



# Safe Night Out Strategy

June 2014

# Safe Night Out Strategy

A strategy to restore responsible behaviour and respect, stamp out alcohol and drug-related violence and ensure Queensland's nightlife is safe for all.

## Changing the culture—everyone is responsible

- **Queenslanders expect** that everyone will take responsibility and play their part to ensure a safe night out for all. Patrons, licensees and police are expected to uphold high standards of behaviour.
- **Queenslanders expect** our young people to be educated about the risk of drugs and their responsibilities when consuming alcohol.
- **Queenslanders expect** all licensed venues, including in Safe Night Precincts, to ensure responsible service of alcohol and not encourage reckless consumption of alcohol.

## Bad behaviour won't be tolerated

- **The Queensland Government will give police the power and resources** to respond quickly to alcohol and drug-related violence and anti-social behaviour (e.g. high visibility policing, drug detection dogs, covert and coordinated operations).
- **The Queensland Government will introduce tougher penalties** for violent and anti-social behaviour in and around licensed venues, including stronger, more responsive banning orders.
- **The Queensland Government will introduce a new offence** of unlawful striking causing death to address 'coward punch' deaths.
- **The Queensland Government will introduce mandatory community service**, as well as compulsory alcohol and drug counselling, for offenders.
- **The Queensland Government will change the laws** to make it easier to prosecute licensees who disregard responsible service of alcohol.
- **The Queensland Government will build a responsive, accountable and strengthened licensing system** that addresses community safety concerns while still encouraging Queenslanders to enjoy a fun night out.

## Safe and supportive environments

- **The Queensland Government will establish Safe Night Precinct local boards** to undertake the effective and safe local management of entertainment areas.
- **The Queensland Government will facilitate improved safety conditions for venues** to help prevent and manage alcohol and drug-related violence (e.g. lock-outs, ID scanners).
- **The Queensland Government will provide services and support** for patrons (e.g. rest and recovery areas, transport, amenity, lighting).
- **The Queensland Government will introduce an enhanced licensing and compliance regime** to manage and prevent alcohol and drug-related violence in and around licensed venues.



## Premier's Foreword

Queensland is a great place for a night out. We have fantastic restaurants, world-class venues, a thriving music and cultural scene and a climate that makes it a pleasure to be out at night.

Our unique and vibrant nightlife makes a significant contribution to the economic, cultural and social life of Queensland, attracting hundreds of thousands of tourists to Queensland each year. It should be preserved and celebrated.

Queenslanders have made it clear that violent and anti-social behaviour will not be tolerated in this great State, and the Government is committed to ensuring that everyone can enjoy a safe night out.

We asked Queenslanders how this should be achieved and we took the time to listen. 8000 comments were left on my Facebook page when the Government announced its intention to introduce a comprehensive strategy. In February 2014, the Government conducted an online survey on alcohol and drug-related violence that received over 12,000 responses. In March, we released a draft strategy and asked for Queenslanders' input.

We believe the Safe Night Out Strategy strikes the right balance between allowing people to go out and enjoy themselves when they want to, and making sure that people are safe, while taking into account very real community concerns about public safety in late-night trading areas. Most people drink and behave responsibly when they are in public and we have taken great care to ensure that the well behaved majority will not be punished, just because of the bad behaviour of a few.

The Safe Night Out Strategy is a comprehensive range of initiatives to address violence, anti-social behaviour and safety issues around licensed venues. It is about patrons, venues, communities and the Government coming together to create a safe, co-operative and vibrant culture for Queensland's nightlife.

The strategy includes initiatives to change the culture to restore responsible behaviour and respect, including education for school students and social marketing campaigns. Bad behaviour will not be tolerated. We will make sure that police and the courts have sufficient powers to deal with violent and anti-social behaviour, and that police and liquor licensing compliance officers can deal with unsafe venues and irresponsible service of alcohol practices. We will facilitate State Government agencies, local government, liquor licensees and community groups working together to build safe and supportive environments. We will also work with local communities to establish Safe Night Precincts across Queensland to ensure that key entertainment precincts have sufficient policing, support services and transport to manage high-volumes of patrons at peak times.

