

**EDUCATION AND HEALTH  
STANDING COMMITTEE**

**INQUIRY INTO THE ADEQUACY AND APPROPRIATENESS OF  
PREVENTION AND TREATMENT SERVICES FOR ALCOHOL AND  
ILLCIT DRUG PROBLEMS IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

**SESSION FIVE**

**TRANSCRIPT OF EVIDENCE TAKEN  
AT PERTH  
TUESDAY, 8 JUNE 2010**

**Members**

**Dr J.M. Woollard (Chairman)**  
**Mr P. Abetz (Deputy Chairman)**  
**Ms L.L. Baker**  
**Mr P.B. Watson**  
**Mr I.C. Blayney**

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**Hearing commenced at 2.58 pm****EDWARDS, MR FRANCIS RICHARD****Chief Executive Officer, City of Perth,****examined:****HAILES, MRS ALLISON****Executive Manager, Planning and Community Development, Western Australian Local Government Association,****examined:****PIGGOTT, MR MATTHEW ROBERT****Coordinator, Environmental Health and Building Services, City of Fremantle,****examined:****MORGAN, MR KEVIN****Mayor, Town of Cottesloe,****examined:**

**The CHAIRMAN:** On behalf of the Education and Health Standing Committee, I thank you for your interest in and your appearance before us today. The purpose of this hearing is to assist the committee in gathering evidence for its inquiry into the adequacy and appropriateness of prevention and treatment services for alcohol and illicit drug problems in WA. You have been provided with a copy of the committee's specific terms of reference. At this stage I will introduce myself, Janet Woollard; Mr Peter Abetz; Mr Ian Blayney; Mr Peter Watson; our principal research officer, Dr David Worth; and we have Hansard with us today. This committee is a committee of the Assembly. This hearing is a formal procedure of Parliament and therefore commands the same respect given to proceedings in the house. Even though the committee is not asking you to provide evidence on oath or affirmation, it is important that you understand that any deliberate misleading of the committee may be regarded as a contempt of Parliament. This is a public hearing and Hansard will be making a transcript of the proceedings for the public record. If you refer to any documents during your evidence, it would assist Hansard if you could provide the full title for the record.

Before we proceed to the questions we have for you today, I need to ask you a series of questions. Have you completed the "Details of Witness" form?

**The Witnesses:** Yes.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Do you understand the notes at the bottom of the form about giving evidence to a parliamentary committee?

**The Witnesses:** Yes.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Did you receive and read the information for witnesses briefing sheet provided with the "Details of Witness" form today?

**The Witnesses:** Yes.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Do you have any questions in relation to being a witness at today's hearing?

**The Witnesses:** No.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Today we will ask you each to make a presentation of five or six minutes and then we will take questions from the committee. Kevin, would you like to go first?

**Mr K. Morgan:** First of all, I would like to acknowledge that the town's position is best expressed in a submission prepared by our CEO, Mr Carl Askew, who gives his apologies. Unfortunately, our sustainability officer, Petra Zele, passed away suddenly last week and her funeral is on at the moment so he cannot attend. I am happy to lodge this submission that has been prepared by the CEO. I appreciate that it might be a bit late in terms of the written submissions but —

**The CHAIRMAN:** Thank you, we would be happy to accept that submission.

**Mr K. Morgan:** It does include a copy of the latest council public report on a section 64 application to the Director of Liquor Licensing which is being contemplated by our town in relation to our beachfront hotels. It also offers to provide further information if requested but on a confidential basis, given the impending likelihood that we will be lodging that section 64 application. That material does include, for instance, investigation data, logs and video footage et cetera that the town has collated over the past 18 months or so as it has, I suppose, put in place surveillance in respect of our two beachfront hotels to gather this type of evidence.

I can say in my personal capacity—if I could slightly stray to that because as a directly elected mayor I believe there are certain constraints as to what I can and cannot say—but in my personal capacity I would note that given the terms of reference this committee has, I believe it would be very beneficial if the committee were to ascertain the true costs for this state caused by the prohibition war on drugs itself and compare those massive costs of prohibition against what I would consider to be relatively small public health costs actually associated with alcohol or drug use no matter its legality. I believe the startling imbalance is all too evident if the real costs of the judicial and legal war are properly identified and calculated and it would leave open only one inevitable conclusion: that the ginormous public funds expended each year on this state's failed war on drugs not only produces way more harm than good but are more than adequate to tackle the real public health costs of alcohol and drug use. I just thought I would raise that. Our town is not dealing with the drug issues but I suppose my background research at the law faculty 20 years ago—I do not think it would have changed very much at all since then. I believe the real costs are those associated with the outlawing of some of these drugs, rather than the drugs themselves.

**The CHAIRMAN:** So, who and how? In relation to that, what do you see? Who do you think should be doing and what should be happening?

**Mr K. Morgan:** I believe this committee ought to be putting before the Parliament what the actual costs of the laws against drugs are versus the actual costs of the drugs themselves, because I believe if that was done it might open up some people's thinking towards tackling this issue in a different way than we have over the past 50-odd years.

[3.00 pm]

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** Are you saying we should decriminalise drugs?

**Mr K. Morgan:** I believe that the whole lot should be treated as a health problem rather than as a problem with the criminal law. I think the criminal law approach has been shown to be an absolute waste of money that is causing more problems than it is solving.

**Mr P. ABETZ:** I would have thought the Swedish experience would indicate the very opposite. They were very liberal in their drug situation. It got so out of hand that the mental health hospital costs blew out to the degree that they simply said, "This can't continue." Now they have the tightest drug laws in Europe and they have the lowest incidence of illicit drug use. The interesting thing is that rather than putting people into jail, they give people a choice: either they go to jail or they go into compulsory residential rehabilitation. The compulsory rehabilitation is proving extremely effective and is far less costly than running a prison.

**Mr K. Morgan:** It certainly sounds like an improvement on the current situation. All I would suggest is that heading in that direction, possibly beyond, is a better direction than where we appear to be heading.

**The CHAIRMAN:** I think we would be happy to have you on board heading in that direction with us rather than the other direction, particularly as this committee is looking at alcohol and illicit drug use. I for one would not be recommending decriminalisation in relation to illicit drugs. I would be happy to support programs.

**Mr K. Morgan:** I did not come here to persuade the committee. When given an opportunity to express a view, I do not hold back.

