

ALCOHOL ADVERTISING — PUBLIC TRANSPORT FACILITIES

Motion

HON HELEN MORTON (East Metropolitan) [10.09 am]: — without notice: I move —

That this house encourages the government of Western Australia to ban alcohol advertising on state government controlled public transport facilities.

Most people would be aware that the role of the Minister for Mental Health also incorporates the role of providing and overseeing services for drug and alcohol services. The Mental Health Commission is the entity that manages the Mental Health Commission and alcohol and other drug services in the state. It does that as a commissioning commission across all government agencies that are working to improve services for people who have mental illnesses or problem drinking.

In the later stages of my term as Minister for Mental Health I managed to get support from cabinet for the Mental Health Commission to undertake an audit of expenditure across all government agencies on direct services that address the impact of problem drinking. It did not include indirect services such as ambulances, which go to retrieve people from an accident in which drinking may have been a component. The audit was conducted across all government agencies and related to direct services that address the impact of problem drinking. It did not include commonwealth direct-funded services, although some commonwealth funds obviously come to the state and are provided by the state to those services; nor did it include private-funded services or services provided by non-government organisations from their own funding. The result of that audit was a bit of a shock. In 2013–14, alcohol cost the Western Australian government \$730 million, which is the expenditure that this state put towards issues around problem drinking. That realisation was of greater concern when I understood that the total Mental Health Commission budget for 2015–16 was \$780 million. The audit also estimated the total cost of alcohol consumption in WA, taking into account all of those indirect services, commonwealth funding et cetera, to be \$4.65 billion.

My intention at the time was to go back to cabinet with a set of recommendations, but I needed to find out a few things first. I wanted to find out the extent of alcohol advertising on public transport facilities and the revenue the government received for that advertising. The combined advertising the government receives from advertising on public transport is around \$7 million. Alcohol advertising on public transport equates to \$160 000, or two per cent of the Public Transport Authority's revenue. My recommendation would have been to cease alcohol advertising on state-controlled public transport facilities. I wrote to the Minister for Transport and asked him to consider doing that off his own bat, not needing it to be a requirement of government or some other mechanism. The response I got was along the line that when the two current licence agreements with APN Outdoor Group Ltd were due for renewal, changes may be considered as part of that process.

Hon Sue Ellery: When are they due for renewal?

Hon HELEN MORTON: I did not have time to find that out, I am sorry.

The Public Transport Authority has two licence agreements with APN Outdoor Group Ltd that allows for commercial advertising on train and bus infrastructure, excluding bus shelters, which are typically the responsibility of local government, and APN must comply with industry standards for advertising. The remainder of the information in the letter from the minister's office was about how it complied with industry standards. This response was not very strong; it certainly was not good enough for me. I detected a significant lack of enthusiasm for the particular issue that I wanted to pursue.

Hon Robyn McSweeney: It's easy to detect, isn't it?

Hon HELEN MORTON: Yes, it is very easy! I thought I might try to inject a little more enthusiasm through this debate this morning. First of all, we have compelling evidence that exposure to alcohol advertising impacts the drinking behaviour and attitudes of young people. Why else would these companies advertise alcohol? Seeing vodka bottles wrapped around buses or a Dan Murphy's advertisement on a bus shelter outside a primary school normalises alcohol use and reinforces the harmful drinking culture that exists in Western Australia from a very young age. Alcohol is the leading cause of death and disability among young males 15 to 24 years of age in all regions of the world, except eastern Mediterranean regions; and for females in that age group, it is the leading cause of death in wealthy countries and the Americas. As traditional media is declining in both audience and market share, out-of-home advertising is increasing. The Outdoor Media Association reported that Australians are likely to see an average of 26 ads out of home each day, alcoholic beverages are ninth in the top 20 advertising categories, and companies spend about \$27.5 million on alcohol advertising. This advertising cannot be switched off when it is on a bus, bus shelter or a train. It cannot be avoided or ignored and it is

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impossible to control who views that outdoor alcohol ad. The industry itself describes it as ubiquitous, effective and always on, with messages 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Children and young people represent a substantial proportion of public transport users, with one in five using public transport to go to school and 50 per cent of secondary school students using public transport to get to school. In WA in 2014–15, students up to year 12 accounted for 13 per cent of cash and SmartRider boardings. An audit of bus stop ads in Perth in 2013 found that one-quarter—that is, 172 out of 744 ads—were for alcohol products. For each additional heavy drinker within a household, the risk of experiencing persistent harm increases sixfold. One United States of America study found that each additional advertisement viewed by a young person resulted in a one per cent increase in drinking. Another study estimated that each additional dollar per capita spent on alcohol advertising in a local market resulted in three per cent more drinking by young people. Studies also show that alcohol marketing strategies lead to underage drinkers starting to drink, regular young drinkers becoming prone to binge-drinking patterns and established young drinkers accruing a heavy level of consumption, putting them at risk. The Department of Transport's response relies heavily on so-called industry standards and independent self-regulatory alcohol advertising systems. I need to spend a few minutes giving members some information about that.