To make sure we get this right we have committed to a review of the Safe Night Out Strategy after twelve months.

We will monitor the success of actions and make any necessary adjustments to ensure the strategy is the best it can be.

The Safe Night Out Strategy is about preserving all that is unique and wonderful about Queensland's nightlife and making sure that everyone can enjoy a safe night out in this great State.

**Campbell Newman MP**  
**Queensland Premier**

## The Objective

A strategy to restore responsible behaviour and respect, stamp out alcohol and drug-related violence and ensure Queensland's nightlife is safe for all.

Everyone wants to enjoy a good night out, but too often in Queensland the occasion is ruined by the bad behaviour of those who become unduly intoxicated through alcohol and drugs.

Sometimes this irresponsible conduct involves indiscriminate aggression and violence that sadly can lead to tragic consequences.

As a community, Queenslanders have said clearly that they won't continue to tolerate bad and irresponsible behaviour.

It is time to act, to challenge head-on this scourge on Queensland's vibrant nightlife and restore common sense, responsibility and respect for others.

Everyone has a role to play—especially patrons, licensees, businesses and law enforcement officers—to ensure that people behave responsibly and safely when they are out at night.

The Queensland Government is doing its part by introducing tougher penalties for those who do not respect social norms and responsible behaviour. This means more police on the beat to enforce the law and increasing measures to make sure that licensees comply with their obligations to responsibly serve alcohol.

The Government will vigorously tackle the misguided culture that has led to the current break down in behaviour in our nightspots. This will include fostering a mature, responsible and safe drinking culture in Queensland, reinforced through social media and other forms of communication.

The Government is also developing new alcohol and drug education for Queensland students in Years 7 to 12 so that our young people learn about the dangers of binge drinking and illicit drug use.

Safe Night Precincts with local boards will be used to effectively manage and plan for high-volume, late-night trading areas. These Safe Night Precinct boards will be empowered to work with local communities, councils and the Queensland Government to foster and grow areas with diverse night-time economies.

This strategy sets out a plan to restore responsible behaviour and respect for others, help stamp out alcohol and drug-related violence and, above all, ensure that Queensland's nightlife is safe for all to enjoy.

For more information on the strategy, visit [www.qld.gov.au/safenightout](http://www.qld.gov.au/safenightout)

# Alcohol-related violence survey\*



Queenslanders are most likely to drink alcohol at pubs or private parties.



Patrons feel most safe getting a lift home and least safe walking.



More than half of all entertainment precinct patrons have witnessed violence in or around venues and public events.

## 75%

of Queenslanders consider alcohol-related violence to be a problem in central nightclub districts.

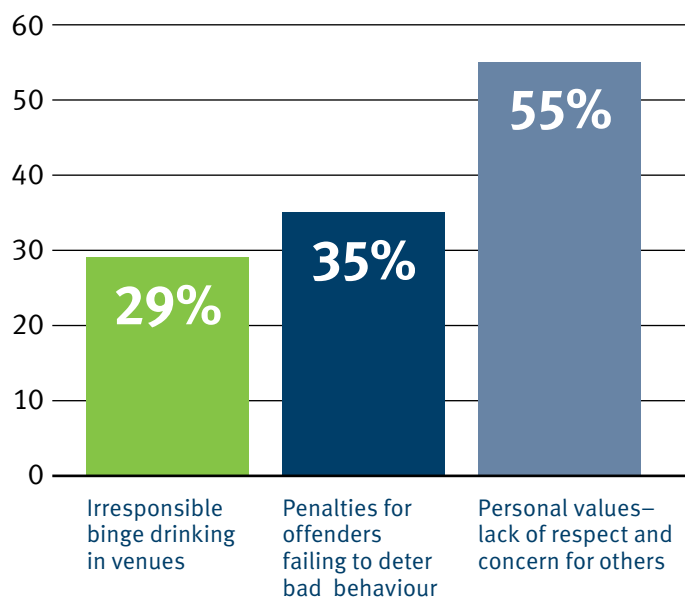
## 78%

of patrons who witnessed violence said it was between people they did not know.