**Mr I.C. BLAYNEY:** I did not quite catch what you said at first. Is that a personal opinion?

**Mr K. Morgan:** Yes, that is a personal opinion. Putting on my mayoral hat, I would submit that the impact on communities from alcohol use is being exacerbated by shortcomings in the Health (Public Building) Regulations 1992, which shortcomings the minister should be called upon to remedy by announcing the intended repeal of regulation 7(4) and 7A(2) and, if need be, by amending the definition in regulation 3(1) of “large licensed premises” to ensure it includes a combined floor area of separate bars in the same venue. Essentially, those regulations exempt some very lucky large licensed premises from having to comply with regulations that would otherwise require those large licensed venues to interface with their local council and obtain the local council’s approval for having numbers above 1 000 people in the hotels. For some obscure non-public reason, back in 2002 these large licensed premises were exempted from having to do that. My understanding is that the large licensed premises that have the benefit of this exemption—I think this exempts large licensed premises which had existing approval for more than 1 000 patrons on 7 June 2002 are the Cottesloe Beach Hotel with 1 855 patrons approved and the Ocean Beach Hotel with 1 971 patrons approved. We used to have Steve’s Hotel but that has gone. Rendezvous Observation City Hotel has gone. We still have the Aberdeen Hotel with 1 443 patrons approved and Metro City, with 1 906 patrons approved. It looks like Cottesloe has the benefit of half of these exemptions, much to our dismay, possibly not the publicans’. If those two regulations were repealed—7(4) and 7A(2), that would have the effect —

**The CHAIRMAN:** Are you talking about the Liquor Licensing Act?

**Mr K. Morgan:** No, these are the public health regulations. I submit that last time around the liquor licensing reforms abdicated any role for public health-type matters in liquor licensing. They exempted current licensees from having to go through the new threshold for obtaining a licence, so basically there is no grandfathering of existing licensees; they have basically been exempted from complying with the new liquor licensing regime for licences, which was a lot tighter but it does not help us if we have some dinosaur hotels sitting in the wrong place. The public health regulations basically say that if a public building is licensed to carry particular numbers of people, it should have to obtain public health approval from the local government.

[3.10 pm]

In addition, there are some mandatory requirements that also have to be met. Why this exemption was put forward is not apparent. But if these repeals do occur, those hotels now have to prepare to lower their maximum to 1 000 people unless in the meantime they engage with their local council to negotiate and meet public health conditions to enable them to continue above the maximum. In other words, if these regulations were repealed, that would automatically halve the number of patrons at our two beachfront hotels. If they wanted to go back above that maximum, they would have to install the mandatory risk management plan—quite surprisingly, for a venue with 1 900 inebriated people and with stairs going everywhere, I am surprised that no-one does have a management plan, but maybe I am wrong—and a failsafe system to monitor patron numbers, plus any other public health condition the council thinks fit. I suppose, coming to this committee and looking at what might be achieved, the quickest and most effective solution I can see is to have the minister requested to repeal this particular regulation unless there is some obscure public benefit of which we are not aware.

**Mr P. ABETZ:** Can you just enlighten us. I am not familiar with Cottesloe Hotel and the —

**Mr K. Morgan:** Ocean Beach Hotel.

**Mr P. ABETZ:** I know where they are, but I have never been there drinking on a Friday or Saturday night. Are these creating a major issue there in terms of drunken behaviour in that area?

**Mr K. Morgan:** The answer is yes. The population of Cottesloe is 6 000 or 7 000 people. On a typically busy Sunday evening, we would have approximately 2 000 people in each of those venues. There is probably about the same again on the footpaths in queues trying to get in. Most of this has arisen simply because once upon a time in the six o'clock-swill days they created a lot of bars for everyone to get a bit of elbow space. All the blokes would stand there and blah, blah, blah. Back in the 90s these venues started to become more and more popular, as they were some of the last big hotels left in the city, as more and more of them got turned over to residential development. The council back in those days, I suppose, was quite aggressive and adversarial in tackling this problem. They brought 117 applications with the Director of Liquor Licensing and sought to gather the evidence. Back in the late 90s there was a settlement of sorts reached during one of those pieces of litigation. As a result of that, the three bars on the ground floor of the Ocean Beach Hotel are confined to having 1 000 people in them at any one time. That is in addition to the upstairs bars which can get them up to far higher numbers anyway. But, I suppose, by the early 2000s the council changed tack. We are more into the process of gathering evidence first rather than shooting first these days. I suppose we have learnt to get the evidence before we launch a case—not surprisingly. We have also appreciated that there was limited utility in going down those particular paths. The Director of Liquor Licensing could do only so much and, quite bluntly, it was probably just pushing the deckchairs around on the *Titanic*, so to speak; it was not making a huge difference in terms of numbers.

The other factor we faced is complaint fatigue. That has probably been the biggest one we have realised over the past few years. It is a very common acknowledgement from residents that they do not complain any more. They have been complaining for 20 years and they have well and truly given up. I can still field complaints from a 90-year-old lady who rings up. She has lived there for more than 50 years. The hotels were relatively quiet suburban hotels in their day but they have changed. She has not changed and her house has not changed, but her neighbour has changed in terms of what this state allows her neighbour to do. Now she is ringing me about someone urinating in through her bedroom window at 11 o'clock on a Sunday evening. There is not much you can tell people about that, apart from explaining to them that Parliament in its wisdom has left us with liquor licensing laws that say, "Yes, you can try to bring these hotels into line if you can show that they are duly impacting the amenity of the area." But the case law establishes that when you look at the amenity of an area you must look at it as being the amenity of an area with a hotel licensed to hold 2000 people in it. The way the law then looks at it is, "What do you expect if you are living beside a hotel licensed for 2 000 people. People are going to urinate in through your window on the odd occasion." That is how we are hamstrung. The more these hotels are licensed for, the more the amenity of the area is supposed to accommodate this type of venue.

Those changes to the licence conditions have occurred surreptitiously, basically. Back in the 90s they tried to increase the numbers by saying that rather than having one person for every square metre, you needed only one person for every half a square metre. Cottesloe successfully challenged that back in the late 90s. We challenged again through the upper house in 2001 where a disallowance motion was successful. But then it came back in 2002 with amendments to the public health regulations which enabled them to have .85 square metres per person. All of these changes have just steadily increased the allowable numbers in these hotels.

**The CHAIRMAN:** I am going to call you to a close, but we are obviously very interested in what you have to say.

**Mr K. Morgan:** Anyway, that is where we have got to now.

**The CHAIRMAN:** We would need to look at why the changes were introduced and the rationale that was put forward for those. We would also need to compare the licence system here and ask if it was consistent with what was happening in other states. But I would like to hear from each person. You obviously have a lot more that you would like to say. If we do not get around to things in questions, then we would be happy to accept from you —

**Mr K. Morgan:** I actually do not have a lot more to say, other than simply saying that we have now moved on to considering an application to the Director of Liquor Licensing, where the director himself can basically issue a show-cause notice on the publicans. Rather than us having to take them on, the director can, and we are weighing that up.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Thank you. Matthew, it is lovely to see you again. Fremantle has led the charge in many areas as a council, so we are very interested to hear what you have to say in relation to this inquiry.

