

**From:** webmaster@parliament.qld.gov.au  
**Sent:** Monday, 2 November 2009 9:50 PM  
**To:** Law, Justice and Safety Committee  
**Subject:** ONLINE SUBMISSION - Alcohol-Related Violence in Queensland

126

**ONLINE SUBMISSION - Inquiry into alcohol-related violence**

**Name:** PHIL BROWNE  
**Email:** [REDACTED]  
**Address:** [REDACTED]  
**City:** [REDACTED]  
**State:** QLD  
**Postcode:** [REDACTED]

**Best practice harm minimisation measures:**

This is a widespread cultural problem in society. It is largely due to people failing to accept personal responsibility for their own actions. It is considered acceptable to use alcohol as an excuse for anti-social and violent behaviour. This culture of alcohol abuse begins from early childhood and family and society contribute to the problem. There is no quick fix - e.g. plastic glasses or shatter-proof glasses, RSA does not work - you often see severely intoxicated people leaving pubs/clubs. Excluding known offenders from pubs/clubs will work. Installing an ID scanner system that links all pubs/clubs will work and must be a priority. This will not stop violent drunken behaviour in the streets, parks, on public transport or in the suburbs with no linked ID scanners.

**The impact of late opening hours:**

The 3am lockout is not a success. I regularly walk through Fortitude Valley between 3am and 5am and frequently see people staggering along the footpath very intoxicated, fights, verbal attacks with threats of physical violence, Police wrestling violent drunks to the ground, etc. The lock-out has certainly not stopped this behaviour. The normal pattern for many violent drunks is to start drinking at home before arriving at licenced premises at 11pm. Often they are very drunk on arrival, and then they continue drinking until 5am close. During the night they may have consumed 20 to 30 standard alcoholic drinks. By closing pubs/clubs at 2am the hours of drinking time are reduced and the number of standard drinks consumed is reduced. This is a win win outcome and I support a 2am closure.

**Flow-on issues for emergency service workers, police, and frontline health workers:**

I am a former Qld Ambulance Service Paramedic and registered Nurse in Emergency Departments. - I have provided medical attention to Police who sustained injuries from violent attacks by drunks. - As a Paramedic I have been assaulted by violent drunks. - Police and Paramedics are busy at the best of time with a constant workload. These violent drunks cause a large additional workload and cause unacceptable delays in providing a service to the rest of the community. - I resigned as a Paramedic due to the continual violence from aggressive drunks. This meant a Paramedic with 10 years experience was lost and a new person had to be trained to fill my place. - I support mandatory sentencing for people convicted of assaulting police, paramedics and fire fighters. - I have seen many injuries caused by drunken attacks, including permanent brain damage. - Often these drunks will then get in their car and drive drunk - I know, I have attended their car crashes, where they continue to throw punches and kick at emergency service workers.

**Education campaigns and their role in cultivating effective social change in terms of community attitudes to alcohol consumption:**

The one punch can kill ads have not made any difference. The people who become violent when drunk do not listen to any education campaign. They do listen to legislation - e.g shorter trading hours, mandatory sentencing for assaults on emergency service workers, tougher sentencing for drunk driving and anti-social behaviour.

**The role of parents in influencing attitudes towards alcohol consumption:**

Society and the culture of seeing binge drinking and alcohol abuse as acceptable, are to blame for this problem. I do not know how to turn this around

**The economic cost of alcoholrelated violence:**

The cost is HUGE: - Countless hours of emergency worker and Emergency Dept staff time. - Lost productivity from injuries sustained from this violence. - Young people who sustain permanent brain damage and require life-long institutional care. - A major burden on the health system with chronic health issues - alcoholic liver damage, brain damage etc. Shorter trading hours would be a start.

**Any other Comments:**

The vast majority of the community has no idea how bad and how widespread this problem is. I challenge the members of this Parliamentary committee to take a walk through Fortitude Valley with Police Officers at 4am any Sunday morning. The committee really needs to see just how bad things are, before you can make the best recommendations. This problem is not confined to certain areas e.g Fortitude Valley. It happens everywhere - Valley, city, suburbs, regional centres, country towns. It is a whole of society problem.