



# ***ECONOMICS AND GOVERNANCE SUBCOMMITTEE***

**Members present:**

Mr LP Power MP (Chair)  
Mr ST O'Connor MP  
Ms KE Richards MP

**Staff present:**

Ms M Salisbury (Acting Committee Secretary)

## **PUBLIC HEARING—INQUIRY INTO THE REVENUE AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2018**

### **TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS**

**WEDNESDAY, 12 SEPTEMBER 2018**

**Mornington Island**

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### **The subcommittee met at 11.41 am.**

**CHAIR:** Good morning. I declare open the public hearing of the Economics and Governance Committee. I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we meet. I wish to pay our respects to the historical people from the surrounding areas and pay our respects to elders past, present and emerging.

Today's hearing, as Mr Nutley said, is part of our inquiry into the Revenue and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. The bill was introduced by the Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, the Hon. Jackie Trad, on 22 August 2018. The committee has to make a report to the parliament by 5 October. I am Linus Power, the member for Logan. With me today are: Sam O'Connor, the member for Bonney, which is on the Gold Coast, and acting deputy chair; and Kim Richards, the member for Redlands, which is on the bayside in Brisbane.

The purpose of this hearing is to hear evidence from stakeholders on Mornington Island. This is a formal proceeding of the Queensland parliament and is subject to the standing rules and orders of the parliament. The committee will not require you to give evidence under oath, but I remind you that intentionally misleading the committee is a serious offence. Hansard will make a recording of the proceedings. As witnesses you will be provided with a copy of the transcript. Mr Nutley is going to help out with that process. I ask everyone to turn their mobile phones off or switch them to silent mode.

We will start the hearing with elders and representatives from the Mornington Shire Council and the Junkuri Laka Justice Association. We will then open up to other members and stakeholders. When you speak, please state your name for Hansard so that they can record it. Please also state the organisation you are representing, if you are representing one. That will help our Hansard reporter take an accurate recording of the hearing today.

**AH KIT, Councillor Jane, Mornington Shire Council**

**FELTON, Ms Robyrta, Private capacity**

**ISAACS, Councillor Sarah, Deputy Mayor, Mornington Shire Council**

**MILLS, Mr Frank, Chief Executive Officer, Mornington Shire Council**

**READING, Ms Corrine, Private capacity**

**REILLY, Senior Sergeant Emma, Officer in Charge, Mornington Island Police**

**ROUGHSEY, Mr Leon, Private capacity**

**SEWTER, Mr Richard, Private capacity**

**SEWTER, Ms Susan, Private capacity**

**THOMAS, Ms Roxanne, Private capacity**

**WILSON, Mayor Bradley, Mornington Shire Council**

**CHAIR:** The law that we are considering is looking at the way that home-brew is made. If you have home-brew concentrate, that is malt and hops, in a can the police can enforce the law. They are unable to enforce the law if people have ingredients such as sugar, orange juice and especially the more advanced forms of yeast, sometimes called turbo yeast, that operate at high temperatures and produce high alcohol volumes.

Who wants to give us their thoughts on the process of home-brewing? One of the things that we wanted to learn about is how homemade alcohol is brewed, the extent of consumption of homemade alcohol, the impacts of homemade alcohol on individuals, families and the community,

access to products such as turbo yeast or yeast specifically for brewing alcohol and views on the proposal to make it illegal to use ingredients like yeast, sugar and fruit juice to make home-brew alcohol.

**Mr Sewter:** I just want to know what the intent of the law is.

**CHAIR:** At present the law says that the police can restrict and enforce home-brew concentrate. A judge has determined that to be a mix of malt and hops. I am a home brewer. The proposed change relates to the possession of homemade alcohol, the possession of substances used to make homemade alcohol and the possession of things used to make homemade alcohol. When they first did this they limited it to just the tins that were used to make home-brew beer from malt and hops.

**Mr Sewter:** I do not really understand what the interpretation of the proposal is if they include other ingredients into the legislation—things like sugar and juice.

**CHAIR:** It has to be that there is intent. The law also frames it so that the police have to make a case that there was intent. They would have to go to a judge and say that there is intent to use these products to make home-brewed alcohol.

**Ms Sewter:** The only way they could enforce it then is if they see all these ingredients together?

**CHAIR:** It is also if the police can make a reasonable case that there was intent to make home-brew alcohol. I am not the police. I am imagining if you have turbo yeast that is not used for baking they can establish intent reasonable easily.

**Ms Sewter:** But it does not specifically say turbo yeast.

**CHAIR:** No, it does not. It specifies ingredients that are used with the intent of making alcohol.

**Ms Sewter:** You can make the assumption—

**CHAIR:** What might be good is if we had someone who would come forward and ask these questions and put forward their concerns. Does anyone want to come and speak into microphones because it is difficult for Hansard to record this. What we want to do is take the opinions of the community back to the Deputy Premier who is the person who has proposed this legislation.

**Ms Sewter:** We are just asking for clarification of the legislation that is proposed? We are asking you for clarification.

**Councillor Ah Kit:** My understanding is that the previous legislation had no stipulations around the home-brewing ingredients. This legislation is stipulating turbo yeast, juice and so on—the contents of the home-brew—is it?

**CHAIR:** The explanatory notes state that the offence is intended to apply to—

... capture a person who is in possession of a substance or combination of substances in their original state with the intention of using it to make homemade alcohol ...

If people have sugar for tea or cordial for kids they are not captured by that because they would not establish intent to do those things. One of the things that is quite important around turbo yeast is that there is not many other practical purposes for that type of yeast except for making—

**Mr Sewter:** If someone has Vegemite and fruit juice in the cupboard they can be charged with intent?

**Ms RICHARDS:** Vegemite is not turbo yeast.

**Mr Sewter:** Do you see how vague it is?

**CHAIR:** It is not that easy for police to take intent to the judge. This might be something that the police could give us some more feedback on.

**Snr Sgt Reilly:** Intent is hard to prove.

**CHAIR:** The concern is that if someone had sugar, baking yeast and a pot how would that be considered under that law. Senior Sergeant, you might give us some information on this.

**Snr Sgt Reilly:** In terms of intent to make home-brew, there are a lot of factors that come into that. It is not just having Vegemite or sugar at your house. It is not something you are going to get charged with—that is, for just having sugar at your house. It is not something that the legislation covers.

What it covers is if you have intent. Obviously, if we were to do a search of your house and we found all those things together and you made admissions as to what it was being used for it is something that we could charge you with. Even if people do not make admissions, but all those things

are there ready to go to make home-brew, we can charge them. Just because you have sugar in your house for your tea or just because you have cordial or orange juice that does not mean that you are going to be charged.