The Public Transport Authority noted that it did not wish to pass judgement on advertising for legal products. But alcohol may not be legally sold to anybody under the age of 18 and is associated with a wide range of harms to drinkers and others. The standards are weak and inadequate and they protect the industry rather than young people. The existing self-regulatory processes have been shown to be very ineffective in protecting children and young people from alcohol advertising. They completely ignore the placement of alcohol advertising. The alcohol advertising content must also adhere to the Australian Association of National Advertisers' code of ethics. This code aims to ensure that advertising is legal, honest and truthful. The AANA is the peak national body championing the interests of Australian advertisers. The only restriction on placement of outdoor alcohol ads is an Outdoor Media Association guideline that limits alcohol advertising on fixed signs within 150 metres of a school gate. There are no placement restrictions on buses, trains or trams in other states. There is misunderstanding about the independence of self-regulatory alcohol advertising systems, and any level of independence is a fallacy. The three directors of the alcohol beverages advertising code scheme are the CEOs of the Brewers Association of Australia and New Zealand, the Distilled Spirits Industry Council of Australia and the Winemakers' Federation of Australia. These three industry groups jointly fund the alcoholic beverages advertising code scheme and its representatives, and this is the scheme that is supposed to regulate the alcohol advertising system. Half of the Advertising Standards Bureau board of directors represent advertising industry interests, including the chair, who was previously a director of the Australian Association of National Advertisers, and the AANA is the peak national body for advisers. The current chair of the AANA board is the managing director of global markets for Lion beer, cider and wine, and another board member is the corporate affairs director for Carlton and United Breweries. These bodies may be largely independent of government, but they are certainly not independent of the alcohol and advertising industries. That is the kind of independence the Public Transport Authority is relying on.

The Royal Australasian College of Physicians and the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists recommend that the current self-regulatory approach to alcohol advertising in Australia and New Zealand should be changed to include statutory restrictions, including the enforcement of costly sanctions for breaches of various codes.

Two surveys have been carried out on public attitudes, one in 2014 and one in 2015. They show that 72 per cent of Australian adults support legal controls to reduce young peoples' exposure to alcohol advertising, with only six per cent opposed; and 72 per cent support removing alcohol advertising from buses and bus stops to reduce young peoples' exposure, with only 10 per cent opposed.

The bodies in support include the Royal Australasian College of Physicians, as I have mentioned; the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists; the Australian Medical Association; the Alcohol Advertising Review Board; the World Health Organization; and the national Preventative Health Taskforce.

In respect of other jurisdictions, the Australian Capital Territory has banned alcohol advertising on public buses, and South Australia has made a commitment to ban advertising, starting from mid-2017. France has had an alcohol advertising ban in place since 1991, but unfortunately that has recently been lifted slightly. Russia has a ban on alcohol advertising. About 18 states in the United States have a ban on advertising alcohol on public transport, including the cities of Baltimore and Boston. Finland has had a ban on alcohol advertising on public transport effective from 1 January 2015. Ireland has passed legislation banning alcohol advertising on public transport.

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From my point of view, this is not about stopping anyone from drinking. I like to drink; I like a Bailey's after tea and I like to drink wine with my meals. I brought back some duty-free whiskey for my husband and sons after a recent trip to Japan. My family certainly enjoys their alcohol.

Sellers can still advertise in heaps of places—TV, radio, print media, social media et cetera. This is about us, as a house, recommending and encouraging this government to stop its double-messaging. It costs \$730 million of taxpayers' money each year, but as a government we advertise alcohol on our own facilities. This is about helping to close off the impact of alcohol advertising on children and young people. It cannot be switched off—it is in front of them 24 hours a day, seven days a week. If the government does not adopt this policy, I hope all political parties will take to the election a commitment to do so. It will not cost a cent, and it is absolutely simple. Let us send a clear message to the public that, through this small measure, the government is showing how to be responsible in respect of youth and alcohol.

