



Lia Finocchiaro
Chief Minister

Steve Edgington
Minister for Alcohol Policy

Media Release

Crime down, victims down, public drinking in focus

26 November 2025

The Finocchiaro CLP Government today released its Banned Drinkers Register Review as the latest crime data is released across the Territory.

Chief Minister Lia Finocchiaro said the Territory's latest crime statistics, covering January to September this year compared with the same period last year, show an 8.3% reduction in victims of crime, with 1,635 fewer Territorians becoming victims.

Breakdown by region includes:

- Greater Darwin Region: 457 fewer victims (6% decrease)
- Alice Springs: 951 fewer victims (18% decrease)
- Katherine: 15 fewer victims (1% decrease)
- Tennant Creek: 37 fewer victims (5% decrease)

"Today I can announce we are further increasing public drinking bans; the 7-day Banned Drinker Order will move to 28 days from next month.

"This gives Police an additional tool to combat alcohol-fuelled violence and crime and further protect our community.

"My government will continue to take action to put the rights of victims and the community ahead of offenders," Mrs Finocchiaro said.

Earlier this year in Katherine, Police undertook an operation to drive down crime, resulting in a 354% increase in BDOs issued. During that period, the community saw a significant reduction in crime.

Minister for Alcohol Policy Steve Edgington said the release of the BDR Review delivered on an important election commitment.

"The BDR Review, like all other published data, makes clear the greatest alcohol policy failure in a decade occurred when Labor allowed the Stronger Futures legislation to lapse.

"The Finocchiaro CLP Government will now consider the BDR Review, but we will fast track one of the Review's recommendations, strengthening Banned Drinker Orders.

"I will bring to Parliament this week on urgency changes to the Alcohol Harm Reduction Act 2017 to give effect to this important change, Mr Edgington said.

Northern Territory Police Commissioner Martin Dole APM welcomed the extended booze ban as Police gear up for summer operations.

"Increasing the number of days from seven to 28 will be an important tool as we head into our summer season, which attracts a spike in alcohol-related crime," Commissioner Dole said.

"Public drinking continues to remain our biggest catalyst for overall assaults and domestic violence, which is why our teams are already rolling out targeted intervention before things escalate."

"Between 2 and 9 November alone, officers issued more than 130 Banned Drinker Orders and emptied more than 900 litres of alcohol."

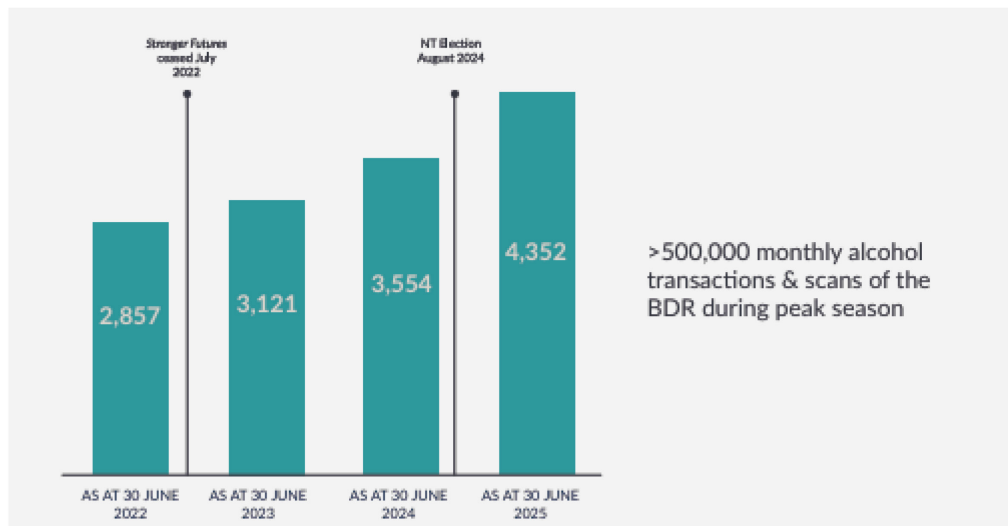
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Review of the Banned Drinker Register

Findings & Recommendations

Election Commitment: Review of the Banned Drinker Register

Persons on the BDR



The Banned Drinker Register (BDR) is an identification system operating in outlets where you can purchase takeaway alcohol. The BDR identifies people who are banned from purchasing, possessing or consuming alcohol and prevents their purchase at the takeaway outlet. The BDR has been in operation since 1 September 2017.

There are multiple pathways onto the BDR, including police, court, corrections and at the discretion of the BDR Registrar. Mandatory triggers for a police-issued Banned Drinker Order (BDO) include alcohol-related offences and Domestic Violence Orders (DVOs), consumption of alcohol in a prohibited public place, protective custody episodes and alcohol-related infringements.