**Ms Sewter:** Just so we understand. If the police came to your door they would come with a warrant, I assume?

**Snr Sgt Reilly:** There are a lot of factors.

**Ms Sewter:** The warrant would say, 'We suspect that you are going to make home-brew.' I do not know what it would say. I am thinking about the community and what that person's legal rights are. What are their rights going to be? You go in and you see sugar on the table or whatever, how does this protect our people?

**Snr Sgt Reilly:** One of the big things with the legislation that they are proposing is that it covers turbo yeast. Turbo yeast is not something that you can use to cook. At the moment if someone possesses turbo yeast we cannot charge them. It is just not possible.

**Ms Sewter:** I understand that, but when the question was asked before you said that it was not specifically turbo yeast, but just says ingredients. If it is about turbo yeast then it has to be specific otherwise we are going into a grey area.

**CHAIR:** If the feedback that people have is that they are concerned about the ingredients component and how intent works and have issues around yeast that has the specific purpose of producing alcohol then it would be great if we got that on the record to take back to the Deputy Premier. I am summarising what you are saying. If people wanted to express that that would be something that would be worth hearing and taking back to Brisbane.

**Ms Sewter:** I would like it to be on the record that it has to be specific because from what you are saying the legislation at the moment is very vague. There is no protection for people. If it is specifically around turbo yeast, fine, but the way it reads at the moment it is too vague.

**CHAIR:** Thank you for that. That is exactly what we want to hear. If someone has a large barrel, sugar and all the makings of home-brew and they are using baking yeast and turbo yeast is the one thing they have hidden is it a concern that the police cannot address the problem?

**Ms Sewter:** I do not think you can. You can suspect that people are making home-brew—however you get that information—but how do you put it altogether when you get into the house? How can you safely say that that person is going to make home-brew? You may see sugar. You could be using that barrel to carry water. To me it is just making assumptions.

**CHAIR:** One of the things is that the ingredients have to be there and there has to be an intent to do something.

**Ms Sewter:** I think that is the grey area.

**CHAIR:** I understand that. I am not a lawyer. Obviously this is something that the police have to deal with. Senior Sergeant Reilly might be able to answer that question for the community. Are there other laws where intent to do something is an important factor?

**Snr Sgt Reilly:** Of course.

**CHAIR:** So it is not unusual. Would you be able to talk to that and then also how that process works?

**Snr Sgt Reilly:** Intent, as we see it, is a state of mind. Someone's intention is not easy to prove, Susan. That is why we talk to people and question them about what they have those ingredients for. For us to find out what someone's intent is it is a case of not only the ingredients that we might find at someone's house but it is talking to them and finding out what they are going to use those ingredients for. If you have a reason for using those ingredients, such as baking, that takes away some of that intent. If there were many ingredients there ready to go it could be seen as intent without even having to have admissions from the person. We are always going to speak to the people and find out what they are using those ingredients for.

**Ms RICHARDS:** I was hoping you could elaborate a little bit further on the current challenges with the way the legislation is written and what you see the changes in the legislation doing to create better communities?

**Snr Sgt Reilly:** There is basically a gap in the legislation at the moment, specifically when it comes to turbo yeast. When we find someone with turbo yeast they cannot be charged. We can seize the yeast, but from there we cannot charge the person. No-one is getting in trouble for possessing turbo yeast at this time. There is definitely a gap there. People can order it over the internet. It is not illegal to order it over the internet and send it through the mail. People are ordering it and receiving it here on the island—and sometimes in big quantities.

**CHAIR:** We understand that turbo yeast is a product that produces alcohol very quickly.

**Snr Sgt Reilly:** Correct.

**CHAIR:** And that it also rates over 12, 13, 14 up to 20 per cent. If only turbo yeast were specified we know that there are also other forms of yeast that can create brews at eight or nine per cent. It might take a week longer. Is the concern that if we only specify turbo yeast it would shift the problem to a different place?

**Snr Sgt Reilly:** That is right. That is why it has to be general to cover all those different ingredients. Turbo yeast is a big problem for the community because it happens so quickly. People can brew quickly. It is a quick changeover of the alcohol basically. If turbo yeast were taken away it takes longer but there is still a problem because it can still be made.

**CHAIR:** Richard, did you want to make a statement about where you see the issues?

**Mr Sewter:** When the grog was taken away my people were smart and found a substitute. You brought in legislation to stop that. Now you are bringing in more legislation to stop that substitute. What is going to happen? There is going to be another substitute. At the end of the day, people are going to be dying from putting rubbish in their brew. Are you going to come back in another two or three years with another piece of legislation to change things? It seems like a bandaid effect. It is always a bandaid effect in this place. There are never solutions. It is a bandaid effect.

**Ms RICHARDS:** In terms of the legislation, in addition to talking about ingredients it talks about intent to brew. What are your thoughts on that?

**Mr Sewter:** I understand that, but it is highly discretionary. If someone is in their house with juice, sugar and Vegemite in a row and a container and the police walk in they will say that they are going to make home-brew. They will charge them. It does not matter if they are not intending to make it. It is up to the discretion of the police because they can say it looks like intent.

**Snr Sgt Reilly:** It is not just up to us with discretion. We have to prove that intent at the end of day, Richard. We will still have to prove that.

**CHAIR:** Senior Sergeant Reilly, if you were presented with a kilogram of sugar, some kind of pot and—turbo yeast would speak to intent very clear—baking yeast, you would have to take that to a police prosecutor in order to take that to a magistrate and then you would have to speak to the state of mind of the person who possessed those things. Is that an easy process?

**Snr Sgt Reilly:** No, it is not an easy process.

**CHAIR:** Do you want to talk more about that? There are other laws that affect other communities where intent is an important part. Prosecutions are not that easy because you have to prove intent. Do you want to talk more to that?

**Snr Sgt Reilly:** Like I was talking about before, intent is a state of mind. Richard, if you had juice and Vegemite at home and we were to come in for some reason and we saw that, we would have to talk to you about it. We would have to ask you questions about it. We cannot just all of a sudden put you before the court in relation to those few ingredients. Turbo yeast is a different story.

**Mr Sewter:** I understand all that. What I am not understanding is the law being so vague. As Susan said, it should say turbo yeast. There is yeast in Vegemite. There is a yeast in Weet-Bix. You can get yeast out of anything.