HON SUE ELLERY (South Metropolitan — Leader of the Opposition) [10.24 am]: I am happy to stand and make some comments on this motion. If this were a motion that we could amend, we may well have considered amending it to make it a bit stronger so that it went further than just “encourage”. I agree with everything that Hon Helen Morton said—which is quite unusual for me!—except for one point, and I will come back to that.

We need to ask: what is the purpose of advertising? The purpose of advertising is to build a consumer base and to influence consumer behaviour. The alcohol industry spends an enormous amount of money on advertising for the purpose of building a consumer base and influencing consumer behaviour. To explain that or to shine a light on it, *The Gruen Transfer* and its spinoffs provide very good examples of the thinking behind advertising agencies, the elements they rely on to put their campaigns together, and the ways in which they seek to build a consumer base and influence consumer behaviour.

The purpose of advertising alcohol on the sides of buses and other forms of public transport is to get more people to drink alcohol and to influence their behaviour to drink a particular type of alcohol. The advertising industry spends hundreds of millions of dollars doing that, knowing that everybody—including those who are not legally of age to drink—is likely to see those ads and be influenced by them.

The only point on which I disagree with Hon Helen Morton is the point that this is not about stopping people from drinking. I actually think it is about stopping young people from starting to drink earlier. It is not about those of us who are a lot older having a glass of wine with our meal. It is about making sure that young people do not start drinking any earlier than they should.

Most of the documents the honourable member referred to I also have in front of me, so I will not repeat much of what she said, but I will make a couple of points. Firstly, self-regulation has not worked. Information was provided to me by, I think, the Alcohol Advertising Review Board to say that it was aware of several instances in which the voluntary guidelines restricting alcohol ads from being placed within 150 metres of school gates had been breached, seemingly with no consequences. It provided some examples. In January 2014, a Corona ad was placed near a primary school in Western Australia. In April 2014, a Dan Murphy's ad was placed directly outside a primary school in Western Australia; the placement of that ad received media attention. In July 2014, there was a complaint regarding a Cooper's Brewery ad placed near two schools in Canberra. In September 2014, a restaurant hotel ad featuring two people drinking wine was placed directly outside a primary school. In November 2014, a Smirnoff vodka ad was placed across the road from a primary school in Melbourne. Complaints were lodged about these ads, and all five complaints were upheld. The review board makes the point that it is highly likely that many more alcohol ads have been placed outside schools and children and young people are likely to have been exposed to them. The honourable member made the point that there is no way to ignore ads on the sides of public transport vehicles, and that is a key message. Everybody can see them; they cannot avoid it.

I turn now to what has been done in South Australia. This year the South Australian government announced that the advertising of beer, wine and spirits on the sides of buses and trams will be banned from next year. The state government is also urging councils, which control advertising on the sides of bus shelters, to do the same. This follows a warning contained in a review of the South Australian liquor laws that successes in tackling underage drinking could be undone if alcohol advertising is not curtailed. The ban will be limited to alcohol products and will not cover events such as food and wine festivals or sponsorship logos and images on sporting uniforms. Under this plan, alcohol ads will also not be allowed on the inside or outside of public transport vehicles. The ACT government introduced a similar ban in 2015.

An interesting argument for why it is important to ban these advertisements so that we do not go backwards in our attempts to halt the take-up of young people drinking alcohol lies in a South Australian review that found that the average age young people had had their first alcoholic drink had risen from 15 in 2007 to about 15 years

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and seven months in 2013. That is a very slow increase in age, but at least it is going in the right direction. I am sure that people of my generation remember that revolting and truly disgusting purple stuff, Blackberry Nip. I drank that at about the age of 14 or 15, I think.

Hon Kate Doust: Is this a confession?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes, it is. My mum has passed away so I am not revealing anything new. She had to come and pick me up and, of course, I said, “Mum, I must’ve eaten something.” It was ugly. The proportion of teens aged between 12 and 17 years who are abstaining from drinking also rose from 56.5 per cent to 72.3 per cent. The point made in South Australia is that we are trending in the right direction so that young people are taking up drinking much later, when obviously the development of their brains, bodies and judgement—unlike mine—are being exercised more sensibly. We do not want to see that go backwards because of the proliferation of advertising.

If members are in any doubt that the alcohol industry spends a lot of money on advertising, some of the material from the Alcohol Advertising Review Board that was provided to me points out —

Alcohol is one of the most heavily promoted products in the world. Young people are frequently exposed to alcohol promotion, including through product packaging that would be expected to appeal to them —

That is, it is designed to appeal to young people —

and advertising that targets younger age groups.