**Mr M.R. Piggott:** First of all, thank you for the opportunity to address the committee. I would like to pass on the apologies of the mayor, Brad Pettitt, and also the CEO, Graeme Mackenzie, who cannot be here today. In my capacity as coordinator of environmental health and building services, I am happy to present to the committee. In terms of the submission that I am going to make orally today, I will be focusing my comments on part two of the terms of reference, which is to inquire into the impact on communities and social costs of alcohol and illicit drug problems in Western Australia.

I will commence by just giving a bit of a run-down on some of the initiatives that the City of Fremantle has used to perhaps mitigate some of these problems. What we have done is to introduce a number of policies and also strategies to combat the negative effects of alcohol. Specifically, the “Fremantle Accord” is a community-based harm-minimisation strategy of the city aimed at reducing crime and violence involving intoxicated people in and around the city of Fremantle. The “Fremantle Accord” is a voluntary local industry agreement that began in 1995 as an agreed code of practice involving the WA Police; the Fremantle licensees; the Department of Racing, Gaming and Liquor; the City of Fremantle; and various Department of Health agencies. The “Fremantle Accord”, like other local accords, aimed to promote the responsible service of alcohol in the liquor industry and provide safe licensed premises for patrons, and facilitate a professional relationship with respect between licensees, police, government agencies and the community. At the City of Fremantle we hold bimonthly accord meetings which promote open communication between licensees, police and government agencies. It is not an enforcement tool and it is not a compulsory-attendance body either.

The aim, essentially, is to reinforce the principles of alcohol harm minimisation, reduce the prevalence of alcohol-related incidents in Fremantle and talk about current issues. We find that is a good tool in terms of creating a network between police, local government and the licensees and it fosters open and frank communication and obviously allows licensees to become familiar with their local police and local council members. It also gives them the ability to forge a network amongst their peers, so that if there is problem on the street, they are comfortable and willing to call each other and say, “Hey, there is trouble, it is coming your way, get your security staff ready, be mindful; and, the police are coming.” There is that sort of awareness of what is happening on a particular night on the streets of Fremantle.

To complement the accord, the Fremantle Alcohol Advisory Committee was established in 2007. It ran for two years. It currently does not exist, but it was an officially constituted body that was established by council to discuss a wide range of liquor issues in Fremantle. The alcohol advisory committee was appointed to examine options for implementing some of the 2006 state government reforms to the Liquor Control Act. Membership consisted of five councillors; four community representatives, including a licensed restaurant and cafe sector representative; a precinct group representative; a youth representative; someone from the Fremantle Chamber of Commerce; plus

one City of Fremantle staff member—myself. The objectives of the alcohol advisory committee were to promote flexibility for restaurants to serve alcohol without the necessity for a complete meal in outdoor dining areas. This was seen as flexibility in a relatively low-risk drinking environment, as opposed to a high-risk nightclub environment, that would promote business opportunities and also allow the public choice in terms of visiting a venue that was seen as relatively family friendly and safe to enjoy alcohol and not necessarily having to go through —

**The CHAIRMAN:** I am interested in where you are going to take us with this, Matthew, because we are aware of research in the eastern states that shows that these boutique venues have been a problem. Please continue.

**Mr M.R. Piggott:** From the Fremantle perspective, as a general overview, we found that a reduction in the number of high-risk premises, be it the nightclubs combined with an increase in the number of low-risk venues, promotes greater choice and perhaps less intense consumption of alcohol within Fremantle, which then has that flow-on effect of less trouble in the venues and less trouble on the streets.

One of the other strategies that relates to the point I have just raised was to encourage applications for small bar licences within Fremantle and also to promote stronger harm minimisation and policing measures to promote responsible drinking and reduce antisocial behaviour. That advisory committee has now ceased to be, but it did achieve some of its aims, particularly the creation of a policy titled “Consumption of liquor without a meal in outdoor eating areas”. The City of Fremantle is now comfortable to allow licensed restaurants that have an outdoor eating area to apply for a liquor-without-a-meal permit in that setting, provided they meet various requirements of the Department of Racing, Gaming and Liquor, mainly the public interest test and harm minimisation principles.

The city has a number of liquor policies that were adopted in the 1990s. It is apparent that a number of these policies are out of date currently, but the intent of those policies is particularly relevant and current. The city is currently using its local planning scheme number 4 as its guiding tool in how it approves or rejects licensed premises applications. Local planning scheme number 4 was most recently amended in February 2009 to introduce a small bar use class and to reflect statutory changes to liquor control. Essentially, our entertainment use classes include nightclub, hotel, tavern, small bar, liquor store, restaurant and “licensed premises at other”. Those types of entertainment uses are granted either discretionary approval by council or discretionary approval following advertisement by council, depending upon the particular zone of land that they fall in, whether it be commercial or mixed use for example. In terms of the strategies that the City of Fremantle has adopted to deal with community safety and crime prevention, the city acknowledges that it is a major entertainment precinct and tourist hub with in excess of half a million domestic daytrippers annually and a quarter of a million domestic overnight visitors per year with 68 per cent of international visitors to WA staying in Fremantle overnight.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Have you noticed any increase in younger drinkers who may no longer be going to the Northbridge area because of the problems there?

**Mr M.R. Piggott:** There does not appear to be a specific increase in patronage in terms of maximum volume within Fremantle, but what we have been finding is that some of our strategies that have been put into place are actually perhaps proactively preventing problems before they arise. As Kevin alluded to earlier, each licensed venue will have a maximum patronage figure, which they are not to exceed. It may be the case that there are more people lining up in queues waiting to enter these venues, but the licensees know full well that inspections can be performed and if they breach the maximum patronage the consequence is they can be prosecuted under the regulations.

