Research Director  
Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee  
Parliament House  
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Sir or Madam

**CONSULTATION ON TACKLING ALCOHOL-FUELLED VIOLENCE  
LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2015**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a response to the consultation on the *Tackling Alcohol-fuelled Violence Legislation Amendment Bill 2015* (the Amendment Bill). Drug ARM welcomes the introduction of the Government's Policy on actions to address Alcohol-fuelled Violence.

Alcohol-fuelled violence in Queensland is significant. The harms from this violence are witnessed by Queensland's police, emergency services and hospitals. In 2014-15, there were 11,241 alcohol-related emergency department presentations.<sup>i</sup> These harms are not just found in major population centres but spread throughout Queensland. They affect individuals, families and communities with 30 per cent of Queenslanders affected in some way by alcohol related violence.<sup>ii</sup>

The harms from alcohol are not just contained to the violence on the streets. It is estimated that the level of alcohol consumption by Queenslanders is the third highest in the country, with Queenslanders consuming 11.03 litres of pure alcohol per year compared to the national average of 10.42 litres.<sup>iii</sup>

In Queensland, there were 1,143 alcohol-related deaths in 2010<sup>iv</sup> and 32,844 alcohol-related hospitalisations in 2010-11. By 2014-15, alcohol-related hospitalisations had reached 45,197, an increase of 38 per cent.<sup>v</sup> At alcohol and other drug treatment services, alcohol was the principal drug of concern in 37 per cent of episodes of care.<sup>vi</sup>

The Amendment Bill recognises that action needs to be taken to reduce the harm from alcohol in Queensland. Queenslanders understand the need for action with 74 per cent of Queenslanders believing that Australia has a problem with alcohol and 71 per cent believing that more needs to be done to reduce alcohol-related harms.<sup>vii</sup>

Specifically, Queenslanders support earlier closing hours and lockouts, also known as a one-way door, with 82 per cent of Queenslanders supporting a closing time for pubs, clubs and bars of no later than 3am and 61 per cent supporting a 1am lockout.<sup>viii</sup>

The measures introduced in the Amendment Bill for on-licence premises, such as pubs, clubs and bars are welcomed and appropriate.

In particular, the 2am last drinks measure to be implemented state-wide, unless the venue is in a prescribed 3am safe night precinct (in which case it can apply to trade until 3am last drinks in conjunction with a 1am one-way door), provides a strong message that the Queensland Government is serious about introducing meaningful measures



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that will be effective in reducing alcohol harm.

Late night trading hours are the hours when patrons are most at risk of alcohol harm. Australian and international research demonstrates that for every additional hour of trading, there is a 16-20 per cent increase in assaults and that conversely, for every hour of reduced trading there is a 20 per cent reduction in assaults.<sup>ix,x</sup> Research has also shown that alcohol-related assaults increase significantly after midnight.<sup>xi,xii</sup>

Earlier closing hours have been proven to be effective in reducing alcohol harms. The Government should feel confident that it is introducing the right measures to achieve its objectives of reducing alcohol-related violence.

Drug ARM support the submission and recommendations made by the Queensland Coalition for Action on Alcohol (QCAA) to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee that includes the following recommendations.

### **Recommendation**

- 1. That the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee recommends that the 10pm close apply to all packaged liquor licences from 1 July 2016, with no exemptions.**
- 2. That the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee supports the state wide introduction of the 2am last drinks policy for approved extended trading hours.**
- 3. That the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee supports the requirement that venues wishing to trade beyond 2am must be located within a 3a.m. Safe night precinct.**
- 4. That the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee supports the process described in the Tackling alcohol-fuelled Violence Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 to prescribe a 3a.m. Safe night precinct.**
- 5. That the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee supports the introduction of a one-way door for all venues in a 3a.m. safe night precinct.**
- 6. That the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee supports the ban on the sale and supply of rapid intoxication drinks and behaviours after midnight.**
- 7. That the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee recommends that the Liquor Regulation provides clear guidance on the types of drinks and behaviours that are banned including:**
  - Any drink that is designed to be consumed rapidly such as those known as shots, shooters or bombs**
  - Any drink containing more than 50 per cent spirits or liqueur**
  - Any ready-to-drink beverage containing more than five per cent alcohol**
  - Any drink that contains more than 30 mls of spirits or liqueur**
  - No stockpiling of drinks after midnight.**
- 8. That the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee recommends that exemptions to the measures outlined in the Tackling alcohol-fuelled Violence Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 be removed.**



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**9. That the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee recommends the inclusion of a moratorium on late night trading hours in the legislation to reduce alcohol related harm, to allow for the development of a framework to support decision making for new applications for a liquor licence and applications to extend trading hours.**

In relation to the Drug, Alcohol, Assessment and Referral Program known as DAAR, Drug ARM also makes the following recommendation for consideration by the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee.