Hundreds of millions of dollars is spent on alcohol advertising each year. It continues —

Information on expenditure on all forms of alcohol advertising and promotion in Australia is not publicly available. The available estimates are very conservative.

Direct alcohol industry expenditure on TV, radio, cinema, outdoor and print advertising only was estimated at **\$125 million** as long ago as 2007. This estimate does not include expenditure on sponsorship, online and point-of-sale promotions, advertising by liquor retailers and other forms of marketing.

Expenditure on alcohol sponsorship in Australia has been estimated at approximately **\$300 million** per year.

Experience from other forms of promotions shows that anywhere between **three and five times** the amount spent on sponsorship can be spent on promoting that sponsorship.

It is fair to assume that expenditure on all forms of alcohol advertising and promotion in Australia is close to **\$1 billion** a year.

Commercial operations are in the business of making profits. They do not spend \$1 billion a year of their or their shareholders’ money if it is not for a very specific purpose. It is designed for a very specific purpose—to influence and build a consumer base, including young people. It is appropriate that government look seriously at this matter and consider whether we are, in fact, sending double messages and whether we ought to consider limiting advertising of alcohol on public transport vehicles and facilities.

HON JIM CHOWN (Agricultural — Parliamentary Secretary) [10.34 am]: I thank Hon Helen Morton for her motion and Hon Sue Ellery for her contribution. When I saw the motion initially, I thought this is an anti-state motion and I will condemn it. But after hearing both members speak on the motion and after giving the matter some thought overnight, I think that both members have taken very responsible positions on the matter.

As Hon Helen Morton stated, alcohol is part of our culture; it is part of the western culture. It has been part of our culture since living memory. In fact, I did a bit of research last night on the matter and I could not find a time or a date for when alcohol became part of the western culture. Interestingly enough, it was used for hundreds of thousands of years as a form of nutrition because the fermentation process involved in producing alcohol enhances amino acids and other forms of protein. In those days, drinking water was not safe, and alcohol was used to supplement thirst quenching. In fact, alcohol became a form of currency at some stage in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Regardless of those facts, we are talking about modern times here. I think it was in 1595 when Sir Walter Raleigh came from the new world and said, “Look at this. I’ve got a weed that can be smoked.” That was tobacco, and it has become to some degree part of our culture also.

It is my firm belief, and I have always said this, that if alcohol and tobacco were put on the supermarket shelves today for the first time, the relevant authorities would ban them. They would say “No, these things are class A drugs. These things have detrimental effects on certain members of the population; they are habitual. We cannot allow this to happen. It’s as bad as cannabis, heroin and every other drug that is available today.” That has not

happened. Alcohol is part of our culture. Governments have made revenue from it for many years, and will probably continue to do so.

This motion today is about public advertising on public transport. I do not disagree that companies advertise for a reason. They advertise to capture a marketplace. If they can capture a marketplace early in people's lives—we are talking about youth—they may have some of them for life. That is the issue we are discussing. The Public Transport Authority has a responsibility to the community through government. I assume that at some stage in the future, when we consider that other responsible governments such as those in the Australian Capital Territory and South Australia have taken the massive step forward to not allow alcohol advertising on public transport, PTA advertising of alcohol will come under review and consideration will be given by a future government to whether it is responsible to have such advertising on these buses. It has already been explained that there was a process in place and it is a responsible and independent process in regard to advertising. For example, all advertising on Public Transport Authority assets must meet the standards of the Australian Advertising Standards Bureau, which is an independent body, as Hon Helen Morton has indicated, and assumes compliance with the Australian Association of National Advertisers. It is very difficult to say no to advertising unless there is a government policy to not allow it because alcohol is a legal product. To go down the track of saying, "Well, you can't do this, but we can allow it here," is a bit hypocritical.

In 1993, the commonwealth took the massive step of banning tobacco advertising. We are going down a similar track here. It was not invoked correctly across the broad spectrum of society at sporting grounds and other venues until 1995. We do not see any public advertising of tobacco today.

Hon Phil Edman: Which is a good idea.

Hon JIM CHOWN: That is totally correct.

As we become more aware of the issues, governments come forward and make decisions. Public advertising on public transport or on government assets happens at this stage in this state, but there is an independent process in place, as has been explained, to ensure that that advertising is responsible. I know that in the United Kingdom, for example, alcohol advertising on public assets cannot include images of any person under the age of 25 years and people in this advertising are not allowed to be seen having a good time. Whether that is responsible is one thing, but at least it is not focused on youth.