The City of Fremantle’s safer streets in Fremantle project has been targeting the antisocial impacts from alcohol and drug consumption. The city obviously is renowned for its cappuccino strip and nightlife and its abundance of restaurants, shopping and tourist attractions and pubs. For a number

of years it has been experiencing alcohol-related antisocial behaviours, including vandalism, harassment, assaults, drunkenness and offensive behaviour, including urinating and vomiting in public places and from time to time drug dealing as well within the precinct. The community is quick to tell us that they see a need for a safe and family friendly CBD. To achieve that, the City of Fremantle has expended in the order of \$800 000 in its safer streets in Fremantle project. This project included the installation of CCTV cameras. We have a network of 11 CCTV cameras in the CBD that are monitored 24 hours a day, where the monitoring room is staffed 18 hours a day from Thursday to Saturday and 12 hours a day from Sunday to Wednesday. This has been successful in alerting police and other services to various incidents as they occur, allowing them to respond before antisocial behaviour escalates, and CCTV provides reassurance and the perception of safety for the general public. We have found that this is particularly reassuring to our seniors. In terms of our initiatives —

**The CHAIRMAN:** I am going to have to ask you to sum up to make sure we can hear from each person.

**Mr M.R. Piggott:** I am happy to close.

**The CHAIRMAN:** We are happy to take the paper that you have as a submission, if there are any areas you have missed.

**Mr M.R. Piggott:** I will be very brief. Additional measures have included 37 additional streetlights, an Indigenous patrol, a local business security patrol and additional ranger staff and patrols. In terms of the current legislative regime, the Liquor Control Act confers enforcement powers on officers from the Department of Racing, Gaming and Liquor and WA Police so that it falls on those agencies to enforce liquor licence conditions and the Liquor Control Act. The perception of members of the City of Fremantle, and also many in the environmental health profession, is that not enough inspectors are employed by the Department of Racing, Gaming and Liquor and there are not enough police dedicated to liquor enforcement to allow liquor licence conditions to be adequately enforced.

[3.30 pm]

It may be that if there were more officers going through venues late at night throughout the metropolitan area, there may be more infringements issued for breaches of the Liquor Control Act by licensees. There may also be more move-on notices issued to antisocial and drunk patrons. Larger fines may be more of a deterrent to licensees and patrons in terms of acting appropriately and in accordance with the act.

One of the common themes that runs through the “Fremantle Accord” is that there appears to be not enough money focused on public education campaigns, and the Drug and Alcohol Office at the Department of Health has limited resources in this regard. There have been a number of campaigns that address, or promote, the harmful effects of alcohol, but perhaps there have not been enough campaigns that educate the public on appropriate patron behaviour in licensed venues and also highlight the obligations of licensees to prohibit entry to intoxicated patrons, or to prohibit the sale of alcohol to intoxicated patrons. There is a legal right to restrict entry and the sale of alcohol, and the fact that this may not be widely known amongst the alcohol-consuming public may cause a lot of conflict in these venues on a weekend.

My final point is that in terms of changing the drinking culture in Western Australia, perhaps the biggest gains are to be made by targeting the young and by putting resources into school education programs. It may assist this in the longer-term.

**Mr P. ABETZ:** Matthew, it is interesting that Fremantle has spent a lot of money—like \$800 000—on CCTV and all that sort of thing. Where is the funding actually coming from for that? Is that actually being funded by the vendors of alcohol or is that coming out of general rate revenue?

**Mr M.R. Piggott:** It is coming from general rate revenue, and I believe the City of Fremantle may have sourced a grant for part of its initiative.

**Mr I.C. BLAYNEY:** How about the Aboriginal patrol based there?

**Mr M.R. Piggott:** I believe, once again, it is a combined city initiative with a grant, but I am probably not —

**The CHAIRMAN:** Perhaps you could provide us that as supplementary information.

**Mr M.R. Piggott:** Yes; I will take those questions on notice and get back to you.

**The CHAIRMAN:** We might move on to you, Alison.

**Mrs A. Hailes:** Thank you, and thank you for the opportunity to present to the committee today on behalf of the association. I will make some broad comments based on the feedback that we have received from our member councils, and in particular some of the projects we have done with a number of those councils, with the assistance of the Drug and Alcohol Office.

Perhaps if I could firstly just add to the answer that Matthew gave about the funding for CCTV and the community security patrols et cetera. There is, at the moment, a growing expectation of local government in the role that it will fulfil with community safety and crime prevention. We have had quite a long relationship with the Office of Crime Prevention and WA Police in looking at what an appropriate role for local government is in that. Seed funding has been provided for capital items, either in full or in part payment, for infrastructure that local governments have deployed, such as CCTV cameras, for instance, but all the ongoing costs associated with that type of infrastructure and the community security patrols et cetera are borne by the local government. Whilst they might get some contribution initially from the state government, certainly the operational costs are borne by the sector.

I just wanted to give a quick overview of the impacts alcohol and illicit drugs have on the community from a local government perspective and a quick outline of local governments' involvement in dealing with those impacts and of the alcohol management plans and policies that are currently being undertaken within local government more broadly. Just as a general opening statement, I would like to say that local government is now widely recognised as playing an important health and wellbeing role in the community, and it is a key sector in which gains can be made. I think that certainly the feedback we have had from our members has indicated that a lot of effort at the moment is going into the clean-up and repair side of things, and it would be much better to perhaps prevent issues arising in the first instance. If we could redirect our efforts into prevention programs and ways of avoiding land-use conflicts et cetera, that would be a much better and more effective use of public funds.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Is WALGA looking at developing any papers in terms of what it would like to see done by the state government on prevention programs, or the prevention approach?

**Mrs A. Hailes:** We developed a toolkit a number of years ago that has actually received national recognition, so I will go into that in more detail. In a general sense, over the past few years the association has made comprehensive submissions on the review of the act and the role of the liquor licensing authority, and the need to have better integration between the planning, public health, building, and liquor licensing systems.

**The CHAIRMAN:** When you say that you have made several submissions over the past few years, would we be able to have a copy of those submissions from the past 10 years?

**Mrs A. Hailes:** Yes, I can provide you with all the papers that we have previously written.

We have also worked very closely with the Department of Planning and the Office of Crime Prevention, looking at, for instance, how the system does not accommodate the cumulative impact of licensed venues in very small localities or in small a small area.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Like Cottesloe?

**Mrs A. Hailes:** We have also run a number of information and education forums for local government in partnership with various state government agencies, such as the Drug and Alcohol Office. WA Police talked to a broad range of local government officers and elected members, and we have also had a lot of contact with community groups who then provide other support services to people within local government areas.

In 2005, in partnership with the Drug and Alcohol Office, we conducted a survey of local governments in Western Australia. That survey showed that many local governments deal either directly or indirectly with a range of alcohol and drug-related issues in their communities, such as littering—especially glass and syringes—reckless and dangerous driving, vandalism, drinking in public places, underage drinking, family issues and domestic violence, antisocial behaviour, and violence generally. More rural and remote local governments reported the family and domestic violence as an issue, compared with metropolitan local governments. We have concluded that whilst both rural and metro-based locations share some common alcohol and drug issues, the nature of those issues—particularly the environments in which they are occurring—are often very different.

