

Good afternoon,

Unfortunately as a sole trader I was just too busy to get to last Friday's forum.

But I have given quite a lot of thought to the bottle shops situation.

In my experience over 24 years living in Alice Springs, if the bottle shops are unattended by police the areas around the bottle shops turn into places that I can only say remind me of images of Beirut I saw as a child watching the news – violence, brutality, begging, bloodshed.

On a particularly bad afternoon at Old Eastside IGA I went into the store, asked for the manager, and when she presented herself, I took her outside with me to see what her trading had caused. Her sole response was "well, they are allowed to drink so it's not my problem." This was when the BDR was last in. The people that were drinking had been in court that week for alcohol related offending – I know because I had been in court prosecuting them.

I appreciate Police are bored out of their wits attending bottle shops, but I must say, it is a damn site better when they are around. Supervision of the BDR and liquor purchasing cannot be left to managers and staff who clearly have a conflict of interest as their business is to sell grog.

Two things occur to me:

- When the BDR was last in it did not appear to be linked to IJIS which records each day's convictions in the CSJ and NTSC;
- Instead of police, can the NT Liquor Licensing Commission train and employ workers to attend bottle shops and man the BDR and alcohol purchasing? I liken this proposal to the Territory Housing Safety Officers who were introduced to manage behaviour in Territory Housing.

Regards,

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