I personally have not noticed any alcohol advertising on public transport, but I will keep my eye out in the future. Hopefully members of this place will do so also. There is a complaint process within the PTA whereby if anybody feels infringed upon by advertising on those assets, they can make a complaint. Members can make a complaint. That would surely be the first step. I hope that Hon Helen Morton has written to the PTA and has made a written complaint on the matter she has raised here, and has asked for a review of the processes or a review through the PTA processes to have alcohol advertising removed at some stage in the future.

Advertising on bus stops is a local government responsibility; it has nothing to do with the state government. If members feel that it is wrong to advertise alcohol on bus stops, where children congregate correctly for long periods of time—the signs cannot be turned off—they should complain and ask those local government councils to remove the advertising. I think that is a fair thing for us to do as responsible citizens. We have a cultural issue across the whole western world. It is an issue that is raised consistently, even in the country towns that I visit on a regular basis. The issue is not so much alcohol abuse by youth, but drug abuse—the hidden addiction that our young people are entering into. Alcohol is always in our face.

Hon Helen Morton: There is much bigger harm from alcohol than drugs by many, many, many times.

Hon JIM CHOWN: I do not disagree with the member. It is a cultural issue that I do not believe advertising will overcome. It is something that has to come from the home. Too many young people are dying on regional roads as a result of alcohol abuse. It is consistent and it has to stop. Advertising will not inhibit these people who culturally believe that they can drink and drive, or drink and hop in a car and do stupid things. That is just one of the issues.

Other than that, I think this motion is worthy of support from a government perspective, but support needs to be done in a responsible way. I thank both members for their contributions. I have nothing more to add.

HON PETER KATSAMBANIS (North Metropolitan) [10.41 am]: I rise to speak on this motion on one of the most important social issues that society faces—that is, alcohol abuse and the impacts of alcohol abuse across our society. I thank Hon Helen Morton for bringing this motion to the house. I have looked at it overnight and I have considered it and it is well intentioned. If in the future a government or the Public Transport Authority decided not to accept alcohol advertising on public transport facilities, I do not think many people in the community would be upset. But, like Hon Jim Chown, I am not necessarily sure that that should be our starting point. I do not think

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alcohol advertising on public transport facilities is a leader in driving young people in particular to use or abuse alcohol. We have a cultural problem, and we have to acknowledge that. That cultural problem was not created by government, and I am sad to say that it will not be solved by government. It is a major issue. It is the example that adults set for young people that sets them down the path of how they use alcohol.

I listened intently to the contribution of Hon Helen Morton. She discussed how alcohol is a problem across the western world. I do not want to paraphrase her wrongly, but she indicated that it was a problem across the western world, perhaps with the exception of the eastern Mediterranean. It is interesting; I know a fair bit about the eastern Mediterranean. In countries such as Greece, people can find alcohol for sale on the sidewalk. People cannot walk 100 metres in most major towns without walking past the kiosk, which is Greece's equivalent of the delicatessens or milk bars where I grew up. It sells everything; it even has a fridge dedicated to beer and wine. Coffee shops, fast-food shops or any shop that sells any type of food will sell alcohol. In the supermarkets, cans of beer or bottles of wine can be found next to the cereal and up the aisle from the toilet paper. Yet that society, which faces many, many problems, does not have a major problem with alcohol abuse in the way that we do in Western Australia or Australia, or in other parts of the western world. They have advertising all over the place for alcohol and other things, but that does not lead their young people or their older people to abuse alcohol on the scale that it happens in this country. Culturally, they treat alcohol as part of everyday meals. Young people who grow up in those countries—I have spoken to people with backgrounds including Italian, Croatian, Serbian and the like—will tell us that as they were growing up, they were introduced to alcohol well before the age of 18, but as a little nip with dinner, when mum or dad might have half a glass or a glass. It is those examples that are set, or those cultural mores if you like, that influence our young people primarily.

In this country, we do not seem to have got it right. We seem to have created a culture that has led to alcohol being seen as a product to abuse rather than to use and enjoy. Of course, the Greeks have had thousands of years of this. The ancient god Dionysus was the god of wine and he was celebrated and venerated in that society. It is the same with the Egyptians. I think the ancient Chinese had alcohol as a large part of their culture, but it did not lead to massive abuse of the product.

We could implement this motion tomorrow with the click of a finger. It could be a policy decision of the Public Transport Authority, it could be a direction from Parliament or we could introduce legislation. Will it change anything? No. It is well intentioned and a step in the right direction, and I have no problem with that, but it will not change anything unless the attitudes in Australian society are changed.