At a different level, the feedback we had from councils in terms of the feedback they were getting from their communities does seem to be around the community's perception of safety and the inherent damage to complex social interactions that occur as a consequence of drug and alcohol issues, and the sense of community that is actually either generated or destroyed.

[3.40 pm]

Amenity within a local area was also very much an issue that was identified. Whether it is the littering, graffiti or just general damage that is done to buildings, the impact on local governments from the desire of the community to see a response is quite significant.

In terms of local governments involvement at the moment, obviously there are statutory obligations. These predominantly relate to maintaining public spaces and properties and the planning and approvals side of the development of licensed premises. We do not actually have any official statistics as yet; however, anecdotally our members have indicated that maintaining and repairing vandalised property is conservatively estimated at tens of millions of dollars per year.

At the same time, community expectations of the councils have grown across a number of their operational areas, particularly in relation to health activities and its role in public health more generally. The increasing need to commit resources to community safety places an extra burden on local government revenue resources. Apart from those safety and crime impacts, the social, health and wellbeing issues are increasingly affecting at-risk groups, such as youth, and are impacting on the demand for those services that are provided by local government. One of the others areas in which it is felt quite sharply is in the financial assistance, or financial support and advice services that local governments offer to families at risk. It is worth noting that under the proposed new public health act, local governments will have additional responsibilities in preparing local health plans, which will feed into the broader public health plan for WA. The model for those local health plans is being developed at the moment and there is a high expectation that they will include alcohol and drug-related strategies targeted at the particular circumstances in a local government.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Is this an unfair question, Allison: will WALGA be supporting Cottesloe in terms of there being a limit on the numbers?

**Mrs A. Hailes:** In relation to Cottesloe, certainly the key issue is the exemption that the licensed premises there currently have. It is quite a complex issue in Cottesloe because it has two very large barn-like pubs that directly abut residential areas. How two completely conflicting land uses are managed at such a scale will always be an issue. Certainly we would support Cottesloe. In fact, the Town of Cottesloe did participate in work that the association did on liquor licensing about three or

four years ago. In the papers that I give you there are specific examples relating to Cottesloe that were provided by the town.

The key strategies that local governments can undertake at the moment relate to developing and enforcing alcohol policies, especially in relation to the use of council-owned facilities. For example, the City of Rockingham noted that damage to its facilities was significant at both high facilities and other public facilities when alcohol was allowed. It has taken the appropriate steps.

Town planning to create safer environments: for example, the City of Subiaco is implementing an alcohol policy specifically in relation to town planning involving density of outlets, mapping and more intensive assessment of liquor licensing applications. There is increasing involvement in liquor licensing matters by local government, including commenting on the applications that are made to the Department of Racing, Gaming and Liquor and monitoring of licensed venues.

**The CHAIRMAN:** I will have to ask you to sum up, because we would like to hear from Frank. Again, could we have copies of those?

**Mrs A. Hailes:** I will provide copies. In closing, the association developed what is called “The Local Government Alcohol Management Package”, which is a toolkit to assist WA local governments develop alcohol management strategies and plans. It is a really comprehensive document. We developed this with the assistance of funding from the state government through Drug and Alcohol and, I think, the Attorney General’s office. At the beginning of this year we received a grant from Drug and Alcohol of \$120 000 to run a pilot project with 12 local governments to actually go through and implement this within their councils. I have a list of those 12 councils. They are in the process of finalising those plans. We have a range of feedback from the 12 councils that have been involved in that process. It has been extremely successful.

**The CHAIRMAN:** As we are having to move on now, can you give us a summary of that feedback by way of supplementary information, because it sounds very interesting?

**Mrs A. Hailes:** Do you want a summary in a written form?

**The CHAIRMAN:** Yes.

**Mrs A. Hailes:** Absolutely.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Would you identify the councils and provide a summary? It maybe that later we might invite one of those councils to discuss their involvement with the committee.

**Mrs A. Hailes:** Finally, there is a survey underway. At the moment the analysis is being conducted and the survey has been completed. It involves the analysis of data provided by six local governments that were asked to consider the costs associated with issues such as clean-up and litter management, security event management and noise complaints. The outcomes of that will be available at the end of July. We will be happy to provide that as well.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Thank you very much, we will be happy to receive that. Frank, last but not least—we have been looking forward to your contribution. The City of Perth, particularly in relation to tobacco, has set a wonderful example. We are very interested in your comments in this area.

**Mr F.R. Edwards:** Thank you and thank you for inviting me here. I will try not to replicate what has already been said, particularly by Allison. Many of the things that WALGA is involved in, we have been involved in with it or supplementary to it. Perhaps I will, therefore, jump around a bit and make a few comments that have not been made before.

I guess the City of Perth is unique in that it is the central business district and it proudly acknowledges that Northbridge is the premier adult night time entertainment precinct for the Perth metropolitan area. Having said that, there are other precincts that have a significant role to play in providing that service within the community. Two of them are represented here today, but there are obviously others throughout the metropolitan area and throughout many large cities in the state and,

of course, they exist everywhere in the world. The fact is that there is a demand in our society for precincts and venues within those precincts for the enjoyment of that adult night time entertainment.

[3.50 pm]

That is a fact of life. Obviously Northbridge is the premier one within this state. But it is also growing within the central business district, particularly in the area of Murray Street, and as more small bars and things open. Small bars were mentioned by the City of Fremantle. The City of Perth has been encouraging small bar growth, spread out across the city, as it does provide alternate venues and it does diffuse the numbers by making them available in a wider area, therefore we hope reducing the impact of the consolidation such as occurs in places like Northbridge. Every city in the world has an entertainment precinct, and we do not shy away from that.

**The CHAIRMAN:** I did not ask Matthew this question, but is there any set rule of thumb in terms of how many of them would be able to provide alcohol without a meal? I was thinking of the boutique restaurants that apply for a liquor licence.

**Mrs A. Hailes:** They are small bar licences.

**Mr F.R. Edwards:** There are a number of them. But they generally have low numbers—fewer than 100 people, or 100 to 120 people maximum. It varies depending on the premise's size and the application under the liquor licensing rules. Obviously we only assess them from the development application point of view, and we provide advice to liquor licensing if they request it with regard to the application for a licence. But my view would be that some of the new ones that have opened up are very good places, well managed, and they do diffuse or provide a place to go where there are less significant numbers and therefore less significant behavioural issues.