**DAAR Program Reach**

The Drug, Alcohol, Assessment and Referral (DAAR) program is delivered State-wide. Drug Arm Australasia is responsible for the delivery of the DAAR program in 7 locations across Queensland. These locations include Brisbane (Annerley), Ipswich, Toowoomba, Mackay, Gold Coast (Southport), Gympie (Sunshine Coast) and Airlie Beach (Phone).

**Background**

The DAAR program is supported by legislation where a court or police officer can impose a bail condition that requires a person to meet with a trained alcohol and drug counsellor to complete the DAAR course.

The imposition is applied in response to an alleged offence that has been committed in a public place, while the person was adversely affected by an "intoxicating substance".

The DAAR program can be a potent form of early intervention for people with issues related to alcohol or drug misuse.

**Areas for Improvement**

- **Number of Referrals**

The number of DAAR referral could be significantly increased through the existing pathway through promotion of the initiative.

The number of DAAR referrals could also be significantly increased if Police were provided the power to refer directly to the DAAR program from Street Intercepts.

- **Client Group Restrictions**

The current client group that is able to be referred for counselling is limited. There is capacity to broaden the scope to include others who have behaved in ways that risk their own or others safety.

An ideal extension of this program would be in support of first offenders in relation to family violence incidents where again Police were provided the power to refer directly to the DAAR program from their initial call out to family violence incidents.

- **Referral Process**

The current referral process requires the alleged offender to attend



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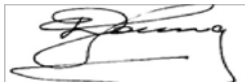
a session as a bail condition which excludes potential target candidates for the program from being referred into DAAR. In addition, attendance at the session could be seen as an admission of guilt. Drug ARM suggests that the Government consider bring this program into line with the Police Diversion Program where Police Officers may refer people directly for assessment, education and counselling without the need of court or a bail condition

**Drug ARM recommends that the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee consider:**

1. An increase in the number of DAAR referrals through the existing pathway
2. Proposing that the client group referred for counselling be broadened to include others who have behaved in ways that risk their own or others safety (e.g. drink drivers, recipients of banning orders or CSOs, those in sober safe centres).
3. Also consider bringing this program into line with the Police Diversion Program where Police Officers may refer people directly for assessment, education and counselling without the need of court or a bail condition

Thank you again for the opportunity to make a submission to the Inquiry into the *Tackling alcohol-fuelled Violence Legislation Amendment Bill 2015*. Drug ARM would welcome the opportunity to address this submission before the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee.

Yours sincerely



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<sup>i</sup> Queensland Health (2015) *Alcohol-related presentations* Emergency Department statistics 2007-2015 provided to FARE by QLD Health

<sup>ii</sup> Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (2015) Annual Alcohol Poll 2015 Canberra: FARE



- iii Gao C, Ogeil RP & Lloyd B (2014) *Alcohol's burden of disease in Australia* Canberra: FARE and VicHealth  
in collaboration with Turning Point
- iv Gao C, Ogeil RP & Lloyd B (2014) *Alcohol's burden of disease in Australia* Canberra: FARE and VicHealth  
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- v Queensland Health (2015) *Admitted patient episodes of care for diagnosis of 'Alcohol related conditions', Public and Private acute hospitals, Queensland 2002/2003 to 2014/2015* Data provided to FARE by QLD Health
- vi Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2015) *Alcohol and other drug treatment services in Australia 2013–14: state and territory summaries* viewed on 8 December 2015 at <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publication-detail/?id=60129551120>
- vii *ibid*
- viii *ibid*
- ix Kypri K, Jones C, McElduff P, Barker DJ. (2010). Effects of restricting pub closing times on night-time assaults in an Australian city', *Addiction*, 106 303-310
- x Rossow, I & Norström, T (2011) The impact of small changes in bar closing hours on violence. The Norwegian experience from 18 cities *Addiction* Vol 107, Issue 3.
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- xii Briscoe, S. & Donnelly, N (2001) Temporal and regional aspects of alcohol-related violence and disorder *Alcohol Studies Bulletin*



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