I will pick up on another thing that Hon Jim Chown said. He talked about illicit drug use and abuse across our society. What intrigues me is that recent surveys show that alcohol consumption per capita is decreasing year upon year, so, as a society, we are drinking less alcohol per head than we have drunk since statistics were kept. That decrease is particularly noticeable in young people and underage people. I question whether there has been a shift from young people using alcohol to young people using illicit drugs. In particular, nightclub owners will tell us that water is sometimes their most popular product in their nightclubs. Again, we have to wonder why that is happening. I do not think it is because we are banning advertising. I do not think it is because we are making things unachievable or unattainable. Perhaps young people see alcohol as an old person's drink; I do not know. There are people in this room who are more expert at that than I.

Hon Jim Chown: What's in the water?

Hon PETER KATSAMBANIS: What is in the water? I do not know. I enjoy a drink, as do most members in this chamber, but the way that we treat it is setting terrible examples for our young people. That is what we should look at. We should look at shifting cultural attitudes. Whether we ban advertising or plaster an advertisement for alcohol on every street corner, it will make an absolute minuscule difference to this problem. I cannot offer magic solutions, but perhaps we can look at some of those cultures around the eastern Mediterranean and see how they regularly incorporate alcohol into their family life, into their village or city life and into their celebrations and how they go out to have fun and have a drink and do not go out to get drunk, like so many of our people, young and old, seem to be doing today.

HON MARTIN PRITCHARD (North Metropolitan) [10.48 am]: I was not going to make any comment on the motion, but as members know, I often draw on personal experience and I thought that I might share a personal experience. To the age of about 30 I probably would have counted myself as an alcoholic. I had a drink every day. Every evening I would make sure that I was in some situation where I could enjoy a drink and I often drank to excess. I got married when I was 23 and I would have to say that although I was never abusive in any way, alcohol certainly did not improve family life for my wife and my young kids. At the age of 30 I decided that that was enough, really, and that I would not drink anymore, so I do not—I do not touch alcohol. I just wanted to rise to say that because I do have some experience. People might think that because I do not drink, I do not have experience, but I have quite considerable experience with the effects of alcohol.

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I agree with some of the comments made by previous speakers, particularly with regard to the fact that if we tried to introduce alcohol now, we would not do it. The misery it has caused over the years was something that would not have been contemplated when it was first introduced many, many centuries ago. Alcohol is a part of our society, unfortunately in my view. It is pervasive in Parliament, it is pervasive at any of the functions that I go to, it is pervasive when I visit people socially; it is just pervasive, and I wish that it were otherwise.

I do challenge some of the views that were expressed about the impact of banning advertising. I am not going to suggest one way or the other whether I support this motion, because if we are going to look at advertising, we should look at it across the board. We can look at the advertising over many years with regard to smoking. I was also a smoker when I was younger, but I no longer smoke. That campaign over many years has been, to varying degrees, quite successful. I think there are fewer cigarettes sold now than when advertising was allowed, generally speaking. Companies would not spend millions and millions of dollars on advertising if it were not successful, so it is obviously a success.

The other thing I wanted to say is that I would hope that, as leaders in our society, we might look to set examples. I challenge members to look at themselves and the example that they set. As I said, at all of the functions I get invited to, the first thing they believe I would want is an alcoholic drink and it is not. I believe that my family has been a lot happier since I gave up drinking. I encourage people to look at that. I challenge members that if they think they are not dependent on alcohol, to not have a drink or to just not have a drink for a month, as indicated, just to prove to themselves that they are not reliant upon it. I certainly was reliant upon both cigarettes and alcohol in my youth, and I am very proud of the fact that I have managed to give them up. I think I set a very good example for my kids. As I said, I challenge members to look at their own habits and to say, “Well, if I’m not an alcoholic, if I’m not reliant on alcohol, then why don’t I just not have one?” I leave the chamber with that message.

HON DAVE GRILLS (Mining and Pastoral) [10.53 am]: I would like to thank Hon Helen Morton for bringing this motion to the house today. I will comment on some of the comments Hon Peter Katsambanis made with regard to alcohol and how we see it. Hon Jim Chown said that alcohol was actually drunk instead of water. Coming from Kalgoorlie, I know that that is why there were 18 breweries in Coolgardie—because alcohol kept better than water and water was actually more expensive than gold. Putting that aside, I have worked in the Mining and Pastoral Region. There were calls this morning for the amount of alcohol that a person can buy in Kununurra to be reduced from two cartons of beer or six bottles a day down to one carton and three bottles of wine. In my opinion, prohibition is obviously not the best answer. My thought process goes along with what Hon Peter Katsambanis was alluding to—that we should look at how to prevent people from abusing alcohol and whether there is something that we can work towards doing in our society.

