MEDIA RELEASE
UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES

October 20th, 2011

The Country Liberals have re-stated their commitment to mandatory rehabilitation for problem drunks during a debate in the Territory Parliament tonight.

Shadow Alcohol Policy Minister, Peter Styles, said the Opposition’s policy hits problem drinkers, while the Government’s attacks ordinary Territorians wanting to buy takeaway alcohol.

“Figures released by the Government this week illustrate the problem with Labor’s laws,” Mr Styles said.

“While there are 1576 people on the Banned Drinker Register, already 104 of those have breached their third Banning Alcohol and Treatment notice – but not one has been made to undertake alcohol rehabilitation.

“And this is one of the inherent flaws in the Government’s grog plan. Problem drinkers can continue to access alcohol, but they don’t have to undertake treatment for their addiction.

“The Country Liberals policy mandates alcohol rehabilitation and leaves ordinary Territorians to buy alcohol without producing photo ID.”

Mr Styles said the grog bans have resulted in increased humbugging and alcoholics seeking out other drugs, such as cannabis.

“This is consistent with the Government’s approach which sees the entire community being forced to pay the price for the actions of few,” he said.

“The Government’s decision to cherry pick crime statistics – despite abandoning the long held practice of releasing them quarterly – serves to illustrate Labor’s desperation to change public opinion about the effectiveness of the Banned Drinker Register.

“If the public was convinced Labor’s approach worked to reduce anti-social behaviour and get rid of drunks off the streets they would embrace it.

“However the vast bulk of the community believe the Banned Drinker Register is a waste of time and are fed up having to queue for extended periods to buy alcohol.

“If the Country Liberals win the next election, the Banned Drinker Register will be scrapped.”

Further comment: Peter Styles 0411 640 660