**Mr Mills:** Perhaps I can put a different spin on it. I look at the legislation that is proposed and I think it actually answers some of the questions you have, Richard, in terms of what happens next after turbo yeast being banned. The definition of substance under the legislation can be turbo yeast or the next product or the product after or the product after or the product after. Whilst it is wide to some degree it also covers the potential for other substances apart from turbo yeast to be used in home-brew.

I am fairly confident around intent and the way the legislation specified that it is not about those people who go to the shop and buy sugar, cordial, fruit juice, Vegemite and all those household staples. It is about a combination of those ingredients and others being used to produce home-brew. There are two ways of looking at it. One is that this is taking a lot of control away from us and it is very broad, but it is actually legislation that allows for changes of circumstances and changes of ingredients.

**CHAIR:** The explanatory notes state—

The new offence provision is not intended to capture the possession of a substance or combination of substances used for their ordinary purpose (for example, yeast, sugar ... The offence provision will be triggered by the intention of the person to use the substance or combination of substances to make homemade alcohol, exhibited where the substance or substances are not being used for their ordinary purpose ...

There is a legal framework about intent the police would have to follow. The Deputy Premier is making it absolutely clear that the ordinary possession of these substances is not what the law is intended to capture.

**Ms RICHARDS:** I think, Richard, as you alluded to, it is a knock-on effect. If you take off yeast, what is next? This legislation is actually trying to address the capture-all and make sure that we eliminate those knock-ons and bring it back to the intent of action. Was it intended to create a home-brew? This is not good quality that people are putting through their systems. Keeping it broad is providing you the mechanism that you are looking for.

**Mr Sewter:** What was the thing that instigated these people putting this stuff through their system?

**CHAIR:** What do you mean, Richard? Can you explain that to us?

**Mr Sewter:** Prohibition. Prohibition forced this on people. People are going to find a substitute, no matter what it is. Do you know what the next thing is going to be here? It is going to be ice. They are going to be on ice and then we will have more problems in the community. You will not have to worry about turbo yeast or anything else there will be harder drugs in this community.

**CHAIR:** That is your concern about alcohol prohibition in general?

**Mr Sewter:** Yes, and all the little amendments to the legislation that come out. They do not do any good for the health of this community. It does not do any good for the economy of the community. It is getting worse and worse. We are going backwards. We are not going forwards. How much did this cost the government for you to come here?

**CHAIR:** A fair bit.

**Mr Sewter:** Exactly. Why could that money not be spent on something else for this community?

**CHAIR:** What we thought is that alcohol management plans are a big imposition on communities. We wanted to listen to some people like you to find out whether you thought alcohol management plans were good in principle but also what happens on the ground. That is what we are here for.

**Mr Sewter:** I am glad we have some members of parliament here. We get sick of talking to the bureaucrats every year.

**Ms RICHARDS:** We are here to listen.

**Mr O'CONNOR:** What do you think should be done? That is what we are here for.

**Ms RICHARDS:** How do we make a good community? That is what we are here to listen to. How do we make good strong communities?

**Mr Sewter:** We had a thing put in place and we still have a plan in place.

**Mr Mills:** Essentially, for those of you who are unaware, through a review process in 2017 we produced a strategic review of the alcohol management plan for Mornington Shire Council. We have agreed with the state government to a three-step process. One of those processes is the banning of turbo yeast and similar products. Another is with respect to a service delivery review. Another is in relation to a reintroduction of an alcohol strategy to provide an alternative to home-brew. I am fairly confident that is progressing well. This is obviously part of that process.

In terms of the service delivery component of it, that is progressing behind the scenes. In terms of a reintroduction of alcohol strategy, we are progressing with that. It is not going to be an easy process. There will need to be changes in legislation, which will involve a similar process to this. It is still happening. It is going to take a while. It is a process in motion.

**Ms Sewter:** I just want to go to a couple of points. I do not think the legislation is going to resolve the problem. I think there are flaws with that legislation. We have Geoff from Junkuri Laka here who is a lawyer. What is that going to do to the court system that we currently have?

Secondly, we had a meeting a couple of weeks ago with DATSIP and liquor licensing. For everyone who was not here, I think they were saying we are looking at five to 10 years. Hang on a minute: we had the health summit not long ago. One of the statistics that came up is that we have 17 per cent of people over 50. What does that tell you? Do you know what it tells me? It tells me that our people are not living a long life. We already know that. That is just reinforcing that our people are dying. Those people over 50 amount to 17 per cent.

After five to 10 years of people drinking and doing all of the other things, what are we going to end up with? Come back in five years and see what the statistics are. That legislation is too vague. There is no protection for people. You cannot do it. I am not a lawyer but the business around intent I do not know how you are going to deal with.

**CHAIR:** I come from the state seat of Logan. Intent is something that is dealt with quite often. There is a charge that is intent to supply. The police have to prove what was in the mind of the person when they were found with a quantity of illicit drugs—for example, that they intended to supply to others. This is quite common within criminal law. We put an extra burden on police.

One of the things I am hearing is that yeast designed for the quick brewing of alcohol, turbo yeast as it is called, is a product that people feel should be addressed. One of the things that you could recommend in addition to or in exclusion of the intent to create home-brew is that police be able to charge people directly with the possession of yeast intended for the production of alcohol. That is an alternate way of structuring it.

**Ms Sewter:** What is the problem with making it specific?

**CHAIR:** We felt it was the same problem that Richard brought up—that is, that people would move to a separate product that was not contained in the legislation and the problem would continue. This was a catch all where the police have a high burden in order to prosecute, but it does not have a specific thing which means they can move to something else. Does that make sense?

**Ms Sewter:** Yes.

**Ms RICHARDS:** Although it sounds light on, it actually creates a tighter framework for making sure that the intent of creating mass produced alcohol is reduced.

**CHAIR:** Next week in parliament we are doing another hearing with people from the Queensland Law Society. We can actually put questions to them about intent and how high the burden is and whether there are protections for people who reasonably have products that could be used and where that burden is. That is certainly one of the questions we will be putting to the Queensland Law Society.

**Ms Felton:** About intent, I hear you say if you see the ingredients there. If the ingredients are already mixed in a 10-litre bottle and police come along then does the intent not disappear?

**CHAIR:** I would say, and Senior Sergeant Reilly might be the one who could tell us this, that it would make clear the intent. The fact that they have done the mixing would make clear their intent to use those products. Would that be fair to say, Senior Sergeant Reilly?