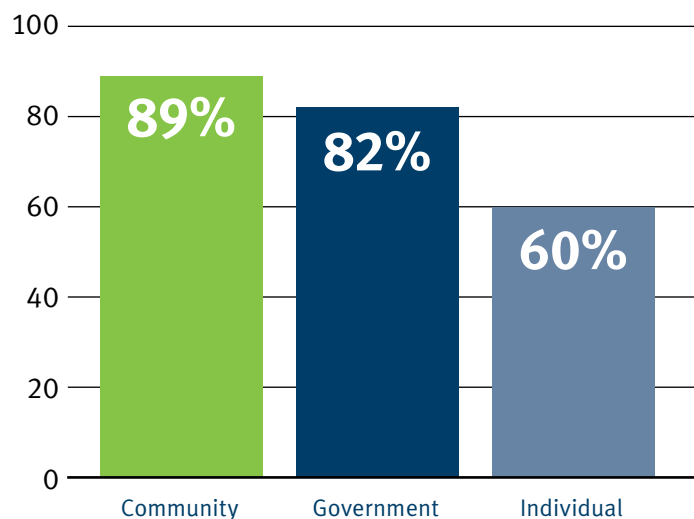
## 2/3

of Queenslanders attend a venue or event where alcohol is consumed once a week or once a month.

## What Queenslanders think contributes to violence in their communities



## Who should do something about the violence?



\* Results reflect an online survey of Queensland residents conducted in February 2014. The total sample size was 12,342. Sample size for individual questions will vary as not all participants responded to every question.

# Safe Night Out survey\*

## Changing the culture—everyone is responsible

### Queenslanders support:

- creating clear standards of behaviour for patrons, licensees and police (92%)
- running awareness campaigns to ensure everyone understands what is expected of them (91%)
- compulsory education for year 7 to year 12 students about the culture, attitudes and social expectations of alcohol consumption (85%)

## Bad behaviour won't be tolerated

### Queenslanders support:

- responding effectively to people who are drunk and disorderly in public (87%)
- requiring offenders to perform community service as part of their sentence (86%) and to undertake compulsory drug and alcohol counselling (85%)
- tougher penalties for intoxicated people who engage in anti-social and violent behaviour around licensed venues and in public (83%)

## Safe and supportive environments

### Queenslanders support:

- better transport services for entertainment precincts (91%)
- Police targeting places known for alcohol and drug-related violent incidents (88.3%)
- encouraging the whole community to support a responsible culture that does not tolerate violence (87.2%)

## Other ideas

Introduce strategies related to

### increasing community awareness

and advertising about the risks and consequences of excessive drinking

### Educate parents

to act as good role models

### Innovation in regulation of the liquor industry

new ways to sanction and reward

### More penalties

for patrons and licensees who do the wrong thing

### More Police

\* Results reflect an online survey of Queensland residents conducted in February 2014. The total sample size was 12,342. Sample size for individual questions will vary as not all participants responded to every question.

## Changing the culture—everyone is responsible

All Queenslanders have the right to enjoy a safe night out, and everyone has a part to play in bringing back the social norms and standards of good behaviour that will ensure that people behave responsibly and safely when they are out at night.

### Setting clear standards

1. Establish clear standards of behaviour for patrons, licensees and police when alcohol is consumed in public and indicate what actions licensees and police will take to stop alcohol and drug-related violence.

We will do this by:

- a. Conducting an awareness campaign about clear standards of behaviour, including advertising, to ensure everyone understands the expected standards of behaviour and the actions that can be taken by licensees and police.

### Education

2. Make new education programs about the culture, attitudes and social expectations of alcohol consumption, including the risks of binge drinking, illicit drug use and alcohol and drug-related violence available each year to every Queensland student in year 7 to year 12.

