



Banned Drinkers Register Pilbara Trial FAQ

What is a Banned Drinkers Register?

A Banned Drinkers Register prevents problem drinkers from purchasing alcohol and triggers the availability of rehabilitation services to assist them with alcoholism.

Those deemed to be problem drinkers include repeat drink-drivers and alcohol-fueled violent and domestic violence offenders.

A Banned Drinkers Register currently operates in the Northern Territory as a strategy to curb problem drinking.

Lessons learned from the NT will be applied to the Pilbara trial.

How would the register be implemented here in WA?

A trial of the register is proposed for the Pilbara communities of Port Hedland, Karratha, Onslow, Tom Price, Newman and Paraburdoo before the end of this year.

Why has a Banned Drinker Register been proposed for the Pilbara?

The Director of Liquor Licensing is responsible for making decisions about liquor restrictions in areas where alcohol-related harm is prevalent, such as the Pilbara.

The Director of Liquor Licensing has consulted with licensees in the Pilbara, who argue that businesses can be adversely affected when the general community is restricted to an amount of alcohol per day, rather than targeting problem drinkers.

The McGowan Government has responded with a proposal to trial a Banned Drinkers Register.

Why not implement blanket restrictions instead of the Register?

Blanket restrictions on liquor sales that have been previously suggested for parts of the Pilbara in WA's far north, unfairly penalise everyone. A Banned Drinkers Register will target problem drinkers only.

Importantly, restrictions do not support problem drinkers with the services they require to rehabilitate.

I drink responsibly – how will the register affect me?

The Register will ban problem drinkers from accessing takeaway alcohol through licensed premises, without affecting the general community who don't need to be policed.

Only those who are deemed 'problem drinkers' will be prevented from purchasing take away alcohol. Responsible drinkers will simply have to present identification to purchase their liquor (driver's licence, proof of age card, gun licence, passport etc). This will only apply to purchases in the Pilbara during the trial period.

What will happen when a Banned Drinker attempts to purchase alcohol?

If a person on the Banned Drinker Register attempts to purchase alcohol at a licensed premises, their ID would be scanned and they would be identified as ineligible to make the purchase.

Importantly, the Register would also trigger the wrap-around services required to assist problem drinkers, by directing them to services to help them tackle their addiction.

This aims to decrease domestic violence in the home and violent behaviour on the streets.



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What consultation has the government undertaken?

The McGowan Government recognises the significant harm that is being experienced in remote areas of the State – and particularly the West Pilbara.

That's why Minister McGurk and Minister Papalia are implementing the West Pilbara Healing and Trauma Response Plan, which will assist in targeting ongoing alcohol abuse in the West Pilbara.

The Government has consulted with key stakeholders such as the AHA and the LSAWA, the Police and other representatives across Government, to develop the trial for a Banned Drinkers Register.

What are the next steps?

Work has commenced on this initiative, and the Minister will be visiting licensees across the Pilbara in the coming weeks to speak with business owners about implementing the plan.

Real-time monitoring and enforcement is required to make this work, and the will of the Government to ensure services respond – and quickly – to issues associated with alcoholism.

This Government is committed to trialling a targeted response that works - with the licensees and the community behind them.

This trial represents the first stage of this new initiative in the State – if the trial yields good results, it may be possible to roll-out the initiative in other areas of the State that are subject to restrictions.