

Question on Notice
No. 613
Asked on 25 March 2010

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

QUESTION:

Will the Minister provide an update of the success of liquor accords in far north Queensland?

ANSWER:

Liquor accords are recognised in the *Liquor Act 1992* for the successful role they play in promoting localised, responsible practices in the supply and consumption of liquor at licensed premises. The accords are voluntary and membership may include licensees, approved managers, local police, councillors, council officers, non-government organisations, liquor licensing officers and other industry stakeholders.

Liquor accords in far north Queensland have been particularly successful in enabling communities to find local solutions to complex issues around harm caused by alcohol misuse and associated violence, disturbances and public disorder.

An indicator of the success of liquor accords in far north Queensland is the number of accords continuing to increase as the local liquor stakeholders recognise the benefits the accords bring to the community. There are currently 16 liquor accords operating in Cairns and far north Queensland with four new accords expected to be initiated in the near future.

The Office of Liquor and Gaming Regulation (OLGR) is working with its partners to create or reinvigorate liquor accords within discrete Indigenous communities and their catchment areas.

A liquor accord was recently launched in Weipa by the Executive Director, OLGR. This accord is addressing the difficult issues faced by a remote mining town surrounded by three discrete Indigenous communities, two of which are currently dry. The accord has agreed upon strategies which include banning the sale of certain products and also placing limitations on external points of sale for take-away alcohol.

The Thursday Island Liquor Accord has demonstrated how accords can maximise their success by partnering with neighbouring accords. The licensees on Thursday Island and nearby Horn Island recently met and formally agreed to a liquor accord to complement the accords in the Northern Peninsula and Weipa areas. This provides a great opportunity to implement common harm reduction strategies between accords in the same area.

The positive light in which liquor accords are viewed by industry is highlighted by the proposed creation of an accord for the Gordonvale and Edmonton area. Prompted by concerns about the impacts of alcohol on the local youth and residents of the nearby discrete Indigenous community of Yarrabah, a local licensee has taken the lead and organised a meeting for early April 2010 to formalise an accord for this area.

While attending a recent Community Cabinet meeting I was pleased to be able to present congratulatory plaques to the Innisfail and Mareeba accords. The awards recognised their fantastic effort in achieving accord participation by all local licensees.

A wide range of successful initiatives have been implemented by far north Queensland accords. Further to those already mentioned, they have included:

- location wide banning of problematic patrons
- bans on sales of specific liquor products during certain times of the day
- reduction in drink promotions and abolition of promotions during late night trading
- display of signage to inform patrons and the wider community of the standards of behaviour expected by accord members.

Further successes are expected as growth in the number of liquor accords continues. I commend all licensees and other stakeholders involved in liquor accords in far north Queensland.