We will do this by:

- a. Developing a suite of curriculum materials and teacher resources for use by all Queensland school sectors.
- b. Developing a strategy for delivery that is flexible and has the capacity to be embedded into the curriculum aligned to the Australian Curriculum and school based pastoral care programs.
- c. Mandating the use of the curriculum materials in all state schools.
- d. Working with the non-state school sector to ensure the curriculum material can be used to strengthen existing programs or accessed for new programs.

## Bad behaviour won't be tolerated

We will stop the unacceptable behaviour that is ruining our nightlife. Bad behaviour by those affected by alcohol or drugs will not be tolerated. We will also enforce responsible service of alcohol rules to make sure that people are not encouraged to binge drink.

### Penalties

3. Introduce new laws to make sure there are severe consequences for violent or anti-social behaviour.

We will do this by:

- a. Introducing a new offence of 'Unlawful striking causing death' so that 'coward punch' deaths are punishable by a maximum penalty of life imprisonment, with the offender required to serve 80 per cent of their sentence of imprisonment before being able to apply for parole.
- b. Changing sentencing rules so that being intoxicated will not be able to be used as a reason to reduce a person's sentence.
- c. Requiring intoxicated offenders convicted of grievous bodily harm, assault occasioning grievous bodily harm, wounding, common assault, affray, or assaults of police or public officers to perform community service work as part of their sentence. These offenders would also, as part of their bail, have to undertake an alcohol

or drug assessment, counselling and education session, and can also be referred to other relevant programs.

- d. Increasing the maximum penalties for aggravated serious assaults on public officers, such as ambulance officers, from 7 years to 14 years imprisonment.
- e. Strengthening penalties for anabolic steroids to make sure they are similar to the heavy penalties that already apply to other dangerous drugs such as methamphetamine and ecstasy.
- f. Enabling courts to be able to hand out life-time bans from licensed premises.
- g. Making sure there are strong and immediate consequences for violent or anti-social behaviour around licensed venues:
  - On-the-spot fines for causing a public nuisance will go up to \$660 or a maximum fine of \$2,750 or 6 months in prison.

- On-the-spot fines for urinating in a public place will go up to \$220 or a maximum fine of \$440.
- On-the-spot fines for refusing to leave licensed premises will go up to \$550 or a maximum fine of \$5,500.
- On-the-spot fines for obstructing police will go up to \$660 or a maximum fine of \$6,600 or 12 months in prison.
- On-the-spot fines for failing to obey a move-on direction will go up to \$660 or a maximum fine of \$6,600.

## Policing

4. Ensure the Queensland Police Service (QPS) has the powers and resources to respond quickly and effectively to alcohol and drug-related violence and anti-social behaviour where needed.

We will do this by:

- a. Ensuring police have the power to direct a person to leave an area and not return for 24 hours due to their behaviour in any public part of a Safe Night Precinct.
- b. Empowering police to issue a banning notice for up to 3 months to immediately ban a person who is behaving in a disorderly or violent way and who is a risk to good order or the safety and welfare of others from being in and around licensed venues. If a person breaches a banning notice, a penalty of up to \$6,600 could apply.
- c. Ensuring high visibility and rapid response to control incidents involving alcohol and drug-related violence and anti-social behaviour in Safe Night Precincts.
- d. Conducting drug operations including tactical covert and overt strategies and drug detection dogs where needed.
- e. Linking banning notice information, including photos of the banned person, with ID scanners in licensed venues to improve enforcement of banning notices.
- f. Conducting high profile operations with other jurisdictions to target alcohol and drug-related violence and anti-social behaviour.
- g. Developing and implementing innovative policing strategies and technologies to support police presence on the ground in policing alcohol and drug-related violence.

## Sobering up

5. Develop and implement ways to effectively deal with people who are drunk and disorderly in public places.

We will do this by:

- a. Implementing a trial of 'sober safe centres' in the Brisbane CBD enabling police to detain a person when they are intoxicated and behaving in a way that could result in harm to themselves or another person or is causing a public nuisance. People detained at

these centres will be required to pay part of the cost of their detention.