**The CHAIRMAN:** So that is small bar licences. There are also licences for cafes to supply alcohol without a meal. Do you have any restrictions for those cafes?

**Mr F.R. Edwards:** I cannot specifically answer that question because I do not know the detail. But the city has been supportive in the creation of small boutique venues in laneways or around the city that assist in providing that alternate place where people can go for a drink after work. It adds to city vibrancy. It is a service that people want. It does diffuse some of the numbers that would be attracted otherwise to these concentration areas or to the larger venues. I think there is value in having a diversity of venue, particularly smaller venues of a more intimate nature with fewer numbers.

Just in terms of some of the numbers, the City of Perth is also obviously involved in an accord. It meets regularly. The Business Improvement Group of Northbridge has over the past year had a very active subcommittee of licensed venue operators who are working with the various authorities to try to ensure that they are managing those Northbridge premises in an appropriate way and trying to reduce issues of poor behaviour. As has been stated, crime prevention through environmental design is a principle that we practice whenever we develop anything around the city. One example is the Northbridge Piazza. The city bought an old licensed venue, bulldozed it and created a green open space where people could gather which did not involve alcohol and which would provide a public space venue where people could diffuse to rather than hang out in the streets. That has been very successful, because it provides alternate forms of entertainment, and it also attracts families back into the precinct for things like the general exhibition Saturday night movies that are free to the public and things of that nature.

The avoidance of dark spaces, lighting, and any initiative that enhances safety are obviously all a consequence of these things, but not solely in response to alcohol and drugs. There will always be elements on the streets that are out to create havoc regardless of whether they have been involved in drugs, alcohol or whatever. We have the most extensive CCTV system of any inner city area in Australia. It was acknowledged some years ago that it was one of the most sophisticated systems in the southern hemisphere. We now have 176 cameras located in Northbridge and the CBD. That

costs us approximately \$1.2 million a year. It has been operating, I believe, for at least 15 years now, if not 20 years, and cameras are added annually. Ninety-nine per cent of the expenditure has been by the city for the city. But it is not just about managing alcohol premises. It is about managing the entire CBD and enhancing that security and improving response by the police officer who sits with the City of Perth staff who man the operations centre. It is manned 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year. In some years past we also provided a service to monitor the cameras that existed in Claremont for some period, following the incidents that occurred in the Claremont strip some years ago when some young people were targeted and killed. So we have a massive investment in our CCTV system. Similarly, we have over 240 infrastructure asset protection cameras in car parks and things of that nature. They are on a separate system. That indicates that we do have a strong commitment to try to provide a safe environment.

I would make the observation that over the past six or eight months, it would seem that the police statistics indicate that there has been a reduction in bad behaviour and serious incidents in the Northbridge precinct. It received a lot of attention in the media until six months ago for about a year. The city is not of the view that that was entirely warranted. At times, many incidents are reported as being in Northbridge even if they are not in Northbridge. They might be in North Perth, in Beaufort Street or something like that, but generally that collective name seems to go there. There has been a range of things, but the city has tried to work with the various authorities to assist. There have been suggestions about things like closing some of the streets to vehicles at night. It is the city's view that taking vehicles out does not necessarily improve anything—other than providing more space to misbehave in! The presence of lights and traffic and moving cars contributes to the vibrancy, the eyes on the street and things of that nature.

I support the comments made about the relationship between the residential and the night-time venues. Northbridge has existed for many, many years. There are now calls from recent residential developments close to these venues to close them down and turn the noise down. The city has generally been of the view that these premises have been there for a long time. We are seeking to take a more coherent approach in terms of noise management, enforcing double glazing on windows, and putting caveats on buildings so that people know that they are buying an apartment that is 50 metres from the Deen and that the Deen is a live music venue. There is a demand for live music venues. They will occur. It is only a matter of how we manage them.

**The CHAIRMAN:** I did not ask the other speakers about this, but what about transport and these venues?

**Mr F.R. Edwards:** I was going to come to that. Quite simplistically, the public transport system in the Perth metropolitan area takes people to all the night-time entertainment areas around the entire metropolitan area, but then at two o'clock it stops and there is no-one to take them home if the venues are open past that time. The venues in Northbridge in particular are open until 3.00 am, 4.00 am, 5.00 am or 6.00 am, and between 2.00 am and 6.00 the trains do not run and the buses do not run. So we take them in but we do not take them home. Therefore, there are issues around managing that group of people when they are seeking to get home. However, that does come to that next statement I was going to make, which is about the social responsibility that should exist in society but which is lacking and which is causing the bad consequences. The fact is that people will and always have wanted to go out and seek to be entertained, with alcohol and food and dancing and music in the evening. Society very much wants to do it later at night for some reason. That is a change in people's behaviours. Well, do you force people to change their behaviour, or do you amend your services and facilities to meet the changing needs of a population? I do not know the answer to that.

I do not know the answer to that; the fact is that when I was young, we were home by midnight because everything was closed, but if we are going to allow facilities to be open until 6.00 am, we must provide the infrastructure to allow them to release and distribute from these venues. We shared

costing with the Department of Transport for a time to provide buses, as I think Fremantle did also, but no-one used the buses. They did not want to pay \$5 and go on a group bus. Although we part-funded it, it had very few takers to take people along the major corridors. There is an issue about how people get transported home from any of these night-time venues—not just Northbridge, but certainly, from my point of view, Northbridge in particular. The City of Perth also manages things such as major music festivals. They involve alcohol; they are licensed premises. However, our experience has been, when they have been held in places like the Esplanade, the Supreme Court Gardens, Heirisson Island and Wellington Square, which are the prime venues, the council has put in place mechanisms to limit the number of them per year in order to ensure that there is a balance between the residences and businesses operating in the city and these venues. We also have more sophisticated venues, like the International Arts Festival Beck's Verandah on the Esplanade and Cirque du Soleil. All these venues involve alcohol, but generally speaking, the rules and regulations set in train those requirements. There is now a memorandum of understanding between the City of Perth and the Department of Transport—it is not a written memorandum, but we have agreed to it—that at music venues where major festivals occur that are enclosed, have security guards and at which liquor is served and provided, public transport tickets are to be a component of the approval, to ensure that public transport can be provided, because otherwise the Department of Transport cannot put on extra trains unless the funding is there in advance for those sorts of services.

**The CHAIRMAN:** In some other states there is a requirement that the organisers of large concerts and festivals supply only low-alcohol beer rather than full-strength beer.

