

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

WRITTEN QUESTION

Mrs Lambley to the Chief Minister:

Alcohol Restrictions following the expiration of the Commonwealth Stronger Future legislation

- 1. Did the Northern Territory Government receive advice from your Department, or any other Agency, that it should not enact comparable alcohol bans under Northern Territory law when the Commonwealth's Stronger Futures legislation lapsed?**

The Northern Territory Government received advice from the Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet concerning the sunseting of the Commonwealth's *Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory Act 2012* (Stronger Futures Act).

- 2. For what reasons did the Northern Territory Government decide not to enact comparable alcohol bans to commence as soon as the Stronger Futures legislation ceased to be in effect?**

To give communities options that were not afforded to them under the Stronger Futures Act.

- 3. Consistent with your policy on open and accountable government, who made the decision not to immediately continue the alcohol bans that were previously in place under the Stronger Future legislation?**

On 17 May 2022, the Associations and Liquor Amendment Bill 2022 was passed, as a transitional arrangement for the management of alcohol restrictions in communities ahead of the sunseting of the Stronger Futures Act.

- 4. Will you or anyone in your Government accept any responsibility for the subsequent surge in alcohol related crime including assaults, property crime and domestic and family violence which occurred following the expiration of the Stronger Future legislation?**

The Northern Territory Government continues to address the high level of alcohol-related harm experienced across the Northern Territory.

5. Exactly what consultation was done with Aboriginal living areas affected by Stronger Futures legislation to prepare them for the lifting of the alcohol bans?

Between May to 30 October 2022, there were 245 face-to-face engagements, with 787 individuals across all regions. There have been further engagements with representatives of multiple affected areas, including town camps, outstations and communities, for example in discussions with Traditional Owners and Land Councils also being in attendance at multiple forums.

6. Over what period did this consultation take place? Please provide details on these timeframes.

Refer to answer above.

7. Has the impact of the lifting of the alcohol bans from July 2022 to February 2023 been assessed by your government?

The Northern Territory Government continues to monitor the broader implications of alcohol-related harm impacting on individuals, families and communities across the Northern Territory.

8. What consultation is being undertaken by the Northern Territory Government with those affected communities by the next phase of changes to alcohol restrictions?

The Northern Territory Government continues to engage with a number of communities with respect to alcohol management.

9. What changes will be put in place in the next phase of alcohol restrictions?

All Northern Territory communities previously subject to alcohol restrictions under the *Stronger Futures Act* are now dry and have interim alcohol protected area (APA) status. The opt-out model provides a process by which communities can request to opt-out, including a requirement to develop a community alcohol plan.

10. When is this next phase of alcohol restrictions scheduled to come into effect?

Alcohol in communities is regulated under the *Liquor Act 2019* via a range of mechanisms, including, but not limited to, permit systems, licensed community clubs, interim APAs and General Restricted Areas.