

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

WRITTEN QUESTION

Mr Maley to the Minister for Infrastructure Planning and Logistics:

NT Drivers Licence

- 1. Please provide the reasons for the new NT Drivers licences to be manufactured interstate.**

In June 2019, the former New South Wales-based card printer supplier advised that technical support and maintenance for the outdated Motor Vehicle Registry (MVR) front counter card printers would cease on 30 June 2020.

In light of this information and with consideration to national harmonisation objectives, including enhanced security of Australian driver licences, change was required. As such, a public tender was released seeking a suitable contractor for the production, supply and mailing of driver licences and identity cards issued by MVR.

Four responses were received to the open tender, all of which were from national/international vendors with none having a business operation in the Northern Territory. The successful supplier also produces driver licence products for three other Australian jurisdictions.

- 2. Please advise if the Government intends in the future to manufacture and manage the NT Drivers licences cards in the Northern Territory?**

Production of identification cards compliant with International Standards requires specialist machinery and operations in a highly secure facility. This expertise is available within the private sector.

Enhancing the security elements and card compliance of the Northern Territory driver licence is necessary given the 2019 Australian Institute of Criminology report which estimated \$3.1 billion in direct and indirect economic costs of identity crime in Australia. The report also identified that driver licences continue to be among the most commonly targeted source for the facilitation of identity crime.

3. Please advise the details of any research done to ascertain the cost to procure the required technology to produce the NT Drivers licences in the Northern Territory?

Appropriate procurement processes were undertaken through open tender which made the scope of works and product requirements widely known to the public. Tender responses were assessed in line with the Procurement Principles.

The previous licence printing equipment was located in house at MVR Offices, supported by consumable products from the interstate provider. This technology is outdated, with all jurisdictions moving to high quality secure cards produced by suppliers that specialise in the manufacturing of card products in purpose built facilities. None of these suppliers are based in the Northern Territory.

4. Please advise the number of complaints received regarding the receipt of the new licence taking longer than 28 days?

There was one official complaint received and responded to in January 2021. Additionally, some customers have expressed their dissatisfaction with postal delivery delays in the lead up to Christmas. These issues were resolved through the MVR front counters and Contact Centre.

Postal delivery services have returned to normal, with no delay reports received from customers over the past three months.

As of 30 April 2021, there have been 49,151 new design driver licences issued.

5. When an application for a new NT drivers licence is received a receipt is issued. Please advise how a Territorian / or liquor outlet can satisfy the requirements of the Banned Drinker Register to purchase take away alcohol where they hold only a receipt for a drivers licence and do not possess any other appropriate form of identification.

With only the first name, last name and date of birth being scanned by the Banned Drinker Register, an expired NT driver licence can continue to be used for purchase takeaway alcohol. Other forms of identification accepted include Evidence of Age Card, NT Ochre Card, Australia Post Keypass Card, Australian passport, most international passports, Australian driver licence and most international driver licences. Further information regarding the Banned Drinker Register can be sought through the Minister for Alcohol Policy.

6. Please provide the reasons behind the decision not to retain the ochre colour of the NT Drivers licence.

Resolutions of the Transport and Infrastructure Council in November 2015, and again in August 2016, endorsed the principle of a single national Australian driver licence to be issued by all jurisdictions and sought advice from Austroads on options that might be pursued. In 2017, Austroads, on behalf of all Australian driver licence authorities, undertook a driver licence harmonisation project to look at how this may be achieved and came up with a concept design for an Australian driver licence that could be adopted by the jurisdictions over time. This is the basis for the new Northern Territory driver licence design.