**Snr Sgt Reilly:** That is right. We can already charge with that. It is already made.

**Ms Felton:** That is the question.

**Councillor Ah Kit:** Over the years the prohibition has been in we have had multiple charges against our people for home-brewing. This is another slice of the legislation I gather. In terms of all the people who have previously been charged with home-brewing, is that legal?

**CHAIR:** Yes. Up until the judge made a different decision on this, the process they went through in the courts was the accepted process and it was legal. It does not make previous charges illegal under the previous laws.

**Councillor Ah Kit:** Millions and millions of dollars have poured out of this island due to charges through the courts and our people going through that system. I know it is going to be hard to charge people with intent. Intent could be good for this community. In terms of the home-brewing on this island, is the intent the health of our people? Are future generations at risk? Our community has to realise where we need to start and stop with all this. It is the responsibility of our community people to step up to the plate and say, 'Is the intent to benefit our people?' As Emma has said, the intent is very hard to prove. They cannot put two and two together unless they have reasonable grounds to do so. You should be able to fight it in court. At this point in time, for me as a councillor and as a member of this community, I think the intent needs to be what is our responsibility now in terms of home-brewing for our community to move forward. People need to give their opinion. This is where it has to happen. Please stand up and give your opinion now.

**Ms Sewter:** We are all worried about the community and what is happening here. Think about all of the money that is coming into this community for services. We have people who, let us be honest, are alcoholics. People have rights. This goes back to 2001 when all this discussion happened. People here have rights like people anywhere else on the mainland.

We have services here. We have people who cannot turn up for work. We have all these different problems—fly-in fly-out. What are we going to do as a community, but then what about the individuals? How do we help support these individuals? It is fine for government to say, 'Look at all the money we have put into Mornington Island.' You have to look at all the services here and find out exactly what all the problems are and help people here.

In parliament when you come up with this kind of legislation you need to think about the big picture and what it is doing for Mornington Island. We are isolated here. The discussions we had back in the early days were that this is an isolated island so we should be growing. Do away with grog and you will be fine. How many years has it taken to realise that that is not right. What have you done? You are trying to solve this problem, but you have created another one. Is that how we are going to keep going—solve this problem and create another one? Is that how we are going to resolve all this?

**Mr O'CONNOR:** Can we take a big step back and get some feedback on what the problems are? Has anyone got any commentary on that?

**CHAIR:** We are referring specifically to problems about home-brewed alcohol. Does anyone want to talk to how big a problem home-brewed alcohol is on the island?

**Ms Felton:** I would like to speak on that. Recently we had a health forum on Mornington Island. I came with a lot of information about our health. For 10 years I was speaking to both state and Commonwealth governments and public servants about the fact that we need to build a dialysis building on Mornington Island because of the number of people going away to Townsville to receive dialysis. Not only the person but her husband or his wife have to leave here to go to Townsville to learn how to operate the dialysis machine.

I made the government understand that I am very concerned about this because I nursed in the mission hospital. I was very concerned about the people diagnosed with diabetes at a very early age—as young as 15 years old. I made them aware why we would like a dialysis building here—that is, so that we could attend on these grounds. Our people have to leave their homeland, leave their families and they are separated from their country. They come back in coffins. Last year we had 10 diabetes related deaths of older people. Just recently we had three diabetes related deaths. I also made them aware that we are aware that eventually some people affected by diabetes would have to go to a larger hospital for treatment. That is one of the concerns.

I have another concern that I would like to raise. I do not like beer. When I go outside, now and again, I do have other drinks. Beer stinks. Somebody asked about the ingredients that people put in alcohol. I got the recipe from six-year-old kids—two large two-kilogram sugars, a jar of Vegemite, cordial and water. They do not use turbo yeast. That is the recipe. It is a killer. It is killing our people.

Sometimes I feel public servants come here and speak about these things but do not take the true message back to the government. They interpret it in their own words. Something has to be done. Did you people hear about liberty? Aboriginal people lost all their liberty. We are still in the colonial era where government says, 'You do this. You do that. This is good for you.' They never listen to us about how we feel and what we want. We are not even in the Constitution. I have two grandsons—one in the navy and one in army. I was going to object to them being there because we are not in the Constitution, but my family said, 'No, that is what they want to do.' We have no rights. Aboriginal people have no rights at all.

What I would recommend to your government is that they should lift this ban and give the people the liberty and right to drink the proper thing instead of making all this rubbish. People come to me and complain about people selling them home-brew in 10-litre containers for \$500. We are not pure. Our people are at fault here too. They are using our people to make money to make them rich and playing on their addiction to alcohol.

**Ms Thomas:** We lost our pub in 2003. How many times have you people been coming here since 2003?

**CHAIR:** I am not really sure how many times a committee has come here. I would have to look it up.

**Ms Thomas:** What I am trying to say is: how many times are you going to have a meeting? How many meetings have we had in this community since 2003? Are we just going to keep stand here talking and pleading with the government—freedom of speech? What about the Aboriginal people here?

**CHAIR:** What would you have us do? What would you see as a change in the law that would be beneficial for Mornington Island?

**Ms Thomas:** I would like to see if we can get our real grog back. I am an alcoholic. I will admit that. I cannot keep drinking home-brew because I know I will end up down in Townsville on the dialysis machine. We all work. We all get married. We would like to have a drink for our 21st or whatever just like you fellas. All I want to see is our drinks come back. Doomadgee got theirs. Palm Island got theirs. When are we going to get ours? Are you going to just keep coming back here and having meeting after meeting with no resolution?



**CHAIR:** It is really good to hear that feedback. We as a committee are looking specifically at this law and gaps in alcohol management plan enforcement. It is specifically about home-brew being limited only to malt based substitutes instead of sugar based ones. Does home-brew have a lot of residual sugar? Is it very sweet?

**Ms Thomas:** It is still very sweet. I still drink sweet home-brew. I know it is illegal.

**CHAIR:** That contributes a lot to diabetes because of the large amounts of sugar?

**Ms Thomas:** Yes. A lot more people in this community are going on insulin. I know that going on insulin means going to Townsville.

**CHAIR:** Is your feeling that the alcohol management plans contribute to a worse form of alcohol coming in the form of home-brew?

**Ms Thomas:** Yes. We are civilised people. Let us prove to you that we can do it.

**CHAIR:** At the time the alcohol management plan was introduced there were obviously a lot of alcohol related problems that they were trying to address. Do you feel that it has not addressed those problems?