Hon Peter Katsambanis was also correct when he said that people who stay away from alcohol often turn to drugs. I know from my experience in Fitzroy Crossing that that tends to be the case. If alcohol is harder to get, people often are more involved in the drug trade. It is correct that people are being affected by drugs. Having worked in the mining industry, I know that alcohol is far more taboo than drugs. From my experience as an occupational health and safety officer, I know that if people were affected by alcohol, that was a sackable offence—everybody had to be breath-tested—but if a person was detected as being on drugs, that person had up to three opportunities to change, and the businesses often put those people into a drug program. Apart from the fact that we talk about it a lot and about advertising—yes, advertising has its place—I think we should look more at fixing the cause and not the symptom. We could do better if we put our forces together to prevent that problem. I thank Hon Helen Morton for bringing the motion to the house and I thank everyone who has made a contribution.

HON ROBIN CHAPPLE (Mining and Pastoral) [10.56 am]: I will rise briefly to speak on this motion. I think one of the problems we face is that we have somehow lifted alcohol in our society to sometimes be a badge of courage amongst our youth. I will just give a quick reference to that. I flew down from the Pilbara about a year and a half ago and I sat behind two young fellas who had just come in from working on the mines. Their conversation went along the lines of who could get checked into Royal Perth Hospital the earliest that night to be pumped out. That was their reason for being. Alcohol used to be the scourge of the mining industry. I remember driving home with a co-supervisor and he used to pop in and get a carton on the way home every night, so members can imagine the state of that gentleman when he came into work the next day. That no longer occurs. Alcohol is being managed pretty well in the mining industry these days with random checks and things like that. I take on board what Hon Dave Grills said about other drugs being used more and with less observation. In my view, alcohol has, to a large degree in this state and this nation, become a rite of passage for youth—it is about who can get tanked up the worst. We obviously see out in the regions the problems with foetal alcohol spectrum disorder and things like that. It is a scourge in Western Australia. I really do think that we need significant education programs for people to identify that it is not necessarily something to be proud of to get themselves completely and utterly inebriated.

HON NICK GOIRAN (South Metropolitan — Parliamentary Secretary) [10.58 am]: I rise to contribute to the debate on this motion. I know Hon Helen Morton well enough to know that at the heart of this motion will be a recognition that we, being the Parliament, are unable to control people's behaviour. The only thing the Parliament can do is to control its message to the community. When I saw this motion, I was very interested to read—I confess for the first time—the Alcohol Advertising Review Board's report entitled "No way to ignore it: The case for removing alcohol ads from public transport". I want to quote two particular sections that attracted my interest. The first is on page 1 under the heading "Outdoor alcohol advertising". It states —

Outdoor advertising continues to be a major promotional medium for advertisers. Advertising across billboards and outdoor media is forecast to account for 9% of advertising industry revenue in 2015–16, up from 7% in 2008–09 due to new advertising methods and an increasing number of advertisement locations at bus and train stops, on public transport and at sporting events. The advertising industry reports that while other traditional media continue to decline in both audience and market share, out-of-home advertising, which covers advertising on billboards, posters, public transit stops, public transport, in shopping centres and airports, continues to grow. The Outdoor Media Association reported that Australians are likely to see an average of 26 ads across out-of-home sites each day and out-of-home advertising reaches 12.2 million people daily across Australia.

It is abundantly clear from that information that outdoor advertising is very significant—in fact, the words that the board uses are "a major promotional medium for advertisers".

The second section I want to quote is on pages 2 and 3 under the heading "Regulation of outdoor advertising placement in Australia". It states —

The Outdoor Media Association ... is the industry body that represents most of Australia's outdoor media display companies. The OMA is part of the self-regulatory system in Australia, and has a Code of Ethics that outlines voluntary principles for its members. The OMA's *Alcohol Advertising Guidelines* set only one restriction upon the placement of outdoor alcohol advertising; that it not be displayed within a 150 metre sight line of a school gate. —

I stop at this point to indicate what an absolute joke of a guideline that must be. The people who write these guidelines must assume that parents blindfold their children when they transport them to school. How can we have only one restriction on the placement of alcohol advertising, which is not to have it displayed within a 150-metre sight line of a school gate? Nevertheless, the report continues —

This guideline does not apply where there is a club, pub or bottleshop in the vicinity of the school, and does not apply to advertising on buses, trams and taxis.