The Alcohol Policy Taskforce

A cross-government Alcohol Policy Taskforce (the Taskforce) has been established to progress actions to deliver on the government's priority to reduce crime and tackle problem drinking. Membership of the Taskforce includes the Territory's BDR subject matter experts from across nine government departments including NT Health, Licensing NT, Attorney-General's Department, and the Department of Corporate and Digital Development. Taskforce members specialise in the areas of digital infrastructure, data integrity, enforcement and compliance and bring unique operational insights into the effectiveness of past, current and proposed future modifications.

The Review

Since its reimplemention in 2017, the BDR has been subject to three formal external evaluations, while several research papers have also been published in regard to its effectiveness and value as an alcohol policy measure.

While the Taskforce acknowledges the limitations of the BDR, it is considered to be an effective tool when combined with the suite of measures available across the Territory to address alcohol related harm in our community including local liquor accords, community alcohol management plans and increased treatment engagement pathways.

The BDR review process undertaken by the Taskforce has been wide ranging in its consideration of the effectiveness of previous technical modifications and reforms made to the BDR in response to legislative changes.

As part of this work, the Taskforce undertook the following actions:

- Collated recommendations and findings from previous evaluation reports and research papers.
- Conducted an analysis of all available alcohol-harm indicators.
- Identified current and future needs for alcohol data and intended use.
- Consulted with subject matter experts to conduct a 'lessons learned' analysis of previous technical modifications to the BDR.
- Collated agency specific ideas for BDR enhancements.

Recommendations

Following careful consideration of previous reviews and suggested enhancements, the Taskforce has developed a range of recommendations that will work to improve the effectiveness of the BDR. These solutions are cost effective and will provide the most value for Territorians. They also find the right balance between protecting consumer rights and privacy, with the need to have robust supply measures to adequately address the high rates of alcohol-related harm in the NT, reduce crime and restore the Territory lifestyle.

The BDR is a central component of the Territory's harm reduction framework, reducing alcohol access to high-risk individuals and delivering measurable health, justice, and community safety benefits. It works best as part of a holistic strategy—including product and promotion restrictions, outlet monitoring, and treatment referrals.

The most effective policy measures to address visible and problematic drinking, anti-social behaviour and associated criminal activity include:

- Using all available mechanisms to reduce alcohol related harms and crime
- Changes aimed at specific problems (not universal)
- Focusing on people whose alcohol use harms others

The recommendations are:

- The use of enforceable undertakings to include on-premises scanning for licensees who repeatedly breach the conditions of their liquor licence.



- Develop an opt-in system for clubs that choose to participate in on-premises scanning.



- Broadening data sharing arrangements between key agencies to enhance collaboration, while increasing training for Authorised Persons to increase capacity to refer to the BDR.



- Changing the length of 7-day Banned Drinker Orders issued by police from 7 days to 28 days.



The Taskforce will be working to progress these recommendations through undertaking relevant **industry consultation, investment, regulation and legislative change**.

Other ideas considered but not recommended by the Review

As part of the Taskforce's review of the BDR technology and functionality, the following suggestions were considered. Included in the table below is a summary about why these are not recommended at this time.

Changes considered as part of BDR Review	Needed changes			Costs
	Policy	System	Legislative	
Expand capabilities of BDR system to record suspicious transactions and identify and monitor secondary supply in real time.	X	X	X	\$\$\$
On-premise scanning for all licensed premises	X	X	X	\$\$\$
Digital Licenses and BDR Integration ¹		X	X	\$\$\$
Strengthening BDR technology to recognise fake or altered identification	X	X		\$\$
Provide point of sale intervention officers with BDO scanner connectivity and access to purchase records.	X	X	X	\$
Systems or communication channels to notify other service delivery agencies of a person's inclusion on the BDR.	X	X	X	\$

¹ The NT Digital Driver's License is currently being developed by DCDD. Integration to the BDR will be delivered as part of this separate body of work.

Addressing problematic drinking requires a community level response with partnerships between regional councils, police, health workers, industry partners and community organisations. This can occur through the use of:

- Local liquor accords
- Community Alcohol (Management) Plans (CAPs)
- Increased treatment engagement through sobering up shelters, protective custody, emergency departments and other frontline services
- The BDR

Increased training for Police has already led to enhanced communication to inform people that they are on the BDR, reducing the number of banned individuals from trying to buy takeaway alcohol. There has also been a decrease in anti-social conduct inside takeaway outlets.

The BDR can provide pathways to therapeutic programs, helping health professionals to connect individuals with clinical support and treatment. This area is currently under utilised and will be further enhanced, particularly through increasing the length of 7-day BDOs issued by police from 7 days to 28 days.

NT Health will work alongside government agencies, frontline services and other stakeholders to build on the recommendations to ensure they are fit for the community.