**Ms Thomas:** No, it has not. You took away the real grog. You introduced a tin of home-brew to us. Then you took the tin of home-brew away from us. Then we went to other resources—sugar, pumpkin, Vegemite or whatever we can get our hands. All I want to see is the real thing back here and that will stop the problems in the community.

**Ms RICHARDS:** If alcohol were brought back in and made available through a licensed establishment, what mechanism would we need to put in to ensure that we maintain your health and do not bring the problems that the alcohol management plans were brought in to try to eradicate? How do we actually improve health outcomes for your community?

**Ms Thomas:** You have already brought health issues here by banning alcohol.

**Ms RICHARDS:** If we were to reintroduce access to alcohol how could we make sure that we maintain a healthier community and not go back to the problems that the alcohol management plans were brought in to try to eliminate? If alcohol is brought back in in a licensed and accessible way, how would we make sure there are not issues?

**Mayor Wilson:** I wanted to touch on the questions you asked Roxanne. We have a lot of services in the community at the moment that have been put in after the AMP. We need to start making them accountable for their roles and responsibilities in the community. The council is doing service mapping at the moment to look at the services we have in the community. We have a lot of issues and those issues stem from the AMP. There are also social impacts in the community as well. There are barriers in the community that we need to starting knocking down.

We have social issues. Alcohol is one issue here. We have a lot of issues and we need to take those issues out and start looking at the main problem in our community. Yes, there are problems. Roxanne spoke about a lot of those. It could be better by making the services we have in the community now more accountable. We need to start making them more responsible for their roles in the community. A lot of money has been poured into the community over the many years that the AMP has been here. We have programs that should not be here but are here. There is a duplication of programs in the community that are not catering for the needs of the community.

Granny Bert touched on the dialysis issue. We have been crying out over the last few years for the government to look at providing a service here for those families who need it. Susan also touched on the health summit that we had. We have had many health summits. We have spoken about this over and over and over again. We sit down at this table and speak about the same things.

The question we need to throw at you is: what are you going to do from here to help us move forward? We have been dealing with the problems in the community. The council has been trying to do other things to help. We have been service mapping this for a while now to look at where we are going.

Alcohol is one bit of the problem. There is also the social impact. We do not celebrate birthdays here anymore. There are no weddings here. There is no interaction in the community anymore. If people want to do it they have to hide behind closed doors. We are not mice; we are human beings. We like to celebrate these things too, but we cannot.

**CHAIR:** I know it might be frustrating, but this bill has various purposes. One specific provision relates to alcohol management plans. A particular part of the law refers to home-brew concentrate and the problems with enforcement. We have put on the record a lot of issues that are much broader

than that. This committee has a particular purpose—that is, to look at whether we change the law to be about home-brew concentrate or about a variety of substances and intent. We have a very narrow area that we have been asked by the parliament to look at. Does that make sense? I know it is frustrating.

**Mayor Wilson:** It is very frustrating. I understand where you are coming from. If you ask that question of the community then they are going to bombard you with things. Obviously you have already heard things. They are going to bombard you with other questions.

**CHAIR:** I respect that.

**Mayor Wilson:** They have a broader spectrum of issues. They are not narrow minded here.

**CHAIR:** Roxanne asked the question about coming back. When they make laws they make laws about specific circumstances. We do have to talk about this one particular thing. It may not reflect the whole. A lot of your interactions with the various departments about services will not necessarily be about a particular law. They will be about the best way to deliver services and not be related to particular laws.

**Ms Sewter:** We appreciate what you have to do, but you are surely in a position to take back what we have said in conversations here. There is no way in the world, as a community person, that I am going to come here every time you come up with a piece legislation to bandaid a problem. It is a problem not only for my generation but for our children and for future generations and for the future of this community. Surely you are not going to walk away from here with just that piece of legislation. You are in parliament so you also have some influence somewhere else to say, 'This is what is coming out of the community.'

**Ms RICHARDS:** I certainly have written down DATSIP and the health summit. We will take that back.

**Ms Sewter:** It is not just about home-brew. It is not just about that part of it. There are other factors that have to be considered. I think this is where the problem has been since the day the first piece of legislation went through—stop the grog and that will solve all your problems. It has not. We have had a review since 2004 or whenever it was. Where has this community been involved in that? We have had meetings and meetings, as Roxanne said, but nothing comes to fruition for us. We do not see any changes.

You are in a position to help. The council has gone through a process. Although Frank is very optimistic, this has been going on for two years. For God's sake. An old lady who was sitting down here has been talking about all this for years. She is 80 now. My mother is 83. I do not want to be sitting here in my eighties defending people. You have to start looking at this. Get Jackie Trad up for a day and sit down and go through all the problems.

We have organisations that are given huge amounts of money. How much of that is actually spent on people in this community? Can you go back and have a look at that? From a million dollars, how much is actually spent in this community? There are all these things that have to be talked about. We cannot just sit down and talk about this one piece of legislation because that is just a bandaid. It is another bandaid that you are putting on in this community.

**CHAIR:** I hope you respect that because the committee has this very narrow remit, we have to come back with a report about whether or not it is a worthwhile bandaid or whether there is a different approach. I know it is not going to solve all the problems on Mornington Island.

**Ms Sewter:** Is there ever a worthwhile bandaid?

**CHAIR:** You can make steady and smaller increments that contribute to fixing a problem.

**Ms RICHARDS:** It certainly sounds from what Frank articulated before in terms of services that are being delivered here and looking at the reintroduction of access to alcohol that there are those conversations underway within the varying levels of government. What you have alluded to there is that the wheels are in motion and it is not a static position. Is that fair to say?

**Mr Mills:** That is certainly the case. I will answer a couple of things that you raised previously, particularly in relation to turbo yeast and what product you end up and whether it tastes sweet and so on. We have had turbo yeast based home-brew analysed. There is no sugar left in it. It is converted to alcohol and ethanol. It has 27,000 times the amount of ethanol as there would be in a standard drink. Whilst it may taste sweet, there is essentially no sugar left in it. It is not the sugar content that is creating issues with people's health, it is actually the toxicity of what they are drinking that is causing organ failure. That is how serious it is.

Has the AMP made any difference since 2002? We can show that things have actually got worse. It has not worked at all. There do need to be processes worked through to change that. This is one step in that direction. There are still a lot of steps to go. I appreciate and absolutely understand the passion of the local people about wanting things changed today. The reality of the world is unfortunately that the wheels of bureaucracy and the wheels to change legislation tend to run fairly slowly. Rest assured that, with the passion of the mayor, the councillors and the community, it is something that is not going to go away. It is something that we are going to continue to push for. Hopefully we will get some results sooner rather than later.