**Mr F.R. Edwards:** Generally speaking, those sorts of limitations are imposed by the liquor licence that is issued. I am not aware that spirits are served generally, but then again, I have not attended them. My comment would be that they have been generally well-organised and well conducted. There are some residual behaviours from people who have not been able to get in, or people who arrive tanked and are turned away. There are always some behaviours in the areas around, but it would be the council's view that they are manageable, given that they are not an every week occurrence. Basically there is a limitation of the number of them that can be held. Smaller activities and venues are not such an issue. There obviously have been reported issues over the years to do with Skyworks where between 250 000 and 400 000 people attended, depending on the year. Over the past two years there have been significant improvements through consistent and strong messages as to the action that will be taken on the illicit use of alcohol at those events. The simple fact is that it is against the law to drink in public open spaces in Western Australia, and we do not break the law for one day a year; it would be like saying that we can all speed for one day a year and not get fined, so I think that has seen significant changes. We have seen significantly less damage, vandalism, broken glass and poor behaviour. The strong message getting through is that any alcohol that has been served at such events has been in licensed premises created for the events, and I think that has seen a significant change. Once again, it is the issue of convincing people to be socially responsible and not always get tanked.

I will finish by saying that the anecdotal view of our surveillance people and our range of security officers is that the most concerning social aspect of excessive use of alcohol in the Northbridge precinct is by young people and particularly by young women, but that is anecdotal. A lot of them are turned away from the premises because those premises are required and supervised to ensure the responsible service of alcohol. It is people getting tanked up before they come in, and that is a social responsibility issue. There is one particular backpackers, for example, that I have heard about where a group of 100 young backpackers will all get as full as a goog and at 11 o'clock come out to hit a nightclub and walk up and down the street. That is the sort of social responsibility issue that needs to be addressed. Party buses are another issue. People drink at home, get on a party bus, and then get delivered into these areas. I do not think it is so much the excessive service of alcohol to patrons within the premises; there are so many rules and regulations around that, and so much training

required, and there are heavy fines for operators who breach those rules. It is the issue of people drinking in car parks or at home before they come out.

**Mr P. ABETZ:** We had the nightclub owner's association, or whatever it is called, present to us. One of the things that they were floating when we were discussing things was the whole issue of such late closing times creating a lot of issues. If the hotels were required to close, say, two hours earlier and the nightclubs also required to close two hours earlier, it would basically push it all back a bit and create space in Northbridge and the entertainment precincts to allow the place to be cleaned up and to develop a culture of going out for breakfast. They were very positive about that. I would be interested in your thoughts on that, because they felt that reducing the number of hours in which people could drink would actually help to address some of the issues. The major problems—I cannot remember the exact time—appear to be between 11.00 pm and 3.00 am. That is when 80 per cent of the violence and events transpire in Northbridge. I am just wondering if any of you people might like to comment on that.

**The CHAIRMAN:** I might tap onto that, because time is running short, and ask that when you answer that question, we will go around and this will be your summing-up. One side is the hours. Is there a part you want to have added to this?

**Mr I.C. BLAYNEY:** Are backpacker establishments allowed to be licensed venues?

**Mr F.R. Edwards:** Some of them have licensed bars, yes.

**Mr I.C. BLAYNEY:** I thought I had been somewhere that had a bar, but I could not quite remember!

**The CHAIRMAN:** Peter's question about bringing the clock forward might be one option. This will be a two-minute summing-up; I am sorry, but we are running a bit late. What new initiative do you think the government could introduce that might help curb some of the problems we are seeing now in terms of antisocial behaviour and the costs to both the person and their families from excessive alcohol intake? I think I know what Kevin's will be, but we will nonetheless start with you!

**Mr K. Morgan:** In response to the latter bit, I will simply say that the problems on Cottesloe Beach are caused by the state Parliament; no-one else. The state Parliament has allowed these dinosaur hotels to continue to exist and has not reined them in, presumably because of the AHA, and we simply say, rein them in. It is about time that these licensed venues were brought into the public health and local government planning fold. The state has been deliberately keeping them out of that fold, and as a result the communities are suffering immensely. We keep on wasting hundreds of thousands of dollars a year. We have had years of initiatives and speaking on a monthly basis with hoteliers and police, having the community meet with them and cleaning up our beaches. We opened the first restaurant in Western Australia that could serve liquor without a meal.

[4.10 pm]

That does not open on Sundays because they are sick and tired of being on the short end of the stick when it comes to the patrons from these big beer barns. We would like to have small, intimate bars in our recreation tourism precinct—it is not an entertainment precinct—and, if anything, the state government should simply bring in a matrix of factors that they take into account, such as the city of Victoria overseas when they license these venues and they should not license them in perpetuity.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Do you think there should be a restriction on the number of licensed venues within a certain geographical area?

**Mr K. Morgan:** I believe local governments have the power to do that under their land use laws already and no doubt some may want to do it so that they avoid turning into a nightclub alcohol strip, such as some may consider.

**The CHAIRMAN:** What about Peter's question in relation to the hours?

**Mr K. Morgan:** In relation to the hours, I suppose I pick up what Frank pointed out, and I believe it is foolhardy to try to change people's behaviours. I think you should work with the behaviours as they currently seem to be. I would say the biggest problem we see is that our tourism recreation precinct is not well serviced by public transport, particularly at night. The only answer is, in fact, taxis. You cannot just expect public transport to get out these long, articulated vehicles to shuffle home a few people. What we need is taxis and, once again, if the state Parliament would deregulate our taxi industry so that some migrant does not have to pay half a million dollars to provide the pleasure of driving people around in a taxi, we would all be better off and these inebriated people could quietly find their way home, instead of staggering through our suburban streets kicking over mailboxes and whatever else they do.

**Mr M.R. Piggott:** In terms of the hours of operation question, currently hotels are required to close their doors at midnight, sometimes 1.00 am if they have an extended trading permit. So, I suppose the perception is that the biggest problems are between 11.00 pm and 3.00 am, and that seems to indicate that it is the nightclubs that open until 5.00 am or 6.00 am.

