

Question on Notice
No. 479
Asked on 11 March 2010

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

QUESTION:

What measures has the Bligh Government undertaken to combat alcohol-related violence?

ANSWER:

The Bligh Government has undertaken a number of reforms to directly combat alcohol-fuelled violence. In 2008, a major review of the *Liquor Act 1992* occurred with implementation of the consequent liquor reforms package on 1 January 2009. Other significant reforms followed in 2009 including the moratorium on extended trading hours after midnight, a ban on the use of regular glass by high risk licensed premises and a Parliamentary Committee Inquiry into alcohol related violence. The committee report was released on 18 March 2010 and can be accessed at www.parliament.qld.gov.au.

The 2008 liquor reforms prioritised harm minimisation as the first object of the Liquor Act, in addition to requiring liquor licence applicants under the Liquor Act to complete a Community Impact Statement (CIS) and a Risk Assessed Management Plan (RAMP) to ensure that community amenity would not be unduly impacted by a proposed licence. A CIS allows for each licensee to identify local conditions and impacts and the RAMP details how a licensee will mitigate any risks and how they will comply with the object of minimising harm to the community from the sale and consumption of liquor.

Additionally, the liquor reforms introduced new risk-based licence fees. Late night trading now incurs higher fees to reflect the risk associated with operating during the early hours of the morning. The new risk-based annual licence fees ensure that all licensees contribute appropriately to the cost of regulating the sale, supply and consumption of liquor in their communities.

The introduction of the requirement for an approved manager to be on-premises at all times during any trading outside of ordinary trading hours in combination with compulsory Responsible Service of Alcohol and Responsible Management of a Licensed Venues training is aimed at reducing the incidence of undue intoxication and to reduce harm on licensed premises.

The stance adopted by the Queensland Government in relation to trading hours for licensed venues also reflects the Bligh Government's desire to combat alcohol-fuelled violence. Ordinary trading hours were reduced to between 10am to 12pm, with trading before 10am only available for bona-fide functions or for community clubs on the basis of demonstrated community need or for sporting clubs for a sport prescribed under a regulation. Extended hours beyond midnight will only be considered where it can be demonstrated that it is in the public interest and does not impact on the amenity of the community.

The 2008 liquor reforms also introduced significant penalties for adults who irresponsibly supply alcohol to minors in private places, as well as increased powers for police to seize the alcohol. A Ministerial banning power was introduced which allows the Minister responsible for liquor licensing to ban the sale of undesirable liquor products which inappropriately target young people or encourage rapid and excessive consumption. These reforms form a significant part of the Government's ongoing harm minimisation effort.

On 8 October 2009, the Bligh Government instigated further changes to the Liquor Act giving effect to a ban on regular glass containers in high risk premises.

Also, on 16 September 2009, the Bligh Government announced a moratorium on applications for extended trading hours after midnight except in a very limited number of designated inner-city areas where there is already a concentration of premises operating with extended trading hours. The moratorium was announced because there is increasing community concern with late night trading encroaching on community amenity. The moratorium is intended to place a freeze on the further grant of extended trading hours outside of the exemption areas until after the findings of the Parliamentary Law and Justice Committee Inquiry into Alcohol-Related Violence are considered by the Government.

While the committee report has been recently released, the Government intends to first consider the views of the community and key stakeholders before making any decisions on the committee's recommendations. All stakeholders, including young people as well as industry, can make their views known on the committee's recommendations at www.getinvolved.qld.gov.au.