**Ms RICHARDS:** It is certainly going to take the efforts of both community and all levels of government to come together to solve the problems and make sure that we create a stronger community and a healthier and safer community for Mornington Island.

**Ms Thomas:** When you go back from here how long are you going sit there before you make a decision—one year, two years or six months?

**Ms RICHARDS:** I will certainly be going back and feeding back what you have said to us today to various departments. That is in addition to the work that we are specifically tasked to do today.

**CHAIR:** Mayor Wilson, do you think that alcohol consumption and especially problematic alcohol consumption is worse than before the alcohol management plans?

**Mayor Wilson:** Definitely. It is because prohibition came in. We did not have an alcohol management plan when I arrived. I say that openly. We have not had the opportunity as a community to manage our plan. If we had we would have managed it a bit better. They have slam dunked it on us all of a sudden. To answer that question, it is out of hand at the moment. There is a big workload for everyone. It can get better if we work as a whole community. If every service provider and everyone in the community who specialises in those areas works together we can make the community healthier and better. I think it will work.

**CHAIR:** With regard to giving the ability to stop turbo yeast through this law or a different formulation of it, would that be useful in the short term or would people immediately move to other products?

**Mayor Wilson:** We spoke about that same scenario earlier. If you stop one thing it creates another thing. That probably answers your question. If you stop one thing they will find something else.

**Ms Sewter:** Through the whole process of the AMP—that is, going back to when it was first talked about in 2001 to when it actually came into this community—there has always been a carrot held out to this community. How many years is it now?

**Mr Mills:** Seventeen years.

**Ms Sewter:** For at least 17 years we have had a carrot dangled in front of us. Never have we been able to move any closer to getting that carrot. It has always moved. What is the school attendance today? Some of the issues were school attendance and court and hospital presentations. What has happened today? We are supposed to be a dry community. We all know we are not. The AMP for this community has not worked. I think school attendance is down to 50 something. I do not know anything about the courts. We are still going through court. I do not know about the hospital. This is never going to end. I am sorry: I do not think this is going to end in my lifetime. Do you know why? The goalposts keep moving.

**Ms RICHARDS:** The goalpost, the carrot, is the reintroduction of alcohol? I am just trying to be clear about what the carrot is.

**Ms Sewter:** What is better: the devil you know or the devil you do not know?

**Ms RICHARDS:** I just wanted it to be on the record that the carrot you are talking about is the reintroduction of alcohol.

**Mr Mills:** I think the carrot that Susan is talking about is this. Initially when the discussion was around AMPs it was all about improving education, it was all about improving employment, it was all about improving health, it was all about reducing people in the criminal justice system and all that sort of thing. The reality is that that is not happening, but the carrot is still there. That is what is continually discussed—this is what AMPs are going to do for you. If you look at the AMP review strategy, it clearly points out that none of that has worked. There needs to be a new process. Part of that process has to be the reintroduction of alcohol. There needs to be an alternative to home-brew to give people that choice.

**Mr Sewter:** When we had the canteen—that is, before prohibition—we had less drugs, we had people going to work, we had kids going to school. The home-brew is so accessible—24/7—that you do not have that anymore. We do not have people going to work. We do not have kids going to school. There were a heap of kids over on the playground over here. Someone pulled up for five minutes and they drove off. The kids were still on the playground. It is that sort of thing that happens here.

**Ms Sewter:** The implication for government is that you keep pouring money into these communities for things that are getting us nowhere. You surely must need to look at that.

**Mr Sewter:** You took the grog away and you spent 17 years trying to get people not to drink. Put the grog back in and spend years educating people to drink. Drinking is about education. Our schoolkids are drinking home-brew.

**Ms Felton:** And gambling.

**Mr Sewter:** This is where they learn it.

**Ms Felton:** And not attending school.

**Mr Sewter:** They brought in Opal fuel. Some of our kids are scientists and they put a bit of coke in it and it lifts the octane. It is as simple as that. That is what I have been saying about a substitute. If you take one thing away, there is going to be a substitute—no matter what.

**Mr O'CONNOR:** No matter what the law is, people will find a way to make something?

**Mr Sewter:** At least if the grog were brought back in it could be regulated. We would have regulated grog. At certain times of the day you could go and drink. You would have people going to work so that they could buy their grog.

**Mr O'CONNOR:** So you say that people will get around these changes?

**Mr Sewter:** Yes. If you are only coming for this it is a waste of your money and our time—as simple as that.

**Mayor Wilson:** Someone said to me a long time ago when we had a meeting up at the festival ground and we had a yarn about the reintroduction of alcohol, 'I would rather drink the real stuff than kill my body with this, but in the meantime I will keep doing what I am doing until we get the real stuff.' Some people give up. Some people are still doing it. It will just move from this generation to the next generation. It is going to be a continuation. The adults at the moment stuff their bodies up. You obviously heard that the kids are doing it now. It is going to be a generational thing. If we do not stop it now, it will continue.

**CHAIR:** We will definitely take back this feedback about alcohol management plans and how alcohol is worse than before. The other thing we have to make a report on is whether a form of law that helps eradicate turbo yeast and the particular high-strength alcohols that it creates quickly is worth including with the alcohol management plans or whether it is not or whether it is irrelevant. That is the other thing that we have to report to parliament about.

**Councillor Ah Kit:** In terms of the previous legislation, there have been a lot of charges around that legislation. This legislation that you have now presented us is clearly talking about turbo yeast and all the other ingredients that are not illegal substances. They want to make illegal the intent. That is the story today. Do we want this other law to come into play when there has already been a law that has been charging us anyway? Does this eradicate home-brewing and stop the people who are selling home-brew, the black market, the under-age drinking? We have to think about the social impact on our people.

The new law that they are presenting to us now is about intent. Are we still going to have all the social problems? They will charge us for the same thing anyway. Do you know what I mean? Emma, you may be able to correct me on this. For me looking in, I can see that we have a law already where we have been charged millions and millions of dollars over the previous 10 years. That money has been taken out of this community. Now we have new legislation that has come out that says that this is what we need in place to eradicate what has been happening so far. Is that correct?

**CHAIR:** That is correct. When you make home-brew from Vegemite it might take a week or some considerable time for all the sugar to be consumed and create alcohol. Turbo yeast is designed to create a base wash for spirits. It might take 24 to 48 hours for all of the sugar to be consumed. It also works much better at hotter temperatures.