- b. Providing rest and recovery services such as those currently provided in Fortitude Valley, Gold Coast and Townsville in Safe Night Precincts.

## Responsible service of alcohol

6. Ensure that licensees comply with requirements under the *Liquor Act 1992* to provide a safe environment for patrons and implement improved and consistent liquor licensing compliance arrangements.

We will do this by:

- a. Implementing new ways to ensure licensees are prohibited from encouraging rapid or excessive consumption of alcohol including:
  - Introducing a new power to prohibit licensees from engaging in specific promotional practices that encourage the irresponsible consumption of alcohol.
  - Testing alcohol service practices through 'mystery shopper' style tests with outcomes discussed with licensees to improve their compliance.
- b. Introducing mandatory requirements to operate networkable ID scanners for venues trading after midnight in Safe Night Precincts. For other venues outside these areas, we will enable the Commissioner for Liquor and Gaming to require ID scanners to be used where this is appropriate to manage community safety.
- c. Amending the definition of 'unduly intoxicated' to ensure successful action can be taken against licensees who serve alcohol to an intoxicated person, regardless of the cause of intoxication.
- d. Increasing obligations on licensees to maintain a safe environment around their premises and make sure action can be taken against licensees that don't comply with these obligations.
- e. Implementing strategies to enhance the responsible service of alcohol by licensees, including developing educational and promotional material about licensees' responsibilities and induction material for new licensees and licensees applying for trading after midnight.
7. Enhance enforcement and compliance measures and ensure that police and liquor compliance officers effectively coordinate and integrate their activities to reduce the regulatory burden on businesses, without compromising compliance.

We will do this by:

- a. Increasing the ability of the Office of Liquor and Gaming Regulation (OLGR) to:
  - Undertake covert and overt compliance monitoring programs including additional late night and weekend activities, and targeting identified premises and geographical areas of concern.



- Gather and analyse relevant data and information, using this to develop compliance programs specifically targeted to responsible service of alcohol and providing safe environments at licensed premises.
  - Conduct state-wide coordination of activities.
  - Engage with the liquor industry, business and local communities on harm reduction strategies.
  - Provide education and training to operational police and other compliance officers.
- b. Requiring OLGR to place greater emphasis on enforcement action for serious non-compliance with the *Liquor Act 1992*.
  - c. Establishing a joint QPS/OLGR taskforce to ensure improved consistent compliance arrangements are implemented, including operating procedures and training for police and OLGR compliance officers, and developing strategies, concepts of operation, and ways to target resources.
  - d. Ensuring ongoing cooperative working arrangements where officers from QPS and OLGR work together to:
    - Ensure greater consistency in enforcement practices between QPS and OLGR.
    - Reduce the regulatory burden on business, by better coordinating inspections and compliance activities across QPS and OLGR.
    - Enable better sharing of information about investigation outcomes, compliance history and other relevant data between police and compliance officers.
8. Ensure we have a responsive, accountable and strengthened licensing system that takes into account community safety concerns and focuses on promoting responsible service of alcohol practices, instead of simply winding back trading hours.
 

We will do this by:

    - a. Requiring that the Commissioner for Liquor and Gaming provide written reasons about how public safety concerns raised by the Police Commissioner are addressed in a liquor licensing decision.
    - b. Enabling communities, through their local councils, to have a right of veto about decisions on adult entertainment precincts.
    - c. Empowering the Commissioner for Liquor and Gaming to direct a licensee to amend its risk-assessed management plan to ensure the licensee's compliance with the *Liquor Act 1992*.
    - d. Using licensing conditions to require all venues in a particular precinct to prevent and manage alcohol and drug-related violence, e.g. lock-outs and responsible service of alcohol initiatives.
    - e. Introducing a new enhanced late-night trading licensing and compliance regime that will apply to clubs, pubs, hotels, nightclubs and restaurants which trade after midnight.
    - f. Approving a final extension to the moratorium on decisions about late-night trading hours to 31 August 2014, which would lapse on the passage of the legislative measures proposed to address community concerns about late-night trading.