In other words, not only do we have this hopeless guideline in place, but also we provide exemptions to that guideline so that it rarely applies. The report goes on —

There have been many instances where this restriction has been breached, demonstrating the failure of OMA's monitoring and enforcement of the *Alcohol Advertising Guidelines*. In addition, 150 metres is a very small distance, and buses, trams and taxis drive past schools every day, further demonstrating that the guidelines are inadequate in protecting children and young people from exposure to outdoor alcohol ads.

The reason I was so interested in those particular sections of the report—which no doubt drive part of Hon Helen Morton's motion—is that it reminded me of a report by the Joint Standing Committee on the Commissioner for Children and Young People that was tabled in this thirty-ninth Parliament in June 2014 and is entitled, "Sexualisation of Children: The Commissioner for Children and Young People's 2013 report on the Sexualisation of Children". If members care to read that report or refresh their memory on it, I would encourage them to turn to page 76. This portion of the report will be of particular interest to Hon Helen Morton. The previous Commissioner for Children and Young People states at page 76 of that report, under the heading "Billboard and outdoor advertising" —

Outdoor advertising includes advertisements placed on billboards, bus shelters, taxis, buses, shopping malls and sportsgrounds. In the 2008 Senate Committee report on the sexualisation of children in the media, it was noted that outdoor advertising is particularly problematic because it is impossible to restrict children and young people's access to the images and, for this reason, there is an argument for treating billboard and outdoor advertising differently from other types of advertisements.

...

A more recent parliamentary inquiry specifically examined billboard and outdoor advertising and it also highlighted that the key issue is that outdoor advertising cannot be turned off, put down or thrown away like other forms of advertising. It was observed that complaints to the ASB about outdoor advertising

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Hon Helen Morton; Hon Sue Ellery; Hon James Chown; Hon Peter Katsambanis; Hon Martin Pritchard; Hon Dave Grills; Hon Robin Chapple; Hon Nick Goiran

had risen (14 per cent in 2007 compared to 20 per cent in 2010) and that there is ‘escalating community concern about outdoor advertising’.

I recommend to my good friend Hon Helen Morton that perseverance will be essential in continuing to pursue the policy change that she is looking for. By way of example, I note that in this report by the previous Commissioner for Children and Young People there is much talk about the commonwealth government’s response to the report of an inquiry by the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs into billboard and outdoor advertising. To give Hon Helen Morton some idea of how exasperating it can be at times to persevere in this process, I draw her attention to pages 76 and 77 of the commissioner’s report. According to this report, the reporting date of the inquiry was to be 30 December 2011, but this was deferred to 28 September 2012 because the committee was waiting for the Australian Law Reform Commission’s final report to be published. The commonwealth government did not provide a response to the inquiry’s report until 16 August 2012. In other words, the inquiry was kicked into the long grass and delayed for another nine months, only to do some more paper shuffling at a later stage.

I then took it upon myself at the time—this would be of interest to Hon Helen Morton—to write a letter to Hon Michael Keenan dated 3 November 2014. His response to me, dated 26 November, states —

Thank you for your letter of 3 November 2014 regarding the report of the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs on its inquiry into billboard and outdoor advertising ... In your letter you ask when the Government will provide a final response to the Committee’s Report.

The previous Government satisfied its parliamentary obligations in relation to the Committee’s Report when it tabled its response on 16 August 2012. As you note in your letter, that response stated that the majority of the Committee’s recommendations were directed wholly or in part at non-government bodies. The Commonwealth referred the Committee’s recommendations to those bodies for their attention and response by 28 September 2012.

In accordance with the previous Government’s response to the Committee’s Report, I wrote to the Chair of the Committee on 13 May 2014 to forward for information, further responses received from three non-Government organisations in relation the Committee’s recommendations. I also advised that the Attorney-General’s Department had completed the requirements of the Committee’s recommendations.

He ends the letter by stating —

Thank you again for writing on this matter.

All of this is to say, Hon Helen Morton, that this is a classic example of more paper shuffling. When we have these reports and people call for policy changes, governments of all persuasions move the papers around, they delegate and say it is the problem of the local government or the commonwealth government, and no-one takes a position and actually makes any progress. I thank Hon Helen Morton for her motion this morning, and I encourage her to persevere, because that will be absolutely essential if we are to have any prospect of success.

Motion lapsed, pursuant to standing orders.