**Councillor Ah Kit:** According to the legislation that you have there, it is turbo yeast but the home-brew contains other things. What we are saying is: is there going to be a stipulation on substances? Is it just going to be turbo yeast or is it the whole approach to home-brewing?

**CHAIR:** Going back to explanatory notes, it states—

... capture a person who is in possession of a substance or combination of substances in their original state with the intention of using it to make homemade alcohol ...

**Councillor Ah Kit:** When we look at the legislation we have to decide how we want to look at it. Is it for the benefit of our people, our future generations, our generation now or whatever? We have to think about those sorts of circumstances. In terms of the legal side, we would hope that we would be represented in court. It has to be that you have the intent to make home-brew. That is my understanding of the situation.

**CHAIR:** You are absolutely right.

**Councillor Ah Kit:** This is my point of view. I want to see what the future holds for Mornington. Where do we go with this legislation? It has been happening all the time, so what. They want to legalise the substance. At the end of the day, it is our people who need to live on this island and walk forward. How do we do that?

**Mr Sewter:** At the end of the day, it does not matter what we say here. They already have their mind made up about the legislation.

**Ms Sewter:** The legislation is there to support the police around home-brew.

**Councillor Ah Kit:** That is to benefit our people.

**Ms Sewter:** We are just talking about legislation. That is what it is there for. It is to support the police to prosecute people for home-brewing. That is what it is for. At the moment they cannot do it. That is what you need the legislation for.

**CHAIR:** The feedback that originally came from this community was that there was a big hole in the legislation in that people could possess turbo yeast and the police knew that they were going to make home-brew at very high strengths—

**Councillor Isaacs:** You are not thinking about the bigger picture. This legislation came from us in the beginning. This is what we wanted. We wanted to get turbo yeast off the table. At the end of the day, that is the ingredient that is causing all these health issues. The police cannot do anything about that at the moment. This legislation is going to allow us to have some impact on monitoring that and policing for turbo yeast.

**Snr Sgt Reilly:** I think you have to look, as you said Sarah, at the long-term picture. When the AMP does get changed—and I believe it will eventually—we need all these gaps filled. We really want to be pushing on people to get rid of the home-brew when alcohol comes back in. That is what we want, is it not—that is, to get rid of the home-brew and to bring alcohol back in? To do that we need these gaps filled to be able to enforce those laws to get rid of the home-brew.

**Councillor Isaacs:** This is just that one little piece of the puzzle that we have to fill now to continue this journey that we have started as a council. This is everything that the community has come forward to us about. This is part of the three-step process to get alcohol reintroduced into this community. This is just one piece of the puzzle.

It is not just about the bad stuff that you are all talking about. I hear your frustrations. This is also about the little things too in terms of the social impact. Turbo yeast does speed up the process. It could take from one week to a couple of days. For that whole week you have kids out on the street fighting each other and everything else. This is going to lessen that process as well. It gives us time. At the end of the day, it is like the old girl said, we still have the mentality that we have to prove ourselves.

**Ms RICHARDS:** You do not have to walk away today and still make it accessible for your children and future generations to have access to what is in essence producing ethanol. You do not want us to walk away from here today and allow that to continue?

**Councillor Isaacs:** Of course not. I am assuming that this legislation is going to help in that process.

**Ms Sewter:** As long as you are also thinking about the next steps. The frustration for us is that you come to us to put a piece of legislation in but you do not really want to talk about what is next. That is the frustration.

**Ms RICHARDS:** That is definitely noted. We are absolutely taking this feedback back. In terms of our remit today, it is what our recommendation is on that very specific piece in the legislation.

**Councillor Isaacs:** Allow us the opportunity as leaders of this community to take our stand to politicians. We come from service provision. We know the story behind that. I know service provision inside out. It is not like it is going to stop at this process and you are not going to hear our story

because we are going to be knocking on doors like we have been doing. It is about allowing the process to take place. People here talk about things all the time. You sit around the table and it goes around again and again. Allow us the opportunity to start making progress because as a council we are doing that. I do not think as a community you understand the hard work that has been put in behind the scenes.

**Ms Thomas:** You know the other thing, though, when you go back and do whatever you have to do our councillors get the blame for not bringing alcohol back.

**Mayor Wilson:** We have been talking about intent. If I have turbo yeast in my possession and Roxanne has red yeast in her possession then obviously you know what my intent is. We have red yeast and turbo yeast. I want to clarify this for the community so we can put it out there. What are the charges going to be when the legislation passes?

**Snr Sgt Reilly:** Like you said, it is about the intent.

**Mayor Wilson:** I want the community to know what message to take out there.

**CHAIR:** My understanding is that if you have turbo yeast there is very little other purpose for that so it would be easy for the police to prove intent. If your friends say that the mayor bakes regularly so that is why he has yeast and—

**Mayor Wilson:** Which I do.

**CHAIR:** It would be very difficult for the police to prove intent if you were a good baker and everybody knew that you used that yeast regularly. However, if you had yeast, sugar, equipment and—

**Mayor Wilson:** I could have my bread and tea.

**CHAIR:** It is going to be more difficult to prove intent.

**Mayor Wilson:** I just want to throw it out there so the community knows and there will be no misinterpretation of intent.

**CHAIR:** This is a question that we are going to put directly to the Law Society. They will answer that from an expert legal basis—

**Mayor Wilson:** On the ground we are going to be experiencing that. Do you know what I mean?

**Snr Sgt Reilly:** We experience intent in a lot of other legislation as well. For us to prove that element of intent to put before the court it is a bit of a process. Just because you have bakers' yeast on you, it does not mean that I can automatically charge you. There have to be a lot of other things surrounding that as well.

**Mayor Wilson:** If I have bakers' yeast in my cupboard and I have turbo yeast sitting around if you come in you will just charge me for the turbo yeast because you know what the turbo yeast is going to be used for?

**Snr Sgt Reilly:** Absolutely, but I am going to ask you questions about it. I will question you about it, talk to you about it and find out what you are using it for. Part of finding out what someone's intent is is to talk to them and question them about what they are using that for. Why have you got that in your pocket or why have you got that in your kitchen? You can tell me.

**CHAIR:** This might be something where we advise that they have a fact sheet to explain this to people.

**Ms Felton:** I did not introduce myself properly. I was born on Mornington Island. I am 87 years old. I am the oldest woman on the island. Home-brew is thoroughly wrecking our people's morals and their self-esteem. It is painful to watch. When you look at our old people they were upstanding people. Recently we had someone come to do our genealogy. In the Wellesley Islands group we have few of the real pure people. We have been on the Wellesley Islands for 65,000 years. To see how our people are going now really saddens me. Something has to be done.

