

Question on Notice
No. 1972
Asked on 6 October 2010

MS GRACE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND FAIR TRADING
(MR LAWLOR) —

QUESTION:

Will the Minister advise how the implementation of the trial of the Drink Safe Precinct in Fortitude Valley is progressing and what will be the benefits to the residents of Brisbane Central?

ANSWER:

The Government's response to the findings of the Law, Justice and Safety Committee's inquiry into alcohol-related violence presents a range of decisive measures, the centrepiece of which is the piloting of a place-based management approach in three 'drink safe precincts' for two years from December 2010.

One of the three drink safe precinct pilots is being conducted in Fortitude Valley. This pilot will benefit the residents of Brisbane Central and also visitors to Fortitude Valley who simply wish to enjoy a safe and secure night out.

The Government is providing \$4.267 million in 'kick start' funding for the first year of the pilots, to fund additional police presence and community support services in the pilot drink safe precincts. This will include 24 additional officers on the beat in Fortitude Valley. The other pilots will be conducted in Surfers Paradise and Townsville.

Local issues to be addressed in each pilot area include better public transport information, better management of crowding, footpath queuing, traffic and toilet amenities.

The Fortitude Valley Drink Safe Precinct committee convened for the first time on 17 September 2010. The Acting Deputy Director-General within my portfolio with responsibilities for liquor regulation chaired the committee's inaugural meeting and the secretariat support for the committee during the planning stages is also being provided by officers from my portfolio.

At the first meeting, the committee itself was established and members commenced the development of a draft Fortitude Valley Drink Safe Precinct Management Plan.

The committee met for the second time on 8 October 2010. The meeting was chaired by the Deputy Premier and Minister for Health, the Honourable Paul Lucas MP. I am advised that as the Member for Brisbane Central you attended this meeting and played an active role in the committee discussions and deliberations. Measures specific to Fortitude Valley include:

- improving way-finding signage in the precinct so people know where to go for buses, trains and cabs
- improving secure taxi ranks in the precinct to increase capacity and to ensure they are more efficient and can get people into taxis more quickly
- opening the Fortitude Valley railway station 20 minutes before the first NightLink train service, instead of the current 10 minutes, to ensure all passengers are able to get to the platform in time for the train
- installing TV screens outside Fortitude Valley train station to show real-time information for commuters wanting to use the NightLink train services
- working with the Brisbane City Council to stagger NightLink bus departure times, and to examine changes to bus stops in order to minimise crowding, and
- setting up a public transport hub in the Valley mall, which will provide information on all transport options including taxis, NightLink buses and NightLink trains.

In addition to the Fortitude Valley Drink Safe Precinct initiative, there are other more immediate measures toward reducing alcohol-related issues which form part of the Government's response to the inquiry and which will benefit Brisbane Central residents, as well as the broader population of Queensland. These measures include:

- providing courts with the power to ban persons from specified areas where banning is justified because of a person's behaviour
- prescribing new ordinary trading hours for liquor sold for take-away to be from 10am to 10pm but retaining the ability for licensees to apply to have their takeaway outlet trade from 9am and 10pm to midnight, strictly on a demonstrated community need basis. This change will only affect new applications for licences or when a licence is transferred to another person. There will be no change in trading hours for licensees who currently have approved trading hours outside of the 10am to 10pm ordinary hours
- making it mandatory for licensed venues to supply free fresh drinking water over the bar to patrons, and
- updating Government communications campaigns and continuing education programs in schools to promote a more responsible attitude towards alcohol consumption.

The third meeting of the Fortitude Valley Drink Safe Precinct committee is at this stage proposed for 8 November 2010 at which it is anticipated that the first draft of the Fortitude Valley Drink Safe Precinct Management Plan will be endorsed by the precinct committee.