State and local governments, Liquor Accords, and community groups need to work together to build a diverse and vibrant Queensland nightlife

## Safe and supportive environments

9. Establish Safe Night Precincts for the safe and effective local management of key entertainment precincts across the State in consultation with the local community.
 

We will do this by:

  - a. Working with local communities to declare Safe Night Precincts in key entertainment precincts across the State.
  - b. Establishing a Safe Night Precinct local board as an incorporated association in each Safe Night Precinct. Eligible members of the association will be liquor licensees in the area and other relevant representatives including from local business and Chambers of Commerce. Queensland Government agencies will work closely with the boards, including police, transport and ambulance services.
  - c. Safe Night Precinct local boards will manage and plan for the precinct to address community safety issues including transport, lighting, public facilities and CCTV.
  - d. Providing funding for each Safe Night Precinct to provide rest and recovery sobering up services through non-government organisations.
  - e. Establishing a Queensland Government fund and ensuring Safe Night Precinct local boards can raise private funds and apply for grants from local state and federal governments to implement locally relevant and appropriate initiatives to effectively manage alcohol and drug-related violence in the precinct.

10. To address concerns about safe and appropriate transport arrangements around late-night trading venues, better transport services will be provided.  
We will do this by:
  - a. Conducting a communication campaign to promote the availability of transport (e.g. NightLink services) to encourage patrons to use this form of public transport.
  - b. Conducting a three year trial for an increased scope of services (e.g. NightLink buses) to provide five inbound/outbound Friday and Saturday night services on two additional routes (Fortitude Valley to Aspley and Brisbane CBD to Garden City).
- c. Working closely with the Safe Night Precinct local boards to ensure public transport in the precincts is managed safely and effectively and continuing to monitor transport issues in each Safe Night Precinct around the state.
- d. Continuing to provide funding assistance for the provision of secure taxi ranks in all Safe Night Precincts around the state.
11. Police will take effective action to combat alcohol and drug-related violence, targeting places known for alcohol and drug-related violent incidents using a range of options (including de-escalation) to quickly intervene to prevent potentially violent, offensive, disruptive or offensive behaviour.

## Working together to build a diverse and vibrant nightlife

12. We will develop and implement new ways to regulate the liquor industry that value those businesses that effectively manage and prevent alcohol and drug-related violence in and around their venue. We will do this by investigating the viability of ratings and rewards systems to benefit those venues with management practices, policies and designs that promote safety.
13. We will facilitate Safe Night Precinct local boards' consideration of ways to empower local governments and local communities to grow areas with diverse economies, including exploring coordinated planning processes between state and local governments, and how to better facilitate local government, police and local community input on liquor licensing decisions.

## Getting the message across

14. We will implement a communication strategy to provide clear and targeted messages to Queenslanders about the need for everyone to support and be part of a responsible culture that does not tolerate alcohol and drug-related violence.  
We will do this by:
  - a. Seeking to build partnerships with non-government organisations, businesses and the community to promote messages about and build a culture of responsible behaviour when enjoying a night out, through social media and other forms of communication.
  - b. Promoting the key actions under this strategy, public safety enforcement measures and the need for everyone to work together to foster a responsible culture in Queensland that does not tolerate alcohol and drug-related violence.

## Review of strategy

15. We will rigorously assess how the measures implemented through the strategy are working, through a review of the strategy after 12 months from its commencement.

We are committed to continuous improvement and will ensure that the outcomes of the review and other lessons learned in implementing the strategy are used to adjust and improve the strategy into the future.

For more information on the strategy, visit [www.qld.gov.au/safenightout](http://www.qld.gov.au/safenightout)

## Safe Night Precincts

Safe Night Precincts are proposed for key entertainment precincts across the State. Subject to consultation with the local community, proposed Safe Night Precinct areas are illustrated in the below map.