Contractors speak to me. In their contract they have a clause which says that they must employ local Aboriginal people. They are all allowed to do that. Our people indulge overnight in home-brew which is partially sold by, I called them, criminals taking advantage of their own people's weaknesses. They go to work at nine o'clock. They go home at 12 o'clock and never return to work. This is what they talk to me about. I have not got an answer for them.

We have parents here who are drunk all night. Children do not attend school. They break and enter and smash people's vehicles. It is deeper than what you people think. They should have a real investigation of this island.

**CHAIR:** We have a lot to do, Robyrta.

**Ms Sewter:** In terms of the legislation, to me it does not matter.

**CHAIR:** It is not the answer.

**Ms Sewter:** It is not the answer and it does not matter. For the record, what needs to happen is that a delegation needs to come up and look at the real issue of this whole alcohol management plan. That needs to happen. That cannot be done in a couple of hours. That needs a day.

**Ms Reading:** I direct this to the police. You guys are struggling now to control the home-brew situation. I understand the thought is that this legislation is going to help, but do you realistically have the capacity on the ground to police and enforce the change?

**Snr Sgt Reilly:** Yes, absolutely.

**Ms Reading:** Really. Should it be successful—should we get rid of the home-brew—human nature, as in the past, means we will find alternatives. That should strike fear into all of us. As Richard said, we will get ice. There are already more marijuana smokers here. It is unrealistic to say that a whole township has to be 100 per cent sober. How dare you. It is inhumane. How can you say that? You would not go to a town on the mainland like Townsville and say that 100 per cent of people are not allowed to drink at all. It is inhumane. Should you be successful in removing that, people will find an alternative.

**Councillor Isaacs:** This process, Corrine, is about trying to get the reintroduction of alcohol. It is never going to disappear. We have already discussed that. It is out there on the table. Everybody knows that. If we do not get the reintroduction of proper alcohol in this community and instil in the younger generation what it is to be a responsible drinker—it is part of Australian culture—we will keep going and there will be nobody here.

**Ms Reading:** I hear what you are saying, but does the community really know that that is what the council is pushing for?

**Councillor Isaacs:** Of course they do. If they did not then I would not be sitting here. You all have concerns prior to the meetings and it is the same people who show up all the time. When you go out into the communities and have these conversations, like we do, because we work in the field—

**Ms Reading:** I think we have to agree to disagree here, Sarah. What I am saying is that if you are going to ban home-brew you need to make alcohol available. They have to be more successful if the legislation is passed.

**Councillor Isaacs:** It is not just up to the police; it is a community thing. It is not just up to the police. It is not up to the state government or the Commonwealth government.

**Ms Reading:** Generally speaking, should you be completely successful getting rid of that home-brew you had better be prepared to have something else available.

**Councillor Isaacs:** That is why service delivery needs to come into play. It is up to the service providers to make that preparation.

**Ms Reading:** Service delivery is compensating for social dysfunction.

**Councillor Isaacs:** It is not their responsibility.

**CHAIR:** We are going to be here for a little while longer to talk people. I note that people are not comfortable speaking in a big group. Feel free to come and talk to any of us directly. I would like to feel that we have a really good insight into the community. We know we do not have all the answers in this piece of legislation. The deputy mayor said that maybe it is a piece of the puzzle and Susan said it was only a bandaid. Either way, we are trying to get feedback on a piece of the puzzle.

**Mr Roughsey:** I have been listening to you talk. I just got a letter from that young fella about the home group. I used to be a really bad alcoholic. I used to drink a lot and smoke dope, but I gave it all away because I was thinking about my grandchildren and the children of the future.

We are talking today about ourselves, but what about the young people? We have to think about them. On the weekend, me and this young fella went around and said to people that we are going to take some young fellas out. There were 16 of those young kids in the troop carrier. We were driving around and then we saw some more boys. That attacked my heart. That really hurt me inside. I said, 'We have no more room boys and girls.' The girls wanted to come.

When we came back in they said, 'What about the girls?' We can only program for the boys. That really hurt me. When we came back in three of the boys' mothers and fathers were walking through. We came back home and I said, 'Where are you going to jump off?' I knew that they were going to have nothing at home. We dropped them there and in a couple of minutes they came back down to my place. I said, 'You can sleep here the night.' They can sleep in my daughter's place.

That got me thinking. I told my brother, 'Next time we might get the girls to come.' There is no men's meeting or women's meeting like we used to have. What happened to them? They are all gone. We are all thinking about drinking alcohol. Forget it; think about our young people. Think about the next generation.

In the school they have no Aboriginal religious instruction. I used to go to work a couple of years ago. I fell back into drinking. When I looked at myself properly I said, 'This community needs somebody. It needs leaders.' So we men need to stand up. We have had no men's meeting ever since we have had all these problems. We have domestic violence in the community. It is bad.

We have to stand up. The men of this community have to pull together, have a meeting and talk about all these problems and solve them ourselves. Nobody is going to solve them for us. We are going to solve them. We have to do it ourselves. We have to stand up, look at the problem and solve it ourselves.

You talk about home-brew. You have to get some dialysis machines up here. Over at Doomadgee they are getting it ready. They have got their alcohol back and they have built up the machines over there. The machines are built up ready for dialysis. We have to watch our health. Our health is very important so that we can show our young people that there is something different.

Our homeland out there needs to be built up again. The houses need to be built again and the roads properly built and we need to get the transport back that we had before. I believe we can fix up our community. We need our homeland to be fixed. Those people who want to stay in town and drink can stay here. What about our kids? We need to pick them up and go back out there.

**Ms Thomas:** What you are trying to say is that they need to get rid of the home-brew and give us back our real drink.

**Mr Roughsey:** You can do that, but first fix up yourself. Limit your drink. People have no limit. They keep on going and going.

**CHAIR:** Thank you.

**Mr Roughsey:** We have to think about our kids. I would like to see some of you girls available. A lot of children need to get out in the bush and do something away from the risk of alcohol. I would like that to happen in this community. The mob that are drinking alcohol can fix up their own problems. That is the saddest thing about the youth of this community.

**CHAIR:** I want to thank the community, especially those who organised this at such short notice—Mayor Wilson and Frank. We realise that we are not talking about all of the problems that are important and we will give that feedback to government. Thanks to Hansard for recording this and to everyone from participating. I declare the hearing closed. I invite you all to speak to us one on one.

**The subcommittee adjourned at 1.07 pm.**