The Minister for Alcohol Policy, Delia Lawrie, today released two key pieces of draft legislation that detail the most comprehensive alcohol reforms in the Territory’s history.

The draft Bills, the *Prevention of Alcohol-Related Crime and Substance Misuse Bill* and the *SMART Court Bill* were tabled in the Northern Territory Parliament.

“The tabling of these draft Bills is to allow for further public discussion on the proposed reforms the Government announced last month,” Ms Lawrie said.

“I encourage everyone in the community to have their say on how they think these important reforms will work in the community.

“Territorians consume alcohol at 1.5 times the national average and alcohol misuse costs the Territory an estimated $642 million a year.

“While most Territorians responsibly enjoy a drink, there continues to be a group of problem drinkers who misuse alcohol and get involved in alcohol fuelled violence and anti-social behaviour.

“That’s why the Henderson Government has said enough is enough which is why we will turn off the tap to problem drinkers to stop the violence and anti-social behaviour.

“These two draft Bills detail a substantial part of these proposed alcohol reforms.”

The *Prevention of Alcohol-Related Crime and Substance Misuse Bill* outlines police powers to issue Banning Alcohol and Treatment (BAT) notices as well as establishes the Alcohol and Other Drugs Tribunal.

It is proposed that Police will be able issue BAT notices to people who have:

- been taken into protective custody three times within three months
- given three related alcohol infringement notices within a 12 month period
- charged with an alcohol-related offence or
- been issued with a police DVO order where alcohol is involved

“The first BAT notice prohibits a person from buying, consuming or possessing alcohol for a three month period,” Ms Lawrie said.

“The BAT notice can only work and be successfully enforced with the introduction of the banned drinker register and identification system to be rolled out across the Territory.
“Once a person receives a second BAT notice within 12 months, the ban is for six months. If a third BAT notice is received within 12 months the ban is for 12 months.

“Once a person receives three BAT notices the next time they will be referred to the Alcohol and Other Drugs Tribunal.

“It is proposed people who go before the Tribunal will be required to have a clinical assessment. While the Tribunal is not a court, it can order a range of interventions including mandatory treatment. It can also review BAT notices issued by police.

Ms Lawrie said the SMART Court Bill followed a review of the existing Alcohol Court and will be more flexible and able to deal with a wider range of offenders.

“The SMART Court will be able to hand down orders for people who have been charged with a criminal offence related to alcohol or drug misuse,” she said.

“The draft Bill proposes a Magistrate will preside over the SMART Court and will be able to hand down a sentence that includes a combination of imprisonment, bans from consuming and purchasing alcohol and mandatory treatment.

“Offenders who have been charged with serious offences that can only be determined by the Supreme Court cannot be sentenced by the SMART Court.”

Copies of the draft Bills can be viewed at http://www.alcoholplannt.com.au/

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