

said that all they had to do was duck down to the police station, have a chat to the senior sergeant and fill out some forms.

It was an event that would have a maximum of 30 people and there would be food, eskies, members and invited guests only; it would be extremely low risk. That club's members were in for the shock of their lives when they saw the results of the former Member for Nightcliff's alcohol reforms. They had to hand over their firstborn, an arm and a leg and a pint of blood. There was about five pages of things that they had to do; they had to get this, that and the other; sign this; swear to that; sign in blood; have it lie on the table for 30 days; and get public notices. It was just a little, dinky community club and all we wanted to do was raise a little money for the club, but there was this huge process to go through.

I support this legislation, which is all about making things easier for low-risk and very low-risk liquor licences to be granted and streamlining things that are in the bleedingly obvious category.

The former Labor government had no idea how to manage alcohol. That is proven because it had to outsource that to esteemed former Chief Justice Trevor Riley, who did a power of work handing down the Riley review. At the time, Michael Gunner accepted all but one of the recommendations. By the time the rubber hit the road, he had thrown most of them in the bin. I think he ended up accepting only about 70 out of 240.

Ms Uiibo: No; it was 119 out of 120.

Mr KERLE: Sorry, Leader of the Opposition. It was 119 out of 240.

Ms Uiibo: No—out of 120.

Madam SPEAKER: Stop the interjections.

Mr KERLE: I am just quoting the ABC reporting at the time. That was the rewrite of the *Liquor Act 1978*, which the former Member for Nightcliff ran through.

On the one hand, Labor had onerous alcohol restrictions for low-risk licences and, on the other hand, it was dealing with the 'Dan ban' on premises larger than 400 square metres. This was specifically to prevent Dan Murphy's from coming to Darwin. That was a great pro-business step by the former Territory Labor government.

In the continued litany of failures of the former government on alcohol, it allowed Stronger Futures to lapse with no transition plan. Sadly, there were predictable results in the rivers of grog that flowed into communities and town camps, particularly in Alice Springs, harming the most vulnerable Territorians. Waves of battered women presented to Alice Springs Hospital, with domestic violence spiking out of control. It was a predictable consequence.

The Member for Gwoja bought shares in an alcohol wholesaler before Stronger Futures lapsed, and he only sold them when his Chief Minister was brought down in a share scandal. Funny timing, that. I hope you made some money off that, but based on the report I do not think you did.

I will not talk for a long time; I do not see the point. This is commonsense reform that was suggested by our Approvals Fast-Track Taskforce to implement a risk-based approach and delivers on our commitments to rebuild the economy and restore the Territory lifestyle.

This Bill is about matching effort to risk. This Bill supports local businesses, local community clubs, jobs and economic activity. It improves how the system works without lowering standards. It is another practical step in how our government is rebuilding the Territory economy and restoring confidence.

I commend the Bill to the Assembly.

Ms BOOTHBY (Tourism and Hospitality)(in reply): Madam Speaker, I thank the members for their contributions this evening, the scrutiny committee for the work they have done and everyone who submitted. I will address all of the recommendations that were made through the scrutiny committee in my summing-up speech.

Recommendations 2 and 5 relate to the post-implementation review. The committee recommended that within 24 months of the commencement the impacts of the low-risk application framework be reviewed and

that the operation of the fit-and-proper-person test also be examined. The government considers this a sensible approach. It is normal that departments will always look at reform closely post-implementation and make sure the operations are reviewed as part of the ongoing program and evaluation and continuous improvement.

Recommendation 3 concerns transparency and consistency in decision-making under new section 52A. The committee recommended that guidance be developed and published on the factors that the director may consider when determining whether an application should proceed as low-risk application. Again, we support this recommendation in principle. The guidance will be developed and made public to promote consistency and transparency in decision-making while preserving the director's ability to determine that when applications should not proceed as low risk where the public interest requires it. That does not impact this legislation.

Recommendation 4 relates to the reviewability of decisions under section 52A(2). For clarity, the Bill provides the determination by the director to remove an application from the low-risk framework is not reviewable by the Liquor Commission or the Northern Territory Civil and Administrative Tribunal. This reflects the procedural nature of those determinations and ensures that the applications are assessed through the appropriate pathway where risk or community concerns arise.

Recommendation 6 raised questions about the application of the public interest considerations to the decisions on applications to make material alterations to licensed premises. The Bill transfers responsibility of those decisions from the Liquor Commission to the director and restructures the relevant legislative provisions accordingly. Under the amended framework, decisions on material alterations continue to be made within the statutory scheme and with regard to the matters required by the Act.

Recommendation 7 concerns the extension of the responsible service of alcohol refresher training period from three years to five years. This change does not lower standards; obligations on licensees and staff remain unchanged. Compliance expectations continue to apply, and refresher training remains readily available, including through free online options. The extended period reflects contemporary practice while maintaining community protections.

Finally, recommendation 8 related to clarity about the scope and effect of the Bill. For the avoidance of doubt, the Bill amends the *Liquor Act 2019*, the *Liquor Regulations 2019* and the *Liquor Commission Act 2018*. Among other things, it confirms that determinations made under proposed section 52A(2) are excluded from review by the Northern Territory Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

This Bill delivers reforms arising from the Approvals Fast Track Taskforce that is designed to improve regulatory efficiency by better aligning assessment effort with risk while maintaining appropriate safeguards. It does not alter alcohol policy settings; it does not increase alcohol supply, and it does not weaken the public interest framework that underpins liquor regulation in the Northern Territory.

With that, I commend the Bill to the Assembly.

Motion agreed to; Bill read a second time.

Consideration in detail

Clauses 1 to 4, by leave, taken together and agreed to.

Clause 5:

Mr SMELT: Why has the government chosen to limit the mandatory consideration period to offences committed within the previous 10 years when determining when a person is a fit and proper person? Why not five or 15?

Ms BOOTHBY: That is consistent with the *Racing and Wagering Act*.

Mr SMELT: Are there any offences of such seriousness that a person would be permanently disqualified from being considered a fit-and-proper person? For example, manslaughter or serious organised crime offences. Does the clause mean that once the 10-year period has elapsed, the person is automatically a fit and proper person again.