**Mr P. ABETZ:** In Northbridge they open until two o'clock.

**Mr M.R. Piggott:** Right; okay. In terms of the hours of operation, I do not know that it is perhaps the time that the venues are open, but perhaps the patron behaviour whilst in those premises. There seems to be a need amongst the youth and the wider community to be entertained late at night. It is just perhaps the manner in which they are entertained. If they are free to consume copious quantities of alcohol without deterrent, if the licensed venues are not subject to fines for serving intoxicated patrons, I think that is when these issues are exacerbated. So it may be that we already have the laws to address some of these issues, particularly under the Liquor Control Act, but because there are not the resources —

**The CHAIRMAN:** The FTEs.

**Mr M.R. Piggott:** — in the Department of Racing, Gaming and Liquor and also the police, to actually monitor and go into the venues, assess the situation, issue infringements and issue move-on notices, that problem exacerbates, fights and violence occur, and the community is destroyed, and there is graffiti perhaps. Perhaps that is part of the cause and effect. In terms of nightclubs versus hotels versus small bars versus restaurants and liquor without a meal, the Department of Racing, Gaming and Liquor would be able to give you a good overview of the stats and the geographical spread. It may be that the saturation of venues is part of the problem, but I would say it is the behaviour within those venues once again that either causes a problem or does not cause a problem.

I believe that the taxi issue and the transport issue is a big factor as well. If you do have people in the entertainment precincts and no way of getting them home, the natural instinct is to amuse themselves and sometimes that is by graffiti and fighting and destroying things.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Allison, on both the timing and any new initiatives that you think would assist.

**Mrs A. Hailes:** In relation to the hours of operation, there are already differences in hours of operation depending on the locality et cetera. So I am not sure that reducing hours is necessarily the way to go. I agree that perhaps moving towards a culture of saying at a certain time the nightlife ends and we are starting to welcome the morning crowd is definitely one strategy worth looking at. But I think with the hours of operation, it is not just about the hours of operation; it is also about how late you can serve alcohol in glass containers, how late you allow venues to provide takeaway alcohol and that type of thing. So I think there is a whole raft of management issues associated with venues that need to be considered. I think the key thing that we would probably advocate for is to not allow the barn-type, large-scale venues to exist. They generate a certain mentality amongst the people that go there. You will get a certain type of or certain age of individual and whether it is a gang mentality or what have you, it will arise. Purely by the fact that you have got 2 000 people all in one small venue trying to talk, well, they cannot; they have to shout. That then spills out onto the

street, so that there all sorts of issues that it leads to. So we would say smaller venues; do not have the barn-type venue; and diversify, like the City of Perth and the City of Fremantle have. It is not about necessarily restricting the availability of alcohol; it is about providing more diversity in the types of venues that are available and encouraging drinking with a meal, as opposed to standing in a big pub. I will leave it there.

**The CHAIRMAN:** And Frank?

**Mr F.R. Edwards:** I might choose to disagree with some of the previous speakers! There will always be a demand, and at the moment in our society amongst young people there is a demand to be part of a large venue because of either a multiplicity of stages, bands, different rooms playing different types of music, and there is a demand there. And because there is a demand there, it is then met by business. The other point I would make is that in terms of the hours, let us not forget the fact that significant investment has been made by the people within the night-time entertainment industry based on sets of rules that have been made or based upon the licences that they have been issued with. They have made significant business investments on those bases, and I do think it is appropriate that the impact of any significant changes to hours be considered in that light. These industries are not necessarily always a licence to print money. There are considerable business risks; there are significant costs involved. The trouble with the hours is that they have grown up over time to be what they are, and there are different times in different places around the metro area. In the Northbridge case in particular pubs are open until two, many of the taverns until four and nightclubs until six. There has been some voluntary clawback of hours in recent time. But I hark back to my youth. At the age of 21, I could drive to another area of Perth and go into hotels that were open. There were always hotels open 24 hours of every day designed to service a particular industry. They were not in the city of Perth, but back then we had venues that you could go in and get a beer 24 hours a day. Now, I am not advocating that, but I think that the fact is that the industry has established itself now based on a set of hours that it has been given. It has made its business investment on that basis and I think that we need to take care than an even playing field is maintained between the different types of licensed venues in order that they survive and continue to flourish as appropriate within any new construct of hours that we establish, because they have different clienteles and they have clienteles that move from event to event during the evening.

[4.20 pm]

I do not think that the behaviours are primarily a cause of what goes on within the premises. We have stringent rules with a lot of checking that responsible service of alcohol is being conducted. I know many of the operators in Northbridge personally, I have been to their venues and I see them enforcing those rules. The problems I would say primarily occur in places like Northbridge after the patrons leave the premises or when they are denied entry to the premises because they have already overindulged either before they have entered the precinct or somewhere else—they have been thrown out and they want to get in somewhere else. One of the things that the City of Perth has long promoted is an active presence of pairs of policemen walking up and down the streets on the beat, rather than the necessarily mass groupings on horseback and things of that nature. Yes, those sorts of responses are required where they are appropriate but a consistent and ever-present law enforcement low-key presence, so that people are always aware that if something happens it will be dealt with quickly and efficiently, is something that the city has consistently promoted. Of course, one final thing: the more rules we make the more criminals we make.

**Mrs A. Hailes:** Thank you, I will just make one final comment from a general local government perspective. I guess the message would be that there is not a one-size-fits-all solution here. Certainly, there are certain experiences in Northbridge, Fremantle and Cottesloe and you can fairly readily understand what is and is not happening in those areas, but we also have councils such as Joondalup, Victoria Park and Vincent that experience quite different behaviours. I think that local

government's experience with the licensees or venue managers can be quite different; some are very responsible and others leave something to be desired.

The councils have said to us that they do see their role falling into two distinct areas. One is the planning for and assessment of applications for new venues. They want to work with the state government agencies to improve the considerations that are given and the coordination that is given at that stage of the process because it is not just about whether this approach fits on that particular site but rather the affiliated services that are associated with licensed premises. I think the second and much more distinct area is managing and regulating existing venues. There is a lot of confusion over roles and responsibilities for those existing venues outside of the CBD or Fremantle. For instance, in Joondalup and some of the other areas that I have mentioned, it is not clear whether the ranger, the environmental health officer or the police et cetera is actually meant to be dealing with a particular issue, and the councils would like to understand that better.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Whilst Frank was saying these businesses have built up over a long time, these businesses applied for a licence. There is no right to sell alcohol; it is a licence. Because of the problems that we are now having within the community, hopefully, with some of the work that WALGA is doing with the local communities, we can look at how we can ensure that the problems that are there that this committee is being told are escalating in the community, can be reduced.

Thank you all for your evidence before the committee today. A transcript of this hearing will be forwarded to you for correction of minor errors. Any such corrections must be made and the transcript returned within 10 days from the date of the letter attached to the transcript. If the transcript is not returned within this period, it will be deemed to be correct. New material cannot be added via these corrections and the sense of your evidence cannot be altered. Should you wish to provide additional information or elaborate on particular points, please include a supplementary submission for the committee's consideration when you return your corrected transcript.

Thank you all once again for coming along today.

**Hearing concluded at 4.24 pm**